

Mexico

at Miraflores 23 Mar (vt. SGM). A **Cape May Warbler** wintering on the Maneadero Plain lingered until 22 Apr (vt. RAH et al.). Remarkably, another wintering bird (an ad.) was at San José del Cabo 28 Mar (vt. SGM). There are only five records of this species for the Peninsula, and it is extremely rare anywhere in Mexico. A Western Palm Warbler in breeding plumage at Estero de Punta Banda, B.C. 4 May (†MAP, BDSP) furnished only the 2nd record of a definite spring migrant for the Peninsula, following one at Isla San Benito Oeste 28 Mar 2001. The Palm is an early migrant in spring, so whether a nominate bird at Estero San José del Cabo 24 Mar (SGM) had wintered locally or was an early transient is anyone's guess. An American Redstart at Middle Island 18 May (RAE) was the first reported from the Islas Los Coronados. A MacGillivray's Warbler on the Maneadero Plain 20 Apr (RAE, RAH) and 4 May (MAP) was in precisely the spot where a presumably wintering bird (the first for B.C.) was observed on 4-5 Jan.

Migrant Green-tailed Towhees were found near Algodones 17 Apr and on the lower Río Santo Tomás 22 Apr (RAE). A Slate-colored Fox Sparrow (*P. i. schistacea*) on the lower Río Santo Tomás 5 May (MAP, BDSP) furnished the latest record of the species for the Peninsula away from sites where *P. i. stephensi* breeds in the Sierra San Pedro Mártir. An imm. Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Misión Santo Domingo, B.C. 31 May (RAE et al.) was only the 4th recorded in spring. An ad. Orchard Oriole was at San José del Cabo 29 Mar (vt. SGM); although a notoriously early migrant, this bird may well have wintered.

Contributors: Edgar Amador, Stephen F. Bailey, Harry R. Carter, Jose Alfredo Castillo, Richard A. Erickson, Martin García, F. Gress, Salvador González-Guzmán, Robert A. Hamilton, Osvel Hinojosa-Huerta, Helena Iturribarria-Rojas, Eric R. Lichtwardt, Guy McCaskie, Eric Mellink, Steven G. Mlodinow, Eduardo Palacios, Michael A. Patten, Brenda D. Smith-Patten, Gary Smith, Darrell Whitworth, Enrique D. Zamora-Hernandez.



Héctor Gómez de Silva

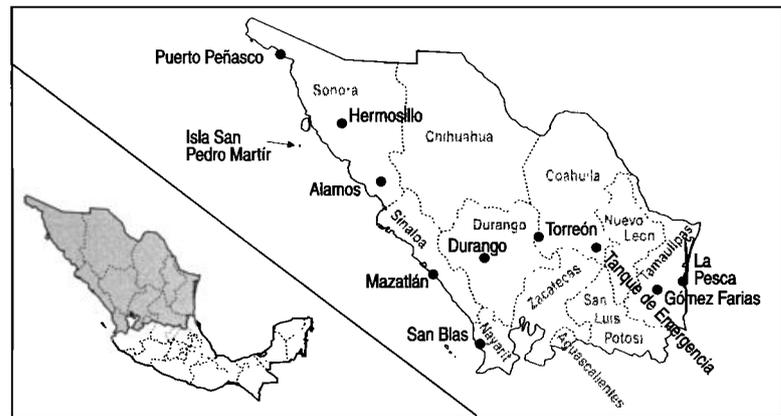
Xola 314-E

03100 Mexico, D. F.

(hgomez@miranda.ecologia.unam.mx)

Subregional coverage in this spring's report is very uneven, with an extra-large contribution from Southern Mexico. The abundant reports from Oaxaca (mainly the central part) are for the first time complemented with a large number of reports from Chiapas, particularly from the very special El Triunfo area, where a string of four tours provided coverage spanning practically the whole season. This spring produced a few reports of Eurasian Collared-Doves from northern Mexico and the Yucatan Peninsula (plus a few prior ones that came to light while researching them).

