



Sartor O. Williams III

Winter 2005–2006 brought a return to serious drought throughout much of New Mexico, and unseasonably warm temperatures were recorded in January and February. Diligent birding, however, resulted in a good season for vagrant waterbirds and unexpected winter holdovers, turned up remarkable numbers of mimids in many areas and grassland species in the south, and culminated with a popular Yellow Grosbeak seen by hundreds at Albuquerque.

Abbreviations: B.L.N.W.R. (Bitter Lake N.W.R.); Bosque (Bosque del Apache N.W.R.); C.C.N.P. (Carlsbad Caverns N.P.); E.B.L. (Elephant Butte Lake); G.B.A. (Gila Bird Area, *Grant*); L.V.N.W.R. (Las Vegas N.W.R.); Maxwell (Maxwell N.W.R. and vicinity); R.G.V. (Rio Grande Valley); R.S. (Rattlesnake Springs area, *Eddy*).

WATERFOWL THROUGH FALCONS

Blue-morph Snow Geese are scarce in New Mexico, so noteworthy were 201 among some 23,000 Snows at Bosque 17 Dec (DH); other blue-morph Snows included 7 at Clayton 14 Dec (CR) and singles at Farmington 17 Dec (AN) and Sevilleta N.W.R. 16 Dec (NC, SC). At least one blue-morph Ross's Goose was at Bosque 10 & 31 Dec (BN, MS, JZ); 2 others there 9 Jan (ph. BZ) were possibly hybrids with Snow Goose. Tundra Swan made a strong showing, with reports from eight locales from the R.G.V. eastward, including up to 15 in the Maxwell area 6 Dec–11 Feb (m.ob., ph. DC), 6 at Tucumcari L. 9 Dec (JO), 2 each at Charette L. 2 Dec (JO) and L.V.N.W.R. 16 Jan (WW), and singles at Jelen 2–5 Jan (JEP, CR, ph. JO), Bosque 9–19 Dec (JEP, CGL), Sumner L. 8 Dec (JO), and L. Avalon 24 Dec–8 Jan (m.ob.), the latter found shot 27 Jan (SW). A

male Eurasian Wigeon was at Albuquerque's Mariposa Park 16 Dec–19 Feb (m.ob.). Seldom reported in the upper R.G.V., 2 male Greater Scaup were at Pilar 22–23 Dec (FO). Single Long-tailed Ducks were at E.B.L. 3–6 Jan (B. Locke) and Jal 10 Dec (JEP). **Barrow's Goldeneye** made an impressive showing e. of the mts. in *Colfax*, *Mora*, and *San Miguel*, with 2–3 at Stubblefield L. 24 Dec–24 Feb (m.ob., ph. DC, ph. JO), a male at French L. near Cimarron 18 Dec–27 Feb (EW, ph. DC), up to 2 males at Mora 20 & 23 Dec (ph. EW), and a female at L.V.N.W.R. 1 Dec (ph. JO).

A productive loon season found single **Red-throated Loons** at Conchas L. 10–19 Dec and 1–24 Feb (m.ob., ph. JO) and Brantley L. 12 Dec–3 Feb (m.ob., ph. JO). One or more Pacific Loons were at Conchas L. 18 Dec (WW) and 20–21 Feb (CR, JEP, NP, ph. JO), but reports of a possible Arctic Loon there 20 Feb were not confirmed. A **Yellow-billed Loon** at Brantley L. 12 Dec–7 Jan (m.ob., ph. JO, ph. WH) provided New Mexico's 13th overall record. Horned Grebes were rarely reported included up to 2 at Cochiti L. 15



One of two Pine Warblers documented in New Mexico this season, this apparent male was at Socorro's New Mexico Tech 1 (here) through 21 January 2006. Photograph by Brian Holliday.

Jan–1 Feb (JEP, WW) and 3 at Mesalero L. 13 Dec (JO). A good **Red-necked Grebe** season produced single imms. at Cochiti L. 15 Dec–8 Jan (MB, NP, WW, CGL, ph. JO) and E.B.L. 8 Jan–3 Feb (ph. BZ, ph. JZ, ph. JO, ph. CGL). Noteworthy so far n. in winter were 730 *Aechmophorus* grebes at Morgan L. 6 Jan (AN); high counts at E.B.L. amounted to only 2770 on 6 Jan (MW) and 2116 on 24 Jan (RD), most of which were Westerns.

