

## Arizona, Sonora

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**S**urveys on the San Pedro and Gila rivers were again conducted throughout the summer and added a considerable amount of new data to our knowledge of these areas.

Several observers commented on the excellent cone crop in the southeast mountains, the mountains around Prescott, and the White Mountains; this seemed to have a favorable effect on Red Crossbills and Pine Siskins.

Despite the fact that the southeast canyons received more attention than usual (due to the large numbers of observers there in July), there were noticeably fewer vagrants from Mexico. We wonder what the conditions were in Mexico that influenced the lack of northward wanderings this summer.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — G.R.A. = Granite Reef Aqueduct; L.C.R. = Lower Colorado River; S.P.R. = San Pedro River.

**GREBES THROUGH WATERFOWL** — A Clark's Grebe, uncommon away from the L.C.R., was observed at Picacho Res., June 26 (DJ). Four Brown Pelicans from s. Arizona were taken to the Desert Museum in Tucson, including an early individual from Oracle June 7 (fide P. Siminski); one was seen at Nogales July 14 (DSj, J. Sunder) and one was reported near Bouse, G.R.A., in July (JH). An Olivaceous Cormorant was observed with a Double-crested Cormorant at Guevavi Ranch, Nogales, July 27 (AM, DD, JBa, B. Bates); both species were also at Patagonia L. in July (JBo et al.).

Two Great Blue Heron colonies were found on the upper S.P.R., one with 8–10 nests s. of St. David, the other with 2–3 nests n. of Hereford (TC, DK). A Cattle Egret, uncommon in summer, was seen n.w. of Bouse June 15 (JH). An ad. **White Ibis** at Picacho Res., June 22 through the period (†J & AP, m.ob.) represented only the 5th record for the state.

The two Fulvous Whistling-Ducks at the Gilbert sewage ponds, s.e. of Phoenix, were still present June 7 (CK, J. Burns). Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks continued to have a successful breeding season in their usual haunts as well as in some new areas in the n.w. part of their range. Six individuals, including two young, were seen at 2 areas in s.w. Phoenix (m.ob.), one was observed farther west on the Gila R. near Buckeye (ph. CBg), and the pair at Sun Lakes, s. of Phoenix, raised another brood (fide DSj). Up to 10 adults were reported in July at Patagonia again for the 2nd year (MO, GG, DSu et al.). Farther s.e. were two at Douglas June 2 (B. Zans) and six at McNeal June 21 (AM). Wood Ducks were present all summer at Watson L., Prescott (CT). "Mexican" type Mallards were common and nesting on the upper S.P.R.; many intermediates between this form and "true" Mallards were seen as well (TC, DK). Individual "Mexican" Mallards were also recorded farther n. on the Gila R. at Solomon June 26 and Eden July 15 (CH). A high of 180 "Mexican" Mallards was counted at McNeal June 21 (AM).

The usual smattering of non-breeding ducks was found summering at several s. Arizona ponds.

**RAPTORS, TURKEYS** — Ospreys are rarely recorded in w. Arizona in summer, so of interest were individuals at Burro Cr. below the Francis Cr. confluence June 6 (CT), at Alamo L., July 24 (D. Laush, J. Wegrzyn), and at the Imperial Dam area all summer (CH). Three more Black-shouldered Kites were reported s.w. and w. of Prescott, at the n.w. edge of their range in the state: one near Date Creek June 5 (M. Morgan), one near



Kirtland Cr., June 13 (CT), and one n. of Skull Valley in open chaparral June 13 (CT). Additional records in new locations included a pair all summer on the lower Gila R. near Buckeye, a pair all summer near Ft. Thomas, upper Gila R., and one n. of Dudleyville, lower S.P.R., June 27 (CH). As usual, numbers were reported from s.e. Arizona, plus one at Sasabe and one w. of Gila Bend. Extralimital records of Mississippi Kite were of an adult near the confluence of the Salt and Gila rivers, s.w. Phoenix, June 29 (RB); an adult farther w. on the Gila R. near Buckeye June 30 (CBg), for the 3rd record for this location in the past year; and an adult flying over Cibola N.W.R., June 6 (SM, JBa), providing the 2nd record for the L.C.R.

