



*Field Guides Tour Report*

**Arizona Nightbirds & More II 2015**

May 7, 2014 to May 11, 2014

Dave Stejskal & Tom Johnson

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



*This adult Painted Redstart was busy feeding young in a hidden nest just off the South Fork Road in the Chiricahua Mountains. This beautiful species delighted us numerous times on this short tour. (Photo by guide Dave Stejskal)*

We enjoyed great weather on this year's trip, with little to no wind and pleasant temperatures (about 10-15 degrees F lower than normal for early May) for the entire trip. The lack of serious wind sure made looking for our primary targets -- the many nightbirds of this rich region -- much easier and so much more enjoyable!

We started the trip off right with an easy Burrowing Owl staring back at us while we sat in the comfort of our van minutes from our airport hotel. We then put the birding and nightbirding into high gear by heading down to remote California Gulch west of Nogales. After a stop along the entrance road for a very cooperative male Montezuma Quail (WOW!!), we found a cooperative Five-striped Sparrow above California Gulch itself, offering great views to all before we walked away. Then, after a delicious picnic dinner in a lovely setting near the Mexican border, we got our lights onto a rare singing male Buff-collared Nightjar -- with a brief look of a curious female as well -- before we turned our attention to the Western Screech-Owl and Elf Owls in the area. What a way to start this tour!!

The next morning found us ascending Miller Canyon for a look at a roosting "Mexican" Spotted Owl and a calling Northern Pygmy-Owl, and then a nesting pair of Great Horned Owls at Whitewater Draw to the east. Six species of owls in less than 24 hours -- not bad! Over in the Chiricahuas, that first evening netted us fine views of the recently split Mexican Whip-poor-will high up in that range, and then a cooperative Whiskered Screech-Owl lower down in Cave Creek Canyon before we called it a day and headed to bed in nearby Portal.

Our one full day in the Chiricahuas was indeed a busy one with a walk down the South Fork Road (Elegant Trogon comes to mind), a drive along State Line Road (great Bendire's and Crissal thrashers), and afternoon visits to feeding stations in and around Portal. We capped off the day with a rather unsatisfactory Common Poorwill but a fabulously cooperative Flammulated Owl -- my best in years and our eighth owl of the trip! Our final day in the Chiricahuas and on the trip back to Tucson saw us birding the pinyon/juniper habitat near Paradise, cleaning up on the high-elevation species that we still needed, and then a visit to the productive oasis of Willcox Twin Lakes Golf Course.

Tom and I both want to thank all of you for joining us on this short and productive tour to the best nightbirding region in the country! We had a blast birding with all of you and hope we can reconnect with you soon on another tour!

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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*) – This tropical species gets scarce in s.e. Arizona east of the San Pedro R. Nice views of a pair at Whitewater Draw.

**GADWALL** (*Anas strepera*) [b]

**AMERICAN WIGEON** (*Anas americana*) [b]

**MALLARD (MEXICAN)** (*Anas platyrhynchos diazi*) – A couple of our birds looked to be 'pure' Mexican Ducks, but it looks like many in our state have been polluted with "Northern" Mallard genes.

**CINNAMON TEAL** (*Anas cyanoptera*) – A very few pairs of this fancy Western duck breed in the region most years.

**NORTHERN SHOVELER** (*Anas clypeata*) [b]

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

**REDHEAD** (*Aythya americana*) [b]

**RING-NECKED DUCK** (*Aythya collaris*) [b]

**LESSER SCAUP** (*Aythya affinis*) [b]

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

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

**SCALED QUAIL** (*Callipepla squamata*) – A few fantastic looks near Portal and in the Willcox area.

**GAMBEL'S QUAIL** (*Callipepla gambelii*) – One of the quintessential Southwestern species, and seen very well a number of times.

**MONTEZUMA QUAIL** (*Cyrtonyx montezumae*) – We really had to work for this one on that first afternoon on our way into California Gulch - but what a look! And to get yet another pair crossing the road in front of us near Portal was just icing on the cake.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

**WILD TURKEY** (*Meleagris gallopavo*) – A defiant tom gobbled up the hill after "Mr. Turkey" left the scene.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

**EARED GREBE** (*Podiceps nigricollis*) – Numbers at Willcox had fallen way off since my last tour through here. [b]

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

**NEOTROPIC CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – This was somewhat of a surprise at Whitewater Draw since it's still rather local and scarce in Cochise County.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

**WHITE-FACED IBIS** (*Plegadis chihi*) – Some fabulous iridescence on these at Willcox. [b]

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

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

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

**SWAINSON'S HAWK** (*Buteo swainsoni*) – Oddly, about 99% of the breeding Swainson's Hawks in s.e. Arizona are light-morph birds. We usually only see dark-morph birds during migration.

