

# Arizona

ed in the orchard at the ranch. They were also much more numerous at Corn Cr. than normal. Perhaps the drought has driven them out of their parched Joshua Tree—juniper woodlands habitat. Likewise, there were surprising numbers of Cassin's Finches in Dyer, NV 17 & 25 May. On the 17th, at least 35 were there and on the 25th there were nearly as many (MMe). A holdover from last season's invasion of Common Redpolls was at a residential feeder in Emigration Canyon, *Salt Lake* 13 Mar (J&SSa). Finally, an obvious escapee European Goldfinch was seen and photographed in Layton, *Davis*, UT 31 Mar (BF).

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**E**xtrême dry conditions persisted statewide, leading to early forest fires and eventual closure of many public lands. Migrants were concentrated at the remaining water sources, giving at least the appearance of large numbers. *Empidonax* flycatchers and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were particularly numerous this season. Conversely, shorebirds were considered sparse in most areas. Very exciting was Arizona's second Snow Bunting, far to the south in Thatcher. Nearly as exciting was another nesting by Rufous-capped Warblers in French Joe Canyon.

**Abbreviations:** A.B.C. (Arizona Bird Committee), A.V.S.T.P. (Avra Valley Sewage Treatment Plant), C.S.L. (Cow Springs L.), H.R.P. (Hassayampa River Preserve), L.C.R. (Lower Colorado River), N.I.R. (Navajo Indian Reservation), P.A.P. (Pinal Air Park pecan grove), S.P.R. (San Pedro River).

## LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

Several loons were late in migrating or depart-

ing, including a Pacific Loon at Lake Havasu City 13 Apr (RD et al.), a Common Loon at Sierra Blanca L. 18 May (DR, GC), and the wintering **Yellow-billed Loon** at Lake Havasu City, last reported 13 Apr (RD, m. ob.). Still casual, a Least Grebe at Sweetwater Wetlands, Tucson 8 May+ (†BZ, KZ; ph. GHR, m. ob.) was the 2nd at this site in two years, and only the 3rd ever from spring. Casual away from the L.C.R., a Horned Grebe was at Becker L. 28 Mar (DR) A Red-necked Grebe on L. Havasu 13 Mar (†JH) would be about the 8th record if accepted by the A.B.C. The pattern of occurrence of Clark's Grebe is still being discerned; spring reports were from Willow L. 26 Mar (CST), 2 at Fountain Hills 6 Apr (TC), Tucson 19 Apr—12 May (D. West), Santa Cruz R., Tucson 21 Apr (MMS), 3 at Saguaro L. 11 May (TC), Willow L. 12 May (CST), and Crescent L. 24 May (SB)

A Brown Pelican at Luna L. 25 Apr+ (DR, GC, m. ob.) was the 3rd record from this site in the ne.; all 3 have been imm. Thirty Neotropical Cormorants were along the Gila River w. of Phoenix 30 Mar (TC), now regularly outnumbering those at Patagonia L. at this, their n limit. An American Bittern at Willcox 26 Apr—18 May (B. Percival, DS et al.) was late for the se A flyby Little Blue Heron over Sweetwater Wetlands 25 Apr (†MMS, RH) was casual. A late migrant Canada Goose was at Willcox 2 May—2 Jun (RT et al.). Montezuma Well hosted a male Eurasian Wigeon 19 Mar (B Hirth) Another late migrant, a female Surf Scoter was at Thatcher S.T.P. 13 May—2 Jun (ph. JW, m



Arizona's eighth Black Skimmer was in eastern Tucson 9 May 2002. Photograph by Mark M. Stevenson.

ob.), where casual. The Long-tailed Duck at Parker Dam was last reported 4 Apr (m. ob.). Very late for spring, 2 Red-breasted Mergansers paused in ne. Tucson 3 Apr (vt. B Nicholas).

