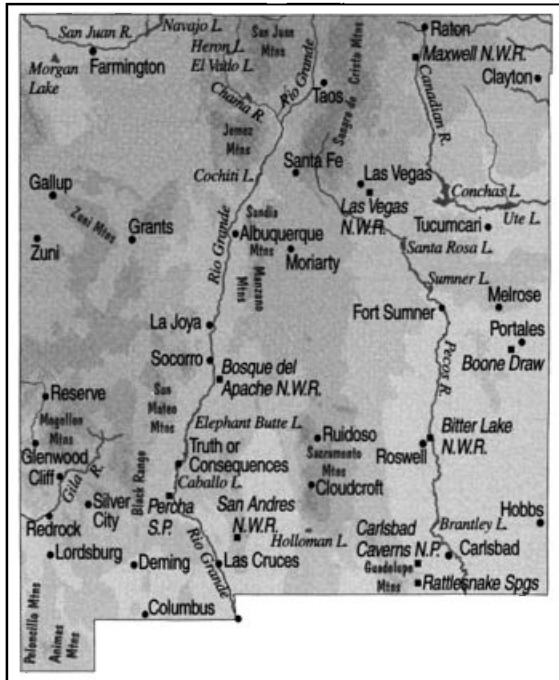


New Mexico



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Widespread winter precipitation continued into early spring 2001, only to be followed by a return to dry and windy conditions. Many montane species that had invaded the lowlands lingered late in nonbreeding areas. Although migration was deemed slow, birding was exciting, with many well-documented rarities, including another species new to the state.

Abbreviations: B.L.N.W.R. (Bitter Lake N.W.R.); Bosque (Bosque del Apache N.W.R.); E.B.L. (Elephant Butte L.); Maxwell (Maxwell N.W.R.); N.R.T. (n. Roosevelt migrant trap near Melrose); R.S. (Rattlesnake Springs area, *Eddy*); R.G.V. (Rio Grande Valley); Zuni (Zuni Indian Reservation).

LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

A quiet loon season found a late Pacific at Conchas L. 12 May (CR). Two Horned

Grebes at Sumner L. 24 Mar (JEP) provided the only report. Two Brown Pelicans were on Brantley L. 12–13 May (SW); one had been noted at nearby L. Avalon 25 Apr (*vide* SW). Single Great Egrets drifted n. to Nutria L. 29 Apr (DC) and Peña Blanca 16 May (WW). A lone Snowy Egret at L. Grande 14 May (SW) was a sad reminder of the once large breeding colony there, now abandoned due to industrial pollution. Single Little Blue Herons were at Bosque 17–26 Apr and B.L.N.W.R. 12–22 May (m. ob.); n. were 2 near Los Lunas 26 Apr (M. Means). Making brief appearances were a Tricolored Heron at Bosque 20 May (ph. JO) and an ad. **Reddish Egret**—New Mexico's 11th—at B.L.N.W.R. 6 Apr (JM). **Glossy Ibis** were detected for the 3rd consecutive spring, with singles at Bosque 20 Apr (JEP), Anthony 28–29 Apr (MS, ph. JZ), Bosque Redondo 5 May (JEP), and B.L.N.W.R. 26 May (JO, JM). A **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** at B.L.N.W.R. 20–25 Apr (ph. GW) was the first there in over a decade. Nine Wood Ducks at Tularosa 3–4 Mar (JO) was a high count for *Otero*; noteworthy were pairs at two s. *Doña Ana* sites 13 & 17 Apr (MS, JZ). Late was a male Greater Scaup at

