

Arizona, Sonora

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It was generally an unexceptional season as far as weather and birds were concerned. The only period of atypical weather was in mid-late May which brought monsoon-like conditions to many parts of southeastern and central Arizona, triggering early singing and breeding behavior in many species associated with this normally late-summer phenomenon.

Again, as has been pointed out previously in this portion of the summary, large portions of the state received little or no coverage for the period (i.e.—western and northern Arizona, excluding the well-worked Prescott region). We can only restate our desire to see the state's birders visit other parts of Arizona to make this report a bit more complete in the future.

Also, this is not the first time that birders have read this plea (hopefully it will be the last), we cannot emphasize enough the desperate need for documentation of rarities in the state, either by written details or by photograph. Details received by us would take much of the unnecessary guesswork out of preparing this report. Lack of documentation in the future may force us to neglect mentioning important records in subsequent reports.

ABBREVIATIONS — B.T.A. = Boyce Thompson Arboretum; L.C.R. = Lower Colorado River; S.P.R. = San Pedro River.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — Pacific Loon away from the L.C.R. is always a surprise, so one at Prescott Mar. 17–26 was noteworthy (CT, BT et al.). Eight Com. Loons at Prescott Apr. 14 was an unusually high number for that location (BT, CT). A W. Grebe at McNeal Apr. 24 provided one of the few spring records for the Sulphur Springs Valley (AM, RT). American White Pelicans were reported from 6 widely-separated areas in the state, the most unusual being a flock of nine birds soaring over Cave Cr. Canyon in the Chiricahua Mts., Apr. 18 (SSP), and as many as 19 at McNeal Apr. 1–14 (AM et al.). Much more unusual was the Brown Pelican (without supporting details) reported from Patagonia L., May 12, providing one of very few spring records for the state (L. Moody). Also at Patagonia L., an Olivaceous Cormorant was present from Apr. 10 through the end of the month (JS et al.).

American Bittern is seldom reported in s.e. Arizona, so one near Portal Mar. 17 (B. & M. Schaughency) and another at St. David May 2 (TC) were noteworthy. A Least Bittern at Prescott Apr. 20 was a rare find (BT et al.). The Great Blue Heron rookery at Picacho Res. first found in spring 1984 had a total of 30 nests May 5, about twice the number originally found (GM). Nine active nests were found at the St. David rookery on the Upper S.P.R. (DK). Very few active Great Blue Heron rookeries are known in the state.

WATERFOWL THROUGH RAPTORS — Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were widely reported from s.e. Arizona n.w. to the Phoenix area, with the most notable sightings being of one near Portal Apr. 26–27 (B. Tomberlin) and another at a stock tank far to the n.w. near Aguila, w. of Wickenburg, May 31 (P. Mondotte, fide BDe). A Greater White-fronted Goose was found near Palo Verde on the Gila R., w. of Phoenix, Mar. 7 (DH). A pair of Wood Ducks near the confluence of the E. Verde R. and the Verde R. all period makes one wonder if nesting will be attempted here (M. Cross, D. Driscoll, R. Jackman, K. Burger, fide TG). The only breeding records for the state have been in the Prescott region recently. A Eur. Wigeon (without



supporting details) was reported from Willcox Mar. 9 (D. & N. Pearson). Arizona has been averaging one to two individuals per year recently for this species. The Oldsquaw that wintered in Prescott was last seen Apr. 4 (CT, BT). New for the Grand Canyon was a flock of Barrow's Goldeneyes (one male, six females) below Lees Ferry Apr. 8 (CT). Barrow's Goldeneye winters regularly in small numbers on the L.C.R. between Parker and Davis dams.

