

ARIZONA: BIRDING THE BORDER II

May 18, 2012 to May 27, 2012

Dave Stejskal

It was another terrific survey tour to the birdiest spots in beautiful Southeast Arizona, but we could have done without that annoying wind during the last half of the tour! I've never had four days straight of howling wind like that on this tour before, but, somehow, we managed to do just great with the birds during our ten days together, and had some fun along the way.

The trip started out great with a first afternoon on Mt. Lemmon just north of Tucson, and then a productive morning in some Tucson lowland hotspots. Red-faced Warbler and Zone-tailed Hawk up high on the first afternoon, Harris's Hawk & Tropical Kingbirds at Sweetwater Wetlands in town, and then cooperative Gilded Flickers in the Tucson Mountains all had us feeling pretty good before we left town. A quick stop at Willcox gave us our first taste of the wind that was to come, but seeing those breeding-plumaged American Avocets and Wilson's Phalaropes, along with surprise rarities like White-rumped and Stilt sandpipers, made us forget the wind for a while.

Then it was on to the lofty Chiricahuas, just starting to recover from the devastating Horseshoe II fire of last summer. Though the habitats up high were patchy, they were still productive and gave us memorable looks of Mexican Chickadee, Olive Warbler, and many others. At the lower elevations, in the lush and mostly unburned Cave Creek Canyon, we thrilled at point-blank Elegant Trogon, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Montezuma Quail, Painted Redstart, and countless others. The dry habitats outside the canyons yielded surprise Baltimore & Orchard orioles, along with Greater Roadrunner, Crissal Thrasher, Juniper Titmouse, Black-chinned Sparrow, and others. And it was in the Chiricahuas where we really started our owling in earnest. Our evenings out together produced great views of Elf, Whiskered and Western screech-owls, Common Poorwill, and Mexican Whip-poor-will. We enjoyed scope views of cooperative Northern Pygmy-Owl during the day to round out our nightbirds during our stay here.

The Huachucas, also just recovering from a major fire last summer, were more of a challenge for us. It was here that our confrontation with the wind started. But, despite the howling wind, we did just great! Greater Pewee and Buff-breasted Flycatcher up high in Carr Canyon showed themselves nicely for the group, as did a sleepy, day-roosting Spotted Owl in Miller Canyon - we're lucky it was hanging out so low in the canyon! And a detour on our way to the Huachucas from the Chiricahuas via Willcox brought us great views of a surprise lifer for a few of us in the group - Arizona's 6th ever Hudsonian Godwit!

Continuing west through the Sonoita Grasslands and Patagonia, along lush Sonoita Creek, our good fortune continued with wonderful first-time views of Gray Hawk & Thick-billed Kingbird, while a vigil at the Paton's feeders in Patagonia yielded views of a striking Violet-crowned Hummingbird. Another morning in the area gave us a relatively easy Five-striped Sparrow without a hike in the heat! What a break we got! And while working our way northward to Tucson on the last day, we found what was arguably the bird of the trip - a surprise Plain-capped Starthroat!

What a fantastic way to finish up a great trip!



The lone member of the tropical Trogon family to occur regularly in the US, the beautiful Elegant Trogon is understandably high on the target list for most birders visiting Arizona for the first time. (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

Thanks to each of you for joining me on this birding adventure to my home state - it's a region of the world that I really love, as you could probably tell. You all were terrific in enduring the howling wind during the last half of the tour, but I guess that's easier to do when you're seeing wonderful birds in a beautiful setting. Have a wonderful summer at home or wherever you find yourself and I hope to see each of you again on another birding tour someplace new!

--Dave

For more information about this tour, including future departures, visit our website at www.fieldguides.com. And to see this same triplist online, go to <http://www.fieldguides.com/triplists/arz12bLIST.pdf> and you will find the list in its entirety.

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – We saw good numbers of this tropical duck species in the flooded fields north of Nogales.

