



Field Guides Tour Report

ARIZONA'S SECOND SPRING II 2016

Jul 30, 2016 to Aug 8, 2016
John Coons & Doug Gochfeld

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).



The entrance to Cave Creek Canyon has been an iconic image for birders for many decades (photo by guide Doug Gochfeld).

Arizona's second spring was truly just that this year, as our tour coincided with a very active monsoon season that coated the southeast Arizona landscape in lush green as far as the eye could see.

Our first whirlwind afternoon started in the Tucson Mountains, where we netted some Sonoran Desert specialties such as Gilded Flicker and the hesperia subspecies of Purple Martin, as well as Rufous-winged Sparrow, Ash-throated Flycatcher, and Black-tailed Gnatcatcher. We then headed over to Sweetwater Wetlands in Tucson proper, where the highlight was a very showy pair of Tropical Kingbirds. After an early dinner, we made our way to an overlook of the Santa Cruz River, where we were treated to some low-flying Lesser Nighthawks, followed by the emergence of several thousand Brazilian Free-tailed Bats from their day roost.

The next morning featured a quick and highly successful stop for Burrowing Owl, before we headed over to Sierra Vista, where we spent the next couple of days. Everybody managed the long hike to see Tufted Flycatcher at upper Ramsey Canyon (with a very vocal Flame-colored Tanager that was tricky to get eyes on as a bonus), and on the way back down, we were rewarded with a beautiful Black-tailed Rattlesnake and a very young Black Bear that made us wonder where its mother was. The rest of our time in the Huachuca Mountains featured Lucifer Hummingbird at Ash Canyon, some nice looks at grassland sparrows (Botteri's, Cassin's, and Grasshopper), Elegant Trogon and an athletic Black Bear in Huachuca Canyon, a very wet Spotted Owl up Miller Canyon, and a nice array of high elevation birds -- starring Buff-breasted Flycatcher -- atop Carr Canyon.

Our drive from Sierra Vista to Portal was fortuitously on the afternoon when all of southeast Arizona was covered in intense monsoonal systems, so we didn't have any birding plans that were interrupted by the wet. We even managed excellent views of the oft-skulky Yellow-breasted Chat, as well as a Crissal Thrasher, on the way. Portal was our home base for three nights, and we got to really enjoy the beauty and bounty of the Chiricahua Mountains. Great views of Montezuma Quail, Whiskered and Western screech-owls were had, everyone got to see a pair of hard-won Northern Pygmy-Owls high in the mountains, and we had a nice array of songbirds including a bushel of Hermit Warblers as well as good looks at Olive, Grace's, and Red-faced warblers, a fresh juvenile Greater Pewee, and Mexican Chickadees.

The trip from Portal to Nogales took us through Willcox, St. David, and Patagonia, and we had great fortune at each of these places, picking up Black Terns, Scaled Quail, Harris's Hawk, and a slew of other waterbirds at Willcox, and a Mississippi Kite, and a couple of Violet-crowned Hummingbirds farther to the southwest. In between enjoying the huge colony of Cliff Swallows on the side of our hotel every morning and evening, we got to bird Patagonia, Rio Rico, and (of course) the Ruby Road and California Gulch. The afternoon and evening around the Gulch was especially memorable, as we got to see Five-striped Sparrows, an excellent sunset, and a cooperative and curious Buff-collared Nightjar, all while the weather in the Gulch stayed dry, despite ominous clouds and electricity well to the east. The last few days of the tour also featured Thick-billed Kingbirds, Black-capped Gnatcatchers, Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, and the rarity capper on the next-to-last day: a Plain-capped Starthroat in Madera Canyon.

Our week of dancing around all the major habitat types throughout the Sky Island region was chock full of highlights, from regional specialties and US rarities to mammals, and, of course, to the excellent camaraderie that pervaded the group. It was a real pleasure to travel with you all, and we're both looking forward to crossing paths with each of you in the field again!

-- Doug & John

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – We saw the heads of a couple of individuals that Doug spotted in the overgrown pond near Rio Rico.

AMERICAN WIGEON (*Anas americana*) – A single bird was at the lake at Willcox.

MALLARD (NORTHERN) (*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*)

MALLARD (MEXICAN) (*Anas platyrhynchos diazi*) – Still currently considered race of Mallard, we saw a few at Sweetwater Wetlands on our first day.

