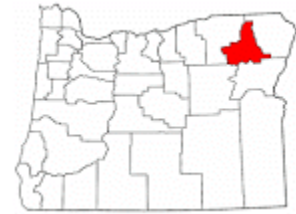


Union County, Oregon



Union County Birding Locations

[Open a Map That Shows All Union County Locations](#)

IMPORTANT!! THIS TABLE IS MEANT TO BE READ LEFT TO RIGHT (ROWS), NOT UP AND DOWN (COLUMNS)!!

<u>GENERAL INFORMATION</u>	<u>ELGIN/IMBLER AREA</u>	Jubilee Lake
Jarboe Meadows	Elgin	Rhinehart Bridge
Imbler	Mt. Harris	<u>La GRANDE AREA</u>
Spring Creek Great Gray Owl Area	Red Bridge State Wayside	Bird Track Sp. Nature Trail
Hilgard Junction State Park	Five Points & Indian Rock	Morgan Lake & Twin Lake
La Grande	La Grande Sewage Ponds	Ladd Marsh WA
Hot Lake	<u>COVE AREA</u>	High Valley Road
Cove & Vicinity	Moss Springs Guard Station	<u>UNION AREA</u>
Union	Medical Springs Hwy	Catherine Creek State Park
N. Fork Catherine Creek	<u>SOUTHWEST UNION</u>	Pilcher Creek Lake
Wolf Creek Reservoir	La Grande Reservoir	Shaw Reservoir
<u>SOUTHEAST UNION</u>	Jimmy Creek Reservoir	Telocaset Lane
Reeves Mountain Road	Thief Valley	North Powder Ponds

If you have only a short time in our county, try these locations first!			
SPRING	Ladd Marsh WA/Hot Lake	La Grande Sewage Ponds	Rhinehart Bridge
SUMMER	Ladd Marsh WA/Hot Lake	Bird Track Sp. Nature Trail	Spring Creek Great Gray Owl Area
FALL	Ladd Marsh WA/Hot Lake	La Grande Sewage Ponds	Moss Springs Guard Station
WINTER	La Grande/La Grande Sewage Ponds	Elgin	Ladd Marsh WA

Authors/Editors: Chuck Gates, Cathy Nowak, Dan Heyerly, Dave Trochlell, Mike Denny, Linda Fink

County Seat: LaGrande

County Size: 2,039 Square Miles

High Elevation : Eagle Cap (9,572 feet)

Rarities : Gyrfalcon, Stilt Sandpiper, White-winged Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Northern Hawk-Owl, Black Swift, Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Northern Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, Tennessee Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Brambling

Top County Lister : Trent Bray (286)

Year List Record : Trent Bray 2013 (259)

County Contact Person: Email Cathy Nowak

[return to the top](#)

ELGIN/IMBLER AREA

Jubilee Lake [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 A-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 B-6
geographic coordinates 45°49'51.2"N 117°57'55.7"W
([45.830887, -117.965465](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: From Elgin, take Hwy 204 west (toward Tollgate) to USFS Rd. 64 and turn east. Follow the 64 road to the sign for Jubilee Lake. Turn right at sign into campground or continue straight to "semi-dispersed" sites on right. This is one of the most popular lakes in the Umatilla National Forest but it is remote enough to provide good birding. It's an excellent place to combine a birding and camping trip.

Habitat and Birds: Tall pines and riparian areas. Waterfowl here might include Barrow's Goldeneye and Hooded Merganser. Grebes and Loons may visit in spring and summer. Look for mountain species like grouse, Accipiters, Vaux's Swift, Rufous & Calliope Hummingbirds. Woodpeckers include Hairy, Northern Flicker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Downy, and Pileated. Red and White-breasted Nuthatches are common as are Mountain Chickadees and Brown Creeper. Flycatchers include Dusky, Hammond's, and "Western" (the distribution of Cordilleran and Pacific-slope Flycatcher is uncertain in Union County). Winter Wrens are here year round and Brown-headed Cowbirds can be found in summer. Western Tanagers, Hermit Thrush, Western & Mountain Bluebirds are all here. Yellow-breasted Chats hide in the thickets. Listen for

both Cassin's and Warbling Vireos. Warblers include Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Townsend's, and a possibility of American Redstart. Spotted Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco are here. Black-headed Grosbeaks and Evening Grosbeaks can be found along with Cassin's Finches and Lazuli Bunting. Watch for flocks of Pine Siskins and Red Crossbills.

Jarboe Meadows [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 A-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 B-6
geographic coordinates 45°50'06.4"N 117°51'38.7"W
([45.835114, -117.860741](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Only consider coming to this location after you have obtained a Umatilla NF map. Typically, the roads are great after the 20th of May in low snow winters. Heavy winter snows can block these roads well into mid-June so use common sense and visit with Forest Service personnel in Pendleton, Walla Walla or stop at the Tollgate Store and ask. To get here from Tollgate take FSRD 64 off SR 204 and head for Jubilee Lake. Go beyond the Jubilee Lake turn off and go until you come to a fork in the road (1.9 miles). FSRD 64 will hook off to the north or left. Then proceed ahead onto FSRD 6413. **This becomes a single lane road that will require all of your attention as there may be rocks in the road (or elk).** It is this road that will determine if you made a wise choice on your visiting date. This is the last place to hang onto its snow drifts in this forest. Follow FSRD 6413 until you arrive at Jarboe Meadow (about 7.7 miles from Jubilee Lake).

