

Southwest Region

Arizona

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

Grebes to Hawks

Although there was no breeding evidence of Eared Grebe at Willcox, an adult was present there July 14 (CM). A single W. Grebe at Willcox June 9–14 (MS) and two at Patagonia L., June 30 were away from known breeding areas in s. Arizona. More unusual was a wandering Clark's Grebe also at Patagonia L. June 30 to at least July 14 (C. Cathers, MS); there are very few midsummer records of this species from the s.e. portion of the state. At least one, and possibly four–five Neotropical Cormorants were present all summer at Patagonia L. (m.ob.). Exceptional, though, was a single Neotropical at a pond in Tempe June 30–July 23 (SGa *et al.*), providing the first record of this species in *Maricopa*

away from P.R.D. The summer usually produces isolated reports of wandering Magnificent Frigatebirds from the southwest; one was described flying N along the upper S.P.R., June 21 (†P. Greer).

An imm. Little Blue Heron was present in s.w. Phoenix July 18 (RJ, RD); this species is still a casual summer visitor to the state. A Roseate Spoonbill at the Nogales S.T.P., July 22–23 provided only the 2nd record for Arizona this decade. Also casual in summer in s. Arizona, three Wood Storks were present at P.R.D., June 18 (L. Piest, *fide* TC), where most of the recent records have come from. The Greater White-fronted Goose that took up winter residence at Silverbell L. in Tucson was still present throughout the period (MS). Unusual lingering ducks at Willcox included two Blue-winged Teal June 9 (CC), a Gadwall June 14 (CC), two Canvasback June 14–July 14 and three July 16 (m.ob), four Redhead June 14 (CC), and a Ring-necked Duck through the period.

Midsummer records of Osprey away from known breeding areas included one at P.R.D., June 16 (L. Piest), and another in s.w. Phoenix in mid-June (T. Hildebrandt). The only different locality mentioned for White-tailed Kites included two in s.w. Phoenix July 6–15 (SGa). A ♀ N. Harrier seen along the Arizona Strip in n.w. Arizona June 3 (PF, DG) was very late; there have only been 2 previous nesting records for the state. Another N. Harrier near Willow L., July 2 (B. Thomen) was also unseasonable. Unusual for *Maricopa* were single midsummer records of Swainson's Hawks; one was in Buckeye June 29 (TC), while another was reported in s.w. Phoenix July 1 (D. Rosie). Well n. of known nesting areas in the n.w. portion of the state, single Zone-tailed Hawks were n. of the Grand Canyon on Mt. Dellenbaugh June 26 (M.

Latta, DG), and on Mt. Logan June 29 (DG) during survey work for the Arizona Breeding Bird Atlas project. A Ferruginous Hawk nest, with young, was located 25 mi. s. of Colorado City on the Arizona Strip June 11 (TC). Although this hawk is thought to nest sporadically throughout the n. portion of Arizona, this record represents only the 2nd actual nest located in the state in recent times.

Rails to Woodpeckers

Quite amazing was the finding of a wandering Clapper Rail at Quitobaquito June 14–18 (L. Dickson, T. Tibbitts). There were very few extralimital records of this species away from known breeding areas in Arizona, and it would be interesting to know where this individual originated! Four Marbled Godwits at Willcox June 24 (SH) were early migrants. The only report of an ad. Semipalmated Sandpiper was one at Willcox July 24 (RP). An ad. Short-billed Dowitcher was reported from Willcox July 14 (CM) and three July 16 (RP). Single Franklin's Gulls were at Willcox June 9 (CC) and July 14–26 (CM, RP). Greater-than-usual numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls were reported, as they were this spring, with at least eight at Willcox June 6 (SH), three June 24 (SH), four July 16, and at least two remaining through the period. It is unclear what went on with Least Terns this summer at Willcox; at least one was present sporadically during most of May, and this continued into June, with a report of one June 5 and two June 9 (CC *et al.*). A report of one still there on the late date of July 6 needs further substantiation.