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

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

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

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

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

**AMERICAN AVOCET** (*Recurvirostra americana*) – A few pairs had already started nesting at the Willcox pond during our visit on the final day. [N]

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

**KILLDEER** (*Charadrius vociferus*) [N]

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

**SPOTTED SANDPIPER** (*Actitis macularius*) – May is THE month for migration for this one in s.e. Arizona. [b]

**WILLET (WESTERN)** (*Tringa semipalmata inornata*) – There's been a little talk about splitting the eastern and western Willets, so keep track of where you see 'em. [b]

**BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** (*Calidris bairdii*) – Quite scarce here in spring. [b]

**LEAST SANDPIPER** (*Calidris minutilla*) [b]

**WESTERN SANDPIPER** (*Calidris mauri*) [b]

**LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) – A little earlier in the spring I had over 125 of these at Willcox; numbers were down considerably from that high during our visit. This one is, by far, the most common of the two dowitcher species in the state. [b]

**WILSON'S PHALAROPE** (*Phalaropus tricolor*) – Quite a few gorgeous females at Willcox. [b]

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

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

**BAND-TAILED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – We had some impressive numbers fly over the Portal Store on our final morning there.

**EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE** (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – Unknown in the state before 2000. [I]

**INCA DOVE** (*Columbina inca*) – Inca Dove is in serious decline throughout Arizona, but it seems to be doing quite well in Portal, where it was considered a vagrant only 15 years ago.

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

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

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

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

**GREATER ROADRUNNER** (*Geococcyx californianus*) – A couple of memorable looks at this noble bird!

Strigidae (Owls)

**FLAMMULATED OWL** (*Ptiloscoptes flammeolus*) – WOWWWW!!!! We clearly found the right bird in the Chiricahuas, with everyone getting smashing views as he sang away from the pines. This one is one of the toughest of all of the owls to try to track down because its voice is so soft and ventriloquial. But this wasn't your guides' first rodeo...

**WESTERN SCREECH-OWL** (*Megascops kennicottii*) – Our responsive bird near the Mexican border on that first night kept its distance, but we still came away with a good look. This screech-owl is very similar in appearance to the Whiskered, but they differ in habitat preference, bill color (at least in s.e. Arizona), voice, and a few subtle plumage characters.

**WHISKERED SCREECH-OWL** (*Megascops trichopsis*) – This look-alike species prefers denser woodland habitat than the Western, always has a pale-tipped greenish bill, and has a very different voice. Our bird performed very nicely for us along the roadside in Cave Creek Canyon on our first night of owling there. Of the specialty owl in s.e. Arizona, this one has the most restricted range within the state.

**GREAT HORNED OWL** (*Bubo virginianus*) – We enjoyed multiple looks at this familiar species at Whitewater Draw and in Portal. [N]

**NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL** (*Glaucidium gnoma*) – Both of our birds were high in tall pines and best viewed through the scope. These southern birds of the subspecies *gnoma* have a notably different song cadence than birds to the north and west of here and may eventually be found to be different enough to split out as the Mountain Pygmy-Owl.

**ELF OWL** (*Micrathene whitneyi*) – This tiny owl, the world's smallest, was pretty flighty at our picnic dinner spot near the Mexican border, but we all got a decent look after we savored our nightjars. This little guy enjoys a huge distributional and elevational range within the state, occurring from lower Colorado River Valley in far western Arizona at about 500 feet up to near 6000' or more in the mountains of S.E. Arizona.

**BURROWING OWL** (*Athene cucularia*) – Our sighting of this endearing species was made to order as we just drove up to the spot near the Tucson Airport and enjoyed point-blank views of a bird standing outside its nesting burrow. A bird in serious decline in Arizona and other parts of the West.

**SPOTTED OWL** (*Strix occidentalis*) – We had much better luck with this bird in the Huachuca Mts. than I did with my prior tour here. Though it wasn't facing the trail, we all enjoyed prolonged views of this adult roosting in the mid-morning hours in Miller Canyon. The race here, *S.o. lucida* (Mexican Spotted Owl) isn't in near the trouble that the Northern Spotted Owl (*S.o. caurina*) is in.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

**LESSER NIGHTHAWK** (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – A couple of these flew over the Portal Peak Lodge parking lot just before we left to go bag our Flammulated Owl higher up. This species is much more widespread in Arizona than the familiar Common Nighthawk. In S.E. Arizona, the Common is restricted to middle elevation grasslands and generally isn't found in the habitats around Portal.

