



Field Guides Tour Report

ARIZONA'S SECOND SPRING II 2015

Aug 1, 2015 to Aug 10, 2015

John Coons & Tom Johnson

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



The monsoon-invigorated, verdant desert meets Cave Creek Canyon at Portal, one of the most dramatic landscapes in southern Arizona. Here, a monsoon thunderstorm builds in the sky above the canyon. Photo by guide Tom Johnson.

This Arizona Second Spring tour was marked by a combination of great luck with the wonderful diversity of Sky Island breeders as well as several encounters with rare Mexican species. Weather ranged from hot and sunny in the afternoons in the open deserts to fresh and cool in the mornings in mountain canyons.

We started off with an introductory loop through the desert west of Tucson, finding Gilded Flickers, Rufous-winged Sparrows, and other Sonoran Desert specialties. We ended the evening with stops at Sweetwater Wetlands and a dusk watch along the Santa Cruz River to see evening birds like Lesser Nighthawks and the remarkable nocturnal emergence of thousands of free-tailed bats.

Leaving Tucson, we headed for the beautiful canyons of the Huachuca Mountains near Sierra Vista. We had good luck finding the vagrant Tufted Flycatchers in Ramsey Canyon, Elegant Trogons in Huachuca Canyon, Spotted Owls in Miller Canyon, Greater Pewee in Carr Canyon, and Lucifer Hummingbirds in Ash Canyon. At night, the birds kept on coming with great views of Western and Whiskered Screech-Owls and a Common Poorwill.

After the Huachucas, we drove eastward to the Chiricahuas, where we spent several great evenings in the gorgeous scenery of the Southwestern Research Station near Portal. Days were spent soaking in the high diversity of birds between the desert grasslands all the way to high elevation conifer forest. Down low (still a high desert, actually), we found Scaled Quail, Bendire's and Crissal Thrashers, and even a rare Plain-capped Starthroat attending feeders. Between middle elevation riparian canyons and scrubby slopes, we found Black-chinned Sparrows (tough this summer), plenty of Montezuma Quail, Blue-throated Hummingbirds, and Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers. In the pine forest near Rustler Park, we tracked down flocks of migrant warblers and vireos, and had lots of great time with Mexican Chickadees. Nocturnal expeditions weren't extremely birdy as in the Huachucas, but we did find some young Great Horned Owls, a rarely seen Western Spotted Skunk (I don't know who was more surprised, the group or the skunk!), and some spectacular starry skies.

Moving west from the Chiricahuas, we made a visit to the shorebird-rich oasis of Willcox. It's amazing what a golf course and a shallow lake in the middle of the desert can do to draw in birds! We found Long-billed Curlews, lots of Baird's Sandpipers, and a bunch of spinning Wilson's Phalaropes. After checking in on some nesting Mississippi Kites along the San Pedro River, our time in the Patagonia area helped us find Violet-crowned Hummingbirds, Thick-billed Kingbirds, and our first Varied Buntings.

From our base in Rio Rico, we had time to explore a few wonderful nooks in the Pajarito Mountains including California Gulch and Peña Blanca Canyon. Here we found Five-striped Sparrows, Rufous-capped Warblers, Black-capped Gnatcatchers, and Buff-collared Nightjar, all Mexican species with small toeholds in the US in this area of Arizona. In addition to our success with rarities, we still had plenty to enjoy from the common birds - the Broad-billed Hummingbird feeding her babies in a nest just outside the restaurant in Rio Rico was just magical.

At the end of the week, we'd seen a fantastic cross-section of Arizona with visits to all of its diverse habitats. This helped us really get to know the remarkable avifauna that continues to draw John and me back to the Sky Islands every year. Thanks for your help in making this a fun and successful tour - we certainly hope to see you out in the field again soon.

Good birding, and watch out for skunks!

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

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

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – We found 45 of these striking tree ducks at the ponds at Rio Rico.

MALLARD (NORTHERN) (*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*) – Quite a few of the Mallards at Sweetwater Wetlands in Tucson matched this phenotype. In other cases, we found a number of apparent intergrades between Northern and Mexican Mallards.

MALLARD (MEXICAN) (*Anas platyrhynchos diazi*) – In addition to Northern Mallards and intergrades, we did see some pure-looking Mexican Ducks. The nicest-looking individuals were in the Rio Rico area.

