



*Field Guides Tour Report*

**Arizona: Birding the Border I 2015**

May 8, 2015 to May 17, 2015

John Coons

*For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).*



*Pyrrhuloxias put on a good show for us, but those cholla spines must be uncomfortable! (Photo by participant Sture Persson)*

We had some great birds and birding in what we will remember as the "least hot" Southeast Arizona tour I have ever done. The cooler temperatures were certainly a help to the birding, as species stayed active later in the morning and afternoon instead of packing it in when the temperatures get very hot. I believe our highest temperature was about 79° F. We were greeted by some chilly mornings in the Chiricahuas Mountains, but it was quite pleasant as the sun rose.

Our birding started in the Tucson area, where we found a couple of Sonoran Desert specialties in Gilded Flicker and Rufous-winged Sparrow. A few Tropical Kingbirds, a nice comparison of Ash-throated and Brown-crested flycatchers, along with Pyrrhuloxias, Verdins, Abert's Towhee, Burrowing Owls, and Vermillion Flycatchers were a nice way to get started. On our way east to the Chiricahua Mountains, Joann spotted a soaring Mississippi Kite as we were enjoying Western Tanagers, orioles, and Phainopeplas feeding in some mulberry trees. At Willcox there was an array of waterbirds with five Long-billed Curlews, Baird's and Western sandpipers, many American Avocets, and lots of spinning Wilson's Phalaropes; a number of Scaled Quail were also nearby.

We got into the cool mountains and soon found Mexican Chickadee, Bridled Titmice, Grace's and Red-faced warblers, and Painted Redstart before settling in for the next three nights at the research station, where a number of hummingbirds were hitting the feeders. A nice look at Elegant Trogon was a highlight the next morning, and during our stay here we encountered a brilliant Olive Warbler, Arizona Woodpeckers, Scott's Orioles, Hepatic Tanagers, Zone-tailed Hawk, a soaring Golden Eagle, a late Townsend's Solitaires, and some migrating Townsend's Warblers in the mountains, with nice looks at Bendire's Thrasher, Greater Roadrunner, Black-throated Sparrows, and an out-of-place Thick-billed Kingbird in the lower elevations. A big highlight of the Chiricahuas was our nightbirding, and we ended up with wonderful looks at Western and Whiskered screech-owls, Elf Owl, a great view of a Flammulated Owl, Northern Pygmy-Owl (during the day), Common Poorwill, and a great encounter with a Mexican Whip-poor-will that nearly landed on Doug.

Heading to Sierra Vista and the Huachuca Mountains, we found two Crissal Thrashers perched up and singing along the way. Getting to Miller Canyon, we saw a number of hummingbirds after our climb to see a fantastic Spotted Owl. In the mountains here we had wonderful views of Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers, the very local Buff-breasted Flycatcher, more trogon sightings, a displaying Wild Turkey, Greater Pewee, and a Whiskered Screech-Owl perched on a small rock in a creek. Our afternoon venture to see Rufous-capped Warbler was more successful for some than others. We left Sierra Vista after a stop where a couple of Great Horned Owls entertained us in the garden center.

With the wind picking up for the next few days we were fortunate to find a Grasshopper Sparrow teed up in the Sonoita Grasslands. We did very well with birds in the Patagonia area, starting with some great looks at Violet-crowned Hummingbird at the Patons', where we also enjoyed good looks at a number of other species including Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Lark Sparrow, Abert's Towhees, and even a Yellow-breasted Chat that came to a feeder. On a tip from a friend we found a family group of Black-capped Gnatcatchers with the fledglings begging for food, and soon afterwards we spotted a very close Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet.

We were at it early the next morning to drive to California Gulch. On the way we had at least three Montezuma Quail calling around us while a female flushed nearby. The very local Five-striped Sparrows put on a nice show at the bottom of the hill in California Gulch. We had great looks at this specialty as well as one of the early Varied Buntings to arrive here and a few Canyon Tree Frogs at the edge of a water pool. Our last day of birding found us heading to Madera Canyon, where we connected with a nicely singing Botteri's Sparrow before checking the feeders there. Near Green Valley we had a nice look at a gorgeous Harris's Hawk, and a Gilded Flicker there took us back to our first day. We finished our birding with a dash to Sweetwater Wetlands again to see a locally rare Least Tern that had appeared the day before.