GADWALL (*Anas strepera*) – A late pair at Willcox. Except for the Mallards, Cinnamon Teal, Ruddy Ducks, and Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, all of the other ducks that we saw were late, lingering spring migrants. [b]

MALLARD (NORTHERN) (*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*)

MALLARD (MEXICAN) (*Anas platyrhynchos diazi*) – This form, which looks quite a bit like a female Mallard, might actually be more closely related to the Mottled Duck than to the Mallard. Some of the birds that we saw, like the bird at Rio Rico, had some "northern" Mallard blood in them.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) [b]

CINNAMON TEAL (*Anas cyanoptera*) [b]

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Anas clypeata*) [b]

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (*Anas crecca*) [b]

LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*) [b]

RUDDY DUCK (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – That bill color on the adult males is really something!

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

SCALED QUAIL (*Callipepla squamata*) – This distinctive quail usually occupies grassier, more desolate habitats than the next species.

GAMBEL'S QUAIL (*Callipepla gambelii*) – One of the most characteristic species of the Sonoran Desert. Those babies sure were cute! [N]

MONTEZUMA QUAIL (*Cyrtonyx montezumae*) – YESSSSS!!!! We put our morning plans on hold in the Chiricahuas until we were all able to get a look at this gorgeous quail with an incredibly complex plumage pattern. This one is usually one of the 'most wanted' birds for anyone traveling to Arizona and we were all lucky to get the looks that we did!

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

WILD TURKEY (*Meleagris gallopavo*) – These re-introduced birds seem to be doing quite well in s.e. Arizona. [I]

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – At least three of these tropical grebes made an appearance for us at Peña Blanca Lake west of Nogales. This species has only very recently invaded this lake, nesting successfully for the past



Zone-tailed Hawks can be easy to overlook given their resemblance to Turkey Vultures in flight, but when they get this close, there's no mistaking them! (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

couple of years there.

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*)

EARED GREBE (*Podiceps nigricollis*) – A single subadult at Whitewater Draw was a surprise there. [b]

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – A few non-breeding birds out on Patagonia Lake. [b]

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) – This one was a bit of a surprise at Patagonia Lake. [b]

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – Nesting along Sonoita Creek again this year. [N]

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) [b]

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*)

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) [b]

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*) – We had a few small flocks of this one, up until the final day of the tour. [b]

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – Patagonia is about as far east as this species regularly gets in Arizona.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*)

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

HARRIS'S HAWK (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) – A single adult on our first morning at Sweetwater Wetlands was all that we found this year.

GRAY HAWK (*Buteo nitidus*) – Great looks at this tropical raptor along Sonoita Creek. It was also nesting in California Gulch and in Madera Canyon this year. [N]

SWAINSON'S HAWK (*Buteo swainsoni*) – This gorgeous raptor of open country was seen well a few times out in the mesquite-grassland habitat south and east of Tucson.

ZONE-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo albonotatus*) – We enjoyed some unbelievable looks at this tropical species on this tour - more than we usually get.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – Not very common at this season in s.e. Arizona.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – On our first morning at Sweetwater Wetlands in Tucson. The birds in the New World were recently split from the Old World birds (theirs is still the Common Moorhen).

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*)

