

landscapes. Instead, bird conservation needs to be guided by the adaptive management paradigm, compellingly articulated in our region by the Clark-County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan. The idea, in a nutshell: it is absurd for wildlife managers to plan for the future in and around fast-growing Las Vegas; instead, we must make policy, we must *adaptively manage*, as we go; and we must have the full power of the courts and agencies behind us as we do so.

Recognition that bird populations are dynamic • The idea of a "balance of nature," that populations are stable, is really as fallacious as the notion that species are immutable. All efforts at bird conservation in the Great Basin, and elsewhere, must accept the reality that bird populations are spatially and temporally dynamic.

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Summer 2004 brought widespread and occasionally heavy rains to much of the state, providing at least temporary relief from persistent drought and allowing extended breeding by many species.

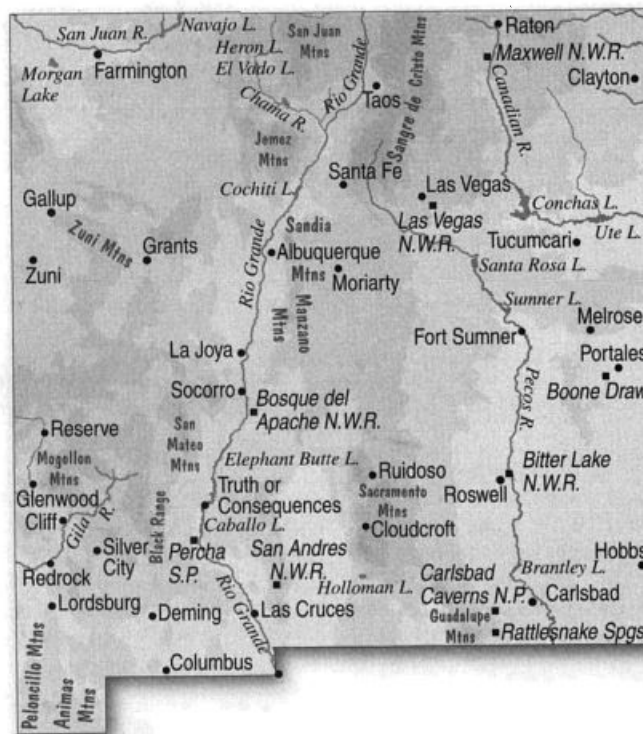
Abbreviations: B.L.N.W.R. (Bitter Lake N.W.R.); Bosque (Bosque del Apache N.W.R.); G.B.A. (Gila Bird Area, riparian habitat on Gila R. below Riverside); K.K. (Katfish Kove, private ponds and trees adjacent to Mimbres R., nw. Luna); L.V.N.W.R. (Las Vegas N.W.R.); Maxwell (Maxwell N.W.R. and vicinity); R.G.N.C. (Rio Grande Nature Center, Albuquerque); R.G.V. (Rio Grande Valley).

GREBS THROUGH RAPTORS

There was news both good and bad for nesting grebes in n. New Mexico. Eared Grebes fared well in Rio Arriba, with 225 nests at Horse L., 125 nests at Stinking L., and 10 nests at Stone L. 18–20 Jun (DS), and with reproduction noted in Jul but failed in Colfax, where 24 nests at Stubblefield L. 23 Jul and nine at Maxwell 7 Jul (DC) were all lost to high water by late Jul. Up to 45 Western Grebe nests were at Stone L. 20 Jun, and ads. were feeding young there 1 Jul (DS). A Western Grebe nest at Stubblefield L. 6 Jul (ph DC) produced at least one young, but four Clark's nests there by 23 Jul (ph. DC) all failed when flooded.

Unexpected were 32 ad. American White Pelicans at El Vado L. 19 Jun (DS) and 15 at nearby Heron L. 1 Jul (DS); noteworthy were 33 migrants at Red L., McKinley 24 Jul (CR, BN). An imm. Brown Pelican wandered to Morgan L. 24 Jul (CR, BN), where it remained into Aug (AN); another imm. Brown was captured near Las Cruces 2 Jul (P. Hinde). A Great Blue Heron nest with a nestling near Bloomfield 2 Jul (*fide* TR) was at a new San Juan breeding locale. A flock of 265 Cattle Egrets was near Lemitar 23 Jul (DH). Rare in the