The cool temperatures kept the reptile sightings to a minimum during our stay, with a Sonoran Whipsnake being a highlight.

It was great traveling with all of you in southeast Arizona and seeing some great birds in such a beautiful area. I look forward to the next time we can get together. Tucson is forecast to be 100° this week!

--John

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#### 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

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### BIRDS

#### Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

**BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – We saw a group of about 60 individuals at the Rio Rico ponds on two different days.

**GADWALL** (*Anas strepera*) – There were a couple of these still hanging around in a few of the ponds/lakes we birded.

**AMERICAN WIGEON** (*Anas americana*)

**MALLARD (NORTHERN)** (*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*)

**MALLARD (MEXICAN)** (*Anas platyrhynchos diazi*) – These were in the "wilder" places we birded, away from the cities.

**CINNAMON TEAL** (*Anas cyanoptera*) – We saw a handful of these colorful waterfowl during the week.

**NORTHERN SHOVELER** (*Anas clypeata*)

**GREEN-WINGED TEAL** (*Anas crecca*) – Dan spotted a couple on the pond at Willcox.

**RING-NECKED DUCK** (*Aythya collaris*) – We saw this species twice usually they have headed out by the time of our trip.

**LESSER SCAUP** (*Aythya affinis*) – There was one on the sandbar at Willcox.

**RUDDY DUCK** (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)

#### Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

**SCALED QUAIL** (*Callipepla squamata*) – We had great looks at several in the Willcox area.

**GAMBEL'S QUAIL** (*Callipepla gambelii*) – There were several encounters including some babies with Mom at the Paton's feeders.

**MONTEZUMA QUAIL** (*Cyrtonyx montezumae*) – We had three males and a female calling around us but couldn't get an open look. Several of us saw the female flush and others had brief views of males walking between clumps of grass on the steep slope. We heard another male in Montosa Canyon but could not get it to come closer.

#### Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

**WILD TURKEY** (*Meleagris gallopavo*) – We saw several individuals but were treated to a great display of a gobbling tom with two hens. One of the hens lay flat on the ground with her wings spread.

#### Podicipedidae (Grebes)

**EARED GREBE** (*Podiceps nigricollis*)

#### Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

**NEOTROPIC CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – We saw these at several locations.

#### Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

**GREAT BLUE HERON** (*Ardea herodias*)

**GREEN HERON** (*Butorides virescens*) – There were several seen at Patagonia Lake as they fed around the edge of the cattails.

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – We saw about three birds at Sweetwater and another at Willcox.

#### Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

**WHITE-FACED IBIS** (*Plegadis chihi*)

#### Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

**BLACK VULTURE** (*Coragyps atratus*) – We saw a few in the Patagonia area.

**TURKEY VULTURE** (*Cathartes aura*)

#### Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

**GOLDEN EAGLE** (*Aquila chrysaetos*) – We had a near adult soar over us in the upper elevations of the Chiricahua Mountains.

**MISSISSIPPI KITE** (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) – Joann spotted a flying bird near St. David where these birds would have just arrived.

**COOPER'S HAWK** (*Accipiter cooperii*)

**HARRIS'S HAWK** (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) – We had a nice scope view of one perched, then flying, at Green Valley.

**GRAY HAWK** (*Buteo plagiatus*) – We had good views of a few in the latter part of the trip.

**SWAINSON'S HAWK** (*Buteo swainsoni*) – Several were seen soaring over the desert and we had a couple individuals perched.

**ZONE-TAILED HAWK** (*Buteo albonotatus*) – We had three encounters with this not-so-common species.

**RED-TAILED HAWK** (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

*Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)*

**COMMON GALLINULE** (*Gallinula galeata*) – Our only sighting was at Sweetwater on our first afternoon.

**AMERICAN COOT** (*Fulica americana*)

*Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)*

**BLACK-NECKED STILT** (*Himantopus mexicanus*)

**AMERICAN AVOCET** (*Recurvirostra americana*) – There were about 50 individuals at the lake at Willcox. Some were in full breeding plumage with bright reddish heads while others were quite pale.

*Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)*

**KILLDEER** (*Charadrius vociferus*)

*Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)*

**SPOTTED SANDPIPER** (*Actitis macularia*)

**GREATER YELLOWLEGS** (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – There were two that flew into the vegetation on the far side of the lake at Willcox and we could not relocate them.