Greater Roadrunner is sparsely distributed across the n. third of the state, therefore two along the Arizona Strip June 3 and again June 28 were of interest. A Groove-billed Ani was reported from the Patagonia roadside rest area July 19 (R. Bradley); there are very few midsummer records of this casual visitor from Mexico. A pair of Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls were found along a wash in n.w. Tucson July 28+ (*fide* MS); although this species has been rarely reported in recent years, Arizona Game and Fish researchers have apparently been monitoring several territories in n.w. Tucson. A singing Buff-collared Nightjar was discovered at Hank and Yank Spring at the top of Sycamore Canyon on or around July 4 (R. Charnack) and remained there through the end of the period (m.ob.). Two additional territories were reported from the Baboquivari Mts. (*fide* AF).

✓ A Broad-billed Hummingbird at the Hassayampa R. Preserve July 7 (V. Little)





Female White-eared Hummingbird at nest with two young in Carr Canyon, Huachuca Mountains, Arizona, August 10, 1996. Probably only the second confirmed nest for the state. Photograph/Chris Nytko.

was n. of this species normal breeding range in Arizona. As usual, at least one ♂ White-eared Hummingbird remained at Ramsey Canyon throughout the period. While a male seen sporadically through the period at Comfort Spring in Carr Canyon suggested again that this species breeds in small numbers in that area, nesting was confirmed July 13 (J. Furusho, ph. C. Nytko), with two young fledging the week of Aug. 11. Full details will be published elsewhere. In June we received 2 different reports, without details, of **Berylline Hummingbirds**: an apparently banded female in Ramsey Canyon June 5, remaining there about a week, and another female seen in Madera Canyon June 12–23 (*fide* SGa). Another Berylline was described from the South Fork of Cave Cr. Canyon July 31 (†T&J Heindel). At least two Violet-crowned Hummingbirds were seen sporadically in Madera Canyon; one male was seen off and on from late June–July 27 (MS), while an immature was frequenting the feeders at the Santa Rita Lodge July 15 (CM). Even farther west, an imm. Violet-crowned was reported from Brown Canyon, B.A.N.W.R., June 13–18 (R. Hanson). An imm. Lucifer Hummingbird was described from Brown Canyon June 13, and a female was there June 30 (†R&J Hanson).

Two active nests of Belted Kingfishers were located along the Black R. on the San Carlos Indian Reservation July 13–14 (PF), further confirming this species breeding in that region of Arizona. Green Kingfishers continue to be reported sporadically from both the upper S.P.R. and

from Sonoita Cr. near Patagonia, suggesting possible continued breeding at both localities. An exciting find was an ad. **Red-headed Woodpecker** hawking insects along the highway in n. Flagstaff July 28+ (C. Drost, tape JC); there were only 6 previous records for Arizona, and this record represents the first from the n. section.

Flycatchers to Warblers

Our understanding of Gray Flycatcher distribution has expanded with the discovery of at least 6 different territories on the San Carlos Indian Reservation in *Graham* July 11–16 (*fide* TC), and adults with fledglings found 15 mi n. of Morenci in *Greenlee* July 26 (T. McCarthy), both locations being well s. and e. of known breeding areas in Arizona. A “Western” Flycatcher seen in an arid desert wash on the B.A.N.W.R., July 7 (AF) was unseasonable. Tropical Kingbird was again found at “Kingfisher Pond” along the upper S.P.R., July 14 (CM), where this species has been a sporadic nester. An active Tree Swallow nest was located along the Black R. in *Graham* July 12 (PF, DG), providing yet another nesting site for this species in Arizona. Five Am. Crows were found during an Atlas project n.w. of Camp Wood (CT). A singing, territorial Winter Wren was along the West Fork of Oak Cr. Canyon June 26 (JC, CL); the nearest known nesting locality is in the e. Sierra Nevada Mts. of California. An apparent pair of **Black-capped Gnatcatchers** were present in Chino Canyon Mar. 31–July 21 (†J. Martin; ph. †TC), although no nest was ever found; this species nested successfully in Chino Canyon back in the early 1980s, but has been absent there since.

Despite the many rumors that another Rufous-backed Robin was caught and banded along the upper S.P.R. in July–August (we reported in *AB* Vol. 50, No. 3 to the one caught June 5), we have learned that this is not the case. An **Aztec Thrush** was reported from Ramsey Canyon July 24 (*fide* S. Corbett); little did we know that this sighting would be the first of what would become an unprecedented invasion into Arizona during August, a full accounting of which will be published in the fall report! The Brown Thrasher visiting Portal continued through the period (*fide* DJ). The Breeding Bird Atlas project found significant range expansions for Crissal Thrasher in n. Arizona: Recently fledged young were found 10 mi s. of Pipe Springs May 30 (DG), 3 different territories were discovered—along with nests and eggs—s. of Colorado City June 1–3 (TM, PF, DG), an adult was observed 15 mi e. of Fredo-

nia June 8 (TC), and another adult with two fledglings was found 15 mi n.e. of the Toroweap Ranger Station.