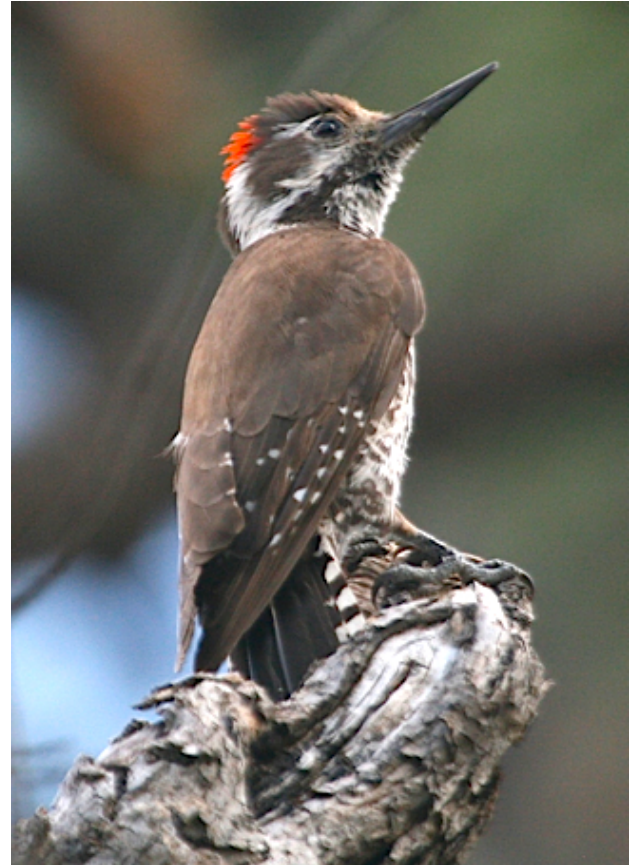
Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SNOWY PLOVER (*Charadrius nivosus*) – We had to go back for this one since we were so close! This species actually nested here at Willcox in the past. This one was our 16th species of shorebird on this tour, which is pretty darned good for Arizona in late May! [b]

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – Our bird on Day 2 at Willcox was a little on the late side for a migrant here. [b]

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*)

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)



*The recent fires in southeast Arizona have created lots of good habitat for Arizona Woodpeckers to forage in, and their numbers have increased locally as a consequence.
(Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)*

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – This and the next are two of the most striking and distinctive of the many shorebirds in western N. America.

AMERICAN AVOCET (*Recurvirostra americana*) – A few of these birds appeared to be on nests at Willcox. [N]

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) [b]

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – One on our first visit to Willcox. [b]

LONG-BILLED CURLEW (*Numenius americanus*) – Two birds at Willcox on Day 2. [b]

HUDSONIAN GODWIT (*Limosa haemastica*) – WOWW!!!
We got word of this one on the day we traveled from the Chiricahuas to Sierra Vista, so our timing was perfect to see this sixth record for Arizona. [b]

MARbled GODWIT (*Limosa fedoa*) – It was great to have this one side-by-side with the above Hudsonian so that we could compare the plumage of the two. [b]

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER (*Calidris fuscicollis*) –
Another exceedingly rare shorebird species in Arizona, these two birds at Willcox established about the 15th record ever for the state. [b]

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER (*Calidris bairdii*) – One of these was seen at Willcox on both of our visits there. It's a much more common fall migrant here than it is in the spring. [b]

STILT SANDPIPER (*Calidris himantopus*) – Yet another spring rarity in Arizona, a pair of adults gave us pretty good looks in the wind at Willcox on Day 2. [b]

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) [b]

WILSON'S PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus tricolor*) – We saw several fancy females on our first Willcox visit (remember, the females are the pretty ones in phalaropes). [b]

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus lobatus*) – A couple of these were seen well in comparison with the above Wilson's at Willcox. Another rare spring migrant here, being much more common in fall. [b]

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

FRANKLIN'S GULL (*Leucophaeus pipixcan*) – Our second visit to Willcox got us some nice looks at a slightly pink adult bird in full breeding plumage. [b]

RING-BILLED GULL (*Larus delawarensis*) – Almost always the most common gull anywhere in Arizona. [b]

CALIFORNIA GULL (*Larus californicus*) – Three or four of these at Willcox were moving through with the Ring-billed Gulls. [b]

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [I]

BAND-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – We ended up with some nice looks at this big pigeon at Portal.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*) [I]

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*)

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*)

INCA DOVE (*Columbina inca*) – The only birds we had were in downtown Portal, where it's quite rare. This bird has dropped in numbers in the state in a very dramatic fashion in the past decade.

COMMON GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina passerina*)

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

GREATER ROADRUNNER (*Geococcyx californianus*) – Always a treat to see, but there's never a reliable spot to show this one to folks.