Neotropic Cormorant has largely vanished from the state; this season, only 2 were reported, those at Caballo L. 18 Dec (BV). Single American Bitterns were at B.L.N.W.R. 17 Dec (JB) and 15 Feb (GW) and at L. Avalon 30 Jan (T. Hines). Wintering Great Egrets were much in evidence in the R.G.V. and Pecos Valley, including 17 near Radium Springs 2 Jan (CGL);

far n. was one below Navajo Dam 11 Dec–7 Jan (AN). Late Snowy Egrets were 2 in the lowermost Pecos Valley 19 Dec (JO), plus one each at Brantley L. (JO) and L. Avalon (SW) 24–25 Dec; early was one at Cliff 6 Feb (DB). Unusual for winter was a Cattle Egret n. to Bosque 17 Dec (DH) and 9 Jan (BZ); 4 were at Las Cruces 1 Jan (CGL). A White-faced Ibis lingered at Belen 3 Dec (CR, BN) and 2 Jan (JEP).

Persistent reports of up to 2 Turkey Vultures at Roswell 24 Dec–4 Jan (ph. WH, MB, NP, I. Palma) culminated in discovery of 14 at a roost there 7 Jan (DK, JR); early were 2 at Silver City 4 Feb (P. Boucher). Late was an Osprey at Hatch 11 Dec (CR, BN); at least one wintering in the E.B.L. area was seen 4 Dec (CGL), 1 Jan (BZ), and 20 Jan (JEP). White-tailed Kite increased its presence across s. New Mexico, with 3 near Rodeo 1 Jan (RW, ph. JO), one in the middle Animas Valley 3 Dec (B. Cavaliere) and 3 there 31 Dec (CR, ph. JO), 2 in *Grant* w. of Hachita 18 Feb (ph. CGL), 2 in *Hidalgo* s. of Hachita 4 Jan (C. Brozek), one at Mesilla 26 Feb (CR, ph. MR), and one at Seven Rivers W.M.A. 4 & 14 Feb (SW, RD, SOW)

Rare s. to *Eddy*, a Bald Eagle was at Brantley L. 23 Dec (WH, CR); noteworthy were 39 at Heron L. 4 Jan (MW). Harris's Hawk continued in the Tularosa Valley, with 4 at Alamogordo 6 Jan (ph. CGL) and 3 near La Luz 30 Dec (J. Mangimeli). A **Crested Caracara** near Rodeo 3 Dec (D. Jasper, ph. K. Maynard) was the first for *Hidalgo* since 1985. Merlins occurred statewide Dec–Feb, including one or 2 on 16 C.B.C.s 15–31 Dec; one was e. to House, *Quay* 10 Jan (DS)

Single native **Plomado** Falcons were in *Otero* 25 Jan (J. Frey) and *Luna* on various dates 20 Dec–27 Feb (RM et al, ph. JB). Wintering Peregrine Falcons continued to increase, including in the Gila Valley, middle and lower R.G.V., and lower Pecos Valley; farther n. were 2 at Pilar 22 Dec (FO) plus up to 4 in *Taos* Dec–Jan (FO) and one in *Rio Arriba* 25 Jan (DS).

RAILS THROUGH POORWILL

North for the season were one Virginia Rail at Española 31 Dec (BF) and 5 each near Cimarron 30 Jan (DC) and Clayton 14 Dec (CR). A Common Moorhen was n. to Bosque 17 Dec (WH). A Black-bellied Plover lingered at B.L.N.W.R. 7 Dec (GW). Rare in winter, a Snowy Plover was at Brantley L. 23 Dec (CR, ph. WH) and 21 Jan (SW), and 3 were near

Loving 17 Dec (SW); earliest arrival at B.L.N.W.R. was one 15 Feb (GW). Another winter surprise was a Black-necked Stilt at B.L.N.W.R. 7 Dec–2 Feb (GW, JH, JEP), as were 2 at Sunland Park 2 Jan (MS, JZ). Late American Avocets were 3 at B.L.N.W.R. 17 Dec (GW); earliest arrivals were 16 at B.L.N.W.R. 15 Feb (GW) and 7 at Bosque 18 Feb (JEP). Unexpected in winter n. to Colfax, 2–4 Greater Yellowlegs were at Springer L. Dec–Feb, including 2 on 14 & 20 Jan (ph. DC). Noteworthy Spotted Sandpipers were singles at Farmington 17 Dec (AN), G.B.A. 2 Dec–17 Feb (RS), and Ruidoso 17 Dec (A. Powell). Lingered or wintering Long-billed Curlews included 24 at Loving 17 Dec (CC), 3 s. of Roswell 7 Jan (JEP), and singles at Deming 28 Dec (LM), near Percha 8 Jan (BZ), at Six-Mile Dam 5 Feb (SW), and in s. Chaves 13 Feb (RD). Late for the n. was a Dunlin at Stubblefield L. 4 Dec (ph. DC); elsewhere, one was at E.B.L. 30 Dec (JO) and a high 12 were near Loving 17 Dec (SW).

