

Southwest Region

Arizona

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The winter in Arizona was very mild and dry. In fact, temperatures in January and February were the warmest on record, and rainfall was almost non-existent. As a result, there were scattered individuals of a large assortment of species which normally winter south of Arizona. Waterfowl numbers were down in southern Arizona, and yet a remarkable diversity of waterfowl species were recorded. Highlights for resident birders included two rare and obliging gulls and two species of scoters, while visitors and residents alike were rewarded with a very cooperative Eared Trogon, and a Rufous-backed Robin.

Abbreviations: A.B.C. (*Arizona Bird Committee*); L.C.R.V. (*Lower Colorado R. Valley*); G.F.P. (*Gila Farms Pond*); M.F.L. (*Many Farms Lake*); N.I.R. (*Navajo Indian Reservation*); P.A.P. (*Pinal Air Park*); P.R.D. (*Painted Rock Dam*); S.P.R. (*San Pedro R.*); and S.T.P. (*Sewage Treatment Plant*); S.S.V. (*Sulphur Springs Valley*).

Loons to Falcons

Despite poor coverage of the L.C.R.V in recent years, it appears that Pacific Loons

still winter in small numbers near the larger dams. This winter one was below Parker Dam Jan. 14 (MS, TC), and another was below Davis Dam Feb. 17 (CBa, BJ). Single Com. Loons were reported from M.F.L., Dec. 16 (CL) and from San Carlos L., Dec. 10 (GHe). A single Horned Grebe, always a scarce winter visitor, was reported at Tuba City Dec. 5 (CL), and three more were located on L. Havasu Jan. 14 (TC). A Clark's Grebe was identified at the Gilbert/Riggs Rd. pond in Gilbert Dec. 10 (RJ, SG); there are still very few extralimital winter records for this species around the state. Western Grebes continue to be more widely reported in winter, with several sightings around s. Arizona beginning in early December. But a report of ≥ 700 at San Carlos L., Dec. 9 (GHe) was a surprise. Additionally, one was in Flagstaff Dec. 1–12 (JC), providing the latest record for that area.

The five Brown Pelicans that were present at P.R.D. during the fall spent the entire winter there (m.ob.). A large flock of ≥ 200 Am. White Pelicans again wintered below P.R.D. (m.ob.). Also, the Neotropic Cormorant that has been present at P.R.D. since at least the summer was reported there throughout the winter (TC, m.ob.). One was also present at the species' more normal location in the state, Patagonia L., for the entire period (GR, m.ob.). Representing only the 2nd winter record for *Maricopa* were three Least Bitterns found on the Gila R. CBC near Gillespie Dam Dec. 21 (T. Hildebrandt, *vide* TC). Winter reports of White-faced Ibis seem to be more routine; this year a small flock was seen flying over in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 7 (B. Demaree *et al.*), four were present at P.R.D., Dec. 10 to at least Jan. 15 (SG, RJ *et al.*), and two were observed at Lower L. Mary Dec. 16 (P. Wang).