CINNAMON TEAL (*Anas cyanoptera*)

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (AMERICAN) (*Anas crecca carolinensis*) – Two individuals were seen at the lake at Willcox.

RUDDY DUCK (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – Our only sighting was at the Amado pond on our last morning.

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

SCALED QUAIL (*Callipepla squamata*) – We had a couple of good views of this "Cottontop" with the best ones near Willcox.

GAMBEL'S QUAIL (*Callipepla gambelii*) – A good number were seen in several localities.

MONTEZUMA QUAIL (*Cyrtonyx montezumae*) – This is often a very tough bird to see well but we had superb views of several birds including males and females while we were in the Chiricahua Mountains.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

WILD TURKEY (*Meleagris gallopavo*) – This large bird was seen a few times with the best studies at the feeding station at Madera Canyon where about ten individuals came in.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*)

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – Our first was at the Sweetwater Wetlands then we saw a few at Patagonia Lake. This is the common cormorant in many parts of Arizona these days.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – A few were seen in the Patagonia area.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*) – There were about four birds at the lake at Willcox.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – In our route, this species is really only seen regularly in the Patagonia and Nogales area where we saw all of ours.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*)

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

GOLDEN EAGLE (*Aquila chrysaetos*) – Doug spotted a soaring bird over the mountain ridge at the mouth of Cave Creek Canyon that was joined by another individual.

MISSISSIPPI KITE (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) – We found one soaring near St. David, Arizona on our way to Nogales. This is a bird that has a quite restricted breeding range in Arizona.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (*Accipiter striatus*) – One was spotted near Onion Saddle in the Chiricahua Mountains.

COOPER'S HAWK (*Accipiter cooperii*) – We saw a few early in the trip with our first one at Sweetwater Wetlands.

HARRIS'S HAWK (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) – A nice adult perched on a power pole for scope views near Willcox.

GRAY HAWK (*Buteo plagiatus*) – A SE Arizona specialty we saw our first in Huachuca Canyon then a few more in the Nogales and Patagonia areas.

SWAINSON'S HAWK (*Buteo swainsoni*) – A lowland desert species we had good views of perched birds and saw a few soaring about as well.

ZONE-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo albonotatus*) – We saw about three individuals in the Huachuca and Chiricahua mountains.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

SORA (*Porzana carolina*) – A juvenile plumaged individual that was almost entirely brown was seen at the small lake at Kino Springs.

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*)

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – A handful of these sharply marked birds were at Willcox.

AMERICAN AVOCET (*Recurvirostra americana*) – Always a handsome bird to see well there were several in the lake at Willcox feeding side-to-side.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*)

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – Willcox had a handful working the lake edge.

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Tringa solitaria*) – A solitary individual was seen at the lake at Willcox.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*)

WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*) – We counted about three birds at Willcox.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*)

LONG-BILLED CURLEW (*Numenius americanus*) – There were four of these large and distinct shorebirds at Willcox.

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER (*Calidris bairdii*) – We had good scope views of this long distance migrant at Willcox where we saw them next to Western Sandpipers for a nice comparison.

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – There weren't many of these at Willcox but we got it well in the scope.

WESTERN SANDPIPER (*Calidris mauri*) – A few were right next to Baird's Sandpipers at Willcox where we could go over the ID points with both species.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) – Only a few individuals were present at Willcox.

WILSON'S PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus tricolor*) – We estimated about 500 individuals at Willcox where there were both males and brighter colored females

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

BLACK TERN (*Chlidonias niger*) – A somewhat uncommon bird in the area, there were four individuals seen at Willcox.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [I]

BAND-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – Our best view was of one perched in a fir tree in the upper elevations of the Chiricahua Mountains.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*) [I]

INCA DOVE (*Columbina inca*) – We saw several around Portal where this species has become more common while its numbers in other parts of the state have declined.

COMMON GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina passerina*) – Our best looks were at Kino Springs.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – One of the few birds we saw everyday of the trip.

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*)

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus americanus*) – A late arrival to Arizona in the spring, we saw a couple of them in the Patagonia area.

GREATER ROADRUNNER (*Geococcyx californianus*) – We had very good luck with this iconic southwestern bird which included seeing eight individuals on the day we drove from Sierra Vista to Portal.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

BARN OWL (*Tyto alba*) – We had a good view of one calling from a water tower near Portal.