Unexpected so late was a Franklin's Gull at Sunland Park 9 (CGL, MB, NP) & 14 Dec (JNP). A good Mew Gull season produced singles at Tyrone 4 Dec (EL, ph. DZ, ph. LM), Albuquerque 11–25 Feb (WH et al., ph. DK, ph. JO), and E.B.L. 5–11 Feb (BN, CR, ph. MB, NP, JEP). Small numbers of California Gulls wintered in the R.G.V. in Sandoval, Bernalillo, Sierra, and Doña Ana Dec–Jan. An ad. Thayer's Gull was at E.B.L. 11 & 18 Feb (JEP). Glaucous Gull staged its best winter ever in New Mexico, with (assuming no duplication) up to 5 first-winter birds at four locales: at least one at Sunland Park 6 Dec–2 Jan (JNP et al., ph. JO) and 2 there 9–11 Dec (JNP, ph. CGL, MB, NP, BN, CR), plus singles at Caballo L. 31 Dec (DH), E.B.L. 23 Jan–26 Feb (WW et al., ph. JO, CGL), and Brantley L. 6 Jan–4 Feb (JEP, DK, SW). Rounding out the rare gull news was an imm. Black-legged Kittiwake at Brantley L. 23–27 Dec (ph. WH, CR, JO, MB, NP).

A Band-tailed Pigeon was early at Signal Peak 12 Feb (R. Mansbach). Now entrenched in New Mexico, Eurasian Collared-Dove was common and conspicuous statewide, including on 26 C.B.C.s; singing began at Albuquerque 29 Dec (SOW) and P. O. Canyon 3 Jan (CDL). White-winged Dove was found n. to Farmington (AN), Española (BF), Santa Fe (DE), and Tucumcari (JO); at Silver City, where formerly absent in winter, 145 were counted 17 Dec (RS). Single Common Ground-Doves were near Cliff 31 Dec (E. Lewis) and at Las Cruces 15–29 Dec (ph. DG). Two to 3 Ruddy Ground-Doves were in the Rodeo area 2 & 11 Dec (P. Hulce, N. Dias) but were not found later. Far n. for winter were single Barn Owls at Maxwell 1 Jan and

24 Feb (ph. DC) and Clayton 14 Dec (CR). An apparent Eastern Screech-Owl was vocal at a wooded rest stop w. of Las Vegas in the early hours of 29 Dec (P. Valentik); there is but one certain record for the state. A Burrowing Owl was late at Farmington 11 Dec (J. Rees); singles wintered n. to Corrales (DK, JR), Albuquerque (SC, JEP), and B.L.N.W.R. (GW), and 2 were near Fort Sumner 10 Jan (DS). Long-eared Owl was conspicuous in the e. and s., including roosts of up to 10 each near Cimarron and at Maxwell Dec–Feb (m.ob.) and 4 in the Animas Valley 25 Dec (AC, NM-C). Undetailed were C.B.C. reports



This Yellow Grosbeak, present at Albuquerque from early December 2005 (here 28 January 2006) into the spring season, attracted hundreds of birders and generated endless speculation about its provenance. Apparently a subadult male, it was the second to be photographed in New Mexico (the first was near Santa Fe 18–21 October 2002) and central New Mexico's fourth since 1999. Photograph by David W. Nelson.

of single Short-eared Owls at Maxwell 15 Dec (fide L. Mowbray), Loving 17 Dec (fide CC), and C.C.N.P. (fide SW). Suggestive of wintering, a Common Poorwill was near Rodeo 31 Dec (fide AC) and a "fresh" feather was found at C.C.N.P. 20 Dec (fide SW).