Habitat and Birds: This huge wet meadow is outstanding between late May through early Sept.. This is amid elevation site (4833') and is very wet in May when it hosts large numbers of birds (and some mosquitoes by mid June). The spring and summer birds of this area are Lincoln's Sparrow, Western Tanager, Virginia Rail, Wood Duck, Northern Goshawk, Golden Eagle, Dusky Grouse, Pileated Woodpecker, Great Gray Owl, Northern Pygmy-Owl and Calliope Hummingbird to name a few.

Elgin [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 B-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 C-6
geographic coordinates 45°33'55.9"N 117°55'02.4"W
([45.565540, -117.917327](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Elgin](#)

Location: Elgin is located 19 miles north of La Grande on Hwy 82.

Habitat and Birds: Small NE Oregon towns like this are primarily attractive to birders in the winter where they have the potential (but far from a sure thing) for winter lovelies like Common Redpoll, Bohemian Waxwing, Tree Sparrow, Pine Grosbeak, and Evening Grosbeak. As you leave Elgin and travel east toward Wallowa, stop at the top of a hill 0.5 miles out of town and scope the sewer ponds to the north.

Rhinehart Bridge [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 C-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 D-6
geographic coordinates 45 30' 51" N 117 55' 41" W
([45.514348, -117.928182](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Rinehart Canyon](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Philberg Lane](#)

Location: From La Grande, travel northeast on Hwy 82 past Island City. Stay on Hwy 82 for another 12 miles to Imbler. Go through Imbler (still on Hwy 82) and drive 3.7 miles more. Look for Philberg Rd. on the right. Take Philberg Rd. east, cross the river and turn right. From that corner go south for approximately 0.25 to 0.5 mile to Rhinehart Bridge or "Rheinhard Bridge" as it is sometimes known. The dry slope is uphill on the east side of that road. The willow streamside thicket and the river itself are on the west side of that road. Gray Catbirds and Veery are abundant here.

Another very good place for Gray Catbird and Veery is Rheinhard Lane and its bridge over the Grande Ronde River. That road takes off to the east off Hwy. 82 just to the south of Philberg Ln. There is very little traffic and you can stand up on the bridge and from above watch the Gray Catbirds flying around from one side of the river to the other.

If you take the road NW from Cove along the base of the hills, you will see the Rheinhard Ln. intersection with that road (N. Cove Rd.?) and can then approach that bridge over the Grande Ronde from the east. You can then proceed west on Rheinhard Ln. to Hwy. 82. We turned right and then fairly soon turned right on Philberg Rd., which is the famous Rheinhard Bridge area. Bird along that road from that intersection up to the first dwelling. As of 2009, local landowners were unsuccessful in a bid to close this road to the public (thanks to local birders). You can drive past the dwellings and park at the old rock quarry. Walk along the river on the old road bed which is maintained by local birders. From the edge of the rock pit to the bridge is state land owned by ODOT.

Habitat and Birds: Riparian area. Birds you might find here include Wood Duck, Northern Harrier, Western Wood-Pewee, Willow Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Black-capped Chickadee, Bushtit, Rock Wren, Canyon Wren, Bewick's Wren, House Wren, Townsend's Solitaire, Veery, Swainson's Thrush, Gray Catbird, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Chipping Sparrow, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Lazuli Bunting.

Imbler [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 C-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 D-6
geographic coordinates 45°27'39.1"N 117°57'45.5"W
([45.460858](#), [-117.962637](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Imbler is located on Hwy 82 about 12 miles NE of La Grande.

Habitat and Birds: Small NE Oregon towns like this are primarily attractive to birders in the winter where they have the potential (but far from a sure thing) for winter lovelies like Common Redpoll, Bohemian Waxwing, Tree Sparrow, Pine Grosbeak, and Evening Grosbeak.

Mt. Harris and Mt Harris Loop [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 C-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 D-6
geographic coordinates 45°26'41.5"N 117°53'53.3"W
([45.444858](#), [-117.898138](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Mt Harris is about 4 miles East of Imbler in Central Union County. From the north end of Imbler, take Striker Lane east for 2 miles. Striker ends at Gray's Corner Road. Across Gray's Corner, look for Mt Harris Loop Road. This road loops around Mt. Harris and provides nice birding near the Wallowa Whitman National Forest. To access the summit to Mt Harris, look for a road to the right at about 0.33 miles from Gray's Corner and Mt. Harris Loop ([45.463243](#), [-117.917112](#)).

Habitat and Birds: This loop consists mostly of mixed conifer forest. A morning drive in the spring, summer, or fall will produce many of the local forest species and you could find Spruce Grouse, Ruffed Grouse, Dusky Grouse, and Pine Grosbeak (very rare but have been found here). Barred Owls have been reported from here.

La GRANDE AREA

Spring Creek Great Gray Owl Management Area

[return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 86 C-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 74 D-4 **geographic coordinates**

700 Rd off FR 21 - 45°20'24.7"N 118°18'57.3"W [45.340205, -118.315922](#)

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Spring Creek](#)

[Pacific NW Research Station Brochure](#) - Very specific map to breeding areas.