CINNAMON TEAL (*Anas cyanoptera*) – These handsome ducks were at Rio Rico and Peña Blanca Lake.

RUDDY DUCK (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – One "stiff-tail" was at Sweetwater Wetlands on our first afternoon.

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

SCALED QUAIL (*Callipepla squamata*) – These beautiful "cotton-topped" quail were seen well in the desert grasslands outside of Portal and Willcox.

GAMBEL'S QUAIL (*Callipepla gambelii*) – Common in lower desert habitats.

MONTEZUMA QUAIL (*Cyrtonyx montezumae*) – This was a spectacular year for this attractive and often enigmatic species in Arizona. We ran into them on four different days, with a total of >20 individuals. The memory of the covey of chicks rising up in front of John will certainly stick in our minds for a while.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – Our only grebes were at Sweetwater Wetlands on the first evening.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – These slim cormorants were at the Amado treatment ponds on our last morning.

Ardeidae (Heron, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – One at Peña Blanca Lake was a notable sighting for this heron-poor area.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – One flew past us at the Ina Rd. bridge in Tucson on our first evening.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – One was at the Ina Rd. bridge over the Santa Cruz River.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*) – The only individual ibis we saw was at the Rio Rico ponds.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – These striking vultures are locally distributed in Arizona. We saw them near Patagonia and along the Santa Cruz River corridor, including 7 at Peña Blanca Canyon.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Common and widespread.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

MISSISSIPPI KITE (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) – We saw adults attending juveniles in a nest in St. David. These elegant raptors are locally distributed along rivers in Arizona.

NORTHERN HARRIER (*Circus cyaneus*) – A male was in the grasslands adjacent to Lake Cochise in Willcox.

COOPER'S HAWK (*Accipiter cooperii*) – Fairly common; we saw these around Sierra Vista and near Kino Springs.

NORTHERN GOSHAWK (*Accipiter gentilis*) – We heard a young bird wailing in upper Ramsey Canyon during our search for the Tufted Flycatchers.

HARRIS'S HAWK (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) – A family group entertained us along the road near Willcox.

GRAY HAWK (*Buteo plagiatus*) – Our first Gray Hawks were in Huachuca Canyon; later on, we saw more of these river-lovers along the San Pedro and Santa Cruz Rivers.

SWAINSON'S HAWK (*Buteo swainsoni*) – Common; we saw these at many lowland locations.

ZONE-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo albonotatus*) – Good views overhead at Carr Canyon and in Patagonia.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – Common and widespread.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

SORA (*Porzana carolina*) – We heard these rails from the marsh vegetation at Sweetwater Wetlands.

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*) – These were at Sweetwater Wetlands and Peña Blanca Lake.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – Our only stilts were at Willcox.

AMERICAN AVOCET (*Recurvirostra americana*) – Great views at Willcox.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SEMPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – These shorebirds were an uncommon sighting at Willcox.

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*) – Willcox only.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – There was a mixed group of yellowlegs at Willcox.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – These were part of a mixed yellowlegs flock in the back pond at Willcox.
LONG-BILLED CURLEW (*Numenius americanus*) – Three were with other shorebirds at Willcox.
STILT SANDPIPER (*Calidris himantopus*) – Three at Willcox were unexpected.
BAIRD'S SANDPIPER (*Calidris bairdii*) – Roughly twenty of these long-winged peeps were mixed with other shorebirds at Willcox.
LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – Willcox.
WESTERN SANDPIPER (*Calidris mauri*) – Willcox.
SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus griseus*)
LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) – We saw some dark-backed, orange-bodied adults at Willcox. We even got to hear their distinctive "peek" calls.
WILSON'S PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus tricolor*) – These were quite common at Willcox, spinning around in the water and running around on the shore.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Common around towns. [I]
BAND-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – We saw a few at high elevation near Rustler Park. Two perched atop a bare snag posed particularly nicely for scope views.
EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – Very common around human habitation. [II]
INCA DOVE (*Columbina inca*) – Good views of these long-tailed, scaly doves in a few spots around Patagonia.
COMMON GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina passerina*) – Our best views came at the feeders in the Patons' yard in Patagonia.
WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – Very common; seen every day.
MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*) – Common; seen every day.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus americanus*) – In the southwest, Yellow-billed Cuckoos are restricted to lush riparian vegetation, which is fairly limited in extent. We found these gorgeous birds along Sonoita Creek in Patagonia.
GREATER ROADRUNNER (*Geococcyx californianus*) – Seen almost every day. Particularly amazing were the "friendly" pair in the parking lot at the Esplendor Resort.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

BARN OWL (*Tyto alba*) – We found these monkey-faced owls in the desert grasslands east of Portal.