New Mexico



state, an imm. White Ibis visited Bosque 27–31 Jul (G. Parker, JEP, ph. JO). An imm. Roseate Spoonbill was at B.L.N.W.R. 21–28 Jun (GW), the 3rd consecutive year the species has appeared there. Summering Wood Ducks where seldom reported included 2 below Conchas Dam 15 Jun (WW) and others at San Juan Pueblo throughout Jun (DS). The irrigated fields of s. Luna remained a Mexican

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Duck stronghold, with 80 there 23 Jul (JEP). A female Ring-necked Duck with 7 ducklings at Berland L., San Juan 24 Jul (CR, BN) established breeding for the Chuska Mts.; other apparently summering Ring-neckeds included 4 at Red L., McKinley 24 Jul (CR, BN), 2-4 near San Gregorio L. 6 & 10 Jul (CR, JO), a pair at Bear Canyon L. 20 Jun (JO), and singles at Moon Ranch, Grant 24 Jun (SOW) and Bosque 20 Jun (SW). Possibly taking advantage of nest boxes, Hooded Mergansers again produced young at Bosque, with 2 juvs. on a pond 27 Jun (JO) and up to 4 juvs. on another pond 24-31 Jul (JEP, ph. JO).

A record 17 Osprey pairs nested in n. New Mexico, but only seven were successful, fledging 14 young (DS). Often overlooked in the breeding season, a Northern Harrier nest with large nestlings was near Morgan L. 25 Jun (R. Kellermueller). A Gray Hawk pair established a territory in the New Mexico portion of Guadalupe Canyon, where it was well documented 19-25 Jun (m.ob., ph. JO) and where an ad. and a large nestling were found 25 Jul (C. Lundblad). Common Black-Hawks continued to appear far n. of expected, including singles at Cochiti Dam 31 Jul (MW) and on the Cimarron R. near Cimarron 29-31 Jul (DC), the latter a Colfax first; in the middle R.G.V., black-hawks again summered at Isleta (K. Johnson), and one was at Sevilleta N.W.R. 24 Jul (T. Kennedy).

PTARMIGAN THROUGH TERNS

Single White-tailed Ptarmigan were on Jicarieta Peak 11 & 13 Jul (CB, E. Rominger), and 3 were there 27 Jul (JBe). A female Blue Grouse with young was on the Rio Quemado e. of Truchas 25 Jul (WW). Unusual were 2 Gambel's Quail in the Jemez Mts. near Ponderosa 25 Jul (CR). One to 2 Common Moorhens were n. to B.L.N.W.R. 3 & 21 Jul (JEP, JO, GW).

Noteworthy for Quay were up to 4 Snowy Plovers at Hudson L. and up to 3 at Ute L. Jun-Jul (DC); high count at B.L.N.W.R. was 255 on 23 Jun (GW). Unusual n. to Colfax were single Black-necked Stilts at Stubblefield L. 24 Jun (ph. DC) and Eagle Nest L. 10 Jul (DC). An apparent Spotted Redshank in black breeding plumage was with Greater Yellowlegs at B.L.N.W.R. 25 Jul (R. Lewis); there are no previous reports and, unfortunately, this individual was not photographed. Solitary Sandpipers where rarely noted were singles w. to Berland L. 24 Jul (CR, BN) and L. Roberts 14 Jul (LM). Unseasonal were 9 Willets at Brantley L. 22 Jun (RD). Unusual for the lower Pecos Valley were several apparently territorial Spotted Sandpipers at Brantley L. 9 & 22 Jun (WH, RD). A remarkable 51 Marbled Godwits were at Brantley L. 22 Jun (RD); other mid- to late Jun reports included 2 at Springer L. 22 Jun (ph. DC) and 4 at B.L.N.W.R. 23 Jun (GW). Single Sanderlings were at Maxwell 19

Jun (DC) and Stubblefield L. 23 Jul (DC). A Semipalmated Sandpiper was w. to Bosque 28 Jul (JO). A White-rumped Sandpiper was w. to Wagon Mound 4 Jun (JO); notably late White-rumpeds were 3 at Stubblefield L. 19 Jun (ph. DC) and singles at Springer L. 22 Jun (DC) and Ute L. 23 Jun (DC). One to 2 vocal Wilson's Snipe summered at Springer L. and near-by Ponil Cr. (DC) and at Mora (NC).