Location: Exit 248 off I84, Take Forest Road 2100 for about 1.5 miles and watch for the signs.

Habitat and Birds: Tall pines and riparian areas. As many as 8 pairs of Great Gray Owls nest in a relatively small area managed by the USFS. Originally, the owls nested in old Northern Goshawk nests but now most nest on nesting platforms placed there when the goshawk nests began to disintegrate. The USFS recommends visiting this location between mid-May and early June. In this window of time, the young will be nearly grown and disturbance will be at a minimum. **Remember to use good birding ethics at all times when viewing this and all species of birds.** Look for other mountain species like grouse, Accipiters, Vaux's Swift, Rufous & Calliope Hummingbirds. Woodpeckers include Hairy, Northern Flicker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Downy, and Pileated. Red and White-breasted Nuthatches are common as are Mountain Chickadees and Brown Creeper. Flycatchers include Dusky, Hammond's, and "Western" (the distribution of Cordilleran and Pacific-slope Flycatcher is uncertain in Union County). Winter Wrens are here year round and Brown-headed Cowbirds can be found in summer. Western Tanagers, Hermit Thrush, Veery, Western & Mountain Bluebirds are all here. Gray Catbirds are possible in the riparian strips and Yellow-breasted Chats hide in the thickets. Listen for both Cassin's and Warbling Vireos. Warblers include Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Townsend's, and a possibility of American Redstart. Spotted Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco are here. Black-headed Grosbeaks and Evening Grosbeaks can be found along with Cassin's Finches and Lazuli Bunting. Watch for flocks of Pine Siskins and Red Crossbills. Look for Barred Owls and Northern Pygmy-Owls here too.

Red Bridge State Wayside [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 86 C-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 74 E-4
geographic coordinates 45°17'23.0"N 118°19'53.4"W
([45.289721, -118.331498](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Red Bridge State Park](#)

[State Park Brochure](#)

Location: Travel 6.3 miles west of La Grande to I-84 exit 252. Take Hwy 244 SW for about 7.3 miles to the park.

Habitat and Birds: Tall pines and riparian areas. Look for mountain species like grouse, Accipiters, Vaux's Swift, Rufous & Calliope Hummingbirds. Woodpeckers include Hairy, Northern Flicker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Downy, and Pileated. Red and White-breasted Nuthatches are common as are Mountain Chickadees and Brown Creeper. Flycatchers include Dusky, Hammond's, and "Western" (the distribution of Cordilleran and Pacific-slope Flycatcher is uncertain in Union County). Winter Wrens are here year round and Brown-headed Cowbirds can be found in summer. Western Tanagers, Hermit Thrush, Veery, Western & Mountain Bluebirds are all here. Gray Catbirds are possible in the riparian strips and Yellow-breasted Chats hide in the thickets. Listen for both Cassin's and Warbling Vireos. Warblers include Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Townsend's, and a possibility of American Redstart. Spotted Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco are here. Black-headed Grosbeaks and Evening Grosbeaks can be found along with Cassin's Finches and Lazuli Bunting. Watch for flocks of Pine Siskins and Red Crossbills.

Bird Track Springs Nature Trail [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 86 C-3 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 74 E-4
geographic coordinates 45°18'01.8"N 118°18'25.8"W
([45.300491, -118.307162](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Bird Track Springs](#)

[Bird Track Springs Nature Trail Website](#)

Location: Exit #252 off Interstate 84 to Highway 244 toward Starkey, 5.4 miles (this is 42 miles east of Ukiah). The trailhead is on your right across from Bird Track Springs Campground. [Bird Track Springs Campground](#)

Habitat and Birds: Tall pines and riparian areas. Look for mountain species like grouse, Accipiters, Vaux's Swift, Rufous & Calliope Hummingbirds. Woodpeckers include Hairy, Northern Flicker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Downy, and Pileated. Red and White-breasted Nuthatches are common as are Mountain Chickadees and Brown Creeper. Flycatchers include Dusky, Hammond's, and "Western" (the distribution of Cordilleran and Pacific-slope Flycatcher is uncertain in Union County). Winter Wrens are here year round and Brown-headed Cowbirds can be found in summer. Western Tanagers, Hermit Thrush, Veery, Western & Mountain Bluebirds are all here. Gray Catbirds are possible in the riparian strips and Yellow-breasted Chats hide in the thickets. Listen for both Cassin's and Warbling Vireos. Warblers include Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Townsend's, and a possibility of American Redstart. Spotted Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco are here. Black-headed Grosbeaks and Evening Grosbeaks can be found along with Cassin's Finches and Lazuli Bunting. Watch for flocks of Pine Siskins and Red Crossbills.

Hilgard Junction State Park [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 86 C-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 74 E-4

geographic coordinates 45°20'32.0"N 118°14'08.3"W
([45.342237](#), [-118.235648](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Hilgard Junction](#)

[Hilgard Junction State Park Website](#)

Location: 6.3 miles west of La Grande off of I-84. Take exit 252.

