

Arizona

“Wild West” Birding

Wed 2nd – Mon 14 May 2018



Arizona highlights (Clockwise from top left): Arizona Woodpecker • Red-faced Warbler • Western Tanager • Bewick’s Wren • Acorn Woodpecker • American Avocet. Photos © Chris Charlesworth/Limosa

**Report compiled by tour leader:
Chris Charlesworth**

Arizona | "Wild West" Birding

Tour Leader: Chris Charlesworth

With: Andy & Jane Baxter, Margaret & Richard Bentley, Nigel & Kath Oram, Geoff Stratford.

Day 1

Everyone met up at the arrivals hall of Phoenix's Sky Harbor International Airport shortly after 7PM. The first bird noted of the tour was a Great-tailed Grackle, flying alongside the road at dusk. We made the short transfer to our hotel and then went for a little bite of dinner before heading to bed to get some sleep.

Day 2

Just after 7AM, we gathered outside the hotel. We headed east to the Riparian Preserve at Gilbert where we spent about two hours at this fabulous location. Today was a gorgeous and sunny day with comfortable temperatures, which we enjoyed very much. Upon arrival, we visited a stand of Saguaro cacti, where a couple of pairs of Gila Woodpeckers were busy entering nest holes. Curve-billed Thrasher and Gambel's Quail were seen well and a Mourning Dove fed two hungry youngsters on the ground not far from us. We saw our first of many Black-chinned Hummingbirds here this morning and we had fair views of the tiny, grey and yellow Verdins as they hopped about in the palo verde trees. We caught our first glimpse of the water - a scarce commodity in the desert - and racked up several species, including lovely American Avocets, as well as Neotropic Cormorants, Snowy Egrets and an immature Black-crowned Night Heron. Song Sparrows sang from the trees and, eventually, we had quite a good view of one of them. Abert's Towhees also showed well, scratching about on the ground, while an obliging Olive-sided Flycatcher perched and gave us great scope views. One particular pond was covered in waders, mostly Long-billed Dowitchers, but also a few Least Sandpipers, Spotted Sandpipers and Black-necked Stilts. A few warblers were about as well, including Black-throated Grey, Wilson's, Yellow and Common Yellowthroat. Overhead, our first Red-tailed Hawk, Harris's Hawk, Turkey Vulture and Peregrine Falcon appeared, the latter chasing Cliff Swallows.

It was time to move on from the outskirts of Phoenix towards the east and we stopped in to have lunch in the town of Globe. As the bill was being paid, the group did some birding outside, spotting the first Cactus Wren of the tour. Our next port of call was Aravaipa Canyon, a stunning place with impressive towering cliffs and Saguaro-studded hillsides. We headed for an area where a Common Black Hawk has nested for years and, while we were looking from the road at the bird sitting on the nest, the property owner came out and invited us in to have a look. From his yard we had very good scope views of the hawk, perched in its nest high up in a sycamore tree along Aravaipa Creek. Other goodies here included eye-popping Vermilion Flycatchers and comparatively drab Black Phoebe. On a patch of shady grass, quite a nice assemblage of birds gathered, including Lazuli Bunting, Common Yellowthroat, White-crowned Sparrow, Inca Dove and more. A Yellow-breasted Chat flew by, leaving us wanting more. We carried further along Aravaipa Road, picking up more birds as we went, such as Lucy's Warbler, Bell's Vireo, Summer Tanager and Broad-billed Hummingbird. Overhead, a Zone-tailed Hawk soared next to a Red-tailed Hawk. Later, our first Grey Hawk was spotted by Andy, wrapping up a pretty good day for raptors. The afternoon was quickly fading to early evening so we carried on into Tucson, checked into our hotel and went for dinner at Chili's.

Day 3

At 6AM we headed to Agua Caliente Park for some pre-breakfast birding. It was sunny and beautiful this morning. At the park the birds started rolling in with the likes of Hooded Oriole, Vermilion Flycatcher, Broad-billed Hummingbird and Lucy's Warbler appearing. Down at the little wetland, a 'big-bottomed' Mallard swam past, obviously possessing a few 'barnyard quacker' genes. A few Red-winged Blackbirds flashed their brilliant red epaulettes from the reeds on the far side of the pond. I heard the plaintive whistles of a Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet nearby so we scurried off in hopes of seeing this uncommon flycatcher. It didn't take too long and we had the bird in our binoculars. A nest, which I suspect was the tyrannulets nest, hung from the lower branches of a eucalyptus tree. High in a pine, I spotted a bulky stick nest with the head of a Cooper's Hawk sticking up above it. This 'head view', plus a brief fly-by were enough for most members of the group to warrant a tick on the list. In an area of Saguaro we had some nice birds such as a pair of tiny Black-tailed Gnatcatchers, a Cactus Wren, a Curve-billed Thrasher, a Ladder-backed Woodpecker and three distant Purple Martins! Not a bad start to the day.

After breakfast we headed out again, ascending the twisting Catalina Highway up the slopes of Mount Lemmon. We began at 3500 feet in Tucson and ended up just over 9000 feet on Mt. Lemmon, traveling through nine, different, biogeoclimatic zones on the way up. The change in habitat due to the elevation gain is equivalent to driving from Mexico to the Canadian border. Our first stop was at the Cypress Picnic area. Here, we had some fantastic birds, such as a very confiding Yellow-eyed Junco, several comical Acorn Woodpeckers, a White-breasted Nuthatch, a Mexican Jay and two Spotted Towhees. Two of the better birds seen here included a male Arizona Woodpecker and a Grace's Warbler, the second of which allowed scope views as it sang from high in a pine. At Bear Wallow, we parked the van and walked up the cool, shady draw through towering Ponderosa Pine and Douglas Firs. It didn't take long to get into the thick of bird activity as several Red-faced Warblers appeared and showed off for us amongst the fresh green, spring leaves. Other warblers about included 'Audubon's' Yellow-rumped Warbler and Townsend's Warbler. A pair of Black-headed Grosbeaks fed on the flowers in a freshly leafed tree, while a male Western Tanager popped with colours nearby. The trumpeting calls of both Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatches were followed by sightings of both species and farther up the draw we saw our third nuthatch of the day, a Pygmy Nuthatch. A Mountain Chickadee appeared, as did a Brown Creeper, while as we were eating lunch, a Hermit Thrush hopped about on the ground. The mammalian highlight in Bear Wallow was the sighting of an Abert's 'Tassel-eared' Squirrel, as well as a cute little Cliff Chipmunk.

At the Iron Door Restaurant near the ski hill, we watched the hummingbird feeders for a few minutes, which were alive with Broad-tailed Hummingbirds. For a few brief moments a Rivoli's Hummingbird appeared. Steller's Jays were about, along with a noisy Common Raven and more cheeky Yellow-eyed Juncos. Right at the summit of Mt. Lemmon, a short walk produced three new species for our growing list, a Hairy Woodpecker, a pair of gorgeous Western Bluebirds and two unassuming Chipping Sparrows. We had some refreshments in the ski village of Summerhaven at the Cookie Cabin, then took a little stroll along a trickling creek and found three Virginia's Warblers foraging in the trees. Another Red-faced Warbler appeared, and an American Robin sang incessantly, but would not show his face. On our way back towards Tucson we stopped at the Windy Point Vista where we took in the stunning view. Down below us in the bushes were our first Blue-grey Gnatcatcher and a Black-throated Grey Warbler. On a ledge nearby, an adult Peregrine Falcon sat quietly in the shade. Once back in Tucson, we had a little rest then had dinner at the Black Bear Diner - that was an experience in American cuisine let me tell you. We did not leave hungry tonight.

