

**City of Rocks National Reserve
And Castle Rocks State Park
May 14, 2015 to May 18, 2015.**

Judy Waring & Janet Callen



Ready to Climb a Sand Dune

We traveled 1416 miles, from approximately 700 feet elevation on Highway 95 at Lewiston, to 8700 feet elevation at Galena Summit on Highway 75 to Stanley. We followed the Salmon River, the Snake River, the headwaters of the Salmon, then the Bitterroot and the Clark Fork. From Skoocumchuk rest stop on the Salmon, where we saw a Bullocks Oriole and heard a Canyon Wren among several other birds, the fun continued. From Boise we visited Bruneau Dunes State Park, took a 1.3 mile hike around the lake, and climbed sand dunes. Highlight was a Lewis's Woodpecker. We then went onward to Three Island State Park and its

very interesting history and then to impressive Malad Gorge. We traveled Thousand Springs Scenic Highway where we spotted both a Caspian and Forster's Tern. We continued south on highway 77 to mile marker 1 at Almo, ID in early evening. We gathered for a dinner at the Lodge in Castle Rock State Park, where we were joined by our guide for the next day, Wallace Keck.

Unfortunately, the next day dawned rainy and stayed that way all day, but we made the most of it, totaling 50 bird species. Life lists expanded under the enthusiastic guidance of Wallace, former Coeur d' Alene Audubon member.

From here we headed north, stopping at Minidoka National Historic Site for a sobering look at the WWII Japanese internment camp site. Continuing north along the Sawtooth Scenic Byway we made a quick stop at Magic Reservoir, turning up a Common Loon. Then up and over Galena Summit at 8700 feet and into Ketchum for lunch followed by a short visit to Ernest Hemingway's grave. We traveled the Salmon River Scenic Byway on to Challis Hot Springs for the final night of our tour. It was all we hoped for and more—two natural hot springs, beautiful mountain scenery and more birds. Aside from the rain in City of Rocks, the trip was a success and a lot of fun. Total species identified were 117. Thanks to Lisa for keeping the list. Thanks

to Ronn and Roberta Rich for the good Mexican restaurant in Ketchum and the idea of Challis Hot Springs for our last night. The wonderful photos are courtesy of Darlene Carlton.

"It was a great, multi-faceted trip, with superb and varied landscapes and perspectives on the geology, history and ecology of parts of Idaho..." ..."the Loggerhead Shrike...my favorite bird."

Lisa Hardy

"I never imagined seeing Dunes, Rock, Rivers, Gorges and Hot Springs all in one trip I saw 71 species and added 13 to my life list." Vera Taggart

"I enjoyed the birding and the opportunity to know all of you a bit better," Linda Chilcraft

Other travelers were Midge and Jim Brennan, Cathy Mohns, and Sally Jones

PS: Janet's favorite birds: 5 young Barn Owls



A CHUKAR AT CHALLIS



A BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAIN