

SOUTHWEST REGION

Arizona, Sonora

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After the driest August on record in many parts of Arizona, the amount of rainfall returned to normal during the remainder of the period. Although Mexican Chickadees and Pygmy Nuthatches were found at lower elevations than usual in the Chiricahua Mountains, and a few other highland species were found in the lowlands, there was no real evidence of an invasion of montane species this fall. Records from the northeastern part of the state (until recently, only sparsely covered) continued to enlighten us. Throughout the state, a fine assortment of unusual shorebirds and warblers highlighted the migrations; and a wagtail was responsible for increasing the state list by one.

ABBREVIATIONS — L.C.R. = Lower Colorado River.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — Three Pacific Loons, slightly more than usual, were recorded in the state this fall with one bird at Willow L. in Prescott Oct. 14-15 (BT), one at Katherine's Landing on L. Mohave Nov. 9 (RN, DS), and another individual at Willow L., Nov. 12 (BT). A surprising total of 16 Horned Grebes was reported from various locations including two at Willow L., Sept. 16 (BT), two at Willcox Sept. 22 (AP), one at the Grand Canyon S. Rim sewage ponds Oct. 8 (GM), one at Tucson Oct. 17 (JBa), two more at Willow L., Nov. 18 (BT), and eight on upper L. Havasu Nov. 22 (CH).

American White Pelicans showed up in numbers again in n.e. Arizona with six on Many Farms L., Sept. 14, and 191 there Sept. 22 (BrJ). This species might be found regularly in this area of the state now that it is receiving good coverage. Brown Pelicans invaded the state this fall, as usual, with the most noteworthy records being of eight flying over I-10 e. of Tucson Nov. 16 (RBo) and an exhausted immature found by a highway patrolman in a snowbank n. of Flagstaff Nov. 13 (*fide* JC). There are very few records of this species in n. Arizona. Even more amazing was the imm. Magnificent Frigatebird photographed near House Rock Rapids on the Colorado R. at the bottom of the Grand Canyon (ph. S. Hester, M. Sharp, ph. B. Dierker), the only frigatebird recorded in the state this fall. Two Cattle Egrets at St. John's Aug. 11 provided the earliest fall record for n.e. Arizona (BH). A Wood Stork at Roosevelt L., Aug. 1 was a nice surprise (J. Poe).

A Fulvous Whistling-Duck, of uncertain origin, returned to Tucson (did it ever leave?) in mid-August for its 3rd consecutive year (JBa). The only Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks reported this fall were 34 (including young) at Nogales Aug. 29 (JBo) and a flock of 13 (4 ad., 9 imm.) at the Gilbert sewage ponds s.e. of Phoenix Oct. 21 (DS). This latter flock remained through the period. A Tundra Swan was observed being chased by a Golden Eagle high overhead at the Hyannis Cattle Co. near McNeal Nov. 15 (AM). The only other Tundra Swan reported was a single bird on Mormon L., s. of Flagstaff, Nov. 16 (AG, VG). Six Greater White-fronted Geese, extremely rare in n. Arizona, were found at Ganado L., Sept. 21 (BrJ, CL). Eight Ross' Geese, which is about average, were found during the period Nov. 9+. The records were about evenly distributed between the L.C.R. and s.e. Arizona.

A ♂ Eur. Wigeon was found at the Buenos Aires Ranch w. of Arivaca during the last week of October (WSh). The Phoenix Zoo individual, which began wintering there in the season of 1979-1980, returned for its 7th consecutive winter Nov. 13 (MC). The only Greater Scaup reported during the period was a ♀ bird at the Parker sewage ponds Nov. 9 (DS, RF, RN). A ♀ Surf Scoter was found the same day at Havasu S.P. (DS, RN, RF).



Red-breasted Mergansers are very rarely reported from n.e. Arizona, so seven at Many Farms L., Nov. 2 and one at Tsalle L., Nov. 10 were noteworthy (BrJ). One Hooded Merganser Oct. 16 and another Nov. 15 were seen at Willow L. (BT). This species is still very rare in the Prescott area.

