



Klamath Network Featured Creature

September 2008

Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*)

General Description:

The Northern Waterthrush is not a thrush but a small, ground-dwelling warbler that is frequently found near water. Adults are ~5-6 inches (12.7-15.2 cm) in length and weigh ~14-24 grams (.5-.8 ounces). They have a brown back, whitish undersides with dark stripes, and a yellowish or whitish eye stripe.

Habitat:

This species can be found in and around water including slow-moving streams, ponds, swamps, and bogs. During the breeding season in Oregon, this species is often found in riparian areas containing 5-8 ft (1.5-2.4 m) tall willows with some sparse alder. During the migration period, they can be found in a variety of forested habitats but there is usually water nearby.

Reproduction and Development:

Breeding can begin as early as May and end as late as August. The female constructs an open cup nest made of moss, leaves, pine needles, bark, and plant materials. The nest can be found in small hollows, cavities of snags or fallen logs, or among the roots of upturned trees. Clutch size ranges from 1-5 eggs which are incubated by the female and hatch in about 4-5 days. Both parents care for the young, which leave the nest approximately 10 days after hatching.

Cool Facts:

The Northern Waterthrush is territorial in both winter and summer. During the summer, the bird can be heard singing a [loud, ringing song](#) to announce its breeding territory. In the winter, the Northern Waterthrush will use a “chink” call along with aggressive behavior to defend its wintering territory.



Behavior and Feeding:

As it walks along the water's edge, the Northern Waterthrush appears to teeter while bobbing its tail as it feeds on a variety of insects and even such foods as snails, crustaceans, and small fish gleaned from the ground and shallow waters.

Where to see it in the Klamath Parks:

As part of the joint effort between the Klamath Network, Oregon Caves National Monument, and the Klamath Bird Observatory, this species was documented for the first time at Oregon Caves NM using mist nets as part of a long-term landbird monitoring project on September 10, 2008! In addition, this species is listed in NPSpecies as “probably occurring” at Lassen Volcanic National Park.

Distribution:

During the breeding season, the Northern Waterthrush can be found in a belt stretching from north central Alaska, east across all of the Canadian provinces and into the northeastern portion of the United States. They can also be found in some of the higher altitudes of the northern Rockies and Appalachian Mountains. As a Neotropical migrant, this species can be found spending the winter season in the tropical mangroves of Central and South America, on the islands of the Caribbean, and in Mexico. What a life!

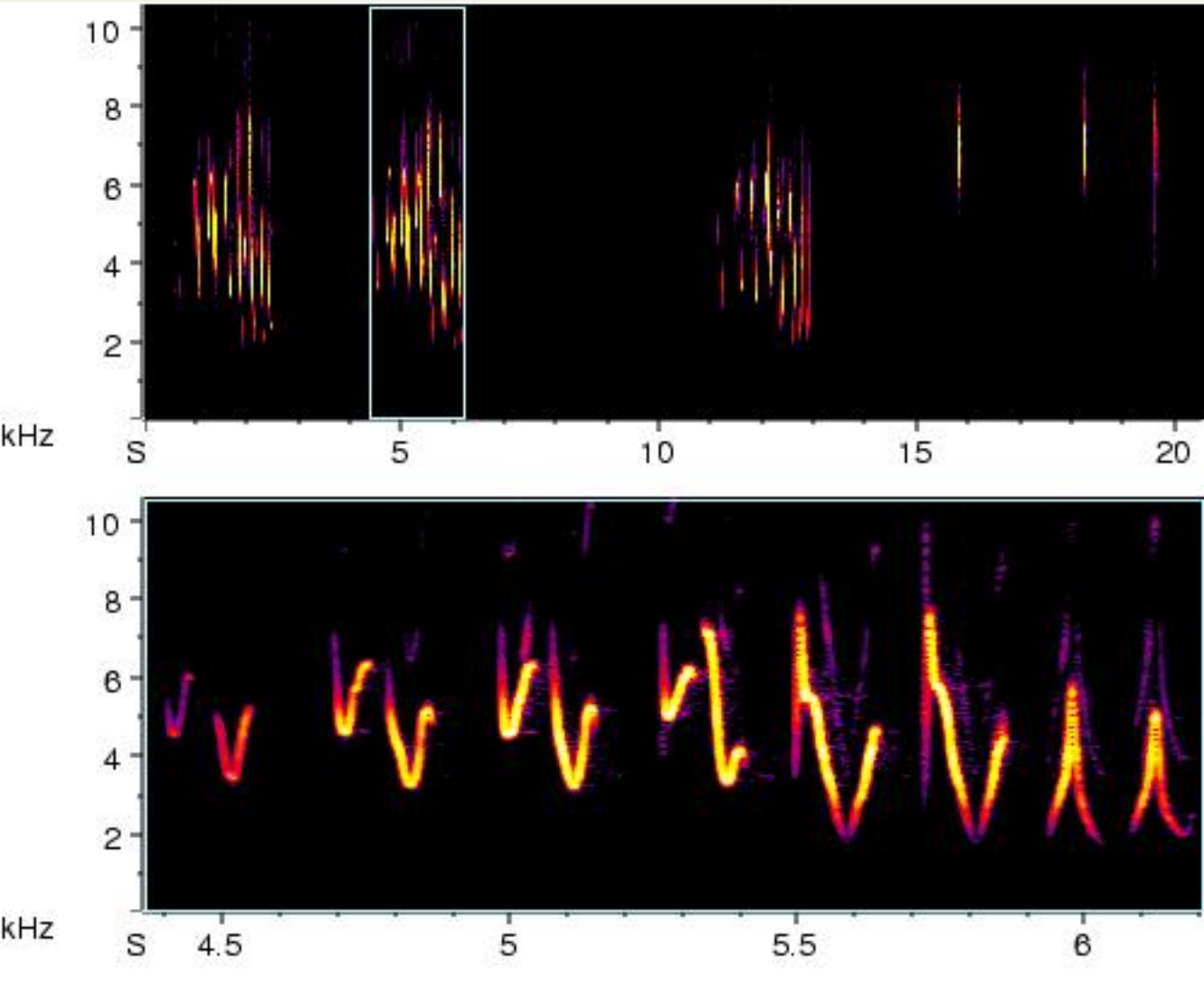
More Information:

http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/Northern_Waterthrush.html

<http://www.wbu.com/chipperwoods/photos/nowaterthrush.htm>

Marshall, D. B., M. G. Hunter, and A. L. Contreras (Editors). 2003. Birds of Oregon: A general reference. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis, OR.

Northern Waterthrush



song
Recordist: Gregory F. Budney, William W. H. Gunn
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