New areas of occurrence for Black-shouldered Kite this season included San Carlos Res., Apr. 18 (R. Spahn), along the C.A.P. aqueduct near the Picacho Mts., Apr. 30 (H. Messing), and at Picacho Res., May 5 (GM). Of the total of 21 occupied territories of Bald Eagle in the state, 9 of the nests contained a total of 16 eaglets. Two "new" nests were discovered in March: one at Alamo L. on the Bill Williams R. and another near the confluence of the Salt and Verde rivers (fide R. Glinski, TG). A late ♀ N. Harrier was seen near McNeal May 30 (AM). A Harris' Hawk on Aravaipa Rd., e. of Hwy 77, May 17 added to the growing number of records for the Lower S.P.R. drainage (B. Hardy). A pair of Gray Hawks was back at San Bernardino Ranch for the 2nd year in a row Apr. 25+ (AM et al.). A total of 9 occupied Gray Hawk nesting territories was found on the Upper S.P.R. between St. David and the Mexican border (fide DK). A Crested Caracara, possibly the same bird reported earlier, was found near Elfrida Apr. 12 (AM, DD, TD, J. Zbyrowski). Impressive was a count of 289 Am. Kestrels Apr. 5 during a Sulphur Springs Valley hawkwatch (AM, DD, TD); this was about 10 times the normal count there.

RAILS THROUGH NIGHTJARS — Unusual was a Com. Moorhen far n.e. of the usual Arizona range at Ganado L., May 25 (DK, TC). There are only a handful of records of this species for n. Arizona. Two Black-bellied Plovers were reported this spring, one at the Gilbert Sewage Ponds Apr. 5 (SG) and another at Willcox May 20–21 (S. Levy et al.). Larger than normal concentrations of Willets this spring included 30 along the C.A.P. aqueduct near the Picacho Mts., Apr. 28 (TC, S. Barrett) and 65 near McNeal May 14 (AM). A large flock of 100 Long-billed Curlews was found near Elfrida May 5 (AM, DD, TD). The only Marbled Godwit reported for the period was at Willcox May 14–15 (AM, SR). A flock of seven Red Knots (without supporting details) was found at Willow L., Prescott, May 13, establishing the first spring record for the state and the first record for Yavapai County (CT). An ad. Semipalmated Sandpiper, very rare in the state in spring, was found near Avondale May 7 (fDSJ, P. Burch). Much rarer was the ad. **White-rumped Sand-**

piper found at Many Farms L., May 24 (ph. †DK, †TC, ph. †CB, B. Johnson). The only other good record for the state was of one photographed at Willcox June 4, 1977. Two Wilson's Phalaropes were found on the early dates of Mar. 9–11 in Tucson (H. Messing, S. Harper, *fide* TG). Red-necked Phalaropes were reported only at Willcox, with one May 15 (AM, SR), three May 22 (KK, LHK), and two June 1 (TC, DK). An ad. Heermann's Gull, extremely rare in spring, was at Prescott Mar. 20 (†BT, †V. Miller, H. & A. Gaither). This provided Yavapai County with its first record. An ad. California Gull at the Grand Canyon Village sewage ponds Mar. 17 furnished only the 4th record for the park (JC, H. Reiser). Since Herring Gull is rare anywhere in the state away from the L.C.R., one at Willow L. in Prescott May 27 was noteworthy (BT). Also at Prescott were "several" Caspian Terns from Apr. 11+ (BT, CT), and two Com. Terns, rare spring transients there, May 19 (BT).

An Inca Dove in Ajo Apr. 15 quite possibly provided the first record for that area (GM). Northern Saw-whet Owls were again found in the Chiricahua Mts. this spring, as last year. One bird was found at the Southwestern Research Station near Portal Mar. 13–14 (S. Stolson *et al.*), and others were discovered in Pinery Canyon and along Barfoot Park Rd. again in late March (RB, BDu). The individuals at the latter 2 localities remained through the period. Buff-collared Nightjars returned to their usual spots in Florida Wash and at Aravaipa Canyon this spring, with up to five individuals present in May at the former. Another nightjar was heard in Catalina S.P., May 17 (GM, D. Fischer), and still another was heard in a canyon on the e. side of the Chiricahua Mts., May 27 (D.S. Lee).