**COMMON POORWILL** (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*) – We had some trouble with this bird in the Portal area after dipping on it entirely at California Gulch. The cooler temps and breezy conditions probably affected the willingness of this one to sit out in the road, which is where we normally find it on this tour.

**BUFF-COLLARED NIGHTJAR** (*Antrostomus ridgwayi*) – YESSSSS!!!! This scarce nightjar, which only barely reaches far s. Arizona, started singing pretty much right on cue for us after we finished cleaning up after our picnic dinner on the Mexican border on our first evening together. We all enjoyed leisurely looks at it as it sat on a couple of exposed dead limbs just above the dry wash and we were pretty thrilled to see a female bird come and and join it while we watched! This bird doesn't make an Arizona appearance every year, but this seems to be a good year for it here.

**MEXICAN WHIP-POOR-WILL** (*Antrostomus arizonae arizonae*) – After hearing quite a few of these recently split birds (split from the familiar Eastern Whip-poor-will east of the Continental Divide), Tom found a cooperative perched bird right behind us high in the Chiricahuas. We all proceeded to enjoy good scope views of this bird as it sat still long enough to be seen by all - even enough for seconds and thirds!

Apodidae (Swifts)

**WHITE-THROATED SWIFT** (*Aeronautes saxatalis*) – Most of these were high above the canyon floor in Cave Creek Canyon. The only confirmed breeding swift in the state.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

**MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD** (*Eugenes fulgens*) – The 2nd-largest U.S. nesting hummer.

**BLUE-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Lampornis clemenciae*) – Great scope looks in the Chiricahuas at the largest breeding hummer in the U.S.

**BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Archilochus alexandri*) – The Western counterpart to the familiar Ruby-throated Hummingbird and one of the most common of the many hummers in this area.

**ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD** (*Calypte anna*) – Nicely at the feeders in Miller Canyon.

**BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Selasphorus platycercus*) – Most of our encounters were of hearing the high-pitched whistle of the males' wings as they flew past us.

**BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Cynanthus latirostris*) – Another stunning hummingbird species, this turned out to be the only species that was recorded every day of this short tour.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

**ELEGANT TROGON** (*Trogon elegans*) – I think the only gripe I have with our multiple looks of this one was that they were too short to enjoy at length in the scopes! Still, a fabulous iconic bird that we were fortunate to see again in the Chiricahuas on this tour. One of our best "...and More" species!

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

**ACORN WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – Unmistakable!

**GILA WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes uropygialis*) – From the van only as we left our Tucson hotel that first afternoon.

**LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER** (*Picoides scalaris*)

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

**ARIZONA WOODPECKER** (*Picoides arizonae*) – Our close views as we started up Miller Canyon to look for the Spotted Owl were memorable.

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

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

**AMERICAN KESTREL** (*Falco sparverius*)

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

**OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER** (*Contopus cooperi*) [b]

**GREATER PEWEE** (*Contopus pertinax*) – Not terribly cooperative in the Huachucas or the Chiricahuas this year.

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

**HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax hammondi*) [b]

**DUSKY FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax oberholseri*) [b]

**CORDILLERAN FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax occidentalis*) – These birds had just arrived a few days earlier from their wintering grounds in W. Mexico.

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

**VERMILION FLYCATCHER** (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) – I never tire looking at these beauties!

**DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – The smallest of the three regular Myiarchus in the state and the one with the least amount of rufous in the wings and tail.

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

**BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*)

**TROPICAL KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – Willcox is a rather remote outpost for this one in the state, but it's been regular here since 2011, at least.

**CASSIN'S KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus vociferans*)

**THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus crassirostris*) – We found this one in 'downtown' Portal on my last tour the week before, and it looks like the pair here may try to nest again, as they did last year.

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

Laniidae (Shrikes)

**LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE** (*Lanius ludovicianus*)

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

**BELL'S VIREO** (*Vireo bellii*)

**PLUMBEOUS VIREO** (*Vireo plumbeus*) – If you remember the old Solitary Vireo split way back when, this was part of that three-way split and it's the only form of the three that nests in the state.

