



Field Guides Tour Report

Arizona: Birding the Border I 2017

May 5, 2017 to May 14, 2017

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



Birding the border doesn't get much more spectacular than Cave Creek Canyon in the Chiricahuas! Not far from this vantage point, we enjoyed views of Crissal Thrasher, Common Poorwill, and so much more! Photo by guide Cory Gregory.

Southeast Arizona is one of the most well-known birding destinations in the US thanks to a variety of habitats, radically different elevation zones, range-restricted specialties, and a very fascinating bird community. This tour focuses on sampling the diversity throughout southeastern Arizona while taking aim at some quality night birds, local rarities, and regional specialties. In the end, John and I are really pleased with how the birding went this trip; not only did we top 200 species, but several targets and hard-to-see species fell into place nicely.

As with any birding adventure, weather is always something to watch, and this tour was notable for how chilly it was! We battled some strong winds in the Chiricahuas along with quite cold wind chills. Once in the Huachucas, we looked up and even saw snow falling at the higher altitudes! However, by the time we reached Patagonia and Nogales, things warmed up a bit and our final day saw temps rise to a normal 97 degrees.

We started off in the Tucson area, where we visited Sweetwater Wetlands and some desert regions to the west of the city. We ended with nice looks at Rufous-winged Sparrows, Gilded Flicker, and Black-tailed Gnatcatchers. We even added an urban Burrowing Owl overlooking his dry wash.

From there we ventured eastward the following day and birded along the way at a couple of key spots. Lakeside Park in Tucson provided views of Black-crowned Night-Herons, a few lingering ducks, and our first looks at Vermilion Flycatchers and Lucy's Warblers. We continued east and stopped at the well-known Willcox ponds to look for shorebirds and ducks. Among the numerous Black-necked Stilts, American Avocets, and White-faced Ibis, we found some less common species like Black-bellied Plover, a California Gull, and both Red-necked and Wilson's phalaropes. That afternoon we finally climbed up into the Chiricahuas where we made a stop to look for the continuing rarity from Mexico, the Slate-throated Redstart (which we found!).

The following couple of days we birded in the scenic Portal/Cave Creek area where we found Bendire's Thrasher down near Stateline Road, Elegant Trogon in the South Fork of Cave Creek, a covey of Montezuma Quail sneaking towards us, Zone-tailed Hawks overhead at the research station, Mexican Chickadee and Red-faced Warbler high up near Rustler Park, and so much more. The nightbirding was superb and we added the always-tricky Flammulated Owl, an Elf Owl peering out of a nest hole, both Common Poorwill and Mexican Whip-Poor-Will, and daily views of a day-roosting Whiskered Screech-Owl.

From there we headed west towards the Huachucas where we enjoyed the rare Lucifer Hummingbirds in Ash Canyon, a snoozing Spotted Owl in Miller Canyon, Botteri's Sparrows in the grasslands, many Buff-breasted Flycatchers in Carr Canyon, a horde of Blue Grosbeaks at the San Pedro House, and a fun variety of hummingbirds at the Beatty's feeders. We even ventured up into Hunter Canyon and got to see the rare Rufous-capped Warbler singing.

The Patagonia area is known for its great birding, and we spent some time exploring locations like Harshaw Canyon, the Paton Center, the famous Patagonia Roadside Rest, and Patagonia Lake State Park. Highlights were many but the Violet-crowned Hummingbird at the Paton Center was a looker,

the Thick-billed Kingbirds at the rest stop proved to be reliable, a couple of the rare Black-capped Gnatcatchers surfaced at Patagonia Lake State Park, and a Common Black Hawk leisurely soared overhead.

Lastly, we ventured farther west to Nogales, where we visited Kino Springs, the Rio Rico ponds, and the famous California Gulch. An over-friendly coati sure made things memorable on Ruby Road! The gulch, remote but beautiful, was hosting quite a number of the rare Five-striped Sparrows, and we all enjoyed jaw-dropping, point-blank views. We closed things out with a visit to the Santa Rita Mountains, where we actually found a Gila Monster (!), another Black-capped Gnatcatcher, and a just-in-time Varied Bunting in Montosa Canyon. A quick stop in Madera Canyon even netted us a beautiful male Calliope Hummingbird and some persistent tom turkeys.

John and I sincerely hope you enjoyed your time exploring Southeast Arizona with us. It was a pleasure sharing these fun and fascinating sightings with you as well as being there for your various milestones. We hope to see you again on a future Field Guides trip. Until then, good birding to "owl" of you!

--Cory

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*) – This large and fancy duck was seen well at the Rio Rico ponds (twice!) towards the end of our trip.

AMERICAN WIGEON (*Anas americana*) – Half a dozen of these wintering ducks were seen at Lakeside Park in Tucson on our first full day of birding.

MALLARD (NORTHERN) (*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*) – We saw this familiar dabbling duck a few times including at Sweetwater Wetlands, Lakeside Park, and Willcox.

MALLARD (MEXICAN) (*Anas platyrhynchos diazi*) – The male of this subspecies lacks the traditional green head! We saw a few of these at Willow Tank in Portal, Kino Springs, and Patagonia Lake State Park.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) – Our only sighting of this uncommon species was at Willcox where a few were tucked in on some of the more vegetated ponds.

CINNAMON TEAL (*Anas cyanoptera*) – Our first full day of birding yielded this species twice; first at Lakeside Park in Tucson and then again at Willcox.