Strigidae (Owls)

FLAMMULATED OWL (*Otus flammeolus*) – We heard it quite close initially, then it never again moved. Darn it! [*]



The lovely Broad-billed Hummingbird is especially common around the Patagonia area. (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

WESTERN SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops kennicottii*) – We had to peer through a lot of limbs in that juniper tree, but it eventually showed itself nicely to all near Portal. This one generally occurs at lower elevations than the next species.

WHISKERED SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops trichopsis*) – This was our nice consolation prize on the night when the Flammulated Owl wouldn't cooperate. The distinctive voice and that green bill help separate this bird from the very similar Western Screech-Owl.

GREAT HORNED OWL (*Bubo virginianus*) – Great views of an adult and a youngster in the willows at Sweetwater Wetlands in Tucson on our first full morning of the trip.

NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium gnoma*) – It took some patience, but we eventually got into a position where we could see this calling bird in the Chiricahuas. Some authors would split this form (the nominate subspecies *G.g. gnoma*) from the others, calling it the Mountain Pygmy-Owl.

ELF OWL (*Micrathene whitneyi*) – This one gave us the run-around for a time near Portal in the Chiricahuas, but we eventually got smashing views of this, the smallest owl in the world!

SPOTTED OWL (*Strix occidentalis*) – For those who ventured up the trail in Miler Canyon, we enjoyed point-blank views of this stately owl perched right next to the trail. This race, called the Mexican Spotted Owl, isn't in nearly the trouble that the two races on the West Coast are.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

LESSER NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – Seen on the first day, and on the last, but never very well, unfortunately.

COMMON POORWILL (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*) – After a lot of work outside the van along the road, we ended up seeing it incredibly well in front of the van in the headlights as we headed back toward Portal.

MEXICAN WHIP-POOR-WILL (*Caprimulgus arizonae arizonae*) – We had unparalleled views of this recently split species high in the Chiricahuas on our first night there. Fantastic!

Apodidae (Swifts)

WHITE-THROATED SWIFT (*Aeronautes saxatalis*) – This is the only swift that's known to nest in the state.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD (*Eugenes fulgens*) – Some of our head-on looks at males at the feeders were, well, magnificent!

PLAIN-CAPPED STARThROAT (*Helimaster constantii*) – WOWWWWW!!!! What a great way to finish up this wonderful tour! Although we dipped on our initial quarry, the Black-capped Gnatcatcher, we discovered this vagrant from Mexico as we explored another part of this isolated canyon. Only about the 20th record for the U.S., this bird is still being seen by other birders into the 2nd week of June!

BLUE-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Lampornis clemenciae*) – The male in Miller Canyon in the Huachucas gave us all the best looks of all.

BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus alexandri*) – The most common and widespread hummer on the entire trip.

ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD (*Calypte anna*) – It's difficult to find this one away from the Tucson area at this season, but we had a few near Patagonia and at Rock Corral Spring.

COSTA'S HUMMINGBIRD (*Calypte costae*) – The subadult male checking out the red pen in my shirt pocket at Rock Corral Spring was a real kick!

BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus platycercus*) – One of the most common hummers at the Miller canyon feeders.

BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD (*Cynanthus latirostris*) – Especially common in the Patagonia/Nogales areas.

VIOLET-CROWNED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia violiceps*) – Great looks at this scarce Mexican species at the feeders in Patagonia!



It may not be the flashiest of hummingbirds, but the Plain-capped Starthroat certainly was one of the biggest finds of the trip. The one we found on our last day in the field was only about the 20th record for the US! (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

Trogonidae (Trogons)

ELEGANT TROGON (*Trogon elegans*) – We really couldn't have asked for better looks at this gaudy species along the road to South Fork in the Chiricahuas. One of the most coveted species in s.e Arizona, this bird performed admirably.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

ACORN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes formicivorus*)

GILA WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes uropygialis*) – The most common and widespread of the lowland woodpeckers in this region of Arizona.

LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER (*Picoides scalaris*) [N]

HAIRY WOODPECKER (*Picoides villosus*)

ARIZONA WOODPECKER (*Picoides arizonae*) – This has been a very good year for this species in the mountains of s.e. Arizona, but this increase is probably due to the fact that there are more recently burned areas along our route, which woodpeckers love to forage in.

NORTHERN FLICKER (RED-SHAFTED) (*Colaptes auratus cafer*)

GILDED FLICKER (*Colaptes chrysoides*) – We found this desert specialty straightaway on the western edge of Tucson on Day 2.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

NORTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANNULET (*Camptostoma imberbe*) – This mostly tropical species just barely gets into the extreme s. U.S.

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER (*Contopus cooperi*) – Still headed north. [b]

GREATER PEWEE (*Contopus pertinax*) – Deb spotted this one up in Carr Canyon, giving all in the group some great views of this mostly tropical species.

WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE (*Contopus sordidulus*)

WILLOW FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax traillii*) – One of these nondescript migrants made an appearance at Peña Blanca Lake near the end of the tour. Willow Flycatcher migrates a little later through Arizona than other migrant Empidonax. [b]

PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax difficilis*) – We ran into a bunch of these migrant flycatchers at the end of the tour. Indistinguishable from the Cordilleran Flycatcher, except by voice. [b]

CORDILLERAN FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax occidentalis*) – This one had just returned from the wintering grounds in W. Mexico.

BUFF-BREASTED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax fulvifrons*) – It was tough in the wind, but we all got great looks at this distinctive little flycatcher in Carr Canyon.

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*)

SAY'S PHOEBE (*Sayornis saya*) [N]

VERMILION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) – Especially common in the Patagonia/Nogales area.

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – The diminutive member of the trio of *Myiarchus* that breed here. The old name for this bird was the Olivaceous Flycatcher.

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus cinerascens*)

BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) – The largest of the *Myiarchus*, and our bird was a member of the largest race.

SULPHUR-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*) – A very nice bird to see so well early in the tour in the Chiricahuas. Just back from the wintering grounds in w. South America.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – This is a species that is enjoying a range expansion in the state. The birds we saw in Tucson weren't there just a few short years ago.

CASSIN'S KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus vociferans*) – According to my records for this tour, this was the most widespread of our four species of kingbirds.

THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus crassirostris*) – We had a fantastic encounter along Sonoita Creek on our way over to Patagonia Lake. A very local bird in Arizona.

WESTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus verticalis*)

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*Lanius ludovicianus*) – Only one this year along State Line Rd.

Vireonidae (Vireos)

BELL'S VIREO (*Vireo bellii*) – We didn't run into this bird until we got to the Patagonia area.

PLUMBEOUS VIREO (*Vireo plumbeus*) – The nest we found high in the Huachucas sure wasn't hidden from view very well! [N]

CASSIN'S VIREO (*Vireo cassinii*) – This late migrant was a nice surprise high in the Chiricahuas. [b]

HUTTON'S VIREO (*Vireo huttoni*) – A Ruby-crowned Kinglet look-alike.

WARBLING VIREO (*Vireo gilvus*) – Recorded every day, but most were migrants.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

STELLER'S JAY (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) – This is the jay that occurs at the highest elevations in s.e. Arizona.

WESTERN SCRUB-JAY (*Aphelocoma californica*) – Our race here, *A.c. woodhouseii*, is likely to be split from the birds of the West Coast sometime soon.

MEXICAN JAY (*Aphelocoma wollweberi*) – Formerly known as the Gray-breasted Jay.

CHIHUAHUAN RAVEN (*Corvus cryptoleucus*) – A notably smaller and slimmer bird than Common Raven, with a much faster wingbeat. [N]

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*)

Alaudidae (Larks)

HORNED LARK (*Eremophila alpestris*)

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW

(*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta thalassina*) – Here in s.e. Arizona, it breeds in the mountains only.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*)

CLIFF SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) – Those birds we saw at our hotel in Sierra Vista were the dark-foreheaded race *P. p. melanogaster*.

