



Amazingly, this immature Red-billed Tropicbird at Yuma 22 Feb 2000 was the sixth recorded in Arizona; all prior records are from fall. Photograph by Bob Henry.

high of 12 was seen 31 Jan (D. Abbott, T. Hall). Other reports were of singles at Arlington 29 Dec–1 Jan (TC), Arizona City 12 Jan (JLD), and Picacho Reservoir during Jan (S.&J. Levy). Interesting was a report of a Whip-poor-will from Garden Canyon 11 Dec (RH, D. Lane); there are no verified winter reports of this species in the state.

An above-average number of Violet-crowned Hummingbirds wintered this year; one was at Portal throughout the period (JLD, DJ), two birds were at Tucson 19 Dec and 20 Jan respectively (*vide* L. Shibley, DS), and another was found dead in Green Valley 22 Dec (T. Furniss, *UA). Two Blue-throated Hummingbirds were at a low elevation in Ventana Canyon, Pima, 20–29 Dec (MS). The Eared Trogon first discovered during Nov in Cave Creek Canyon continued until at least 2 Jan (*vide* DJ, NMC). A second individual was in Miller Canyon in the Huachuca Mts. 13–20 Dec (M&S Turner, m.ob., vt. GHR, ph. MS). The only report of Green Kingfisher this year was of two along the upper San Pedro R. seen sporadically throughout the period (DK, m.ob.). Very unusual was a report of four Acorn Woodpeckers at a lower-than-normal elevation on the campus of Arizona State University in Maricopa 26 Dec–Jan (JB). We received only two reports of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, a male at Patagonia Lake 21 Jan (SM) and an imm. in ne. Tucson 14 Jan (JLD). Single Yellow-shafted Flickers were reported from the Phoenix Zoo 29 Dec+ (RMJ), Patagonia L. 9–16 Jan (PL), and Oak Flat campground, Pinal (JB).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH THRASHERS

Two Black Phoebes were along the Colorado R. in Glen Canyon 3–30 Jan (RR, L. Dickson, J. Grahame); this species has only recently been found wintering along the river as far north as the Grand Canyon. It was a surprisingly good winter for E. Phoebes in the state, with no fewer than seven reports received, most from the southeast. Although likely a rare but regular winter visitor in n. Arizona, N. Shrikes had not previously been found wintering along the Colorado R. in the Grand Canyon. This winter, one was found at river marker 5.8 on 17 Dec (CTL), while another was found dead at Lee's Ferry 1 Feb (C. Bland). Several Plumbeous Vireos were in the Tucson area this winter, with one along the Santa Cruz R. 19 Dec–26 Jan (RH), one at the Roger Road S.T.P. 25 Jan (RH), one in n. Tucson 29 Jan (RH), one in cen. Tucson 3 Feb (RH), and one in ne. Tucson 14 Jan (JLD). A Cassin's Vireo was along the Santa Cruz R. 19 Dec (RH); we are still working out the winter status in the state of both species. Accidental in winter anywhere in Arizona, a Warbling Vireo was photographed at Pena Blanca L. 24 Jan–17 Feb (P. Wang, ph. MS).

Unheard of in n. Arizona during the winter, a N. Rough-winged Swallow was reported from Lee's Ferry 16 Jan (C. Bland). A number of Barn Swallows lingered into the winter, with one along the Santa Cruz R. in Tucson 10 Dec (MS), one in Carefree 27 Dec (H. Beatty), two at Arlington 29 Dec (B. Palmer), and another in Tucson along the Santa Cruz R. 26 Jan (RH). This species is casual at best in Arizona during the winter. A

seemingly lost Am. Crow was along the Santa Cruz R. in Tucson 26 Jan (MS). Word from n. Arizona was that Bushitts staged a large invasion, with greater-than-normal numbers throughout that area (CTL). Perhaps indicative of a mild winter, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were found at a couple of localities in n. Arizona, with three along the Colorado R. in Glen Canyon 30 Jan (J. Grahame) and another at Page 1 Feb (CTL). There were few, if any, winter reports of this species from n. Arizona.