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Anas clypeata*) – A handful of these dabblers were spotted at Willcox and they remained our only of the trip.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (*Anas crecca*) – Same as the previous species, our only sighting was at Willcox where a few were keeping company with the other teal.

RING-NECKED DUCK (*Aythya collaris*) – There was one swimming around on a back pond at Willcox on our first full day of birding.

RUDDY DUCK (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – We spotted this stiff-tailed diver twice: first at Willcox and then later in the trip at Amado WTP.

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

SCALED QUAIL (*Callipepla squamata*) – The scrubby and open habitat near the golf course at Willcox delivered this "cottontop" just like we were hoping for. We would see more later at Willow Tank in Portal and at the San Pedro House.

GAMBEL'S QUAIL (*Callipepla gambelii*) – A familiar species that we saw on more than half our trip days. Our first looks came from Sweetwater Wetlands on our first outing.

MONTEZUMA QUAIL (*Cyrtonyx montezumae*) – Wow, what a fantastic experience! Initially heard near the day-roosting Whiskered Screech-Owl in Cave Creek, a handful of these secretive quail eventually came right in and provided great looks. For being such a tricky species to spot, this was an exciting sighting.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

WILD TURKEY (*Meleagris gallopavo*) – Worth, our in-house turkey expert, was almost always first to hear and see these gangly game birds. He was even able to call one in! The ones at the Madera feeders hardly seemed wild though ;-)

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – It wasn't until Patagonia Lake State Park that we spotted this tiny grebe. We had scope views as it cruised around on the lake, often mingling with other ducks.

EARED GREBE (*Podiceps nigricollis*) – Like the previous species, our first sighting came from Patagonia Lake State Park where we enjoyed a fine-plumaged adult through the scopes.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – This is our most common species of cormorant in Arizona. We spotted our first at Sweetwater Wetlands and went on to see more at Lakeside Park, Patagonia Lake SP, and Amado WTP.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – An uncommon species we don't see on every tour to these parts, this cormorant is considerably larger than Neotropics. Our only sighting was from Patagonia Lake State Park.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – We spotted this large heron twice; first at Willcox on our first full day and then again at Patagonia Lake State Park.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – A somewhat uncommon egret, this little guy was spied on the far bank at Amado WTP on our final day.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – Never common, this little heron surfaced twice on tour; first at Sweetwater Wetlands and then again at Patagonia Lake State Park where we had scope looks.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – As many as 4 of these shy herons were found at Lakeside Park in Tucson towards the start of our trip.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*) – There were quite a few of these dark ibis both at Willcox and later in the trip at the Rio Rico ponds. Despite looking carefully through them, none of them showed signs of being Glossy.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – It wasn't until our time around Patagonia and Kino Springs that we found our first ones. These are distinctive for having the silvery color in the primaries as well as that distinctive flat-winged silhouette.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Widespread and familiar, we found this species on every day of tour.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (*Accipiter striatus*) – This bird-eating species is uncommon at that time of year and our only sighting was of a migrant overhead at Sweetwater Wetlands on our first day.

COOPER'S HAWK (*Accipiter cooperii*) – A good-sized accipiter, and larger than the previous species, it was the more expected accipiter in areas we visited. We found them at Sweetwater Wetlands, overhead at Carr Canyon, and at the Patagonia Roadside Rest.

COMMON BLACK HAWK (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) – We had splendid looks at one of these broad-winged, short-tailed riparian raptors at Patagonia Lake State Park. Although they have bred there before, it's never a species to expect on this tour.

HARRIS'S HAWK (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) – This long-legged raptor has gotten harder to find in recent years. Still, we had success along a road near Willcox. We never were able to ID what it was eating though.

GRAY HAWK (*Buteo plagiatus*) – Although quiet on the first half of tour, the second half yielded a few glimpses of this tropical species. Eric especially enjoyed sightings at Kino Springs, Patagonia Roadside Rest, Harshaw Canyon, and the Rio Rico ponds.

SWAINSON'S HAWK (*Buteo swainsoni*) – We got to enjoy views of this migrant on several of our days including in the flats below Cave Creek. The dark flight feathers really stood out compared to Red-tailed Hawks.

ZONE-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo albonotatus*) – An interesting buteo that seems to mimic vultures in both habit and coloration. None of us complained when two were seen flying over the parking area in Cave Creek! We later saw a perched one in Carr Canyon while hearing another.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – This familiar raptor was spotted every day except for Day 3. One in Montosa Canyon was flying over with a lizard hanging out of its mouth!

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – Sweetwater Wetlands on our first day was the only spot yielding this rail.

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*) – We ended up finding this white-billed species many times including at Sweetwater Wetlands, Lakeside Park, Willcox, Willow Tank in Portal, etc. At Patagonia Lake State Park, we even saw some of their oddly-colored chicks.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – About 10 of these lanky shorebirds were seen at Willcox during our first full day of birding. The lack of them from that point on wasn't surprising given the habitats we visited!

AMERICAN AVOCET (*Recurvirostra americana*) – Similar to the previous species, our only sightings came from Willcox. However, there were no shortages of them; we tallied more than 100!

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – This may have been the first year hosting this rarity on this itinerary! It's a large plover that did its best of hiding from us at Willcox on our first full day of birding.

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*) – This plover truly is vociferus! We saw (and heard!) them at places like Willcox, Willow Tank in Portal, and at the Amado WTP.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – Only one of these tiny peeps (the smallest shorebird in the world) was present at Willcox.

