

Arizona

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The invasion of montane species into the lowlands, which began in the fall, continued through the winter. This winter's movement included even jays, which do not always accompany other montane species during these periodic incursions.

Another phenomenon that characterized this winter was the occurrence of many species (especially waterfowl and sparrows) that were present in higher numbers than usual.

A few rarities added spice to the season.

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

LOONS THROUGH IBISES — A Pacific Loon, not unexpected but still uncommon, was seen on L. Havasu Dec. 13 (JD, GR, CM). The only Horned Grebes reported were one northeast of Phoenix Jan. 10 (RBr) and one at P.R.D. Dec. 11 at least to Jan. 16 (PL, DH). A Red-necked Grebe, in basic plumage, was discovered among the Eared and Western grebes on Roosevelt L. Feb. 17 (fD, Driscoll, M. Cross); there have been only 2 previous state records, both from the L.C.R.

An Am. White Pelican with a broken wing was present at Alamo L. from at least Jan. 15+ (RH). An imm. Brown Pelican, uncommon in winter, was present at Imperial Dam Dec. 23–31+ (m.ob.). Eleven Double-crested Cormorants, unusual away from the L.C.R. and lakes, were observed along the Salt R., s.w. Phoenix, Jan. 16–22 (DS, T & RJ). An Olivaceous Cormorant was present again on Patagonia L., where it was observed Feb. 26–28 (MD et al.), and one was seen at Pena Blanca L. Jan. 22 (GM).

An Am. Bittern, an uncommon winter resident, was present at Nogales from Jan. 23+ (RDe et al.). An unusually large group of Great Egrets (60–70) and 10 Snowy Egrets were observed along the Salt R., s.w. Phoenix, Jan. 16 (DS, T & RJ); both species are uncommon in winter away from the L.C.R. and large reservoirs. A White-faced Ibis was seen at Topock Marsh Feb. 2 (GM).

WATERFOWL — Eight Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, present during the fall at Avondale sewage ponds, southwest of Phoenix, remained at least to Jan. 16 (DS, SGa). A Tundra Swan was observed on Roosevelt L. Dec. 15–16 (R. Jackman, J. Donato), and one on lower Tonto Cr. Jan. 24–Feb. 1 (RMe, HM) may have been the same individual. Another Tundra Swan was seen at Sullivan L., Prescott, Feb. 29 (fide BT). Greater White-fronted Geese were reported from Tucson, where four were seen Dec. 14 (G. Porter), with one remaining through the period, and from P.R.D., where one was seen Jan. 23 (DH). Individual Ross' Geese were reported on the upper S.P.R. through the period (TC, DK); one was in Chino Valley north of Prescott Jan. 16–21 (BT et al.); and one was in e. Tucson all winter at least to Feb. 6 (m.ob.). Canada Geese were unusually common in areas south and west of and around Phoenix, where at least 350 were counted during the winter (m.ob.).

More than the usual numbers of Wood Ducks were reported during the period: 10 in the Phoenix area (m.ob.), at least five in Tucson (m.ob.), a male at Parker Dec. 12 (JD, GR, CM), and a male at Pena Blanca L. Jan. 22 (GM). An unusual concentration of 350+ Green-winged Teal was observed at Willcox Jan. 6 (GM). A large flock of 100+ Gadwall was observed below Lee's Ferry in late January (V. Mowbray). No fewer than six ♂ Eur. Wigeons were present during the winter: three in the Phoenix area (R. VanSwinderen, L. Hatcher, PB et al.), one at Yuma (fide RBr), one at Prescott, and one at Montezuma Well



(fide CT). Two Greater Scaup were seen at Parker Dam Dec. 12 (JD, GR, CM), and a ♂ Greater Scaup was seen below Parker Dam Jan. 9 (RF, RN). An Oldsquaw was discovered at a pond south of Phoenix Jan. 18 (PB). An imm. White-winged Scoter, rare in Arizona, was discovered at Silverbell L., Tucson, Jan. 1 (ph. JL, TG, S. Loch); the individual at B.T.A. remained into the first week in December (m.ob.). Four Barrow's Goldeneyes were seen below Parker Dam Dec. 12 (JD, GR, CM); 17 (including two ad. males) were counted above Parker Dam Feb. 1 (GM).