NORTHERN MEXICO



Our subregional editors from Torreón, Coahuila report that this spring was warmer than usual, with temperatures near 30°C in early March (mean March temperature is 20.9° C). Arvin reports that in the first half of March, Tamaulipas experienced an infrequent climatic phenomenon he calls "the dry westerlies," in which warm and dry west and southwest winds descend over the normally humid eastern slope of the Sierra Madre Oriental, bringing the highest temperatures of the year and low relative humidities. However, the usual tropical maritime air mass had reestablished itself by 17 March, providing cooler humid conditions in the Sierra. Peak blooming by many species of plants occurred in March, providing a rich food source for hummingbirds, orioles, and some tanagers. Many species of birds began to sing in March, as usual, though few species breed at this time of year (euphonias being an exception), most waiting until the return of the rains in May and June. As usual, the flocks of small insecti-

vores that form between late summer and February dispersed in March, and the Golden-browed Warbler that dominated them returned to the higher pine-oak forests. In early May, Tamaulipas was still suffering from the extended drought and strong southeasterly winds that also plagued southern Texas, with the thorn forest appearing partly defoliated. The tropical deciduous and lower cloud forests on the eastern slopes of the Sierra Madre Oriental were comparatively lush and mostly leafed out after the first showers fell around Gómez Farias in early May.

Abbreviations: B.V.C. (Bosque Venustiano Carranza, Torreón, Coah.), E.C.B.S. (El Cielo Biological Station).

GREBES THROUGH NIGHTJARS

There were 300 Eared Grebes at the Estero Marúa, s. of Puerto Peñasco, Son. 31 Mar (HA). An ad. **Little Blue Heron** was seen high in the trees of B.V.C. 13 & 21 Apr (EC, FVP, WB, ph), where there is no water. There was an imm Reddish Egret at Estero Marúa 31 Mar (HA). A **Brant** of the race *nigricans* was seen as it flew from the ocean into the mouth of Estero Pozo in San Blas, Nay. 2 Mar (MDC). Following the sighting of 73 **Wood Ducks** in three large groups over the Nazas R. near Sapioriz, Dgo. in late Feb (FVB, WB), fifteen pairs were seen at La Isla and other locations in the Nazas R. 5 May (FG, FVP), on 12 & 19 May, males were still frequently seen, but females seemed absent in most locations, suggesting probable nesting (FG, FVP). Migration of Green-winged Teal, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, and Blue-winged Teal in the Torreón area seemed to take place later than usual, with sightings in May, when unrecorded in previous years (FG, FVP, WB). The Puerto

Peñasco wastewater treatment plant had 1400 Ruddy Ducks 30 Mar (HA). A Swallow-tailed Kite was seen on Hwy. 85 n. of Monterrey, N.L. 3 Apr (RW et al.). A Crane Hawk was seen at Laguna Flamingos, Tamps., the northernmost site for this species, in early May (JCA). An estimated 1000 Swainson's Hawks were s. of Linares in kettles or perched on fenceposts or scrub 4 Apr (RW et al.). A pair of Broad-winged Hawks was sighted in B.V.C. 31 Mar—14 Apr, on occasion whistling to each other (EC, WB). Peregrine Falcons, usually a pair, were seen in urban Torreón feeding on pigeons and doves; the last confirmed sighting being from the Canal 9 television antenna 30 Apr (WB, FVP).

Several singles and one flock of about 15 **Wild Turkeys** were seen at Laguna Flamingos in early May (JCA). There were 2 juv. Glaucous-winged Gulls at the Puerto Peñasco wastewater treatment area 30 Mar (HA). In the first half of May, singing Mangrove Cuckoos were encountered widely in Tamps., with at least 3 at Laguna Flamingos in a pasture with scattered large ebony and mesquite trees, and 3 in tropical deciduous forest above Gómez Farías, including one in tropical/cloud forest transition at nearly 1000 m., unexpectedly high for this species (JCA). However, none were heard in mangroves at Laguna Morales, Tamps., the southern extension of the Laguna Madre (JCA). Along the lower Nazas R., Yellow-billed Cuckoos returned to La Isla 12 May and were seen in La Posta 19 May (FVP, WB, FG).

