

SOUTHWEST REGION

ARIZONA

/Janet Witzeman

A rather lackluster fall was brightened by a family group of Golden-winged Warblers, the first Blue-winged Warbler since 1952 and Eared Trogons that continued to tantalize.

Although there were a few nuthatches and chickadees and several Golden-crowned Kinglets found in the lowlands, no major movement of montane and/or northern species materialized.

In the following report, the names of Elfrida, McNeal and Bis-bee/Douglas sewage ponds appear frequently. These are areas south of Willcox in southeast Arizona that have received increased cover-age during the past year, and any records from that previously little covered area help to plug up the holes in our knowledge of the state's avifauna.

LOONS THROUGH FRIGATEBIRDS — Loons recorded away from the Lower Colorado R. (hereafter, L.C.R.) were two Com. Loons at Upper L. Mary Nov. 3 (J. Shipley), and an Arctic Loon at Prescott Oct. 19, which provided only the second recent record for that area (CT). A total of one Arctic and five Commons was recorded on the L.C.R., during the period (CH *et al.*). Horned Grebes were found in two areas: one at Phoenix Oct. 2-12 (DSj) and one at Nogales Nov. 19 (JBo). A W. Grebe at Becker L., on the late date of Nov. 26 was of the dark phase (DDa, JBe), the only form recorded so far in the northeast.

White Pelicans continued to be numerous and widespread. Several scattered flocks were on L. Havasu during August and early September and 300+ were counted on Cibola N.W.R., Oct. 2 (DL *et al.*). Five were observed at Prescott Oct. 15 with one remaining until Nov. 11 (H & AG, CT), four at Tucson Nov. 25-30 (JD *et al.*) and additional individuals were at Alamo L., Aug. 17-18 (P. Glinski, TS), Phoenix October-December (TG *et al.*) and w. of McNeal Oct. 6-12 and Nov. 10 (AM). As usual, Brown Pelicans wandered N late July to mid-September: individuals were recorded at Tonapah, w. of Phoenix (DK), Picacho Res. (DSj), San Carlos Res. (B. Thomas) and St. David (T. Heatley), as well as five to six at Painted Rock Dam (hereafter, P.R.D.) (PB *et al.*). The Picacho Res. bird was an adult; one of the very few ever recorded inland in the southwest.

A Double-crested Cormorant, a scarce transient in the northeast, was at Becker L., Nov. 26 (DDa, JBe). Olivaceous Cormorants at Patagonia L. increased from seven in mid-September to at least 15 in mid-November (PN, DDe *et al.*). One of the bizarre records of the fall was of the discovery of an imm. frigatebird perched in a eucalyptus tree in a Tucson yard at night, on the late date of Oct. 7 (GG, PN, m.ob.). All of the previous records have occurred from late June to mid-September.

HERONS, IBISES — The third and fourth Louisiana Herons of the year was recorded at San Simon Cienaga, e. of Portal, Sept. 13 (R.T. Scholes, F.P. Smith) and Gillespie Dam, w. of Phoenix Oct. 31+ (CB *et al.*). The individual recorded at Tucson in June remained until Aug. 22 (DSj, SG *et al.*). Records of Cattle Egrets in the southeast (where formerly rare) continued to multiply. From one to



six were seen n. of Elfrida Sept. 24-Nov. 22, four were w. of McNeal Oct. 2 (AM) and one was at Willcox Oct. 9 (S. King). More unusual was one at Prescott Oct. 31 (CT). Four at Tucson Sept. 26 (B. Pollock) and four at Phoenix Nov. 13 (RBr) were the only other ones reported during the fall. Individual Great Egrets, uncommon in the southeast, were present n. of Elfrida Sept. 24-Oct. 6 and w. of McNeal Oct. 8 (AM).

White-face Ibises were found in good numbers w. of McNeal through September with a high of 90 Sept. 28 (AM). A late individual was at Benson Nov. 27-28 (PN, JBo). Surprising were two probable White Ibises seen flying N of Ehrenberg, L.C.R., Oct. 7 (†LL). There were only 4 previous state records.