A singing Red-eyed Vireo was reported from Portal June 11 (*fide* DJ). A ♂ **Blue-winged Warbler** was described from Brown Canyon, B.A.N.W.R., June 9 (†R&J Hanson); there are only 3 previous reports for s.e. Arizona. A Townsend’s Warbler in the Chiricahua Mts., July 14 (CM) was a very early migrant for the region. A Blackpoll Warbler, virtually unrecorded in the state from spring, was reported from Proctor Rd. below Madera Canyon June 3 (*fide* CW). An Am. Redstart at Buckeye June 29 (TC) was an unusual date for this species. A Red-faced Warbler at Big Spring Work Center on the w. slope of the Kaibab Plateau June 9–22 (TC) was n. of this species breeding range in n. Arizona, the closest being the Hualapai Mts. near Kingman. A Hooded Warbler, an almost regular early-summer visitor in s. Arizona, was reported from Madera Canyon June 13 (T. Staudt). As reported in the spring report, one of the two ♂ **Rufous-capped Warblers** found in French Joe Canyon in 1995 returned in 1996, and was present throughout the period; although we received reports of two—and possibly three—individuals, we received no conclusive evidence that there more than two were present.

Tanagers to Goldfinches

Atlas crews found 4 more localities in the Arizona Strip with Hepatic Tanagers, further suggesting that this species is more widespread in that region than previously thought; two were present on Grassy Mt., June 2 (PF), a nest with young was found on Mt. Dellenbaugh June 25 (TM), another two individuals were on Mt. Dellenbaugh June 27 (ML, DG), and one was on Castle Peak June 26 (TM). The ♂ **Flame-colored Tanager** found again this Spring at Bog Spring in Madera Canyon remained there throughout the period, but became increasingly difficult to find. Eleven Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were found in the state June 8–July 21.

A Green-tailed Towhee at Proctor Rd. below Madera Canyon June 10 (MS) was very late for this species in s. Arizona. Similarly, a White-crowned Sparrow frequented a feeder in Paradise June 14–15 (D. Julian). Between June 1–June 29, Black-chinned Sparrows were located at no fewer than 9 sites in the Arizona Strip region of n. Arizona (*fide* TC), where this species was not known to nest. Of interest was the report of a Five-striped Sparrow along Proctor Rd. near Madera Canyon June 23 (JB); historically this species nested at near-

by Chino Canyon, but has been absent from the Santa Rita Mts. for over a decade.

A ♀ Orchard Oriole, a casual visitor to s. Arizona, was well described coming to a hummingbird feeder in n.e. Phoenix June 10–13 (†CB). The pair of Streak-backed Orioles along the San Pedro R. at Dudleyville was present throughout the period at a nest, but it is unclear if they successfully fledged any young. Interesting were 2 different reports of ♂ Lawrence's Goldfinches, one at Madera Canyon July 18 (SGo), and another at a feeder in Paradise, also in July (D. Julian); this species is normally an irregular fall or winter visitor, and it is very unusual for birds to be moving this early in the year.

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New Mexico

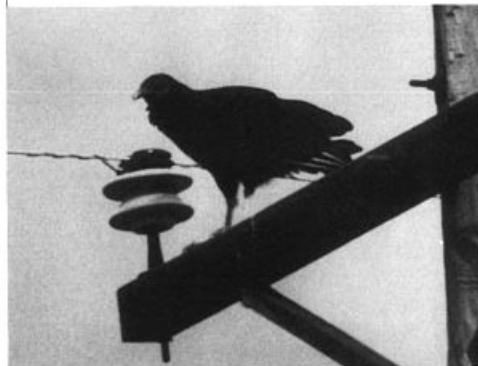
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Summer 1996 was a season of contrasts, with extreme drought in June broken by abundant rains in July, resulting in reduced or delayed breeding by several species. A record 59 (of 63 possible) BBS routes were conducted, while another species was added to the official state list.

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*).