**CASSIN'S VIREO** (*Vireo cassinii*) – Tom spotted one of these migrants in Miller Canyon that a few folks were able to get onto before it disappeared. [b]

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

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

**STELLER'S JAY** (*Cyanocitta stelleri*)

**WESTERN SCRUB-JAY (WOODHOUSE'S)** (*Aphelocoma californica woodhouseii*) – Another Scrub-Jay split coming? Well, maybe this interior form that would be called Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay if it comes to pass.

**MEXICAN JAY** (*Aphelocoma wollweberi*) – By far, our most common 'jay' on the tour.

**CHIHUAHUAN RAVEN** (*Corvus cryptoleucus*) – Even when seen while we were driving in the van, the smaller size, slimmer build, and faster wingbeats are pretty evident on this desert-grassland species. [N]

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

Alaudidae (Larks)

**HORNED LARK** (*Eremophila alpestris*)

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

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

**PURPLE MARTIN (DESERT)** (*Progne subis hesperia*) – A pair of these seemed to be investigating a potential nest site in one of the few Saguaros in California Gulch on our first afternoon.

**VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW** (*Tachycineta thalassina*)

**BANK SWALLOW** (*Riparia riparia*) [b]

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

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

**MEXICAN CHICKADEE** (*Poecile sclateri*) – We ended up with excellent studies of this very local (in the U.S.) species high in the Chiricahuas. They've been relatively difficult to come by after the devastating fire of 2011, so count your blessings with this one!

**BRIDLED TITMOUSE** (*Baeolophus wollweberi*) – These endearing little guys were encountered on a regular basis on this tour.

**JUNIPER TITMOUSE** (*Baeolophus ridgwayi*) – There's only one mountain range south of the Chiricahuas (in Mexico) where this species occurs, so we were pretty darned close to the southern limit of it's World range.

Remizidae (Penduline-Tits)

**VERDIN** (*Auriparus flaviceps*)

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)

**BUSHTIT** (*Psaltriparus minimus*) – This is another one of these birds that has a pretty clear line separating coastal from interior forms with corresponding plumage and voice differences that may be ripe for a split in the future.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

**RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH** (*Sitta canadensis*) [✱]

**WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH (INTERIOR WEST)** (*Sitta carolinensis nelsoni*) – Keep track of where you see these - there may be a 3-way split coming soon.

**PYGMY NUTHATCH** (*Sitta pygmaea*) – We only had these very high in the Chiricahuas on our final day together.

Certhiidae (Treecreepers)

**BROWN CREEPER (MEXICAN)** (*Certhia americana albescens*) – This is yet another species that may be deserving of a taxonomic revision, so keep track of where you see these, too.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

**ROCK WREN** (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) – This was seen carrying food to an unseen nest in Miller Canyon. [N]

**CANYON WREN** (*Catherpes mexicanus*) [✱]

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

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

**CACTUS WREN** (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*) – A couple of pairs were actively feeding fledglings in Portal. [N]

Regulidae (Kinglets)

**RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET** (*Regulus calendula*) [b]

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

**HERMIT THRUSH** (*Catharus guttatus*)

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

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

**CURVE-BILLED THRASHER** (*Toxostoma curvirostre*)

**BENDIRE'S THRASHER** (*Toxostoma bendirei*) – A check of State Line Rd. near Portal revealed a pair of these local thrashers feeding young right next to the road on the New Mexico side of the border. [N]

**CRISSAL THRASHER** (*Toxostoma crissale*) – The same spot as the above Bendire's produced this much more shy species in the thick mesquite brush. A nice thrasher double-whammy!

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

Sturnidae (Starlings)

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

Bombycillidae (Waxwings)

**CEDAR WAXWING** (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) – A couple of lingerers in Portal. [b]

Ptilionotidae (Silky-flycatchers)

**PHAINOPEPLA** (*Phainopepla nitens*)

Peucedramidae (Olive Warbler)

**OLIVE WARBLER** (*Peucedramus taeniatus*) – A little work up high in the Chiricahuas on our last morning produced some fine looks at this bird recently placed into its own family. You got your lifer peucedramid!

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

**LUCY'S WARBLER** (*Oreothlypis luciae*) – Very often the only species of warbler in the dry desert scrub of the lowlands.