**LONG-BILLED CURLEW** (*Numenius americanus*) – Five of these distinct shorebirds were standing on the sandbar at Willcox.

**BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** (*Calidris bairdii*) – There were about five birds at Willcox.

**LEAST SANDPIPER** (*Calidris minutilla*) – Several, about 20, were on the mud and sandbars at Willcox.

**WESTERN SANDPIPER** (*Calidris mauri*)

**LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) – We counted 24 individuals at Willcox.

**WILSON'S PHALAROPE** (*Phalaropus tricolor*) – About a hundred birds were spinning, flying about and feeding at Willcox.

*Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)*

**LEAST TERN** (*Sternula antillarum*) – Our last new bird of the trip. We made a dash to Sweetwater to find this rarity that had been spotted the day before.

*Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)*

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) [I]

**BAND-TAILED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – Only a couple were encountered.

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

**INCA DOVE** (*Columbina inca*) – A declining bird in some of the areas we visited we saw these in Portal and again near Patagonia.

**COMMON GROUND-DOVE** (*Columbina passerina*)

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE** (*Zenaida asiatica*)

**MOURNING DOVE** (*Zenaida macroura*)

*Cuculidae (Cuckoos)*

**GREATER ROADRUNNER** (*Geococcyx californianus*) – After seeing our first in New Mexico, we got the pickle jar opened and ended up seeing several the rest of the trip.

*Strigidae (Owls)*

**FLAMMULATED OWL** (*Psiloscopus flammeolus*) – We had great looks at this small and difficult owl in the Chiricahuas. It was great to have Rose Ann's help in finding this elusive owl.

**WESTERN SCREECH-OWL** (*Megascops kennicottii*) – We watched a roost or nest hole at dusk and finally saw the adult pop out when a few orioles that were headed to bed were making a ruckus. We had nice scope views.

**WHISKERED SCREECH-OWL** (*Megascops trichopsis*) – A nest hole at SWRS that we checked several times during the day came up empty until we watched at dusk. The adult climbed out of the hole just at dusk for nice looks. Then a couple of days later, we saw one perched on a rock in the creek in Huachuca Canyon!?

**GREAT HORNED OWL** (*Bubo virginianus*) – Our first birds were seen in the hay barn along the road, but we had a much better view in the Garden Center where they had recently fledged two young.

**NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL** (*Glaucidium gnoma*) – We had great looks at a calling bird high up in a conifer in the Chiricahuas.

**ELF OWL** (*Micrathene whitneyi*) – Just after seeing our Whiskered Screech-Owl we had a good view of this smallest of the owls calling from its hole in a large sycamore.

**BURROWING OWL** (*Athene cunicularia*) – We had nice looks at two birds at a nest hole near our motel in Tucson. Who would have figured this location?

**SPOTTED OWL** (*Strix occidentalis*) – It was well worth the walk up Miller Canyon to see this specialty. It was sitting quietly and occasionally scanned its environs.

*Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)*

**LESSER NIGHTHAWK** (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – We saw a few flying around the desert below Portal at dusk.

**COMMON POORWILL** (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*) – We had pretty good views of one in the road on our first evening of nightbirding then another on our way up the mountain.

**MEXICAN WHIP-POOR-WILL** (*Antrastomus arizonae arizonae*) – We had great views of a flying bird, then saw it perched just after it almost ran into Doug.

Apodidae (Swifts)

**WHITE-THROATED SWIFT** (*Aeronautes saxatalis*)

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

**MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD** (*Eugenes fulgens*) – We saw several in the mountains, both at feeders and in the wild.

**BLUE-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Lampornis clemenciae*) – I think all of our sightings were in the Chiricahua Mountains where these were frequent visitors to the feeders at SWRS. We also saw a few in the forest along the South Fork road.

**BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Archilochus alexandri*) – This was the most common hummingbird we encountered.

**ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD** (*Calypte anna*) – There were a handful coming to the feeders in Patagonia and at Beatty's feeders in Miller Canyon.

**BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Selasphorus platycercus*)

**BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Cynanthus latirostris*) – There were a few in the Chiricahuas but even more coming to the lowland feeders we visited.