WESTERN SANDPIPER (*Calidris mauri*) – A few of these peeps were foraging in the Willcox pond. They were larger with longer bills than the Least Sandpiper that was with them.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) – This chunky shorebird was spotted twice on tour: first at Willcox and then a lone bird in the Willow Tank near Portal.

WILSON'S PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus tricolor*) – Of the two phalarope species seen on tour, this was the more common of the two. We saw quite a collection of them swimming together in the Willcox pond.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus lobatus*) – Shorter-billed and smaller than the previous species, this uncommon phalarope was also spotted at Willcox.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – This shorebird is known for its distinctive tail-bobbing behavior and we got to witness it at Willcox, Patagonia Lake State Park, and Amado Wastewater Treatment Plant.

WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*) – A chunky tringa species, this shorebird was seen only once at the Willcox pond.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

RING-BILLED GULL (*Larus delawarensis*) – A small gathering of gulls loafing around at Willcox were mostly this species.

CALIFORNIA GULL (*Larus californicus*) – We found one of these lingering with the Ring-billeds at the Willcox pond. They are larger, longer-billed, and darker-backed comparatively.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – A common and widespread species in cities and other urban areas. [1]

BAND-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – We stumbled into a few of these montane pigeons right around the town of Portal. It would turn out to be our only sighting of the trip.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – This is another familiar (and introduced) dove that we saw several times on tour. We saw quite a few at Willcox and more at Kino Springs. [I]

INCA DOVE (*Columbina inca*) – This small, scaly-looking dove was seen nicely near the Portal store. Whether they say "no hope" or "cold coke" depends on how depressed and/or dehydrated you are.

COMMON GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina passerina*) – We bumped into just a few of these at Blue Haven Road in Patagonia and Kino Springs. They are shorter-tailed than the previous species with a simpler song.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – An especially widespread and common species, they were seen every day of tour.

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*) – Like the previous species, we found this familiar dove every day of tour.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

GREATER ROADRUNNER (*Geococcyx californianus*) – We saw this fantastic, ground-dwelling cuckoo several times and only missed it on one of our days. We even got to see one gliding downhill a considerable distance along Ruby Road.

Strigidae (Owls)

FLAMMULATED OWL (*Psiloscops flammeolus*) – This small owl is well-known for remaining hidden and only after considerable effort were we able to lay eyes on this montane species near Cave Creek. Still, it was an awesome and rewarding experience.

WESTERN SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops kennicottii*) – Our only encounter with this little owl was in Cave Creek Canyon in the evening of our first full day of birding.

WHISKERED SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops trichopsis*) – We enjoyed seeing and hearing this Southwestern specialty several times. It was hard not getting too blasé about driving by and seeing it roosting in its hole every day in Cave Creek!

GREAT HORNED OWL (*Bubo virginianus*) – Not only did we get to see an adult at Whitewater Draw, we even got to see a fluffy youngster in downtown Portal.

NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium gnoma*) – Although we heard this day-hunting species more than we saw it, we eventually got nice scope looks at one perched up high near the Onion Saddle in the Chiricahuas.

ELF OWL (*Microathene whitneyi*) – Cave Creek Canyon is a superb location for this species, the smallest owl in the world. We followed the calls and managed to find it looking at us out of a hole!

BURROWING OWL (*Athene cunicularia*) – Our group visited an urban pair of Burrowing Owls in Tucson at the start of our trip. This would turn out to be our only sighting of this small, ground-nesting species.

SPOTTED OWL (*Strix occidentalis*) – An uncommon species restricted to montane regions in Arizona, one of these was waiting for us up in Miller Canyon. Perched next to the trunk of a conifer (in the rain), it had a very Northwest feel to it.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

LESSER NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – We spent some time watching these graceful flyers overhead in Portal on the first evening in the Chiricahuas.

COMMON POORWILL (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*) – Although heard on our first owling evening, we eventually got great looks at this tiny nightjar along the Portal-Paradise Road.

MEXICAN WHIP-POOR-WILL (*Antristomus arizonae*) – Whip-poor-will was split in 2010 into two distinct species and this is the one found in the Southwest. We had our best luck in Cave Creek Canyon although we heard them numerous times while owling.

Apodidae (Swifts)

WHITE-THROATED SWIFT (*Aeronautes saxatalis*) – This species can rocket by before you really know what you just saw! We spied a couple high over Cave Creek Canyon early on our trip.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD (*Eugenes fulgens*) – This hummer, one of our largest in the US, was a staple species at the Beatty's feeders in Miller Canyon. We would see one again at Ash Canyon and Madera Canyon.

BLUE-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Lampornis clemenciae*) – Our only sightings of this species, our largest hummer, came from Cave Creek where they were common at the research station feeders.

LUCIFER HUMMINGBIRD (*Calothorax lucifer*) – This rare hummer was the star of the show at Mary Jo's feeders in Ash Canyon. Not only did we see a vivid male, we saw two at the same time!

BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus alexandri*) – This was often the most common species of hummingbird on tour and we saw them on at least 7 of our tour days.

ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD (*Calypte anna*) – This stocky hummer with a short, straight bill was seen well at the Ash Canyon feeders. We noted how the pink feathering not only lined the gorget, but also extended up onto the head.

BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus platycercus*) – We started to hear the buzzes of the flying males when we reached the Chiricahuas but it wasn't until the Miller Canyon feeders that we got to watch them at point-blank distances.