Habitat and Birds: A few birds that have been seen at this location in the past include California Quail, Spotted Sandpiper, Rufous Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Red-naped Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Warbling Vireo, Steller's Jay, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Mountain Chickadee, Cedar Waxwing, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, American Redstart (occasionally), Dark-eyed Junco, Brown-headed Cowbird, and American Goldfinch.

Mount Emily, Five Points and Indian Rock [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 86 C-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 74 D-5

geographic coordinates 45°26'16.2"N 118°05'28.7"W
([45.437835](#), [-118.091315](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Mount Emily Road](#)

Location: From I-84 at the Mount Emily Exit (Exit 243) which is about 28 miles NE of LaGrande and 33 miles SE of Pendleton, get onto FSRD 31 and proceed east 11.8 miles until you come to the turn off to the south that goes to Mount Emily (NF 3120 or Skyline Road or Mt Emily Road [45.498281, -118.108083](#)). Turn right onto this road 3.1 miles and you will come to Indian Rock ([45.465166, -118.097282](#)). Travel south from Indian for 1.9 miles and you will see the road to the Mt Emily ski area. You can continue on Mt Emily Road south for about 8.0 miles to Owsley Canyon Road ([45.383488, -118.096878](#)). Turn right and continue south for 3.2 miles to I-84 very near La Grande. ***This is a high clearance vehicle road only.***

Habitat and Birds: This is a very interesting place as you have very dry west and east facing slopes and drop offs. The views are spectacular and the birding is interesting. In spring, the wildflower bloom is outstanding. Birds to watch for are Dusky Grouse, Mountain Bluebirds, Hairy Woodpecker, Turkey Vulture, Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Northern Goshawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Merlin, Clark's Nutcracker and Red Crossbill to name a few. This is a site where you will want a camera! Bring your own water and wear boots.

Morgan Lake & Twin Lake [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 86 C-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 74 E-5
geographic coordinates 45°18'06.9"N 118°08'19.4"W
([45.301922, -118.138730](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Morgan Lake](#)

Location: It's best to find these lakes via the area by Eastern Oregon University. To access the region near the university, take Exit 259; proceed on US Highway 30 into La Grande. Turn right at the second set of lights onto Fourth Street. Continue on Fourth Street until you reach the "K" Avenue. Take "K" Avenue all the way to the west end. Turn left (south) on Sunset Drive (it will shortly become Alder St.). Turn right on "C" Avenue and go one block. Turn left (South) on Walnut Street. Walnut will leave town and become Morgan Lake Road. After about 1 mile from town, look for a fork in the road. Take the right fork (Morgan Lake Road). Stay on this road for about 1.2 miles to a junction. Take the right (north) to the lakes. Morgan

Lake is near the road but Twin Lake is a tenth of a mile west and somewhat obscured by trees.

Habitat and Birds: These small lakes offer some habitat for visiting waterfowl. They hold some potential for visitors like Snow Geese and grebes. The forests around the lake can be productive for most of the local forest species. Twin Lake is very marshy and has the potential for many nesting species.

La Grande [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 86 C-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 74 E-5
geographic coordinates 45°19'28.6"N 118°05'16.9"W
([45.324625](#), [-118.088035](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: La Grande is located off of I-84 in Northeastern Oregon about 50 miles SE of Pendleton. To access the region near the college, take Exit 259; proceed on US Highway 30 into La Grande. Turn right at the second set of lights - onto Fourth Street. Continue on Fourth Street until you reach the "K" Avenue. Driving the neighborhoods both north and south of "K" Avenue should bring good winter birding. Some of the preferred locations within the city limits include the ponds at the Fairgrounds (take 2nd Street north under I-84 [45.345304](#), [-118.105950](#)), Pioneer and Gangloff Parks (take Hwy 30 north to the edge of town ([45.334962](#), [-118.104554](#))), and Riverside Park (go east on 82 under the railroad overpass and take the first left which is Monroe Street. Then turn right on Spruce and follow it north for about 1.25 miles. Pass over the freeway and look for the park on your right. [45.342860](#), [-118.084828](#)).

No Trip to La Grande will be complete without a stop in to local wild bird store called **The Bobolink**. Located at 1707 5th Street in downtown La Grande ([45.327107](#), [-118.095552](#)), this is the place to stop in and get current bird news. Owner/Operator and local bird expert **Trent Bray** will happily give advise and handle all your birding supply needs. Here's a recent testimonial from the Bobolink Facebook page, "*Wonderful store with a variety of helpful books, supplies, etc. for birders; also a huge variety of disc golf equipment and supplies, beers, wines, coffees, etc. Definitely going to have to return and spend time browsing! Trent is so helpful and knowledgeable.*"

Habitat and Birds: Several of the best locations near La Grande are dealt with later in this site guide. The town itself can be very productive for winter birds like Bohemian Waxwing and Common Redpoll (both are rare and don't occur every year). The older neighborhoods near the high school and the college have plenty of ornamental fruit trees and birch that attract these and

other birds. Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Blue Jay, Clay-colored Sparrow, Black-and-White Warbler, Great-tailed Grackle, Brambling, Tennessee Warbler, and most recently Pine Warbler have all occurred here.

