

Mexico

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Mexico

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NORTHERN MEXICO

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Several dozen Clark's Grebes were studied on Tanque Aguilereño and Tanque Genty, two small, neighboring reservoirs straddling the municipalities of Viesca (in Coahuila state) and San Juan de Guadalupe (in Durango) 3 Jan. Some were young individuals, suggesting a breeding population (FVP, JRA). Three Northern Gannets were seen well at La Pesca, Tamps., during passage of a cold front 2 Feb (RK et al.); the same observers tentatively identified 4 smaller but distant sulids as Brown Boobies at Barra el Tordo, Tamps. 17 Jan. Brown Boobies are not mapped in Howell and Webb (1995) at this location.

A single Ross's Goose was recorded on the Río Nazas just off Hwy. 40, at a site known as Puentes Cuates near Cañón de Fernández, Dgo. This is a new species for the subregion (FVP, WB). The population of Wood Ducks in Cañón de Fernández on the Río Nazas produced healthy numbers for the period, 54 on 1 Jan and 32 on 22 Feb; most birds were paired at this time, though agonistic encounters between males were often observed (FVP, WB, AVJ). A male Eurasian Wigeon was among 1000+ American Wigeons at Yávaros, Son. 13 Jan (KG, KCM).

A year after the hurricane hit San Blas, Nay., both Rufous-necked Wood-Rail and Rufous-crowned Motmot seem to have recovered rather poorly, according to Carmody, who visited there in late winter. A group of 27 Swainson's Hawks was seen feeding over burning grass along Hwy. 15 on the Sinaloa/Nayarit border 18 Feb; one was soaring above the Singayta trail 20 Feb (MC). Several Peregrine Falcons continued to perch on and hunt from the Canal 9 television towers at Torreón, Coah.; present year-round, they are clearly local residents and possibly nesting (FVP). A Dunlin was at a tidal pond n. of Mazatlán, Sin. 14 Feb (MC). A second-year Glaucous-winged Gull at Yávaros 13 Jan (KG, KCM) was s. of any record mapped by Russell & Monson (1998).

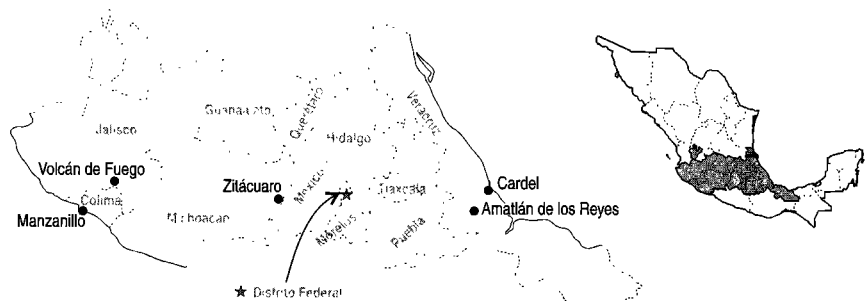
A Eurasian Collared-Dove was carefully identified at Soto la Marina, Tamps. 15 Jan, and at least 4 were recorded in and around San Fernando, Tamps. 3 Feb (RK et al.). Male and female Anna's Hummingbirds were seen throughout the period in Bosque Venustiano Carranza, the Torreón urban park. Anna's are now the most frequently recorded hummingbird species at this site (FVP, WB). A Greater Pewee was in a small park in Hermosillo, Son. 14 Jan (KG, KCM). A Willow Flycatcher was at Rosario de Tesopaco, ne. of Ciudad Obregón, Son. 12 Jan (KG, KCM); this species has not previously been recorded in Sonora in winter.