A nesting pair of Sharp-shinned Hawks was discovered in S. Fork, Cave Cr. Canyon, Chiricahua Mts., July 14 (RM, DW); a juvenile was seen at the nest site July 20 (PL). The species is extremely rare as a breeder in s.e. Arizona. Four Com. Black-Hawk nests found along the lower S.P.R. (CBg), plus one nest found there the previous summer, represented the first known nests along the lower S.P.R. since 1977. Four to 5 pairs along Bonita Cr. produced four young (CH), which also represented an increase over the previous summer.

Harris' Hawk is a rare breeder on the S.P.R.; one family group was found s. of Mammoth during the summer (CH), one adult and a dead immature were seen at Hereford June 2 (DD, AM), and a pair near a nest with at least one downy young was found n. of Hereford June 26 (TC). Two adults and one immature at Cochise July 17 provided the northernmost record for the Sulphur Springs Valley (GM). Up to 3 pairs from the reintroduced stock on the L.C.R. bred on the Arizona side (CH). Nine nesting territories of Gray Hawks counted along the upper S.P.R. contained 23 adults, two 2nd-year birds, and at least 15 fledglings (TC, DK). Five pairs of Gray Hawks were found along the lower S.P.R. (CH). Two pairs of Zone-tailed Hawks were found breeding on Bonita Cr., only one of which was thought to be successful (CH). An imm. Ferruginous Hawk seen in Chino Valley July 17 (H & AG) represented one of only a few summer records for n. Arizona and only the 2nd near Prescott in recent years.

Individual Wild Turkeys in 2 areas of the S.P.R., e. of Sierra Vista June 13 & 16, may have been wandering birds from a flock introduced in the Huachuca Mts. a few years ago (TC).

**SHOREBIRDS** — Although three to four Snowy Plovers summered at Willcox for the first time in several years, there was no evidence of breeding (m.ob.). Four pairs of Black-necked





Red Phalarope at Cunningham Wash, Ariz., June 1986. Photo/Ron Christofferson.

Stilts were recorded June 10 at Cibola N.W.R. (SM, JBa), where the species has been nesting only since 1983. Nine individuals were recorded at Willcox June 28 (DD, AM); the species is uncommon in s.e. Arizona in summer. Twelve Am. Avocets, including one with three young, observed at McNeal June 3 represented the first breeding record for that location (AM). A high count of 220+ Am. Avocets at Willcox July 17 was probably the largest number yet recorded in the southeast (GM). A N. Jacana was reported as having been seen on Mitty L., L.C.R., June 3 & 30 (M. Johnson), but details have not yet been received.

Two Lesser Yellowlegs at Willcox June 25 and one at Picacho Res., June 26 (DJ) were among the earliest records for the state (June 24 is the earliest date on file). Fifteen late Willets were seen June 9 in an odd habitat—in the desert s.e. of Sierra Vista (TC, DK). An early Whimbrel was seen at Picacho Res., June 22–29 (JSa, BS, m.ob.); another individual was observed at Willcox July 31 (A. Keith). An early ad. Pectoral Sandpiper was seen at the Gila Bend sewage ponds July 27 (CBA). An ad. Short-billed Dowitcher was observed at Picacho Res. on the early date of June 22 (DSj, RN, D. & J. Burns). Another early adult was found at Willcox July 19 (fPL, DW) & 26 (JD).

Common Snipe was found nesting at Tsaille L., Navajo Indian Reservation, in early June (B. Jacobs); a pair, giving a broken-wing act w. of Eagar in late May, was probably nesting there as well (GR, JW). A Red Phalarope at Cunningham Wash, G.R.A., June 8–9 (ph. Ron Christofferson) provided a first June record for Arizona.

**GULLS THROUGH NIGHTJARS** — A 2nd-year California Gull at Willcox June 10 (JBo) furnished one of only a few summer records for the state.