La Grande Sewage Ponds [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 86 C-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 74 E-5
geographic coordinates 45°16'56.7"N 118°01'30.0"W
([45.282413, -118.024988](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for La Grande Sewage Ponds](#)

Location: From Central La Grande, Take Adams Ave. east until you leave town. This road becomes the La Grande-Baker Hwy or Hwy 203. The sewage ponds are located off of Hwy 203 about 1.6 miles after 203 passes under I-84. Stop by the office and ask permission to view the ponds. You can also access the ponds by taking I-84 exit 265 south of La Grande and follow the above directions.

Habitat and Birds: Like many sewage ponds, waterfowl are plentiful. Unusual species like Ross's Geese or Greater Scaup are possible. Scoters and Harlequin Ducks would be very unusual. Horned, Eared, Red-necked, Pied-billed, Clark's, and Western Grebes are all possible. The usual gulls are Ring-billed and California but Bonaparte's, Herring, Franklin's, and Glaucous-winged are all possible. Caspian, Forster's, and Black Terns sometimes show up and a rare tern like Common or Arctic is always possible. Shorebirds are mostly mixed peeps like Least and Western Sandpipers but you might find Baird's or Pectoral Sandpipers if you're lucky. Yellowlegs and dowitchers are here too. Wilson's and Red-necked Phalaropes are sometimes seen. American White Pelicans can show up here and a Peregrine Falcon is not out of the question. Say's Phoebes might visit in migration and swallows are usually abundant in summer.

Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 86 C-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 74 E-5
geographic coordinates 45°15'51.2"N 118°02'35.4"W
([45.264214, -118.043164](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Ladd Marsh WMA](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Ladd Marsh WMA \(Peach Road\)](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Hot Lake](#)

[Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area Website](#)

Location: Take I-84 south of La Grande to exit 268. Travel NW on Foothill Road (some sources list this as Foothill-Ladd Canyon Road) and watch for the ODFW barn on your left. Explore this area for sparrows. Hike up the hill (open Apr. 11- Dec. 31) to find grouse, a variety of woodpeckers, Lazuli Bunting and the possibility of Great Gray Owl. Proceed north along Foothill road and look for a small yellow sign that marks the entrance to the Ladd Marsh Overlook. This viewpoint is good for viewing nesting Sandhill Cranes including adults with young in the spring and summer. It will also provide long distance views (a scope is really handy here) of American Bittern, American White Pelican, swans and other waterfowl. To reach the Tule Lake Public Access Area (open March 1 - Sept 20), from I-84 exit 268, turn east and cross over the freeway. Turn south on Pierce Rd. and then east on Hot Lake Lane. From here turn south on Hwy 203. Immediately after Hwy 203 crosses over the railroad tracks, turn north on Peach Road. After about 1.3 miles (most of which has wildlife area on both sides of the road) the public access area entrance is on the east side of the road. There is a 1 mile auto route and a parking area (with restrooms) from which 3 miles of trails through the wetlands can be accessed. Most of the remaining wildlife area is closed to the public but viewing can be very good from county roads in the region.

Habitat and Birds: A group of wetlands, marshes, and prairies. Nesting Bobolinks have been found in the wet fields near here (not in recent years) as have a myriad of marsh birds. Thousands of ducks and geese use this area for stop-overs and nesting habitat. Black-necked Stilt and American Avocet may nest here making this one of the only places you can see those species in NE Oregon. Fifteen pairs of Sandhill Cranes nest here and several can be seen with young from several county roads. Listen for American Bittern and watch for Black-crowned Night-herons. Both Virginia Rail and Sora are found here and Yellow-headed Blackbirds are common in summer. Tricolored Blackbirds and Great-tailed Grackle were here in 2009. Look for wintering American Tree Sparrow in the brushy areas along the road.

Hot Lake [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 C-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 E-6
geographic coordinates 45°14'44.9"N 117°57'37.1"W
([45.245798, -117.960298](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[Hot Springs Resort Website](#)

Location: From La Grande, take I-84 exit 265 to Hwy 203 east (this is Adams Avenue). Take 203 for 5 miles to Hot Lake.

Habitat and Birds: These lakes are the remnants of a much larger lake system that used to exist in this valley. Waterfowl move between the Hot Lakes and Ladd Marsh. Ducks, geese, shorebirds, and waders all gather here in good numbers.

COVE AREA

High Valley Road [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 C-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 E-7

geographic coordinates 45°17'49.4"N 117°49'07.8"W
([45.297054, -117.818820](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: This road travels south from Cove and follows the edge of the Grande Ronde Valley to the community of Union. From Cove (see below), travel west on Hwy 237 (Main Street in town). Just after leaving Cove, look for High Valley Road on the left side of the road. It's about 9 miles to Union.

Habitat and Birds: Open scrub, riparian areas, and farmland. This road can be productive in spring and summer for raptors, waders, migrants, both Eastern & Western Kingbirds, and Bobolinks. Snow Bunting is sometimes seen here in winter.

Cove & Vicinity [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 C-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 E-7

geographic coordinates 45°17'48.3"N 117°48'34.5"W
([45.296759, -117.809591](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: Cove is 15 miles east of La Grande on Hwy 237. From La Grande, take I-84 exit 261 to Hwy 82 east (this is Island Avenue). Travel 1.7 miles to Island City and go straight on Hwy 237. Travel another 13 miles to Cove. The town itself can offer some good birding especially in winter. Follow 237 through town and it loops around to the west for a distance. There are several large ponds (including the Cove sewage ponds) on the west side of Cove along Hwy 237. Explore the farmland to the east of Cove. The Eagle Cap Wilderness is directly east of this region.