A Varied Thrush was seen eating berries from a tree in Paradiso Resort at San Carlos, Son. 30 Dec (CB). A male Kentucky Warbler was found near the first crest on the La Bajada road 21 Feb, perhaps the same bird that has shown up there in recent winters (MC). Two Western Tanager were seen in roadside scrub in the hills about halfway between Soto la Marina and La Pesca, Tamps. 15 Jan (RK et al.). Lark Buntings were at Cañón de Fernández, Coah. 25 Jan, a first record for this site (FVP, WB, JRA). A Swamp Sparrow was calling at a cattail marsh at Tular Lagoon in Guaymas, Son. 14 Jan (KG, KCM). An ad. White-throated Sparrow was carefully scrutinized at Rosario, Sin. 18 Feb (MC), perhaps the only state record.

Contributors: Clark Blake, Manuel Bujanda Rico, Michael Carmody, Kimball Garrett, Rudolf Koes (with Andy Courcelles, George Holland, Richard Staniforth), Kathy C. Molina, Juan Rodriguez-Andrade, Alfredo Villalobos-Jauregui.

CENTRAL MEXICO

Héctor Gómez de Silva



A juv. Northern Gannet was seen feeding close to shore with a group of Laughing Gulls at Playa Esmeralda near Nautla, Ver. 1

Feb (RK et al.). Some 2000 American White Pelicans in flight over Tecolutla, Ver. 19 Jan was impressive (RK et al.). A subad. Mississippi Kite was seen moving s. at Xalatlaco, Méx., sw. of Volcan Ajusco 5 Oct (MC). A Bat Falcon was soaring over Barranca el Choncho, Jal. 10 Dec (BC). A Virginia Rail was heard 23 Jan in marshy lakeside area at La Jungla at L. Catemaco, Ver. (RK et al.). Some 14 Double-striped Thick-knees were seen along the Las Barrancas road s. of Veracruz, Ver. 21 Jan (RK et al.). Up to 2 Green-breasted Mangos attended flowering bougainvilleas at Hotel Playa Azul, Catemaco, Ver. 22-25 Jan (RK et al.). A Cliff Swallow and 2-3 Barn Swallows were noted at the Río Hondo bridge on the toll road near Cosamaloapan, Ver. 31 Jan (RK et al.). Two Colima Warblers were at San Andrés Totolapan, D.F. 25 Dec (MG), and another 2 were seen at Parque Ecológico de la Ciudad de México, D.F. on various dates in Jan (AOI). A Prothonotary Warbler frequented the edge of a sewage lagoon immediately w. of Tecolutla 19 Jan (RK et al.). Two Lark Sparrows were found on a dike through marshes just w. of Tecolutla 19 Jan (RK et al.).

Contributors: Michael Carmody, Bob Cecil, Manuel Grosselet, Rudolf Koes (with Andy Courcelles, George Holland, Richard Staniforth), Adán Oliveras de Ita.

SOUTHERN MEXICO

John Forcey

We include several October 2003 records from Guerrero, received too late for inclusion in the fall report. All locations in Oaxaca state unless noted otherwise.

Abbreviations: B. J. (Benito Juárez); C. V. (Cuatro Venados); Jilguero Arroyo (above Teotitlán del Valle); La Nevería (above San Miguel del Valle); S. J. G. (San Juan Guelavía); S. F. P. (San Felipe Park); P. A. D. (Presa Azul Dam).

A Great Blue Heron was high at La Nevería,

2860 m above sea level 6 Jan. Six Muscovy Ducks (wild status not determined) were seen in flight at Presa Tuxpan, interior Gro., 6



Oct (MC). Eight Lesser Yellow-headed Vultures were around the shortgrass prairie n. of Playa Carrizil, Gro. 9 Oct (MC).

A Broad-winged Hawk kettle of 9 birds was seen over the Tetipac Road, n. of Taxco, Gro. 6 Oct (MC), and a White-tailed near Tierra Colorado, Gro. the same day was rare for the Pacific slope here. At least 2 Roadside Hawks were again seen on and near the grounds of Hotel Misión de Los Angeles, Oaxaca City (where they apparently nested in late Feb 2003) 22 Dec—late Jan (MEC); the species is essentially unknown in the Valley. Two Harris's Hawks were seen 5 Feb at S. J. G. A Swainson's Hawk was seen on Christmas Day near El Tule (A&BB), first winter report for the species in this area, though mid-winter Swainson's are often encountered along the Oax. coast between Puerto Angel and Puerto Escondido. The 2nd Northern Goshawk for the cen. Oaxaca area was reported 27 Dec at the Jilguero Arroyo (AB).