Grebes to Falcons

Causing considerable excitement was an ad. **Red-necked Grebe** at Caballo L., June 16–July 27 (v.o., ph. JO), possibly the same individual that was there earlier this year. The largest Eared Grebe colonies numbered 125 nests at Long L., Chuska Mts., July 25 (DC), 990 nests at Stinking L., July 12 (DS), and 44 nests at Maxwell N.W.R., July 27 (BN, DE). Among 40 pairs of W. Grebes at Horse L., June 17 were 6 active nests (DS). Lingering Am. White Pelicans included five at Morgan L., June 9 & 22 (D&ML), 56 at Stinking L., July 2 (DS), 15 at Maxwell N.W.R., June 4 (KG), 26 near Amistad, *Union*, June 26 (*vide* WC), three at Zuni June 26 and July 4 (DC), and 20 at La Joya June 21 (JO). A sub-ad. **Brown Pelican** was at E.B.L., June 19 (TH, ph. C. Painter). Neotropic Cormorants may be increasing n. to Bosque N.W.R., where there were 75 individuals and 23 nests July 19 (CR). Great Egrets made an impressive showing, with 33 at Bosque N.W.R., July 9 (GE) and four nests July 9 & 19 (GE, CR), 10 at E.B.L., June 17–21 (TH), three n. to Tucumcari June 8 (CR), 10 at L. Avalon July 13 (SW), and one at Jal in July (ph. Associated Press). Single Little Blue Herons included adults at Albuquerque June 4 (JO) and Caballo L., June 22 (JEP, JO) and an immature at Bosque N.W.R. July 7 (B&DF). Far north was an imm. Tricolored Heron at Bandelier June 21 (M. Asaki). Only four White-faced Ibis nests were located at Stinking L., June 8 (DS), and breeding was undocumented elsewhere. A remarkable six ad. **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** were at Maxwell N.W.R., July 14 (E. Morrall) and a single adult entertained many at the Lordsburg marsh July 19–26 (SW *et al.*, ph. JO). Unseasonal were



Black Vulture just north of Rodeo, New Mexico, July 21, 1996. First documented state record. Photograph/Jon L. Dunn.

a Greater White-fronted Goose at Maxwell N.W.R., July 13 (JEP, JO) and July 27 (CR, BN, DE), two Snow Geese at Stinking L., June 17 & 27 (DS), and five Snows plus an ad. Ross' at Lordsburg June 15–July 28 (v.o.). In the unexpected category were an Oldsquaw at Stinking L., July 5 (WW), a volant ♂-plumaged **Surf Scoter** on the Animas R. at Flora Vista June 5–6 (TR, ph. D&ML), and a ♂ Red-breasted Merganser near Las Cruces July 29 (LS).

— Long overdue, **Black Vulture** was added to New Mexico's verified list when one was photographed n. of Rodeo July 21 (ph. JD). On the Osprey front, a new nesting pair was discovered at Tierra Amarilla in mid-June, but the nest was unsuccessful (*vide* DS); elsewhere, the El Vado L. nest fledged three in late July but the Heron L. nest failed (DS), while rumors persisted of yet another pair far to the south near Ruidoso. Mississippi Kites w. to the R.G.V. included singles near Belen June 1 (WH) and July 27 (JEP, JO) and near Las Cruces July 27 (CS). Possibly nesting N. Harriers were a pair at Morgan L., June 12 (TR, D&ML) and July 6 ((D&ML), plus singles at 2 Zuni sites June 10 and July 4 (DC) and another at Las Cruces June 11 (CS). A Com. Black-Hawk reportedly fledged in the Hondo-San Patricio area, *Lincoln* (*vide* SB), where there have been persistent—but unverified—reports of summering birds for several years. Other Com. Black-Hawks in areas where not known to breed were an adult in the Animas Valley July 27 (JEP, JO) and a juvenile in Guadalupe Canyon June 12 (SOW). Harris' Hawks in the lower R.G.V. were singles June 12 near Leasburg (*vide* CS) and at Hill (LS). An ad. and a sub-ad. **Gray Hawk** were in the Animas Valley July 5 (AC, NMC), where the sub-adult remained through July 21 (v.o., ph. JO). A juv. **Aplo-mado Falcon** near Las Cruces July 19–20 & 25 (ph. P. Jungemann) provided additional encouragement that natural recolonization may be underway.