WATERFOWL — In addition to the White-fronted Geese on the L.C.R.—15 on L. Havasu Sept. 22 (GM) and 11 at Cibola N.W.R., Sept. 24 (DK, LL)—two were at Tucson Oct. 20 into December (JD, GG *et al.*), one w. of Phoenix Sept. 23-30 (J. Burton), and more unusual were one to five during October and November near McNeal (AM, TD, DDa). Snow Geese were more widespread and numerous than usual away from the L.C.R., in November; notable were up to 20 at McNeal (AM, PN) three at Bisbee/Douglas sewage ponds (AM), up to three at Tucson (PN, GG, WD) and individuals at Sierra Vista, Willcox, Nogales, Phoenix; and a blue morph at Kayenta Nov. 29 (C. LaRue). Two Ross' Geese were at Poston and a high of 20 were with the 500 Snow Geese at Topock, L.C.R., in November (CH), plus individuals were near McNeal (ph. AM), Sierra Vista, Willcox (PN) and Tucson (WD, GG).

Black-bellied Whistling Ducks were found nesting in 2 areas—at the Benson sewage ponds for the first time—a pair with nine young were observed Sept. 14 (BB, DDe), and at the Nogales sewage pond, a pair with 13 young during October (JBo *et al.*). In addition 14 were at Marana, n. of Tucson Aug. 22 (S. Suter) and up to seven at Tucson during August (JBo, SG). A ♀ Greater Scaup, an uncommon migrant, especially away from the L.C.R., was observed at Tucson Nov. 21

(KK). A small invasion of scoters occurred in s. Arizona. Two **White-winged Scoters** were found at Tucson Nov. 14 (DSz *et al.*), at Patagonia L., Nov. 24 (R. Eastman) and at Nogales Nov. 26 (D. Garver, R. Olson). These possibly involved the same two individuals. These were only $12 \pm$ previous recent records. Two individual Surf Scoters were at Nogales Nov. 16 (BH) and Benson Nov. 27 (PN). Additionally, a Surf Scoter was seen in n. Arizona on L. Mead Oct. 19 and another, or the same, in nearby Hualapai Canyon Oct. 20 (VM). A Hooded Merganser on a lake w. of Springerville, Nov. 28 (DDa, JBe) was of interest as there are only a few records for the northeast.

RAPTORS THROUGH RAILS — Records of White-tailed Kites continued to increase. One was observed along the San Pedro R., just n. of the Mexican border Aug. 4 (MJ, M. Piersons) and one photographed near McNeal Sept. 12 remained through October (TD, AM, DDa, L. Moody). A wandering individual Mississippi Kite was recorded at Marana Aug. 6 (B. Whitney). An imm. Goshawk near McNeal Oct. 12 (AM) was well away from areas of residence in the mountains. A Black Hawk in the Bill Williams Delta (hereafter, B.W. Delta) Sept. 8 & 16 was probably the same individual that summered there (CH, JJ). An imm. Caracara, observed in the mesquite grassland s.w. of McNeal Nov. 6 (†AM), was far e. of its breeding range.

Sandhill Cranes spread to 2 new areas: 135+ were in the Picacho Res./Eloy area in September and 250+ were at Gillespie Dam Nov. 28 (DT). A Black Rail was heard in the B.W. Delta Sept. 8, 16 and Oct. 5 (†DK, D. Kohlmoos). This represented the second record at this area n. of the known breeding areas on the L.C.R. A Com. Gallinule at Granite Cr., in Prescott Oct. 28 into winter was unusual at this elevation and habitat (CT).

SHOREBIRDS — Two Mountain Plovers n. of Elfrida Nov. 3 (AM) added to the recent records of this species in the southeast. An Am. Golden Plover at Phoenix Oct. 11-24 (ph. RW *et al.*) furnished only the third record since 1976. Before that one or more had occurred annually since at least 1969. The only Black-bellied Plovers of the fall were two at Tucson Oct. 2 (BB, WD) and one w. of McNeal Oct. 27 (AM). Individual Snowy Plovers were at the Bisbee/Douglas sewage ponds Sept. 13 (AM), w. of Phoenix Sept. 5 (RBr, RF) and three at Tucson Sept. 1 (FH). One of the rarer shorebirds to pass through or over the state, the Red Knot, was recorded in two areas: one w. of Phoenix Sept. 7-18 (PB *et al.*) and one at Nogales Sept. 17 (BH, RBa).



American Golden Plover, Phoenix, Ariz., Oct. 11, 1982. Photo/R. Witzeman.