**COMMON YELLOWTHROAT** (*Geothlypis trichas*) [✱]

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

**YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (AUDUBON'S)** (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*)

**GRACE'S WARBLER** (*Setophaga graciae*) – This pine specialist was seen very well a couple of times in the mountains.

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

**TOWNSEND'S WARBLER** (*Setophaga townsendi*) – A few of these striking birds were still moving through on their way northwest. [b]

**HERMIT WARBLER** (*Setophaga occidentalis*) – At least one of these was in view briefly for some as we ascended Miller Canyon on our first morning. These often move north with mixed flocks that include Townsend's Warblers. [b]

**WILSON'S WARBLER** (*Cardellina pusilla*) – This ended up being one of the poorest springs in memory for this normally common migrant. [b]

**RED-FACED WARBLER** (*Cardellina rubrifrons*) – I know Janet was worried about this one - but Tom and I never lost the faith! Certainly one of the most distinctive and beautiful of the many s. Arizona specialty species.

**PAINTED REDSTART** (*Myioborus pictus*) – One of my all-time favorites! [N]

**YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT** (*Icteria virens*) [✱]

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

**SPOTTED TOWHEE** (*Pipilo maculatus*) – I grew up calling this one the Rufous-sided Towhee (and still call it that occasionally).

**RUFOUS-CROWNED SPARROW** (*Aimophila ruficeps*) – We had a couple of excellent studies of this handsome species, especially along the South Fork Rd. in the Chiricahuas.

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

**RUFOUS-WINGED SPARROW** (*Peucaea carpalis*) – A bird at our picnic dinner spot near the Mexican border was a nice find there. Except for a couple of extralimital records from s.w. New Mexico, s. Arizona is still the place to see this local sparrow within the U.S.

**BOTTERI'S SPARROW** (*Peucaea botterii*) – A few right along the Arizona/New Mexico border along State Line Road.

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

**BLACK-CHINNED SPARROW** (*Spizella atrogularis*) – The only place to see this local species along our route is right along the first 2 miles or so of the Portal-Paradise road, and that's where we found ours.

**LARK SPARROW** (*Chondestes grammacus*)

**FIVE-STRIPED SPARROW** (*Amphispiza quinquestriata*) – This special sparrow sat up nicely for the group along the road above California Gulch on our first afternoon of the tour, giving us all fine views. There are just a handful of canyons near the border where this one occurs within the U.S.

**BLACK-THROATED SPARROW** (*Amphispiza bilineata*)

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

**WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW (MOUNTAIN)** (*Zonotrichia leucophrys oriantha*) – We didn't see many White-crowned Sparrows on this tour, but most were this Rocky Mountains breeding race with black lores and a pink bill. This is the more common of the two expected races within Arizona during migration (they usually winter farther south in Mexico). [b]

**WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW (GAMBEL'S)** (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*) – Just one molting adult of this race at the Rodrigues feeders near Portal this year. [b]

**YELLOW-EYED JUNCO** (*Junco phaeonotus*) – A little intimidating with that fierce yellow eye...

#### Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

**HEPATIC Tanager** (*Piranga flava*) – This one usually isn't found overlapping with the rather similar Summer Tanager, but there are a number of spots where riparian intersects with pine-oak forest where one should be aware of potential confusion. Voice is always a great clue to separate these two, but the dark bill, dark cheek, and gray flanks of this one in all plumages is unlike Summer.

**SUMMER Tanager** (*Piranga rubra*)

**WESTERN Tanager** (*Piranga ludoviciana*) – Given how common this bird is as a breeder in the Chiricahuas, it's a little difficult to believe that it doesn't breed in the mountains of nearby Sonora, Mexico.

**NORTHERN CARDINAL** (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) – Longer-tailed, longer-crested, and brighter red than birds in e. North America.

**PYRRHULOXIA** (*Cardinalis sinuatus*) – We had a very impressive number of these coming in to the Rodrigues feeders near Portal that afternoon!

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

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

**LAZULI BUNTING** (*Passerina amoena*) – Still a few gorgeous males coming to Portal feeders (they were gone on my next tour here). [b]

#### Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

**EASTERN MEADOWLARK (LILIAN'S)** (*Sturnella magna lilianae*) – We had fine views of this very pale and distinctive race (or species?) at Willcox.

**YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD** (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) – Cynthia spotted a stunning adult male across the pond at Willcox and it allowed our close approach once we drove over to that side. [b]

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

**BRONZED COWBIRD** (*Molothrus aeneus*) – There's no mistaking this one for the next species given that big, red eye!

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

**HOODED ORIOLE** (*Icterus cucullatus*) – This was a pretty common bird in both California Gulch and in the Portal area.

