



Newsletter

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Breeding Bird Surveys— by Friends of Alta

Earlier this summer, the fourth year of our five year Alta breeding bird survey was completed. This study is a collaborative effort between Tracy Aviary, Alta Environmental Center, and Friends of Alta. Since birds can serve as indicator species, understanding the bird populations of an area is extremely important and can tell us a lot about the overall health of the ecosystem, allowing informed conservation decisions to be made about an area. The data that has been collected so far is still being analyzed by staff at Tracy Aviary, but currently, to date, our species richness count is at 106 different species spotted and documented around Alta. Volunteers also assisted with monitoring song bird boxes that had been placed in Alta last year. This year, it was found that nesting season was successful with over 40 chicks fledged! Although breeding bird surveys and nest box monitoring have finished for the year, there are still lots of different opportunities to get involved with the study. Summer and fall monthly non-breeding bird surveys begin in September and will be held on the 2nd Monday of every month through November. Winter surveys on skis will also be held monthly and fun from December to April.



Upcoming Bird Surveys

- August 19 — Annual Bird Talk & Walk
- September 10 — Birding at Alta
- October 8 — Birding at Alta
- November 12 — Birding at Alta

Registration is required: <http://bit.ly/2NYLK8U>



Summer Host Program

New to Alta Ski Area this summer is the Summer Host program. Summer hosts are stationed at the top of the Sunnyside lift and at the trailhead leading to Secret Lake. The host is to facilitate a positive experience for all visitors to Albion Basin. Each host represents Alta Environmental Center (Alta Ski Area), Friends of Alta, Cottonwoods Canyon Foundation, and the US Forest Service. Hosts are strategically placed to answer questions guests may have as well as educate guests. Albion Basin is a



watershed area at the headwaters of the Salt Lake City protected watershed that provides clean drinking water to the valley. Summer hosts will also encourage hikers to stay on trails, and not pick the wildflowers. We want to preserve the environment of Albion Basin and protect the Alta experience in all seasons. We encourage a Leave-No-Trace experience, you pack it in, you pack it out. Hosts work in conjunction with the Sunnyside lift operations, weekends and holidays.



The Earth doesn't belong to us: we belong to the Earth.

- Marlee Matlin

Wildflower Etiquette

This book We all love wildflowers, that is what draws us up into the mountains. The colors, the beauty of them in their natural environment and the nostalgia of being in the mountains amongst wildflowers. If each person who visited public lands picked a flower, we'd quickly run out of colorful wildflowers to enjoy. A growing interest in native plants leads to people removing the native wildflowers and native plants from their natural habitats. This is detrimental to the plant and wildflower. They should not be disturbed in their natural environment. Some of the plants and wildflowers may be listed as an endangered species and could lead to the extinction of the entire species if removed from their habitat. The USDA Forest Service states there are four main consequences to the illegal activity of digging up or removing wildflowers and native plants.



1. All living organisms need to reproduce. Digging up wildflowers, picking wildflowers, or collecting their seed will reduce a plant's ability to reproduce and will adversely affect its long-term survival in that location;
2. Removing wildflowers from the wild can adversely affect pollinators and other animals that depend on that species for food or cover.
3. Removing wildflowers from our national forests and grasslands prevents other visitors from enjoying our natural heritage; and,
4. Most wildflowers, when dug from their natural habitat, do not survive being transplanted.

Remember, DO NOT PICK THE WILDFLOWERS. Take pictures, capture moments and enjoy wildflowers and native plants in our national forest. Leave no trace, leave the wildflowers as you found them so future generations can enjoy the natural beauty of the mountains.

July & August Sustainability Events

- **Saturday, July 28—Wasatch Wildflower Festival:** This Saturday is Alta's turn to show off nature's gifts. [Cottonwoodcanyons.org](https://cottonwoodcanyons.org)
- **Tuesday, July 31—TreeUtah Tuesday Harvest:** Enjoy a cool evening in Alta and get a little stewardship done. [Treeutah.org](https://treeutah.org)
- **Friday, August 3—HawkWatch Bird of Prey Show & Hike:** Come for the birds, stay for the walk with the Alta Environmental Center. No registration needed, just show up!
- **Tuesday, August 14—Community Weed Pull:** Don't let the weeds steal the show from the native wildflowers, join us on for a chill evening of taking back Alta. [Cottonwoodcanyons.org](https://cottonwoodcanyons.org)
- **Friday, August 17—HawkWatch Bird of Prey Show & Hike:** If you missed the previous bird shows, put this one on your calendar and take a walk around with Tracy Aviary afterwards. No registration required.
- **Sunday, August 19—Annual Bird Talk & Walk:** Did you know we have over a 100 species of birds that breed in Alta? Come and learn more. Register with friendsofalta.org.