Only one Red-billed Pigeon was heard in the Gomez Farías region early Mar, and the flocks had not yet broken up into pairs (JCA). A male **Ruddy Ground-Dove** was n. of its mapped range at Laguna Flamingos in early May (JCA). A **Eurasian Collared-Dove** was sighted in Ciudad Chihuahua, Chih. 17 Mar (BR), and a bedraggled individual thought by the observers to be a recent escapee was seen in B.V.C. 30 Mar—20 Apr (FVP, WB). Prior to this, reports from Mexico are 2 in n. Tamps. July 2000 (JCA, Clifford Shackelford), one in Campo Mosqueda, B.C. 5 May 2001 (N.A.B. 55: 360), and 5 at a grain storage facility in Pedro J. Mendez in the vast agricultural fields 85 km s. of Reynosa, Tamps. 1 Jan 2002 (TB).

A pair of Military Macaws was perched in a budding sweetgum near the El Cielo Biological Station 16 Mar (JCA). An escapee Military Macaw was seen in B.V.C. through Apr and May, and a pair was sighted there late May; both had short tail feathers (WB, FVP). On 5 May, a Burrowing Owl was seen on the grounds of the Torreón airport, standing near a burrow where a pair had been late last year (FVP). Three territories of Tamaulipas Pygmy-Owl were noted around the E.C.B.S. (often mobbed by White-throated and Clay-colored



A first-winter Lesser Black-backed Gull at the Puerto Peñasco sewage treatment plant (center bird) was an excellent find here 1 April 2002. Records from both coasts of Mexico continue to accumulate.

Photograph by George L. Armistead.

Robins, Green Jays, Audubon's Orioles, hummingbirds, and Flame-colored Tanagers), and one was singing at the low elevation of 700 m just above Gómez Farías in early Mar (JCA). A Mexican Whip-poor-will that sang for a minute or two predawn around the E.C.B.S. in early Mar was probably an altitudinal visitor from higher elevations, as the species, though common in the pine-oak forests, does not occur at cloud forest elevations during the breeding season.

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH ORIOLES

Hummingbirds recorded at the E.C.B.S. in a brief early Mar visit by Arvin were a Wedge-tailed Saberwing, a male Broad-billed Hummingbird (this species is not uncommon in the area in the spring dry season, and there is at least one nesting record), several Azure-crowned and Amethyst-throated Hummingbirds, a Buff-bellied Hummingbird (an accidental visitor from lower elevation), a male Magnificent and a female Bumblebee Hummingbird (the latter is a regular wet-season visitor from higher elevations). A single male **Anna's Hummingbird** was observed regularly 22 Mar—14 Apr in B.V.C. (WB). Mountain Trogons, Blue Mockingbirds, and Flame-colored Tanagers were in full song in the Sierra Madre Oriental above Gómez Farías in early Mar, but Blue-crowned Motmots and Bronze-winged Woodpeckers were just beginning to sing. There were a Lewis's Woodpecker and a **Cassin's Kingbird** (rare in winter) at Puerto Peñasco 30 Mar (HA). There were records of **Northern Beardless-Tyrannulets** along the lower Nazas R. at La Isla 12 May and La Posta 19 May (FVP, WB, FG). A male Sinaloa Martin was seen soaring over Imala, Sin. 8 May (KLG, KCM, XV). Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush, which is apparently migratory in ne. Mexico, was still absent above Gómez Farías 13-

17 Mar (JCA). Single Hermit Thrushes were recorded in B.V.C. 28 Apr and 15 May (WB, FVP). White-throated and Clay-colored Robins seemed about equally abundant above Gómez Farías in early Mar (but only rarely singing), whereas in the breeding season, White-throated Robin is far more abundant at cloud forest elevations (JCA). Very few Cedar Waxwings were seen in groups of 4 or 5, mainly in the grounds of Instituto Tecnológico de La Laguna in Torreón 23 Apr—14 May (FVP, WB). A single male Gray Silky-Flycatcher was found at about 900 m elevation above Gómez Farías NEED DATE, a low elevation for this time of year (JCA).