Although no nesting was discovered, California Gulls again summered at Eagle Nest L., with 15 there 25 Jun (JEP) and 25 on 17 Jul (DC); other Californias were 12 at Heron L. 18 Jul (CR) and 23 at Morgan L. 24 Jul (CR, BN). Also at Eagle Nest L. were up to 15 Ring-billed Gulls 25 Jun (JEP) & 10 Jul (DC). A significant discovery was an active Least Tern colony at Brantley L. 9 Jun (WH), where low water provided habitat for up to seven pairs, which produced fledglings by Jul (RD), providing a nesting first for Eddy and the first for New Mexico away from B.L.N.W.R. Eleven Least Tern pairs nested at B.L.N.W.R. (GW); wandering Least were singles at Ute L. 3 & 23 Jun (ph. DC), Bosque 12 Jun (CB), and Holloman L. 10 Jun (J. Smith). Unseasonal were 4 Forster's Terns at Springer L. 22 Jun (ph. DC) and singles at Maxwell 25 Jun (JEP) and at B.L.N.W.R. 23 Jun and 7 Jul (GW).

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Eurasian Collared-Doves were found statewide, including areas up to 2100 m elevation at El Rito 11 Jun (JO) and Ranchos de Taos 3 Jul (JO). White-winged Doves were n. to La Plata 5 Jul (TR), Los Alamos 12 Jun (JO), and Maxwell 7 Jul (DC). Encouraging were up to 4 Common Ground-Doves in Guadalupe Canyon 12-26 Jun (JO, JEP, SOW) and 2 in the Carzalia Valley e. of Hermanas 23 Jul (JEP). A male Ruddy Ground-Dove was singing in Guadalupe Canyon 19 & 25 Jun (JEP, ph. JO). Yellow-billed Cuckoos where seldom noted included singles at Zuni's Black-rock 5 Jun (JO), near Farmington 24 Jun (TR), at Los Luceros near Española 14 Jun & 4 Jul (MM), Eldorado 2 Jun (ph. DW), Clayton L. 27 Jul (NC), the Canadian R. near Logan 26 Jul (NC), and near Gila Cliff Dwellings 15 Jul (K. Brodhead), but few were found on the lower Pecos R. near Carlsbad, where spraying to kill saltcedar had destroyed much suitable habitat (SW). Maintaining their Eddy beach-head were 8 Elf Owls in lower Last Chance Canyon 8 Jul (SW). The state-first Barred Owl, discovered at Galisteo in late May, persisted in cottonwoods along Galisteo Cr. into Aug (JBa et al.). Northerly Whip-poor-wills were 2 in Hausner Canyon, Zuni Mts. 4 Jun (JO), 2 at Doc Long Picnic Area, Sandia Mts. 8 Jun (DW) and 2 Jul (CR), and one on the Vermejo Ranch in Crow Canyon, n. Sangre de Cristo Mts. 13 Jul (v.r. DC).

Hummingbirds were widely reported. Broad-billed Hummingbirds in the Peloncillo Mts. n.

of Guadalupe Canyon were 3 in Cottonwood Canyon 12 Jul (WW), one to 2 in Skeleton Canyon 12 Jun-8 Jul (SOW, JEP, JO), and one to 2 in P.O. Canyon Jun-Jul (CL). Violet-crowned Hummingbirds were notably scarce in Guadalupe Canyon, with only 2 there 12 Jun (SOW) and none found later. Single Blue-throated Hummingbirds were in Cottonwood Canyon 12 Jul (WW) and at Queen 5 Jul (SW). A female Magnificent Hummingbird was n. to the Pajarito Ski area above Los Alamos 4-5 Jul (JEP, ph. JO). Up to 4 ad. Lucifer Hummingbirds were reported Jun-Jul in P.O. Canyon (CL), where a female gathered nest material 22 Jun (K. Scholes) and 2-3 fledglings were noted 27-31 Jul (CL); elsewhere in the Peloncillos, 2 were in Skeleton Canyon 28 Jun (SOW) and one in Cottonwood Canyon 12 Jul (WW). Other notable hummingbirds were an early Anna's in P.O. Canyon 30 Jun (CL), a Costa's banded at L. Roberts 28 Jul (JD-M), and single Calliope e. to Ute L. 28 Jul (DC) and B.L.N.W.R. 16 & 20 Jul (GW). A mysterious but well-documented hummingbird at Bosque 25 Jul (m.ob., ph. G. Froelich, ph. JO) likely was a Calliope Hummingbird x Rufous Hummingbird hybrid. Earliest Rufous was a male in the Manzano Mts. 23 Jun (TH); one to 2 others were at 10 sites statewide 25-30 Jun (m.ob.), and 7 were banded at L. Roberts 1 Jul (JD-M). Six Allen's Hummingbirds were banded in the L. Roberts area 18-31 Jul (JD-M), and a probable male Allen's was at Las Cruces 10-17 Jul (D. Griffin).