Individual Semipalmated Sandpipers were reported at Tucson Aug. 28-29 (DSj *et al.*), from two areas in Phoenix Aug. 20 (†RN, VJ) & 25 (DSj) and one to three w. of Phoenix Sept. 15-18 (DSj *et al.*). Dunlin are more uncommon in the southeast than in the west, so of interest was one at Tucson Oct. 18-21 (KK *et al.*) and two w. of McNeal Nov. 14 (AM). Higher-than-usual numbers of Long-billed Curlews were counted w. of McNeal—31 on Aug. 30, 24 in late October and again Nov. 14 (AM). The only Marbled Godwits of the period were singles w. of Phoenix Sept. 18 (JW, DSj) and at Tucson Oct. 19 (EB). Sanderlings were more common than usual: w. of Phoenix were four Sept. 8 (CB), one Sept. 24 (RW) and two Oct. 12 (PB); in Tucson there were two Oct. 2-3 (KK, SG) and one Nov. 20 (WD); and one was at Nogales Oct. 8 (JBo, BK).

A high of five Red Phalaropes was reported—two at Posey Wells, n. of Bowie Sept. 24 (JBo, DDe, DSj), one near McNeal Nov. 11-13 (AM, PN), one at Tucson Nov. 11 (JS, WD) and one at Parker Nov. 8 (†RH, ph. DK).

JAEGERS THROUGH ANIS — An imm. jaeger (sp.) was observed on Lower L. Mary, s. of Flagstaff Sept. 12-16 (†JC, TM). The only previous record of a jaeger for n. Arizona was of a Pomarine near Flagstaff in fall 1927. Records of Herring Gulls are sparse, especially away from the L.C.R. An adult and immature were observed with Ring-billed Gulls at Prescott Nov. 4 (CT) and one was seen at Becker L., near Springerville Nov. 26 (DDa, JBe). A first-year California Gull (uncommon away from the L.C.R.) was at Tucson Oct. 19 (SG).

A flurry of Heermann's Gulls occurred briefly at 4 locations during storms in mid-November: on the 9th, two were at Tucson (KK *et al.*) and one was at B.W. Delta (†DK, CH); on the 16th five were at Tucson (TG, MC) and two were in Tempe, e. of Phoenix (RBr *et al.*) and on the 20th one was at Nogales (JS). We have come to expect Sabine's Gulls in the fall, but unexpected was the ad. Sabine's Gull at Phoenix on the early date of Aug. 17-22 (TG, MJ *et al.*). Adults are uncommon inland. Single imm. Sabine's were at Tucson Sept. 25-26 (WD *et al.*) and Cibola N.W.R., Sept. 26 (†RH, DK). An early Franklin's Gull was also in Phoenix Aug. 17-18 (MC *et al.*).

Common Terns, uncommon away from the L.C.R., were at Tucson, one to three Sept. 14-18 (SG, KK *et al.*) and at P.R.D., one Sept. 12 (RF). Most unusual were the two Caspian Terns far e., near McNeal Sept. 24 (AM).

An Inca Dove at Portal Oct. 25-November was only the second one ever noted there (S & WS). A Groove-billed Ani, photographed Oct. 21 at Rim Rock, s.w. of Montezuma Well (D. Smith), was the first for Yavapai County and only the third for n. Arizona.

HUMMINGBIRDS — The ♂ Lucifer Hummingbird at Portal in July remained through most of August; a pair was there in early September and the ♀ Lucifer remained until Oct. 21 (S & WS). One or two ♂ White-eared Hummingbirds were at Portal to early October and two males were present there Oct. 9-13 (S & WS, PN). Calliope Hummingbirds continued to be more common than usual. Single males were observed in Ramsey Canyon Sept. 25 (JE), at Portal all of August (S & WS) and a female at Portal Sept. 25-Oct. 10 (SS, DDe, DSj).

In Madera Canyon, where Violet-crowned Hummingbird is relatively uncommon, one remained until Nov. 17 (SG). Costa's Hummingbirds are usually scarce in fall in the Phoenix and Tucson regions, however, at least one pair plus another male were visiting yards in the Phoenix area October into December (JW, PB), at least two were seen several times Oct. 10-Nov. 25 along the Santa Cruz R., Tucson (KK, DDe, FH *et al.*) and one was still coming to a feeder in Green Valley Nov. 17 (GP). A ♂ Costa's at Portal Sept. 21 (RM) represented one of the few records for that area. Broad-billed Hummingbirds wandered to areas where they are not usually found. Two were seen in Globe Aug. 13 (BJ) and one in the Swisshelm Mts., e. of McNeal Nov. 5 (AM, S. Treiber). At least 20 Anna's Hummingbirds at feeders at 7000 ft in the Santa Catalina Mts., Sept. 14-15, was a large number for that elevation. A Rivoli's Hummingbird was n. of its usual range in the Pinal Mts., Aug. 8 (BJ). One of the Plain-capped Starthroats that was in Madera Canyon during the summer remained until Sept. 6 (R. Newcomer).