**VIOLET-CROWNED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Amazilia violiceps*) – We had great looks at two individuals at the Paton's feeders in Patagonia.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

**ELEGANT TROGON** (*Trogon elegans*) – We had nice looks at a male along South Fork Road in the Chiricahuas on our first morning there. We then had a pair of birds feeding in a tree in Huachuca Canyon. It is always a highlight to see this colorful species.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

**ACORN WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – We saw lots of these sharply marked woodpeckers and, also, their granary trees for storing acorns.

**GILA WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes uropygialis*)

**LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER** (*Picoides scalaris*) – Our best views were at the Paton's feeders.

**HAIRY WOODPECKER** (*Picoides villosus*)

**ARIZONA WOODPECKER** (*Picoides arizonae*) – We ended up seeing several of these local specialties. They were all seen in the pine-oak habitat.

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

**GILDED FLICKER** (*Colaptes chrysoides*) – We had nice scope views of two of these very local woodpeckers in the Saguaro desert outside of Tucson then again near Green Valley. This is a bird that is essentially endemic to the Sonoran Desert.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

**AMERICAN KESTREL** (*Falco sparverius*) – Our first one was seen perched atop a large Saguaro cactus. We later saw one carrying a lizard to its mate at a nest.

**PEREGRINE FALCON** (*Falco peregrinus*) – We had a brief fly-by at the Sweetwater Wetlands on our first afternoon.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

**NORTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET** (*Camptostoma imberbe*) – We enjoyed great views of this small flycatcher near Patagonia. This is a tropical species that just gets into the U.S. in a few places.

**GREATER PEWEE** (*Contopus pertinax*) – We had a singing bird in Miller Canyon on our way up to see the Spotted Owls.

**WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE** (*Contopus sordidulus*)

**PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax difficilis*) – We saw just one of these lower elevation migrants while at the San Pedro House near Sierra Vista. Fortunately, it was calling to confirm the ID.

**CORDILLERAN FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax occidentalis*)

**BUFF-BREASTED FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax fulvifrons*) – This very local species gave us great views in Huachuca Canyon. We even had nice scope views of one as it sang.

**BLACK PHOEBE** (*Sayornis nigricans*)

**SAY'S PHOEBE** (*Sayornis saya*)

**VERMILION FLYCATCHER** (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) – We had several encounters with this colorful species. If more flycatchers looked like this one, flycatchers would be a lot more popular with birders.

**DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*)

**ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus cinerascens*)

**BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) – Our first were in the Sonoran Desert outside of Tucson where they were probably nesting in Saguaros.

**SULPHUR-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*) – We chased these around a bit in Huachuca Canyon before getting nice views of another mostly tropical species.

**TROPICAL KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – We saw at least three individuals at Sweetwater Wetlands on our first afternoon. This is another quite local bird in SE Arizona.

**CASSIN'S KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus vociferans*) – Seen almost daily.

**THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus crassirostris*) – It was somewhat of a surprise to hear one call while we were birding in Portal. This is outside the usual range of this species but a pair nested here last year. We saw another at the more traditional site at Patagonia.

**WESTERN KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus verticalis*)

Laniidae (Shrikes)

**LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE** (*Lanius ludovicianus*) – There were a few in the desert below Portal and the Chiricahuas.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

**BELL'S VIREO** (*Vireo bellii*) – We had good views of this quite nondescript bird. The song is the highlight of it.

**PLUMBEOUS VIREO** (*Vireo plumbeus*) – Formerly called Solitary Vireo, this is the split that occurs in the interior mountains of the western U.S.

**HUTTON'S VIREO** (*Vireo huttoni*)

**WARBLING VIREO** (*Vireo gilvus*) – Another migrant, we only had one or two during our birding.

*Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)*

**STELLER'S JAY** (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) – Nice looks at a few near Rustler Park in the Chiricahuas.

**WESTERN SCRUB-JAY** (*Aphelocoma californica*)

**MEXICAN JAY** (*Aphelocoma wollweberi*) – These were seen each time we got into pine oak habitat.

**CHIHUAHUAN RAVEN** (*Corvus cryptoleucus*) – Our best view was of one eating a small rodent while perched on a post. It didn't take long for it to consume the whole thing. We could even see the white under-neck feathers as the wind blew them up showing why it used to be called White-necked Raven.

**COMMON RAVEN** (*Corvus corax*)

*Alaudidae (Larks)*

**HORNED LARK** (*Eremophila alpestris*) – There were a few along the roadside at the pond at Willcox.

*Hirundinidae (Swallows)*

**NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)

**VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW** (*Tachycineta thalassina*) – Most of our sightings were around the Research Station in the late afternoon.