Day 4

With blue skies once again, we made our way back to the foot of the towering Santa Catalina Mountains and spent our morning at Sabino Canyon. We took a short stroll around before catching the tram and were engaged by a naturalist who took us to see a 'Crested Saguaro', which is a deformed Saguaro that grows in an odd shape. She pointed out quite a few other plants for us and told us not to drink the water from a saguaro unless we were interested in a psychedelic experience! We took her advice. At 9AM, the 'tram' headed up the canyon and we enjoyed the narrated ride up and halfway back down, at which point we disembarked and walked a couple of kilometers. It was already pretty hot by the time we arrived, but that didn't stop us from seeing some nice birds. The common species in Sabino Canyon were White-winged Doves, Lucy's Warblers, Bell's Vireos, Broad-billed Hummingbirds and Brown-crested Flycatcher. The star attraction was a Canyon Wren that sat on a ledge for quite some time as we watched him sing through the scope, while White-throated Swifts zipped overhead. A male Costa's Hummingbird sat briefly atop a dead tree and Andy and I glimpsed a Green-tailed Towhee in the undergrowth. Yet another Virginia's Warbler foraged in the palo verde trees.

We had lunch in Tucson then checked a spot along Ajo Road where Burrowing Owls may be found. Just as we pulled up to the location, I spotted the owl sitting on a pipe, but he promptly flew down into the ditch and disappeared into his burrow. After a while we gave up and headed west to the Sonoran Desert Museum. It was hot by now and the van temperature gauge briefly read 108 degrees F. As we arrived, our first Pyrrhuloxia sat nicely for good views. We wandered around the museum, spotting some nice birds such as Cactus Wren, Western Tanager, Rufous-winged Sparrow, Black Vulture, Abert's Towhee and Costa's Hummingbirds. An adult Cooper's Hawk came in to drink in a fountain quite close to us, offering incredible views! We gathered back at the café and had some cold drinks before beginning the short drive to Green Valley where we had dinner in the pub at the hotel and then got some sleep.

Day 5

We left our hotel after breakfast under the normal weather conditions for S.E. Arizona; Sun, blue sky and warm temperatures. We headed for an area of residential Green Valley that has nicely landscaped gardens and quite a few birds. It didn't take us long to find a Gilded Flicker as he sat atop a large yucca and called in the morning sunlight. This neighbourhood provided quite a few other sightings as well such as Gambel's Quail, Costa's Hummingbird, Brown-crested Flycatcher and Bullock's Orioles. A male Bronzed Cowbird was a nice catch here, as was a nesting Curve-billed Thrasher that had built its nest in the safety of a cholla cactus. Our first Black-tailed Jackrabbit of the tour hopped along the roadside, while the smaller Desert Cottontail was also noted.

We picked up our lunch and headed to Madera Canyon in the Santa Rita Mountains. We headed to the upper parking lot and embarked on a hike into the pine/oak forest with a couple of target birds in mind, most notably Painted Whitestart and the highly sought-after Elegant Trogan. The first species we encountered were Mexican Jays, Yellow-eyed Junco and a couple of Bridled Titmice. A Hutton's Vireo sang incessantly and was seen by some in the party. Higher up in the canyon, we heard the warbling song of a Painted Whitestart and, after some searching, we finally had this lovely warbler in our sights. Then, a barking sound came from within the trees along the dry creek bed. It was an Elegant Trogan. After a little searching we finally saw the bird, a male, calling within the depths of an Alligator Juniper. Scopes were set up and cameras clicked as the trogon called away and we descended back down the trail with big smiles on our faces.

We had lunch amongst the oak trees while Mexican Jays waited for us to clear out so they could descend upon the campsite and clean up any scraps. It was already getting quite warm and bird activity was waning, so we headed down the canyon to visit the feeders at the Kubo Cabin. It was nice and shady here and the birds were actively coming in to feed. Acorn Woodpeckers were very evident here, as were Black-headed Grosbeaks, Pine Siskins, House Finches and Mexican Jays. Hummingbirds included Broad-billed, Black-chinned and Rivoli's. Along the dry creek bed, a Lincoln's Sparrow hopped about and other treasures included our first American Robin, a Hermit Thrush and our first Western Grey Squirrels of the tour. Down at the feeders at Santa Rita Lodge we again sat for a while enjoying the action as Pine Siskins, Lesser Goldfinches, Mexican Jays, Acorn Woodpeckers, a variety of hummingbirds and White-breasted Nuthatch all came in. We heard rumours that another trogon and a pygmy owl were present down at the Madera Picnic Area so that's where we headed next. Upon arrival we could hear the trogon barking so we headed in the direction that the bird was calling. We had great views of this trogon as he flew from perch to perch and even investigated a possible nest cavity. Geoff then spotted a Brown-crested Flycatcher nest next to the creek and as we were looking at the nest a Northern Pygmy Owl appeared. The owl sat up nicely in a juniper with a tiny lizard in its talons. What a great day it had been in Madera Canyon! We returned to Green Valley, had an early dinner and then headed back to Madera Canyon for some nocturnal exploring. We, along with several other birders, waited patiently for an Elf Owl to pop its head out of a cavity in a telephone pole and the owl kept his date with us, appearing

promptly at 7PM. Higher up in the canyon as darkness fell we heard the calls of Mexican Whip-poor-wills and we had a great view of a Whiskered Screech Owl to top it all off.

Day 6

This morning we headed back towards the Santa Rita Mountains, stopping in at Florida Wash. One of the first birds to greet us here was a smashing Black-throated Sparrow that sat right up on top of the mesquite. After that, a Pyrrhuloxia popped into view, then a Green-tailed Towhee flitted through the undergrowth. A Yellow-breasted Chat sang loudly but remained hidden in the bush. It had been made known to me several times that Greater Roadrunner was one of the most wanted birds to be seen; in fact it would be a lifer for all seven tour participants! I was excited then, when I spotted a roadrunner slinking through the mesquite so I shouted to the group "Roadrunner" and they all came quickly. Not quickly enough, however as the roadrunner gave us the slip and disappeared into the desert, being seen by just myself and briefly by Andy. We had our first nice views of Swainson's Hawks this morning as they sailed overhead against the cobalt blue sky. In a bit of grassland near Florida Wash we had great views of a Botteri's Sparrow that sat on a fence. Our next stop was at Proctor Road in the lowest section of Madera Canyon. Upon arrival, I heard a Crissal Thrasher singing, so we tracked it down, eventually getting good scope views of this 'scythe-billed' denizen of the desert. We then staked out an area along the dry creek bed where a pair of rare Black-capped Gnatcatchers had been seen recently. Several times I could hear the soft whining calls of the gnatcatcher so I knew they were in the area, but it took us quite a while to finally catch a glimpse of the female. With several good target birds 'in the bag', we began the drive back to Green Valley where we picked up lunch at Safeway.

We took our lunch to Ron Morris County Park in Tubac, where we ate at some shady picnic tables. It was hot today, with temperatures of 100F, or slightly above. After we finished our lunch, a few birds appeared, including our first Cassin's Kingbird and a nice surprise pair of uncommon Tropical Kingbirds! We had at this point become a little blasé about the Vermilion Flycatchers that seemed to be present at most stops, though it is hard to get tired of seeing such a cracking little bird. After lunch we walked up the Santa Cruz River, hoping to catch a glimpse of another local rarity, the Rose-throated Becard. A pair of becards – a species normally found in Mexico - has been nesting along the river near Tubac for the last couple of years and we were instructed by a passing birder to look for the orange bucket, which would mean we were in the area of the becard's nest. After a little searching we found the orange bucket and then we spotted the large, bulky nest, hanging from a cottonwood. We hung around for quite some time, spying other species such as Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Bridled Titmouse, Song Sparrow and Gila Woodpeckers. Jane, who had wandered off a little suddenly asked, "Does the becard have a pink throat patch?" We hurried over to her, but the bird was no longer in the spot she had seen it. It called several times, so I was aware the bird was still in the area. After a while I said we would give the bird ten more minutes to show up and then we'd have to go. Within a few minutes, there was motion near the nest and it was the male Rose-throated Becard. He sat near his nest for five minutes or so while we all enjoyed scope views. On our way back to the van we paused to look at several American Bullfrogs that were loafing around in a scummy looking puddle.

