

New Mexico



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Fall 2001 was characterized by relatively warm and dry conditions, with the cold and snow delayed until late November. Both birds and birders were active, and several interesting rarities were documented.

Abbreviations: B.L.N.W.R. (Bitter Lake N.W.R.); Bosque (Bosque del Apache N.W.R.); E.B.L. (Elephant Butte L.); L.V.N.W.R. (Las Vegas N.W.R.); Maxwell (Maxwell N.W.R.); N.R.T. (n. Roosevelt migrant trap near Melrose); R.G.V. (Rio-Grande Valley).

LOONS THROUGH CRANES

A good season for Pacific Loons found singles at Clayton L. 10 Nov (ph. JO), Charette L. 11 Nov (ph. JO), Eagle Nest L. 13 Nov (DC), and Sumner L. 28 Nov (WW). Common Loons where seldom reported included 8 at Charette L. 11 Nov (JO) and one at Quemado L. 28 Oct (JO). The few Horned Grebe reports were restricted to the ne. and included 4 at Springer L. 1-7 Nov (DC) and a displaying pair at L.V.N.W.R. 3 Nov (JO). Twelve pairs of Clark's Grebes produced 8 chicks at Stubblefield L. by 23 Aug (DC); at least one Clark's chick was at

Bosque 2 Aug (MS, JZ). An ad. Neotropic Cormorant strayed far n. to Stubblefield L. 13 Aug-26 Sep (ph. DC). A Least Bittern at Bosque 19 Aug (MS, JZ) provided the only report. Northerly for the season were 2 Great Egrets at Bernardo 30 Sep (BV); late were 5 at B.L.N.W.R. 2 Nov (GW) and 2 near Radium Springs 25 Nov (JO). Always noteworthy, 2 Little Blue Herons were at B.L.N.W.R. 13 Sep (CR), and one wandered to Holloman L. 29 Aug (GE). Unreported from New Mexico prior to 1991 (but recently found annually!), **Reddish Egrets** made an especially strong showing this season, with singles at Sumner L. 18-31 Aug (WW, JO, JEP), Ute L. 8 & 22-23 Sep (ph. JO), and Caballo L. 25 Sep (WW) plus one to 2 at B.L.N.W.R. on various dates 3 Aug-15 Sep (GW, JEP, WW, SW). **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** likewise made an impressive showing, with 2 juvs. at Bosque Redondo 4 & 7 Sep (WW, JEP, ph. J. Nelson-Moore), 3 juvs. near Bellview, Curry 22 Sep (ph. JO), and an ad. at Tatum 18 Aug (ph. JO). An ad. **Glossy Ibis** at Fort Sumner 8 Sep (JEP, ph. JO) furnished New Mexico's first fall record. Turkey Vultures exited the state on schedule; last were singles at Deming 17 Oct (LM), B.L.N.W.R. 18 Oct (GW), and Delaware R. 20 Oct (SW).

Five Tundra Swans graced Maxwell 29 Oct-26 Nov (JEP, JO, MW, ph. DC). Ever on the increase, Wood Ducks were noted in 10 counties and included an impressive 18 near Sunland Park 23 Oct (MS, JZ). Single Eurasian Wigeon

were at Albuquerque 18-19 Nov (R. Yaksich) and Deming 17-21 Nov (LM). Noteworthy Canvasback concentrations were 1220 at Stone L., Rio Arriba 6 Nov (MW) and 1030 at L.V.N.W.R. 5 Nov (MW). One to 2 Greater Scaup at Conchas L. 31 Oct (WW), Bosque 4 Nov (JO), and Sunland Park 10, 19, & 22 Nov (MS, JZ) provided the only reports. An imm. White-winged Scoter at Ruby Ranch near Las Vegas 14 Nov (WW) furnished a local first. Single Long-tailed Ducks were at Stubblefield L. 16 Oct (DC) and L. Avalon 29 Nov-1 Dec (SW, JO).