**BANK SWALLOW** (*Riparia riparia*) – Sture saw one flying about over the pond at Amado.

**BARN SWALLOW** (*Hirundo rustica*)

**CLIFF SWALLOW** (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*)

*Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)*

**MEXICAN CHICKADEE** (*Poecile sclateri*) – We had wonderful views of this Chiricahua specialty in the mixed-conifer forest at the higher elevations we visited. We probably encountered about four pairs.

**BRIDLED TITMOUSE** (*Baeolophus wollweberi*) – This very handsome and sharply marked species was seen several times. Sture commented that it resembled a Crested Tit which he sees in his back yard at home.

*Remizidae (Penduline-Tits)*

**VERDIN** (*Auriparus flaviceps*) – A true desert dweller we saw several in the lowest elevations we birded.

*Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)*

**BUSH TIT** (*Psaltriparus minimus*) – We had a few groups of these entertaining little guys.

*Sittidae (Nuthatches)*

**RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH** (*Sitta canadensis*)

**WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH** (*Sitta carolinensis*)

**PYGMY NUTHATCH** (*Sitta pygmaea*) – This pine habitat specialist showed quite well along the drive up to Rustler Park.

*Certhiidae (Treecreepers)*

**BROWN CREEPER** (*Certhia americana*) – We had a handful of individuals. These were the locally nesting Mexican race that has a dark cheek.

*Troglodytidae (Wrens)*

**ROCK WREN** (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) – Good views of a couple of birds bouncing up and down on the rocks.

**CANYON WREN** (*Catherpes mexicanus*) – This wonderful songster showed well a few times. It's great song echoed off the cliffs of the canyons.

**HOUSE WREN** (*Troglodytes aedon*)

**BEWICK'S WREN** (*Thryomanes bewickii*)

**CACTUS WREN** (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*) – The largest North American wren, we saw several including a pair at a nest at the Rodrigues feeders.

*Poliophtidae (Gnatcatchers)*

**BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER** (*Poliophtila caerulea*)

**BLACK-TAILED GNATCATCHER** (*Poliophtila melanura*) – We had nice looks at a few in the desert near Tucson.

**BLACK-CAPPED GNATCATCHER** (*Poliophtila nigriceps*) – This rarity showed very well for us in the Patagonia area where we saw a male and female feeding three fledglings. This can be a tough one to find.

*Regulidae (Kinglets)*

**RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET** (*Regulus calendula*)

*Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)*

**EASTERN BLUEBIRD** (*Sialia sialis*) – Sture spotted a pair of birds as we were cruising along Ruby Road after leaving California Gulch.

**TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE** (*Myadestes townsendi*) – It was a real surprise to see this late migrant still hanging around in the Chiricahuas. A few winter here but they are normally gone early in the spring. We rarely get this species on the trip.

**HERMIT THRUSH** (*Catharus guttatus*) – We heard and saw a few here and there.

**AMERICAN ROBIN** (*Turdus migratorius*)

*Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)*

**CURVE-BILLED THRASHER** (*Toxostoma curvirostre*) – This was the most common thrasher by far that we encountered.

**BENDIRE'S THRASHER** (*Toxostoma bendirei*) – We had nice looks at a calling bird in the desert below Portal. Another local specialty, it probably had a nest nearby.

**CRISSAL THRASHER** (*Toxostoma crissale*) – After quite a bit of looking we ended up with great scope views of two individuals in the Sulphur

Springs Valley. This is always a tough bird to see at this time of year.

**NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD** (*Mimus polyglottos*)

*Sturnidae (Starlings)*

**EUROPEAN STARLING** (*Sturnus vulgaris*) [I]

*Bombycillidae (Waxwings)*

**CEDAR WAXWING** (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) – A flock or two was hanging around Portal.

*Ptilionotidae (Silky-flycatchers)*

**PHAINOPEPLA** (*Phainopepla nitens*) – This unusual species showed well for us a few times. The first one seemed to be feeding on hackberries and mulberries near the San Pedro River.

*Peucedramidae (Olive Warbler)*

**OLIVE WARBLER** (*Peucedramus taeniatus*) – We had great looks at a brilliantly colored male that had more orange on the head and breast than any bird I remember seeing before. It put on a good show as it worked through the Douglas Fir.