Scattered single Snow Geese were reported from around Arizona; of more interest was a flock of ≥ 500 that wintered at Cibola N.W.R. (TC). The six Ross' Geese that were present in Sierra Vista in late November remained there until at least Dec. 31 (JWh). Elsewhere, two were in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 9 (C. Drowley), one was in Scottsdale Feb. 21–27 (A. Spenser, SGa), and an unusually high concentration of 25 were at Cibola N.W.R., Jan. 13 (TC). Also at Cibola Jan. 13 (TC) was one of the highest winter concentrations (eight) ever reported of Greater White-fronted Goose in the state. Four Eur. Wigeons—single males at Ocotillo, Indian Bend Wash in Scottsdale, the Phoenix Zoo, and at Nogales S.T.P.—all returned for yet another winter. A "new" male was located on a pond in c. Phoenix Jan. 27–28 (RBr). A flock of ≥ 75 Canvasbacks seen along the upper S.P.R., Jan. 21 (CDB) was an unusually large concentration for s. Arizona. Individual Greater Scaups, still casual in the state away from the L.C.R.V., were reported from Prescott Jan. 20–Feb. 9 (CT), at P.R.D., Jan. 27 (CDB *et al.*), and from the Nogales S.T.P., Feb. 17 (†J. Pike). Incredibly, a ♂ Tufted Duck was relocated on a pond at Red Mt. Ranch in Mesa Feb. 21 for the *fourth* consecutive winter (SGa *et al.*); interestingly, this individual was looked for repeatedly earlier in the winter and *not* found. The only report of Oldsquaw was from Willcox Jan. 21 (R. Taylor). One of the better finds of the winter was an imm. ♂ Black Scoter present below Parker Dam Feb. 1+ (SGa, RJ *et al.*; †CM); this represents only the 6th record for Arizona. Also present nearby on the Bill Williams arm of L. Havasu Feb. 4+ was an imm. ♂ White-winged Scoter (SGa, RJ *et al.*; †CM); this species is considered casual at best in the state, with a majority of records coming from the L.C.R.V. A ♀ Barrow's Goldeneye was well-described from Black Mesa Jan. 18–Feb. 4 (†CL); there are only a few credible records in the state away from the L.C.R.V. Six Red-breasted Mergansers near Parker Dam Feb. 24 (DS) were likely northbound migrants, as the migration period for this species on the L.C.R.V. begins in mid-February.

A group of 12 Black Vultures wandered N to s.w. Phoenix Jan. 28 (B. Greenwood). At least eight White-tailed Kites were reported from scattered localities in s. Arizona this winter (m.ob.). Higher than usual numbers of Bald Eagles were reported in s. Arizona, with ≤ 6 in the S.S.V. during the period (JWh *et al.*). In the Flagstaff region, numbers also seemed to be up from previous years, with no fewer

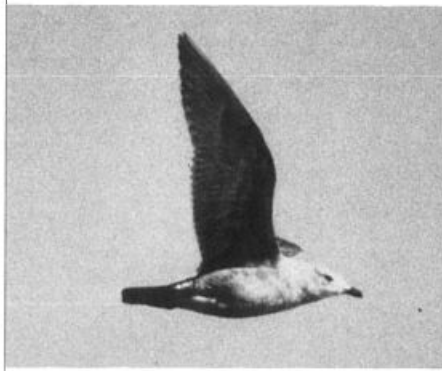


than 80 reported from lakes near there Jan. 9 (CL). Astounding was the report of an ad. Com. Black Hawk seen along the Verde R. near Cottonwood Dec. 25 (†P. Wang, V. Miller, C. VanCleve); there have been no previous winter records for the state. A Crested Caracara wandered N and E from its normal range to the P.A.P. pecan grove Dec. 2–3 (GHe). Many observers commented about the apparent higher-than-normal numbers of Merlins throughout the state this winter; for example, ≥ 11 were reported from n. Arizona throughout the period (CL), and ≥ 6 were present in the S.S.V., Jan. 6–9 (JLD).

Plovers to Woodpeckers

The Black-bellied Plover present at the Gilbert S.T.P. during late November was last seen Dec. 10 (RJ). The high count of Mt. Plovers in the S.S.V. was 212 Jan. 26 (NP). Black-necked Stilts are locally uncommon in winter in s. Arizona, therefore, ≥ 130 at the Sun Lakes pond, s. of Phoenix, Jan. 9 (DS) was a surprise. A flock of 24 Long-billed Curlews in the sod fields near Arizona City Dec. 24 (RD) was a good concentration for winter. A W. Sandpiper, still considered rare in the state in winter, was at Nogales S.T.P., Jan. 17 (CDB, JC). Of interest were three Long-billed Dowitchers at Watson L. near Prescott Dec. 18 (CT), and a flock of 12 at Sunsites, S.S.V., Feb. 10 (C&L Cathers); this species is also locally uncommon in s. Arizona in winter. Eight Com. Snipe at Lee's Ferry Dec. 5 (CL) represented an unusually high concentration for n. Arizona in winter. Individual Red Phalaropes (or the same bird?) were reported from Pena Blanca L., Jan. 23 (†GHe) and from Nogales S.T.P., Feb. 26 (†D. Wolf); this species is a casual visitor in winter (more regular during fall and spring), but there are records from every month of the year.

