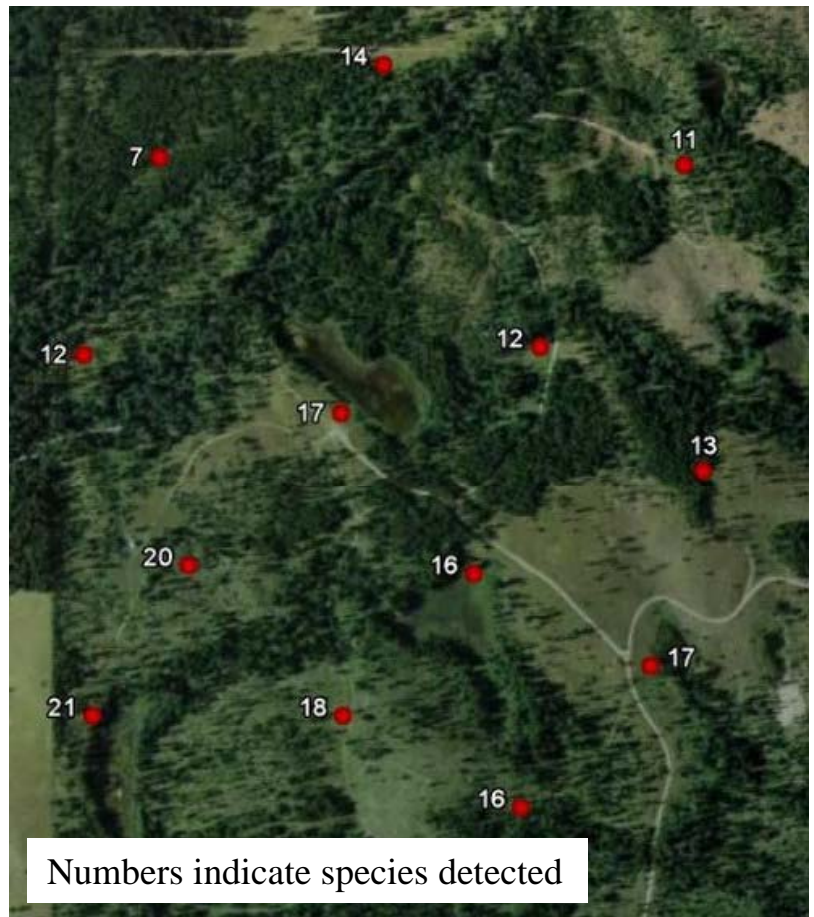


Bird Survey at MPG North K. Stone

On Saturday, June 26, I counted birds at 13 points that encompassed the range of habitats present at MPG North. I detected 44 species. The map below shows the spatial arrangement of the sample points. The numbers next to each point represents the number of different bird species detected. Species richness at one point was 21 species.



Species list for Condon 6/26/10 (44 species):

<u>Hawkers</u>	<u>Songbirds</u>	Red crossbill
Common nighthawk*	American redstart	Red-breasted nuthatch
Rufous hummingbird	American robin	Red-eyed vireo
Tree swallow	Black-capped chickadee	Ruby-crowned kinglet
Violet-green swallow	Cassin's vireo	Song sparrow
White-throated swift	Chipping sparrow	Swainson's thrush
	Common yellowthroat	Warbling vireo
<u>Water birds</u>	Dark-eyed junco	Western tanager
Bufflehead (with 5 young)	Dusky flycatcher	Yellow-rumped warbler
Ring-necked duck	Evening grosbeak	
Sora	Golden-crowned kinglet	<u>Others</u>
	Hammond's flycatcher	Brewer's blackbird
<u>Corvids</u>	MacGillivray's warbler	Brown-headed cowbird
American Crow	Mountain chickadee	Downy woodpecker
Black-billed magpie*	Olive-sided flycatcher	Red-winged blackbird
Common Raven	Orange-crowned warbler	Red-naped sapsucker*
Stellar's jay*	Pine siskin	Hairy woodpecker
		Turkey vulture*