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus calliope*) – This little hummer, the smallest bird north of Mexico, was spotted a few times visiting the feeders at the Santa Rita Lodge of Madera Canyon. This was a surprise encounter; these are mostly north at this point of the season.

BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD (*Cynanthus latirostris*) – A red-billed species, they became a familiar sight at feeders in Portal, Miller Canyon, Ash Canyon, and at the Paton's.

VIOLET-CROWNED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia violiceps*) – This white-fronted hummer was spotted at the Paton's feeders where it was probably our only chance for it. The feeders in Patagonia have long-since been some of the most reliable in the US for this uncommon species.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

ELEGANT TROGON (*Trogon elegans*) – Perhaps this is the species you think of when you contemplate the spectacular birding of Southeast Arizona. We were at the right place at the right time to witness one perched right overhead in the South Fork of Cave Creek. Just a minute or two later, it wandered up canyon. Wow!

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

ACORN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – The inspiration of Woody the Woodpecker, this clown-like woodpecker was a familiar species for much of our tour. We had ample opportunities to study them at places like Cave Creek, Miller Canyon, and Madera Canyon.

- GILA WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes uropygialis*) – A woodpecker of the lowlands and desert regions, this vocal species we seen first at the Tucson Mountain Park. They turned out to especially numerous at locations like Patagonia and the San Pedro House.
- WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER** (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*) – We had a surprise encounter with this woodpecker high in the Chiricahuas. Maybe a lingering bird or a potential breeder? There have been more sightings of this species this spring than normal.
- RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER** (*Sphyrapicus nuchalis*) – One of these woodpeckers was found on the grounds at the research station in Cave Creek. It would go on to be the only sighting on tour.
- LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER** (*Picoides scalaris*) – Seen on about half of our days, this is a small woodpecker that prefers the dry, "deserty" regions like California Gulch, Patagonia Lake State Park, and Montosa Canyon.
- HAIRY WOODPECKER** (*Picoides villosus*) – A highland species in Southeast Arizona, this woodpecker was seen quite well as it foraged low on a roadside near Onion Saddle.
- ARIZONA WOODPECKER** (*Picoides arizonae*) – Formerly part of Strickland's Woodpecker (which was split off and is now endemic to Mexico), this species is a brown-backed resident in Southeast Arizona and Southwest New Mexico. We had sightings in Cave Creek, Carr Canyon, and Madera Canyon.
- NORTHERN FLICKER (RED-SHAFTED)** (*Colaptes auratus cafer*) – We saw this woodpecker many times including at Cave Creek, Miller Canyon, and several high up in Carr Canyon. You can separate this subspecies from the Yellow-shafteds by the red malar (on males) and the lack of red in the nape.
- GILDED FLICKER** (*Colaptes chrysoides*) – This was one of our targets near Tucson on the first day and we struck gold in the desert regions west of town. We could even see the yellow-shafted flight feathers as it flew.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

- AMERICAN KESTREL** (*Falco sparverius*) – Our smallest falcon, one was spotted just over the New Mexico state line.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

- NORTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET** (*Camptostoma imberbe*) – It took a little effort but we were rewarded with superb looks at this tiny flycatcher at Patagonia Lake State Park. After that, we could hardly get rid of them.
- OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER** (*Contopus cooperi*) – A long-winged flycatcher in the same genus as the pewees, one of these was spotted atop a tree on the Herb Martyr Road in the Chiricahuas.
- GREATER PEWEE** (*Contopus pertinax*) – Most of our encounters with this flycatcher came from Miller and Carr Canyon although we heard some while in the Chiricahuas too. Their distinctive song sounds like "Jose Maria!".
- WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE** (*Contopus sordidulus*) – We were surprised at how few of these we saw on tour. Still, we had plenty of chances to listen to and look at this common western flycatcher. They sound like "Dee deer".
- HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax hammondi*) – Only a passage migrant in this part of Arizona, this rather plain empid has fairly long primary projection compared to the Dusky. We saw a few of these in the Chiricahuas like at South Fork of Cave Creek and again higher up near Onion Saddle.
- GRAY FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax wrightii*) – The downward-pumping of the tail makes this empid fairly unique among flycatchers. We crossed paths with one out in the flats near the San Pedro House one afternoon.
- DUSKY FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax oberholseri*) – This is another migrant empid in this part of Arizona and we only spotted one on tour. Our sighting came from Hunter Canyon where we got to watch this species and study the short primary-projection.
- PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax difficilis*) – This yellowish empid is essentially identical to the Cordilleran Flycatcher. Luckily, their call notes are a handy way of telling them apart. We found a migrant or two in California Gulch that did us the favor of vocalizing.
- CORDILLERAN FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax occidentalis*) – This is another yellowish flycatcher but one that breeds in the mountains of SE Arizona. Strangely though, we managed to hear this species several times but we never got on one a a group. [*]
- BUFF-BREADED FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax fulvifrons*) – A range-restricted, buffy-colored species only found in a couple of mountain ranges in the US. We ended up seeing quite a few in Carr Canyon.
- BLACK PHOEBE** (*Sayornis nigricans*) – A flycatcher that loves to be around water, it was first seen along Blue Haven Road in Patagonia.
- SAY'S PHOEBE** (*Sayornis saya*) – A buffy-bellied phoebe that loves the arid, open country of the west. This species proved to be quite common around our lodging in Cave Creek (we even spotted a nest).
- VERMILION FLYCATCHER** (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) – A real crowd-pleaser, the bright males were easy to spot at places like Lakeside Park in Tucson and Kino Springs (where they liked to perch on the greens)
- DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – This myiarchus was heard more than seen but thankfully its downslurred call is pretty distinctive. We caught glimpses in Cave Creek, Miller Canyon, Hunter Canyon, and Pena Blanca Lake.
- ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) – We had quite a collection of these subtly-marked flycatchers in California Gulch as well as Montosa Canyon, Hunter Canyon, etc. This species is very wide-ranging in the western US.
- BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) – This large myiarchus was first seen in the dry deserts west of Tucson on our first day. Although that one didn't want to perch out in the open, we caught up to many more in the Chiricahuas and again in Patagonia. This is a cavity-nester and has been seen nesting in saguaros.
- TROPICAL KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – After a probable Tropical was spotted at Sweetwater Wetlands on Day 1, we cleaned this species up nicely at the Rio Rico Ponds.
- CASSIN'S KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus vociferans*) – This turned out to be our most-frequently seen flycatcher on the trip (seen every day!).
- THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus crassirostris*) – An uncommon specialty of SE Arizona, this kingbird was first spotted in Portal thanks to some local intel. We went on to see more at the Patagonia Roadside Rest where they are often the main target.
- WESTERN KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus verticalis*) – This species of kingbird has white outer tail feathers that made separation easy from other species. We ended up seeing these on at least half of our tour days.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

- LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE** (*Lanius ludovicianus*) – Scarce on this trip, only one was seen. Our scope views came from the Willow Tank in Portal.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

BELL'S VIREO (*Vireo bellii*) – Although the song was a very common sound in the scrubby habitats, this species kinda sneaks around a bit and rarely perches out in the open. Still, we had nice looks at various places including Montosa Canyon.

HUTTON'S VIREO (*Vireo huttoni*) – This species looks like a chunky Ruby-crowned Kinglet but with a thicker bill and less animated feeding behavior. We had many encounters including at Cave Creek, Miller Canyon, and Carr Canyon.

PLUMBEOUS VIREO (*Vireo plumbeus*) – The burry song of this breeder was a common sound in the conifer forests at higher elevations. We had numerous encounters in the Chiricahuas and Huachucas.

WARBLING VIREO (*Vireo gilvus*) – An uncommon species on tour, this bland vireo popped up just a couple of times including near the Onion Saddle in the Chiricahuas, Blue Haven Road in Patagonia, and Montosa Canyon.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

STELLER'S JAY (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) – A handsome, dark blue corvid with a big crest, this species was spotted just a few times at higher elevations including at Pinery Canyon and near Onion Saddle.

WOODHOUSE'S SCRUB-JAY (*Aphelocoma woodhouseii*) – In the not-so-distant past, these used to be called Western Scrub-Jays. However, that species was split in 2016 and all of the scrub-jays in Arizona belong to this species now. We encountered some near Portal, up in Carr Canyon, and in Hunter Canyon.

MEXICAN JAY (*Aphelocoma wollweberi*) – This pale bluish jay was a staple along our trip and we saw them every day except for around Tucson. This species used to be called Gray-breasted Jay.

CHIHUAHUAN RAVEN (*Corvus cryptoleucus*) – Limited more to the open grasslands, this smaller raven was seen a few times as we crossed from the Huachucas westward towards Patagonia.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*) – A common and familiar all-black corvid, this species was seen every day of our tour.

Alaudidae (Larks)

HORNED LARK (*Eremophila alpestris*) – Our only sighting of these bare-ground specialists came from Willcox where a few were foraging on an old lakebed.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – We found this subtle swallow a few times including at Sweetwater Wetlands on our first afternoon.

PURPLE MARTIN (HESPERIA) (*Progne subis hesperia*) – We saw two of these chunky and dark swallows using a hole in a saguaro in California Gulch. Within the US, the hesperia subspecies is found only in Arizona and they are saguaro specialists.

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta thalassina*) – This was the most frequently encountered swallow in Cave Creek, Portal, and throughout the Huachucas.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – A common and widespread species throughout our tour. The deeply forked tail is a good fieldmark to look for.

CLIFF SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) – Our two encounters were at Willcox and Kino Springs. The tan rump patch is a dead giveaway.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

MEXICAN CHICKADEE (*Poecile sclateri*) – This chickadee is one of the main targets of birders visiting southern Arizona. Within Arizona, they're found only high in the Chiricahuas and we found a few between Onion Saddle and the Barfoot Junction.

BRIDLED TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus wollweberi*) – What a striking titmouse! This black-and-white acrobat was seen several times in the South Fork of Cave Creek and again briefly in Madera Canyon.

JUNIPER TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus ridgwayi*) – Although it remained very sneaky and hard-to-see, this plain-colored titmouse was seen on the Portal-Paradise Road in the juniper habitats. This species used to be lumped with Oak Titmouse and called "Plain Titmouse".

Remizidae (Penduline-Tits)

VERDIN (*Auriparus flaviceps*) – This rather dull-colored species with a yellowish head was seen on our first outing to Sweetwater Wetlands. They're a desert specialist and we never crossed paths with them at higher elevations.

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)

BUSH TIT (*Psaltriparus minimus*) – Cute little gray puffs that roamed in flocks, this species was seen several times in montane areas like Miller Canyon, Carr Canyon, and Hunter Canyon.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta canadensis*) – This species serenaded us while we watched the Spotted Owl in Miller Canyon. That would turn out to be our only sighting of this conifer-loving nuthatch.