A White-tailed Kite in Bouse 16 Mar (CB) was well away from usual habitat and areas of occurrence. The only other reports were from Hereford 20 Apr (JH) and P.A.P. 12 May (PS). Mississippi Kites returned to St. David by 9 May (M. Auslander, H. Lauchstedt), 130 km s. of the Dudleyville outpost. Nest-building was first observed in St. David in 1997. Far more unusual was one seen soaring over the e. side of the Chiricahua Mts. 14 May (†S. Heintz, A. Piston). There is only one prior sight report of Mississippi Kite from this range. Still casual in the state, the pair of Red-shouldered Hawks persisted at H.R.P. throughout (m. ob.), but no nesting activity was noted (*vide* TC). An early Broad-winged Hawk in Skull Valley 10 Mar (†B. Pearson) will be reviewed by the A.B.C. Documentation for all reports of this species is still requested. For the 3rd consecutive year, **Short-tailed Hawks** were seen over the Chiricahuas, with 2 light-morph ads. reported 4 May near Barfoot Park (†RT, C Sharpe et al.). The species appears to be slowly expanding its range from s. Sonora. A casual migrant, a dark-morph Harlan's Hawk paused in Marana 9 Mar (MMS, BS, C Neese).

### RAILS THROUGH TERNS

Well away from their closest known outpost at Picacho Reservoir, a Clapper Rail was closely observed at Willcox 11 May (†SB). Apparently breeding locally again after many years, a Sora was along the Gila R. w. of Phoenix 11 May (*vide* TC). Casual in the ne., a Common Moorhen was at Nelson Reservoir 9 May (DR).

Three Mountain Plovers were seen in appropriate breeding habitat w. of Springerville 16-21 May shortly before the area burned in a range fire (ph. BG). Several large flocks of Willets were reported, including 72 at L. Powell 24 Apr (J.

Spence), 26 at Luna L. 25 Apr (DR, GC), and 40 at A.V.S.T.P. 4 May (LL, B. Percival). Casual in spring away from the L.C.R., a Whimbrel was w. of the Tucson Mts. 19 Apr (†KK). Some 65 Marbled Godwits at Kachina Wetlands 28 Apr (F. Brandt) was a large number away from the L.C.R. Eight at Willow L. 27 Apr (CST, B. Thomen) were notable for the Prescott area. The only Sanderling reported was a single at Willcox 11 May (DS). The only Semipalmated Sandpiper was at A.V.S.T.P. 2-4 May (RT, C. Sharpe, MMS). Among 8 late individuals statewide, the latest Western Sandpiper was at A.V.S.T.P. 23 May (DS). Very sparse in spring in the ne., a Baird's Sandpiper was at Wahweap S.T.P. 15 May (CL, DS, MMS). Casual migrant Dunlin were at Gila Bend S.T.P. 11 Mar (H. Detwiler) and A.V.S.T.P. 19 May (DS). Also casual in spring, Stilt Sandpipers were at opposite ends of the state in mid-May: Wahweap S.T.P. 15 May (CL, DS, MMS) and Willcox 19 May (SB).

An unprecedented report of 4 Pomarine Jaegers s. of Tucson 26 Apr (†LL) will be reviewed by the A.B.C. Franklin's Gulls were seen in above-average numbers, with 75 statewide 20 Mar—22 May. Conversely, only 5 Bonaparte's Gulls were reported, 7 Apr—11 May. The gull of the season was a one-year-old **Heerman's Gull** 20 Apr at Patagonia L. (CDB, J. Higgins et al.). Two Herring Gulls at C.S.L. 24 Apr (ph. DD) made the 8th spring N.I.R. record. Terns made a good showing away from the Colorado R. Ten Caspians were noted 18 Apr—14 May. A Common Tern, casual in se., was at Willcox 9 May (†JH). Eleven Forster's Terns were tallied 16 Apr—2 Jun. Least Tern continues to be regular in small numbers in spring. Singles were reported from Willcox 17 Apr (G. Chaniot), Willcox 14 May (†S. Heintz, A. Piston), C.S.L. 16 May (DD), Willcox 27 May (MMS et al.), and Thatcher S.T.P. 4 Jun (DP, BM). A Black Tern at Willcox 18 May (GHR et al.) and 2 at A.V.S.T.P. 29 May (PS) were casual. Outstanding was a **Black Skimmer** at Lakeside Park in Tucson 9 May (B. Rathjen, ph. MMS, vt. MPO, m. ob.), only the 8th Arizona record.