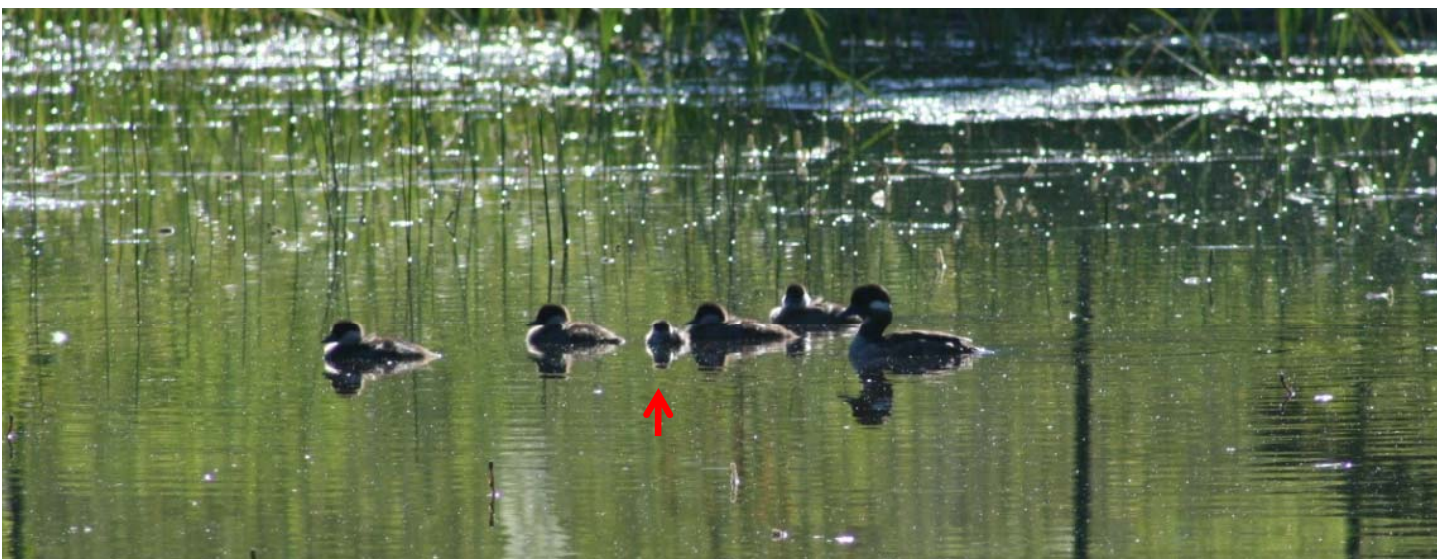
*incidental birds not detected on point count

Observations: This survey was the first time I ever detected 3 vireo species at one location—the Cassin’s, warbling, and red-eyed vireos. Red-eyed vireos, a species of concern in Montana, were particularly abundant. They were found exclusively in areas with deciduous tree cover, and seemed to like both birch and cottonwood for foraging and singing.

