

High Peaks Birders

BIRDING ETIQUETTE

Birding has been called the most popular spectator sport in North America, which means more people watch birds than football. It's also a hobby that anyone can enjoy, from kids on up to great-grandparents. It can be done alone or in a group, in your back yard or some exotic locale. Birding is informative. It can be challenging. It is almost always a lot of fun. Lets keep the fun in birding for ourselves and the birds by agreeing to follow these simple guidelines.

Respect The Birds

In order to find most birds you will be encroaching on their territory. Be careful not to harm the birds by causing undue stress or changing their behavior. Normal interaction such as walking by a bird, even one you do not see, will usually startle the bird and it will fly away. Although this is unavoidable, it is clear our presence has changed its behavior. Here are some suggestions to limit the birder's impact.

- Whenever possible walk around a bird you see perched nearby, or wait for it to fly off on its own.
- Do not disturb birds with excessive activity or loud talking. This is especially important around nest sites.
- Be mindful of excessive use of playback systems, especially during nesting season. The long range impact of these devices on bird behavior is unknown. To offer the birds an abundance of caution, consider playing bird songs on low volume so the birder can hear it, but not loud enough to disturb the birds.

Respect The Humans

Birding is more than a spectator sport. It is an active engagement with wildlife and an opportunity to be one with nature. To help enjoy each moment as it unfolds, here are a few more guidelines you may find useful.

- Be aware of other birders around you. Excessive or loud talking can diminish the quality of their experience.
- Be aware of skill levels if you are in a group. Ask questions to birders with more experience. Offer help to birders with less experience.
- Respect the rights and needs of private property owners. Ask permission to be in certain areas when appropriate.