TROGONS THROUGH CORVIDS — Unreported since 1979, Eared Trogons were again sighted in Cave Cr. Canyon, Chiricahua Mts. Individual males were spotted for a brief time Aug. 22 (†J. VanOs, WS) and Oct. 1 (JBo), then faded back into the wilds of that rugged border range. This year's census of Coppery-tailed Trogons produced a total of 77 individuals—12 fewer than last year but about the same as the previous 2 years (R. Taylor *et al.*).

A ♂ and imm. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker of the e. race *S. v. varius* were observed in a Phoenix yard Oct. 12 (RBr). Another of this race was reported at Parker Nov. 27-Dec. 4 (CH). There was no major movement of Lewis' Woodpecker this fall, but one in Tex Canyon, Chiricahua Mts., Oct. 18 was in an odd location (TD).

A Thick-billed Kingbird, far w. at Cibola N.W.R., Sept. 9 (†JJ), was one of only a few records for the L.C.R. A late Cassin's Kingbird was out of its normal habitat near McNeal Nov. 6 (AM). This fall's Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was recorded s. of Parker on the late date of Nov. 18 (†RH, LL), more than a month later than previous fall records. A Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher strayed into Bisbee Aug. 8 (DDa). Buff-breasted Flycatchers were found in areas where they have only recently returned: two were near Portal Sept. 13 (RM) and one among mixed pines on Mt. Lemmon in the Catalinas Sept. 26 (B. Zoelich). Two Willow Flycatchers, found at the Research Ranch, Elgin Aug. 18, were suspected of nesting (DDa, AM, RBa).

Two late Barn Swallows and three late Tree Swallows were near McNeal Nov. 11 (AM), and a late Barn Swallow was at Parker Nov. 27 (CH). The only lowland Scrub Jay reported was one at Topock, L.C.R., Nov. 28 (CH). Numbers of Com. Crows at Cibola N.W.R., were back up again: 1000+ were counted Nov. 5; 400 were at Topock Nov. 28 and one was at Parker Nov. 8 (DK, CH *et al.*). Two at Tucson Nov. 11 (DSz) were among the very few for that area.

CHICKADEES THROUGH SHRIKES — Lowland reports of Mountain Chickadee came from Tucson; three were seen during the period (KK *et al.*). One to five Red-breasted Nuthatches were at Boyce Thompson Arboretum during the period (HL, DSj) and one in Phoenix Nov. 1 (DSj). At least two lowland Brown Creepers were in Tucson Oct. 29-December (JBo) and three were at Parker Nov. 27 (CH).

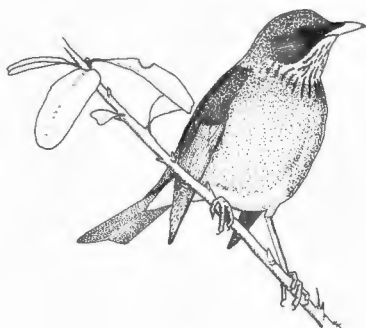
Reports of Winter Wrens were widespread; an early one was near Portal Sept. 19 (RM) and other individuals during October and November were at S. Fork near Springerville (DDa, JBe), s.w. Phoenix (DSj), two n.w. of Phoenix (RF, PB), two at Prescott (RF) and two at Beaver Dam Wash near Littlefield (JC). Long-billed Marsh Wrens were so plentiful (100+) at Beaver Dam Wash Nov. 27 that they were foraging in the bark of cottonwood trees (JC).



Brown Thrasher, Hereford, Ariz., Nov. 13, 1982. Photo/T. Deecken.

A Brown Thrasher at Hereford Nov. 13-December (AM, ph. TD, DDa) was the only one reported this fall. Rufous-backed Robins, rare winter strays from Mexico, appeared for the first fall in 4 years. One was at Tucson Nov. 6-12 (CT *et al.*) and from one to two were at Parker Nov. 15-December (†CH, DK *et al.*).

One of the ♂ Black-capped Gnatcatchers was still in Chino Canyon Sept. 4 (DSz). Six Black-tailed Gnatcatchers in the Swisshelm Mts., Nov. 5 (AM) were of interest as the species is uncommon and local in the southeast A N. Shrike at Becker L., on the remarkably early date of Oct. 9 (DSj, AG, RF) was the only one reported.