*Parulidae (New World Warblers)*

**LUCY'S WARBLER** (*Oreothlypis luciae*) – We heard many and saw a few but the best views were those picking through the chain link backstop in search of food at the park in Tucson. We saw the pair make a few trips into a tree where they seemed to be feeding young.

**MACGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER** (*Geothlypis tolmiei*) – Don got a photo of one near the Research Station. This is another migrant that was late this year.

**COMMON YELLOWTHROAT** (*Geothlypis trichas*)

**YELLOW WARBLER** (*Setophaga petechia*)

**YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (AUDUBON'S)** (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*) – All that we saw were the yellow throated "auduboni" race.

**GRACE'S WARBLER** (*Setophaga graciae*) – Another mountain bird we had a few nice views in the Chiricahuas.

**BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER** (*Setophaga nigrescens*)

**TOWNSEND'S WARBLER** (*Setophaga townsendi*) – We only encountered a couple of these migrants which are on their way to the Pacific Northwest,

**RUFIOUS-CAPPED WARBLER** (*Basileuterus rufifrons*) – The Good and the Bad. We did a nice walk up Hunter Canyon in search of this rarity and found it almost immediately on the other side of the canyon, but only a few of us got on it. We then spent a good hour trying to see it again. I think many of us got some kind of look but it could have been better.

**WILSON'S WARBLER** (*Cardellina pusilla*)

**RED-FACED WARBLER** (*Cardellina rubrifrons*) – We had a few great encounters with this very fancy warbler in the Chiricahua Mountains then again in Miller Canyon.

**PAINTED REDSTART** (*Myioborus pictus*) – We saw a lot of these in South Fork of Cave Creek Canyon on our first morning in the Chiricahuas as they flashed their tails while feeding along the roots and tree trunks in the forest.

**YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT** (*Icteria virens*) – After hearing a few we were treated to a several minute scope view of a singing bird near the San Pedro River.

*Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)*

**SPOTTED TOWHEE** (*Pipilo maculatus*)

**RUFIOUS-CROWNED SPARROW** (*Aimophila ruficeps*) – I was surprised how often we saw this bird. We had many good views.

**CANYON TOWHEE** (*Melospiza fusca*)

**ABERT'S TOWHEE** (*Melospiza aberti*) – We had a few seen well with the best views at the Paton's feeders.

**RUFIOUS-WINGED SPARROW** (*Peucaea carpalis*) – Essentially an endemic bird to the Sonoran Desert we had a great view of a singing bird on our first afternoon. A great song, this is one of my favorite sparrows.

**BOTTERI'S SPARROW** (*Peucaea botterii*) – After having a skulker hiding in the grass in front of us in the Sonoita grasslands, we had a great view of one singing from a small mesquite bush below Madera Canyon.

**CHIPPING SPARROW** (*Spizella passerina*)

**BLACK-CHINNED SPARROW** (*Spizella atrogularis*) – This mostly Great Basin Desert species is just on the edge of its range in the Chiricahua Mountains where we were treated to a nice view of a singing individual.

**LARK SPARROW** (*Chondestes grammacus*) – We had nice looks at the Paton's feeders.

**FIVE-STRIPED SPARROW** (*Amphispiza quinquestrata*) – We saw 4-5 of these extremely local specialties of North America in California Gulch. They were singing from the steep slopes of the canyon in the most accessible place there is to see them.

**BLACK-THROATED SPARROW** (*Amphispiza bilineata*) – A very well-marked sparrow we saw these almost everyday of the trip.

**GRASSHOPPER SPARROW** (*Ammodramus savannarum*) – We were fortunate to see this wonderful grassland breeder in the high winds we encountered for a couple of days.

**SONG SPARROW** (*Melospiza melodia*)

**LINCOLN'S SPARROW** (*Melospiza lincolni*) – We saw a couple of late-wintering individuals.

**WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW (MOUNTAIN)** (*Zonotrichia leucophrys oriantha*)

**YELLOW-EYED JUNCO** (*Junco phaeonotus*) – Another mountain specialty of southeastern Arizona, there were a few very confident individuals on the lawn at SWRS that watched us do our checklist each evening.

*Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)*

**HEPATIC TANAGER** (*Piranga flava*) – These were right around the cabins at SWRS and we had a few in the Huachuca Mountains as well.