Habitat and Birds: Small towns like Cove can be attractive to migrants during spring and fall as well as winter birds who stop to feed on the ornamental trees in the town. White-winged Dove was found here in 2005 and again in 2008. Search the farmland around Cove for raptors and sparrows and be sure to visit the ponds west of town. There are several good birding sites around Cove (most are listed in this site guide) and you could easily make Cove a central hub for various excursions in the area.

Moss Springs Guard Station and Campground

[return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 C-6 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 E-7
geographic coordinates 45°16'28.5"N 117°40'44.2"W
([45.274572, -117.678935](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Moss Springs Guard Station](#)

Location: From La Grande, take Hwy 82 to Island City, Hwy 237 East towards Cove. From Cove, take County Rd. 65 (Mill Creek Rd.) east and then Forest Rd 6220. Moss Springs is located only 8 miles from the town of Cove and 21 miles from the City of La Grande. The campground is just about a mile east of the guard station. Take the Lodge Pole Trail from the Campground and hike as long as you like. Drive the side roads early in the morning for grouse.

Habitat and Birds: Forest of mixed conifers. In addition to the regular forest birds, Dusky and Spruce Grouse are seen here on occasion. This is one of the few sites in Union County where American Three-toed Woodpecker can sometimes be found.

UNION AREA

Union [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 D-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 E-6
geographic coordinates 45°12'22.7"N 117°51'55.8"W
([45.206311, -117.865499](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: From La Grande, take I-84 exit 265 to Hwy 203 east. Take 203 for 10.4 miles to Union. Check out Union City Park in Central Union on the west side of Hwy 203/237 at Arch Street. If time permits, check out the

Union Cemetery on the SE end of Union. Take 237 south from the junction with 203 and travel 4 blocks to Fulton Street. Turn left (east) and go 6 blocks to the cemetery. You might check in at Buffalo Peak Golf Course and ask permission to check the large ponds in the middle of the golf course. This is only recommended during the winter off-season when golfers are often absent.

Habitat and Birds: While far from common and not to be expected every year, gems like Common Redpoll, Bohemian Waxwing, Tree Sparrow, Pine Grosbeak, and Evening Grosbeak can be found around this town on winter days. Blue Jays have become nearly an annual species so keep an eye and ear out for local feeders.

Medical Springs Hwy [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 D-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 E-6
geographic coordinates 45°12'30.0"N 117°51'05.5"W
([45.208322, -117.851539](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: From the town of Union, travel SE on Hwy 203. This is the Medical Springs Hwy. It leaves the county at about 23 miles south of Union just past the community of Medical Springs. Stop in at Catherine Creek State Park and the North Fork of Catherine Creek (see below).

Habitat and Birds: Tall pines and riparian areas. Look for mountain species like grouse, Accipiters, Vaux's Swift, Rufous & Calliope Hummingbirds. Woodpeckers include Hairy, Northern Flicker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Downy, and Pileated. Red and White-breasted Nuthatches are common as are Mountain Chickadees and Brown Creeper. Flycatchers include Dusky, Hammond's, and "Western" (the distribution of Cordilleran and Pacific-slope Flycatcher is uncertain in Union County). Winter Wrens are here year round and Brown-headed Cowbirds can be found in summer. Western Tanagers, Hermit Thrush, Veery, Western & Mountain Bluebirds are all here. Gray Catbirds are possible in the riparian strips and Yellow-breasted Chats hide in the thickets. Listen for both Cassin's and Warbling Vireos.

Warblers include Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Townsend's, and a possibility of American Redstart. Spotted Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco are here. Black-headed Grosbeaks and Evening Grosbeaks can be found along with Cassin's Finches and Lazuli Bunting. Watch for flocks of Pine Siskins and Red Crossbills.

Catherine Creek State Park [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 D-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 F-7 **geographic coordinates** 45°09'10.1"N 117°44'26.9"W ([45.152795, -117.740818](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Catherine Creek State Park](#)
[State Park Brochure](#)

Location: From Central Union, take Hwy 203 east and south for a little over 8 miles to Catherine Creek State Park. Hike the Rock Springs, Huckleberry, and Salt Trails and nearby Ames Creek and Ames Springs are worth exploring.

Habitat and Birds: Tall pines and riparian areas. Look for mountain species like grouse, Accipiters, Vaux's Swift, Rufous & Calliope Hummingbirds. Woodpeckers include Hairy, Northern Flicker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Downy, and Pileated. Red and White-breasted Nuthatches are common as are Mountain Chickadees and Brown Creeper. Flycatchers include Dusky, Hammond's, and "Western" (the distribution of Cordilleran and Pacific-slope Flycatcher is uncertain in Union County). Winter Wrens are here year round and Brown-headed Cowbirds can be found in summer. Western Tanagers, Hermit Thrush, Veery, Western & Mountain Bluebirds are all here. Gray Catbirds are possible in the riparian strips and Yellow-breasted Chats hide in the thickets. Listen for both Cassin's and Warbling Vireos. Warblers include Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Townsend's, and a possibility of American Redstart. Spotted Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco are here. Black-headed Grosbeaks and Evening Grosbeaks can be found along with Cassin's Finches and Lazuli Bunting. Watch for flocks of Pine Siskins and Red Crossbills.