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta carolinensis*) – A familiar bird for most, this tree-creeping species was seen first in Portal and then again at Carr Canyon and the feeders in Madera Canyon.

PYGMY NUTHATCH (*Sitta pygmaea*) – Our best looks at this tiny denizen of conifer forests came from the high elevations near Onion Saddle.

Certhiidae (Treecreepers)

BROWN CREEPER (*Certhia americana*) – Most of our sightings came from high in the Chiricahuas although we did find more in Carr Canyon to the west. This species climbs upwards in a spiral whereas nuthatches usually go down tree head first.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

ROCK WREN (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) – We finally caught up with a couple of these along Ruby Road after hearing a few earlier on the trip.

CANYON WREN (*Catherpes mexicanus*) – The great song of this wren, the downward whistles descending the scale, were a common sound around steep rock cliffs. We focused on them in Cave Creek and then again in California Gulch where we found a family group.

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – A plain and common species, this wren was seen on a majority of our days. A pair was even nesting under the footbridge at the research station.

BEWICK'S WREN (*Thryomanes bewickii*) – This songster has a longish tail and white eyebrow. The song, which is similar to the Spotted Towhee, never starts with those two intro notes. Luckily for us, they were seen or heard nearly every day.

CACTUS WREN (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*) – The largest wren in the US, this desert-loving species was fairly common around Portal, along the Portal-Paradise Road, and in Montosa Canyon.

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila caerulea*) – Our sightings of this wheezy-sounding species were split between the Chiricahuas and the Huachucas. This species lacks a black cap in every plumage.

BLACK-TAILED GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila melanura*) – Although they can show a black cap, the underside of the tail is mostly black. We saw this snazzy species on our first outing to the deserts west of Tucson.

BLACK-CAPPED GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila nigriceps*) – Although a very rare bird in the US, this species has bred in southern Arizona in recent years. We found a cooperative bird at Patagonia Lake State Park and then chanced into another one in Montosa Canyon the following day! Similar to the previous species but with more white in the tail and with different vocalizations.

Regulidae (Kinglets)

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus calendula*) – Our only sighting was in Carr Canyon.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

EASTERN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia sialis*) – Like the previous species, our only encounter with this mostly-eastern bluebird was high up in Carr Canyon.

WESTERN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia mexicana*) – We were high in the Chiricahuas near the Onion Saddle when one of these was spotted downhill.

HERMIT THRUSH (*Catharus guttatus*) – Our first encounter with this brown thrush was in the South Fork of Cave Creek in the Chiricahuas.

AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*) – Although a familiar presence on lawns across the country, this species is more of a montane thrush in southeast Arizona. We saw them in Cave Creek, near the Onion Saddle, and in Carr Canyon.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

CURVE-BILLED THRASHER (*Toxostoma curvirostre*) – Maybe a bit misnamed as there are several thrashers with more-curved bills! However, compared with the following species, this name is appropriate. We had great looks at Bob Rodriguez' feeders in Portal and at the San Pedro House.

BENDIRE'S THRASHER (*Toxostoma bendirei*) – The flatlands below Portal are a good place to look and we had quick success there. This thrasher has a shorter and straighter bill than the previous species.

CRISSAL THRASHER (*Toxostoma crissale*) – After missing this secretive thrasher at a few places, it soon rose to the top of our target list. We eventually managed scope views of one along the Portal-Paradise Road early one morning.

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*) – We saw this mimic a few times including at Lakeside Park in Tucson and at Whitewater Draw.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – A familiar introduced species. We saw them at Sweetwater Wetlands on our first day. [I]

Bombycillidae (Waxwings)

CEDAR WAXWING (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) – Quite a good-sized flock was present in St. David, probably attracted to the fruiting trees.

Ptilionotidae (Silky-flycatchers)

PHAINOPEPLA (*Phainopepla nitens*) – We saw this attractive species in the low, deserty regions like Kino Springs, California Gulch, and Patagonia Lake State Park. This is our only silky-flycatcher in the US.

Peucedramidae (Olive Warbler)

OLIVE WARBLER (*Peucedramus taeniatus*) – The road high in the Chiricahuas near the Onion Saddle put us in a great position to see this specialty.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – This is an uncommon warbler that we heard chipping from a wet area at Kino Springs. [*]

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis celata*) – We found this uniformly-colored warbler just a few times high in the Chiricahuas.

LUCY'S WARBLER (*Oreothlypis luciae*) – A species that loves the dry, hot lowlands and riparian areas, this cavity-nesting warbler was seen numerous times at locations like urban Tucson, Portal, San Pedro House, Patagonia, California Gulch, etc.

VIRGINIA'S WARBLER (*Oreothlypis virginiae*) – Joe spotted this nice warbler at Beatty's in Miller Canyon.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*) – Sweetwater Wetlands, Whitewater Draw, and Kino Springs were all locations we saw this masked warbler.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – This classic warbler was fairly common although we heard it more than we saw it. Sightings started right away at Sweetwater Wetlands.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (AUDUBON'S) (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*) – We found quite a number of these high in the Chiricahuas including a flock of 10-15 near Rustler Park.

GRACE'S WARBLER (*Setophaga graciae*) – This is an attractive little warbler that tends to stick to the tops of conifers. We had looks at Cave Creek, Rustler Park, Carr Canyon, and Hunter Canyon.

BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER (*Setophaga nigrescens*) – High in the Chiricahuas is where we saw a couple of these black-and-white western warblers.