Bosque 12 May (DE, BN). Continued good news for Ospreys were seven active nests in *Rio Arriba* and *Sandoval* (DS); a record 81 passed the Sandia Mts. lookout 25 Mar–5 May (H.W.I.), while a single day high of 14 was at Quemado L. 11 Apr (DS). Six pairs of White-tailed Kites—four with active nests—were under observation in s. New Mexico 6 May (RM); by 16 May, one nest had fledged young, firmly establishing the species as a New Mexico breeder (RM). Mississippi Kites, common breeders in e. New Mexico, continued to infiltrate the R.G.V., including one at Corrales 28 May (C. Wood), 2 in Albuquerque's South Valley 28 May (DE, BN), and one at Luis Lopez 11 May (DE, BN). A Northern Harrier was carrying nest material at Nutria L. 7 May (JAT). Common Black-Hawks enjoyed a good season in the Cliff-Gila Valley, with 19 territories there in May (GS); in the R.G.V., one was at Isleta 3 & 23 May (J. Drummond, J. Whittle), while in the Pecos drainage, an active nest was at Ft Stanton 28 May (JO). Harris's Hawks continued in evidence in the Tularosa Basin, with single active nests at Tularosa and Alamogordo Apr–May (GE et al.). Unusual in riparian forest was a Swainson's Hawk nest below Cochiti Dam 2 May (DS). A Zone-tailed Hawk was in Water Canyon 13 Apr (JEP, ph. JO); the species is scarce in the Magdalena Mts. A high 14 Merlins passed the Sandia lookout 13 Mar–20 Apr (H.W.I.). The saga of the first wild pair of **Aplomado Falcons** to nest in the United States in 50 years continued: a yucca stick nest was selected in Mar, and incubation was in progress in Apr, but by 9 May apparent avian predation had caused failure; by 25 May, however, the pair was incubating on a replacement nest nearby (RM).

QUAIL THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS

Two Montezuma Quail were in the Guadalupe Mts. 9 May (D. Roemer), where the species is scarce. A Common Moorhen was n. to Isleta 10 May (JO); w. was one at Clanton Cienega 21 Mar–6 Apr (AC, NM-C). Black-bellied Plovers peaked with 22 at B.L.N.W.R. 16 May (J. Montgomery). An American Golden-Plover was near La Union 14 Apr (JEP, ph. JO), and one was at B.L.N.W.R. 15 Apr (JM), 11 May (ph. JO), 24 May (JM), and 26 May (ph. JO). A **Piping Plover** at B.L.N.W.R. 21–27 Apr (JM, GW, JEP, DE, BN, ph. WH) provided New Mexico's 7th overall and 3rd to be photo-documented. A Mountain Plover in grasslands near Black Butte, n. Socorro 10 Apr (LS) furnished a new record for that locale. Willets

were at nine sites statewide 14 Apr–22 May, including highs of 109 at Bosque 3 May (CR) and 30 at Brantley L. 22 Apr (JO); unusual were 5 at Moriarty 27 Apr (DE, BN). A good Whimbrel season produced singles at Bosque 22 Apr (DE, BN, CR) and B.L.N.W.R. 22 & 27 Apr (JEP, JM), plus 3 at Maxwell 30 Apr (PRS). Very rare, 2 **Hudsonian Godwits** were at Bosque 24 Apr (WW, ph. JO). A **Ruddy Turnstone** attaining breeding plumage was at L Avalon 25 Apr (*vide* SW). A remarkable 311 Stilt Sandpipers were tallied at B L N W.R. 12 May (GW, JO). An **American Woodcock** that strayed to the Monticello Box 28 Mar (B. Lang) provided New Mexico's 3rd w of the R.G.V. and 9th overall. A Red-necked Phalarope was e. to Portales 27–28 May (JEP, ph. JO). A **Laughing Gull** put in a brief appearance at L. Carlsbad 22 Apr (SW, ph JO); another reached B.L.N.W.R. 29 May (JM). A Thayer's Gull was at E.B.L. 12 Mar (ph JO). The ad. **Glaucous Gull** at Cochiti L. in Feb was seen again 2 (PRS) & 4 Mar (BV). An ad **Elegant Tern** at Burn L., Las Cruces 7–8 May (TS, GE, MS, JNP, JEP, phs. TS, JZ, JO) provided an abundantly well-documented state first. A Caspian Tern was at Brantley L. 12 May (JEP, ph. JO). Single Least Terns away from their B.L.N.W.R. breeding grounds were singles at Red L., *McKinley* 12 May (ph. DC), Bosque 12 May (DE, BN), Burn L. 20–21 Apr (GE, MS, ph. JZ), and Jal L. 26 May (ph. JO), and 2 were at Sumner L. 30 May (WW). Eurasian Collared-Doves were found at 20 sites from the R.G.V. eastward (JO et al.) and are "becoming ubiquitous in small towns on the eastern plains" (JEP); w. were singles at Silver City 8–22 May (EL) and Hillsboro 6 May (DE). White-winged Doves continued to solidify their northward expansion, notable were singles at Zuni 12 May (ph DC), Los Alamos 3 Apr (C. Jervis), Quarai 10 May (HRS), and Vaughn 29 Apr (JO), with 2 at Madrid 27 Apr (LS). Single Common Ground-Doves at Redrock 29 May (SOW) and Guadalupe Canyon 12 May (AC) provided the only reports. Yellow-billed Cuckoos returned early, with singles at N R T 29 Apr (CR), R.S. 12–13 May (SW, JEP), Zuni 12–13 May (ph. DC), and Cliff 14 May (SS); several pairs were nesting in the Cliff-Gila Valley by 31 May (SS). A vocal Western Screech-Owl was in the Organ Mts. 17 May (MS, JZ), where seldom encountered. Expanding their presence in the se. were one to 4 vocal Elf Owls in Rocky Arroyo near Brantley L. 2 & 12 May (WW, JEP, JO). Early was a Common Poorwill found dead near Hillsboro 17 Mar (JEP, JO). Chimney Swifts