We were doing very well today with our target birds, knocking them off one by one. At our next stop, also along the Santa Cruz River, but at Santa Gertrudis Lane, our luck ran out. There had been sightings fairly recently of two Mexican vagrants here, Sinaloa Wren and Rufous-backed Robin. I knew our chances of seeing either of them were slim, so I wasn't too disappointed we couldn't find them. As a consolation prize, a pair of Thick-billed Kingbirds put on a nice show for us and this is a species we normally only see closer to Patagonia. As luck would have it, we wouldn't find them at Patagonia so these Santa Cruz River birds were to be the only ones on the tour. Of course there were other birds to enjoy along the cottonwood-lined stream, such as Yellow-breasted Chat, Common Yellowthroat, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, and overhead a Zone-tailed Hawk. We carried on to Nogales, our home base for the next two nights, and were greeted by a male Hooded Oriole having a drink in the water fountain outside the hotel, which was not a bad welcoming party.

Day 7

At 6 AM we took a short stroll in scrubby habitat near our hotel, in search of the elusive Greater Roadrunner. Last year's group had a roadrunner right at this spot on both mornings. It was not meant to be this morning, however. We had a quick look at the bustling Cliff Swallow colony under the eaves of our hotel before boarding the van and making our way to lovely Pena Blanca Lake. The morning light on the desert made for an idyllic setting. We spent about an hour and a half at Pena Blanca Lake, exploring a little trail that took us alongside the calm lake, then up into a little bit of desert scrub. One of the first birds we found was a new species for us, a pair of Rufous-crowned Sparrows. In an open area near the lake we encountered quite a lot of bird activity. There were Say's Phoebes, Vermilion Flycatchers, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Lark Sparrows, Costa's Hummingbird and more. On the lake, waterfowl were few and far between, but we did see a pair of Mexican Ducks, Ruddy Ducks and American Coots. We climbed up a short stairway away from the lake and saw some migrants, including Wilson's Warbler, Bullock's Oriole, Western Tanager and Warbling Vireo. Lucy's Warblers, the ghostly pale warbler of the desert, sang loudly and a small flock of Bushtits entertained us. As the clock neared 8AM we began feeling the urge to have breakfast and, even more importantly, some coffee, so we headed back to our hotel.

After breakfast we headed for Patagonia Lake State Park. It was already heating up and today's temperatures also neared 100 F. We spent an hour and half or so walking the trails of Patagonia Lake Park's 'Birding Trail'. Waterbirds were very much of interest to us and we found a nice Green Heron foraging by the first bit of water we encountered. In the scope we compared Neotropic Cormorants with a single Double-crested Cormorant out on a log. White-faced Ibis probed the mud with their long, decurved bills. Spotted Sandpipers were rather numerous along the muddy shores of the lake and we saw a Killdeer as well. A Gadwall was our first for the tour, as was a small flock of Northern Shovelers that flew past, spotted by Andy. In the reeds we enticed a lovely male Common Yellowthroat into view. This warbler, with its striking black mask, is known as the 'bandit of the marsh'. Other species noted at Patagonia Lake included Summer Tanager, Cooper's Hawk, Yellow-breasted Chat, Ladder-backed Woodpecker and Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet to name a few species.

We headed into the town of Patagonia and went for lunch at the Gathering Grounds Café. After lunch we took a short stroll around town, checking out some local galleries and the historic Stage Stop Inn. At the Paton's Center for Hummingbirds we sat in the shade and watched feeders for much of the rest of the afternoon. It was quite enjoyable to relax here and enjoy the birds, which included the local celebrity, Violet-crowned Hummingbird. Other hummers included our first Anna's Hummingbird of the tour, as well as Broad-billed, Broad-tailed and Black-chinned hummingbirds. At the oranges, a Yellow-breasted Chat came in to feed several times and at seed feeders were Pine Siskins, Lesser Goldfinches, Black-headed Grosbeak, Northern Cardinal and Song Sparrows. In the brush piles scattered around the yard were Curve-billed Thrasher, Canyon Towhee, Green-tailed Towhee, White-crowned Sparrow and Gambel's Quail. It had been yet another enjoyable day of birding in S.E. Arizona and we headed back to Nogales for a little rest before heading out for dinner.

Day 8

From Nogales we headed north to Rio Rico, where I'd hoped we might get lucky and find the much anticipated Greater Roadrunner. We got to the spot, a resort that we used to stay at and where I had several encounters with roadrunners over the years. Upon arrival we were greeted by a giant, 'Closed for renovations' sign. Darn, I thought, but at just that moment Jane piped up, "Right there on the road" and there it was, a Greater Roadrunner! The bird snuck behind a tree and then came trotting right towards the van. The usual snickering comments that there was no coyote chasing it ensued. Somebody went 'beep beep'. The roadrunner climbed up a tree and then walked along a wall, posing for photographs, before trotting off into the mesquite woodland. Finally, a roadrunner in the bag! At the Patagonia Roadside Rest Stop, I explained the importance of the site to North American birders. At the little concrete picnic table tucked away into the trees, a rare bird had been found back in the 1970s, a first for North America, I believe. Other birders began showing up to look for said rare bird, and in turn they began finding other rarities. 'The Patagonia Picnic Table Effect' was born. Now, unfortunately the effect didn't bring us any rarities today, but it was nice to see Canyon Wren, White-throated Swifts, Grey Hawk, Canyon Towhee and others here this morning. We then popped into Patagonia and at the Gathering Grounds we ordered our lunches to go. We had a coffee while we waited and the staff didn't make us wait long as they were terribly efficient. We were on the road again, stopping at Sonoita to fill up with fuel. I turned around after filling up the tank and realized the entire group had disappeared. They were soon spotted, photographing and looking at some old west wagons and buildings.

Back to birding, at Las Cienegas Grasslands, it was quite calm and the birds were active. We had great views of Brewer's and Grasshopper Sparrows here. Kath spotted a Loggerhead Shrike and, though it was a fair distance off, we had views through the scope. Andy spotted another distant creature, a Pronghorn Antelope. Again, through the heat haze, we could just make out what it was. Several Chihuahuan Ravens lazily flew by, while Eastern Meadowlarks, of the 'Lilian's' race were singing and perching for good scope views. Swainson's Hawks soared lazily overhead in the afternoon thermals. Andy, the king of Lark Buntings, spotted a Lark Bunting as it flew off. This would happen twice on the tour! We turned off the main highway on a road marked to Elgin. In the prairie along this stretch we saw three more Pronghorn Antelopes, with one of the males being quite curious about us. We bumped down a long dirt road to the Audubon Appleton-Whittell Research Ranch where we were greeted by friendly attendant, Suzanne. Even before we left the parking lot we'd added the species we'd come here for, Scaled Quail. There were half a dozen or so of them huddled in the shade beneath one of the work trucks. We were surprised to see one lone white quail egg on the ground under the truck where the birds had been. We had our lunch inside 'the party barn', which made a nice shelter for us to eat inside. Scaled Quail called loudly from just outside the barn and Say's Phoebe fluttered around the eaves, possibly nesting. Several of us entered in a raffle to win a wooden carved Montezuma Quail, which if won, would be the only of its kind encountered on this particular trip. As we were leaving the research ranch, we saw a couple of Botteri's Sparrows in an area of native grassland vegetation. An Olive-sided Flycatcher perched on an agave was an unusual sight, in my opinion, as I'm familiar seeing this species in its northern forest and bog breeding habitats. Eastern Meadowlarks again perched nicely for us as we drove on by. We carried on into Sierra Vista where we went out for dinner at Applebee's before getting some rest.