RAPTORS THROUGH CRANES — Two hawk-watches in the Sulphur Springs Valley Sept. 7 and Oct. 19 (AM, DD, TD) provided some interesting numbers for migrating raptors, including 437 Turkey Vultures and 482 Swainson's Hawks Sept. 7, and 114 N. Harriers, 354 Red-tailed Hawks, and 23 Ferruginous Hawks Oct. 19. Some other interesting finds included two Black-shouldered Kites and four Harris' Hawks Sept. 7, both still quite rare in the Sulphur Springs Valley, and 11 Harris' Hawks and two Merlins Oct. 19.

Ospreys seemed to be much more common than usual this fall away from the L.C.R. and the larger lakes and reservoirs in the state, with no fewer than 25 being reported from various locations in c. and s.e. Arizona. Black-shouldered Kites continued to be recorded at numerous scattered locations from w. of Phoenix s.e. to Douglas. Totally amazing was a report of an ad. light-phase **Short-tailed Hawk** seen near the Rustler Park-Barfoot Rd. intersection in the Chiricahua Mts., Aug. 7 by an observer very familiar with the species (†J. Arvin). If accepted by the Arizona Bird Committee it would represent a first state record. Short-tailed Hawk occurs regularly as far n. as c. Sinaloa with one sight record for the Alamos area of s.e. Sonora (GM). In addition to the Harris' Hawks mentioned above, four more were found at San Bernardino Ranch e. of Douglas Oct. 26 (AM, DD). The refuge manager maintained that the hawks had nested there earlier in the year. The last record of Harris' Hawk at this location was in 1892! An ad. Ferruginous Hawk was seen n. of Chino Valley in suitable breeding habitat on the early date of Sept. 2 (JC, K. Dial, N. Czaplewski). This species has bred in the Prescott region historically, but not since the 1920s.

A flock of 32 Wild Turkeys (*M. g. mexicana*) was found near Arroyo Cajon Bonito in extreme n.e. Sonora Aug. 23 (AM, S. Shemnetz). This race is not definitely known from Arizona. Reports of Montezuma Quail have been on the increase lately, especially in the Chiricahuas and the Santa Rita Mts. According to S. Spofford, this species may finally be rebounding from the last 5-8 years of low populations throughout the state. The status of Chukar in the state is very poorly known, so the presence of good numbers near Chilchinbito on the Navajo Indian Reservation was noteworthy (CL, BrJ). Sandhill Crane had been unrecorded in n. Arizona since 1936, so an individual at Many

Farms L., Oct. 20, was a true surprise (BrJ). A flock of 50 Sandhills s. of San Simon Oct. 15 was in an area where they do not normally occur (RM).

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH GULLS — The ad. N. Jacana first found in June near Nogales remained through the period. Black-bellied Plovers are apparently not as rare in n.e. Arizona as we had previously thought; several at both Many Farms L. and Ganado L. through September and part of October added to the growing number of recent reports (BrJ *et al.*). A Lesser Golden-Plover (*P.d. dominica*) was found at Many Farms L., Sept. 14, providing the second record for n.e. Arizona (†BrJ, CL). An amazing four Lesser Golden-Plovers were found at the 83rd Ave. (Phoenix) sewage ponds after a storm Oct. 18-21 (†DS *et al.*). These two appeared to be *dominica*. Arizona usually averages one Lesser Golden-Plover every 1-2 falls. Snowy Plovers were more common than usual with no fewer than eight being reported from scattered locations throughout the state, including a late individual at Willow L., Nov. 24 (BT). Only two Mountain Plovers were reported Nov. 26 near McNeal in the area where up to 100 individuals have wintered in recent years (AM). Black-necked Stilt is still rarely reported in n. Arizona, so three at Ashurst L. near Flagstaff Sept. 4 were noteworthy (JC).