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — A Broad-billed Hummingbird at Portal May 13 was unusual there (SSp). A Violet-crowned Hummingbird at Patagonia Apr. 5 was extremely early (DH, JS). Individual Violet-crowns were also found from the more usual time of mid-May on, at Madera, Ramsey, and Guadalupe canyons, and Sonoita Cr. (v.o.). A **Plain-capped Starthroat** was reported from the S. Fork of Cave Cr. Canyon in the Chiricahuas on the early date of May 20, providing the first spring report in the state (RS *et al.*). Possibly as many as three ♂ Lucifer Hummingbirds were present in Portal this spring, Apr. 4–19 and again May 7–8 (W & SSp). A ♀ Lucifer was found near Paradise, Chiricahua Mts., May 11–13 (D.S. Lee), and another ♀ Lucifer was found May 29 in the Dragoon Mts. (TD), a range where this species is not usually recorded. North of the usual range was a ♂ Anna's Hummingbird on territory in Oak Cr. Canyon near Sedona, early March to May 10 (m.ob.).

Four Elegant Trogons in Price Canyon and two more in Rucker Canyon in the Chiricahua Mts. were in areas where this species is not usually found (AM, RM, TD). Single Belted Kingfishers in Oak Cr. Canyon and at Page Springs May 10 were in areas with suitable breeding habitat. Both areas are very close to a 1980 breeding locality at Clear Cr. (JC). Belted Kingfisher is an extremely rare breeder in the state. The only Green Kingfisher reported this period was an ad. ♀ bird on the Upper S.P.R., n. of Hereford, May 26–27 (TC, DK). Evidence of breeding in this area is being actively sought. One of the Lewis' Woodpeckers that wintered at Molino Basin in the Santa Cataline Mts. was last seen Apr. 27 (RB). Another Lewis' was reported from Prescott Apr. 29 (CT). News of Three-toed Woodpeckers in the state is always of interest to Arizona birders, so 2 pairs s. of Jacob L., s.w. of Page, May 23 and two more on the n. rim of the Grand Canyon May 25 were noteworthy (J. Johnson, CB).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WARBLERS — Northern Beardless-Tyrannulets were again reported from B.T.A. this spring, in as many as 3 different areas there Mar. 30, and nest building was observed there Apr. 27 (CT). This species nested here for the first time in the spring of 1986. Beardless-Tyrannulets were also present this spring in Portal, where rarely reported, with one bird there Apr. 12 (R. Plage, C. & A. Robbins), and two seen May 1+ (AM, RT, L. Elliot *et al.*). Greater Pewee

is rarely reported in the lowlands during migration, so one in Elfrida Apr. 30 (AM, RB, BDu) and two more on the Upper S.P.R., Apr. 29 & 30 (DK) were unexpected. An E. Phoebe near Hereford May 20 was unusual (DK). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher May 9 near Dudleyville was a nice surprise (K. Friar). Two Purple Martins were seen May 26 on the Upper S.P.R., where they are considered to be uncommon (TC). A Winter Wren in Sycamore Canyon very close to the Mexican border (there are few Mexican records) was found Mar. 14 (J & AP, JBo). The Am. Dipper first found at B.T.A. in November was last seen Mar. 16 (B. Nieman), and the individual that wintered in Ramsey Canyon was last seen Apr. 3 (DK). Unusual was a Golden-crowned Kinglet on the Colorado R. below Lees Ferry Apr. 7 (CT). There are very few records of this species in that area. Individual out-of-place Townsend's Solitaires were at Cabeza Prieta Tanks Apr. 16 (GM) and at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum May 15 (R.A. Rowlett *et al.*). A singing Wood Thrush at Patagonia May 24+ was a real surprise (RS, m.ob., sound recording DSj). This was only the 11th state and 3rd spring record. The Rufous-backed Robin at Kino Springs found in December was last seen Apr. 1 (BDu). Brown Thrasher is a rare spring vagrant to the state, so one in Prescott May 8 was exciting (S. Harris).