**BULLOCK'S ORIOLE** (*Icterus bullockii*) – The western counterpart of the familiar Baltimore Oriole and once lumped with it as Northern Oriole.

**SCOTT'S ORIOLE** (*Icterus parisorum*) – Our views of this stunner were pretty distant, unfortunately.

#### Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

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

**CASSIN'S FINCH** (*Haemorhous cassinii*) – At least one female bird was still hanging around Portal during our stay there. This was an exceptional spring for this species in s.e. Arizona. [b]

**PINE SISKIN** (*Spinus pinus*) – Loads at all of the Portal feeders.

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

#### Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

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

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## MAMMALS

**EASTERN COTTONTAIL** (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) – This was the cottontail of the foothill and mountains, being replaced in the flat desert below by the next species.

**DESERT COTTONTAIL** (*Sylvilagus audubonii*) – Longer-eared than the Eastern Cottontail, but pretty similar otherwise.

**BLACK-TAILED JACKRABBIT** (*Lepus californicus*) – We had some good comparative views of this and the Antelope Jackrabbit on our drive out of California Gulch after dark.

**ANTELOPE JACKRABBIT** (*Lepus alleni*) – Those huge ears really make this one look pretty preposterous!

**CLIFF CHIPMUNK** (*Tamias dorsalis*) – The only true chipmunk along our route.

**HARRIS'S ANTELOPE SQUIRREL** (*Ammospermophilus harrisi*) – A brief crossing of the road in front of the van for some.

**SPOTTED GROUND SQUIRREL** (*Spermophilus spilosoma*) – This one inhabits some pretty desolate places!

**ROCK SQUIRREL** (*Spermophilus variegatus*) – The most common 'squirrel' that we saw on this tour.

**MEXICAN FOX SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus nayaritensis*) – Like the Mexican Chickadee, the Chiricahuas are the only place in the country where you can see this one!

**ARIZONA GRAY SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus arizonensis*) – This one gets as far east as the Huachucas in Arizona, where it's replaced by the fox squirrel above in the Chiricahuas.

**ARIZONA COTTON RAT** (*Sigmodon arizonae*) – I'm pretty sure that the cotton rats that we saw at the Rodrigues feeders near Portal were this species and not the very similar Hispid Cotton Rat.

**COYOTE** (*Canis latrans*) – One on our drive to California Gulch that first afternoon was the only one recorded.

**COLLARED PECCARY** (*Tayassu tajacu*) – We never really got a great look for the group, but some saw it along the drive to California Gulch and others saw a few in Portal.

**WHITE-TAILED DEER** (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – All of the deer we saw were the small race that occurs in the mountains here, the Coues's (pronounced 'Cows') White-tailed Deer.

#### Herps

**CHIRICAHUA LEOPARD FROG** (*Rana chiricahuensis*) – Mr. Beatty was successfully breeding these endangered leopard frogs on his property in Miller Canyon.

**COMMON LESSER EARLESS LIZARD** (*Holbrookia maculata*) – Tail length is the best character to use to separate this one from the very similar Elegant Earless Lizard (Common has the shorter tail).

**STRIPED PLATEAU LIZARD** (*Sceloporus virgatus*) – Common in the leaf litter in Cave Creek Canyon and around Portal.

**CLARK'S SPINY LIZARD** (*Sceloporus clarkii*) – This is the big tree lizard that you see in the canyons and along the riparian corridors in s.e. Arizona - it also happens to be one of the favorite prey items of the Gray Hawk.

**GILA SPOTTED WHIPTAIL** (*Aspidoscelis flagellicauda*) – One of the many all-female whiptail species in the West.

**GOPHERSNAKE** (*Pituophis catenifer*) – Seeing two of these intertwined and half-way down the same rodent burrow at Whitewater Draw still has me scratching my head wondering just what was going on!

**EASTERN PATCH-NOSED SNAKE** (*Salvadora grahamiae*) – We found one of these in the middle of the Miller Canyon road as we headed up to the trailhead.

**SONORAN WHIPSNAKE** (*Masticophis bilineatus*) – A couple of these lizard eaters in the road on the first two days of the tour.

**COACHWHIP** (*Masticophis flagellum*) – We spotted a couple of these bright pink snakes on the highway as we headed to the Chiricahuas on Day 2.

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## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

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**Totals for the tour: 170 bird taxa and 14 mammal taxa**