

Weather Watch

Cave Junction

Thursday, December 22	37% Chance of Rain	High -- 47	Low -- 41
Friday, December 23	53% Chance of Rain	High -- 53	Low -- 44
Saturday, December 24	57% Chance of Rain	High -- 56	Low -- 44
Sunday, December 25	33% Chance of Rain	High -- 58	Low -- 44
Monday, December 26	58% Chance of Rain	High -- 56	Low -- 45
Tuesday, December 27	58% Chance of Rain	High -- 53	Low -- 45
Wednesday, December 28	58% Chance of Rain	High -- 51	Low -- 43

Following are the high & low temperatures, and rainfall recorded in Selma by Chris Granville

Dec.	High	Low	Rain
10	44	40	2.33
11	43	37	.23
12	40	34	.06
13	38	31	0
14	39	36	0
15	40	31	0
16	37	29	0

Year To Date Rain: 10.82
drought meter lowered to unusually dry



TRY ROSIE'S PIZZA TODAY

458-212-0444

OPEN Friday - Monday

At Chevron in CJ 11 AM - 7 PM

Closed Tuesday - Thursday

Crawlies with Cri: by Christy Solo



(Photos by Christy Solo for the Illinois Valley News)

Black-headed grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*)

On Dec. 7 the Intermountain Bird Observatory at Boise State introduced a world record-breaking black-headed grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*). So this week seems like the perfect time to learn more about these beautiful Southern Oregon birds.

First, what record did IBO's bird (pictured left) break? At 15 years old, he's the oldest known black-headed grosbeak ever. He broke the previous record of 11 years and 11 months, set by another banded male in Montana, by several years.

How do they know? He was first banded at IBO as a one-year-old in 2008 and that little metal leg band held up well enough that bird banders could read his unique number in 2022 to

verify he is, well, him, and quite the old fellow.

Based on black-headed grosbeaks' wintering range, the 15-year-old grosbeak traveled a minimum of 2,000 miles each year going to and from his winter and summer ranges. Over 15 years it's estimated he traveled at least 30,000 miles and could have easily reached 45,000 miles depending on where he spends the winter. One tough bird.

Black-headed grosbeaks live throughout western North America, with the heaviest populations along the Cascades and the Sierras. There's a good chance you've seen one, with their bold orange and yellow coloring they're hard to miss as they flock to the treetops in our area in spring and summer.

Females and juveniles of both sexes have less bold coloring, but make up for that by being adorable (see photos).

Females do most of the nest building, including

picking the nest site, which is generally about 25 feet up a deciduous tree in a well-camouflaged spot. After the nest is done, both females and males share equally in sitting on eggs and then feeding/raising the young.

While you might assume grosbeaks' beaks are made for seed cracking, most of their spring and summer diet consists of various arthropods including beetles, spiders and even monarch butterflies. They also are adept at cracking open snail shells and dining on some escargot. Black-headed grosbeaks are apparently immune to the milkweed toxins concentrated in monarch bodies and are among the only birds who can eat the pretty flitters.

They are excellent at shucking sunflower seeds also, so you can woo them to your yard with seed feeders. They love all types of seed and eat lots of seeds and suet during mating season.

Their young fledge around the time blackberries

ripen and both adults and juveniles love a good berry. Along with blackberries they favor chokecherries, elderberries and Oregon grape.

Black-headed grosbeaks breed in areas with a lot of plant diversity and ready access to water. They don't like monotonous stretches of unbroken dry chaparral, desert, grassland or dense coniferous forests. Their ideal habitat is a nice mix of large trees and dense understory.

Black-headed grosbeak will start arriving back in our area around the first of May and will be around through August and sometimes even into September. If your yard isn't in one of their favored habitats, head out to any riparian area in one of our many local parks or forests and listen for their distinct call - heard here: https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Black-headed_Grosbeak/sounds - and then check the trees for that flash of bright orange.

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Thank You Illinois Valley

for your support of our 2022 Holiday Event!

Pam & Tim Lenhart

CHEVRON Oregon Caves Chevron, Yeti's Ice Cream & Treats, Oregon Caves National Monument & Preserve, Illinois Valley Fire District, IV Yea!, WaFd Bank, Illinois Valley News, IVCanDo & all of the Illinois Valley elves who donated, wrapped gifts, & stood in the rain... all for the kids!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