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH VERDIN

On the hummingbird front, a male Broad-billed was at a Carlsbad feeder 10 & 24 Dec (SW, WH, CR), and a female was at another Carlsbad feeder Dec–Mar (E. Pierce), including 6–7 Jan (JEP, CGL). Late was an ad. male Magnificent Hummingbird at L. Roberts 1 Dec (J. Day-Martin), as was a female Black-chinned at Carlsbad 7–15 Dec (SW). An Anna's Hummingbird wintered at Carlsbad 24 Dec–10 Jan (SW et al.), singles were in w. Las Cruces 19 Jan (L. Hinesley) and ne. Las Cruces 22 Dec and 20 Jan (CGL), and 2 wintered at Radium Springs Dec–13 Jan, with one there through 2 Feb (MS, ph. JZ). An ad. male Costa's Hummingbird was a surprise at Las Cruces 29 Nov–2 Jan (ph. T. Lawton). Up to 3 apparent Rufous Hummingbirds were in Carlsbad 9–24 Dec (SW, JEP, JO); lacking details were several possible Rufous at Las Cruces 17 Dec (fide GE) and Silver City Dec–Feb (fide DB).

Previously unreported from New Mexico, a Green Kingfisher was seen on the Pecos R. near Malaga 17 Dec (R. Wiedenmann); unfor-

tunately, exhaustive efforts to relocate it in subsequent weeks failed, so verification of the species for the state must wait. Noteworthy were 12 Lewis's Woodpeckers e. to Sugarite S.P. 9 Feb (CH); maintaining a conspicuous presence in the upper R.G.V. were 20 at Questa 15 Dec (R. Weber), 24 at Dixon 17 Dec (R. Templeton), and 50 at Española 31 Dec (BF). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was w. to Columbus 18 Feb (LM, ph. R. Matthews). Unexpected was a Ladder-backed Woodpecker near Cimarron 9 Dec (ph. DC). While it is clear that *Empidonax* flycatchers are wintering in s. New Mexico in increasing numbers, the species involved are not always clear. Among the reports this season were single likely Dusky Flycatchers at Percha 27 Jan (JO) and 3 Feb (JEP, CR), Redrock 5 Feb (CR), and Bosque 20 Feb (DH), single Dusky/Hammond's at Mesilla 2 & 29 Jan (CGL) and R.S. 6–7 Jan (JEP, CGL), singles reported (without details) as Grays in the Peloncillo Mts. 31 Dec (fide AC) and at C.C.N.P. 21 Dec (fide SW), and unidentified singles at Silver City (P. Taber) and Mimbres (DB) in Dec. A Black Phoebe was n. to Zuni 17 Dec (JT); single Easterns were w. to Cliff (RS) and the Peloncillo Mts. (AC), both 31 Dec. Unexpected so far n. in winter were a remarkable 4 Say's Phoebes at Farmington 17 Dec (AN), 3 at Española 31 Dec (BF), 2 at Santa Fe 26 Dec (DE), and singles at Philmont 17 Dec (ph. EW) and Maxwell Dec–Feb, including 14 Jan (DC). Wintering Vermilion Flycatchers were in evidence in the s. in Hidalgo, Grant, Socorro, Sierra, and Eddy. A vocal Ash-throated Flycatcher wintered at Caballo Dam 9 Dec–4 Feb (JEP et al.).

Northern Shrikes were reported across the n. counties, including multiple reports from Taos (FO) and Colfax (DC et al.) and singles s. to El Malpais 18 Feb (C. Grimes) and Tucumcari 11 Dec (ph. JO). A good season for Plumbeous Vireo found 2 at Percha 4 Dec (CGL) and singles there 16 & 31 Dec (ph. CGL), plus singles at Radium Springs 24 Feb (MS, ph. JZ), Mesilla Park 7 Jan (BZ), and Deming 10 Dec (CGL). A Hutton's Vireo was n. to Socorro 29 Dec (J. Shipman), and another was e. to Aguirre Springs, Organ Mts. 7 Jan (BZ); the 17 on the Peloncillo Mts. C.B.C. 31 Dec (AC) established a record high there. Rushing the season was a Blue Jay building a nest at Clayton 29 Dec (JO). Noteworthy for winter was a Northern Rough-winged Swallow at Santa Teresa 2 Jan (MS, JZ); earliest spring migrant was one near Radium Springs 14 Feb (MS, JZ) while the earliest Tree Swallow was at E.B.L. 18 Feb (JEP). Notably early were 2 Cave Swallows near Whites City 19 Jan (R. West). North in the R.G.V. was a Verdin near Belen 12

Dec (DH); one was lining a nest with feathers at Spring Canyon S.P. 13 Jan (LM).