A large tern, identified as an Elegant Tern, was observed at Patagonia L., July 25 (fBS); the status of this species in the state is under consideration by the Arizona Bird Committee, and as yet there have been no confirmed records. Seven Com. Terns in various plumages observed at Willow L., Prescott, June 20 (fRTh) made a large number for this uncommon migrant. Another individual was seen at Parker, L.C.R., June 7 (SM). There was only one previous June record for the state. **Least Terns** were discovered in 2 areas of the state: one at Cibola N.W.R., June 5–6 (SM, JBa) and two at Picacho Res., June 21–23, with one remaining until June 29 (fPT, fJ & AP, m.ob.). There had been only 7 previous state records.

For the first time, no Yellow-billed Cuckoos were detected in the Yuma area, where there has been habitat loss due to flooding and clearing. A few individuals were found along the lower Gila R., but they did not attempt breeding (CH). Numbers seemed stable at Buckeye (CH) and s.w. Phoenix (DSj, RB). At higher elevations, they were nowhere common except at Pima, upper Gila R., n.w. of Safford (CH).

An imm. Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl was seen and heard in Sycamore Canyon June 7 (TC, DK). For the 2nd year Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl was recorded on the S.P.R. at Dudleyville: two were heard and one was seen from June 2 to July 3 (CBg, fCH). Another individual was reported at the Patagonia Rest Stop in late July; there was only one individual in n.w. Tucson during the summer (fide JBa). Spotted Owls are being monitored throughout the West. Probably 2 or 3 pairs of Spotted Owls nested in Miller Canyon, Huachuca Mts.; individual adults (three) and fledglings (two) were seen in 3 areas in this canyon during the summer (TC, DK). One was heard n.e. of Bog Springs, Santa Rita Mts., July 27 (PN) and one was heard from Rustler Park, Chiricahuas, Aug. 1 (DSu, PN). At least three individuals were heard in the Pinal Mts., June 29 and July 30 (RH, BJ et al.). A Long-eared Owl detected in a ponderosa pine forest near Canyon Cr., e. of Payson, June 6 was at a higher elevation than usual (RB).

Common Nighthawks were observed along the S.P.R. all summer: one at Dudleyville June 6 (CH), five (with Lesser Nighthawks) seen and heard n. of Fairbanks June 25, then seen irregularly the rest of the summer throughout the upper S.P.R. (TC, DK), and four near Hereford July 23 (PL et al.). Although the species is more common at higher elevations farther north, it is also an uncommon local resident in grasslands of the southeast, from the Mule Mts. east of the S.P.R. west to the Atascosa Mts. Up to four Buff-collared Nightjars were again present in Florida Wash, Madera Canyon, all summer (m.ob.).

**HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH WOODPECKERS** — Only one each of the four rare hummingbirds was reported during the period, in contrast to the previous summer when there were multiples of each. A ♀ White-eared Hummingbird was observed in Sheelite Canyon, Huachuca Mts., June 26 (RS). A Berylline Hummingbird was present at Ramsey Canyon feeders June 22–26 (D. Collazo). A Plain-capped Starthroat was at feeders in Whitetail Canyon, Chiricahuas, again from early June to July 18 (RTa, m.ob.). A ♂ Lucifer Hummingbird frequented a Portal feeder the last week in July (S & WS).

A Violet-crowned Hummingbird was found nesting again at Log Canyon, S. Fork trail, Chiricahuas, June 23 (RM). Individuals were also recorded at Madera Canyon, where it has become more regular in recent years, as well as at Sonoita Cr. and Ramsey Canyon. Magnificent Hummingbirds were seen June 9 at Rose Cr. cabins, Sierra Ancha Mts., where they were reported by the owners to have been present for 3 years (S. Peabody); there was only one previous record for this range. The species is recorded only infrequently in the White Mts., where one was seen at S. Fork, w. of Eagar, May 31 (JW, GR); and at least one has been seen at feeders in Greer every summer in recent years (fide JW). Three males at feeders on Signal Peak, Pinal Mts., June 3 were more than had been recorded there previously (RH).

An ad. ♀ Elegant Trogon was found away from its normal habitat along the S.P.R., n. of Hereford, July 10 and Aug. 1 (DK).