A singing Gray Vireo at Cabeza Prieta Pass Apr. 17 was an interesting find, but not totally unexpected since this species winters nearby in very small numbers (GM). Another very rare spring vagrant to the state, a Yellow-throated Vireo, was found at B.T.A., May 16 (†CB). A **Golden-winged Warbler** was an exceptional find at Patagonia May 18 (RS). There were only 6 previous state records, none in spring, although 2 were for mid-summer. The only Tennessee Warbler reported was one at Patagonia May 30 (BS). A N. Parula, very rare in n. Arizona, was found May 25 at Ganado Wash (†TC, †DK, CB, B. Johnson). Two Am. Redstarts, about an average number, were reported: a female on the Upper S.P.R., May 22 and another at Patagonia May 30 (m.ob.). A Prothonotary Warbler, averaging about 1–2 records/year recently, was found at Patagonia May 30 (†BS). There are now about 2 dozen records for the state, about evenly split between spring and fall. The only N. Waterthrush reported for the period was the individual that wintered in Nogales, which was last seen Apr. 6 (BS). The Louisiana Waterthrush first found in February in Madera Canyon was last reported Mar. 1 (RN). Very unusual was a Red-faced Warbler at B.T.A., Apr. 28 (CT); there are very few lowland records for the state. A ♂ Olive Warbler, first discovered in lower Oak Cr. Canyon in mid-February in Upper Sonoran Zone habitat, was last seen there Mar. 25, accompanied by three ♀-plumaged birds (JC, B. Whitney). For the first time in several years, no Black-and-white Warblers were reported for the period.

BUNTINGS THROUGH FINCHES — As was the case with Black-and-white Warbler, no reports of Rose-breasted Grosbeak were received for the first time in several years. Painted Bunting usually shows up in the state during late summer–early fall, so a female at Portal Apr. 19 was very unusual (W & SSp). A Black-throated Sparrow put in a rare appearance in Prescott in April (CT). Single Fox Sparrows were reported from Leslie Canyon Mar. 11 (GM, AM), at Patagonia Mar. 14 (DH *et al.*), and from Prescott Apr. 16–19 (S. Harris). A Swamp Sparrow at B.T.A., Apr. 27 provided a first local record (CT). Also at B.T.A., the White-throated Sparrow that wintered there was last seen Mar. 30 (CT). Another White-throated was singing in Bisbee Apr. 19 (DD). The Golden-crowned Sparrow that wintered at Prescott was last reported Apr. 25 (V. Miller). An ad. Harris' Sparrow found in Miami Mar. 17–Apr. 10 had probably wintered locally (J. & W. Spencer). The two imm. Harris' Sparrows present since early December on the Upper S.P.R. were observed as they gradually acquired ad. plumage before departing May 5 (ph. DK).

An out-of-place ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird was at Pinta Sands, Cabeza Prieta N.W.R., Apr. 16 (GM). An ad. ♂ Orchard Oriole at Aravaipa Canyon May 25 was a nice surprise (RB).



Adult Harris' Sparrow on the upper San Pedro River, Ariz., May 5, 1987. Photo/Dave Krueper.

Extremely rare in the state, especially in n. Arizona, was a ♂ "Baltimore" N. Oriole May 23 at Pipe Springs N.M. (TC).

One to two Purple Finches were present at B.T.A., Mar. 1-9 (SG, CT). Six Purple Finches, rare in the Flagstaff area, were found near Walnut Canyon N.M., Mar. 25 (JC). Purple Finches were last seen in and around Prescott Apr. 14 (CT). A very late ♀ Cassin's Finch was seen in the Bradshaw Mts., s. of Prescott, May 29 (BT). Good numbers of Red Crossbills were present in both the Prescott and Flagstaff areas through the end of the period and into June (CT, JC).

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