An Elegant Trogon pair was found nesting in the cen. Peloncillo Mts. 28 Jun and 8-9 Jul (SOW, PM). A pair of Lewis's Woodpeckers was nesting at Santa Fe's Fairview Cemetery 27 & 30 Jul (DW, JS). Far n. were 2 Acorn Woodpeckers at Cedar Springs Campground e. of Gobernador, Rio Arriba 17 Jul (JO), where first reported in May; other Acorns in the nw. were singles near Cuba 18 Jul (JO) and in the Chuska Mts. near Crystal 24 Jul (CR, BN). Ladder-backed Woodpeckers are unexpected in the nw., so noteworthy was one near Ambrosia L., McKinley 11 Jul (CR); another was n. to Maxwell 7 Jul (ph. DC). Scarce in the Sacramento Mts., an active Downy Woodpecker nest was near Cloudcroft 12 Jun (WH). American Three-toed Woodpeckers were much in evidence in the San Juan, Sangre de Cristo, and Jemez ranges (m.ob.), including the San Pedro Park area near Cuba 7 & 10 Jul (CR, JO); unusual was one at Little Walnut Picnic Area near Silver City in mid-Jul (fide D. Zimmerman).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH BUSHTITS

Single Hammond's Flycatchers were singing in aspens in the Zuni Mts. near Coddington 8 Jun (HS) and near Ojo Redondo 25 Jun (HS); an ad. with a begging juv. was in upper Cimarron Canyon 10 Jul (DC). Ten Dusky Flycatchers were detected on a three-km transect along Bluewater Cr., Zuni Mts. 24 Jun (HS). Gray Flycatchers continued to pop up most every-

where, including singing birds s. to the Burro Mts. (JD) and Sawtooth Mts. (SOW) in Jun and a record 8 in the Gallinas Mts. near Corona 18 Jun (HS). Black Phoebes are now well established n. to *San Juan* and *Colfax*, with two successful pairs at Farmington in Jun (AN, ph. TR) and pairs with fledglings at Cimarron 12 Jun (DC) and Springer 15 Jul (DC); providing additional evidence of range expansion were singles on the Animas R. near the Colorado line 16 & 23 Jun (TR) and near Bluewater Campground 24 Jun (HS), a pair at El Rito 11 Jun (JO), and one in the Sacramento Mts. at 2160 m 12 Jun (WH). Summering Eastern Phoebes were w. to the Mills Canyon area (LS), both Cinta Cr. and Manga Cr., *San Miguel* (CR), and Sumner Dam (GK) in Jun, and a juv. was at Santa Rosa 15 Jun (WW). Noteworthy for the Black Range were 4 Dusky-capped Flycatchers along upper Las Animas Cr., *Sierra*, 10 Jul (WW). Brown-crested Flycatchers were unusually numerous in Guadalupe Canyon (m.ob.) and made a good showing elsewhere, with 4 in Skeleton Canyon 20 Jun (JO) providing a local first, one n. to Glenwood 21 Jun (JO), 4 at K.K. 25 Jun (JO), 2 on upper Las Animas Cr., *Sierra* 10 Jul (WW), and one in the Tres Hermanas Mts. near Columbus 10 Jun (LM); a large *Myiarchus* at La Mesa, *Doña Ana* 8 Jun (GE) may have been this species. A Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher was in Guadalupe Canyon 11–12 Jun (SOW), the 3rd consecutive year for the species there. Only one Thick-billed Kingbird was in Guadalupe Canyon 19 & 26 Jun (JEP, JO), where many of the large sycamores favored by this species were dead or dying. Far w. were single Scissor-tailed Flycatchers at Maxwell 8 Jun (ph. KG) and L.V.N.W.R. 15 Jul (MR); a pair was nest-building at B.L.N.W.R. 27 Jun (GW).