Strigidae (Owls)

WESTERN SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops kennicottii*) – Great views in the Huachucas.
WHISKERED SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops trichopsis*) – Excellent views in the Huachucas.
GREAT HORNED OWL (*Bubo virginianus*) – We heard these on a few occasions, and eventually found a screeching fledgling along Cave Creek in Portal.
NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium gnoma*) – After a considerable dance back and forth across the creek near Herb Martyr in the Chiricahuas, we eventually had nice scope views of this tooting ventriloquist.
ELF OWL (*Micrathene whitneyi*) – Great views just above our heads in California Gulch.
BURROWING OWL (*Athene cunicularia*) – One of our first stops was a Burrowing Owl stakeout near the Tucson Airport - a good way to kick off the tour!
SPOTTED OWL (*Strix occidentalis*) – Those who made the hike up Miller Canyon were rewarded with nice views of a gorgeous and sleepy Mexican Spotted Owl.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

LESSER NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – We saw about a dozen along the banks of the Santa Cruz River in Tucson at the end of our first evening.
COMMON POORWILL (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*) – Superb views on a dirt road in the Huachucas!
BUFF-COLLARED NIGHTJAR (*Antrostomus ridgwayi*) – Though we all wished for more of a show, we did see one of these West Mexican specialties perched on a hillside at California Gulch.

Apodidae (Swifts)

WHITE-THROATED SWIFT (*Aeronautes saxatalis*) – We often heard and saw these aerial masters zooming around overhead in the mountains.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD (*Eugenes fulgens*) – Nice views, especially in the Huachucas and the Chiricahuas.
PLAIN-CAPPED STARTHROAT (*Heliomaster constantii*) – We lucked out again with some great looks at this hummer, a true rarity in the US. Thanks to Lori and Mark Conrad for their hospitality in Portal.
BLUE-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Lampornis clemenciae*) – Excellent views of this big bruiser in the Chiricahua Mountains.
LUCIFER HUMMINGBIRD (*Calothorax lucifer*) – We had a spectacular show at Ash Canyon. We saw several males and even got to compare them to a long-staying male Lucifer x Costa's Hummingbird hybrid.
BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus alexandri*) – Quite common.
ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD (*Calypte anna*) – Seen early in the tour, mostly in the area around the Huachucas.
COSTA'S HUMMINGBIRD (*Calypte costae*) – We found a few of these tiny hummers on our last evening in a desert neighborhood near Green Valley, though they weren't terribly cooperative.
BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus platycercus*) – Good views at higher elevations.
RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus rufus*) – We saw reasonable numbers of southbound migrants, especially up in the mountains.
BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD (*Cynanthus latirostris*) – Fairly common near riparian areas - we had a really neat experience watching a female attend a nest with chicks outside our lunch stop in Rio Rico.

VIOLET-CROWNED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia violiceps*) – One was at the Ramsey Canyon feeders; we had even better views at the Patons' feeders in Patagonia.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

ELEGANT TROGON (*Trogon elegans*) – We had truly wonderful views of at least 4 individuals, including a recently fledged juvenile, at Huachuca Canyon.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

ACORN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – Common in oak areas. We enjoyed the big granary tree in Portal, too.

GILA WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes uropygialis*) – Common in desert habitats.

LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER (*Picoides scalaris*) – The "Desert Downy." We saw these small woodpeckers a few times, including at Ash Canyon and Patagonia.

HAIRY WOODPECKER (*Picoides villosus*) – Numerous in the mountains, especially the burned forest near Rustler Park.

ARIZONA WOODPECKER (*Picoides arizonae*) – We encountered this brown woodpecker several times, with our best views coming at Huachuca Canyon and Ramsay Canyon in the Huachuclas.

NORTHERN FLICKER (RED-SHAFTED) (*Colaptes auratus cafer*) – Common in montane forest, especially the Chiricahuas.