Amazingly, the **Carolina Wren** discovered at Cook's L. along the San Pedro R. near Dudleyville last spring wintered successfully (H. Messing, D. Laush). Winter Wrens were more prevalent in s. Arizona, with about ten reports received, most in December. It is likely that both "eastern" and "western" birds were involved; birders should pay attention to call notes, as they are the best means of differentiating between the subspecies groups. Mountain Bluebirds were not widespread throughout s. Arizona this winter, but a concentration of at least 343 on the Gila River CBC 29 Jan (*vide* TC) was indicative that they had staged at least a mini-invasion to the south. A greater-than-normal number of Rufous-backed Robins were found this winter; perhaps as many as three wintered at the B.T.A. (although only one was seen regularly), one was at Patagonia L. S.P. 11 Dec–1 Feb (m.ob.), one was along Arivaca Cr. near Arivaca 29 Dec (KKe), two were in ne. Tucson 14 Jan–2 Feb (RH, PL), and one was reported from Green Valley 27 Jan (B. Massey). Still casual anywhere in the state during winter, a Varied Thrush was reported from a Tempe yard 17 Jan (P. Wilson, S. Machen). The Gray Catbird that was discovered in Portal during the fall season was still present 2–3 Jan (JLD); another was at Oak Flat 15 Jan (E. Boyd). Another sign of a particularly mild winter in n. Arizona was a N. Mockingbird at Page 3–23 Jan (B.&K. Bobowski, J. Alston), providing perhaps a first local winter record. Individual Brown Thrashers were found in Scottsdale throughout the season (J. Bartley), at the P.A.P. pecan grove 29 Jan–23 Feb (J. McCabe, m.ob.), and in Green Valley 21 Feb (D. Tracy); this species is a rare but almost regular winter visitor in s. Arizona.

WARBLERS

Two Olive Warblers were at a lower-than-expected elevation in Hawshaw Canyon 9 Feb (MS). At least eight N. Parulas were discovered this winter, with birds along the Verde R. 1 Dec (S. Demaree et al.), at Kino Springs 11 Dec (KKe), along the Salt River

ne. of Phoenix 16 Dec (TC), along the Santa Cruz R. in Tucson 19 Dec (GHR, RH), at Arlington 1 Jan (TC), and along Sonoita Creek s. of Patagonia 3 Jan (RH). Amazingly, another was at Lee's Ferry 20–29 Dec (CTL, C. Goetze, G. Nealon), providing what was undoubtedly the first winter record for n. Arizona. Chestnut-sided Warblers in s. Arizona during the winter are becoming routine; this year one was at Arlington 28–29 Dec (TC, JW, RW), two were along the Santa Cruz R. 19 Dec (RH), and another was in n.-cen. Tucson 1 Feb+ (RH). Still one of the rarer warblers to occur in Arizona, with fewer than ten total records, is **Pine Warbler**, so one well-documented at Bisbee 4–22 Jan (W. Wallraven, H. Brodtkin, ph. MS) was of great interest. Two other reports were intriguing, one from Hawshaw Canyon 26 Jan (D. Touret), and another from Ramsey Canyon 3 Feb (M. Pretti, H. Brodtkin), but the A.B.C. has yet to receive details of either sighting. Virtually every record of this species in the state is from the winter. Similarly, **Prairie Warbler** is among the warblers with the fewest state records and most are from late fall and winter. One found along the Verde R. on the F.M.I.R. 16 Dec (†TC) brings the total number of reports in the state to seven. The only Black-and-white Warbler report for the season was one at Pena Blanca L. 4 Dec (KKe). Likewise, the only Am. Redstart found this winter was one along the Gila R. near Robbin's Butte 29 Dec (TC). Normally somewhat rarer in winter than the previous two species, two Ovenbirds were found, along Sonoita Cr. near Patagonia 23–31 Dec (J. Saba et al.) and in ne. Tucson 12 Jan–8 Feb (RH et al.). Likely a rare but regular winter visitor to rocky streams in the se. portion of the state, one Louisiana Waterthrush was reported this winter, a bird in Garden Canyon 11 Dec (RH, D. Lane). Outstanding for winter, a male Hooded Warbler was located in Reid Park, Tucson, 2 Dec–1 Jan (m.ob.). Another Hooded, this time a female, was along the Santa Cruz R. in Tucson 26 Jan (MS); there are few previous winter reports. A Wilson's Warbler was along the Santa Cruz R. 5 Dec (RH). The Painted Redstart found along Camp Creek during the fall (for the third year in a row) was still present 26–27 Dec (TC); this locale is well n. of most winter records for the state. After nearly a two-year hiatus, another **Rufous-capped Warbler** was located in French Joe Canyon 20 Nov+ (KKe, ph. M. Rogers), establishing only a 9th record for Arizona. One wonders if a small population has been present in French Joe since at least 1995, when the first ones were found there!