American Coots were notably absent from P.A.D. this winter, with just a single bird present 2 Feb. A Collared Plover was at Presa Tuxpan, Gro. on 6 Oct (MC). Winter Solitary Sandpipers were recorded at P.A.D. on Christmas Eve (A&BB) and 17 Jan, while Wilson's Snipe were seen there 6 Jan, and 2 snipe were high at La Neverta on the same date. A Sandwich Tern with a flock of 60 other terns (Caspian and Royal) was seen roosting 9 Oct at the coastal lagoon n. of Atoyac de Alvarez, Gro. that is reached via the Las Tunas road (called locally Playa Paraiso).

Two displaying Greater Swallow-tailed Swifts—"magnificent birds" (MC)—were noted halfway up the Filo de Caballos road, Gro. 11 Oct. A Ruby-throated Hummingbird, very rare in midwinter in the Oaxaca Valley, was seen 2 Feb at P.A.D. Typically scarce in winter, Greenish Elaenias were seen 17 Jan at Jilguero Arroyo, 2 Feb at P.A.D., and 8 Feb at Río Grande de Guelatao. Five Buff-breasted Flycatchers made a high count 4 Dec at Cuatro Venados, where a Say's Phoebe and a Cassin's Kingbird were at high elevation. Two Western Kingbirds were at P.A.D. 2 Feb, probably northbound migrants. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was seen at Yagul 23 Dec (A&BB). A Rose-throated Becard was seen around a mixed flock of jays and Gray-barred Wrens above Guacamaya 4 Feb.

A Marsh Wren was heard 5 Feb at S. J. G., and a Golden-crowned Kinglet, until recently

almost unknown in Oax., was recorded 15 Jan at B.J. (MG). A late Swainson's Thrush was seen 22 Dec at L. C. (A&BB). Aztec Thrushes, always unpredictable in cen. Oax., were reported on the C.B.C. 26 Dec (location unknown; A&BB), 17 Jan at B. J. (one bird), and on the same date, 2 were seen feeding in fruiting tree with about 7 Brown-backed Solitaires and 15 White-throated Robins at the Jilguero Arroyo, with 2 still there 5 Feb. About 50 American Pipits were high at Cuatro Venados 4 Dec, and about 20 were seen in a flock near Teotitlán del Valle on 5 Feb.

An early Golden Vireo was heard singing 3 Feb at S. F. P. A rare winter Tennessee Warbler was reported 22 Dec at L. C. (AB). A single wintering Yellow Warbler was recorded 18 Jan at the Jardín Botánico in Oaxaca City

at Cuatro Venados, and a single Vesper Sparrow was near Teotitlán del Valle 5 Feb. Savannah Sparrows were recorded 5 Feb at S. J. G. and near Teotitlán del Valle. A scarce wintering Rose-breasted Grosbeak was reported 28 Dec from an unknown location in the Oaxaca Valley on the C.B.C. (A&BB). A fairly bright male Lazuli Bunting was seen 28 Feb near Huitzo Dam. One Hooded Oriole was recorded 17 Jan at the Hotel Victoria, Oaxaca City. Scott's Oriole was reported 15 Feb at B. J. (MG). About 10 Red Crossbills were seen 4 Dec at Cuatro Venados. Two or more pairs of Slate-blue Seed eaters were detected in the bamboo n. of Iguala, Gro. 13 Oct (MC). A single Evening Grosbeak was seen at B. J. 5 Feb; apparently never common, the species has become very scarce in the state.