GILDED FLICKER (*Colaptes chrysoides*) – We found a pair in a patch of Giant Saguaro cactus west of the Tucson Mountains.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – Fairly common in the lowlands.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – An adult and begging juvenile at Carr Canyon were possibly the same ones we saw previously from Ramsey Canyon.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

NORTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET (*Camptostoma imberbe*) – Great views of this diminutive flycatcher with the snub-nose along Sonoita Creek in Patagonia.

TUFTED FLYCATCHER (*Mitrephanes phaeocercus*) – This is a mega-rarity in the US, and so it was a real treat to find the continuing pair of these Central American beauties when we hiked up Ramsay Canyon.

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER (*Contopus cooperi*) – One teed up atop a snag at Sweetwater Wetlands was a nice migrant find for the lowlands.

GREATER PEWEE (*Contopus pertinax*) – We had nice looks at 2 of these large, crested pewees in Carr Canyon.

WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE (*Contopus sordidulus*) – Very common in woodland habitats.

GRAY FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax wrightii*) – We found one in juniper forest near Paradise, where the species is a scarce breeder.

PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax difficilis*) – We found a few migrants - one at the Patagonia Roadside Rest and another in Peña Blanca Canyon.

CORDILLERAN FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax occidentalis*) – One put in a brief appearance near Herb Martyr in the Chiricahuas.

BUFF-BREADED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax fulvifrons*) – We had good studies of these local and distinctive Empids in Huachuca Canyon and Carr Canyon.

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*) – Common near water.

SAY'S PHOEBE (*Sayornis saya*) – We saw fledged juveniles daily around the Southwestern Research Station and also at several other roadside locations.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) – Fairly common, especially in the Patagonia-Rio Rico corridor.

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – Our best views of these slim Myiarchus flycatchers were at Huachuca Canyon and in the Patagonia area.

BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) – These large riparian flycatchers made us work for it, but we finally tracked down a vocal pair in Patagonia.

SULPHUR-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*) – These striking tropical flycatchers made plenty of appearances, including at Ramsey Canyon, the Portal area, and in Peña Blanca Canyon.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – Good studies at Sweetwater Wetlands, Willcox, and the Rio Rico area.

CASSIN'S KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus vociferans*) – Common and widespread. Many were staging, and we had good comparisons with Western Kingbirds.

THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus crassirostris*) – Great views at nesting territories in Portal and in the Patagonia area.

WESTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus verticalis*) – Very common. Migrants were lining the utility wires in many locations. We even saw two migrating past at the top of Carr Canyon.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*Lanius ludovicianus*) – Common in the deserts. We mostly saw these while driving, but we had some good views on the Arizona/ New Mexico border east of Portal.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

BELL'S VIREO (*Vireo bellii*) – Good views of this loud singer at Patagonia.

PLUMBEOUS VIREO (*Vireo plumbeus*) – Common in montane forests in the Huachuclas and the Chiricahuas.

HUTTON'S VIREO (*Vireo huttoni*) – Commonly seen in mixed forest in mountain canyons. Particularly common in Ramsey Canyon.

WARBLING VIREO (*Vireo gilvus*) – Nice views of migrants at Sweetwater Wetlands, Portal, and Peña Blanca Canyon.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

STELLER'S JAY (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) – Our only time with these jays was in the Chiricahuas in the vicinity of Rustler Park.

WESTERN SCRUB-JAY (*Aphelocoma californica*) – We ran into these regionally uncommon jays in Carr Canyon and near Paradise in the Chiricahuas.

MEXICAN JAY (*Aphelocoma wollweberi*) – Common in mountain canyons - we saw these charismatic corvids almost daily.

CHIHUAHUAN RAVEN (*Corvus cryptoleucus*) – Though these ravens are more locally distributed than many resources indicate, we did find them in

grasslands northeast of Sierra Vista and east of the Chiricahuas.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*) – This is the widespread raven throughout most of the region. In the mountains, it is the only raven present. In some grassland areas, Common and Chihuahuan Ravens occur side-by-side.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – We saw just a few of these brown, mousey swallows at Willcox.

PURPLE MARTIN (*Progne subis*) – A pair was hanging out in saguaros west of the Tucson Mountains on our first evening. The local subspecies nests in cactus cavities.

TREE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta bicolor*) – We saw a few at Sweetwater Wetlands on our first evening, and then more scattered in roadside swallow flocks later in the tour.

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta thalassina*) – We had repeated great views of these elegant swallows overhead at the Southwestern Research Station in the Chiricahuas.