in possible breeding locales were 2 at Fort Sumner 15 May (WW), 2 at Melrose 19 May (JO), 5 at Tucumcari 6 May (WH), and 2–3 at Roswell 26 Apr–May (JEP, JO, SB). A Broad-billed Hummingbird was n. to the central Peloncillo Mts. 22 May (SOW), where only recently established. Earliest Lucifer was a male in P.O. Canyon 25 Mar (RS); a male Anna's there 5 Apr (RS) was likely a post-breeder from farther west. Unexpected in New Mexico in spring, a male Calliope was near Madrid 4 May (LS), while single male Rufous Hummingbirds were at Silver City 8 Apr (EL) and P.O. Canyon 9 Apr (RS).

WOODPECKERS THROUGH BUSHTIT

Lingering in s. lowlands were single Lewis's Woodpeckers at Deming 15 Apr (LM), Burn L. 18 Apr (GE), and Tularosa 18 Mar (JO) plus 2 near Lake Valley, *Sierra* 5 May (ph. SGD). Encouraging was news of 12–15 Gila Woodpecker territories in the Cliff-Gila Valley by 31 May (SS), up from the usual 2–5 of recent years. Single Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were described from se. *Curry* 24–25 Mar (JL) and Waldrop Park, e. *Chaves* 8 Mar (W. Shelmerdine). Ladder-backed Woodpeckers were present below Bluewater Dam in May (JAT), but nesting remained unconfirmed. Four Northern Beardless-Tyrannulets had returned to Guadalupe Canyon by 31 Mar (AC, NM-C). Very early was an Olive-sided Flycatcher at Percha 14 Apr (JEP, JO). Rarely found in New Mexico, an **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was "singing profusely" at R.S. 12 May (SW). Far w. was a Least Flycatcher near Lake Valley 4 May (SGD). South of expected was a probable Hammond's Flycatcher singing in Springtime Canyon, San Mateo Mts. 28 May (CR). A Gray Flycatcher wandered e. to Waldrop Park 28 Apr (WH). Among the few May Eastern Phoebe reports was one in likely breeding habitat at Santa Rosa 28 May (JEP). One to 2 Vermilion Flycatchers were n. and e. to Las Vegas N.W.R. 27 May (WW), Conchas L. 12 May (CR), N.R.T. 24 Mar (JEP, ph. JO), and se. *Curry* 31 Mar (JL); noteworthy were two pairs, plus a nest, at Percha 14 Apr (JEP, JO). Ash-throated Flycatchers apparently benefited from the Cerro Grande fire, as they seemed more widespread than usual at Los Alamos (JT). Far out of range, a Thick-billed Kingbird at R.S. 19–20 May (SW et al.) furnished an *Eddy* first. South of expected was an Eastern Kingbird at Bosque 22 May (GE); w. was a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at La Joya 12 May (DH). A Northern Shrike was at Abiquiu 11 Mar (JT). Beautifully detailed

