

Western Meadowlark: Beautiful and nice singer, too

BY BRUCE MCCAMMON

Spring brings increased numbers of Western Meadowlarks to our sage-steppe foothills and plateaus.

These birds are about the size of a robin and have a bright yellow breast with a black V neck line. Their sides are spotted and they sport a visible eyebrow and eyering.

Their sharp pointed bill is often used to dig holes or pry open tree bark to expose insects.

In addition to its spectacular looks, the Western Meadowlark has a beautiful

song. Their song carries long distances and it often sounds much closer than the bird actually is. You'll likely hear them before you see them sitting near the top of shrubs or sagebrush.

Western Meadowlark occur in all western and central states



Bruce McCammon is retired, color-blind and enjoys photographing the birds in north central Washington.



of the United States. They are commonly seen in north central Washington and have been designated as the "State Bird" for six states.

This photo was taken on the steep climb up the Rock Island

Grade in April 2017.

Watch for them as you hike or ride through our vast shrub-steppe foothills. Listen for their call and then search the tops of the low vegetation to find them.

You probably won't be able to

get too close to one but their physical beauty and wonderful song will make for a great memory.

A set of binoculars will really help you appreciate this bird's beauty.