Providing a first *Maricopa* record, and only the 6th record overall for the state, a first-winter Mew Gull was found at P.R.D.,



Thayer's Gull in first-winter plumage at Painted Rock Dam, Arizona, January 11, 1996. About the eighth state record. Photograph/Robert A. Witzeman.

Jan. 9 (DS, m.ob.; ph. R. Witzeman, JLD) and remained there through the period. Perhaps more unusual was a first-winter Thayer's Gull at P.R.D., Jan. 11 (SB, ph. R. Witzeman, JLD), which also remained through the period; there have been 7 previous records for the state, but none since 1989. We received scattered reports of Herring Gulls; one was at P.R.D., Dec. 3–10 (SGa, RJ), one first-winter bird was at San Carlos L., Dec. 10 (GHe), another first-winter was at Lower L. Mary near Flagstaff Jan. 9 (†CL), and an adult was at Bullhead City Jan. 14 (TC).

Three Inca Doves at Lee's Ferry Dec. 2 (J. Grahame) were well n. of this species' range in Arizona. The only Ruddy Ground-Doves reported were in a small group ranging from three–six individuals throughout the season at El Mirage pond in s.w. Phoenix (m.ob.). Exciting was the find of a group of ≥ 13 Long-eared Owls roosting in a wash e. of Red Rock (between Phoenix and Tucson) Jan. 1+; this species has been found roosting in even larger concentrations in washes, mainly in the s.w. portion of the state. Additionally, one was located on the Portal CBC Jan. 1 (*vide* DJa), and another was at Hunt's Mesa, Monument Valley, Jan. 27 (CL), both odd localities for this species in the state. Also at an unusual locality was a calling N. Saw-Whet Owl at Santa Rita Lodge, Madera Canyon, Feb. 15 (†BZ); although this species probably nests high up in the Santa Rita Mts., it is seldom seen anywhere in that mountain range, let alone down so low. Early Com. Poorwills were heard at Harshaw Canyon Feb. 17 (J. Pike), and near Parker Canyon L. (D. Otto).

Southern Arizona reports of Broad-billed Hummingbirds included one in Tucson Dec. 8+ (C&L Cathers), another in Tucson Dec. 13–Jan. 10 (GHe), one in Green Valley Dec. 9+ (L. VanderWerf),

and another very far north in Tempe beginning Jan. 15 (SGa). As usual, one—maybe two—Violet-crowned Hummingbirds were present throughout the winter at the Paton's feeders in Patagonia (m.ob.), and another returned to feeders in Bisbee (JWh). Unusual for the Prescott region was a ♂ Anna's Hummingbird coming to feeders in Skull Valley Jan. 1 (*vide* CT). Also casual in winter were two—and perhaps as many as four—different Rufous Hummingbirds frequenting feeders in the Portal area during the period (DJa).

Bordering on the amazing, a ♀ Eared Trogon was found Jan. 1 in Haunted Canyon, an obscure canyon in the Superstition Wilderness Area e. of Superior, Gila, that, to our knowledge, was never before birded! This well-documented record, along with this past fall's record of a pair up near Christopher Cr. on the Mogollon Rim, lends further support to previous sightings of this incredible bird in both the Sierra Ancha and White Mts. Another Eared Trogon was located in yet another new area: in Rucker Canyon on the w. side of the Chiricahua Mts., Jan. 29. It was seen off and on until at least Feb. 25 (H. Snyder, R. Ridgely, F. Gill *et al.*). A Belted Kingfisher was at Lee's Ferry Dec. 5 (CL), where this species can be considered sparse in winter. Besides the Green Kingfishers along both Sonoita Cr. and the upper S.P.R., one female was at Agua Caliente Park in Tucson Feb. 10–11 (C&L Cathers).