WRENS THROUGH WARBLERS

A wren killed by a cat at Sugarite S.P. 13 Jan (P. Walsh) proved to be a Carolina Wren (CH). A House Wren wintered n. to Luis Lopez, where seen 2 Jan–23 Feb (JO). Unprecedented numbers of Winter Wrens were found nearly statewide, with reports from 13 locales and including up to 8 in the Corrales area 21 Dec–16 Feb (TF), 2–3 at Los Lunas 29 Dec–8 Feb (M. Stake, G. Garber), and 2 at Eagle Nest Dam 14 Dec (DC), plus singles at Cimarron Canyon 13 Dec and 1 Mar (ph. DC), Ponil Cr. near Cimarron 9 Dec and 4 Feb (ph. DC), Santa Fe 26 Dec (DE), Cochiti 8 Jan (CR), near Pecos 17 Dec (JK), Santa Rosa 14 Dec (WW), R.S. 15 Jan (SW), Zuni 17 Dec (JT), and G.B.A. 31 Dec (RS). Scarce in the Sacramento Mts., 2 American Dippers were at Ruidoso 4 Dec (CR, BN). Far n. was a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at a Farmington suet feeder 20 Dec (L. Lesperance); a high 3 were at Mesilla 2 Jan (CGL). Black-tailed Gnatcatchers n. in the R.G.V. included 5 at Bosque 17 Dec (DH), with one there 14 Jan (JEP, JO), 2 there 22 Jan (JB), and 2 in the town of Elephant Butte 4 Feb (JEP); others of note in Sierra were 10 in the Fairview Mts. 13 Jan (CGL) and 3–4 at three sites in the n. San Andres Mts. 13 Jan–24 Feb (CGL).

Moderate numbers of Eastern Bluebirds were found on 15 C.B.C.s, primarily from the R.G.V. eastward, plus at Zuni and Gila; 10 C.B.C.s reported all three bluebird species. An ad. male Varied Thrush was near Mesilla Dam 29 Jan–16 Feb (ph. CGL, ph. JO, MS, JZ). Unexpected anywhere in New Mexico in winter, single Gray Catbirds were at Ranchos de Taos 28 Jan (FO), Sevilleta N.W.R. 16 Dec (D. Prichard), and Elephant Butte Dam 3 Feb (JEP). Northern Mockingbirds were unusually numerous across the s. half of the state; singles were n. to Cimarron 29 Dec–16 Jan (ph. DC), Sugarite S.P. 19 Dec–21 Jan (ph. DC), Clayton 14 Dec (CR), Conchas L. 18 Dec (WW), s. of Mosquero 1–2 Feb (MM), and near Madrid 14 Feb (LS). Sage Thrasher wintered in unprecedented numbers across s. and cen. New Mexico, including in areas where not previously known in winter; found on 14 C.B.C.s in Dec, including n. to Orilla Verde, Española, and Santa Fe, numbers increased in Jan, including 45 at E.B.L. 9 Jan (BZ), 70 in Rhodes Canyon, n. San Andres Mts. 13 Jan (CGL), 10 at Madrid 2 Jan (LS), and 92 in the Caja del Rio area near Santa Fe 7 Jan (MR). Noteworthy for Colfax was a Curve-billed Thrasher near Cimarron 18 Dec (fide DC); another was n. to Española 31 Dec (BF). Northerly Crissal Thrashers were singles at Tesuque Dec–Feb

(S. Tanner) and Zuni 17 Dec (JT); Crissals were singing in the Sandia Mts. 14 Jan (BN) and the Peloncillo Mts. 18 Jan (CDL).

