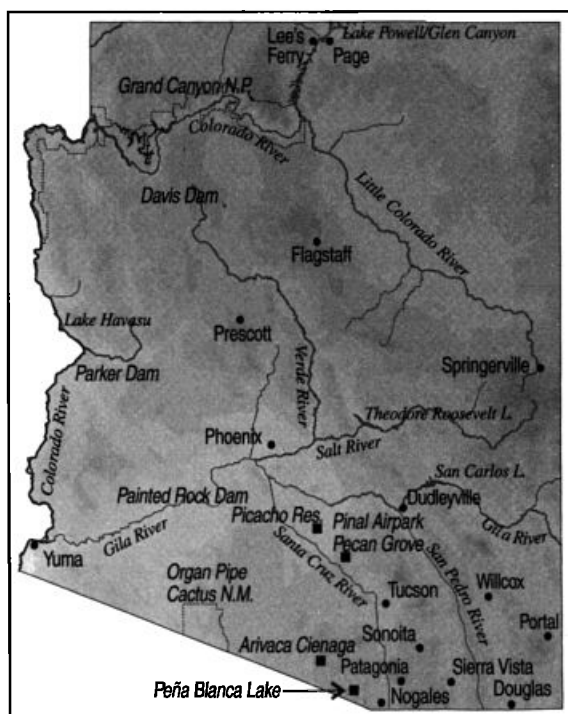


Arizona



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In general, it was a relatively mild and wet winter, which was certainly reflected by the presence of a number of species that normally have a difficult time wintering in Arizona, such as warblers (Yellow, Wilson's, Townsend's), hummingbirds (Calliope, Rufous, and Broad-tailed), and orioles. On the heels of last fall's major invasion of montane species into s. Arizona, several species lingered well into the winter, with large numbers of some present locally (such as Townsend's Solitaires and Steller's Jays). Other species were late arriving, such as Red Crossbills and Slate-colored Fox Sparrows. Perhaps the single defining event of this winter was the major invasion of White-winged Juncos, the

first such movement into Arizona since the winter of 1936–1937. Another interesting event was a serious movement of Rough-legged Hawks, normally a casual visitor, into southern Arizona.

Abbreviations: Hassayampa River Preserve (H.R.P.), San Pedro River (S.P.R.), Sewage Treatment Plant (S.T.P.), Sulfur Springs Valley (S.S.V.), Tempe Town Lake (T.T.L.), Bill Williams Delta (B.W.D.), Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area (W.W.D.)

Loons Through Mergansers

A rare winter visitor, a Pacific Loon was at Katherine Landing 15 Jan (MSM), while the only Common Loon of the season was at T.T.L. 7–13 Jan (SG). Horned Grebes are always interesting when found away from the Colorado R.; therefore 2 at Canyon L. 13 Dec (SG) were noteworthy. The only Western and Clark's Grebes reported from the se. were individuals at Patagonia L. 14 Jan (PL) and at Tucson 1 Dec (DW), respectively. Neotropic Cormorants have become regular winter residents at both Patagonia L. and in *Maricopa* along the conflu-

ence of the Salt and Gila Rivers in the last two decades; high counts this season were 3 at Patagonia L. 22 Jan (JD) and up to 15 along the Salt and Gila throughout the period (TC, SG, RMJ). Notable concentrations of White-faced Ibis included 30 w. of Phoenix 21 Dec (RWtz, DT), 50 a little farther w. along the Gila R. late Dec–early Jan (TC), and 135 even farther w. near Arlington 8 Feb (*vide* SG). A Turkey Vulture near the junction of US 89 and AZ 69 on 11 Jan (CT) was the first winter record for the Prescott region. Greater White-fronted Geese were reported in above-average numbers this winter, with 3 on the Salt Verde C.B.C. 14 Dec (JoB), 3 at W.W.D. 3 Jan (CB), and 4 at the S.S.V. 21 Jan (JD). High concentrations of Snow Geese were 50 at Arlington 10 Dec (MB), 150 at W.W.D. 3 Jan (CBe), and 190 at the S.S.V. 21 Jan (JD). This was an incredible year for Ross's Geese, with a total of 56 individuals reported from nine different locations, high counts including 10 seen off and on at the Avra Valley S.T.P. 2–12 Dec (JH, MMS), 20 at W.W.D. 3 Jan (CBe), and another 10 at the S.S.V. 21 Jan (JD).