### DOVES THROUGH TROGONS

Apparently unabated, Eurasian Collared-Doves continued to spread: 38 were reported statewide, with sightings from Yuma to Kayenta and San Simon to Fredonia (m. ob.). White-winged Doves in Kayenta 3 Mar+ (S. Kuras, CL) and Eagar 14 Mar+ (GC, DR) reflect the northward spread of this species. Nesting was first noted in Eagar last spring (GC, DR). An Inca Dove in Page 18 Apr (C. Goetze) was well n. of the typical range. A Ruddy Ground-Dove lingered in Patagonia through 16 Mar (SH, m. ob.). Two in May were quite late: a female near Hereford 15

**SA** The presence of apparent hybrids has increasingly clouded the status of Berylline Hummingbird in recent years. Reports of suspected hybrids with Magnificent, Broad-billed, and Anna's from Miller and Ramsey canyons were received this season. Actual Berylline reports included one to 2 in Ramsey Canyon 2 Apr+ (E. Malais, S. Atkinson, m. ob.), a male in S. Fork of Cave Creek 14 Apr (T. Galluci), and one at Miller Canyon 10 May+ (R. Stovall, m. ob.). As there is clearly a problem with hybridization in Arizona, this species remains on the A.B.C. review list; careful observation and documentation are warranted.

May+ (†, vt. S. G. Mlodinow) and a male 25-27 May s. of El Mirage (BG, TC). In recent years, Buff-collared Nightjar has been far less regular. Most welcome was the discovery of one to 2 birds near California Gulch 26 Apr+ (K. Nelson, J. Ellis, m. ob.).

White-eared Hummingbirds appeared in the usual Huachuca Mtn. areas, with a male in Ramsey Canyon 15 Apr+ (MPr, m. ob.) and a female in Miller Canyon 4 May+ (TB, m. ob.).

Lucifer Hummingbirds away from Portal were in the Mule Mts. 26 Mar and 10 Apr (†RHu), Kartchner Caverns S.P. 12 Apr (J. & S. Hammon), lower Carr Canyon 13 Apr (H. Brodtkin), and in Miller Canyon (several) 15 Apr+ (TB, m. ob.). Notable Calliope Hummingbirds were late and/or casual singles at Mt. Ord 11 May (TC), Wahweap 15 May (DS), and 2 in Miller Canyon 26 May+ (ph. JS, SL). Likely displaced by the drought, an Elegant Trogon at Sabino Canyon 24 May (WR, MMS) was the 2nd in the Catalina Mts since the 1880s.

### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH THRASHERS

A Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet was at the B.T.A. 15 Apr (TC); this species is an infrequent spring and summer visitor this far n. but likely breeds locally. Intriguing was a report of a singing **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** from C.S.L. 17 May (DD; *vide* CL); hopefully a report will be made available to the A.B.C., and if accepted, would represent only a 3rd Arizona record. Another difficult-to-evaluate report was that of a Least Flycatcher from Tucson Mtn. Park 15 May (†RT); it should be noted that apart from three specimen records described in Monson and Phillips's *Checklist of the Birds of Arizona*, the A.B.C. has accepted only two sight reports of this species, and there has yet to be any photographic evidence for

any Least Flycatcher report, including this one. This spring was exceptionally good for *Empidonax* flycatchers, with huge numbers reported during Apr and May from around the state. Incredible was the report of at least 400 "empids" (Hammond's, Dusky, and Gray) per day in the Prescott area 26-27 Apr (CST).

Black Phoebe is local and scarce anywhere in n Arizona; therefore one at Cameron 21 Apr (CL), and another at Pipe Springs N.M. 16 May (CL, DS, MMS) were of interest, but it is still unclear whether these isolated reports represent migrants or local breeders. Eastern Phoebes at Safford 24 Mar (†JW, B. Matheny), at the A.V.S.T.P. 29 Mar—5 Apr (N. Miller et al.), and at Cameron 6–8 May (CL, JC) all represented birds that had not been seen during the winter; the Cameron sighting is only the 5th report from the N.I.R. A Vermilion Flycatcher at the Kachina Wetlands s. of Flagstaff 27-28 Mar (J. Hildebrand, B. Breed et al.), another one in Flagstaff 2 Apr (C. Holm), and one at Sipe Wildlife Area near Springerville 8 May (DR, GC et al.) were all exceptional for n. Arizona. Two Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers along the W. Fork of Oak Creek Canyon 19-20 May (CL, DD, T. Brush) were well n. of normal range in Arizona, but there have been sporadic reports along Oak Creek since 1997.