Searches for wintering Sprague's Pipit were successful in grasslands of the n. Jornada del Muerto e. of San Antonio, where several were found on various dates 26 Dec–11 Feb (WW, JEP, JB, BN, CR, SW), including a high 7 on 21 Jan (JEP); elsewhere, 3 were near Brantley L. 23 Dec (WH, CR), up to 3 were in Luna 13 Jan (DG) and 27 Feb (RM), and one was in the Animas Valley 31 Dec (RW). Cedar Waxwings began drifting back into New Mexico in late Jan, including 20 at Mesilla Park 20 Jan (CGL), 8 at Socorro 22 Jan (BN, CR), and 4 at Valmora 29 Jan (CR). Phainopeplas were more common than usual in the Peloncillo Mts. (CDL); n. were 4–5 at G.B.A. 4 Jan and 3 Feb (RS), one at Socorro 22 Jan (CR), up to 2 at Luis Lopez 5 & 22 Jan (JO), and one at B.L.N.W.R. 19–21 Dec (JH). An Olive Warbler at Cherry Creek C.G. 22 Feb (LM) may have wintered locally. Small numbers of Orange-crowned Warblers again wintered in the lower R.G.V. and the Pecos Valley; noteworthy were 5–6 at Mesilla Park 1–20 Jan (CGL). A possible Yellow Warbler was at Las Cruces 17 Dec (H. Harrison). Going for higher education, a Pine Warbler

visited the University of New Mexico campus at Albuquerque 8–19 Dec (MB, NP, JO, W. Talbot, BN), and another was on the New Mexico Tech campus at Socorro 1–21 Jan (ph. B. Holliday, BZ, ph. JO, CGL, JEP, CR), where there was also an Ovenbird 14 Jan (JEP, ph. JO).

TOWHEES THROUGH FINCHES

A Green-tailed Towhee was n. to Bosque 2 & 22 Jan (JEP). Careful attention to grassland sparrows helped to clarify the status of Cassin's Sparrow, with 2 e. of San Antonio 26 Dec (WW) and at least one there 11 & 13 Feb (JEP, WW), one at Brantley L. 23 Dec (WH, CR), 4 at Las Cruces 17 Dec (DG), and 13 in the middle Animas Valley 31 Dec (CR et al.). A remarkable 130 Rufous-crowned Sparrows were reported at C.C.N.P. 21 Dec (SW); Rufous-crowns were singing in the Peloncillo Mts. by 17 Feb (CDL). Single American Tree Sparrows were s. to Albuquerque 17–18 Dec (N. Shroud), Bernardo W.M.A. 21 Jan (JEP), and Luis Lopez 23 Dec–11 Jan (ph. JO). Late for the n. were 2 Chipping Sparrows at Conchas Dam 11 Dec (MB, NP) and one at Santa Rosa 14 Dec (WW); early was one n. to Corrales 29 Jan (DK). Two likely Clay-colored Sparrows were in the middle Animas Valley 31 Dec (JO, CR). Sin-

gle Field Sparrows were near Conchas Dam 1 Feb (WW) and at Carlsbad 11 Dec (SW), and 2 were at Maddox L., Lea 12 Dec (ph. JO); an unprecedented 9 were reported at C.C.N.P. 21 Dec (SW). North were 2 Black-throated Sparrows at Cochiti 2 Jan (DK) and a Vesper Sparrow at Albuquerque 18 Dec (JK). Early was a Sage Sparrow near Cimarron 25 Feb (ph. DC). Savannah Sparrows were moving northward by Feb, as evidenced by 35 near Conchas Dam 1 Feb (WW), 4 near Datil 18–19 Feb (CR, BN), one at Farmington 22 Feb (AN), and 10 at Springer L. 25 Feb (DC). Among the grassland surprises e. of San Antonio was a Baird's Sparrow 13 Feb (WW), one s. of Deming 28 Dec (JB), and 2 were in the middle Animas Valley 25 Dec (AC,

NM-C). Lingered from Nov was a Le Conte's Sparrow at Clabber Hill Ranch below Conchas Dam 10 Dec (JEP, ph. JO).

A good Fox Sparrow season found singles n. to Peña Blanca 3 Jan (WW) and Ute L. 27 Dec (DC); farther s., one to 2 were at 12 sites in Bernalillo (JEP, DZ), Valencia (TF), Sierra (CGL), Doña Ana (N. Stotz), Grant (RS), Hidalgo (CDL), and Eddy (JEP, CGL). North was a Swamp Sparrow at Springer 14 Jan (DC); w