Wood Duck reports came in from the Gila R. C.B.C. 27 Dec (BG), Agua Caliente Park, Pima 31 Dec (KK), and 4 were found at St. David 19 Feb (ST). A male Eurasian Wigeon was found at its usual haunts in s. Scottsdale by 23 Dec (PM), other single males were at Watson L. 29 Dec (MP) and Fort Mohave, *Mohave* 15 Jan (MSM), and an interesting Eurasian x American hybrid spent its 2nd winter at Willcox (CG). Two very large concentrations of Greater Scaup were reported, 16 near the Prescott Airport during January (CT) and up to 65 at Lee's Ferry on the Colorado R. 3 Feb (MMS, PL, JO). Casual in the state, Long-tailed Duck was well represented this winter, with individuals found at Page 16 Dec (MMS, v.t. GHR), at Tucson 22 Dec (BS), at Lee's Ferry 3 Feb (PL et al.), and B.W.D. 17 Feb (CB, SS). This was also a strong year for Common Goldeneye, with 26 individuals reported from fourteen different locations, while at their more traditional locations as many as 500 were counted along the Colorado R. at Parker Dam during Feb (DC). Barrow's Goldeneyes seemed to be rather sparse this year. We received only two reports: 2 were all that could be found at Parker Dam 1 Jan+ (BH, SH), while the other was a first county record for *Apache* at Lyman L. 14 Jan (MMS, v.t. GHR). Always interesting away from the Colorado R., a single male Red-breasted Merganser was at L. Montezuma 25 Jan (CT).

Kites Through Woodpeckers

There was a scattering of White-tailed Kites reported in s. Arizona: one was at the San Rafael Grasslands 9 Dec (RH), 2 at the S.S.V. 5

Dec (MMS, RH, WR), one at Bog Hole Wildlife Area 28 Dec (DW), one near Friendly Corner 21 Jan (JM), another at Hereford 2 Jan (JK), and 2 were seen off and on at the Sonoita Grasslands during Dec and Jan (JR, DK). Casual anywhere in the state, a single Red-shouldered Hawk was at Tuba City 16 Feb (AH), while the pair that has taken up residence at H.R.P. was back on territory by late Feb (NL; ph MMS). A very late Zone-tailed Hawk was at Green Valley 20 Dec (SJ), and another wintering or very early migrant was in Tucson 7 Feb (RG). Rough-legged Hawks invaded s. Arizona this winter; individuals were at Buckeye 31 Dec (SG, TC, MB), w. Phoenix 11 Feb (MB), n. of Sunizona 5 Dec (MMS, RH, WR), Tucson 25 Dec (BM), Harshaw Road 28 Dec (JL), Patagonia 28 Dec (DW, M. ob.), and 2 were found along Stataline Road near Portal 1 Dec (DJ), with another 2 near Elfrida 6 Dec (v.t. GHR). Both rare winter visitors, single Snowy and Semipalmated Plovers were present on a pond s. of Arlington throughout Jan and Feb (AS et al.). It should be good news for folks in the n. plains region that Mountain Plovers were found in s. Arizona in strong numbers this winter as many as 50 were on the Western Sod Farms (NB, m.ob.), 80 were w. of Casa Grande 7 Jan (NB), and 75 were at Essary Hay Sales 14 Jan (JD). Another rare winter visitor, a single Lesser Yellowlegs was at the Water Ranch Ponds 24 Feb (SG). Herring Gulls are always a nice find, individuals were at Lyman L. 14 Dec (MMS, GHR) and Many Farms L. 15 Dec (MMS, GHR).