For the 2nd year in a row, a pair of Tropical Kingbirds were found at H.R.P. 5-12 May (ph. J. Woodley). Elsewhere in s. Arizona, this species was found at a greater-than-usual number of locales along the San Pedro and Santa Cruz Rivers, including one at Roger Road S.T.P. in Tucson 1 Jun (D. Wright; ph. B. Gerstan). Thick-billed Kingbirds were at odd localities at Madera Canyon 5 May (S. Barlow) and near Hereford 25 May (R. Weissler). A species that has been reported less frequently in Arizona during the past decade, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was at Spring Valley 12 May (R. Duerksen). A male Rose-throated Becard was present at the historical nesting area along Sonoita Cr. (Roadside Rest) beginning 18 May (fide M. Brown, JBo); this species has declined in recent years.

A White-eyed Vireo was in ne. Tucson 14 Apr (B. Nicholas; †MMS), and another was at Page Springs 3-4 May (†J&L Estis); there are fewer than 15 total records for the state. Another casual bird, single Yellow-throated Vireos were reported from Tonto N.M. 19 Apr (†G. Martinez) and from C.S.L. 16-24 May (DD, CL). This species has recently been elevated to the review list by the A.B.C. A Winter Wren in upper Secret Canyon (below the Mogollon Rim) 3 May (T. Schultz, CL) was in suitable nesting habitat; this species has only recently been confirmed nesting in Arizona in similar

canyons coming off the Rim. Five different Varied Thrushes were seen in the Region this spring: a female at Granite Basin present during the winter was seen through 22 Mar (CT); another continued at Peña Blanca L. 12 Mar (SH); one was along the Colorado R. in the Grand Canyon 20 Mar (J. Spence); a female was in S. Fork of Cave Creek Canyon 22 Apr (†R. Hamilton); and one was reported from California Gulch 24 Apr (K. Graves). This incursion was likely spill-over from a substantial movement of this species along the coast during the fall and winter.

Gray Catbirds are still casual in the state away from breeding grounds in the White Mts.; therefore, one in Miller Canyon 15-18 May (M. Haldeman, T. Beatty et al.), one at C.S.L. 16-17 May (DD), and one at Granite Oaks, nw. of Prescott 28-29 May (B. Stewart, M. Trevor) were of note. Brown Thrashers continuing from the winter included singles at Agua Caliente Park, Tucson 2 Mar (m. ob.) and B.T.A. 29 Apr (DS). Other spring records included one at St. David 17 Mar—3 Apr (KK et al.) and one banded at Tumacacori 21 Apr—4 May (WT).

#### WARBLERS THROUGH GOLDFINCHES

A singing male Tennessee Warbler was in Tucson 30 Apr—2 May (D. Touret et al.); there have been a decreasing number of reports of this species during the past 10 years. Northern Parula has increased as a migrant in recent years; this spring, at least 10 were reported 13 Apr—28 May, all from s. Arizona. A Magnolia Warbler along Sonoita Cr. near Patagonia 24 May (J. Moore, †MMS; vt. MPo) provided about an 8th spring record. A Pine Warbler, thought to be a female, was in Marana 9-11 Mar (†RH, P. Saloman, JBo et al.); there are fewer than 10 accepted state records, virtually all from winter. A greater-than usual number of Palm Warblers was reported, with one along the S.P.R. near Hereford 19 Apr (R. Carlson fide RHu), one along the Blue R. in the White Mts. 29 Apr (DR), one at Willcox 4 May (C. Smith, †BS), one at Cameron 6 May (CL), and one in Flagstaff 13 May (P. Kegley, S. Ordway); this species is still considered a review species by the A.B.C.