Hooded Mergansers were unusually common this winter, with 10 in Scottsdale east of Phoenix, one at the Hassayampa Preserve south of Wickenburg, two in Tucson, three at Guevavi Ranch, and two at Kino Springs (m.ob.). Common Mergansers were not only more numerous than usual, but appeared in areas where they are not usually found: a female at B.T.A. Jan. 14–24 (L. & T. Watson, B. Odear) was the first for that locale; about 60 were counted along the Salt R., s.w. Phoenix, Jan. 16–22 (DS, T & RJ); two were reported at Guevavi Ranch Feb. 26 (PS); three were seen at Cook's L. Dec. 9 and one at Willcox Feb. 29 (GM); plus up to nine were on the S.P.R. Jan. 21–Feb. 19 (TC, DK). A Red-breasted Merganser was seen at Tucson Dec. 4 (J. Holloway).

RAPTORS THROUGH TERNS — An Osprey, uncommon in winter, was observed in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 (DS, RN). A ♀ Bald Eagle that fledged from a nest on the Verde River was radio tracked to British Columbia, then found again in December near Martinez L., Imperial N.W.R., along with one adult and 10 imm. Bald Eagles (G. Hunt, D. Von Gonten). Three other Bald Eagles that fledged in summer 1987 were tracked to Canada and Montana, then found back again on the Salt and Verde rivers in December (fide TG). The ad. N. Goshawk seen in n. Phoenix in late November was seen again Dec. 12 (DS). Two Wandering Harris' Hawks were found at Canoa Ranch Jan. 13; one was at Green Valley Feb. 9; and three were along Joshua Tree Parkway north of Wickenburg Feb. 3 (GM). Three Harris' Hawks seen north of Alamo L. Feb. 20 (RH) may have been from the captive breeding program on the L.C.R. or wanderers from farther southeast. Four "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawks were reported: one at Mammoth Dec. 9 (GM), one at Benson Dec. 9 (KK, RBo, SGo), one at McNeal Jan. 1–Feb. 13 (TC, DK), and one in Chino Valley Jan. 16–21 (BT et al.). A Crested Caracara, north of its usual range, was seen near Gila Bend Dec. 29 and Jan. 14 (S. Burge, R. Witzeman, D. Todd). Another individual was seen north of Marana Jan. 1 (BK). At least 15 Merlins,

many more than usual, were reported from around the state during the winter (m.ob.).

Four Am. Avocets, scarce in the Phoenix area in winter, were at the El Mirage ponds Dec. 4 (DS, SGa), and six were in s.w. Phoenix Jan. 16 (DS, TJ); two were reported at Yuma Dec. 29 (BB et al.), and one was at Topock Marsh Feb. 2 (GM). Individual Lesser Yellowlegs, uncommon in winter, were at El Mirage pond, s.w. Phoenix, Dec. 4 (DS, SGa) and at P.R.D. Feb. 20 (DH). A Solitary Sandpiper in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 (DS, RN) represented one of only a few winter records for the state. Three Long-billed Curlews at Chino Valley Jan. 16 (BT et al.) represented one of only a few winter records for Yavapai County. Western Sandpiper, an irregular, uncommon early winter visitor in small numbers, was unusually common this winter: six were observed at the El Mirage pond Dec. 4 (DS, T & RJ), with four still present there Jan. 16 (TC, DS, T & RJ); five were reported west of Tucson and four north of Tucson in early December (m.ob.); one was at P.R.D. Dec. 11 (PL); and one was at Willcox Dec. 13 (ph. PL). There were higher numbers of Dunlins as well: eight were at the El Mirage ponds Dec. 4, with six still present Jan. 16 (DS, SGa, T & RJ); plus one was at the Nogales sewage pond Jan. 13 (GM). Two Com. Snipe were observed at Tuba City Jan. 10 (S. Studebaker); there are few winter records for n. Arizona. A Com. Snipe at B.T.A. Feb. 27 (R. Hirst) was new for that locale.