BUNTINGS THROUGH GOLDFINCHES

The bird of the season was a male **Eastern Towhee** along Sonoita Cr. just s. of Patagonia, first found on the Patagonia CBC and then relocated 30 Jan+ (J. McCabe, RH, KKe, ph. MS, v.r. GHR). This bird establishes a first Arizona record and the first record west of the Continental Divide. Intriguing was the report of a Botteri's Sparrow from grasslands adjacent to the San Pedro R. e. of Sierra Vista 2 Jan (DK); although the bird was well-described by an excellent observer, there remains no physical documentation of this species' occurrence in Arizona during the winter. Apparently Brewer's Sparrow is a rare or casual winter visitor in n. Arizona; therefore, one at Page 21–22 Dec (CTL) was of interest. This winter was probably the best for seeing thousands of Brewer's throughout s. Arizona. Of particular local interest was the identification of a possible Timberline Brewer's Sparrow (*Spizella breweri taverneri*) along the San Pedro R. near Hereford 22 Jan (†SM); in our opinion, the jury is still out as to whether or not this form can be safely identified in the field, but it should be noted that the published winter range of this potential split from Brewer's Sparrow includes Arizona. Black-throated Sparrows are unusual in n. Arizona during winter, with sightings this year of one at Page 22 Dec (CTL), two there 3 Jan (J. Spence), and another near Cameron 18 Feb (CTL).

It was clear from a number of reports that this may have been the best year ever for the *oriantha* subspecies of White-crowned Sparrow wintering in s. Arizona; one observer reported no fewer than 200 along the San Pedro R. in early Jan, indicating unprecedented numbers for winter. This form usually winters s. in Mexico and only passes through s. Arizona during migration. At least seven reports, totaling no fewer than 12 individual Fox Sparrows were received for the period; virtually all were believed

to be the subspecies *schistacea* from the Rocky Mountains, but at least one at Portal 3 Jan (JLD) was believed to be either an *iliaca* or *zaboria* from farther north/east. It is important to identify the various subspecies of Fox Sparrows in Arizona, as they may be split into at least three species and the winter status of each form in Arizona is poorly understood. Golden-crowned Sparrows, still rare in Arizona during the winter, included one along the Agua Fria R., Yavapai, 8 Jan (CBa), one in sw. Phoenix 15–21 Jan (B. Grossi et al.), and two at the Phoenix Zoo 17 Jan (RJ). Greater-than-usual numbers of both Swamp and White-throated Sparrows were in se. Arizona. More unusual were Swamp Sparrows found in n. Arizona, where there are few winter reports. One was found in the Grand Canyon (RM 8.7) 4 Feb (CTL), and another was in a different part of the Grand Canyon 23 Feb (CTL). A Red-backed Junco (*J. h. dorsalis*) was identified in Miller Canyon 11 Jan (JLD); there are few confirmed reports of this form away from its breeding grounds in the White Mountains of e. Arizona. A Lapland Longspur was photographed on the Vaca Ranch in the San Rafael Grasslands 19 Jan to at least 9 Feb (†PL, RH, ph. G. West, MS); despite being rare but regular in areas of California, there are inexplicably still fewer than a dozen verified reports from Arizona.

Very unusual during winter, two Indigo Buntings were found, one in Portal 2–5 Jan (NMC, KK et al.) and another that hit a window at the Phoenix Zoo 15 Jan (RJ). Another



The Southwest's first Eastern Towhee was this male at Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Sanctuary from late Dec through the winter. It was seen by numerous observers, had various calls recorded, is videotaped, and was photographed by many; this image was from 13 Feb 2000. Photograph by Mark Stevenson.

sign of a mild winter was the occurrence of several Blue Grosbeaks along the upper S.P.R., all near Hereford, and perhaps referring to the same individuals; a female was seen 5 Dec (GHR), two males were seen 12 Feb (DK), and a male and a female were there 24 Feb (S. Turner). A stunning bird was an apparent hybrid male N. Cardinal × Pyrrhuloxia photographed at Patagonia L. 10 Jan (ph. JLD, L. Sansone); details of this rare combination will be published elsewhere.

A male Hooded Oriole, casual at best anywhere in s. Arizona during the winter, was at the B.T.A. 17 Jan (CT). More expected during winter, but still considered casual, were the Scott's Orioles at Portal 16 Dec+ (S. Spofford, DJ), the Santa Rita Lodge in Madera Canyon

22 Dec (*fide* MS), Sycamore Canyon 28 Dec (M. Gors), and Agua Caliente Park, Tucson, 17 Jan–22 Feb (MS). For at least the third year in a row, Bronzed Cowbirds have been found wintering in the Mohawk Valley, with three birds at Wellton 18 Jan (PL). A female Red Crossbill on a nest at the South Rim of the Grand Canyon 7 Feb (CTL) was of interest, as the timing of breeding in Arizona is mostly a mystery. It was a particularly good Lawrence's Goldfinch year, with numerous birds found at a variety of locations from the Phoenix region south; even during good years (although likely bad for the birds themselves), numbers seem greatly reduced as compared to invasion years from the 1970s and 1980s.