Single Bell's Vireos were n. in the R.G.V. to La Joya 14 & 23 Jun (JD) and in the Pecos Valley to Bosque Grande n. of Roswell 9 Jun (WH). Three Gray Vireos were singing near Piñon 10 Jun (WH), and 2 at Red L., Guadalupe Mts. 5 Jul (SW) furnished a new locale; searches for nests in *Socorro* found four in the Ladrone Mts. 24 Jun, two at the Socorro Box 28 Jun, and four (plus a pair feeding fledged cowbirds) in the Quebradas area 28 Jun (JD). The Yellow-throated Vireo found at R.G.N.C. in May remained until 5 Jun (m.ob.); far w. was another in the G.B.A. 10 Jul (JBa). Singing Red-eyed Vireos were w. to Cimarron 31 Jul (DC) and Albuquerque's South Valley 17 Jun (DH). Several corvid species in the R.G.V. appear to have suffered steep declines in recent years, with West Nile virus the suspected culprit. Western Scrub-Jays were considered common in the Cochiti area in 2000 but were scarce or absent there in 2004, and reports of "dead blue jays" were received from the area (MW). In the Española area, monthly counts of Black-billed Magpies at one site declined from 35 in 2002 to 15 in 2003 to zero

by Jul 2004 (MM). Similarly, American Crows have declined sharply on standard transects in the middle R.G.V. (DH). Northwest of expected was a Chihuahuan Raven near San Ysidro, *Sandoval* 8 Jul (CR). Purple Martins returned to the recently-colonized Sangre de Cristo Mts., including one n. to the Raton area 24 Jul (DC), 2 above Gallinas, *San Miguel* 5 Jun (CR), and singles near Elk Mt. 6 Jul (WW), at Cowles 16 Jul (JEP), and Iron Gate Campground n. of Cowles 26 Jun (DW); noteworthy in the w. were five active nests in Cebolla Canyon, *Cibola* 3 Jul (DK). About 25 Tree Swallows were using nest boxes at Eagle Nest 12 Jun (DC); others suggestive of local breeding were at Iron Gate Campground 26 Jun (DW). Cave Swallows colonized an abandoned garage at White's City, where there were five nests 23 Jun (SW). Unusual at 3030 m were 15 Bush-tits on Elk Mt. 16 Jul (JEP).

NUTHATCHES THROUGH TANAGERS

Red-breasted Nuthatches began appearing in numbers (up to 7 daily) in the middle R.G.V. by 22 Jul (DH), and the species was "common" in the Burro Mts. 24–25 Jul (JD), where absent in Jun; unusual was one at K.K. 25 Jun (JO). One to 2 Pygmy Nuthatches descended to the R.G.V. at Albuquerque 22 Jul (DH). House Wrens apparently invaded the Gallinas Mts. near Corona following a large fire in 2001; this season, 8 were singing and a pair was feeding young 18 Jun (HS). Ten Black-tailed Gnatcatchers were tallied in the Tres Hermanas Mts. 10 Jun (LM); far from expected range was a Black-tailed at the Gila Cliff Dwellings 16 Jul (DK). A lone Veery singing along the Rio Pueblo, *Taos* 22 Jun–11 Jul (WW, JEP, JO, CB) provided the only report of the species. Late for the Peloncillo Mts. was a singing Swainson's Thrush in P.O. Canyon 17 & 19 Jun (CL). A white American Robin was at Socorro 10 Jul (vt. T. Mitchusson); a juv. was at Artesia 1 Jun (SW), where breeding is rare. Nicely described was a female Varied Thrush at Las Cruces 3 Jul (L. Schulte). A Brown Thrasher was nw. to the Animas R. 7–18 Jul (J. Wells, *vide* TR). At the e. fringe of the range were one Crissal Thrasher n. of Roswell at Bosque Grande plus 2 more near there 9 Jun (WH); one at Piñon 10 Jun (WH) provided a local first. Establishing breeding in *San Juan* were two Cedar Waxwing pairs that nested in Russian Olives along the San Juan R. below Navajo Dam 12 Jun–10 Jul (TR et al.); one nest apparently failed, but the other pair was feeding nestlings in Jul (ph. TR). Elsewhere, up to 4 Cedar Waxwings were seen daily at San Juan Pueblo throughout Jun (DS), where nesting was first documented in 1995. Single Phainopeplas wandered n. to *San Juan*, with one along the La Plata R. n. of Farmington 25 Jun (ph. TR) and another at Chaco Canyon 30 Jun–7 Jul (ph. B. Shattuck); others of note were singles n. to Los Lunas 16 Jul

(DH) and near Mayhill, *Otero* 30 Jun (SW).