ere 2 each at L. Roberts 6 Dec (DB) and the Animas Valley 31 Dec (ph. JO). Two Harris's Sparrows were at Ranchos de Taos 13 Dec (FO); singles were at Rio Rancho 19 Jan (TF) and Bosque 4 Dec–26 Feb (m.ob., ph. CGL, ph. G. Froehlich). Unusual in winter, 5 dark-lored White-crowned Sparrows were at Rodeo 31 Dec–1 Jan (ph. JO); early was one at Silver City 19 Feb (DZ). A Golden-crowned Sparrow at Rock House Spring, San Andres Mts., Sierra 24 Feb (CGL) furnished a local first; at Bosque, one was found along the Marsh Loop 16 Jan (CGL), and presumably another was at the headquarters feeder 18 Jan (DK). Two to 15 McCown's Longspurs were in grasslands e. of San Antonio 2 Jan–13 Feb (JEP, SW, CR, BN, WW); Chestnut-collareds were common there all season. Lapland Longspurs were restricted to Colfax and Union; the high count was 11 at Eagle Nest 3 & 13 Dec (ph. DC).

Northern Cardinal continued its presence in the ne., including 5 each at Santa Rosa 14 Dec (WW) and the Conchas Dam area 18 Dec (WW), 2 s. of Mosquero 1 Feb (MM), and 3 along Pajarito Cr. near Tucumcari 11 Dec (JO). Pyrrhuloxias drifting northward included singles at L. Roberts in early Dec (F. Land), San Lorenzo 23 Feb (P. Walker), San Acacia 15 Feb (RD), and Causey, Roosevelt 11 Dec



New Mexico's rarest grebe species, a Red-necked Grebe entertained many at the Dam Site Restaurant, Elephant Butte Lake, Sierra County 8 (here 9) January through 3 February 2006. Photograph by James E. Zabriskie.

(JO), and 3 at Valley of Fires, Lincoln 4 Dec (CR, BN). Attracting national attention was a **Yellow Grosbeak** at Albuquerque. First noticed in early Dec (ph. R. Powell) and 5 Jan (ph. M. Ratliff), it was discovered by birders 22 Jan (JEP, JO et al.) and enjoyed (and photographed) by hundreds through the season. Apparently a subad. male, the grosbeak frequented feeders in the North Valley through 1 Feb, then relocated to the University area mid-Feb–Mar (m.ob.).

An impressive **Rusty Blackbird** season produced 3 at Ute L. 27 Dec (ph. DC), one at B.L.N.W.R. 1-3 Dec (JH, JEP, ph. JO), 3 at R.S. 17 Dec–7 Jan (JEP, ph. JO, JB, DK, CGL), and 2 at Las Cruces 17 Dec (W. Whitford). Common Grackles continued to linger or overwinter n. and w. of expected, but haphazard reporting continued to confuse the issue; credible reports included one w. to Playas 10 Jan (P. Lehman) and 2 at Deming 29 Jan (LM), singles n. to Albuquerque 18 Dec (A. Rominger) and San Antonio 2 Jan (JEP), 3 at Eagle Nest 3 Dec (DC), one at Maxwell 1 Jan

(ph. DC), and 6 at Santa Rosa 14 Dec (WW). Up to 10 Bronzed Cowbirds were at Las Cruces Dec–Feb (m.ob., ph. BZ). A male **Bullock's Oriole**, first noted at Percha in late Nov, remained Dec–Jan (ph. CGL, ph. JO, JEP) and was last reported 3 Feb (BN, CR). The dependable three-species flock of rosy-finches entertained many at Sandia Crest, where 271 were banded through 25 Feb—203 Blacks, 39 Brown-capped, and 29 Gray-crowned (NC, SC et al.); a three-species flock of 30 at Eagle Nest 13 Dec (DC) provided the only additional locale. What was described as an eastern **Purple Finch** was at Percha 24 Jan (G. Bieber). Montane finches were notably scarce—small numbers of Cassin's Finches were reported on seven widely scattered C.B.C.s, Red Crossbills were detected only twice during the season, and the few Evening Grosbeaks reported were largely restricted to the Sangre de Cristo Mts. Lesser Goldfinch continued to make its winter presence known n. of expected, including outnumbering American Goldfinch 28 to 24 at Farmington 17 Dec (AN).