California Gulls in very small numbers have been recorded irregularly in winter away from the L.C.R., but unprecedented was the large number of adults (21) seen at P.R.D. Dec. 11 (PL). Two late, or wintering, Caspian Terns were observed north of Yuma Dec. 23 (CM, BB, M. Patten). There are few winter records for Forster's Tern, so unusual were the two at P.R.D. Dec. 11 (PL), up to three at Imperial Dam Dec. 23–31 (CM et al.), and three at Topock Marsh Feb. 2 (GM).

PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — An imm. Band-tailed Pigeon in n.w. Phoenix Dec. 9 (L. Bustard, fide RBr) represented one of only a few winter records for the state. Two ♂ **Ruddy Ground-Doves**, observed at Green Valley Nov. 22–Jan. 3 (ph. †DG et al.), provided the 2nd record for that area; another male was found in the foothills of the Tucson Mts. Dec. 4 (ph. SL, JL, GM). There have been 6 previous state records, all since 1981. A Spotted Owl, spotted in a juniper tree in Bee Canyon on Tonto Cr. north of Roosevelt L. in late February (ph. N. Lucas, C. Lenihan), was at a lower than usual elevation. Another Spotted Owl was discovered north of Globe Feb. 12 (C. & B. McKusick).



Spotted Owl in Bee Canyon, Tonto Creek, Ariz., March 1, 1988. Photo/Neil Lucas.

An ad. ♂ Broad-billed Hummingbird, casual in winter, was seen in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 (DS, RN), and another male was observed south of Phoenix at Ahwatukee Feb. 8 (PB). Up to two Violet-crowned Hummingbirds were present in Bisbee Dec. 1–12 (ph. A. & M. Cordano); there have been about 6 previous winter records. A ♂ Blue-throated Hummingbird frequented Portal feeders Feb. 13–23 (fide S & WS).

Unprecedented numbers of Green Kingfishers were found wintering. Three that were present all fall on the upper S.P.R. were still present Dec. 19, and the male remained through the winter (TC, DK). Individuals were also reported at Guevavi Ranch at least through December (m.ob.), at Nogales Dec. 19+ (Jsa, TG, MJ et al.), and at St. David Jan. 31 (C. Green). Continued reports of Lewis' Woodpeckers in the lowlands included one west of Phoenix Dec. 9 and one in Mesa southeast of Phoenix from mid-December to Jan. 10 (PB). Five individual Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers (more than the usual one or two) were reported: an immature in n.w. Phoenix Dec. 12 (DS), an ad. male at Prescott Dec. 19 (fide CT), one in e. Tucson Dec. 20+ (B. Sutton, B. Scheibe), another in Tucson Jan. 19–Feb. 22 (D. Deifik, GG, BK et al.), and an ad. male at Benson Jan. 24 (DS, SGa). Three Red-breasted Sapsuckers were found: one at Prescott Dec. 19 (fide CT); one at Catalina State Park, Tucson, Jan. 4+ (WD, RBo); and one at the Hassayampa Preserve Feb. 4 (GM). A Williamson's Sapsucker at Tucson Dec. 2+ (KK et al.) was at a lower elevation than usual. A "Yellow-shafted" N. Flicker was seen in Prescott Dec. 19 (fide CT).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH RAVENS — A N. Beardless-Tyrannulet was seen Feb. 21–28 at B.T.A. (DH) for the 2nd consecutive winter record at that locale. One Hammond's Flycatcher was reported in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 (DS, RN), and another individual was seen at B.T.A. Jan. 10–Feb. 15+ (SGa, Jsa, DS). There were 4 reports of E. Phoebe: the one in Madera Canyon in late November was still present Dec. 5 (Jsa); one was found east of Tucson Dec. 12 (PL, KK); one was at the Parker oasis Dec. 12 (JD, GR, CM); and one was along the Verde R. east of Phoenix Dec. 21 (BP, RP). A Dusky-capped Flycatcher, seen far west at Topock Marsh Jan. 9, provided the first winter record for the state (†RF, RN).