Strigidae (Owls)

WESTERN SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops kennicottii*) – We had a nice experience tracking this small owl in the dark in the desert outside of Portal and getting a fabulous close view of it.

WHISKERED SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops trichopsis*) – A tip led us to a site where we found this local specialty roosting in a hole in a sycamore tree.

GREAT HORNED OWL (*Bubo virginianus*) – We saw one perched in a tall sycamore near the end of the road in Portal.

NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium gnoma*) – A climb up a steep slope in the Chiricahuas yielded great views of two birds that were calling back and forth. It was well worth the trek to see this little guy.

ELF OWL (*Micrathene whitneyi*) – Always tough this time of year, we heard two birds calling in the California Gulch area that we could not get a view of before the threat of rain forced us to move on. [*]

BURROWING OWL (*Athene cunicularia*) – We enjoyed nice views of one near a burrow quite close to our motel in Tucson.

SPOTTED OWL (*Strix occidentalis*) – Another hike up a trail in Miller Canyon in a light rain found this magnificent bird posing well for us. This was just after we waited out a very loud thunderstorm at the feeders at Beatty's Guest Ranch.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

LESSER NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – We saw several individuals on our first evening just as the bats were emerging from under the bridge over the Santa Cruz River in Tucson.

COMMON NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles minor*) [*]

COMMON POORWILL (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*) – We had a fly-by then a bird perched on the ground outside of Portal.

BUFF-COLLARED NIGHTJAR (*Antrostomus ridgwayi*) – This was a great experience to see and hear this quite rare species in North America. We bounced our way into California Gulch and after a picnic dinner we waited for dark and saw the nightjar make a few close passes.

Apodidae (Swifts)

WHITE-THROATED SWIFT (*Aeronautes saxatalis*) – Though we never had any that were really close we saw a good number in the sky above cliffs and mountains.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD (*Eugenes fulgens*) – Good views of males and females of this large hummingbird were obtained.

PLAIN-CAPPED STARTRHROAT (*Heliomaster constantii*) – Another quite rare North American bird, we watched the feeders at Madera Canyon for awhile before this bird came in for a 8-10 second feeding foray.

BLUE-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Lampornis clemenciae*) – These were regular visitors to the feeders at our lodge in Portal.

LUCIFER HUMMINGBIRD (*Calothorax lucifer*) – We saw at least one and maybe two males at the feeders in Ash Canyon during our visit. The bird on the second visit stayed for nearly two minutes as it tanked up on sugar water providing a great view of this gorgeous hummingbird.

BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus alexandri*) – This was the most widespread hummingbird we encountered.

ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD (*Calypte anna*) – A fair number of males and females were seen at a few localities we visited.

BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus platycercus*) – Just about always seen in the mountains we had nice looks at males and females and heard the distinctive wing whirr of flying individuals.

RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus rufus*) – A handful of bright males were seen in a few places. The female and young types are very difficult to distinguish from Allen's Hummingbird.

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus calliope*) – At least one male was frequenting the feeders at the Portal Peak Lodge and we saw it daily.

BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD (*Cynanthus latirostris*) – Another species that we saw many days of the trip and they were especially common at the Paton's feeders at Patagonia.

VIOLET-CROWNED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia violiceps*) – Although it has a lot of competition, I think this species in a real beauty among the hummingbirds in SE Arizona.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

ELEGANT TROGON (*Trogon elegans*) – It took some searching but we finally tracked down a calling male in Huachuca Canyon. Hearing them early on in our search we chased a few calls before getting a scope view of this much sought-after species. Yip! Yip! Yip!

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

ACORN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – These conspicuous woodpeckers were encountered frequently.

GILA WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes uropygialis*) – We saw them our first day in the desert near Tucson then watched them at the hummingbird feeders at Paton's.

LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER (*Picoides scalaris*) – Another lowland species we had nice looks at a few.

HAIRY WOODPECKER (*Picoides villosus*) – A mountain bird in this part of the world we saw a couple near Rustler Park in the Chiricahua Mountains.

ARIZONA WOODPECKER (*Picoides arizonae*) – A specialist of the pine-oak zone we saw a handful during our trip. This is a quite local species in the U.S.