Paridae (Chickadees and Tits)

MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE (*Poecile gambeli*) – That unscheduled drive to the top of the Santa Catalina Mts. on our first afternoon of the tour was our only shot at this one.

MEXICAN CHICKADEE (*Poecile sclateri*) – There were still plenty of patches of forest up high in the Chiricahuas to support pairs of this very local (in the U.S.) species. We came away with some great views.

BRIDLED TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus wollweberi*) – Certainly one of the cutest birds on the planet!

JUNIPER TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus ridgwayi*) – We had no trouble with this one in the Chiricahuas. Formerly lumped with the Oak Titmouse as the Plain Titmouse.

Remizidae (Penduline-Tits)

VERDIN (*Auriparus flaviceps*) [N]

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)

BUSHTIT (*Psaltiriparus minimus*) – This one may follow the lead of the Juniper or "Plain" Titmouse above. The coastal forms and the interior forms are quite different looking.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta canadensis*) – Only one of these this year up high in the Chiricahuas, but what a look!

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta carolinensis*) – This is another species that could see some splitting soon, so keep track of where you see them. Ours was *S.c. nelsoni*, which is widespread in the interior West mountains.

PYGMY NUTHATCH (*Sitta pygmaea*) – These almost landed on me on that first afternoon up on Mt. Lemmon.



The cascading song of the Canyon Wren is one of the most unforgettable sounds of the southwest. This bird gave us a fine performance as it sat right next to the road and sang! (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

Certhiidae (Treecreepers)

BROWN CREEPER (*Certhia americana*) – We heard a lot more of these than we saw.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

CACTUS WREN (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*) – Arizona's state bird!

ROCK WREN (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) – We had some super views right along the road up on Mt. Lemmon on that first afternoon of the tour.

CANYON WREN (*Catherpes mexicanus*) – I'll never forget that singing bird right next to the road near Patagonia!

BEWICK'S WREN (*Thryomanes bewickii*)

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*)

Poliophtidae (Gnatcatchers)

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila caerulea*) – I'm still bothered by that bird we saw on our last day at the mouth of Madera Canyon. The plumage basically looked like this species, but that bill looked long to me and the tail looked quite graduated, both good marks for Black-capped. Unfortunately, it never called.

BLACK-TAILED GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila melanura*)

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

EASTERN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia sialis*) – A lovely male near Patagonia was nice to see. The race here, *S.s. fulva*, makes it into s.e. Arizona from Mexico.

SWAINSON'S THRUSH (*Catharus ustulatus*) – We had a rather late migrant at Patagonia Lake. [b]

HERMIT THRUSH (*Catharus guttatus*) – That haunting song was everywhere in the highlands.

AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*)

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*)

CURVE-BILLED THRASHER (*Toxostoma curvirostre*) – Those birds over in the Chiricahuas were the well-marked race *T.c. celsum*.

CRISSAL THRASHER (*Toxostoma crissale*) – A couple of these very distinctive thrashers got up into view after I squeaked at them next to the road in the Chiricahuas.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) [I]

Ptilonotidae (Silky-flycatchers)

PHAINOPEPLA (*Phainopepla nitens*) – Much more common the farther west we traveled.

Peucedramidae (Olive Warbler)

OLIVE WARBLER (*Peucedramus taeniatus*) – You really hope that the bird that comes into view for the group is a nice, adult male - and it was! Now that this strange little bird is in its own family, there's added impetus to see it well.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

LUCY'S WARBLER (*Oreothlypis luciae*) – Maybe the drabest of all the wood-warblers?

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*)

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*)

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (*Setophaga coronata*) – Watch for a split of the old Audubon's and the Myrtle warblers again sometime soon. All of our were Audubon's.