Day 9

We were now accustomed to waking up to blue sky and warm temperatures. Today was no different as we picked up our lunches before heading up into the Huachuca Mountains and Carr Canyon. A stop in lower Carr Canyon did not produce a Scott's Oriole, unfortunately, though we did catch a glimpse of an Eastern Bluebird. Overhead, our only Golden Eagle for the tour was seen, being chased by a seemingly diminutive Common Raven. "Well try again for the bluebird later" I said, as we carried on up the bumpy road. I explained that I didn't like stopping on the way up into Carr Canyon, since I like to keep my momentum going. The road really wasn't as bad as I had made it out to be, however and the views going up and coming down were incredible. Once up at Reef Townsite Campground we got out of the van and strolled around for over an hour. Almost immediately we found one of the target species for the Huachuca Mountains, a Buff-breasted Flycatcher. This, tiniest of the *Empidonax* flycatchers is fairly common in the pine/fir forests of the upper elevations of the Huachucas. Our next target was Greater Pewee and one was singing close by so we tracked it down and enjoyed lovely scope views as it sang 'Jose Maria'. We had great views of Plumbeous Vireos here today, new for the trip list, while we finally caught up with Olive Warblers, as both male and female performed in the pines above us. Other warblers seen included Virginia's, Grace's, Townsend's, Hermit, Wilson's, Black-throated Grey and Audubon's. All in all it was a very pleasant trip to the 7400 feet in elevation. We had lunch and began bumping our way back down the road, pausing to look at a Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay along the way. Back down near the bottom of the road we did try again for the Eastern Bluebird and this time we had great views of a male of the locally rare *fulva* race.

We made a return visit to Ash Canyon where we had hoped we might catch a glimpse of the rare Lucifer Hummingbird this afternoon. One or two of us got lucky, as a male appeared frustratingly briefly and then a female showed up several times at a feeder buried in the leaves. We did get two 'firsts' for the trip however, a young male Calliope Hummingbird appeared at

the feeders for Margaret, Richard and I to see. All of us had leisurely views of a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak here as well, a species not normally found in Arizona. We made a return visit to Applebee's for dinner before some of us ventured out into the field, hoping to catch a view of a Common Poorwill. Unfortunately the poorwills didn't want to show this evening, though we did hear their calls off in the distance while we enjoyed the great show that is the night sky.

Day 10

We returned to Miller Canyon, the same area where we had tried to find poorwills the evening before; it all looked very different bathed in sunlight. Today, a bit of a gusty breeze blew here and there, otherwise, sunny and warm as usual. At the Beatty's Guest Ranch we headed up to a known Northern Goshawk nest site. The goshawk, though we were sure it was hunkered down on the nest, could not be seen from our vantage point. We carried on up the canyon, hoping to spot a roosting Spotted Owl, but the search couldn't turn one up. Other nice birds along the babbling creek included Cordilleran Flycatcher, Grace's Warbler, House Wren, Painted Whitestart and Arizona Woodpecker. We ran into another group as they ascended the canyon. They asked about our luck with the Spotted Owl so I told them the bad news. They gave us a tip on a viewing location for the goshawk so we took their advice and climbed the small hill near the nest, attempting to get an eye level view of the incubating adult. It took a long time, peering through the sea of green leaves, but eventually, I spotted the adult sitting atop the nest. Richard and Margaret, who stayed below, ended up seeing the bird sit right up on top of the nest for a moment. The rest of us settled for scope views of the bird, which was visible only when the wind blew and the leaves parted enough. We could see the goshawks red eye, its hooked bill and occasionally the white supercilium. To finish off our visit at Beatty's we watched the excellent hummingbird feeder setup for half an hour or so. We had our best views of Rivoli's Hummingbird here, along with Broad-tailed, Broad-billed and Black-chinned hummingbirds. A female Calliope Hummingbird fed on flowers near the path, which was nice for everyone who had missed the species the previous day. On a little pond we saw some Leopard Frogs then, after saying goodbye to Tom Beatty Jr, we headed back to Sierra Vista where we had lunch.

After lunch we drove a short distance east to the San Pedro River. Soon after disembarking, we bumped into a couple that had travelled with Andy and Jane years ago in Africa. Sometimes the world seems like such a small place! They pointed out where our target bird, a Western Screech Owl, was roosting in a massive cottonwood. I was thankful, since the tree had been pruned since my previous visit and I was having a hard time locating the owls' roost. Blue Grosbeak was another nice addition here and we saw only our second or third Common Ground-Doves foraging on the ground. A short visit to the gift shop seemed rather lucrative for the gift shop, as quite a few people emerged with little bags of birding memorabilia.

In Douglas, a dusty border town, we stopped to fuel up before we made our way to Portal, where no fuel can be purchased. It was a lovely drive through the desert to Portal, which took us onto State Line Road, where the road is the border between Arizona and New Mexico. On the New Mexico side, it was an hour later and we stopped to check out a barn where I had seen Great Horned Owls in the past. It didn't take me long to spot the owls again and this year, there was an adult and three fluffy chicks stuffed onto the top of the hay bales. We had great scope views and the owner pulled up in his pickup and told us we could go onto his property for a better view, so we did! We carried on to Portal, checked into the lodge then had a little down time before dinner. After dinner, I went on a short stroll, bumping into Geoff who was enjoying the night sky. I ran into Richard and Margaret as well. They were listening to a pair of dueting Western Screech Owls and as I stood with them, a Striped Skunk rustled around in the leaves near the bank of the small creek.

Day 11

Before breakfast we headed out in the cool morning and made our way back to the New Mexico border to try for Bendire's Thrasher at Gin Road. We again saw the family of Great Horned Owls camped out inside the hay barn. Cactus Wren, Western Kingbird and Chihuahuan Ravens all appeared, but soon the star of the show arrived, a Bendire's Thrasher. Now this species is quite similar to the Curve-billed Thrasher but the Bendire's sports a shorter, pale-based bill. We watched the Bendire's forage about for a few minutes and then he collected some nesting material and flew off. Soon thereafter, a Curve-billed Thrasher appeared on a fence and we were able to see all the key differences between the two species. A rather brief encounter with a Prairie Falcon was noteworthy today, as we spotted a large, brown falcon, as it flew away across the fields and disappeared. Leaving New Mexico in the dust, we returned to Portal then went a few miles up the Paradise Road. Three species were on my radar this morning and we managed to find two of them, Scott's Oriole and Juniper Titmouse, both of them at the Paradise Cemetery. The one we missed, the Black-chinned Sparrow, has apparently been very hard to find this spring. After breakfast, we bumped and bounced our way up into the Chiricahua Mountains, stopping at Rustler Park at over 8000 feet elevation. We strolled through a forest of towering pines and firs, listening for the soft calls of our target species, Mexican Chickadee. The Mexican Chickadee is only regularly found in the USA in the Chiricahua Mountains and in one or two mountain ranges in adjacent New Mexico. Since the big forest fire of 2003, it has been somewhat difficult to find them as their coniferous forest habitat lost a lot of size. We had some nice birds in this woodland such as American Robin, Red-faced Warbler and Yellow-eyed Junco, but when the Mexican Chickadee arrived, it stole the show.