TOWNSEND'S WARBLER (*Setophaga townsendi*) – Another western warbler, this yellow and black species turned out to be fairly common in the Chiricahuas and Huachucas.

RUFOUS-CAPPED WARBLER (*Basileuterus rufifrons*) – Wow, what a fantastic bird to see in the US! We made the walk up Hunter Canyon and eventually found our target out in the open singing! Although this warbler occasionally breeds in the US, it's still considered a rarity.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*) – We saw this common, black-capped species on a majority of our days and in a variety of habitats.

RED-FACED WARBLER (*Cardellina rubrifrons*) – One of the great gems in the warbler family! We spotted this attractive species near Rustler Park but it didn't stick around for long.

PAINTED REDSTART (*Myioborus pictus*) – Although not the rarest redstart we saw on tour, it certainly was more numerous and always pleasing to see. Our first was from Pinery Canyon.

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (*Myioborus miniatus*) – What a fantastic rarity to see on tour! We ventured up to the stakeout location near Pinery Canyon and started looking. Although up the gully a little ways, we found the bird and even got to hear it singing a few times. Earlier this spring, it was a different Field Guides group that discovered that this bird had returned to where it hung out last year.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens*) – We saw this large, long-tailed warbler first in St. David on our first full day of birding.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

RUFIOUS-WINGED SPARROW (*Peucaea carpalis*) – This is a range-restricted sparrow in Arizona and we wasted no time seeing it in the desert west of Tucson. Turns out, we would go on to find this species many times, more than usual.

BOTTERI'S SPARROW (*Peucaea botterii*) – A grassy roadside provided us great looks at this grassland species just outside of Sierra Vista.

CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*) – Not a common species on tour, this small spizella sparrow surfaced just a few times. Our first was along the road from South Fork to Onion Saddle in the Chiricahuas.

BLACK-CHINNED SPARROW (*Spizella atrogularis*) – Brrr! Our first attempt at this striking sparrow was hampered by some serious wind and chilly temps. Thankfully, we caught up to a beautiful bird in Hunter Canyon that perched out in the open for all to see.

BREWER'S SPARROW (*Spizella breweri*) – A bit of a surprise, this drab sparrow suddenly showed up on the ground at Bob Rodrigues' feeders.

BLACK-THROATED SPARROW (*Amphispiza bilineata*) – I'm not sure there is a sharper, more clean-cut sparrow than this desert specialist. We had crippling looks at Bob Rodrigues' feeders at the start of the tour.

FIVE-STRIPED SPARROW (*Amphispiza quinquestriata*) – The most reliable place in all of the US to see this very rare sparrow is California Gulch. We made the drive and trek down into the canyon and had several very nice, close looks.

LARK SPARROW (*Chondestes grammacus*) – You might remember the white corners of the tail on this large, attractive sparrow. We had a flock of 30 moving through Sweetwater Wetlands on our first day.

YELLOW-EYED JUNCO (*Junco phaeonotus*) – The high-elevation conifer forests of the Chiricahuas and Huachucas often hosted these ground-dwellers. This species, more than not, tends to be very tame and we all enjoyed great looks.

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW (ORIANATHA) (*Zonotrichia leucophrys oriantha*) – Although this subspecies doesn't breed in southeast Arizona, we saw a few of these dark-lored birds at feeders like Bob Rodrigues' setup.

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW (GAMBEL'S) (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*) – Unlike the previous subspecies, this one has pale lores. This is the most common subspecies wintering in Arizona and we saw a few lingering at feeders.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) – We were lucky to see this rather rare species feeding in and around a brush pile at the Paton Center in Patagonia.

SONG SPARROW (*Melospiza melodia*) – We only saw this species in wet areas away from the mountains. For example, sightings occurred at Sweetwater Wetlands, Whitewater Draw, the Paton Center, Kino Springs, and the Rio Rico Ponds.

CANYON TOWHEE (*Melospiza fusca*) – This species is at home in the dry washes and deserts of Arizona. Our first sighting came from the mountains west of Tucson but we would see many more.

ABERT'S TOWHEE (*Melospiza aberti*) – This dark-faced towhee was much less common than the previous species; we would see them at Sweetwater Wetlands and then again nicely at the Paton Center.

RUFIOUS-CROWNED SPARROW (*Aimophila ruficeps*) – With a song reminiscent of a hurried House Wren, it was easy to pass this sparrow off. Still, we saw this rock-loving species many times including half a dozen in California Gulch.

GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE (*Pipilo chlorurus*) – Our first appeared at Bob Rodrigues' feeders but we saw more at the Paton Center.

SPOTTED TOWHEE (*Pipilo maculatus*) – A very widespread and common species. The song of this towhee was especially representative of many of the habitats we spent time in.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

HEPATIC TANAGER (*Piranga flava*) – Cave Creek and Miller Canyon turned out to be reliable spots for this southwestern specialty.

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) – Although sightings were sprinkled throughout the tour, our best looks came in California Gulch, Patagonia Lake State Park, and Harshaw Canyon. The commonly-heard call of this species sounds like "pick-up truck".

WESTERN TANAGER (*Piranga ludoviciana*) – Seen on more than half of our days, this turned out to be a very commonly-seen species. Some were migrants but some could have been breeders too.

NORTHERN CARDINAL (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) – A common species in the dry, scrubby lowlands around Portal and Patagonia.

PYRRHULOXIA (*Cardinalis sinuatus*) – A "desert cardinal", if you will. We saw this nicely-highlighted species west of Tucson, in Portal, and in Montosa Canyon.