BANK SWALLOW (*Riparia riparia*) – Our only encounter was of a few mixed in with the swallow flock at Willcox.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – Fairly common; often seen around Portal and with other swallows.

CLIFF SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) – We often ran into these pale-rumped swallows mixed in with other species. About 30 were at the Amado Water Treatment Pond on our last morning.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

MEXICAN CHICKADEE (*Poecile sclateri*) – We found flock after flock of these range-restricted chickadees between Onion Saddle and Rustler Park in the Chiricahuas. Phenomenal views!

BRIDLED TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus wollweberi*) – Common in canyons; seen most days.

JUNIPER TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus ridgwayi*) – We found a few of these skulky titmice in scrubby, open forest near Paradise in the Chiricahuas.

Remizidae (Penduline-Tits)

VERDIN (*Auriparus flaviceps*) – Common in the desert.

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)

BUSHTIT (INTERIOR) (*Psaltriparus minimus plumbeus*) – Good views of several hyperactive flocks in the Chiricahuas.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta canadensis*) – We had a few good looks of these handsome nuthatches at high elevation in the Chiricahuas.

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta carolinensis*) – Common in many locations we visited on the tour. These belong to the "Interior West" subspecies group.

PYGMY NUTHATCH (*Sitta pygmaea*) – We had good views of these perpetual motion machines in high elevation forest in the Chiricahuas.

Certhiidae (Treecreepers)

BROWN CREEPER (*Certhia americana*) – Common in Ramsey Canyon and up high in the Chiricahuas.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

ROCK WREN (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) – These bouncy wrens prefer rocky slopes. We found them singing their repetitive songs in the Huachucas and in California Gulch.

CANYON WREN (*Catherpes mexicanus*) – A classic song of the American west - we were rarely out of earshot of one during the tour, and we saw these delightful wrens in several spots including Ramsey Canyon.

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – We had great views of these active wrens in Ramsey Canyon.

BEWICK'S WREN (*Thryomanes bewickii*) – Common in mountain canyons.

CACTUS WREN (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*) – These huge wrens accompanied us in Portal, Rio Rico, and several other desert locations.

Poliophtidae (Gnatcatchers)

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila caerulea*) – We found these gnatcatchers in mixed flocks on several occasions in the Chiricahuas.

BLACK-TAILED GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila melanura*) – Our best views were on the first evening in the desert west of Tucson.

BLACK-CAPPED GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila nigriceps*) – We found a family group of four individuals near California Gulch, and had good views of this Mexican specialty.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

HERMIT THRUSH (*Catharus guttatus*) – We heard one calling in Huachuca Canyon, but didn't see it.

AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*) – Fairly common in the mountains.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

CURVE-BILLED THRASHER (*Toxostoma curvirostre*) – This tour's "playing field" straddles a subspecies boundary in Curve-billed Thrashers. The birds east of the Chiricahuas seem to be allied with the Eastern subspecies, while those west of the Sulphur Springs Valley are the western subspecies. Callnotes differ between the groups. We saw these thrashers in both zones.

BENDIRE'S THRASHER (*Toxostoma bendirei*) – Good views of a bird teed up in a mesquite in grasslands near Rodeo, New Mexico.

CRISSAL THRASHER (*Toxostoma crissale*) – We saw several of these large thrashers, including a nice view of one perched up near Portal.

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*) – Common and widespread. There was even a nest at our hotel in Sierra Vista.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Common near large towns. [H]

Ptilionotidae (Silky-flycatchers)

PHAINOPEPLA (*Phainopepla nitens*) – Our best experience with this species was in Peña Blanca Canyon, where we saw at least four individuals.

Peucedramidae (Olive Warbler)

OLIVE WARBLER (*Peucedramus taeniatus*) – A nice male posed over the road in Upper Carr Canyon.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis celata*) – We found at least three migrants in Peña Blanca Canyon.

LUCY'S WARBLER (*Oreothlypis luciae*) – These tiny warblers usually leave the region sometime during late summer, so they can be tricky to find at this season. We had good luck, with some great views in several spots including the Conrads' backyard in Portal.

NASHVILLE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis ruficapilla*) – We were surprised to find LOTS in Peña Blanca Canyon. 18 was definitely a notably high count for the date.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*) – We heard and saw several at Sweetwater Wetlands in Tucson.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – Common and widespread.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (*Setophaga coronata*) – Two were in Upper Carr Canyon.