Belted Kingfishers (at least two) observed at Watson L. and Granite Cr. throughout the period furnished the first summer records for Prescott (CT, H & AG, RTh). An individual seen at S. Fork, w. of Eagar, June 4 (TC) added another summer record for the White Mts. A ♀ Green Kingfisher was seen at the Sonoita Cr. crossing, Patagonia, July 27 (fCH).

At least nine Lewis' Woodpeckers counted in the Springerville area in late May was a larger number than usual for the White Mts. (GR, JW). Both "Red-shafted" and "Gilded" forms of N. Flicker were found along the upper S.P.R., as well as intergrades showing many shades of orange in tail and wing linings (TC, DK).

**FLYCATCHERS THROUGH THRASHERS** — N. Beardless-Tyrannulets were found again for a 2nd summer at the new area on Bonita Cr., above the Gila R. confluence (CH).



The species was found to be more numerous than last summer on the lower S.P.R. (CH), but surprisingly was heard or observed only infrequently along the upper S.P.R. (TC, DK). Willow Flycatchers, first found breeding along the S.P.R. and Gila R. a year ago, were present there again this summer; a breeding pair was found at Ft. Thomas, Gila R., again and several new individuals were spending the summer nearby; singing birds at Dudleyville and San Manuel on the S.P.R. probably attempted breeding (CH). A pair of Buff-breasted Flycatchers, present from early May into mid-July at Rustler Park (TGu), provided another in a growing number of records from the Chiricahuas in recent years, as the species continues to re-inhabit its pre-1920s range.

A pair of Vermilion Flycatchers raised two broods at Watson L. during the period; this represented one of only a few breeding records for Prescott, where the species is at its upper elevational limits (CT). A Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher was found at the Patagonia Roadside Rest June 6 (TC); there are very few records for Sonoita Cr. Tropical Kingbirds were found again along the lower S.P.R. from Mammoth to Hayden, and the Gila R. w. of Hayden (CH).

Several Bridled Titmice, observed in the cottonwood stand near Ft. Thomas June 25, July 14, and Aug. 4, provided the first summer records for the upper Gila R. (CH). However, surprising was the absence of the species on the upper S.P.R., compared to its fairly common to uncommon status on the lower S.P.R. (TC, DK). A ♀ Red-breasted Nuthatch and three fledglings found in Miller Canyon, Huachuca Mts., July 25 indicated nesting at a lower elevation than usual (TC, DK).

A pair of Black-capped Gnatcatchers feeding three young in a nest was found in a sycamore tree about ½ mi from the border in Sycamore Canyon July 27 (GG, ph. †MO *et al.*); four young were seen in the nest July 30 (V. Zerbi *et al.*). The young had fledged by Aug. 2 (m.ob.).



Female Black-capped Gnatcatcher at a nest in an Arizona Sycamore (appropriately) in Sycamore Canyon, Ariz., July 27, 1986. Photo/Michael O'Brien.

At least four singing ♂ Townsend's Solitaires were recorded near Snowshed and Chiricahua peaks July 5–6 (GW, BC). There was only one previous summer record for the Chiricahuas. An Am. Robin seen at the Nogales drive-in pond June 6 (TC) added to the summer lowland records for the state.

A Gray Catbird at Dudleyville June 16–17 was in the same area where one was recorded in July of the previous summer (†CH). The individual at the S.W. Research Station at Portal (since May 29) remained at least to June 7 (A. Greene). Three Curve-billed Thrashers were seen at Willcox July 17, where they had not been recorded before; the species is local in the Sulphur Springs Valley (GM).

**VIREOS, WARBLERS** — A Bell's Vireo found singing near Laguna Dam in late May was the only individual recorded along the L.C.R. and lower Gila R., where the habitat is still recovering from the 1983 floods (CH). In s.w. Phoenix, where the habitat is also regenerating, three individuals were counted June 11 (DSi) and one June 29 (RB). There is still a healthy population throughout the upper and lower S.P.R. (TC, CH). At least three Hutton's Vireos on Bonita Cr., above the Gila R., June 6, and at least one individual on the S.P.R. at San Manuel July 2, provided the first summer records of the species in lowland riparian habitat (†CH, TM, CBg). A Red-eyed Vireo at Portal June 22–24 (DSi) provided the 3rd summer record for that area.