NORTHERN FLICKER (RED-SHAFTED) (*Colaptes auratus cafer*) – Several of these familiar woodpeckers were seen.

GILDED FLICKER (*Colaptes chrysoides*) – We had great looks at two individuals on our first afternoon as they hung out in the saguaro loaded deserts outside of Tucson.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*)

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

NORTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET (*Camptostoma imberbe*) – This tiniest of the North American flycatchers showed well in the Patagonia area.

TUFTED FLYCATCHER (*Mitrephanes phaeocercus*) – A mega-rarity, we ended up with a nice view of a perched bird in Ramsey Canyon in the Huachuca Mountains. This Mexican and Central American species has been seen in this area for two years and it fledged young from a nest this year. It was quite the hike up the canyon and we heard the bird almost as soon as we arrived but it took nearly 1 1/2 hours to get a good look at it as it moved around quite a bit.

GREATER PEWEE (*Contopus pertinax*) – We had very nice views of this somewhat uncommon species in the Chiricahua Mountains.

WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE (*Contopus sordidulus*) – This bird was very common on some days.

PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax difficilis*) – We saw one in Montosa Canyon on our last morning and heard it give a brief vocalization.

CORDILLERAN FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax occidentalis*) – These were rather quiet at this time of year but we had a couple in the area near the Tufted Flycatcher.

BUFF-BREASTED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax fulvifrons*) – After getting fleeting glimpses in Huachuca Canyon we had great looks at calling birds at the top of Carr Canyon. This is another species with a quite limited range in North America.

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*)

SAY'S PHOEBE (*Sayornis saya*) – There were a couple of birds around the buildings at the Southwest Research Station.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) – Always a favorite, we saw a good number in the Patagonia Lake area.

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – Most of our sightings were in the Huachuca Mountains.

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) – We saw this species on our first afternoon then again in the Patagonia area.

BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) – We saw our first just outside Ferenc's cabin in Portal.

SULPHUR-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*) – Another local flycatcher we had good views in Ramsey Canyon and again in Huachuca Canyon.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – A cooperative male showed well for us at the Sweetwater Wetlands on our first afternoon then we saw it again at Kino Springs.

CASSIN'S KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus vociferans*) – Quite common throughout.

THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus crassirostris*) – We had good views of individuals at two sites near Patagonia. This bird is only known from a handful of sites in the U.S.

WESTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus verticalis*) – Generally found a bit lower in elevation than Cassin's Kingbird we saw a good number during our trip.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*Lanius ludovicianus*) – We had a handful of individuals in the desert below Portal where this species seems to be doing well.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

BELL'S VIREO (*Vireo bellii*) – After hearing several we finally got a good view at Patagonia Lake.

PLUMBEOUS VIREO (*Vireo plumbeus*) – This species was seen several times and was a common voice in the mountains and canyons above Portal.

HUTTON'S VIREO (*Vireo huttoni*) – We had a few good views of this pine-oak habitat specialist.

WARBLING VIREO (*Vireo gilvus*) – A migrant in southern Arizona, we encountered a few south bound birds.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

STELLER'S JAY (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) – We saw a couple of noisy birds in the higher elevation of the Chiricahua Mountains.

WESTERN SCRUB-JAY (*Aphelocoma californica*) – Just recently split into two species, this form of Western Scrub-Jay is now called Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma woodhouseii*) and the more western form is now called California Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma californica*). We saw these a few times in the juniper habitat near Portal then again in the Huachuca Mountains.

MEXICAN JAY (*Aphelocoma wollweberi*) – Sightings of this species were a daily occurrence in the foothills and canyons.

CHIHUAHUA RAVEN (*Corvus cryptoleucus*) – We saw a handful on the day we drove to Portal.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*)

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – A few were around Sweetwater Wetlands on our first afternoon and again in a few other places.

PURPLE MARTIN (HESPERIA) (*Progne subis hesperia*) – On our first afternoon we had nice looks at a few flying around and perching in the saguaro desert outside of Tucson where these nest in the tall cactus. This saguaro nesting race is essentially endemic to Arizona and lowlands of the state of Sonoran in adjacent Mexico.

TREE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta bicolor*)

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta thalassina*) – This was the swallow we most commonly saw in the Chiricahua Mountains.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – Seen nearly daily.