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new mexico



LOONS THROUGH DUCKS

A **Yellow-billed Loon** at Cochiti L. 15–26 Feb (WW et al., ph. JO) was New Mexico's 10th in 10 years. Single Pac. Loons were at Conchas L. 9 Feb (WH) and Brantley L. 18 Jan (CR); a dead Pacific at E.B.L. was being recycled by a gull 2 Feb (WW). South was a Horned Grebe at Burn L., Las Cruces, 18 Dec–9 Jan (v.o.); high counts were five Horneds at Santa Rosa 19 Dec (WW) and four at Brantley L. 29 Dec (JD, JO). A **Red-necked Grebe** at Farmington L. 11–23 Dec (ph. TR) provided only the 3rd confirmed state record, but was the second for that locale. One–two Am. Bitterns at B.L.N.W.R. 18 Dec–4 Feb (GW, SB) were the only ones found. Small numbers of Great Egrets overwintered at Bosque N.W.R. and B.L.N.W.R., but Snowy Egrets were unreported after late Dec. Late were four Cattle Egrets at Bosque N.W.R. 18 Dec (SC), where one remained into Feb (v.o., ph. BZ). Seven–eight White-faced Ibises also overwintered at Bosque N.W.R. 18 Dec–12 Feb (v.o., ph. BZ) and another remained at B.L.N.W.R. (GW). Very early was a Turkey Vulture near Las Cruces 18 Feb (SB).

With about 12,000 of each, Ross's Geese equaled Snow Geese at B.L.N.W.R. 3 Dec (GW); some 25,000 Snows were at Bosque N.W.R. 18 Dec (SC). To protect Arctic breeding grounds from these "light geese," it truly became open season on them in New Mexico 1 Feb, complete with no daily bag or possession limits, unplugged shotguns and electronic calls approved, and shooting hours extended to before sunrise and after sunset! Four Tundra Swans found their way

to the Bernardo-La Joya area by Dec, but only one survived the experience. Although it is illegal to hunt swans in New Mexico, one was shot 19 Dec and two others were bagged 7 Jan (*fide* T. Mitchusson); the survivor was last seen 28 Jan (JP). Wandering Wood Ducks included singles at Zuni 18 Dec–8 Jan (ph. DC), Lake Valley, Sierra, 25 Dec (CR), and the Animas Valley 4 Jan (JD), and two were at Deming 3 & 30 Dec (LM, JD, JO); noteworthy were 10 at Española 19 Dec (BF). Cinnamon Teal are irregular in winter, so Jan reports of 1–2 at Zuni (DC), R.G.N.C. (MS, JZ, JO), Bosque Redondo (NV), Bosque N.W.R. (v.o.), and B.L.N.W.R. (GW) were noteworthy. A Blue-winged Teal was at Bosque N.W.R. 18 Dec (D. Hawksworth) and 9 Jan (JO). One–four Greater Scaup were at six locales from the R.G.V. east (v.o.); west were four males at Farmington L. 21 Feb (TR). Unusual for the far sw. was a Com. Goldeneye at Hurley 8–26 Jan (EL, LM).

OSPREYS THROUGH OWLS

Presumably early were two Ospreys at E.B.L. 1 Feb (WW). White-tailed Kites continued to tantalize, with two in the Uvas Valley 4 Feb (ph. JO) and singles in the Animas Valley 4 Dec (*fide* RS) and 20 Jan (AC, NMC) and in the R.G.V. near Garfield 18 Jan (R. Rasmussen). A dark *Buteo* at Cliff 3 Dec was carefully described as a Zone-tailed by one observer and, independently, as a Harlan's Hawk by another observer; nicely documented was a Harlan's near Anthony 6 Dec (ph. BZ) and 22 Jan (MS, JZ). Many Ferruginous Hawks winter at large prairie dog colonies near Janos, n. Chihuahua, where 21 were counted 18 Dec (C. Melcher). One–two Rough-legged Hawks were s. to the Animas Valley 4 & 20 Jan (JD, NMC, AC), Mesilla Valley 22 Jan (MS, JZ), and Dripping Springs 18 Dec (GE). Merlins were especially numer-

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Another dry and mild winter allowed many birds to linger late, overwinter north of usual, and/or return early, all the while rearranging conventional wisdom as to the status of several species. The season was notable for unprecedented numbers of wintering sparrows, these apparently responding to abundant grasses and mild conditions, especially in south-central and southwestern New Mexico.

Abbreviations: B.L.N.W.R. (*Bitter Lake N.W.R.*); Bosque N.W.R. (*Bosque del Apache N.W.R.*); E.B.L. (*Elephant Butte Lake*); R.G.N.C. (*Rio Grande Nature Center, Albuquerque*); R.G.V. (*Rio Grande Valley*); R.S. (*Rattlesnake Springs, Eddy*); Zuni (*Zuni Indian Reservation*).