The only s. Arizona reports of Lewis' Woodpecker came from a Phoenix yard Feb. 21 (RBr), and from Molino Basin in the Santa Catalina Mts., Jan. 10–Feb. 17 (DS). A Gila Woodpecker in Portal all period (S. Spofford) was at an unusual locality for the species in Arizona. A ♀ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker returned to Rio Verde for the 3rd consecutive winter Dec. 23+ (RJ). Red-breasted Sapsuckers continue to cause confusion in Arizona in winter. The one returning this winter to the maintenance yard near Continental, and seen throughout the period, was thought to definitely have hybrid characteristics (PL). Similarly, the one that returned to the B.T.A. was also thought to be a possible hybrid (perhaps between *ruber* and *daggetti*) (JLD). An apparent pure Red-breasted, present in s.w. Phoenix since the fall, was seen again Jan. 20 (TC). Single "Yellow-shafted" N. Flickers were reported from Portal Dec. 6, where flicker numbers were thought to be way up this winter, (DJa), at Reid Park in Tucson Dec. 13–23 (†GHe), at Prescott Dec. 18 (CT), in Haunted Canyon Jan. 16 (†CDB), and in n.w. Phoenix Jan. 28 (R. Ferguson).



Mew Gull in first-winter plumage at Painted Rock Dam, Arizona, January 11, 1996. Sixth state record. Photograph/Robert A. Witzeman.

Flycatchers to Vireos

Two different Greater Pewees were found: one at the Patagonia Roadside Rest Dec. 17 (MS *et al.*) and another at the confluence of the Salt and Verde Rivers Dec. 18 (TC). Winter records of Hammond's Flycatcher at Page Springs near Sedona Dec. 25 (CL) and in Haunted Canyon Jan. 16–Feb. 3 (CDB, CM *et al.*) were both well n. of the species normal distribution in winter in Arizona. Two different "Western"-type Flycatchers, most likely Pacific-slopes, were found: one in Tempe Dec. 17 (SB) and another along the Hassayampa R. near Wickenburg in Feb. (m.ob.). This winter, E. Phoebes were found at Patagonia Dec. 17 (TC) and Jan. 7 (CDB), well n. at Kirkland near Prescott Jan. 1 (CT), and one spent the winter at the B.T.A. (SGa *et al.*). A ♂ Vermilion Flycatcher was found at the same location near Page Springs that one was at last year on the same date, Jan. 1 (CL); this species is casual at best this far north in Arizona during any season. An Ash-throated Flycatcher in the Swisshelm Mts. e. of Elfrida Jan. 20 (CDB *et al.*) was e. of its normal winter range in Arizona, but present in proper habitat. A Cassin's Kingbird in Patagonia Feb. 16 (ph. BZ) may have wintered locally as there were several lingering in the Patagonia-Nogales region well into December.

Western Scrub-Jays made a definite movement into lowland areas, particularly in n. Arizona (*vide* CL). In the s. portion of the state this movement was not as pronounced, but one was found along the Gila R. w. of Phoenix Dec. 21 (G. Clark, N. Shrou). Similarly, in n. Arizona Mt. Chickadees were reported from several areas where this species does not nest (CL). Red-breasted Nuthatches were at several odd localities in s. Arizona throughout the winter, but ≥ 100 reported in and around Portal throughout the period was considered most unusual; Spoford, a long-time resident of Portal, reports that this was the first in 13 years that such a phenomenon has taken place. In general, Winter Wrens were reported more frequently than usual. In a year that chickadees and nuthatches appeared to be on the move (particularly in the East), it seems ironic that the only extralimital reports of Golden-crowned Kinglet came from a single individual seen in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 23–Jan. 1 (DKa), and in Tucson Dec. 26 (CDB, PB).

A Hermit Thrush, casual at best in n. Arizona in winter, was at Moenavi near Tuba City Dec. 5 (CL). Three different Rufous-backed Robins, always a sought-after "Mexican" stray, were found: one near Patagonia L. in late December (J. Boyd, S.

Morris, *vide* J. Pike), one on the Patagonia CBC along Sonoita Cr., Dec. 17 (†MS), and another at Pena Blanca L., Jan. 28–Feb. 8 (S. Healy, RJ, JJ, MS). Also casual in s. Arizona during the winter, a Varied Thrush was present along the Hassayampa R. near Wickenburg Dec. 30+ (J. Jones).