From Onion Saddle, we headed down the road towards the Chiricahua National Monument, stopping at Pinery Campground to have a look around and to eat our lunch. Birds were quite numerous here with Cordilleran Flycatcher, Painted Whitestart, Townsend's Warbler, Acorn Woodpecker and Western Wood-Pewee all distracting us from eating lunch. We'd heard there had been a Spotted Owl in the area, but despite a very good search, we couldn't find one. Farther down the canyon we stopped to 'twitch' a rarity, a Slate-throated Whitestart. It was a short and somewhat steep climb up the babbling little brook to where the bird had been seen. "I've got it", I said, as it was about the first bird I put my binoculars on. The lovely red belly, coupled with a lack of white eye arcs and the lack of any white in the wings, made it our bird. The bird fanned its tail, showing the broad white tips to the outer feathers, also indicative of Slate-throated Whitestart. "Does anybody else see it?" I asked, and two members of the group replied, "yes". The bird disappeared after about a ten-second look and then the area suddenly filled up with Painted Whitestarts. A little pool of water attracted some nice visitors while we sat and watched; Townsend's

Warbler, Yellow-eyed Junco and another Mexican Chickadee, most notably. One of our group who had stayed behind near the van came running up and said that my friend John Coons had just warned them of a nearby forest fire. It was hot and windy, two things that combine to make for extreme fire conditions. We could see the smoke and as we were leaving, a forest ranger appeared to make sure we were on our way out. As we passed by John and his Field Guides group, I stopped and chatted with him. He said we should get out for a quick look as they were going to check for Spotted Owl. It would be a pity if we drove on by and they found the bird. We searched together, as a group of about 15 birders, but couldn't find the owl.

The drive back to Portal was scenic, especially through parts of the south fork of Cave Creek Canyon. We stopped for half an hour to bird in the canyon, where the sycamores and oaks nicely shaded us. Birds included Bridled Titmouse, Blue-grey Gnatcatcher, Black Phoebe, Painted Whitestart, Hutton's Vireo, American Robin and Mexican Jay. Once back in Portal we went for a stroll, with hopes of finding a couple more birds for our trip list. The first target was Blue-throated Hummingbird, the largest of North America's hummingbird species. We checked in at a feeder where they often visit, but there was no liquid in the feeder. Two houses down, however, the feeder was stocked. We watched for a bit, enjoying Western Tanagers, Blue Grosbeak, Lazuli Bunting, White-crowned Sparrow and Green-tailed Towhee to name a few species. The Blue-throated Hummingbird, a male, flew in and had a quick feed. He then landed on a branch in a nearby cedar and sat there calling as we watched through the scope. In the trees overhead, flocks of Band-tailed Pigeons were a joy to see. Just as we met for dinner the feeders at the café had some interesting attendees, including Cassin's Finches and Pyrrhuloxia. Our final dinner together as a group was very nice and it was sad to think it would all be over tomorrow. Margaret and Richard went for another stroll this evening, and guess what? They found another skunk. This one a Hognose Skunk, strolling through Portal.

Day 12 – A few keeners joined me this morning on another stroll through Portal. The morning bird activity was high. The Cassin's Finches, Northern Cardinals, Pyrrhuloxia, Acorn Woodpeckers, Canyon Towhees and other various bits and bobs were still at the feeder. Singing in the desert at the edge of town were Cactus Wren, Lucy's Warbler, Bell's Vireo, Curve-billed Thrasher and the like. We had more views of the Blue-throated Hummingbird this morning and saw again the Band-tailed Pigeons. A Pacific-slope Flycatcher sang several times, but remained hidden in the greenery. After breakfast, on our way out of Portal, we came across a large Western Diamondback Rattlesnake that was sunning on the road. I pulled off beside the snake and tried to encourage it to move off the road as there were cars coming in both directions. The snake gave a couple of rattles to me as it headed straight under the tire of the van where it curled up in the shade. Rather carefully, I got back in the van and slowly backed up, under the careful guidance of Nigel. The snake sat there all coiled up. At least he was off the road. We drove through barren areas of western New Mexico this morning as we headed back towards Phoenix for late afternoon flights. Our main birding stop for the day was at the Willcox Sewage Pond, or 'water treatment plant' as coined by Jane. It was ridiculously windy here, which made spotting shorebirds through the scope a bit of a challenge. There were plenty of Black-necked Stilts and American Avocets, as well as Killdeer and some really nice Wilson's Phalaropes. Several 'peeps' were pointed out to me and after a quick look in the scope, we'd added Least Sandpiper and Western Sandpiper. Distant gunshots kept flushing the waterfowl, but in the end we added quite a few species here such as Cinnamon Teal, Blue-winged Teal and Green-winged Teal and American Wigeon. Horned Larks 'hung on for dear life' in the wind as they foraged at the edge of the pond. The drive back to Phoenix was broken by a lunch stop in Benson. We tallied up the list as we drove and figured we'd seen 207 species. In my memory, this is the highest list I've tallied on an Arizona trip.

Systematic List of Species Recorded (207 bird species)

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Small numbers at Gilbert Water Ranch in Phoenix.

Cinnamon Teal *Spatula cyanoptera*

Pair at Willcox Water Treatment Ponds (WTP)

Blue-winged Teal *Spatula discors*

Two at Willcox WTP.

Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Found at Patagonia Lake State Park and at Willcox WTP.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Small numbers at Patagonia Lake State Park and at Willcox WTP.

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

Upwards of 20 at Willcox WTP.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Noted at Amado WTP, Gilbert Water Ranch and at Agua Caliente.

Mexican Duck *Anas diazi*

Found at Willcox WTP, Pena Blanca Lake, Patagonia Lake State Park.

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

Single bird at Patagonia Lake State Park.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Noted at the Amado WTP, Patagonia Lake State Park and Willcox WTP.

Scaled Quail *Callipepla squamata*

Several seen well at the Appleton – Whittell Audubon Research Ranch near Elgin.

Gambel's Quail *Callipepla gambelii*

Common throughout in lowland desert / suburban habitats.

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo*

Fairly common in various canyons including Madera Canyon, Ash Canyon etc.

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*

One or perhaps two at Patagonia Lake State Park.

Black-necked Grebe *Podilymbus nigricollis*

One at Patagonia Lake State Park and others at Willcox WTP.

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*

Tallied at Patagonia Lake State Park and at Willcox WTP.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Only sightings came from the Gilbert Water Ranch in Phoenix

Green Heron *Butorides virescens*

Found at Gilbert Water Ranch and at Patagonia Lake State Park.

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*

Found at Gilbert Water Ranch, as well as at Aravaipa Canyon, and along Sonoita Creek near Patagonia.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

Two at Gilbert Water Ranch in Phoenix.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*

Seen at Gilbert Water Ranch near Phoenix.

Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasiliensis*

Found at Patagonia Lake State Park and at Gilbert Water Ranch.

Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus*

One immature bird at Patagonia Lake State Park.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*

Common throughout tour.

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*

First sighting at the Sonoran Desert Museum in Tucson. Later found along Santa Cruz River near Tubac and at Patagonia Lake State Park.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

One chased by raven at base of Carr Canyon Road near Sierra Vista.

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii*

Fairly common throughout. Nest with adult inside at Agua Caliente Park in Tucson.

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

One on nest at Beatty's Guest Ranch in Miller Canyon.

Common Black Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus*

Adult on nest in Aravaipa Canyon.

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

One circling over Gilbert Water Ranch in Phoenix.

Grey Hawk *Asturina nitida*

Seen regularly, especially in riparian habitat along creeks. First sighting was of a bird soaring in Aravaipa Canyon. Other locations included the De Anza Trail, and Santa Gertrudis Lane along Santa Cruz River, Patagonia Lake State Park and Pena Blanca Lake.

Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*

Several sightings, mostly of single birds at Florida Wash, the Amado WTP, Gin Road Area near Portal, and two birds soaring together over Las Cienegas Grasslands.

Zone-tailed Hawk *Buteo albonotatus*

First noted at Aravaipa Canyon, and later seen at Patagonia Lake State Park and along Santa Gertrudis Lane.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*

Common buteo throughout tour.

American Coot *Fulica americana*

Numerous at Gilbert Water Ranch and at Willcox WTP, with smaller numbers at Patagonia Lake State Park, Pena Blanca Lake, and the Amado WTP.

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*

Noted at Gilbert Water Ranch in Phoenix, Willcox WTP and at the Amado WTP.

American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana*

Found at Gilbert Water Ranch and at Willcox Sewage Ponds.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*

Seen at Gilbert Water Ranch, Patagonia Lake State Park and Willcox Sewage Pond.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*

Small numbers at Gilbert Water Ranch and at Willcox Sewage Ponds.

Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri*

A couple identified at Willcox WTP.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

Large numbers at the Gilbert Water Ranch and a few also at Willcox WTP.

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*

One at Gilbert Water Ranch and many at Willcox WTP.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia*

Found at Gilbert Water Ranch, Agua Caliente Park, Patagonia Lake State Park and at Willcox Sewage Ponds.

Feral Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Common throughout.

Band-tailed Pigeon *Columba fasciata*

Several noted in Portal.

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Common throughout.

Inca Dove *Columbina inca*

First at Gilbert Water Ranch, later at Aravaipa Canyon, Santa Gertrudis Lane, Paton's Center for Hummingbirds, San Pedro House, and in Portal.

Common Ground Dove *Columbina passerina*

Two or three noted along path along Santa Cruz River at Santa Gertrudis Lane and others at San Pedro House.

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*

Common throughout.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica*

Common throughout.

Greater Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus*

One seen briefly in Florida Wash at base of Santa Rita Mtns. Excellent views of one in Rio Rico at entrance to Esplendor Resort. Seen also along road in lower Carr Canyon and a couple noted along Stateline Road near Portal.

Western Screech Owl *Megascops kennicottii*

One roosting in cavity in large cottonwood at San Pedro House. Pair also heard in Portal.

Whiskered Screech Owl *Otus trichopsis*

Fantastic views in Madera Canyon.

Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus*

Nesting in hay barn along Stateline Road, on the New Mexico side. Adult and three chicks.

Mountain Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium gnoma*

One seen very well at Madera Picnic Area in Madera Canyon.

Elf Owl *Micrathene whitneyi*

One seen well in Madera Canyon as it poked its tiny head from out of a hole in a telephone pole at 7 PM sharp. Others heard at Whitehouse Picnic Area in Madera.

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*

One seen at burrow in urban Tucson, at corner of S 16 Ave and W Ajo Rd.

Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis*

One or two seen in Madera Canyon.

Common Poorwill *Phalaenoptilus nuttallii (H)*

Heard several calling in Miller Canyon in the Huachuca Mountains.

Mexican Whip-poor-will *Antrostomus arizonae (H)*

Heard in Madera Canyon.

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi*

Seen at Gilbert Water Ranch and later on in upper Carr Canyon.

White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis*

Found at Sabino Canyon, Patagonia Roadside Rest Stop, and in upper Carr Canyon.

Broad-billed Hummingbird *Cynanthus latirostris*

Perhaps most common hummingbird species throughout tour.

Violet-crowned Hummingbird *Amazilia violiceps*

One of the rarest hummingbirds in the USA, just one seen at Paton's feeders in Patagonia.

Blue-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis clemenciae*

Largest hummingbird in the U.S.A., seen at feeders in Portal.

Rivoli's Hummingbird *Eugenes fulgens*

Fairly common at feeding stations in Madera Canyon, Ramsey Canyon, and various other locales. First sighting at feeders at Iron Door Restaurant atop Mt. Lemmon.

Lucifer Sheartail *Calothorax lucifer*

Tantalizingly brief sighting on several occasions of male at Ash Canyon feeders, and one look also at female.

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri*

Common at feeding stations throughout.

Anna's Hummingbird *Calypte anna*

Found at Paton's Center for Hummingbirds and at Ash Canyon feeders.

Costa's Hummingbird *Calypte costae*

Sightings at Sonoran Desert Museum, suburban Green Valley neighborhood along W Paseo Del Canto Rd, Pena Blanca Lake, and at Sabino Canyon.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird *Selasphorus platycercus*

Fairly common at feeding stations in all the canyons.

Calliope Hummingbird *Selasphorus calliope*

Noted first at Ash Canyon B & B and later seen in Miller Canyon.

Elegant Tropicbird *Trogon elegans*

Two encounters. One on trails in upper Madera Canyon, and another at Madera Picnic Area in lower canyon.

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus*

Common in oak and pine woodlands throughout.

Gila Woodpecker *Melanerpes uropygialis*

Common and seen almost daily, with the exception of the Portal area.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Picoides scalaris*

Fairly common throughout, with first sighting in Aravaipa Canyon.

Arizona Woodpecker *Picoides arizonae*

Seen at Cypress Picnic Area on Mt. Lemmon. Also at Madera Canyon and at Beatty's Guest Ranch in Miller Canyon.

Hairy Woodpecker *Picoides villosus*

One seen well atop Mt. Lemmon in Santa Catalina Mountains.

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*

Found at Mt. Lemmon as well as in the Chiricahua Mountains. 'Red-shafted' race.

Gilded Flicker *Colaptes chrysoides*

One along W. Paseo del Canto Rd in Green Valley.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*

Located at Sabino Canyon and along Ruby Road near Pena Blanca Lake.

Prairie Falcon *Falco mexicanus*

One made brief appearance along Arizona side of Stateline Road near Portal.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Encountered at Gilbert Water Ranch in Phoenix, as well as at Windy Point Vista in Santa Catalina Mountains, and atop Carr Canyon in Huachucas.

Northern Beardless Tyrannulet *Campstostoma imberbe*

Fairly local species found at Agua Caliente Park in Tucson, as well as at Patagonia Lake State Park.

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans*

Found at Aravaipa Canyon, S. Fork Cave Creek Canyon, and at Pena Blanca Lake.

Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya*

Noted at Pena Blanca Lake, Appleton – Whittell Research Ranch, lower Carr Canyon and at Miller Canyon's Beatty's Guest Ranch.

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi*

Single migrants at Aravaipa Canyon, Gilbert Water Ranch, Sabino Canyon and at the Appleton – Whittell Research Ranch.

Greater Pewee *Contopus pertinax*

Found in the Huachuca Mountains in upper Carr Canyon at Reef Townsite Camp Ground.

Western Wood-Pewee *Contopus sordidulus*

Common and seen often throughout tour.

Willow Flycatcher *Empidonax traillii*

One seen at Patagonia Lake State Park.

Hammond's Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondi*

Heard often, and seen at Aravaipa Canyon and at Bear Wallow on Mt. Lemmon.

Pacific-slope Flycatcher *Empidonax difficilis*

Probably seen several times, but difficult to separate from Cordilleran unless calling. One brief sighting was at Proctor Road in lower Madera Canyon.

Cordilleran Flycatcher *Empidonax occidentalis*

Good views in Miller Canyon in Huachuca Mountains, and also in Chiricahua Mtns at Pinery Campground.

Buff-breasted Flycatcher *Empidonax fulvifrons*

Excellent views at Reef Townsite Campground in upper Carr Canyon in the Huachuca Mountains.

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*

Seen most days on tour, Aravaipa Canyon, Agua Caliente Park, Santa Cruz River and other locations.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus*

Two at Roy Morris County Park in Tubac.