Mangrove Warblers were conspicuous and singing in early May at Laguna Morales (JCA). An



Little Blue Herons sometimes wander to high elevations and odd locations, but this one—high in the trees of Bosque Venustiano Carranza, in Torreón, Coahuila state 13 and 21 April 2002—was extreme: there is no water around for miles *Photograph by William Beatty.*

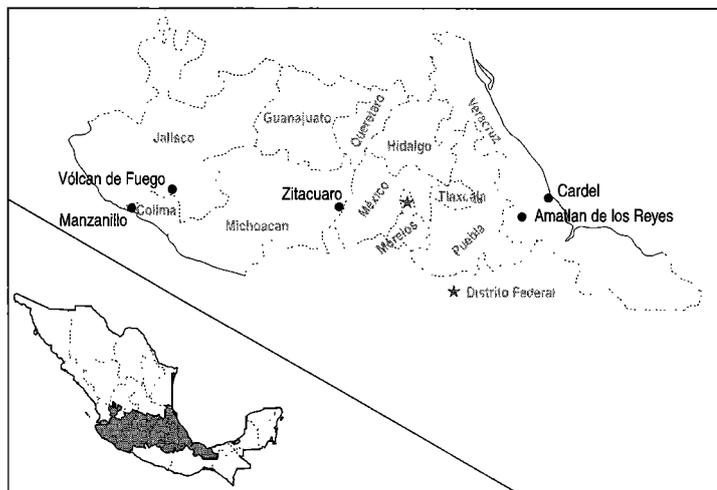
Ovenbird was seen in B.V.C. 15 May (FVP). For the first time in the last three years, no American Redstarts were recorded in B.V.C. (WB, FVP). Regular vireo visitors to B.V.C. included **Black-capped** (13 Apr), Plumbeous (13, 20 Apr), Cassin's (20 Apr and 1, 2 May) and Warbling (21 Apr, 5 May). Also recorded were warblers: Nashville (23 Mar—5 May), Yellow (4 & 10-12 May), Black-throated Gray (14, 21 Apr), Townsend's (21 Apr—12 May), Hermit (21 Apr), Black-and-white (23 Mar—1 May), MacGillivray's (1m 10 May), and Wilson's (13 Apr—12 May; all WB, FVP). A single Slate-throated Redstart at the E.C.B.S. was Arvin's first record for cloud forest elevations in the region (the species is an uncommon and local breeder at higher elevations). A male **Prothonotary Warbler** was found in mangroves at Bahía Pabellones near Culiacán, Sin. 11 May (KLG, KCM, XV, TP).

Three Red-legged Honeycreepers were near El Naranjo, S.L.P. 6 Apr (JH, KN *vide* BC). A pair of **Yellow-winged Tanagers** was seen gathering nesting material at 900-1000 m above Gómez Fariás in the first half of Mar (JCA). A flock of 7-8 Crimson-collared Grosbeaks (only one of them in ad. male plumage) was at the E.C.B.S. in early Mar (JCA). Sightings of Painted Buntings were unusually frequent in the Torreón area this season: a male and a female were eating fruit from a mulberry tree in the Instituto Tecnológico de La Laguna campus 23-24 Apr, a male was seen in B.V.C. 1 May, and at least 3 males and 2 females were seen in La Isla 12 May, the males singing and chasing each other aggressively (FVP, WB, FG).

White-collared (Cinnamon-rumped) Seedeaters were singing and generally very active in La Isla 12 May (WB, FVP, FG). A **White-throated Sparrow** was at Puerto Peñasco 30 Mar (HA). A flight of 20+ orioles at Puerto Peñasco 1 Apr included Hoodeds and Bullock's. Two male Hooded Orioles competed for nectar at a flowering *Erythrina* at the E.C.B.S. early Mar, Arvin's first records of this tropical zone species at cloud forest elevations. An ad. male **Orchard Oriole** on the edge of Bahía Yávaros, Son. 5 May was late and out of range (KLG).

Contributors (area compilers in boldface): Harry Armistead, John C. Arvin, **William Beatty**, Tim Brush, Ernesto Cabrera, Michael D Carmody, Bob Cecil, Kimball L. Garrett, Felipe Gaetán, James Huntington, Kathy C. Molina, Kay Niyo, Tony Pico Sr., **Francisco Valdéz Perezgasga**, Xico Vega, Russ Widner.