Eurasian Collared-Doves continued at two s. Arizona locations; one was along the Upper San Pedro R. 11 Dec (CA), and 4 remained at Willcox until at least 3 Dec (RH). Ruddy Ground-Doves have certainly dropped off from the high winter numbers of a few years ago. This year saw only 4, with 2 at Arlington 27 Dec (MC, BWtz, et al) and another 2 at Tacna 12 Jan (PL). Northern Saw-whet Owls invaded the lowlands during mid-winter. As many as 4 were in the Phoenix area during Jan, one was photographed in Sabino Canyon 28 Dec (ph. K and P Kynion), a single was in Bisbee 26 Jan (JW), and yet another was at Hereford 28 Jan (WW). A Calliope Hummingbird wintered at the Tucson Audubon Society offices in Tucson 15 Dec+ (S. Birky et al.; ph. MMS), providing what is likely only the 2nd winter record for the state. Other interesting winter hummingbirds included a Broad-tailed Hummingbird in Tucson 6 Dec+ (ph. DS) and individual Rufous Hummingbirds in Hereford 5 Jan (M. Pretti) and in Tucson 7 Jan (K. Roche).

Lewis's Woodpeckers were widely reported in s. part of the state this winter. Williamson's

Sapsuckers also staged an impressive invasion this year, with as many as 10 individuals found at lower-than-normal elevations. It's widely known that Arizona is a prominent wintering ground for hybrid Red-naped x Red-breasted Sapsuckers, and even though redder-than-normal Red-naped usually end up in the hybrid category, it is far from impossible for a pure Red-breasted to be found. We encourage observers to scrutinize each individual closely and to forward all documentation (especially photos) to the A.B.C. so that we can learn from these interesting birds. This winter saw 7 of these sapsuckers reported, with at least one in e. Tucson 18 Feb (†MMS et al.) and another at Cook's L. 5 Jan (TC) that suggested pure Red-breasted. Casual in Arizona, 2 Northern Flickers of the yellow-shafted race were found this year, one at Many Farms L. 15 Dec (MMS, GHR), the other at Scottsdale 20 Jan (RD).

Flycatchers Through Pipits

At least two different Western Flycatchers were found this winter, one at the H.R.P. near Wickenburg 6 Dec (DS, MMS, CDB), and the other along the Santa Cruz R. in Tucson 28 Feb (RH); all of the definitively identified individuals of this complex in Arizona during the winter in the past have referred to Pacific-slope Flycatcher, and there are no documented winter records of Cordilleran Flycatcher from the state. It was an above-average winter for Eastern Phoebe in the state, with at least six different reports received. A Vermilion Flycatcher in Prescott 15 Dec–9 Jan (CT) was north of this species's normal winter range in Arizona.

Most unusual for winter was a Bell's Vireo found at the H.R.P. 6 Dec (DS); there are very few documented winter records of the state. It was an above-average winter for Plumbeous Vireo, with no fewer than 13 reports throughout s. Arizona. Cassin's Vireos were less numerous this winter, with one reported from Reid Park, Tucson 8 Dec (MMS) and another found in Warsaw Canyon 16 Dec (BA). Good numbers of Steller's Jays lingered in the lowlands of s. Arizona after last fall's major invasion of montane species; more unusual were at least 40 found in the Portal area throughout the period (DJ). Western Scrub-Jays also lingered well into the winter at a variety of lowland locations. At least 3 Clark's Nutcrackers were present at Rustler Park, Chiricahua Mts. 1 Jan (JO), where this species is only a sporadic winter visitor. Away from normal wintering areas in s. Arizona, and most likely a result of the montane invasion, up to 6 American Crows were present at Arlington, w. of Phoenix, 26 Dec–21 Jan (TC, RMJ, SG). Crows were once again found wintering in the Sulphur Springs

Valley, with at least 250 present e. of Elfrida much of Jan (CDB et al.).