A **Cave Swallow**, observed near the confluence of the Salt and Verde rivers east of Phoenix Dec. 21–31 (†TG, ph. HM, MJ, RMe, DS), provided the first winter record for Arizona; the only prior winter records in the United States have been from Texas. Reports of late lingering Barn Swallows were of one in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 (DS, RN), five or more at Parker Dec. 12 (JD, GR, CM), and one at Tucson until Dec. 14 (WD).

Steller's and Scrub jays continued to be in evidence in the lowlands. At least two individual Steller's Jays spent the winter in Phoenix yards (RBr, G. Chaiken), up to six were present all winter at the Hassayampa Preserve (J. Cooper, TG et al.), two were seen on Pinal Cr. near Globe Feb. 4 (N. Smith), and one was in e. Tucson Feb. 6 (JBo). Six Scrub Jays were present at B.T.A. from early fall through the winter (CT, DH), one was seen in Glendale west of Phoenix Dec. 9 (PB et al.), one was observed at Parker Dec. 12 (JD et al.), and many were in Tucson throughout the season. Almost unprecedented for s.e. Arizona were the numbers of Am. Crows reported during the period: about 50 were seen between Benson and St. David Jan. 31 (CG), 60–70 were counted along the upper S.P.R. between St. David and Fairbank Feb. 1–3 (TC, DK), and a flock (perhaps the same one) was seen again near St. David Feb. 17 (DJ).

TITMICE THROUGH WARBLERS — Two Bridled Titmice seen in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 4 (SGa, DS) were very unusual for that location and elevation. As in the fall, Pygmy Nuthatches continued to be seen in the lowlands—one remained in n.w. Phoenix until Dec. 24 (DS), and two were seen in a Phoenix yard Jan. 10 (TCh). Individual Am. Dippers, uncommon in s.e. Arizona in winter, were observed in Sabino Canyon Dec. 25–26 (D. Lee) and in Madera Canyon until Jan. 1 (RDu et al.). A Golden-crowned Kinglet was observed at a lowland locale along the Salt R. east of Phoenix Dec. 20+ (H. Fibel et al.).

The Rufous-backed Robin at B.T.A. remained at least to Dec. 24 (SGa et al.); another individual was discovered at the Patagonia Sanctuary Feb. 26+ (B. Matheny et al.). These represented the 3rd and 4th records of the fall-winter season. More Varied Thrushes were reported: one in Carr Canyon Dec. 19 (fide DD), one in the Santa Catalina Mts., Jan. 2 (fide D. Thayer), and one in Prescott Jan. 1-18 (J. Waddle). The Gray Catbird at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson was seen again Jan. 14 (CT). The Brown Thrasher on the upper S.P.R. at St. David remained until Dec. 7 (TC, DK); other individuals were seen at Continental east of Green Valley Dec. 27 (fide BS) and at Portal Dec. 27 (RMO).

A Warbling Vireo found along the Verde R. east of Phoenix Dec. 21-23 (fBP, RP, DS) represented one of only a few winter records for the state. Two extremely early individual Lucy's Warblers were observed at the Hassayampa Preserve Feb. 10 and in Phoenix Feb. 13 (SD). A Yellow Warbler, a sparse winter visitor, was seen in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 (DS, RN). A Chestnut-sided Warbler, uncommon in winter, was observed at Tucson Dec. 22 (J. Tedford). The Pine Warbler at Benson since early November remained until Jan. 11 (DJ, ph. GR, ph. RBo., m.ob.).