Cassin's Kingbird *Tyrannus vociferans*

Fairly common, with first sighting at Roy Morris County Park in Tubac.

Thick-billed Kingbird *Tyrannus crassirostris*

Two along the De Anza Trail in Tubac were the only ones found this year.

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*

Fairly common and seen most days in open areas.

Rose-throated Becard *Pachyramphus albogularis*

Male near nest along Santa Cruz River and De Anza Trail in Tubac.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer*

Smallest of myiarchus flycatchers found in USA. Fairly common in canyons and in riparian areas throughout.

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens*

Medium sized myiarchus. Fairly common in open desert areas throughout.

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus*

The biggest Myiarchus in the region, this species was found in most wooded canyons throughout the tour.

Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus*

One seen on telephone wires near Florida Wash / Lower Madera Canyon. Also found at Las Cienegas Grasslands.

Bell's Vireo *Vireo bellii*

Common in desert scrub habitats, especially near water. Found at Aravaipa Canyon as well as at Agua Caliente Park, Sabino Canyon, and a number of other sites.

Plumbeous Vireo *Vireo plumbeus*

Heard often, with first visuals at upper Carr Canyon in the Huachuca Mountains.

Cassin's Vireo *Vireo cassinii*

One, our only on tour, seen at Gilbert Water Ranch in Phoenix.

Hutton's Vireo *Vireo huttoni*

First noted at Bear Wallow on Mt. Lemmon. Also found in Madera Canyon, Carr Canyon, and Miller Canyon.

Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus*

Fairly common migrant, seen most days.

Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri*

Found in Santa Catalina Mountains, Huachuca Mountains and Chiricahua Mtns.

Mexican Jay *Aphelocoma wollweberi*

Common in canyons such as Madera, Carr and Miller. Usually present where feeders are found.

Woodhouse's Scrub Jay *Aphelocoma woodhousei*

One or two from the van near Globe, but later good sightings in the Huachuca Mountains and near Portal at Paradise.

Northern Raven *Corvus corax*

Common throughout.

Chihuahuan Raven *Corvus cryptoleucus*

Found at Sonoita Grasslands at Las Cienegas and in desert habitats around Portal.

Phainopepla *Phainopepla nitens*

Common throughout and seen nearly every day.

Bridled Titmouse *Baeolophus wollweberi*

Fairly common in canyons, especially where feeders present.

Juniper Titmouse *Baeolophus wollweberi*

One found near Paradise Cemetery close to Portal.

Mountain Chickadee *Poecile gambeli*

Found in the Santa Catalina Mountains along Bear Wallow Road.

Mexican Chickadee *Poecile sclateri*

Three found in the Chiricahua Mountains at Pinery Canyon and at Rustler Park.

Verdin *Auriparus flaviceps*

Common in desert areas such as those at the Desert Museum near Tucson and the lower reaches of Madera Canyon.

Also numerous at the Gilbert Water Ranch.

Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

One seen quite well along gravel road at Las Cienegas Grasslands near Elgin.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Several at Willcox WTP.

Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina*

Found at various places along the Catalina Hwy up to Mt. Lemmon.

Purple Martin *Progne subis*

Three seen near Agua Caliente Park in Tucson.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*

Found at a number of places, all near water, such as Gilbert Water Ranch, Aravaipa Canyon, Pena Blanca Lake, etc.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Common throughout, especially where water present. Most numerous at Willcox WTP.

American Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*

Found at Gilbert Water Ranch on first day. Also, nesting colony present on side of our hotel in Nogales.

American Bushtit *Psaltriparus minimus*

Small numbers about at Pena Blanca Lake, Carr Canyon and at Ash Canyon B & B.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula*

Several in Bear Wallow on Mt. Lemmon.

Cactus Wren *Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*

Fairly common, especially in desert lowlands. Our first Cactus Wren was at Agua Caliente Park in Tucson. We later saw them at the Arizona – Sonoran Desert Museum, as well as at Sabino Canyon.

Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus*

Found at Sabino Canyon and at the Patagonia Roadside Rest Stop.

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii*

Fairly common in riparian habitats.

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*

Common in mountain and canyon habitats throughout.

Blue-grey Gnatcatcher *Polioptila caerulea*

Seen only twice, with first sighting on Mt. Lemmon at the Windy Point Vista. Second sighting was at Cave Creek Canyon near Portal.

Black-tailed Gnatcatcher *Polioptila melanura*

We found these at Agua Caliente Park, the Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum and at Sabino Canyon, all around Tucson.

Black-capped Gnatcatcher *Polioptila nigriceps*

Single bird near nesting location along Proctor Road in Madera Canyon.

Pygmy Nuthatch *Sitta pygmaea*

Smallest North American nuthatch seen at Bear Wallow on Mt. Lemmon, and also in Pinery Canyon in the Chiricahuas.

Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis*

Small numbers in upper elevations of Catalina Mountains. Noted at Bear Wallow Rd on Mt. Lemmon, as well as at the ski area on Mt. Lemmon.

White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis*

Common throughout, especially at feeders.

Brown Creeper *Certhia americana*

Encountered at a number of locations including Bear Wallow Road on Mt. Lemmon, Carr Canyon, and Miller Canyon in the Huachuca Mtns, and at Cave Creek Canyon.

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos*

Fairly common throughout in suburban areas and in desert habitats.

Bendire's Thrasher *Toxostoma bendirei*

One seen well along the Arizona / New Mexico State Line at Gin Road, near Portal.

Curve-billed Thrasher *Toxostoma curvirostre*

Common throughout in desert areas.

Crissal Thrasher *Toxostoma crissale*

Nice views at Proctor Road in lower Madera Canyon.

Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Common throughout.

Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialis*

Male 'Azure' Eastern Bluebird seen along lower reaches of Carr Canyon Road near Sierra Vista.

Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana*

Two seen well atop Mt. Lemmon.

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus*

Heard several times, but seen just once at Cave Creek Canyon near Portal.

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus*

Seen when we ventured in canyons and higher elevations. First encounters were at Bear Wallow Road on Mt. Lemmon.

Also seen in Carr Canyon, at the Reef Townsite

Campground, as well as at Pinery Canyon in the Chiricahuas.

American Robin *Turdus migratorius*

Found in higher elevation forests and in pine / oak canyons on several occasions.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Common in urban and rural areas throughout.

Olive Warbler *Peucedramus taeniatus*

First seen along Bear Wallow Road on Mt. Lemmon. Later seen well at Reef Townsite Campground in Carr Canyon.

Cassin's Finch *Haemorhous cassinii*

One in Summerhaven on Mt. Lemmon, and later several at feeders in Portal.

House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus*

Common throughout at low elevations and especially where feeders present.

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Noted at feeders in Portal.

Lesser Goldfinch *Carduelis psaltria*

Common throughout, especially at feeders.

Pine Siskin *Carduelis pinus*

Common this year with many at feeding stations throughout.

Orange-crowned Warbler *Oreothlypis celata*

Found at Pena Blanca Lake, near Nogales.

Lucy's Warbler *Leiothlypis luciae*

Common throughout in desert and lowland habitats.

Virginia's Warbler *Leiothlypis virginiae*

Several sightings this year, with first ones at Summerhaven on Mt. Lemmon. Later, found at Carr Canyon, Sabino Canyon and at the Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum.

MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei*

One seen briefly at Sabino Canyon in Tucson.

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*

Found on first morning of birding at Gilbert Water Ranch in Phoenix. Also found at Patagonia Lake State Park and along the Santa Cruz River at the De Anza Trail.

American Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia*

Common in lowland habitats, especially near riparian areas.

Audubon's (Yellow-rumped) Warbler *Setophaga auduboni*

Fairly common throughout.