GRACE'S WARBLER (*Setophaga graciae*) – Fairly common in pine forest in the mountains - we saw most of ours in the Chiricahuas.

BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER (*Setophaga nigrescens*) – Common; a frequent member of mixed flocks.

TOWNSEND'S WARBLER (*Setophaga townsendi*) – Surprisingly, we only saw one - at Huachuca Canyon .

HERMIT WARBLER (*Setophaga occidentalis*) – We saw this migrant warbler near Rustler Park in the Chiricahuas.

RUFOUS-CAPPED WARBLER (*Basileuterus rufifrons*) – A rarity from Mexico! We had good views of three in Peña Blanca Canyon during a very birdy walk.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*) – Three were in Peña Blanca Canyon during our search for the Rufous-capped Warblers.

RED-FACED WARBLER (*Cardellina rubrifrons*) – These stunners graced us in Ramsey Canyon and the highlands of the Chiricahuas. We had wonderful views of one at lower-than-normal elevation in a yard in Portal. It even sat on a utility wire briefly!

PAINTED REDSTART (*Myioborus pictus*) – Very common in mountain canyons.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens*) – Several of these songsters were in evidence in Patagonia, and we eventually saw one after some effort.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

RUFOUS-WINGED SPARROW (*Peucaea carpalis*) – Nice views west of Tucson and also in Peña Blanca Canyon and California Gulch. This species has expanded its range in southern Arizona.

BOTTERI'S SPARROW (*Peucaea botterii*) – We heard the fantastic bouncing song of these sparrows whenever we were in desert grasslands. We saw them well in scopes on several occasions.

CASSIN'S SPARROW (*Peucaea cassinii*) – Good views in grasslands outside of Portal. Late summer monsoon season is the peak of breeding activity for this species in southern Arizona.

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW (*Ammodramus savannarum*) – One was sitting on a fence in the Sonoita Grasslands when we parked the vans. How convenient!

CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*) – Fairly common in flocks in the Chiricahuas.

BLACK-CHINNED SPARROW (*Spizella atrogularis*) – We found a few of these skulky sparrows, but they chose to mostly sing out of view from the group.

BLACK-THROATED SPARROW (*Amphispiza bilineata*) – Common in desert habitats.

FIVE-STRIPED SPARROW (*Amphispiza quinquestriata*) – We had phenomenal views of at least six birds in the area around California Gulch. A stunning sparrow!

LARK SPARROW (*Chondestes grammacus*) – We saw small groups of migrants in several areas. 20 were in Peña Blanca Canyon.

LARK BUNTING (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) – We found a few migrant flocks at Stateline Rd. near Portal and at Peña Blanca Lake west of Rio Rico.

YELLOW-EYED JUNCO (*Junco phaeonotus*) – We saw our first in Ramsey Canyon, but then we saw lots of these handsome and distinctive juncos in the Chiricahuas.

SONG SPARROW (*Melospiza melodia*) – These sparrows are restricted to riparian areas in southern Arizona. We saw them at Sweetwater Wetlands and in Patagonia.

CANYON TOWHEE (*Melospiza fusca*) – Common in canyons; we saw them on most days.

ABERT'S TOWHEE (*Melospiza aberti*) – We saw these dark-faced towhees at Sweetwater Wetlands and in Patagonia.

RUFOUS-CROWNED SPARROW (*Aimophila ruficeps*) – Common on rocky slopes. We saw these on many occasions, including some great views in the Chiricahuas.

SPOTTED TOWHEE (*Pipilo maculatus*) – Common at higher elevations in the Huachuclas and the Chiricahuas.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

HEPATIC TANAGER (*Piranga flava*) – We saw these tanagers at higher elevations in the Huachuclas and the Chiricahuas.

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) – Good views in the Patagonia area.

WESTERN TANAGER (*Piranga ludoviciana*) – We saw migrants on most days. We had some very nice views in Portal and in Ramsey Canyon.

NORTHERN CARDINAL (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) – These cardinals prefer slightly lush vegetation than Pyrrhuloxias. We saw some in Portal and more around Patagonia.

PYRRHULOXIA (*Cardinalis sinuatus*) – Common in desert scrub. Tucson Mountain Park and the Portal area were particularly productive.