A ♂ Golden-winged Warbler at Bisbee June 20 (†DD) was the 7th for Arizona and the 3rd in summer. Three Orange-crowned Warblers were seen at different spots near the summit of Mt. Lemmon July 23 (J. Buckman); the species is uncommon in the Santa Catalina Mts. in summer. Several Yellow Warblers seen and heard singing along the Gila R. s.w. of Buckeye June 9–30 may have been breeding; the species had been extirpated as a breeder along this stretch for more than 50 years (CH).

A Black-and-white Warbler was observed at Canelo Hills June 13 (TS). American Redstart is another regular summer visitor: a singing ad. male was seen at Patagonia June 25–July 3 (JBo *et al.*), and a female was reported at Patagonia July 28 (MO *et al.*). A Prothonotary Warbler, a sparse migrant or vagrant, was observed at Elgin June 11 (TS).

The pattern of late-summer records for Louisiana Waterthrush continued to grow: one was observed in Sheelite Canyon July 26 into August (R. Stallcup *et al.*); and another individual, found in the Patagonia Sanctuary in late July and early August (R. Baxter, W. Weber), was in the same area where it has wintered the past 4 years, and will likely do so again. This summer's records of Hooded Warbler were of a male at Bisbee June 21 into August (†DD) and one in Cave Cr. Canyon, Portal, June 30 (DSi).

**BUNTINGS THROUGH FINCHES** — Two ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were reported—one June 30 at Patagonia (TC) and one June 21 in the Chiricahua Mts. (RM). Two ♂ Varied Buntings were found at 2 locations on the Mexican border s.e. of Vamori, Tohono O'odham (Papago) Indian Reservation July 7 & 29 (S. Levy); there were no previous records from the area between the Baboquivari and Ajo mountains (*vide* GM). Individual Varied Buntings were seen in 2 areas near Portal June 25 (RM); the species is rare in the Chiricahuas. Fairly large numbers of singing males and females were recorded in the Fairbanks area of the upper S.P.R. all summer (TC, DK). An imm. ♂ Dickcissel banded e. of Tucson July 3 was recaptured there July 31 (P. Walters); it provided the first July record in the state of this uncommon migrant.

An early migrant Chipping Sparrow was seen in n. Tucson July 5 (GM). Several singing ♂ Black-chinned Sparrows were recorded along the road between Portal and Paradise, as well as in Whitetail Canyon from mid-July on (RM, PL *et al.*); this is an uncommon and recent local breeder in the Chiricahuas. At least two Song Sparrows in Lower Aravaipa Canyon July 11 were in an area where they had not been reported before (GM). An ad. White-crowned Sparrow was found on Mt. Wrightson, Santa Rita Mts., July 2 (GW, BC) where it has not been recorded in summer before.

Sightings of male and female Bronzed Cowbirds, and three eggs of this species found in the nest of a Hooded Oriole along Burro Cr., n.w. of Prescott, June 9, represented the first confirmed breeding for this area, which is n.w. of the previous known limits of the species' range (CT).

Although Red Crossbills had been recorded in some mountain ranges in a few summers previously, never before have they been present in all 3 mountain ranges around Prescott in the same summer as they were this year (CT). Unprecedented were the singing males all period, not only around Prescott, but also in the White Mts., the Santa Catalinas, the Huachuclas



(Sawmill Canyon), and the Chiricahuas (TC, DK *et al.*). Some Pine Siskins tend to linger into June in their wintering areas; one at Portal was still present June 10 (RM). However, one s. of Charleston on the S.P.R., July 23 was surprisingly late or early (DK). An individual was seen flying over Bog Springs Campground July 27 (DSu); the species is a sparse breeder in the Santa Rita Mts.

An Am. Goldfinch at Prescott July 7 (H & AG) provided the first mid-summer record for that area, and one of only a few summer records for the state. Evening Grosbeaks were present in the Huachuca Mts. again, as they have been in some recent summers; and in the Chiricahuas, adults were observed feeding fledglings s. of Rustler Park June 18 (TCu).

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