was a **White-eyed Vireo** at the Albuquerque oxbow 23 May (sketch NV). Bell's Vireos in new locales included singing singles at Separ 11 May (LM) and near Columbus 27 May (SOW). Noteworthy Gray Vireos included one near Madrid 29 May (LS), 2 near Pleasanton in May (SS), and 3 in the Organ Mts. 18 May (MS, JZ). Single **Yellow-throated Vireos** were at Española 29 Apr (M MacRoberts, JT) and N.R.T. 12 May (JEP, ph. JO). North was a vocal Hutton's Vireo in the San Mateo Mts. 27 Mar (SOW); far w. was a Red-eyed at Cliff 21 & 28 May (SS, GS). Among the last of the lowland Steller's Jays were 5 at Deming 20 Apr (LM). West were single Blue Jays at Albuquerque 15 Apr (J Arnold) and Manzano L., *Torrance* 29 Apr (NV); noteworthy were 3 at Sugarite S P, n. *Colfax* 5 May (DC). Escaped cagebirds along the Mexican border remain a problem, this season produced 2 ad. Black-throated Magpie-Jays near Sunland Park 27 Apr (MS, JZ). A Pinyon Jay in the Tres Hermanas Mts near Columbus 17 May (SOW) was far from known range and habitat. Clark's Nutcrackers where rarely reported included singles at Zuni's Pescado Canyon 12 May (JAT), Sandia Crest 21 Apr (SJD), and Capilla Peak 12 Apr (*vide* WH). A Black-billed Magpie wandered s. to Sevilleta N.W.R. 9 Apr (DH). Noteworthy for the e. plains was a Common Raven nest at Hudson, *Quay* 6 May (WH). The Bank Swallow is an often overlooked riparian species of concern; encouraging were several dozen in a n. Corrales arroyo 19 May (WH), where a new colony was suspected, and up to 15 at Bosque 10 May (NV), including one entering a ditch-bank cavity. A Cave Swallow at Burn L. 7 Mar (MS, JZ) provided a local first; the species now breeds under bridges at several s. *Doña Ana* locales. Lingering Mountain Chickadees included 2 at Socorro 8 Apr (JO), 6 at Deming 28 Apr (LM), and one in Guadalupe Canyon 31 Mar (AC, NM-C). One to 2 Verdins were n. in the R.G.V. to La Joya 25 Mar (BV) and 11 Apr (WH), and nesting was suspected. Lingering in the e. were 4 Bushtits at Roswell 12 May (SB).

WRENS THROUGH TANAGERS

A **Carolina Wren** was singing at Socorro's Riverine Park 8 (JO), 24 (WW), & 29 Apr (JEP), where the species has been present since 1999. Late was a Winter Wren at N R T 9 May (WW). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Caballo Dam 17 Mar (JEP, JO) likely wintered locally; a Black-tailed at Separ 11 May (LM) provided a local first. Late was an