Lingering were single Ospreys at Conchas L. 10 Nov and E.B.L. 25 Nov (JO). White-tailed Kites were in evidence in *Hidalgo*, including at least 2 near Rodeo 4 Aug (C. Gresham) and one in the s. Animas Valley 8 Sep (AC, NM-C). Noteworthy for the lower R.G.V. were 3 Mississippi Kites at Sunland Park 11 Aug (MS, JZ); late were 2 at Melrose (JO) and one at Fort Sumner (JEP) 22 Sep. Very early for *San Miguel* was an ad. Bald Eagle at Ruby Ranch 7 Oct (WW). North in the R.G.V. was a Harris's Hawk at Bosque 16 Nov (GE). Two ad. Zone-tailed Hawks were with a juv. at Turkey Canyon, Guadalupe Mts. 8 Aug (SW). Extremely early were single Merlins at Milnesand 1 Sep (JO) and Holloman L. 29 Aug (GE); Merlins were widespread after 1 Oct. Native **Aplomado Falcons** in s. New Mexico included the "resident" pair seen on territory 4 Sep, 10 Oct, and 20 Nov (RM) and an ad. at a new site 16 km from there 24 Aug (SOW, PM), plus 2 others on Otero Mesa 14 Nov (E. Mayfield). Encouraging were 30 Gould's Wild Turkeys at the mouth of Clanton Canyon 11 Oct (ph. C. Hayes). Among the few Montezuma Quail reports were 8 in P.O. Canyon 28 Nov (CL). Early Sandhill Cranes were 2 at Maxwell 20 Sep (DC), 4 at B.L.N.W.R. 28 Sep (GW), and a remarkable 51 at Percha 30 Sep (CR).

PLOVERS THROUGH NIGHTJARS

An **American Golden-Plover** stopped at a Santa Teresa turf farm 2-9 Oct (MS, JZ, ph. BZ); undetailed was another at B.L.N.W.R. 28 Sep (*vide* GW). Other plovers in the news included single Black-bellieds at Stubblefield L. 12-19 Sep (DC, JEP, JO), Ruby Ranch 7 Oct (WW), E.B.L. 27 Sep (JEP, JO), and B.L.N.W.R. 18 Oct (GW), 3 Snowies at Stubblefield L. 20-23 Aug (ph. DC), and 4 late Semipalmateds at E.B.L. 22 Nov (JO). A Mountain Plover near Santa Teresa 8-9 Oct (BZ, MS, ph. JZ) furnished one of the few *Doña Ana* records. Solitary Sandpipers where seldom reported were one at Mountainair 19 Aug & 9 Sep (JO), 3 at Clanton Cienega 25 Aug (AC, NM-C), and one near Queen, Guadalupe Mts. 16 Sep (SW). An impressive 32 Upland Sandpipers were at Bosque Redondo 21 Aug (WW); smaller numbers passed through N.R.T., Portales,

B L N W.R., Carlsbad, Otero Mesa, and Animas Valley 1 Aug-9 Sep (JO, JEP, SW, RM, DH). Baird's Sandpipers were much in evidence at Stubblefield L. 1 Aug-24 Oct (DC), with maxima of 580 on 31 Aug and 485 on 16 Sep; elsewhere, 72 were at Moriarty 31 Aug (JO) and 295 were at B L N W.R. 3 Aug (GW). Stilt Sandpipers were conspicuous in the east 1 Aug-18 Oct, including a high 320 at B.L.N.W.R. 3 Aug (GW). The shorebird event of the season was provided by a juv **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** that strayed w. to Alameda 28-30 Sep (JO et al., ph. JO, ph. HS, sketch NV); another Buff-breasted was near Moriarty 29 Sep (ph. JO). Nicely documented was a juv. Short-billed Dowitcher near Moriarty 15 Sep (JEP, ph. JO).

Making an all-too-brief appearance was an ad **Little Gull** at L. Avalon 29 Nov (SW). An impressive 90 California Gulls were at Eagle Nest L. 28 Aug (ph. DC); south were one to 2 at Deming (LM, vt. JO), Sunland Park (MS, JZ), L. Avalon (SW), and L. Carlsbad (SW) 24-30 Nov. Sabine's Gulls, all juvs., were at 8 locales from the R G.V. eastward 7 Sep-17 Oct; highs were 4 at Stubblefield 18 Sep (ph. DC) and 7 at E.B.L. 25 Sep (WW). A juv. **Black-legged Kittiwake** at Springer L. 25-26 Sep (ph. DC) was a *Colfax* first and the state's earliest ever.