Grace's Warbler *Setophaga graciae*

Our first Grace's Warbler was at the Cypress Picnic Area on Mt. Lemmon. Also seen at Carr Canyon, Madera Canyon and Pinery Canyon.

Black-throated Grey Warbler *Setophaga nigrescens*

Present, in ones and twos, in many of the canyons, including Carr Canyon and Miller Canyon, as well as at Gilbert Water Ranch, and at Windy Point Vista on Mt. Lemmon.

Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi*

Small numbers present as migrants at locations including Bear Wallow at Mt. Lemmon, Madera Canyon, Santa Gertrudis Lane, and at Reef Townsite Campground in upper Carr Canyon.

Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis*

Up to three at Reef Townsite Campground in the Huachucas and another later at Pinery Canyon in the Chiricahuas.

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla*

Common migrant throughout.

Red-faced Warbler *Cardellina rubrifrons*

Great views at Mt. Lemmon in cool confines of Bear Wallow. One seen later in trip at Rustler Park in Chiricahuas.

Painted Whitestart *Myioborus pictus*

Fairly common and present in all mountain canyons; Madera, Carr, Miller, etc.

Slate-throated Whitestart *Myioborus miniatus*

Rare stray north of Mexico. Continuing rarity seen in Pinery Canyon in the Chiricahua Mountains.

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens*

One seen at Aravaipa Canyon. Others noted along Santa Cruz River at the De Anza Trail. One came in to orange feeders at Patons in Patagonia.

Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna*

'Lilian's' race seen along the road to the Appleton-Whittell Research Lab and in the Las Cienegas Grasslands, near Elgin.

Scott's Oriole *Icterus parisorum*

One seen quite well at picnic area in lower Carr Canyon, Huachuca Mountains.

Bullock's Oriole *Icterus bullockii*

Brief views in Green Valley along Paseo del Canto Dr. Seen later in Portal as well.

Hooded Oriole *Icterus cucullatus*

Found in Aravaipa Canyon, as well as at Agua Caliente Park. Also seen at Portal.

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*

Seen several times on tour, with best places being the Gilbert Water Ranch near Phoenix, Patagonia Lake State Park and Agua Caliente Park.

Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus*

Two sightings. First was at Paseo del Canto Dr in Green Valley. The other was at Ash Canyon B & B near Sierra Vista.

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater*

Common throughout.

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus*

Common throughout.

Lark Bunting *Calamospiza melanocorys*

Seen by single observer twice. First at Florida Wash enroute to Madera Canyon, and later along access road at Patagonia Lake State Park.

Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia*

Encountered several times in riparian areas including Gilbert Water Ranch, the Paton Center for Hummingbirds, Patagonia Lake State Park, Pena Blanca Lake, Santa Gertrudis Lane and more locations.

Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolni*

A migrant species, heading further north to breed. Found at Aravaipa Canyon and in Madera Canyon.

White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*

Common throughout in lower elevations where species is a migrant.

Yellow-eyed Junco *Junco phaeonotus*

Fairly regular at higher elevations on Mt. Lemmon, in Madera Canyon, and in Carr Canyon.

Grasshopper Sparrow *Ammodramus savannarum*

Small numbers in Las Cienegas Grasslands and another near the Appleton-Whittell Research Ranch.

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*

Seen just once on tour near top of Mount Lemmon.

Brewer's Sparrow *Spizella breweri*

Two seen in weeds at edge of pond at Gilbert Water Ranch in Phoenix. Later, seen quite well at Las Cienegas Grasslands.

Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus*

Common at lower elevations throughout.

Black-throated Sparrow *Amphispiza bilineata*

Seen well at Florida Wash near Madera Canyon and at Paradise near Portal.

Rufous-winged Sparrow *Aimophila carpalis*

Noted at the Sonoran Desert Museum, as well as in Florida Wash. Seen also along Paseo del Canto Dr in Green Valley.

Botteri's Sparrow *Aimophila botterii*

Sightings in dry grasses in Florida Wash and along access road to the Appleton-Whittell Research Ranch in Elgin area.

Rufous-crowned Sparrow *Aimophila ruficeps*

Found at Pena Blanca Lake, Patagonia Lake State Park, the Patagonia Roadside Rest Stop, and at the Appleton-Whittell Research Ranch.

Green-tailed Towhee *Pipilo chlorurus*

Quite a few seen this year at locations including Ash Canyon B & B, Sabino Canyon, Paton's Center for Hummingbirds, and in Portal.

Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus*

Seen in most of the canyons, including Ash Canyon B & B, Miller Canyon, Carr Canyon, Cave Creek Canyon, etc.

Canyon Towhee *Pipilo fuscus*

Quite common throughout, with sightings at a number of locations. Just a couple of locations include Ash Canyon B & B, San Pedro House, Portal, Proctor Road in Madera Canyon, etc.

Abert's Towhee *Pipilo aberti*

Riparian counterpart of the Canyon Towhee, Gilbert Water Ranch, Aravaipa Canyon, Agua Caliente Park, Sonoran Desert Museum, Santa Gertrudis Lane and the De Anza Trail.

Hepatic Tanager *Piranga flava*

Found several times in mountains; Madera Canyon, Miller Canyon, Carr Canyon, Pinery Canyon and Cave Creek Canyon.

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra*

Common throughout in lower elevation areas with plenty of deciduous trees.

Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana*

Fairly common migrant throughout.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus*

Male spotted at feeders at Ash Canyon B & B.

Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus*

Common throughout tour, especially at feeders.

Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis cardinalis*

Common in pine / oak forests of canyons. Also common where feeders present.

Pyrrhuloxia *Cardinalis sinuatus*

Several good views of this species with our first good looks at the Sonoran Desert Museum in Tucson. Also seen in Florida Wash, Ash Canyon, and in Portal.

Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*

Good views at the San Pedro House feeders, east of Sierra Vista. Seen also at at feeders in Portal.

Lazuli Bunting *Passerina versicolor*

First noted at edge of irrigated lawn in Aravaipa Canyon. Also found at Agua Caliente Park, Florida Wash and in Portal.

Mammals

Rock Squirrel *Spermophilus variegatus*

Round-tailed Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus tereticaudus*

Cliff Chipmunk *Neotamias dorsalis*

Tassel-eared (Abert's) Squirrel *Sciurus aberti*

Arizona Grey Squirrel *Sciurus arizonensis*

Mexican Fox Squirrel *Sciurus nayaritensis*

Botta's Pocket Gopher *Thomomys bottae*

Black-tailed Jackrabbit *Lepus californicus*

Desert Cottontail *Sylvilagus audubonii*

Coyote *Canis latrans*

Striped Skunk *Mephitis mephitis*

American Hog-nosed Skunk *Conepatus leuconotus*

Mule Deer *Odocoileus hemionus*

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus*

Pronghorn *Antilocapra americana*

Reptiles and Amphibians

American Bullfrog *Rana catesbeiana*

Chiricahua Leopard Frog *Rana yavapaiensis*

Red-eared Slider *Trachemys scripta*

Greater Earless Lizard *Cophosaurus texanus*

Sonoran Spotted Whiptail *Aspidoscelis sonorae*

Western Diamondback Rattlesnake *Crotalus atrox*

Butterflies

Pipevine Swallowtail *Battus philenor*

Giant Swallowtail *Papilio cresphontes*

Cloudless Sulphur *Phoebis sennae*

Marine Blue *Leptotes marina*

Gulf Fritillary *Agraulis vanillae*

Arizona Sister *Adelpha bredowii*

Empress Leila *Asterocampa leilia*

American Snout *Libytheana carinenta*

Monarch *Danaus plexippus*

Queen *Danaus gilippus*

Silver-spotted Skipper *Epargyreus clarus*