Another casual visitor to s. Arizona in winter, a Gray Catbird was at Portal Dec. 22 (DJa). Unusual in winter so far north in the state, single N. Mockingbirds were seen at Kayenta Dec. 30 and Feb. 9 (CL). About normal numbers of Brown Thrashers were reported; one was along the Hassayampa R., Dec. 30–Feb. 3 (T. Brodner), one was in Portal Jan. 2+ (DJa), and another was along the Santa Cruz R. near Tumacacori (*vide* S. Edwards). This winter was particularly good for N. Shrikes in n. Arizona, with ≥ 14 observations of ≥ 11 individuals reported by a single observer (CL).

A singing ♂ Bell's Vireo was at the Parker Oasis, Parker, Feb. 17 (CBa, BJ), and perhaps wintered locally, as it has at least once before. Providing what may only be the 4th winter record for the state, and the first for January, a Warbling Vireo was along the Hassayampa R. near Wickenburg Jan. 7–8 (RJ).

Warblers to Orioles

Providing one of the few acceptable winter records, a Nashville Warbler was at P.R.D., Jan. 27 (CDB *et al.*). Single N. Parulas, still casual in s. Arizona in winter, were near the confluence of the Salt and Verde Rivers n.e. of Phoenix Dec. 18 (TC), along the Salt R. in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 23 (DKa), and along the Gila R. w. of Phoenix Dec. 21 (T. Hildebrandt). Very scarce anywhere in the state in winter, a Yellow Warbler was located along the Santa Cruz R., Tucson, Dec. 26 (CDB), and a female was found in s.w. Phoenix Jan. 20 (TC). Chestnut-sided Warblers continue to show up during the winter in the Phoenix Valley; this year one was along the Salt R. in s.w. Phoenix Jan. 5–Feb. 23, one was in Tempe Jan. 15, and a 3rd was in Scottsdale Jan. 21+ (all SGa). A single Black-and-white Warbler wintered at Patagonia (m.ob.), while two were at Cook's L. along the lower S.P.R., Dec. 26 (DS), and one was at Proctor Rd. near Madera Canyon Jan. 23 (WR). An Ovenbird found in a Tucson yard Dec. 16 was still present at the end of the period (ph. CDB). Another Ovenbird found along Sonoita Cr. in late December was still present Jan. 25 (PL); these 2 records represent the first winter records of this species from s.e. Arizona. A casual winter visitor to streams in s. Arizona, three different Louisiana Waterthrushes were located, one

was present during the entire period at the B.T.A. (TC *et al.*), one was along Sonoita Cr., Dec. 17 (ph. MS), and another was found on the Atascosa Mt. CBC along a stream on the way into California Gulch, remaining there through the period (GW, RJ *et al.*). Acceptable mid-winter records of Wilson's Warblers in Arizona are few and far between, therefore one along Sonoita Cr. near Patagonia Dec. 17 (†MS) and another at Picacho Res., Feb. 3 (MS) were of interest. A ♀ Hooded Warbler along the Verde R. near Tuzigoot Dec. 17 (†JC *et al.*), and another male found along the Hassayampa R. near Wickenburg Jan. 28–Feb. 3 (*vide* SGa) provided only the 3rd and 4th winter records for the state. Winter records of Painted Redstarts away from known areas of occurrence included two along Camp Cr. near Carefree Jan. 2 (TC) and another in the now-famous Haunted Canyon Jan. 13–Feb. 3 (CDB, CM).

The two Summer Tanagers that returned to the Phoenix Zoo during the fall season remained there throughout the period (RJ). Indicative of a mild winter, no fewer than five W. Tanagers were found during the winter season: singles at Cook's L., Dec. 26 (DS), the B.T.A., Dec. 31 (DS, JC), and Patagonia Jan. 25, and two there Feb. 11 (CDB, GW). Another was in Haunted Canyon Feb. 3 (*vide* CM). This species is considered casual in s. Arizona during the winter. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak at the B.T.A., Jan. 5–13 (CT) provided one of the few recent winter records for the state. A ♂ Painted Bunting along the Agua Fria R. near Youngtown Dec. 23 (ph. E. Robinson) provided only the 3rd winter record.