A Caspian Tern at Ute L. 23 Sep (vt. JO) provided the only report. Apparent Common Terns were 3 at Springer L. 25-26 Sep (ph. DC) and singles at Conchas L. 16 Sep (WH) and Sumner L. 30 Sep (JO). Black Terns have become increasingly rare migrants in recent years; high this season was 65 at Maxwell 1 Aug (ph. DC).

Band-tailed Pigeons typically vacate cen. New Mexico by mid-Oct, so noteworthy were 3 in Water Canyon 18 Nov (*fide* HS). The Eurasian Collared-Dove tide continued to sweep across New Mexico, with often multiple reports from 23 of the state's 33 counties; west were 3 at Gallup 5 Sep (G. Johnson), 25 at Silver City Oct-Nov (DZ, JO), and up to 7 at Playas 7 Aug (P. Pirtle) Northerly White-winged Doves were one at Clayton 10 Nov (ph. JO), 8 at Ute L. 8 Sep (JO), 20 at Tucumcari 31 Oct (WW), and 3 at Madrid 30 Nov (LS). Inca Doves continued to increase n. to Albuquerque, where 11 were at the Zia school 7 Oct (BV). Encroaching on the Rocky Mts. was a Roadrunner at Raton 21 Nov (DC) An impressive 156 Flammulated Owls were banded at Capilla Peak 27 Aug-6 Oct (JD), demonstrating the importance of the Manzano Mts for this Neotropical migrant. Thirteen Northern Saw-whet Owls were banded at Capilla Peak 25 Sep-21 Oct (JD); noteworthy was a vocal Saw-whet on Buck Mt., *Lincoln* 24 Aug (SW). Late Common Poorwills were singles near Rodeo and in P.O. Canyon 1 Nov (CL).

SWIFTS THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

In the Jemez Mts., 6 Black Swift nests each contained one nestling 23 Aug (HS), with fledging expected by 1 Sep. Broad-billed Hummingbirds continued to push n. in the Peloncillo Mts., with one at P.O. Canyon 26 Aug (RTS). An imm. male **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** at Fort Sumner 19 & 21 Aug (ph. JO; WW) furnished New Mexico's 6th credible report. Post-breeding Anna's spread across s. New Mexico in the expected pattern, present in the Peloncillo Mts. by early Aug (and peaking there in Oct; RTS, CL, WB), at Deer Cr., Animas Mts. 24 Aug (SOW, PM), and reaching Las Cruces 13 Nov (MS, JZ) and Carlsbad 29 Nov (SW, E. Pierce). Banding studies in *Grant* continued to clarify our understanding of **Allen's Hummingbird** in New Mexico: along Sapillo Cr. (where 2 had been banded in mid-Jul), one was banded and measured at Trout Valley 6 Aug (WC), and another was similarly processed at Grey Feathers Lodge 11 Aug (JD-M).