Contributors: Alice & Brad Boyle, Michael Carmody, Megan Edwards Crewe, Manuel Grosselet. Uncredited observations are those of John Forcey, Ramiro Aragon, and Kerry Wilcox.

YUCATÁN PENINSULA

Barbara MacKinnon



(MG). A single Black-throated Blue Warbler, seen 4 Jan (Rich Hoyer, Jim Tietz, Rebecca Green) and again 10 Feb (RA, KW) on the Oaxaca-Pochutla highway near the Copalita exit, represents a new species for the state of Oaxaca. Yellow-breasted Chat was recorded at Monte Albán 20 Dec (A&BB). The Fan-tailed Warbler previously reported from S.F.P. was seen again 16 Jan.

Three Red-headed Tanagers seen 28 Dec at the ford on the Guacamaya road represented the first firm winter record of the species from the Oaxaca Valley (A&BB). A Yellow-throated Euphonia was seen 2 Feb, accompanying a mixed flock of seed-eating birds in a brushy field at Rojas de Cuauhtémoc. This would represent a first record for the interior valleys of Oaxaca. Two male and one female Yellow-faced Grassquits were seen 18 Feb at Huitzo dam, again a first record in the Oaxaca Valley, although this species is very commonly captured and sold in city markets.

About 15 Striped Sparrows were seen 4 Dec

After a twelve-year hiatus, Christmas Bird Counts were restarted in Yucatán state. The three carried out included Celestún on 14 December, Río Lagartos on 21 December, and El Cuyo on 4 January. Participants included local bird guides, reserve personnel, and conservationists. There were few unusual sightings for the Region during the winter season.

Abbreviations: R.L.B.R. (Ría Lagartos Biosphere Reserve); H.S.A.X. (Hacienda San Antonio Xpakay; entrance road located at Km 52 on road to Tekit from Tekoh, Yuc.).

A total of 12 Least Grebes (ads. with young) and 3 Least Bitterns were located at two ponds behind the coast at El Cuyo 4 Jan (BM, JM, MT, RM), and another Least Bittern was reported 23 Jan at Uaymitún (DB). A single ad. Black-crowned Night-Heron was at Celestún during the C.B.C. 14 Dec (BM, AD, MT), while an ad. Boat-billed Heron with 2 young was seen at Río Lagartos 2 Dec (SNGH, IN).

Two male Snail Kites were observed during

the C.B.C. behind El Cuyo 4 Jan (BM, JM, MT, RM), and an ad. male Northern Harrier was sighted flying over a savannah area on the Chunchucmil road e. of Celestún on the C.B.C. 7 Dec (BM, AD, MT). One Great Black-Hawk was at X'cambo 23 Jan (DB); another was watched by members of the Club Toh as it devoured a snake while perched on a snag on the road leading to H.S.A.X. 8 Feb (BM, AE, EG). A Zone-tailed Hawk was sighted 12 km e. of Celestún 7 Dec (BM, AD, MT) and another between Progreso and Uaymitún 23 Jan (DB). A Collared Forest-Falcon was heard and seen briefly on the road to H.S.A.X. 8 Feb (BM, AE, EG, RM).

An ad. Ruddy Crake with one juv. was observed in a mangrove area e. of Celestún 7 Dec. Three Soras were at ponds behind the coast of El Cuyo during the C.B.C. 4 Jan (BM, JM, MT, RM). Other sightings later that day included a flock of 36 Willets and three flocks of Sanderlings totaling 360 in the coastal lagoon 10 km w. of El Cuyo (BM, JM, MT, RM). A total of 16 Marbled Godwits were in the lagoon behind Chixchulub 7 Dec (AE, BM, RM, BS), while a flock of 150 Least Sandpipers was in the coastal lagoon 10 km w. of El Cuyo 4 Jan (BM, JM, MT, RM). About 100 Stilt Sandpipers and 100 Short-billed Dowitchers were seen 23 Jan between Progreso and the X'cambo turn-off (DB). A single Franklin's Gull was reported at Río Lagartos 2 Dec (SNGH, IN), while 4 Gull-billed Terns were seen between Progreso and the X'cambo turn-off 23 Jan (DB). Among the small flock of Caspian Terns at Uaymitún on 7 Dec was a juv. still begging (AE, BM, RM, BS). A total of 15 of these wintering Caspians were on a sandbar 2 km s. of Celestún 14 Dec (BM, AD, MT), while 8 Forster's Terns were reported at Ría Lagartos 2 Dec (SNGH, IN).