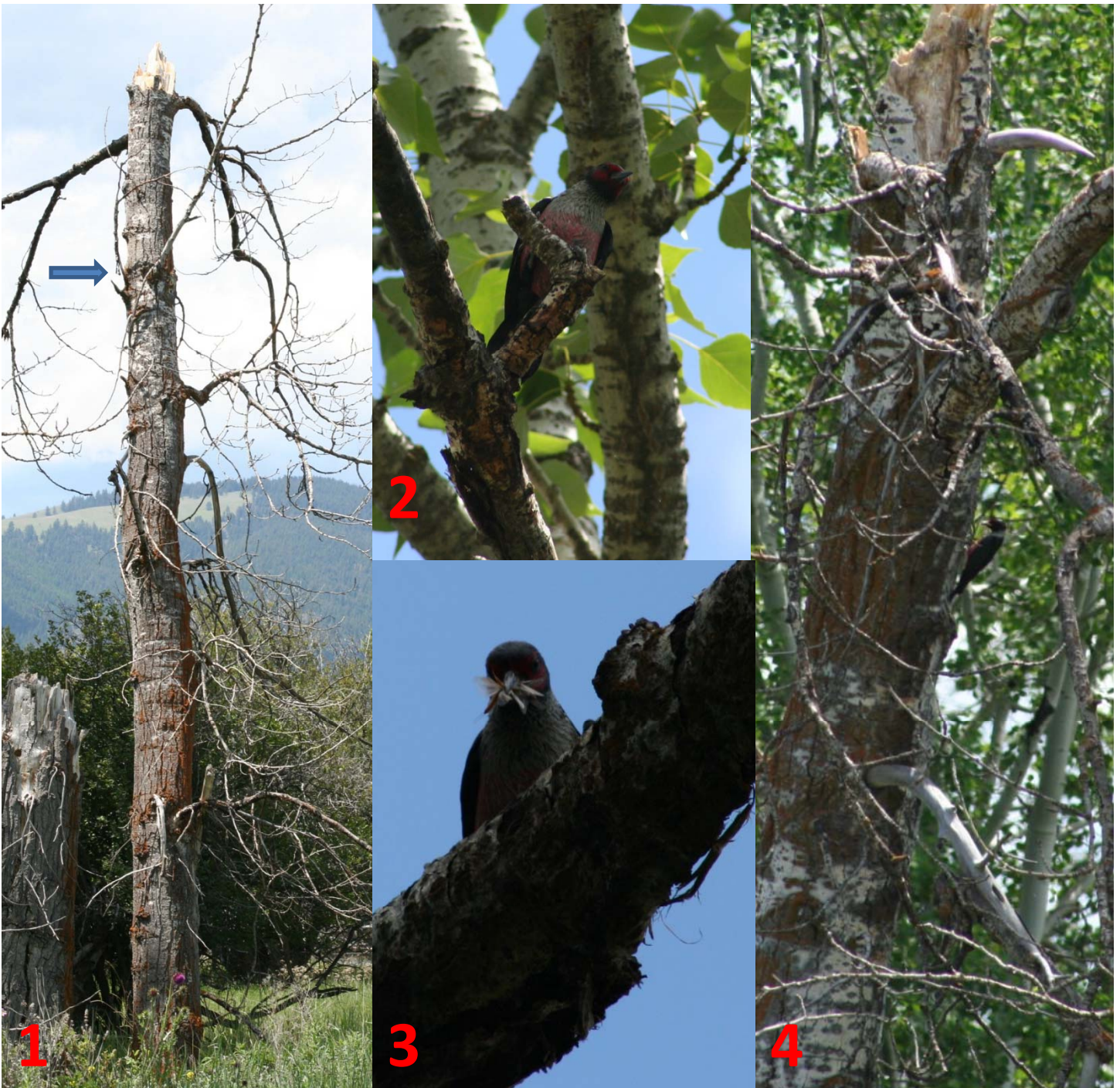
The other surprising detection was the white-throated swift; I picked up a single swift at two points. White-throated swifts nest on cliffs, so this swift (and maybe others) probably flies down from the mountains to forage in buggy lowlands.

The volume of the water rushing down the creek limited the detection range of counts near Cooney Creek.

A cassin’s vireo
singing from high up
in a lodgepole pine



A pair of Lewis's woodpeckers have an active nest in a cottonwood snag southwest of the Clubhouse (1). Lewis's woodpeckers are unable to excavate their own cavity, so they often use the old cavities of other woodpeckers, like the northern flicker. There are at least 2 nestlings keeping the parents busy bringing insects to this nest. Adults will perch in a tree looking for flying insects (2), and then begin fly-catching when they see a potential prey item. These adults were observed repeatedly smashing large prey like dragonflies against a tree branch (3) before taking the pieces to the nest (4).





This chipping sparrow nest was found 6/20/2010 in a foot off the ground in a sagebrush on a ridge south of the Woodchuck drainage. The eggs were a sky blue with black speckles at one end. Chipping sparrows nest for 9 to 15 days.



Many trees in the Bitterroot were hit hard by last October's hard freeze. One of the nonnative trees that seemed to suffer the most was the black locust, a native to the Southeast but widely planted in the West as a shelterbelt tree, for fenceposts, and as a honey tree. The local black locusts just leafed out in early June, much later than other deciduous tree species. The two large black locusts on the MPG Ranch began flowering this week, attracting numerous insects as well as the birds that feed on them. The black locusts were filled with Bullock's orioles, cedar waxwings, and even a western wood-pewee (not pictured).

Long billed curlew
chick above the top
house.



Say's Phoebe chicks from the second clutch at the Top House.