Four Black-and-white Warblers were reported: two in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 4 (DS, SGa), one in another area of s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 and Jan. 16 (DS, RN, T & RJ), and one at Cook's L. Dec. 9 (GM). Two **Worm-eating Warblers** were found—one along Rose Cr., Sierra Ancha Mts., Dec. 5 (fF. Collins) and one at Cook's L. Dec. 9 (GM, RDo). There had been only one previous winter record. This winter's Louisiana Waterthrush records came from Sycamore Res., Santa Catalina Mts.—one on Dec. 20 (m.ob.)—and from Garden Canyon, Huachuca Mts.—one on Feb. 21 (DJ). A Painted Redstart was reported in Cave Cr. Canyon, Chiricahua Mts., Dec. 18 (RMO).

SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES—The following sparrows—Fox, Swamp, White-throated, Golden-crowned, and Harris', usually present in winter in small numbers—were all found in greater than usual numbers. Individual Fox Sparrows were seen at Portal all December, and a 2nd individual was there Jan. 16 (S & WS). Other singles were at Tucson Dec. 31-Jan. 1 (KN); at Patagonia Jan. 1 (T. Olson), with another individual there Feb. 21 (JBo); at Miami Dec. 10+ (JSp); and two were at B.T.A. Jan. 10 (JSa). Individual Swamp Sparrows were observed at Cook's L. Dec. 9 (RDo, GM), at Pena Blanca L. Jan. 22 (GM), at McNeal Jan. 1 (TC, DK), on the upper S.P.R. Jan. 6+ (TC, DK), at St. David Jan. 12-20 (TC, DK), at Nogales Jan. 31 (JBo), at Kino Springs all winter (m.ob.), at Patagonia Feb. 21 (JBo), and at Patagonia L. Feb. 26 (MD). There were no fewer than 35 White-throated Sparrows reported in s.e. Arizona during the winter, with up to 25 individuals in the Patagonia area alone (m.ob.). Four individual Golden-crowned Sparrows were reported: in Sabino Canyon, Tucson, to at least Dec. 13 (WR et al.); at Bill Williams Delta Dec. 29 (A & JP); at Tucson Jan. 23+ (KN); and in the Avra Valley west of Tucson Feb. 4 (F. Hopf). As was the case last winter, there was a small invasion of Harris' Sparrows, which included individuals at Tuba City all period (fide CL), at Miami Dec. 15-Jan. 15 (JSp), at Tucson from late December to Jan. 27 (JP), at P.R.D. Jan. 23 (DH), at B.T.A. Feb. 18+ (C. Clark, PB, DH), and at Green Valley Feb. 27+ (J. Holloway).

A Yellow-eyed Junco was found out of range at Benson from early November to Jan. 11 (DJ). A large flock of 250 McCown's Longspurs was observed north of Elfrida Dec. 13 (PL). Several Chestnut-collared Longspurs were found west of Phoenix Feb. 27 (RBr et al.).

A ♂ Great-tailed Grackle was seen at Tuba City Jan. 22 (fide CL); the species has expanded its range to n. Arizona only in the past decade. An imm. ♂ **Streak-backed Oriole**, for one of only a few Arizona records, was discovered at Green Valley Feb. 26+ (fJK, m.ob.).

The only Purple Finch reported was one seen at Catalina S.P. Jan. 7 (B. Coffee). Cassin's Finches were observed at 3 lowland locations: a male at Bisbee Dec. 12 (TC, DK), a female at Benson Jan. 24 (DS, SGa), and two individuals at Miami Jan.

19-23 (JSp). Red Crossbills continued to be widespread in the lowlands: at least 10 were seen in Tucson Dec. 2+ (KK et al.), one in Sabino Canyon Dec. 13 (KK, PL), eight in Phoenix Jan. 10 (TCh), six at B.T.A. Jan. 10 (DH), and two in n.w. Phoenix Feb. 27+ (DS).

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