A study of the winter distribution of Baird's Sparrows in the grasslands in s. Arizona provided an insight into the true abundance of this seldom-seen sparrow. On study areas in the Sonoita Grasslands alone, Caleb Gordon, a graduate student at the University of Arizona, along with teams of sparrow herders, netted no fewer than 40 individual Baird's Sparrows, an astounding number given how difficult this skulker is to find!

At least ten different Fox Sparrows were reported from s. Arizona between Dec. 3–Jan. 28. With the recent publication of biochemical studies concerning this complex of sparrows, it is increasingly important for observers to note which particular form of Fox Sparrow they encounter, as at least 3 species may be involved; the majority of reports in Arizona appear to be the *schistacea* form from the Rocky Mts., or, less-commonly, of the *iliaca-zaboria-altivagans* complex. No fewer than ten White-throated Sparrows were reported statewide

More interesting, though, were 3 separate reports of *oriantha* White-crowned Sparrows, with two in Tucson Dec. 11 (CDB), three seen along the upper S.P.R., Jan. 10 (JLD), and another five seen at the P.A.P. pecan grove Feb. 17 (J. Pike). This form is casual at best in winter in s. Arizona. Six Golden-crowned Sparrows, about normal for a winter, were found around the state between Dec. 10 and the end of the season. Two different extralimital Yellow-eyed Juncos were reported, with one at the B.T.A., Jan. 5–13 (CT), and another at a feeder in Prescott Feb. 28–29 (V. Miller; *vide* CT). This species is only a casual winter visitor away from known breeding areas in s. Arizona. There are very few records of Lapland Longspurs anywhere in the state, therefore one seen near McNeal in the S.S.V., Jan. 6 (†JLD) and another in the San Rafael Grasslands Jan. 7–9 (†JLD, CDB, PB, C. Duncan) were noteworthy; this species is most likely overlooked and more common in s. Arizona than the paucity of records indicates. Eighteen Yellow-headed Blackbirds at Mormon L., Dec. 16 may well represent the first winter record for n. Arizona (J. Grahame). Extremely rare anywhere in Arizona during the winter, a ♂ Bullock's Oriole wintered at Granite Cr. near Prescott (CT). A ♀/imm. Purple Finch, casual in s. Arizona in winter, was in Patagonia Dec. 17 (DTr, CDB).

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New Mexico

SARTOR O. WILLIAMS III

An unusually mild winter provided favorable conditions for birds and for those who watch them, but continued drought gave cause for concern. Waterbirds and warblers provided much excitement, and montane species attracted attention in the lowlands.

Abbreviations: B.L.N.W.R. (*Bitter Lake N.W.R.*); Bosque N.W.R. (*Bosque del Apache N.W.R.*); E.B.L. (*Elephant Butte L.*); R.G.V. (*Rio Grande Valley*); Zuni (*Zuni Indian Reservation*).

Loons to Ducks

An excellent season for rare waterbirds found single Pacific Loons at E.B.L., Dec. 31 (ph. JO) and Jan. 13 (JEP, JO) and Caballo L., Jan 2–11 (BZ, JNP *et al.*), a possible **Red-throated Loon** at Santa Rosa L. Feb. 17 (CR), and a **Yellow-billed Loon** at Ute L., Dec. 27 (ph. JO), the latter the state's 5th in 5 years. What may prove to be New Mexico's first verified **Red-necked Grebe** was discovered at Caballo L., Dec. 23 (BN, DE, CS), where it remained through Jan. 12 (v.o., ph. JO); unverified reports stretch back over half a century! One–four Horned Grebes wintered at E.B.L., Caballo L., Ute L., Brantly L., and s. *Eddy* (v.o.). Some 4000 *Aechmophorus* grebes were seen during an aerial survey of E.B.L., Jan. 12 (SOW) and ≤2000 Eareds were at Caballo L. during January (v.o.); a possible Least at Bosque N.W.R., Jan. 8 (EW) was not found by others. Moderate numbers of Am. White Pelicans overwintered in the lower Rio Grande and Pecos valleys; early returnees were 150 over Anthony Feb. 9 (EW, *vide* CS) and 18 over Malaga Feb. 25 (SW). A **Brown Pelican** plunge-diving at Caballo L., Dec. 8 (JO) was last seen Dec. 14 (*vide* CS). Unusually far north were six Double-crested Cormorants at Morgan L., Dec. 31 (TR); 38 Double-crested at Willow L., Jan. 20 (SW) was a high number for *Eddy*, while a Neotropic near Deming in December and February (JO, JEP) may provide a *Luna* first. Very late was a Cattle Egret at Bosque N.W.R., Jan. 12–14 (CS, JD) and a White-faced Ibis there through Jan. 7 (ph. JO).