CLIFF SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) – There were several nests on the side of our motel in Nogales. This race (*P. p. melanogaster*) is primarily found in southern Arizona and has a buffy throat.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

MEXICAN CHICKADEE (*Poecile sclateri*) – A bird that is, nearly, only found in the U.S. in the Chiricahua Mountains. We found our first with a mixed species flock along the Herb Martyr Road well down the mountain. The following day we saw a few more in their more traditional haunts higher up.

BRIDLED TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus wollweberi*) – These distinctly marked parid showed well a few times. It is always a favorite.

JUNIPER TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus ridgwayi*) – It took some looking but we found a pair of birds along the Paradise Road in their juniper habitat.

Remizidae (Penduline-Tits)

VERDIN (*Auriparus flaviceps*) – It took a couple of encounters before we all had good views of this very desert species.

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)

BUSHTIT (INTERIOR) (*Psaltriparus minimus plumbeus*) – On our way up to Onion Saddle we encountered a group of about 20 individuals along the roadside. Their jingly little calls gave them away.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta canadensis*)

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta carolinensis*) – A rather common species in the canyons and mountains this species is a likely future split due to its differences from the eastern forms.

PYGMY NUTHATCH (*Sitta pygmaea*) – We enjoyed a few good views of this cute little nuthatch near Rustler Park in the Chiricahuas.

Certhiidae (Treecreepers)

BROWN CREEPER (*Certhia americana*) – This species has become more common and conspicuous since the fires in the Huachuca and Chiricahua mountains.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

ROCK WREN (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) [*]

CANYON WREN (*Catherpes mexicanus*) – After hearing several we finally had wonderful looks at a singing bird near Patagonia.

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*)

BEWICK'S WREN (*Thryomanes bewickii*)

CACTUS WREN (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*) – The biggest of the North American wrens, by far, our first good view was on the corner of a building near our motel in Sierra Vista.

Poliptilidae (Gnatcatchers)

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliptila caerulea*)

BLACK-TAILED GNATCATCHER (*Poliptila melanura*) – This was one of the first birds we saw in the Sonoran Desert on our first afternoon. We went over the critical field marks that we later used to separate this species from the following.

BLACK-CAPPED GNATCATCHER (*Poliptila nigriceps*) – A quite rare species in the U.S. we had nice looks at two birds after some searching at Patagonia Lake. We then saw another in Montosa Canyon on our last morning.

Regulidae (Kinglets)

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus calendula*) – We saw one near the Juniper Titmouse site in the juniper trees which would indicate this was a migrant individual.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

EASTERN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia sialis*) – We saw a few birds in the upper end of Carr Canyon in the Huachuca Mountains.

WESTERN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia mexicana*) – A bird I had not seen in the Chiricahuas since the big fire in 2011, we saw about seven individuals along the road in the burn area.

HERMIT THRUSH (*Catharus guttatus*) – Some of us had a good view in Huachuca Canyon. They were all done singing for the year.

AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*)

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

CURVE-BILLED THRASHER (*Toxostoma curvirostre*) – The most common and widespread of the thrashers in southern Arizona, we saw several along our route.

BENDIRE'S THRASHER (*Toxostoma bendirei*) – We had a good view of one that landed on a fence wire in the desert below Portal.

CRISSAL THRASHER (*Toxostoma crissale*) – Always a tough one this time of year, Ferenc spotted one in the mesquites at a roadside stop and it stayed perched long enough for a scope view.

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*)

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) [I]

Ptilionotidae (Silky-flycatchers)

PHAINOPEPLA (*Phainopepla nitens*) – This unusual species became more common later in the trip when we got to the Patagonia area though our first one was near Portal in the Chiricahuas.

Peucedramidae (Olive Warbler)

OLIVE WARBLER (*Peucedramus taeniatus*) – It took some searching before we found a couple of individuals near Rustler Park in the Chiricahuas. Formerly considered a member of the wood-warblers, recent taxonomic work has placed this unusual bird in its own family.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

LUCY'S WARBLER (*Oreothlypis luciae*) – This small, mostly, plain gray warbler gave us a few studies as it darted amongst the mesquites.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*)

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – We saw a few in the riparian areas we visited.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (*Setophaga coronata*) – Our only sightings were in the higher elevations of the Chiricahua Mountains. These were the "Audubon's" race.