North Fork Catherine Creek [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 D-6 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 F-7 **geographic coordinates** 45°09'14.3"N 117°36'58.2"W ([45.153960, -117.616173](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: From Union, go 11 miles SE on OR 203 and turn left on Catherine Creek Lane (FR 7785). Go 5.7 miles to the road's end and take the trail.

Habitat and Birds: Tall pines and riparian areas. Look for mountain species like grouse, Accipiters, Vaux's Swift, Rufous & Calliope Hummingbirds. Woodpeckers include Hairy, Northern Flicker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Downy, and Pileated. Red and White-breasted Nuthatches are common as are Mountain Chickadees and Brown Creeper. Flycatchers include Dusky, Hammond's, and "Western" (the distribution of Cordilleran and Pacific-slope

Flycatcher is uncertain in Union County). Winter Wrens are here year round and Brown-headed Cowbirds can be found in summer. Western Tanagers, Hermit Thrush, Veery, Western & Mountain Bluebirds are all here. Gray Catbirds are possible in the riparian strips and Yellow-breasted Chats hide in the thickets. Listen for both Cassin's and Warbling Vireos. Warblers include Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Townsend's, and a possibility of American Redstart. Spotted Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco are here. Black-headed Grosbeaks and Evening Grosbeaks can be found along with Cassin's Finches and Lazuli Bunting. Watch for flocks of Pine Siskins and Red Crossbills.

SOUTHWEST UNION

Pilcher Creek Lake and Campground [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 86 D-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 74 F-5
geographic coordinates 45°02'23.3"N 118°04'38.4"W
([45.039805, -118.077334](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: About 22 miles south of La Grande on I-84, take the North Powder exit 285 and travel west on North Powder River Road (called River Lane on some maps). Go about 7.8 miles on North Powder River Road and look for a road to the right marked Tucker Flat Road. The reservoir is down this road about 2 miles.

Habitat and Birds: Lake with associated forest. Look for divers and dabblers like Bufflehead, Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Mallard, Cinnamon Teal, and many others. Grebes and loons may stop over here in migration and geese can visit here as well. There is a Bald Eagle nest on the hill on the southeast side of the reservoir that can be scoped from the west parking area.

Wolf Creek Reservoir [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 86 D-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 F-6
geographic coordinates 45°03'16.1"N 118°00'59.6"W
([45.054471, -118.016547](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: About 20 miles south of La Grande on I-84, take exit 283 and travel west on Wolf Creek Lane. The reservoir is 11.5 miles down this road.

Habitat and Birds: Mountain Lake with associated forest. Look for divers and dabblers like Bufflehead, Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Mallard, Cinnamon Teal, and many others. Grebes and loons may stop over here in migration and geese can visit here as well.

La Grande Reservoir [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 86 D-4 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 74 F-5
geographic coordinates 45°08'23.0"N 118°12'22.4"W
([45.139716](#), [-118.206232](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: From Interstate 84 eastbound, take exit 270 (Ladd Creek). There is no exit from the westbound side, nor is there a return to the freeway eastbound from this exit. One can exit from the freeway eastbound and return to the freeway westbound (toward La Grande). From the off-ramp, the pavement ends in less than 0.25 miles as the road becomes Forest Road 4300. Follow the 4300 road for about 5.6 miles past Ladd Canyon Pond, known locally as "the beaver pond," and to the junction with the 4305. This junction can be confusing because to stay on the 4300, one must make a hard left turn while to "turn" onto the 4305, one must continue straight ahead. Take the 4305 and follow it for about 14.7 miles. The road into the watershed and the reservoir, road 270, is on the south side of the 4305 and is gated. Road 4305 is closed about 200 feet beyond the 270. Even if the gate is open, it is closed to motor vehicles; the road is sometimes used by administrative personnel. Park here but do not block the gate. It is only a mile and a half or so to the reservoir as the gray jay flies but following the road on foot it is about 2.2 miles. The hike from the gate to the reservoir includes a total of 546 feet in elevation gain and 65 feet of descent for a net gain of 481 feet. The Reservoir gets regular, if not heavy, use by anglers during summer and the watershed overall gets a lot of use by hunters, both archers and rifle hunters so one should consider wearing blaze orange during hunting seasons.

Habitat and Birds: Lake with associated forest. Look for divers and dabblers like Bufflehead, Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Mallard, Cinnamon Teal, and many others. Grebes and loons may stop over here in migration and geese can visit here as well.

Shaw Reservoir [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 D-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 F-6
geographic coordinates 45°05'40.8"N 117°59'25.8"W
([45.094654](#), [-117.990494](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: About 15 miles south of La Grande on I-84, take exit 278 and go east for a short distance to Ladd Canyon-North Powder Road. Take this road south for a couple of miles to McCause Lane which goes over the freeway. Take McCause west for 1.8 miles to the entrance of Shaw Reservoir.

Habitat and Birds: Lake with associated forest. Look for divers and dabblers like Bufflehead, Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Mallard, Cinnamon Teal, and many others. Grebes and loons may stop over here in migration and geese can visit here as well.