A Black-bellied Whistling-Duck caused considerable excitement at Las Animas Cr., *Sierra*, Jan. 6–20 (JEP *et al.*, ph. JO), but

its close association with domestic ducks and chickens—plus the presence of ≤five Mute Swans (v.o., ph. D. Mott) and a pair of Mandarins in the area (v.o.)—seriously eroded its credibility. A Tundra Swan was at L. Avalon Dec. 4–25 (ph. SW, JO). Ross' Geese reportedly comprised 49% of the "white geese" at B.L.N.W.R., resulting in 6000 Ross' there Dec. 16 (SMB); peripheral Ross' were three–four near Farmington Dec. 2 and Jan. 2 (TR), singles at Lordsburg Feb. 24 (JEP, JO) and Burn L. Dec. 17–23 (ph. BZ), and 20 at Willow L., *Eddy*, Feb. 29 (SW). Wood Ducks continued to winter widely; three at Montezuma Dec. 17 (PRS), a pair near Deming Dec. 30 (JO), and four at Brantly L., Jan. 8 (J. Fanning) were in areas where seldom reported. A ♂ Blue-winged Teal at Rattlesnake Springs Dec. 16 (*vide* SW) and four at L. Avalon Jan. 4 (SW) were late; earliest Cinnamons were single males at Navajo Dam Jan. 26 (TR), Zuni Feb. 3 (DC), and Rattlesnake Springs Jan. 27–28 (DE, BN, JO). A ♂ **Eurasian Wigeon** at Black Rock L., Dec. 15 (JT) provided a Zuni first; another was at Albuquerque Jan. 7–15 (BV, JEP, PES, CR, ph. JO). Formerly rare, Oldsquaws have been reported annually in recent years; this season found a male at Tyrone Jan. 1–2 (EL, ph. D&MZ) and a female at Lovington Dec. 28 (ph. JO). Much farther downstream than usual on the San Juan R. were one–two Barrow's Goldeneyes at Farmington Dec. 2–Jan.8 (ph. TR).

Vultures to Doves

Extremely late was a Turkey Vulture near Otis Dec. 21 (ph. SW), but one at Percha Dec. 26 (GE) had a broken wing; notably early was one at the Glenwood roost Feb. 13 (R. Skaggs). Given the virtual absence of Turkey Vultures from New Mexico in mid-winter, the presence of 279 only 25 mi s. at Janos, Chihuahua, Mexico Jan. 10 (WH *et al.*) was startling, as were the 80 Black Vultures a little farther south at Casas Grandes Jan. 11 (WH *et al.*). Blacks are unverified in New Mexico at any season! Two White-tailed Kites in the Uvas Valley, *Luna*, Dec. 30 (ph. JO) furnished further evidence of this kite's expansion into the state. A "black" Merlin near Santa Fe Jan. 24–Feb. 28 (DS) was likely *suckleyi*; elsewhere, one–five Merlins were at 20 locales statewide December–February (v.o.). Far north was a Com. Moorhen at Zuni Dec. 13 (JT). A Snowy Plover was late at Holloman L., Dec. 28 (GE); three were early there Feb. 14 (GE). A remarkable 350 Killdeer were at L. Avalon Jan. 4 (SW). A Mt. Plover was early at Los Lunas Feb. 21 (PES); earliest Am. Avocets were