Very unusual for spring, a male Blackpoll Warbler was reported from Prescott 10 May (†CST, W. Bull); there have been about five previous spring reports. We received eight Black-and-white Warbler reports this spring, an above-average number. The only Prothonotary Warbler of the season was a male at A.V.S.T.P. 24-25 Apr (D. West et al.). Two Worm-eating Warblers were reported, with one at the Phoenix Zoo 18 Apr (RJ) and one in Cave Creek Canyon 28 Apr (DJ); there have been very few reports of this species in recent years. Three Ovenbirds, about average for



Arizona's second Snow Bunting was at Thatcher 11 to 20 April (here 12 April) 2002. Photograph by Gary H. Rosenberg.

a spring, were reported, with one near Big L. 26 May (SB), one in Phoenix 27 May (ph. BG), and one in French Joe Canyon 31 May (M. Kehl). No fewer than 22 Northern Waterthrushes were reported statewide, above the average for a spring. Three different Hooded Warblers turned up, with one along the S.P.R. 29 Apr (R. Weissler), one in French Joe Canyon 3 May (P. Sweet), and a singing male in Madera Canyon 16 May (L. Debatatz et al.). Something was up with Painted Redstarts this spring, with no fewer than six lowland migrant records from mid-late Mar. The pair of Rufous-capped Warblers that have been present in French Joe Canyon apparently nested successfully for the 2nd year in a row, with the ads feeding a juv. 27-31 May+ (SH, RHo et al.).

An ad. male Scarlet Tanager was in the Patons' yard in Patagonia 21-23 May (R. Baxter, m. ob.; †MMS, vt. J. Mueller); there are fewer than 25 total reports from Arizona. A singing male Flame-colored Tanager established a territory in upper Miller Canyon 11 Apr+ (J&D Parker; ph. J. Woodley); there have been fewer than 10 accepted records from Arizona, where its status has been complicated in recent years by numerous presumed hybrids with Western Tanager.

At least 7 Clay-colored Sparrows were reported, which is a higher number than normal for a spring. A Grasshopper Sparrow at H.R.P. 12 May provided a first spring report from *Maricopa*. An apparent Sooty Fox Sparrow was in Sahuarita 27 Mar (ph. C. Cathers); if confirmed, it would represent one of the only records of this form from Arizona. A Harris's Sparrow was at C.S.L. 9 May (ph. DD); this species is seldom seen as a spring migrant in the state. Quite amazing was the report of a Yellow-eyed Junco from cen. Tucson 12 Apr (B. Rowe). Far-and-away the best bird sighting of the spring was a female Snow Bunting found at Thatcher S.T.P. 11-20 Apr (B. Metheny, JW, m. ob.; ph. GHR, ph. SH); this represents a 2nd

Arizona record, and one of the farthest s. reports for the species in the West.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak is considered a rare-but-regular spring migrant/visitor anywhere in the state, but this spring, no fewer than 46 individuals, an unprecedented number, were reported. Indigo Buntings also appeared to be more numerous than usual this spring. Single Painted Buntings were reported from Hereford 9 Apr (C. Anderson) and from Prescott 29 May (CST). Two Bobolinks were at C.S.L. 14-18 May (DD, CL), while another was at Kayenta 25 May (CL); this species has nested once in n. Arizona previously. A first-year male Orchard Oriole was at Cameron 15 May (DS, MMS), while another