The same storm that downed the four Lesser Golden-Plovers mentioned above also downed two of the rarest shorebirds in Arizona. Among the numerous shorebirds at the settling ponds was a juv. **Ruff** and a juv. **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper**, both of which established 2nd state records. The Ruff remained Oct. 18-20 and was seen by many, but the Sharp-tailed remained only one day, Oct. 18, and was seen by a lucky half-dozen birders (†DS *et al.*). Two Ruddy Turnstones were found in n.e. Arizona this fall, one at Tsaille L., Sept. 1-3 and the other at Round Rock L., Sept. 8 (BrJ). There was one previous record for that part of the state. Three Sanderlings, about average, were recorded from Willcox (two) Sept. 1-2 (AM, CG *et al.*) and Avondale Oct. 6 (TG, MJ). A late Least Sandpiper was found at Tsaille L., Nov. 10 (BrJ), and three more were at Ashurst L., Nov. 14 walking in 8 inches of snow at the edge of the lake (JC). Four Semipalmated Sandpipers were reported with one in mid-August in Tucson (JS), another at Willcox Sept. 2-8 (SG, JBo, †JBa), a late bird at Avondale Sept. 23 (†DS), and an even later individual at Willcox Oct. 4 (J & AP). Observers should be reminded that all Semipalmated records must be accompanied by full details, especially after late September. More Short-billed Dowitchers than usual were reported again this fall, including 3 records from n.e. Arizona, where it is especially rare. Two juveniles were at Many Farms L., Aug. 14 and another at Tsaille L., Sept. 13-16 (BrJ), and another juvenile was at the Chinle sewage ponds Sept. 15 (DS, CB, CH, RN). Three late Long-billed Dowitchers were at Many Farms L., Nov. 16 (BrJ).

A **Pomarine Jaeger** was found at Becker L., n. of Springerville, Oct. 14 (†GR *et al.*). This was only the 2nd record for n. Arizona and only the 5th for the state. A 2nd-year Heermann's Gull at Topock Marsh near Golden Shores Nov. 9 was a surprise (DS, RF, RN). A first-year Herring Gull was found in Tempe Oct. 10 (TC) and another was at L. Havasu Nov. 22 (CH). Five Sabine's Gulls were reported this fall: an adult and an immature at Tsaille L., Sept. 13 (BrJ), single immatures at Avondale Sept. 23 (DS) and at L. Havasu Oct. 12 (K.V. Rosenberg, A. Higgins), and an adult near Centennial Wash Oct. 11-13 (ph. T. Rogers, D. Scarbrough). The Tsaille L. birds provided only the 2nd record for n.e. Arizona.

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS — A **Ruddy Ground-Dove** was observed with Inca and Mourning doves at Paloma, w. of Gila Bend, Sept. 6 (PB). This was the 6th record for Arizona. See last fall's report for a thorough discussion of this bird's status in the state. A group of three Groove-billed Anis was discovered near Arlington Oct. 2 (BDu). This was the 2nd record of this species this year w. of Phoenix.

White-eared Hummingbird is still quite rare in the Santa Rita Mts., so of interest was at least one immature at Madera Canyon

from July to the very late date of Nov. 4 (KK *et al.*). The two Plain-capped Starthroats found earlier this year near Portal remained until Aug. 12 with one staying until Sept. 2 (RT). Single Lucifer Hummingbirds were found at Madera Canyon, where still very rare, Aug. 17 and Sept. 23 (m.ob.). At Portal, where it is more regular, an imm. ♂ Lucifer and a female were seen Oct. 12, with one bird remaining until Oct. 18 (S & WSp, KK, GR *et al.*); at least three individuals remained at feeders in a nearby area until the 3rd week in October (RM).