A singing Olive Warbler was n. to Hausner Canyon, *Zuni* Mts. 1 Jun (JT), and 2 were in the San Mateo Mts. near Springtime Campground 11 Jun (HS); ads. were tending fledglings in the Burro Mts. 22 Jun (JD) and 18 Jul (DK). North in the R.G.V. was a pair of Lucy's Warblers at San Acacia 16 Jun (RD). A singing Northern Parula in P.O. Canyon 3 Jun (CL) furnished a local first, as did a male Chestnut-sided Warbler there 13 Jun (CL). Single Black-and-white Warblers were at Maxwell 25 Jun (JS) and at G.B.A. 10 Jul (JBa). Late American Redstarts were singles at R.G.N.C. 2 Jun (C. Davis) and Bosque 3 Jun (DH), plus a female at B.L.N.W.R. 3 Jun and a male there 5 Jun (GW); perhaps summering were a female near Cimarron 5 Jul (DC) and a male there 31 Jul (ph. DC). As in several recent years, an Ovenbird was singing along El Rito Cr. 11 (JO) & 26 Jun (JEP). Surprising was a singing Kentucky Warbler in the Sacramento Mts. sw. of Sacramento, *Otero* 23 Jun (MMS); in the same general area were a singing Hooded Warbler 9 Jun and a pair of Hoodeds 23 Jun (MMS). An ad. Wilson's Warbler with a fledgling was in a willow carr above Serpent L. 26 Jul (Jim Nelson-Moore), and several Wilson's were detected on transects in the nearby Santa Barbara Ridge area 27 Jul (JBe). Northerly Red-faced Warblers were singles in Hausner Canyon, *Zuni* Mts. 1 Jun (JT) and in the Sandia Mts. 4 Jun (J. Jokela). Two Painted Redstarts were n. to Sawmill Canyon, Magdalena Mts. 17 Jun (A. Rominger). Scarce in the Manzanito Mts., a singing Hepatic Tanager was at Cedro Peak 5 Jun (JEP); nicely documented was a nesting pair of Hepatics at Crow Canyon near Cimarron 25 Jun–3 Jul (ph. DC). Summer Tanagers summered n. to Galisteo, where there were one to 2 on 12 Jun (JO) and 13 Jul (JBa), plus a stub-tailed fledgling 25 Jul (JBa); in ne. *San Miguel*, up to 7 Summers along Atarque Cr. 3 Jun–29 Jul (MM) represented a significant range expansion. A molting male Scarlet Tanager was near Ponderosa 20 Jul (WW).

SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES

Responding to wetter conditions, Cassin's Sparrows were widespread and conspicuous, including in the nw., with one near San Antonio Mt., *Rio Arriba* 4 & 6 Jul (*vide* JBe), several near Pueblo Pintado, *McKinley* 30 Jun (JS), plus 2 there 11 Jul (CR), 8 in the *Ojito* area, w. *Sandoval* 27 Jun (CR), and 2 on Albuquerque's West Mesa 4 Jun (JEP). In the middle Animas Valley, Botteri's Sparrows have been slow to recover in areas that were both burned and grazed but have rebounded in unburned areas following cattle removal; a high 61 territories were mapped there 5–8 Jul (SOW, PM). Surprisingly far n. was a Black-chinned Sparrow in the La Jara Cr. drainage near Gobernador, *Rio Arriba* 19 Jun (JBe), not far from the Colorado line. Lark Buntings responded positive-