GRACE'S WARBLER (*Setophaga graciae*) – We had several good views of this yellow throated southwest specialty in the higher elevations we visited.

BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER (*Setophaga nigrescens*) – A fair number were seen in the foothills.

HERMIT WARBLER (*Setophaga occidentalis*) – On our morning in the higher elevation of the Chiricahua Mountains we saw a few individuals which were all migrants from the north.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*)

RED-FACED WARBLER (*Cardellina rubrifrons*) – This southwest dazzler showed well in Ramsey Canyon and again in the higher elevations of the Chiricahua Mountains.

PAINTED REDSTART (*Myioborus pictus*) – Another specialty of the riparian areas of the southwest we saw a few in the Huachuca and Chiricahua mountains.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens*) – Usually a skulker, the one we saw along the San Pedro River put on a great show as it sat up for a scope view for at least two minutes.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

RUFOUS-WINGED SPARROW (*Peucaea carpalis*) – This species which is essentially endemic to the Sonoran Desert showed very well on our first afternoon outside of Tucson. We heard a few more during our time.

BOTTERI'S SPARROW (*Peucaea botterii*) – We had great looks at one on a fence wire in the grassland at the southern end of the Huachucas. This is a species that really begins singing after the summer rains have started.

CASSIN'S SPARROW (*Peucaea cassinii*) – We enjoyed nice looks at a singing and displaying individual just off the parking lot of our motel in Sierra Vista. This is another species that we rarely encounter in May since they don't start singing until the summer rains have started.

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW (*Ammodramus savannarum*) – Great views were had of a singing bird in the grasslands south of Sierra Vista.

CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*) – A breeding bird in the mountains of the southwest we saw a few small flocks which meant they were gathering to migrate.

BLACK-CHINNED SPARROW (*Spizella atrogularis*) – It took some looking but we finally had nice views of a singing bird along the Paradise Road. This is a species that is more common further north in Arizona. We are just on the edge of its normal range here.

BLACK-THROATED SPARROW (*Amphispiza bilineata*) – A rather common species of the southwest deserts, we saw several in a few locales.

FIVE-STRIPED SPARROW (*Amphispiza quinquestriata*) – This very local rarity showed very well for us in the afternoon in California Gulch. There are only a few known breeding localities for this bird in the U.S.

LARK SPARROW (*Chondestes grammacus*)

YELLOW-EYED JUNCO (*Junco phaeonotus*) – A high elevation species, we saw these in the Huachucas and the Chiricahuas.

SONG SPARROW (*Melospiza melodia*)

CANYON TOWHEE (*Melospiza fusca*)

ABERT'S TOWHEE (*Melospiza aberti*) – After getting a brief view at Sweetwater Wetlands we had a nice look at one at the Paton's feeders.

RUFOUS-CROWNED SPARROW (*Aimophila ruficeps*)

SPOTTED TOWHEE (*Pipilo maculatus*) – These were quite numerous in a few places but especially at the upper end of Carr Canyon.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

HEPATIC Tanager (*Piranga flava*) – A good number of these were seen in their pine-oak habitat in the mountains.
SUMMER Tanager (*Piranga rubra*) – The males were certainly a bright spot of red in the cottonwood and sycamore trees.
WESTERN Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) – This species seemed to be finished nesting and had mostly moved out of the breeding areas in the pine forests. We saw a few there but most were more in lowland habitats.
FLAME-COLORED Tanager (*Piranga bidentata*) – On our first morning we hiked up Ramsey Canyon to look for the Tufted Flycatcher and heard a Flame-colored Tanager singing below our overlook in the canyon. We worked our way down the trail and got closer as it sang across the canyon. A few of us saw it briefly perched but it got away. We hoped to find it again on our return but the later hour was not conducive to finding it.
NORTHERN CARDINAL (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) – The crests on these SE Arizona birds are longer than those in the eastern U.S.
PYRRHULOXIA (*Cardinalis sinuatus*) – We had a few good views including on our first afternoon in the field and then a better view at the Rodriguez feeders near Portal.

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*)

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*) – We ended up seeing several males and a few females. A few of the males were still singing away.

LAZULI BUNTING (*Passerina amoena*) – We had a good view of a female plumaged bird at the Rodriguez feeders and then another near Patagonia Lake. These are migrants on their way south and had just started to arrive.