Elegant Trogon has been recorded only once before in the Baboquivari Mts., w. of Nogales, so a ♀ trogon there Nov. 5 was very interesting (R. Harm). An **Eared Trogon** along the S. Fork trail in Cave Creek Canyon, Chiricahua Mts., Oct. 22 (ph. K. Lawrence) suggested that the species continues to occur in the area where it was first found in 1977. The Green Kingfisher at Kino Springs remained until Aug. 21 (m.ob.). An imm. Green Kingfisher was found at Sycamore Canyon Aug. 31 (JS), and another individual was discovered at Arivaca Oct. 27 and remained through the period (J & AP *et al.*). A very early Lewis' Woodpecker was found along the Salt R. in s.w. Phoenix Sept. 23 (DS). Two more were seen in Portal Oct. 13 (W & SSp) and another was near Kansas Settlement Nov. 27 (GM). The only Yellow-bellied Sapsucker reported was on the Salt R., e. of Phoenix, Oct. 12 (CH).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH THRUSHES — Complete surprises were the discoveries of two N. Beardless-Tyrannulets e. of the Boyce Thompson Arboretum near Superior Aug. 23 (CB) and five to six at the Arboretum Sept. 9 (DS). The closest area of regular occurrence is near the confluence of the San Pedro and Gila rivers about 35-40 mi to the southeast. A Greater Pewee remained in Tucson from Oct. 30 through the end of the period (JBo). Another individual was in a Phoenix yard Nov. 17 (RBr). An E. Phoebe was reported in s.w. Phoenix Nov. 28 (RN). The first E. Kingbird reported in several years was seen in Flagstaff Sept. 15 (JC, T. Myers). A surprising three Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were reported this fall with one Aug. 2-7 near Marana (JBo *et al.*), one s. of Chandler Oct. 13 (R. Knorr *et al.*), and another Oct. 15 near Pima (BDu).

"Hundreds" of Pinyon Jays near Young Oct. 7 were thought to be the prelude of an invasion this fall, but the invasion never materialized (J. & W. Spencer). A single Clark's Nutcracker was seen in the Santa Rita Mts., Oct. 12 (R. Eastman).

Mountain Chickadees were common in many lowland riparian areas in n.e. Arizona from mid-August on, including many locations where they do not normally occur, straying as far as Petrified Forest N.P. (BrJ, RN, GR *et al.*). The only lowland Red-breasted Nuthatches were two in Tucson Oct. 30 (FH, JBa), and the only lowland Golden-crowned Kinglet was found at Quitobaquito Spring, Organ Pipe Cactus N.M., Oct. 26 (RBo, B. Dunning). Numbers of Black-capped Gnatcatchers continued to be reported from both Chino and Sycamore canyons through late August (*fide* JBa).

A very early Mountain Bluebird was found at Willcox Sept. 1 (AM, CG). A Rufous-backed Robin was found dead at the Buenos Aires Ranch in mid-October (WSh), but the one found at Canoa Nov. 24 was still very much alive (JS, BS). Another **Aztec Thrush** was found in Madera Canyon Aug. 16-17 (P. Baicich, †D. & D. Traver) and provided the 4th record for that canyon and 6th for the state.

THRASHERS THROUGH WARBLERS — The only Gray Catbird reported this fall was at E. Stronghold Canyon, Dragoon Mts., Nov. 22 (TD). The most exciting bird of the season (and the most frustrating) was the imm. **White/Black-backed wagtail** found at the Grand Canyon S. Rim sewage ponds Oct. 7-10 (ph. C. Rudd, K. Berggren, ph. S. Hadapp *et al.*). Since immature birds of these two species are inseparable in the field, Arizonans had to be content with only adding a new genus to the state list.

A Philadelphia Vireo, an extremely rare vagrant in the state, was observed in Keams Canyon in n.e. Arizona Sept. 14 (CL,



Immature White or Black-backed wagtail at Grand Canyon Nat'l Park, Ariz., Oct. 6, 1985. First record of any wagtail for Arizona. Photo/Connie Rudd. VIREO x05/1/012.

†BrJ). Red-eyed Vireo was recorded more commonly than in recent years with four reported: one in Guadalupe Canyon Aug. 6 (S. Ruden), one at Guevavi Ranch Aug. 22 (SG), another at Keams Canyon Sept. 21 (BrJ, CL), and another at Chiricahua N.M., Oct. 4 (JP).