Initialed observers: Jonathan Balkin, Matt Baumann, David Beatty, David Cleary, Nancy Cox, Steve Cox, Alan Craig, Craig Cranston, Robert Doster, Deanna Einspahr, Trevor Fetz, Bernard Foy, David Griffin, David Hawksworth, William Howe, Jeff Howland, Charles Hundertmark, Jim Krakowski, David Krueper, Carroll D. Littlefield, Carl G. Lundblad, Martin MacRoberts, Larry Malone, Raymond Meyer, Narca Moore-Craig, Alan Nelson, Bruce Neville, Frank Oatman, Jerry Oldenettel, John E. Parmeter, James N. Patton, Nick Pederson, Mary Ristow, Christopher Rustay, Janet Ruth, Lawry Sager, Marcy Scott, Roland Shook, Dale Stahlecker, John Trochet, Brad Vaughn, Gordon Warrick, Mark Watson, Richard Webster, Steve West, William West, Elton Williams, S. O. Williams, James Zabriskie, Barry Zimmer, Dale Zimmerman. ☺

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Arizona



Mark M. Stevenson | Gary H. Rosenberg

La Niña conditions resulted in an extremely dry winter statewide: there were 143 straight days without rain in Phoenix, a record, and essentially no snowpack in the mountains. Mild temperatures allowed many species to winter in unusually high numbers. Two potential first state records were documented, a Royal Tern and a Brown-chested Martin.

Abbreviations: A.B.B.A. (Arizona Breeding Bird Atlas), A.B.C. (Arizona Bird Committee), A.V.S.T.P. (Avra Valley S.T.P.), B.T.A. (Boyce Thompson Arboretum), G.W.R. (Gilbert Water Ranch), H.R.P. (Hassayampa R. Preserve), L.C.R.V. (lower Colorado R. valley), P.L.S.P. (Patagonia Lake S.P.), S.P.R. (San Pedro R.), Whitewater (Whitewater Draw W.A.).

WATERFOWL THROUGH CORMORANTS

Fulvous Whistling-Ducks have been extremely scarce in Arizona in recent decades. The one-day Scottsdale record from Nov heralded a change. What was presumably the same bird was relocated 2-29 Dec on Chaparral L. (H. Bond, ph. PD) and again 7 Jan+ at nearby McCormick Ranch (TC, DY). In Green Valley, a flock of 18 was on a golf course pond 3 Dec (ph. C. Triple), and other singles turned up in e. Mesa 4 Dec–29 Feb (M. Tomme, ph. MW) and at Topock Marsh 13-28 Dec (†A. Haskew; D. Henderson). Casual in Prescott, 2 Snow Geese were present 18 Dec+ (CST). Ross's Goose is accidental in the Grand Canyon region, so 5 at CRM-8 on 4 Feb (CL, ph. G. Nealon) were remarkable. Still very rare in the state, **Cackling Goose** reports included 3 in Scottsdale 17 Jan–3 Feb (†PL; ph. N. Kaznajian), 2 near the confluence of the Gila R. and Agua Fria R. 13 Feb (ph., †MMO), and 3 on L. Mary 19 Feb (JP).

Six unbanded **Trumpeter Swans** seen at Kino Springs 6-9 Jan (R. & R. Thompson, ph. L. Smith) relocated to Corona de Tucson S.T.P. 15-26 Jan (B. Howard, ph. A. Tozier); there are only two prior records for se. Arizona, both since 1994, and few for the state. Eurasian Wigeon reports included one at Flagstaff 9-21 Dec (ph. N. Gaines) and 2-3 in Scottsdale (TC, J. Jones, m.ob.) all season. A hybrid wigeon was at Sun City 23 Nov–13 Dec (CST); another returned to Willcox 24 Dec+ (SH). In addition to the Mexican Ducks reported in the fall at Gilbert, another was in Chandler 12 Feb (MMO).

Surf Scoter is a rare, primarily late-fall migrant; reports came from Prescott L. 28-30 Nov (CST, ph. S. Burk), Many Farms L. 1 Dec (MMS, MP), and Ashurst L. 3 Dec (JP). By far the rarest scoter in the Southwest, a **Black Scoter** at Saguaro L. 18 Feb–3 Mar (J. Rusinow, S. Fried, ph. KR) made only the 8th state record. Nearly annual in the state in winter, single Long-tailed Ducks were at Watson L. 3-13 Dec (ph. S. Burk) and Parker Dam 4 Dec–19 Feb (H. Van Oosten). While 3 Barrow's Goldeneyes at Parker Dam 8 Dec–15 Jan (H. Van Oosten) were fewer than expected there, an ad. male near the confluence of the Gila R. and Agua Fria R. 29 Jan–4 Mar (ph. BG) was only a 2nd *Maricopa* record and one of very few from s. Arizona away from the L.C.R.V.