Lewis's Woodpeckers moving s. in the R.G.V. were 2 at Corrales 1 Sep (WH), 4 at Los Lunas 28 Oct (CR), one at Luis Lopez 10 Sep (JO), and one at La Mesa, *Doña Ana* 4 Nov (MS, ph. JZ). Two Williamson's Sapsuckers on Salinas Peak, San Andres Mts. 1 Oct (DH) provided a rare record for that range. The woodpecker of the season was a nicely-detailed **Red-breasted Sapsucker** at Los Alamos National Lab 5-6 Nov (JT, BF), but security restrictions prevented others (and their cameras) from visiting the area; the species remains unconfirmed in the state. Apparently early was a Hairy Woodpecker in the Organ Mts. at Aguirre Springs 19 & 29 Sep (BZ), where not known to nest. West was a male Yellow-shafted Flicker at Albuquerque 2 Nov (DM). Least Flycatchers were reported from nine sites from the R.G.V. eastward, primarily during the period 18 Aug-8 Sep (JO, JEP, SW, MS, JZ). An apparent **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** was measured and banded at Albuquerque 9 Sep (S&NC). A **Buff-breasted Flycatcher** in the cen. Peloncillo Mts 24 Sep was the observers' first ever for New Mexico (DZ, MZ). Easterly Vermilion Flycatchers were singles near Encino, *Torrance* 21 Sep (JO), House, *Quay* 8 Sep (vt. JO), and Stephens Park, *Lea* 2 Sep (JO). Single Great Crested Flycatchers were at Rattlesnake Springs 2 Sep (JO, SW) and Fort Sumner 18 Sep (WW). A **Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher** in Last Chance Canyon 9 Aug (SW et al.) was an *Eddy* first. Notably late was a Cassin's Kingbird at P.O. Canyon 5 Nov (CL). An Eastern Kingbird reached Albuquerque 26 Aug (NV).

VIREOS THROUGH WARBLERS

Making news at Mesilla was a Blue-headed Vireo 12-13 Nov (GE, MS, JZ, ph. BZ); another was at

Ramon, *Lincoln* 13 Sep (CR). Four Hutton's Vireos at Aguirre Springs 29 Sep (BZ) was a high number for the Organ Mts.; 5 in Slaughter Canyon 18 Nov (SW, RW) were noteworthy for *Eddy*. Single Philadelphia Vireos were at Corrales 3 Sep (WH), Socorro 29 Sep (CR), Percha 29 Sep (DE, BN), and N.R.T. 3 Oct (WW). Steller's Jays dispersing to unlikely locales were 2 at Albuquerque's oxbow 14 Oct (NV) and singles e to Mills Canyon 5 Nov (DC), Seneca, *Union* 7 Oct (JO), near Encino 19 Oct (JO), and at B.L.N.W.R. 24 Oct (GW). Beyond expected range and habitat were 6 Pinyon Jays at Mesilla 9 Sep (MS, JZ).

Purple Martins ne. to the Sangre de Cristo Mts. were 8 on the Vermejo R., *Colfax* 8 Aug (DC) and 22 on Sapello Cr., *San Miguel* 19 Aug (WW). Still in the family way was a pair of Mountain Chickadees carrying food at Corrales 3 Sep (WH). A Cactus Wren in e. Albuquerque 14 Oct (MG) indicated that that n. population was persisting. Single Winter Wrens reached N.R.T. 3-13 Oct (JEP, WW, ph. JO), Ramon 19 Oct (JO), and Mangas 23 Nov (JO). Well-documented were a **Wood Thrush** at N.R.T. 6 Oct (JEP, ph. JO) and a **Varied Thrush** at Maljamar (!) 13-15 Oct (ph. JO; B. Whitman). A Brown Thrasher returned to a Corrales yard 3 Nov, for the 3rd consecutive winter there (WH); another was banded at Albuquerque 29 Sep (S&NC) A Long-billed Thrasher continued in residence at Bosque Redondo, where it was singing 13 Oct (JEP). Seven migrant Sprague's Pipits were detected over Otero Mesa grasslands 7 Nov (RM). A vocal Olive Warbler drifted down to Mesilla 11-15 Nov (MS, JZ, ph. BZ). Leading the warbler parade was a **Golden-winged Warbler** at N.R.T. 6 Sep (JO), a **Magnolia Warbler** near Stead, *Union* 7 Oct (JO), plus one at Percha 30 Sep (DE, BN), a female **Cape May Warbler** at Carlsbad 27 Nov (SW), a **Blackburnian Warbler** at Bosque Redondo 13 Oct (JEP), a **Pine Warbler** at Sunland Park 29 Nov (JZ, sketch MS), and one at N.R.T. 7 Oct (DE, BN), a possible Prairie at Carlsbad Caverns NP 7 Oct (SW), and a **Swainson's Warbler** at Rattlesnake Springs 23 Sep (SW). Adding spice was a Northern Parula near Chamberino 17 & 22 Nov (MS, JZ), single Chestnut-sideds at Moriarty 2 Oct (WW) and Bosque 16 Oct (SA), 2-3 Black-throated Blues at N.R.T. 15 Sep-13 Oct (JEP, ph. JO), plus singles at Nara Visa (JO), Boone's Draw (ph. JO), and San Marcial (BJ), banded HW 7-13 Oct, single Palms at Seneca 6 Oct (JO), N.R.T. 7 Oct (DE, BN), Bosque 16 Oct (SA), and (undetailed) Caballo Dam 30 Oct (W. Glenn), single Black-and-whites at 5 locales 18 Aug-6 Sep (JEP, JO), single American Redstarts w. to La Joya (DM), San Marcial (HW, BJ), Mesilla (MS, JZ), Riverside (RSS), and Deming (LM), and lone