GRACE'S WARBLER (*Setophaga graciae*) – A number of great looks at this pine specialist.

BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER (*Setophaga nigrescens*) – A very common voice in the abundant oak woodland on this tour.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*) – Although we recorded it on quite a few days of this trip, the numbers had



We got lucky with the local Five-striped Sparrow this trip, finding one right next to the road, saving us a long, hot hike. (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

really dwindled since earlier in the month. [b]

RED-FACED WARBLER (*Cardellina rubrifrons*) – Fantastic looks on that first afternoon up high on Mt. Lemmon! This is one of those 'must see' birds on a S.E. Arizona tour.

PAINTED REDSTART (*Myioborus pictus*) – Another one of those warblers that you just gotta see when you're here!

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens*) – Great looks at the feeders in Patagonia.

Emberizidae (Buntings, Sparrows and Allies)

SPOTTED TOWHEE (*Pipilo maculatus*) – We had one particularly confiding bird in Huachuca Canyon one morning. Formerly lumped with Eastern Towhee as the Rufous-sided Towhee.

RUFIOUS-CROWNED SPARROW (*Aimophila ruficeps*) – This was a 'no show' until we got to the Patagonia area.

CANYON TOWHEE (*Melospiza fusca*) – Formerly lumped with the California Towhee as the Brown Towhee.

ABERT'S TOWHEE (*Melospiza aberti*) – As close to an Arizona 'endemic' as any bird gets (the world range of this one is almost entirely confined to Arizona's borders).

RUFIOUS-WINGED SPARROW (*Peucaea carpalis*) – Nicely up in the Tumacacori Mts. on our final morning.

BOTTERI'S SPARROW (*Peucaea botterii*) – We didn't really 'nail' it until we got to the Madera Canyon entrance road on the final afternoon.

CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*)

BLACK-CHINNED SPARROW (*Spizella atrogularis*) – Our looks along the Paradise road in the Chiricahuas were pretty distant.

LARK SPARROW (*Chondestes grammacus*)

FIVE-STRIPED SPARROW (*Amphispiza quinquestrata*) – YESSSS!!!! Ours was right next to the road in the Ocotillos - saved us a hike in the heat. Woo Hoo!

BLACK-THROATED SPARROW (*Amphispiza bilineata*) – One of the most beautiful of the sparrows.

LARK BUNTING (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) – A single female bird on the fence at Willcox was getting quite late. [b]

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW (*Ammodramus savannarum*) – We had it well from inside the van as it sat in the grass.

SONG SPARROW (*Melospiza melodia*)

LINCOLN'S SPARROW (*Melospiza lincolni*) – The 3rd week of May is getting awfully late for this migrant. [b]

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW (MOUNTAIN)

(*Zonotrichia leucophrys oriantha*) – Still a few of these around at the feeders. This is the race that breeds in the Rocky Mts., but not in Arizona. [b]

YELLOW-EYED JUNCO (*Junco phaeonotus*) – We couldn't have asked for a better look at this local specialty than what we had on our first stop on Mt. Lemmon on that first afternoon. [N]

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

HEPATIC TANAGER (*Piranga flava*) – We had this almost daily on this tour, missing it only on the first and last days.

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) – All of these *Piranga* tanagers are no longer true 'tanagers'. A recent taxonomic paper places them closest to the grosbeaks and cardinals, so it's better to look at them as narrow-billed grosbeaks now (they sure sound similar!).

WESTERN TANAGER (*Piranga ludoviciana*) – This was recorded daily, with most of the birds we detected being migrants still on the move northward. [N]

NORTHERN CARDINAL (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) – The race here, C.c. superbus, is longer-crested and longer-tailed than the birds that you know in the East and Midwest.

PYRRHULOXIA (*Cardinalis sinuatus*) – This close relative of the above N. Cardinal prefers drier, scrubbiest habitats.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – A female put in an appearance at breakfast one morning at the Research Station. It's one of those 'rare but regular' migrants in the state, especially in May. [b]

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) – Every day.