A single Zenaida Dove, a species becoming increasingly difficult to find on the Yucatan coast, was seen 8 km w. of El Cuyo 4 Jan (BM, JM, MT, RM). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, a regular but never abundant winter resident in the subregion, was reported 22 Jan at Chichén Itza and another at X'cambo the next day (DB). A first for the archeological zone of Muyil at Chunyaxché, Q. Roo, was a single Chestnut-colored Woodpecker 26 Jan (IC). A Bright-rumped Attila, apparently feeding at an ant swarm, was seen in a low tangle under a canopy of deciduous forest along road leading into H.S.A.X. 8 Feb (BM, EG), while a single Wood Thrush was observed in same area that same morning (BM, EG, RM). Five Savannah Sparrows were in the low brush 10 km w. of Telchac Puerto 7 Dec (AE, BM, RM, BS).

Contributors: David Bacab, Ismael Caamal, Alex Dzib, Edwin Gongora, Steve N.G. Howell, Jorge Montejo, Rodrigo Migoya, Ismael Navarro, Beth Scott, Melgar Tabasco. 🐾

Central America



The winter season was an impressive one, especially for El Salvador. Oliver Komar reports: "This winter was one of the most active periods in the history of El Salvador ornithology. Four long-term mist-netting (bird monitoring) stations were established, with monthly visits at Montecristo, El Imposible, and Los Volcanes National Parks, and at a coffee plantation in Izalco. Separately, a team conducted inventory work in pine-oak forests at Montecristo National Park and La Montaña forest. In addition, 22 biologists collaborated to conduct the first park-wide one-day bird count at El Imposible National Park. Finally, local biologists continued with regular waterbird censuses at several freshwater lakes." Now, if we could only have this kind of coverage in the other six countries...

Most Panama records in this season's report are from just two Victor Emanuel Nature Tours led by Marshall Iloff. Imagine how much more useful information could be assembled for this column if other tour operators would start sending in their Central American trip reports!

The string of "country firsts" remains unbroken, with El Salvador's first and second Black-throated Blue Warblers and first and second Audubon's Warblers.

Abbreviations: C.R.N.M. (Costa Rica National Museum); K.U.N.H.M. (University of Kansas Natural History Museum); M.H.N.E.S. (Museo de Historia Natural de El Salvador); V.E.N.T. (Victor Emanuel Nature Tours).

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TROPICBIRDS THROUGH DUCKS

The Red-billed Tropicbird is an uncommon visitor off the Pacific coast of Costa Rica, but a juv. found freshly dead in the yard of PM well inland at 1800 m in San José de la Montaña, Heredia 6 Feb (*C.R.N.M.) was a truly extraordinary extralimital occurrence. American White Pelicans continue to turn up in C.A. with increasing frequency. Five were seen moving e. down the coast at the Kékoldi raptor migration count station at Hone Cr., Limón 3 Dec. All recent Costa Rica reports have come from the Caribbean coast, mostly from Tortuguero. A group of 38 Brown Pelicans was seen flying east-northeastward over La Democracia, Belize 10 Jan (PB), and 13 were seen flying eastward over Chan Chich Lodge, Orange Walk 13 Feb (SS). Brown Pelicans are occasionally seen flying high overhead in inland Belize, presumably commuting between the coast and Lago Petén Itzá in Guatemala. Thus far, no seasonal pattern