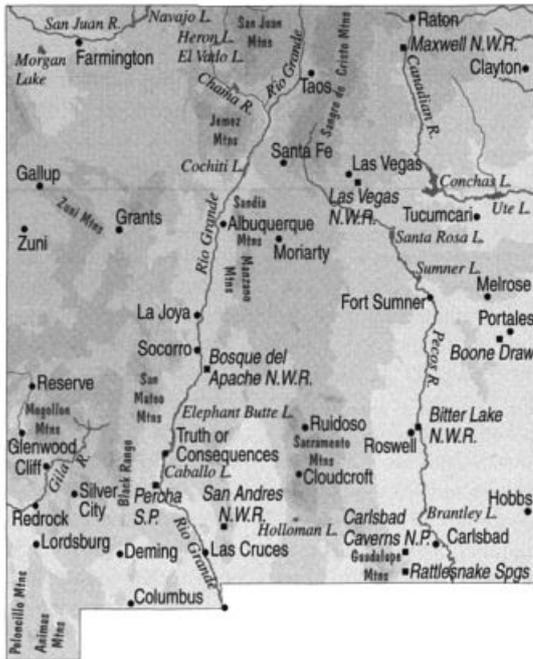
male was at Red Rock 27 May (C. Wood); these represent only the 2nd and 3rd N.I.R. reports. At least 3 different ad. male Baltimore Orioles were reported, with one in Tucson 9 May (†MMS, B. Koenig), one at Sipe Wildlife Area near Springerville 16 May (ph. DR, GC), and one in Cave Creek Canyon 16-17 May (†S. Heinl, S. G. Mlodinow et al.). Of interest were two late spring reports of Lawrence's Goldfinches, one from Paradise 21 May (George Walker House) and one from Patagonia 24 May (RT).

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# New Mexico



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The severe drought gripping New Mexico deepened in spring 2002, reaching conditions not seen in half a century; by season's close, forests were burning, lakes and rivers were drying, and everywhere dry topsoil was blowing away with the wind. Against this backdrop, birds and birders concentrated at shrinking wetlands and surviving oases, resulting in discovery of many rarities, especially shorebirds and water-

birds as well as eastern strays, particularly warblers. As always, in the following report all unusual species are supported by documentation unless otherwise noted.

**Abbreviations:** B.L.N.W.R. (Bitter Lake N.W.R.); Bosque (Bosque del Apache N.W.R.); L.V.N.W.R. (Las Vegas N.W.R.); Maxwell (Maxwell N.W.R. and vicinity); Mills Canyon (Canadian R. canyon w. of Mills, *Harding*); N.R.T. (n. *Roosevelt* migrant trap near Melrose); R.G.N.C. (Rio Grande Nature Center, Albuquerque); R.G.V. (Rio Grande Valley); R.S. (Rattlesnake Springs area, *Eddy*).

## LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

Surprisingly reluctant to leave, single Common Loons lingered at Ute L. 4 May (JO), Maxwell 20 May (DC), and Stubblefield L. 28 May (DC). Late Horned Grebes included singles at Holloman L. 29 Apr (CR) and L.V.N.W.R. 11 May (CR). Undetailed was a possible Brown Pelican at L. Avalon 27 May (*vide* SW). Two Neotropic Cormorants strayed n. to Sevilleta N.W.R. 7 Apr (WH). An American Bittern at Bosque 17 Apr (WW) and 2 at B.L.N.W.R. 3 May (GW) furnished the only reports for this now rare species. Great Egrets continued to appear in out-of-the-way places, including 2 at Peralta, *Valencia* 3 Apr (KC) and singles at Clanton Cienega, *Hidalgo* 11 May (NMC), Columbus 28 May (SOW), Mayhill 28 Apr (SW), and Jal 9 May (SW); a high 26 were at Bosque 12 Apr (JEP). Far n. was an ad. Little Blue Heron at Springer L. 8 May (ph. DC), another was at B.L.N.W.R. 25-27 Apr (JEP, JO, DK, GW) and one to 2 were at Bosque 2-28 May (WH, DE, BN, JO, CB). An imm. **Reddish Egret** at Holloman L. 24 May (BZ)—New Mexico's 18th overall—provided an *Otero* and May first. An ad. **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** made a brief Bosque visit 26 May (T. Warren). An ad **White Ibis** split its time between Bosque and La Joya 12 Apr—28 May (m. ob., ph. JO). **Glossy Ibis** was documented for the 4th consecutive spring, with singles at Bosque 13 & 17 Apr (WW, ph. JO) and 10 May (DE, BN), near Bernalillo 1 May (ph. JO), and at L.V.N.W.R. 25 Apr (D & BF), where there were 2 on 5 May (ph. JO).

An ad. **Fulvous Whistling-Duck** visited a field s. of San Antonio 22-23 Apr (RK, PS, ph. JO). Noteworthy were 2 Greater White-fronted