CENTRAL MEXICO



Abbreviations: P.E.C.M. (Parque Ecológico de la Ciudad de México, D.F.), U.N.A.M. (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México).

GREBES THROUGH NIGHTJARS

One Least Grebe was high at 2300 m elevation at Puerto del Aire, Ver. 2 Mar (HGdS). Thousands of Turkey Vultures were soaring northeastward in kettles over Colonia Francisco Barrios and La Mancha, Ver. 2 Mar (HGdS). A **Hook-billed Kite** was seen at the U.N.A.M. Botanical Garden through Mar, probably the same bird seen there Oct and Nov; it was not seen there in Apr but was there again, joined by a 2nd bird, in May (SA). An imm. Snail Kite was inland near Microondas Las Trincheras, Ver. 1 Mar (HGdS). Long-tailed Wood-Partridges were heard in the P.E.C.M. 10 Mar (SA). Around 10 Spot-tailed Nightjars were seen and heard 7.5 km s. of Las Choapas, Ver. 24-25 May; they were perching in low branches of scattered small oaks in a recently burned area with short grass (FGG).

SWIFTS THROUGH ORIOLES

A flock of White-collared Swifts was at the P.E.C.M. 17 May (SA). One **Dusky Hummingbird** was at the Zapotitlán de las Salinas Botanical Garden, Pbla. 3 Mar (HGdS). A Violet-crowned Hummingbird, very rare in the D.F., was in the U.N.A.M. Botanical Garden 15 May (CM). A female Magnificent Hummingbird was recorded 27 Apr in the Parque Ecoguardas, and a male was recorded in the U.N.A.M. Botanical Garden 26 Apr (SA). Single Blue-throated Hummingbirds were in Parque Ecoguardas 17 Mar and 4 May, and one was seen in Parque Tepozán, D.F. 11 May (SA). All three Mexican toucans were recorded at Amatlán, Ver. 1 Mar (HGdS).

Single Acorn Woodpeckers were seen in pine forest in the P.E.C.M. 26 Mar and 12 May (SA). A Greenish Elaenia was heard in oak forest in the P.E.C.M. 10 Mar (SA). A silent Ochre-bellied Flycatcher was at Amatlán 1 Mar (HGdS). Two Pine Flycatchers were seen near Llano Grande, Méx. 3 Mar (HGdS). A pair of Vermilion Flycatchers were near the U.N.A.M. Botanical Garden, where rare summer visitors, in late May (HGdS). Several **Boucard's Wrens** were at the Zapotitlán de las Salinas Botanical Garden 3 Mar, where they are common residents (HGdS), this is somewhat n. of the distribution mapped by Howell & Webb (1995). Sumichrast's Wrens were oddly silent at Amatlán 1 Mar, even after much tape-playing, until midday (HGdS)—perhaps in response to the atypically cool weather. An Eastern Bluebird was heard near Microondas Las Trincheras 1 Mar, and a pair was at Puerto del Aire 2 Mar, both localities slightly e. of its mapped range, 1 Mar (HGdS). An early Veery was slightly nw. of mapped range at Amatlán 1 Mar (HGdS). Several **Rufous-backed Robins** were in the e. outskirts of Tehuacán, Pbla., e. of its mapped range, 2 Mar (HGdS).

Three male **White-lored Gnatcatchers** and 10 **Phainopeplas** were at Zapotitlán de las Salinas Botanical Garden 3 Mar (HGdS); both are resident in the area, although not mapped or not mapped as resident there by Howell & Webb (1995). Small groups of Gray Silky-Flycatchers were recorded in the U.N.A.M. Botanical Garden throughout the period (SA). Hermit Warbler was last recorded in the s. D.F. 19 Mar (SA). A Hooded Oriole was near Microondas Las Trincheras 1 Mar (HGdS). Scott's Orioles were recorded in the U.N.A.M. Botanical Garden (a pair), in the Parque Ecoguardas and in oak forest and desert scrub of the P.E.C.M. throughout the period (SA).