Hoodeds w. to L. Roberts 11 Aug (RG) and near Riverside 25 Aug (RSS *vide* DZ).

Noteworthy distributional records included single Hermits near Grassy L.O., San Mateo Mts. 25 Aug (JEP) and Aguirre Springs 29 Sep (BZ), one to 2 Red-faceds in the San Mateo Mts. 25 Aug (JEP, JO), and a Painted Redstart in Potato Canyon, San Mateo Mts. 31 Aug (HS).

SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES

A Cassin's Sparrow nest with eggs was in the Animas Valley 22 Aug (SOW, PM); few if any nests have been reported from sw. New Mexico. Also noteworthy for the sw. were 2 Clay-colored Sparrows banded in the s. Animas Valley 7-8 Sep (AC, NM-C). Two stub-tailed Savannahs were begging food at Maxwell 11 Aug (DC). The 25 Grasshopper Sparrows in the s. Animas Valley 25 Aug (AC, NM-C) included an ad. feeding fledglings; 3 migrant Grasshoppers were on Otero Mesa 9 Oct (RM). Single migrant **Baird's Sparrows** were detected at 2 Otero Mesa sites 10 Sep and 16 Oct (RM), at Davies Tank, Tularosa Basin 26 Nov (DH), and near Deming 20 Nov (RM). Early was a Harris's Sparrow at Carlsbad 27 Sep (SW); another reached Luis Lopez 9 Nov (ph. JO).

A Rose-breasted Grosbeak wandered to Chamberino 22 Nov (MS, JZ). Still in the nest was a Blue Grosbeak chick at Double Adobe, Animas Mts. 9 Sep (AC, NM-C). Lazuli Buntings migrated in large numbers in late Aug, including 28 at Albuquerque's oxbow 26 Aug (NV) and 75 in the Animas Valley 25 Aug (AC, NM-C). Noteworthy was a male Painted Bunting n. to the Mountainair area 12-13 Aug (TH); other Painteds were reported from the e. plains, lower Pecos Valley, lower R.G.V., and the Animas Valley. Further evidence of Dickcissels breeding in Colfax was furnished by a female carrying food to an unseen chick near Springer 21 Aug (DC); westerly Dickcissels were 4 at Luis Lopez 13 Sep (JO) and 3 at Percha 30 Sep (CR). Late for the n. were single Common Grackles at Maxwell 25 Nov (DC) and Las Vegas 11 Nov (JT). Noteworthy was an Orchard Oriole at Mountainair 21 Sep (JO). Quite rare in New Mexico, a **Baltimore Oriole** was near Encino 16 Sep (JO). Even more rare in the state, a **Purple Finch** was at B.L.N.W.R. 9-12 Nov (GW, ph. CR); 2 probable Purples were described from Brushy Canyon, Peloncillo Mts. 7 Oct (CL). Red Crossbills, prevalent in Jul, continued in evidence in most major mountain ranges but in diminished numbers. Continuing from late Jul, up to 3 **White-winged Crossbills**, including singing males, were at the Santa Fe ski area 4-20 Aug (WW, MS, JZ, J&KH, ph. WH), but no breeding was documented; nearby, a pair was at Hyde Memorial Park 20 Aug (J&KH), while to