RUFUS-BACKED ROBIN — KENN KAUFMAN 1983

Rufous-backed Robin. Drawing/K. Kaufman.

VIREOS, WARBLERS — Individual Red-eyed Vireos were at Portal Aug. 20 (J & G Maender), Picacho Res., Aug. 28 (MJ *et al.*), Tucson Sept. 23 (KK), and farther n. at Prescott three singles Sept. 4, 6, 12 (RF, RBr, RN).

The variety and number of "eastern" warblers was not as great as usual; however, the appearance of two of the rarest species on the state's list made up for that. An ad. ♂ **Blue-winged Warbler** was found at Eager, n.e. Arizona, Oct. 9 (†DSj, AG). The only previous record for the state occurred 30 years ago at B.W. Delta. Even more surprising were the *four* (1 ♀ and 3 ♂) **Golden-winged Warblers** that frequented a bird bath and bushes in a yard at Prescott Aug. 28-Sept. 18 (†VM, ph. E. Miller *et al.*). There were 4 previous state records, all of individuals. The thought that they may have been the result of nearby breeding was an amazing one, but more plausible than that they would have migrated as a group.

A **Yellow-throated Warbler** at Ehrenberg Sept. 5 (†CH, ph. DK *et al.*) was only the tenth for the state but the *third* for the year. A **Magnolia Warbler** was found at Tucson Nov. 7-8 (SG *et al.*) and a ♀ **Black-throated Green Warbler** was at Tucson Nov. 9-15 (KK *et al.*).

There were two **Black-throated Blue Warblers**: a male at Bisbee Oct. 3 (DDa) and a female at Douglas Oct. 9-11 (†AM, DDa). Two individual **Ovenbirds** were at Richville, n.e. Ariz., Oct. 10 (RF, DSj, AG) and at Phoenix Oct. 30-December (DSj). The only **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was at Patagonia Oct. 16 (T. Rehm).

Individual **Tennessee Warblers** were found s. of Phoenix Sept. 7 (PB) and at Tucson Oct. 28 and Nov. 7 (JBo). There were three **Black-and-white Warblers**, seven **N. Waterthrushes** and eight **Am. Red-starts** reported during the fall.

ICTERIDS, TANAGERS — A **Bobolink**, uncommon in the southeast, was found n. of Tombstone Sept. 12 (AM, DDa). A **Scarlet Tanager** was found at Portal Oct. 23 (†RM, WS). There are only 11 previous state records. **Late Summer Tanagers** were at Tucson Nov. 14-December (JBo), at Phoenix Nov. 14 (DSj) and at B.W. Delta Nov. 29 (†RH).

FRINGILLIDS — **Painted Buntings**, uncommon visitors, were found in 2 areas; a pair at Portal Aug. 11 (RM) and a male at Kino Springs Oct. 17 (PB). **Dickcissels** appeared to be more numerous than usual. At least one on the L.C.R., at Cibola N.W.R., Sept. 22 (†CH) and n. of Ehrenberg Sept. 25 (LL) were among only a few recorded in w. Arizona. An imm. **Dickcissel** was at a Green Valley feeder Sept. 22-25 (GP), one at Portal Oct. 7 (SS) and two immatures at Amado Oct. 8-10 (JBo, BK). There were at least 7 reports of **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** from the southeast. The only **Lawrence's Goldfinches** reported were two at Tucson Nov. 13 (JS).

Individual **Clay-colored Sparrows** were observed at Cibola N.W.R., Aug. 28 (†DK) and s. of Cibola Sept. 12 (RH). There was only one previous record for the L.C.R. Another was reported from the southeast near Double Adobe Oct. 12 (AM). Exceptionally large numbers of **Cassin's Sparrows** remained in parts of the southeast through the fall. The species is quite variable in numbers in fall and winter in the state. **Swamp Sparrows** were found in a new area: one n.w. of Elfrida Oct. 23 and two n. of Elfrida Nov. 8 (AM). The only **Harris' Sparrow** was at Portal Nov. 2-3 (ph. S & WS, RM).

A **Lapland Longspur**, an uncommon winter visitor, was heard n. of Ehrenberg Nov. 23 (CH, LL, DK). A single **Chestnut-collared Longspur** was found at Prescott, n.w. of the usual range in the state, Oct. 14 & Nov. 11 (CT).

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