ly to plentiful rains in *Colfax*, *Union*, and *Harding*, where they were common to abundant Jun–Jul (LS, DC). Few Savannah Sparrow nests have been documented in New Mexico, so noteworthy was an ad. incubating eggs at Eagle Nest L. 13 Jun (DS). Prolonged drought coupled with excessive livestock grazing have spelled bad news for Arizona Grasshopper Sparrows in s. *Hidalgo*, where standard transects produced only 21 in the s. Animas Valley 10 Jun (down from 109 in 1992) and none in the West Playas Valley 11 Jun (down from 41 in 1992), where apparently extirpated (SOW). Exciting was news of singing Fox Sparrows in willow carrs in the Pecos Wilderness 27 Jul (JBe)—one above Serpent L. and 2 in the upper R. Santa Barbara drainage; the species is not known to nest in New Mexico. At least one Song Sparrow pair was nesting s. to the Zuni Mts. along Bluewater Cr. 24 Jun (HS). Some 48 Lincoln's Sparrows were detected in the San Pedro Park area 6–8 Jul (CR), a surprising density for New Mexico. At least six Yellow-eyed Junco territories were documented in the Burro Mts. Jun–Jul (JD), including a nest with eggs 3 Jun and ads. with fledglings on various dates 4 Jun–25 Jul (JD). Also in the Burro Mts. were at least two pairs of *dorsalis* Gray-headed Juncos, with fledglings noted 21 Jun (JD); this is the only site where the two taxa breed sympatrically.

Northern Cardinals in the ne. were singles at Santa Rosa 15 Jun (WW) and Tucumcari L. 26 Jul (NC). Ad. Pyrrhuloxias were feeding fledglings at Deming 17 (LM) & 31 Jul (CR). Single male Rose-breasted Grosbeaks lingered in the R.G.V. at Escondida 16 Jun (DH) and near Radium Springs 7 Jun (MS, JZ). Indigo Buntings continued to encroach on Lazuli habitat in the north; Indigo Bunting x Lazuli Bunting hybrids were noted on the Animas River 23 Jun and 6 Jul (TR) and near Cimarron 5 Jul (DC). A male Varied Bunting in P.O. Canyon 5–7 Jun (CL) provided a local first. An Eastern Meadowlark was nw. to the Cabezon Peak area, *Sandoval* 27 Jun (CR), and another was n. to Philmont, *Colfax* 16 Jun (DC); 13 were in the Rosebud area of *Harding* and s. *Union* 10 Jun (C. Hayes). Single Bronzed Cowbirds were n. to Albuquerque 13 Jun (JEP), B.L.N.W.R. 4 & 20 Jun (GW), and Portales 25 Jun (GK). An active Orchard Oriole nest was at Ute L. 9 Jun (DC), and another was near Pep in mid-Jun (*vide* TM). A probable male *Baltimore Oriole* was near Española 18 Jun (M. Orr); another was at B.L.N.W.R. 16 Jun (ph. GW). Cassin's Finches were notably scarce, but Red Crossbills were present in good numbers in the northern two-thirds of the state, including 250 in the San Pedro Park area 6–8 Jul (CR), 50 on Elk Mt. 6 Jul (WW), 26 in the Zuni Mts. 25 Jun (HS), and 40 at

Emory Pass 24 Jul (JEP). A male *White-winged Crossbill* with a juv. in the Latir Peaks area 19 & 27 Jun (ph. D. DiTommaso) likely nested locally (*vide* C. Benkman); other *White-wingeds* were 6 in the Brazos Ridge area 7 Jul (*vide* JBe), a male above Serpent L. 17 Jul (JEP), one in the upper R. Santa Barbara drainage 26 Jul (JBe), and 3 at the Santa Fe Ski Basin 27 Jul (WW). An American Goldfinch visited a feeder along the Animas R. near Cedar Hill 16 & 23 Jun (TR), and 2 were at Bosque 4 Jul (DH); up to 5 Americans were on the Cimarron R. near Cimarron 29 Jul (DC), where singing and flight displays were noted.