An Orange-crowned Warbler in Sycamore Canyon Aug. 5 provided the earliest fall record for this species in s. Arizona (DS, RN). Reports of Chestnut-sided Warblers have increased in recent years, so it is no surprise that three were reported for the period: at L. Patagonia Sept. 21 (JBo, JBa), at Many Farms L., Sept. 22 (BrJ), and at Phoenix Nov. 22 (RN). Two ♀ Black-throated Blue Warblers were reported, from Patagonia Sept. 22 (RS) and from e. Tucson Sept. 29 (FH). A Palm Warbler was found behind a hotel in Tempe (near Phoenix) during the A.O.U. meetings Oct. 11 (†K. Parkes) and another was near Buckeye Nov. 16 (†CB); there are now about 28 state records.

An impressive three Prothonotary Warblers were found during the period: at S. Fork, Cave Creek Canyon, Aug. 19 (D. Viess, R. Rust), at Patagonia Aug. 29-Sept. 1 (JS, AP), and at Sabino Canyon Oct. 10 (†A. Bradford, J. Tedford). A Worm-eating Warbler was at Chiricahua N.M., Sept. 29 (AP); Arizona averages two to three individuals a year. Remarkable was the report of a Swainson's Warbler at Patagonia, first discovered by a pair of anonymous British birders Sept. 4, then rediscovered Sept. 8 (†BS *et al.*); if accepted, it would provide the 2nd record for the state and one of very few in the West. The only Ovenbird was one found at Ganado Wash, n.e. Arizona, Oct. 6 (RF). Two Louisiana Waterthrushes were reported: one at Sycamore Canyon Aug. 4 (†DS, RN) and the other at Patagonia Nov. 16+ (RS), presumably the same individual that has wintered there the past 2 years. The August bird fit neatly into an emerging late-summer pattern of records for Arizona, being the 4th to be recorded during late July-early August. The ♂ Hooded Warbler at Page Springs remained until Oct. 8 (VG). Exciting was the discovery of an imm. ♂ Mourning Warbler at Ganado Sept. 15 (†DS, †CH, †RN, CB); if accepted, it would provide the 2nd state record and the first for fall.

Two Black-and-white Warblers, five Am. Redstarts, and about 15 N. Waterthrushes (more than usual) were reported for the period.

BUNTINGS THROUGH FINCHES — Two Painted Buntings were reported this fall, an ad. male at Portal Aug. 24 (†AP *et al.*) and an immature in e. Tucson Sept. 12 (CD *et al.*). More Dickcissels than usual were found, with nine reported: one banded in e. Tucson Sept. 12 (P. Walters, CD *et al.*), one each at Becker L. and the Hooper Ranch near Springerville Sept. 14 (†CH, DS *et al.*), two at Ganado Wash Sept. 15 (†CH), and four s.e. of Tucson Sept. 14 (RBo). Three Clay-colored Sparrows, more than usual,

were found in n. Arizona: an immature at Ganado L., Aug. 17 (†RN), an immature at Richville, near Springerville Sept. 14 (†CH, RF, RN, DS), and one at Page Springs Sept. 20 (RF). Only two White-throated Sparrows were reported, one in Oak Cr. Canyon Oct. 18 (SD, HL, JW) and one at Bisbee Nov. 28 (AM, DD). Two early White-crowned Sparrows were found in Tucson Aug. 20 (K. Rawlins). Golden-crowned Sparrow has rarely been recorded in n. Arizona, so of interest was one at the Grand Canyon S. Rim sewage ponds Oct. 8 (GM). Three Harris' Sparrows were reported: one at Ganado Oct. 6 (RF) and two immatures at Prescott Nov. 28+ (B. Sullivan *et al.*) and Nov. 30+ (V. Miller). McCown's Longspurs were found again in the Sulphur Springs Valley Nov. 23 for the 3rd consecutive year (JS, BS).

A ♀ Orchard Oriole near Springerville Sept. 14 (†CH, RN) was the first for n.e. Arizona; an imm. ♂ Orchard Oriole was found at Topock Marsh, L.C.R., Nov. 9 (†DS, RN, RF). The first record of "Baltimore Oriole" for n.e. Arizona was provided by an imm. male at Becker L., Sept. 14 (†CH). Evening Grosbeaks were reported again in Portal; 13 were counted there Nov. 25 (RM).

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