Eastern Bluebird at N.R.T. 30 May (WW); 5 Easterns were at Sugarite S.P. 28 Mar (DC). A **Wood Thrush** put in an appearance at N.R.T. 27–28 May (JO, JEP). Noteworthy for the w. were single Gray Catbirds at Clanton Cienega 25 Mar (AC, NM-C) and Bluewater Gorge 10 May (JAT); far s. in the R.G.V. was one singing near Sunland Park 24 Apr (MS, JZ). A Long-billed Thrasher singing at Bosque Redondo Mar–May (m. ob.) presumably was the same one present since 1997! A Curve-billed Thrasher at Quarai 29 Apr (NV) provided a local first. A Sprague's Pipit was at Sevilleta N.W.R. 16 Apr (DH); the species is rare in the R.G.V. Small numbers of Cedar Waxwings lingered into late May at Zuni (DC), Quemado (CR), Luis Lopez (JO), and R.S. (SW, RW). Olive Warblers returned to their n. outpost in the Magdalena Mts., with 2 above Water Canyon 12 May (DE, BN); in the adjacent San Mateo Mts., 4 Olives were in Springtime Canyon 27–28 May (CR), and a nest was under construction at San Mateo Spring 23 May (*vide* HRS). It was a memorable season for wood-warblers, with 35 of New Mexico's 46 verified species reliably reported. Rare e. strays were headlined by a male **Cerulean Warbler** at Springtime C.G. 26 May (ph. CR), only the 2nd verified in the state. Others making news were single male **Blue-winged Warblers** at Zuni 8 May (JAT), Santa Rosa 17 Apr (ph. D. Bleakly), and Mesilla 8 May (W. Seager), a **Blackburnian Warbler** at N.R.T. 12 & 19 May (JEP, JO, DE, BN), single **Yellow-throated Warblers** at Caprock 28 Apr (JO, CR), Las Cruces 17 Mar (R. Hoyer), Brantley L. 28 Apr (DE, BN), and R.S. 19 May (SW), single **Kentucky Warblers** at Cochiti 16 May (DH) and Water Canyon 3–4 May (E. Decker, CR), and single male **Mourning Warblers** at N.R.T. 12 May (JEP, ph. JO) and Boone's Draw 27 May (JO). Adding to the excitement were a heard-only Prairie at N.R.T. 19 May (JO), a Palm at N.R.T. 5 May (JEP), a Blackpoll at Albuquerque 23 May (*vide* NV), and single Prothonotaries at Algodones 22 May (WW), Mesa, *Chaves* 2 May (WW), and R.S. on various dates 27 Apr–26 May (JEP, DE, BN, SW, ph. JO). In the rare but regular group were single Northern Parulas at Chaco Canyon (BHS), Otero Canyon, Manzano Mts. (NV), Anthony (MS, JZ, JEP, JO), N.R.T. (JEP), and se *Curry* (JL) 12 Apr–5 May; singing male Chestnut-sideds at Bluewater Gorge 10 May (JAT) and R.S. 20 May (SW); single Black-throated Blues at Albuquerque (R. Yaksich), Moriarty (JEP), N.R.T. (JEP), and Carlsbad (RW) 1–19 May; a male Black-throated Green at R.S. 28 Apr (DE, BN); single

Hermits (very rare in spring) at Cliff 6 May (CR) and Anthony 12 Apr (MS, JZ); a Hermit x Townsend's hybrid at Lake Valley 4 May (SGD); and single Hoodeds at Bluewater Gorge 10 May (JAT), Cochiti 11 May (DH), Escondida 30 May (DH), Hillsboro 6 May (DE, BN), and N.R.T. 9 May (WW). Rounding things out were single Black-and-whites at seven sites and one to 2 American Redstarts at five sites (m. ob.). Establishing New Mexico's northernmost breeding record was a Red-faced Warbler pair nest-building in Little Water Canyon, Zuni Mts. 9 May (JAT), where first detected only in 1999. Hepatic Tanagers in unusual locales included singles at Petroglyph N.M. 20 May (HRS), Moriarty 28 May (JEP), Sunland Park 12 May (MS, JZ), and R.S. 12 May (SW). Peripheral Summer Tanagers were singles at Zuni 11 May (JAT), Santa Fe 23 May (BF), and N.R.T. 12 May (JEP, JO).

SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES

Plentiful winter rains resulted in good conditions for Cassin's Sparrows in sw. New Mexico, with several singing near Hachita, Antelope Wells, Gage, and Columbus 27–30 May (SOW). Surprising was a Rufous-crowned Sparrow e. to N.R.T. 5 May (JEP). Single Black-chinned Sparrows pushed n. to Zuni 12–13 May (JAT, ph. DC) and Madrid 29 May (LS). Unusual was a Black-throated Sparrow near Melrose, *Curry* 12 Apr (SOW). Early greenup of the ne. prairies induced Lark Buntings to stop there; w. were 3 displaying near Stanley, *Santa Fe* 28 May (LS). A Grasshopper Sparrow was singing near Cliff 24 May (SS), where not known to breed. Late, and a local first, was a White-throated Sparrow at Chaco 27 April (BHS). A Harris's Sparrow was at Carrizozo 11 & 18 Mar (ph. JO); another at Las Cruces since Dec was last seen 27 Apr (TS). A Golden-crowned Sparrow at Albuquerque 15 Apr (BV) furnished the only report. A Northern Cardinal in Rocky Arroyo near Brantley L. 13 Apr (SW) provided additional evidence of this species's Pecos Valley presence. A Pyrrhuloxia at N.R.T. 29 Apr (CR) was exceptionally far n. for so late in the season. Another strong showing by Rose-breasted Grosbeaks found one to 2 at 12 sites from the R.G.V. eastward 29 Apr–30 May; w. were singles at Cliff 14 May (SS) and Clanton Cienega 12 May (NM-C). Unexpected was a Painted Bunting at Rio Rancho 1 May (ph. SGD); evidence of expansion in the e. was provided by 2 along the Canadian R., se. *San Miguel* 12 May (CR) and one at N.R.T. 28 May (JEP). Early was a Dickcissel at Luis Lopez 2 May (JO); far w.

and a local first was one at Chaco 13 May (BHS). A Bobolink was singing in a Peña Blanca pasture 16 May (WW). Common Grackles continued their westward movement, including singles at Zuni 17 Apr (ph. DC), Quemado 20 May (CR), and Sapillo Cr., *Grant* 16 Apr (ph. JO). Single Orchard Orioles wandered w. to Lamy 4–7 May (S. Steffy) and Luis Lopez 3 May (ph. JO), singles were at six e. sites in *Curry, Roosevelt, Chaves, and Lea* 28 Apr–27 May (m. ob.), while 24 were at R.S. during May (SW), a high count A Hooded Oriole was n. to Zuni 25–29 Apr (ph. DC). An ad. male **Baltimore Oriole** was at Tinnie, *Lincoln* 6 May (SW). The Sandia Crest rosy-finch flock was down to 70 birds—mostly Blacks but including Brown-capped and Gray-crowned—26 Mar (KS), only one remained 31 Mar (KS). Elsewhere, mixed rosy-finch flocks numbered 60 at Taos Ski Basin 1 Apr (G. Tingos, J. Nelson-Moore) and 26 at Madrid 18 Mar (LS). Two Pine Grosbeaks persisted at Sandia Crest until 21 Apr (SJD). Cassin's Finches lingered in lowland areas in the w. two-thirds of the state into early May; among the last were 2 each at Deming (LM) and Roswell (SB) and one in s. *Doña Ana* (MS, JZ) 12 May. Similarly late were 2 Red Crossbills at Albuquerque 26 May (PRS) and 10 at Socorro 29 May (JO) Pine Siskins likewise were reluctant to leave the lowlands and were especially prevalent in the e. into early May and in the R.G.V. and s. deserts into late May. Most Evening Grosbeaks retreated early; among the last in nonbreeding areas were one to 2 at Quemado 19–20 May (CR) and 2–3 in Guadalupe Canyon 12 May (AC, NM-C).

Cited Observers: Sherry Bixler, David Cleary, Alan Craig, Stephen J. Dinsmore, Scott G. Downes, Douglas Emkalns, Gordon Ewing, Bernard Foy, David Hawksworth, HawkWatch International, William Howe, Eugene Lewis, James Lofton, Jacob W. Malcom, Larry Malone, Raymond Meyer, Narca Moore-Craig, Bruce Neville, Jerry Oldenettel, James N. Paton, John E. Parmeter, Christopher Rustay, Giancarlo Sadoti, Lawry Sager, Kenneth Schneider, Robert Scholes, Hart R. Schwarz, Marcy Scott, Tara Shelton, B. Hamilton Smith, Patricia R. Snider, Da... Stahlecker, Scott Stoleson, Joyce Takamine, John A. Trochet, Brad Vaughn, Nick Vaughn, Gordon Warrick, Renee West, Steve West, William West, S. O. Williams, James Zabriskie.