SOUTHEAST UNION

Jimmy Creek Reservoir [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 D-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 F-6
geographic coordinates 45°04'46.6"N 117°53'39.8"W
([45.079610, -117.894397](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: From North Powder in southern Union County, take Hwy 237 (La Grande-Baker Hwy) for 2.25 miles to Jimmy Creek Road. Take Jimmy Creek Rd. for 1.5 miles and turn right onto the access road to the dam at Jimmy Creek Reservoir. Scope the lake from the dam.

Habitat and Birds: Look for divers and dabblers like Bufflehead, Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Mallard, Cinnamon Teal, and many others. Grebes and loons may stop over here in migration and geese can visit here as well.

Telocaset Lane [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 D-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 F-7
geographic coordinates 45°05'00.3"N 117°48'57.4"W
([45.083419, -117.815946](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: From Union, travel south on Hwy 237 for about 8 miles (check out the big pond at about 7 miles). Telocaset Lane goes 1.8 miles and then crosses the railroad tracks. Eventually it runs about 10 miles in a southeastern direction and ultimately hooks up with Hwy 203.

Habitat and Birds: Telocaset Lane goes through dry canyons, riparian strips, and farmland. Look for Chukar, Gray Partridge, Canyon Wren, and sage species. Rough-legged Hawks are common most winters. Wind farms

have been established in this area and it is unclear what that might mean to bird populations on Telocaset Lane. Don't miss a side trip to Reeves Mt Road (see below).

Reeves Mountain Road [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 D-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 F-7
geographic coordinates 45°03'35.4"N 117°47'11.5"W
([45.059841, -117.786516](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: From Union, travel south on Hwy 237 for about 8 miles (check out the big pond at about 7 miles). Telocaset Lane goes 1.8 miles and then crosses the railroad tracks. Take Telocaset 2.5 more miles and look for Reeves Mountain Road to the left. Take this road into the mountains for several miles. Check out the pond at [45.087757, -117.706289](#). It will hook up with the 2034 road (north of the pond [45.093960, -117.710876](#)) which will eventually end at Hwy 203. A forest service map is recommended for this area as there are many side roads and the main track can become somewhat confusing.

Habitat and Birds: Look for mountain species like grouse, Accipiters, Vaux's Swift, Rufous & Calliope Hummingbirds. Woodpeckers include Hairy, Northern Flicker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Downy, and Pileated. Red and White-breasted Nuthatches are common as are Mountain Chickadees and Brown Creeper. Flycatchers include Dusky, Hammond's, and "Western" (the distribution of Cordilleran and Pacific-slope Flycatcher is uncertain in Union County). Winter Wrens are here year round and Brown-headed Cowbirds can be found in summer. Western Tanagers, Hermit Thrush, Veery, Western & Mountain Bluebirds are all here. Gray Catbirds are possible in the riparian strips and Yellow-breasted Chats hide in the thickets. Listen for both Cassin's and Warbling Vireos. Warblers include Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Townsend's, and a possibility of American Redstart. Spotted Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco are here. Black-headed Grosbeaks and Evening Grosbeaks can be found along with Cassin's Finches and Lazuli Bunting. Watch for flocks of Pine Siskins and Red Crossbills.

Thief Valley Reservoir [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 D-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 F-7
geographic coordinates 45°01'32.7"N 117°47'19.7"W
([45.025749, -117.788809](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

[eBird Hotspot Checklist for Thief Valley Reservoir](#)

Location: To get to the developed east side of the reservoir, take Hwy 237 north out of North Powder for 4.5 miles. Turn right on Government Gulch Road and travel 2.4 miles to Telocaset Road. Turn right on Telocaset and travel 4.4 miles to Thief Valley Road. Turn right and travel 1.5 miles to the reservoir. Take Thief Valley Road around the reservoir and past the dam for as long as you choose. The west shore is in Baker County.

Habitat and Birds: Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Tundra Swan, Eurasian Wigeon, a dozen other duck species, grebes, Great Egret, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, Spotted Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, several species of gull, and a few other species might be found here.

North Powder Ponds [return to the top](#)

DeLorme (copyright 2001) Pg 87 D-5 DeLorme (copyright 2008) Pg 75 F-6
geographic coordinates 45°00'45.7"N 117°55'54.3"W
([45.012689](#), [-117.931740](#))

[View A Google Map](#)

Location: There are two ponds called North Powder Pond #1 and North Powder Pond #2. North Powder Pond #1 is technically in Baker County but we will address them both here. From North Powder (exit 285), go west on second street to the west side of the freeway. Take Hwy 30 south for 0.9 miles to an unmarked road on the right (west). Take this road to North Powder Pond #1. To find Pond #2, return to the freeway exit on Hwy 30 and take North Powder River Road west. Travel 4 miles on this road to a left hand turn (south) onto Ellis Road. The pond is just a half mile south on Ellis Road [44.995594](#), [-117.993076](#).

Habitat and Birds: These are small fishing ponds that have vegetation around them and some shoreline. Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Tundra Swan, Eurasian Wigeon, a dozen other duck species, grebes, Great Egret, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, Spotted Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, several species of gull, and a few others might be found here.