Initialed observers: Jonathan Batkin (JBa), Jason Beason (JBe), Celestyn Brozek, David Cleary, Nancy Cox, Joan Day-Martin, John DeLong, Robert Doster, Gordon Ewing, Kathy Granillo, David Hawksworth, William Howe, Tyler Huning, Greg Keller, David Krueper, Carroll Littlefield, Martin MacRoberts, Larry Malone, Tish McDaniel, Patricia Mehlhop, Alan Nelson, Bruce Neville, Jerry Oldenettel, John E. Parmeter, Tim Reeves, Mary Ristow, Christopher Rustay, Lawry Sager, Hart Schwarz, Marcy T. Scott, Dale Stahlecker, Mike M. Stake, James Stuart, John Trochet, Gordon Warrick, Mark Watson, Steve West, William West, David White, S. O. Williams, James Zabriskie. ☉

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Blessed with a vast land area, a favorable geographic location, and a wide diversity of habitats, New Mexico is home to one of North America's largest avifaunas—510 species at last count, of which some 300 breed in the state. And, owing to the low human population density (15 people/mi²), many New Mexico habitats vital to birds are in functioning or at least restorable condition. Nevertheless, declines are evident in many bird species, with 32 species listed as endangered or threatened and another eight species listed as of special concern by the State of New Mexico.

New Mexico encompasses parts of four Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs): the Southern Rockies/Colorado Plateau that covers most of the northern and central portions of the state (BCR 16), in which Lewis's Woodpecker, Gray Vireo, Pinyon Jay, and Black-throated Gray Warbler are representative species of concern; the Shortgrass Prairie in the east (BCR 18), along the Texas/Oklahoma border, with Lesser Prairie-Chicken, Mountain Plover, Long-billed Curlew, and Lark Bunting; the western-central Sierra Madre Occidental (BCR 34), with Montezuma Quail, Whiskered Screech-Owl, Elegant Trogon, and Red-faced Warbler; and the Chihuahuan Desert across most of the southern third of the state (BCR 35), with Lucifer Hummingbird, Sprague's Pipit, Baird's Sparrow, and Varied Bunting. In addition to these flagship species, numerous other species that occur in New Mexico have suffered documented range-wide or local declines, and so have been designated as priority species by Partners in Flight or other bird plans. Causes for these declines are typically interrelated and often complex, but leading the list is habitat loss, alteration, and/or fragmentation resulting from increasing human pressures on the environment.

Progressive loss of riparian systems is a leading challenge facing many resident and migratory bird species in New Mexico. Water is key to life in New Mexico and elsewhere in the arid Southwest, yet water is scarce and, consequently, is intensively managed. Unfortunately, virtually all water management is geared toward human needs (flood control, irrigation, domestic use, industrial use), leading to increased demands on riparian systems, resulting in lowering water tables, altered hydrology, stream desiccation, and loss of streamside habitats and associated bird species (Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Bell's Vireo). Included here is the rampant poisoning or other "control" of exotic plants such as saltcedar (*Tamarix*) with no regard for the biological consequences of such actions.

Progressive loss or degradation of native grasslands, owing largely to excessive livestock grazing, presents an important challenge to many New Mexico birds, including breeding species (Botteri's Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark), migrant and/or wintering

species (Sprague's Pipit, Baird's Sparrow, McCown's Longspur), and other species, such as Aplomado Falcon, that require healthy grassland ecosystems to survive. When excessive grazing is combined with periodic drought, grassland degradation can be severe and in some cases probably irreversible. Another threat to the integrity of grasslands as well as other habitats is increased energy development activities throughout much of New Mexico and adjacent western states.

Owing to widespread fire suppression activities in past years, wildfire is now a recognized threat to New Mexico's woodland and forest ecosystems and to many of the birds that depend on them. Especially vulnerable are forest species that require extensive mature forests, such as Northern Goshawk and Mexican Spotted Owl. Included here is the danger inherent in inappropriate (but politically palatable) "management" activities, such as increasing timber harvest to prevent fires.

Encompassing many of the challenges to birds is the continuing failure to recognize—or admit—that New Mexico is, in fact, a very arid region. What some refer to as "long-term drought" may more realistically be seen as a return to long-term norms. Continued reliance on drought as an excuse to continue unsustainable land and water management policies will not resolve the challenges facing life in the Southwest. Finally, underlying all of the above is a relentlessly growing human population which, if it proves incapable of developing the wisdom to alter its "growth for the sake of growth" philosophy, has the potential to disrupt native ecosystems—ranging from local habitat destruction to global climate change—that both we and our birds depend upon.



Common Black-Hawk is listed as a Threatened species in New Mexico and as a Priority Species by Partners in Flight, largely because its limited habitat—undisturbed riparian corridors with large trees—has been impacted by water diversion projects, development, and disturbance. This photograph was taken in New Mexico's Gila River Valley in July 1969. Photograph by Dale and Marian Zimmerman.