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) – A common and widespread species on tour; it was seen nearly every day.

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*) – Worth enjoyed this handsome bird at the San Pedro House along with the rest of us. Not only did we see one... we saw nearly half a dozen!

LAZULI BUNTING (*Passerina amoena*) – Quite a collection of these put on a great show at Bob Rodrigues' feeders and again at the San Pedro House. Such gorgeous birds!

INDIGO BUNTING (*Passerina cyanea*) – One snuck into the back feeders at Mary Jo's in Ash Canyon. It scampered off pretty quickly though and not everyone got a look.

VARIED BUNTING (*Passerina versicolor*) – Whew, talk about 11th hour! This species, which returns to Arizona in May, was just arriving back as we were finishing up the tour. Our persistence paid off when we snagged a gorgeous male in Montosa Canyon on our last day.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – Although sightings were scattered throughout the trip, we saw the most at Sweetwater Wetlands and the Rio Rico ponds.

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (LILIAN'S) (*Sturnella magna lilianae*) – The Lilian's subspecies is still part of Eastern Meadowlark despite a movement to give it full species status. We had these in Willcox and Upper Elgin Road.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Common and widespread, this species was seen every day on tour.

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*) – We caught up to this thick-necked, red-eyed cowbird at Pena Blanca Lake and then saw another in Madera Canyon.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (*Molothrus ater*) – This species was a familiar sight at places like Bob Rodrigues's feeders, the Paton Center, and many others.

HOODED ORIOLE (*Icterus cucullatus*) – We saw our first at Bob Rodrigues' feeders and then another in Harshaw Canyon.

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE (*Icterus bullockii*) – A common sight at Bob's feeders in Portal as well as Cave Creek, San Pedro House, and Ash Canyon.

SCOTT'S ORIOLE (*Icterus parisorum*) – We saw this black-and-yellow oriole first in Cave Creek but would go on to see more at Ash Canyon, Harshaw Canyon, and several up the trail in Hunter Canyon.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

HOUSE FINCH (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) – This was an abundant species that was seen every day.

PINE SISKIN (*Spinus pinus*) – Our only sighting were of 4 coming to feeders in the town of Portal.

LESSER GOLDFINCH (*Spinus psaltria*) – Seen nearly every day, this small finch was missed only once. They were especially abundant at the Paton Center in Patagonia.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Common and widespread around urban areas. [II]

MAMMALS

EASTERN COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) – The high-elevation cottontail in SE Arizona is typically this species. We had a quick look at one in Carr Canyon in the Huachucas.

DESERT COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus audubonii*) – The lowland cottontail around Tucson is probably this species. We saw it on our first and last days of tour.

BLACK-TAILED JACKRABBIT (*Lepus californicus*) – This big guy was spotted in the lowlands below Cave Creek midway through our trip.

CLIFF CHIPMUNK (*Tamias dorsalis*) – This cute little guy was seen on the grounds of the research station multiple times.

HARRIS'S ANTELOPE SQUIRREL (*Ammospermophilus harrisi*) – We found one of these after it had climbed a bush at Sweetwater Wetlands.

SPOTTED GROUND SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus spilosoma*) – This ground squirrel was spotted taking a drink at Bob Rodrigues' feeders in Portal.

ROCK SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus variegatus*) – A common and widespread species, they're fair climbers and we sometimes saw them perched in trees or on fence posts.

ROUND-TAILED GROUND SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus tereticaudus*) – We heard this species calling from inside its burrow near the Burrowing Owl spot in Tucson. [*]

ARIZONA GRAY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus arizonensis*) – This well-named squirrel was seen in Carr Canyon of the Huachucas on our 6th day.

BOTTAE'S POCKET GOPHER (*Thomomys bottae*) – One of these would occasionally pop up for some grass while we were doing our checklist at the research station.

WHITE-NOSED COATI (*Nasua narica*) – We were minding our own business when we stumbled on a coati on the Ruby Road. As soon as we stopped to get a look, this critter scrambled right under the car shrieking the whole time. Opening the side door wasn't the right move; it tried to come in! We took it slow and eventually got some distance as we drove away from this probably-rabid dude.

BOBCAT (*Lynx rufus*) – It was quick but a few folks had a glimpse of one darting across a road in Portal.

MULE DEER (*Odocoileus hemionus*) – We crossed paths with an odd, tight group of these deer; were they wild?

WHITE-TAILED DEER (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – Our most commonly-seen mammal of the trip.

PRONGHORN (*Antilocapra americana*) – We were looking for grassland sparrows along Upper Elgin Road when a few of these, including a big buck, were seen.

Herps

AMERICAN BULLFROG (*Lithobates catesbeianus*) – Pena Blanca Lake was where we heard the deep calls of this species. [*]

POND SLIDER (*Trachemys scripta*) – A few folks spotted this turtle on our first day of tour.

DESERT SPINY LIZARD (*Sceloporus magister*) – This attractive lizard was seen along a trail at Sweetwater Wetlands on our first day.

SONORAN SPOTTED WHIPTAIL (*Aspidoscelis sonorae*) – This lizard also was seen on our first day of tour.

GILA MONSTER (*Heloderma suspectum*) – Clearly we saved one of the best for last, imagine our luck to stumble onto this rare and hard-to-find species in Montosa Canyon! However, this venomous lizard didn't seem much in a hurry as it wandered off the shoulder of the road.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 210 bird taxa and 15 mammal taxa