**SUMMER TANAGER** (*Piranga rubra*)

**WESTERN TANAGER** (*Piranga ludoviciana*) – We saw a number of these both on the breeding grounds and as migrants in the lowlands. Always a beauty when seen well.

**NORTHERN CARDINAL** (*Cardinalis cardinalis*)

**PYRRHULOXIA** (*Cardinalis sinuatus*) – We enjoyed good views of males and females at the Rodrigues feeders.

**BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK** (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*)

**BLUE GROSBEAK** (*Passerina caerulea*)

**LAZULI BUNTING** (*Passerina amoena*) – A handful were around the feeders in Portal and again at Paton's.

**VARIED BUNTING** (*Passerina versicolor*) – We had great looks at a male in California Gulch. This is a subtly colored bird with about five shades of blue on it. We saw them again the next day in Montosa Canyon.

*Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)*

**RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD** (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)

**EASTERN MEADOWLARK (LILIAN'S)** (*Sturnella magna lilianae*) – This is the southwest breeding race which is a good candidate for a split, but we've been saying that for many years.

**GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)

**BRONZED COWBIRD** (*Molothrus aeneus*) – We saw a few in Portal within a day or two of their arrival.

**BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD** (*Molothrus ater*)

**HOODED ORIOLE** (*Icterus cucullatus*)

**BULLOCK'S ORIOLE** (*Icterus bullockii*)

**SCOTT'S ORIOLE** (*Icterus parisorum*) – A great singer and equally handsome bird, we had a few in the Chiricahua area.

*Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)*

**HOUSE FINCH** (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)

**CASSIN'S FINCH** (*Haemorhous cassinii*) – We saw a male at the Rodrigues feeders in the desert below Portal. This was an unusually high year for them in southern Arizona

**PINE SISKIN** (*Spinus pinus*) – There were tons of these in a few places and seemed to be all over the feeders we visited.

**LESSER GOLDFINCH** (*Spinus psaltria*)

*Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)*

**HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) [H]

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## **MAMMALS**

**EASTERN COTTONTAIL** (*Sylvilagus floridanus*)

**DESERT COTTONTAIL** (*Sylvilagus audubonii*)

**BLACK-TAILED JACKRABBIT** (*Lepus californicus*) – A couple of these were seen along State Line Road below Portal. It is really an iconic southwestern image to see these bounding along.

**CLIFF CHIPMUNK** (*Tamias dorsalis*)

**HARRIS'S ANTELOPE SQUIRREL** (*Ammospermophilus harrisi*) – These were the small squirrels with the tail curled over their back.

**ROCK SQUIRREL** (*Spermophilus variegatus*)

**ROUND-TAILED GROUND SQUIRREL** (*Spermophilus tereticaudus*) – Like a small prairie dog, we first saw these at Sweetwater on our first afternoon.

**MEXICAN FOX SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus nayaritensis*) – Also known at Chiricahua Squirrel we only saw one of these reddish-orange rodents. The numbers seem to have dropped since the recent fires and floods.

**ARIZONA GRAY SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus arizonensis*)

**BOTTAE'S POCKET GOPHER** (*Thomomys bottae*) – Each evening at the checklist outside our rooms at SWRS we could see the nose of one pushing dirt up from its labyrinth of tunnels.

**YELLOW-NOSED COTTON RAT** (*Sigmodon ochrognathus*) – This is the cotton rat species we saw in the oaks at the feeders at Madera Canyon.

**ARIZONA COTTON RAT** (*Sigmodon arizonae*) – This species is more of a desert dweller and is often found in association with waterways or canals as where we saw them at Sweetwater Wetlands.

**COLLARED PECCARY** (*Tayassu tajacu*) – We had some good views of a family near the motel in Tucson and again in Portal where they sauntered out of the mesquite scrub and walked to the feeding area near the Store as if they owned the place.

**MULE DEER** (*Odocoileus hemionus*) – Mostly a desert species in southern Arizona, we saw a few in the flats near State Line Road.

**WHITE-TAILED DEER** (*Odocoileus virginianus*)

**PRONGHORN** (*Antilocapra americana*) – We found one in the Sonoita grasslands after circling back for a small group that got away.

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## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

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**Totals for the tour: 195 bird taxa and 16 mammal taxa**