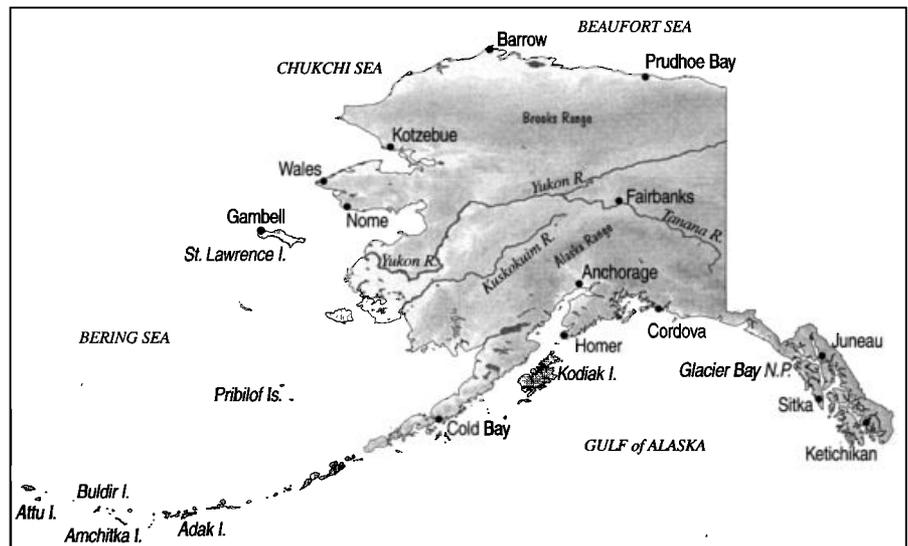
the n. a singing male was at Williams L., Taos 19 Aug (BJ). A late Lesser Goldfinch nest at Maxwell had 3 nestlings 24 Sep (DC); 3 fledglings were being fed by ads. at Madrid 20 Oct (LS). Evening Grosbeaks were restricted to the n. and included 20 at Taos 18 Aug (MS, JZ), where they favored Russian Olives, and up to 80 at Raton 27 Sep (DC).

Initialed Observers: Susan Allerton, William Baltosser, William Calder, David Cleary, Steve & Nancy Cox, Alan Craig, Joan Day-Martin, John DeLong, Douglas Emkalns, Gordon Ewing,

Bernard Foy, Rebecca Gracey, Jim & Karen Havlena, David Holdermann, William Howe, Tyler Huning, Brian Johnson, Carroll Littlefield, Larry Malone, David Mehlman, Patricia Mehlhop, Raymond Meyer, Narca Moore-Craig, Bruce Neville, Jerry Oldenettel, John E Parmeter, Christopher Rustay, Lawry Sager, Hart Schwarz, Robert T. Scholes, Marcy Scott, Roland S. Shook, Joyce Takamine, Brad Vaughn, Nick Vaughn, Hira Walker, Gordon Warrick, Mark Watson, Renee West, Steve West, William West, S O. Williams, James Zabriski, Barry Zimmer, Dale Zimmerman, Marian Zimmerman.



Alaska



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Autumn 2001 produced as distinct a season of weather extremes and contrasts as we've witnessed in over a decade. And given the number of boldfaced rarities and reports of extralimital species, it was also one of the Region's most exciting in recent memory. The season's first half, well into October, showed consistently above-average temperatures. Even in the northerly latitudes, balmy conditions were clearly responsible for a protracted migration, for example at Gambell, where Lehman didn't see freezing conditions

until the last days of September. Although the norm tends to be systematic cooling and snow accumulations following a mid- to late October freeze-up, this year's freeze fell hard and fast after very mild conditions dominated the Region. By late October, near-record snows had covered habitats and bodies of water that had barely begun the typical transition into winter. This turnaround happened within a week and was followed by Arctic high pressure and unseasonably cold conditions through the remainder of the period. As could be expected, these extremes focused birders and rarities in the late season and produced a fair share of late dates of departure.

With continued coverage and later into the season, the Bering Sea vagrant season becomes