Another local specialty, Yellow-eyed Junco, got our tour off to a good start on our first day up on Mt Lemmon. (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*) – These birds had just started returning from the wintering grounds in numbers.
LAZULI BUNTING (*Passerina amoena*) – There were only a couple of birds left at the feeders on this route. This one rarely lingers to breed in the region. [b]
VARIED BUNTING (*Passerina versicolor*) – We got our best look, finally, at Rock Corral Spring in the Tumacacori Mts. on the final morning. This is another one that had just started to arrive from the wintering grounds in W. Mexico.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (LILIAN'S) (*Sturnella magna lilianae*) – This distinctive race is often mentioned as a potential split from Eastern Meadowlark.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) – A few birds were still hanging out at Whitewater Draw when we visited. [b]

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*) – More common as we headed west on this tour. The host of choice for this one is the Hooded Oriole.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (*Molothrus ater*)

ORCHARD ORIOLE (*Icterus spurius*) – Nice! This was a complete surprise along State Line Rd. near Portal, especially right after seeing the adult male Baltimore Oriole earlier in the same morning! My first ever on this tour! [b]

HOODED ORIOLE (*Icterus cucullatus*) – Gorgeous!

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE (*Icterus bullockii*) – There was a nice male feeding in the same flowering Agave as the above male Orchard Oriole - a nice mix of East & West.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*) – That adult male that we spotted on the hillside above the road feeding on the Ocotillo flowers was only about the 20th documented record for the state! [b]

SCOTT'S ORIOLE (*Icterus parisorum*) – These gorgeous orioles were around, but it was tough getting a really good look at them this year, for some reason.

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

HOUSE FINCH (*Carpodacus mexicanus*)

LESSER GOLDFINCH (*Spinus psaltria*)

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) [I]

MAMMALS

EASTERN COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) – This was the cottontail that we saw at the higher elevations in the pine/oak woodland.

DESERT COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus audubonii*)

BLACK-TAILED JACKRABBIT (*Lepus californicus*) – Just that one day on the State Line Rd. near Portal. I guess their numbers are down due to the ongoing multi-decadal drought here.

CLIFF CHIPMUNK (*Tamias dorsalis*) – A few of these in the Chiricahuas.

ROCK SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus variegatus*) – The most common squirrel on the tour, by far.

ROUND-TAILED GROUND SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus tereticaudus*) – We had these plain-looking ground-squirrels in the Tucson area only.

NAYARIT FOX SQUIRREL (*Sciurus nayaritensis*) – This big squirrel, also known as Apache Fox-Squirrel, is restricted to the Chiricahua Mts. in the U.S.

BOTTAE'S POCKET GOPHER (*Thomomys bottae*) – We had good looks at this fossorial species at our first picnic lunch on Day 2, and then again at the main compound at the Southwestern Research Station.

YELLOW-NOSED COTTON RAT (*Sigmodon ochrognathus*) – At the Research Station.

ARIZONA COTTON RAT (*Sigmodon arizonae*) – This was the rat we saw at Sweetwater Wetlands in Tucson.

GRAY FOX (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*) – We had the briefest of looks one night in Cave Creek Canyon.

COYOTE (*Canis latrans*) – Jim spotted this one from the van as we drove along the east side of the Chiricahuas.

COLLARED PECCARY (*Tayassu tajacu*) – A big adult was a big surprise in Portal one afternoon.

MULE DEER (*Odocoileus hemionus*) – Also known as Black-tailed Deer, this species is typically found at lower

elevations than the next species in Arizona.

WHITE-TAILED DEER (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – The race here, Coues's White-tailed Deer, is the 2nd smallest race of White-tailed Deer.

PRONGHORN (*Antilocapra americana*) – A couple of nice looks in the grasslands of this North American endemic (the only member of the family Antilocapridae).

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 202 bird taxa and 16 mammal taxa