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) – We saw these beautiful birds on almost every day of the trip. Mountain canyons held the highest densities.

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*) – Very common in desert grasslands at the bases of canyons. We saw these almost every day.

LAZULI BUNTING (*Passerina amoena*) – Our first was a flyover in the grasslands below Portal. Then, we saw more in the Patagonia area, including at the Patons' feeders.

VARIED BUNTING (*Passerina versicolor*) – This was an excellent year for the species - we found lots from Patagonia west to California Gulch, where they prefer dry thornscrub hillsides. Particularly memorable were the views at Warsaw Canyon. We also enjoyed watching the brown (immature?) male singing at the Patagonia Roadside Rest.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – Most of ours came on the first day in the marshes of Sweetwater Wetlands.

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (LILIAN'S) (*Sturnella magna lilianae*) – Common in desert grasslands. Good looks came around Rodeo, New Mexico and in the Willcox area.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Common in towns and some agricultural areas.

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*) – A few of these bizarre "Cobra Cowbirds" were hanging around at the Esplendor Resort at Rio Rico.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (*Molothrus ater*) – Common; seen every day. We watched Buff-breasted Flycatchers desperately fighting with one in Huachuca Canyon.

HOODED ORIOLE (*Icterus cucullatus*) – Good views in Portal and around Rio Rico.

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE (*Icterus bullockii*) – A late nest was being attended by both adults in the top of a huge sycamore along the main street in Portal.

SCOTT'S ORIOLE (*Icterus parisorum*) – These were surprisingly scarce during the tour. We heard them singing in a few places between Portal and Paradise.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

HOUSE FINCH (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) – Very common and widespread.

RED CROSSBILL (*Loxia curvirostra*) – Great scope views at higher elevations in the Chiricahuas.

PINE SISKIN (*Spinus pinus*) – We heard a few "zing" over at Rustler Park.

LESSER GOLDFINCH (*Spinus psaltria*) – Everywhere! Found in all habitats and at all elevations.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Found in many towns and agricultural areas. **[I]**

MAMMALS

BRAZILIAN FREE-TAILED BAT (*Tadarida brasiliensis*) – Thousands emerged from under the Ina Rd. bridge over the Santa Cruz River in Tucson on our first evening. A real thrill!

EASTERN COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) – In the woodlands around the Southwestern Research Station.

DESERT COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus audubonii*) – Widespread cottontail of lower elevations and desert grasslands.

BLACK-TAILED JACKRABBIT (*Lepus californicus*) – The common jackrabbit of the region.

CLIFF CHIPMUNK (*Tamias dorsalis*) – This is the only chipmunk of the area - we saw many in the Chiricahuas.

HARRIS'S ANTELOPE SQUIRREL (*Ammospermophilus harrisi*) – One crossed the road with its tail held high near Portal.

ROCK SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus variegatus*) – Very common.

ROUND-TAILED GROUND SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus tereticaudus*) – The small, pale ground squirrel of the desert flats.

MEXICAN FOX SQUIRREL (*Sciurus nayaritensis*) – Chiricahuas only.

ARIZONA GRAY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus arizonensis*) – Good views of some recently "fledged" juveniles at Huachuca Canyon. We saw more in the Patagonia area.

COYOTE (*Canis latrans*) – One was seen briefly on the drive in to California Gulch.

WESTERN SPOTTED SKUNK (*Spilogale gracilis*) – WOW! We were very lucky to have this beautiful little skunk walk out on the road next to us while we were searching for owls in the Portal area.

STRIPED SKUNK (*Mephitis mephitis*) – Common; seen several times at night.

MULE DEER (*Odocoileus hemionus*) – These large deer were in the grasslands below Portal.

WHITE-TAILED DEER (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – The deer that we saw in mountain canyons were the small, gray Coues subspecies of White-tailed Deer.

PRONGHORN (*Antilocapra americana*) – One group was along the road south of Rodeo, New Mexico.

Herps

TEXAS HORNED LIZARD (*Phrynosoma cornutum*) – A stunning find in sandy desert flats at Willcox. This beautiful armored lizard was hunting ants when we found it.

BLACK-TAILED RATTLESNAKE (*Crotalus molossus*) – One cruised right past our cabins at the Southwestern Research Station during our afternoon break, allowing for some excellent views.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 198 bird taxa and 16 mammal taxa