VARIED BUNTING (*Passerina versicolor*) – Our first, a female plumaged individual, was less than satisfactory but we caught up with a nice male at Patagonia but the best view was our last morning in Montosa Canyon with a perched up bird with the light behind us showing all the flavors of blue.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – It was a bit of a surprise in that our only sighting was at Willow Tank along State Line Road.

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (LILIAN'S) (*Sturnella magna lilianae*) – The race we saw in SE Arizona is fairly distinct and is a likely candidate for a split but we have been saying that for many years.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) – A quite early migrant we saw a single individual in the reeds along the shore of the lake at Willcox.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*) – In the town of Rodeo we watched a male displaying to two females. The male had his wings drooped and neck feathers puffed up. How could any female resist this?

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (*Molothrus ater*)

HOODED ORIOLE (*Icterus cucullatus*)

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE (*Icterus bullockii*) – This species seems to disappear from its SE Arizona range at this time of year so it was a treat to see a nicely plumaged male show up at the Rodriguez feeders.

SCOTT'S ORIOLE (*Icterus parisorum*) – We heard one singing up the slope for quite awhile and were about ready to give up when Ferenc spotted this colorful singing from a juniper along the Paradise Road.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

HOUSE FINCH (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)

LESSER GOLDFINCH (*Spinus psaltria*) – Many, many were seen during our tour.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) [H]

MAMMALS

BRAZILIAN FREE-TAILED BAT (*Tadarida brasiliensis*) – It was difficult to count the number of bats that emerged from under the bridge on our first evening but it was many thousand individuals. It was a treat to see them gathering altitude and stream off like a column of smoke.

EASTERN COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) – These were the smaller rabbits we saw in the mountains.

DESERT COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus audubonii*) – These were seen in the lowland areas and deserts that we visited. Of course, there were a few in the intergrade zone of habitats that we were unsure of.

BLACK-TAILED JACKRABBIT (*Lepus californicus*) – These long-eared rabbits were encountered a few times along State Line Road.

CLIFF CHIPMUNK (*Tamias dorsalis*)

HARRIS'S ANTELOPE SQUIRREL (*Ammospermophilus harrisi*) – These were the small squirrels with their tail curled up on their backs.

SPOTTED GROUND SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus spilosoma*) – We had a good view of one at the Rodriguez feeders, spots and all.

ROCK SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus variegatus*) – This species was quite common throughout the trip.

ROUND-TAILED GROUND SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus tereticaudus*) – A few were around the parking lot at Sweetwater Wetlands on our first afternoon.

MEXICAN FOX SQUIRREL (*Sciurus nayaritensis*) – This larger reddish-orange tree-squirrel was seen along South Fork of Cave Creek Canyon. It is essentially only found in the U.S. at this locality.

ARIZONA GRAY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus arizonensis*) – Another Arizona endemic, we saw a few in the Huachuca Mountains where it is a riparian species.

YELLOW-NOSED COTTON RAT (*Sigmodon ochrogathus*) – We saw one shaking the vegetation and appearing now and then while we watched the feeders at Madera Canyon.

GRAY FOX (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*) – We saw one along the Paradise Road that squeaked up for a better view.

COYOTE (*Canis latrans*) – While birding at Kino Springs we heard at least one howling in the distance. [*]

BLACK BEAR (*Ursus americanus*) – It is always great to see this wonderful mammal and we were treated to two sightings. The first was a cub that crossed the trail ahead of us as we hiked down Ramsey Canyon, then we encountered an older but smallish individual in Huachuca Canyon. We watched that one patrolling the slope and it started to climb a tree. We moved along when it seemed to recognize us.

WHITE-NOSED COATI (*Nasua narica*) – A single individual was seen on the other side of Ramsey Canyon while we were trying to track down the Flame-colored Tanager.

STRIPED SKUNK (*Mephitis mephitis*)

COLLARED PECCARY (*Tayassu tajacu*) – A few were seen by some as we drove in to Huachuca Canyon.

MULE DEER (*Odocoileus hemionus*) – A mostly desert species in this part of the state, we saw one below Portal on the day we drove to the Chiricahuas.

WHITE-TAILED DEER (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – These were commonly seen on our days in the mountains.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 196 bird taxa and 20 mammal taxa