Four Purple Martins were reported from Tucson 18 Feb (B. Nicholas), which is at least two weeks earlier than the usual first arrivals of this species in Arizona. Barn Swallows lingered at several lowland locations through Dec, and individuals were reported at Picacho Res. 1 Jan (NB), at Roll 12 Jan (PL), and in Tucson 13 Jan (B. Nicholas); this species is casual at best in s. Arizona during the winter. After the report of **Black-capped Chickadees** along Short Cr. in Colorado City in the fall, another 2 were located along the wash at Teec Nos Pos 7 Dec through Feb (TC, CL, m.ob.; ph. MMS v.t. GHR); there are still fewer than ten records from the state. Mountain Chickadees also lingered at a variety of lowland locations after the fall invasion, but 2 at Portal 17 Dec–1 Feb (DJ) were more unusual. Amazingly, the **Carolina Wren** that was found at Cook's L. along the lower S.P.R. during the summer of 1999 was still present throughout the winter (TC); this remains the only record of this species from Arizona.

It was certainly one of the best (or worst depending on one's perspective) winters in Arizona for Townsend's Solitaires, with individuals found at a variety of lowland locations, more impressive were at least 27 found on the Atascosa C.B.C. 16 Dec (*vide* K. Kertell), and 50–75 present all winter at Portal (DJ), both local records. Rufous-backed Robin reports were as follows: the individual found at H.R.P. during the fall season was seen through 7 Jan (SG, ph DS), one was along lower Sonoita Creek 16 Dec (M. Bissontz), and one was found in downtown Phoenix 27 Dec+ (J. McKay et al.). The Varied Thrush that was found at H.R.P. during the fall remained until at least 6 Jan (B. Demaree et al.), while another was located at Whitlow Dam 13 Dec (J. Bartley), and a third was found at Patagonia L. 5 Mar (S. Turner); this species is a casual fall and winter visitor to Arizona. Another casual visitor to the state, Brown Thrashers put in a better-than-average showing this winter, with individuals at the B.T.A. 1 Dec+ (m.ob.), along the lower S.P.R. 5 Jan (GHR), and at Page Springs 25 Jan–11 Feb (CT). Although regular as a winter bird in se. Arizona, there are very few Sprague's Pipit reports from elsewhere in the state; one found s.w. of Arlington 26 Dec–8 Feb (TC et al.) provided one of the few recent *Maricopa* records.

Warblers Through Goldfinches

A Northern Parula found along the Salt R. in sw. Phoenix in early Nov remained there through 11 Feb (m.ob.). Another parula was at Wahweep on L. Powell 3 Dec (J. Saba), while another was at the Sweetwater Wetlands in Tucson through

15 Jan (MMS). Surprisingly more unusual in winter, single Yellow Warblers were in Tucson 17 Dec (RH), at Central Arizona College near Casa Grande 1 Jan (NB), and in sw. Phoenix 21 Jan (SG, RMJ). The Chestnut-sided Warbler that was found at the Phoenix Zoo during Nov was still present 6 Dec (RMJ), and another was located near Tolleson 10 Dec (BG); this species remains a rare but regular late fall and early winter visitor to s. Arizona. Certainly one of the better warblers to be found this winter in Arizona was a Magnolia Warbler located in Continental 15 Feb+ (†S. Johnsen; †MMS et al.), providing the first winter record for the se.; there was only one previous winter record for the state, a bird along the Bill Williams R. Dec–Jan 1978. A male Black-throated Blue Warbler was reported from Madera Canyon 10 Dec (B. Mulrooney) but was not relocated. The Palm Warbler found in Gilbert in Nov lingered until at least 8 Dec (R. Ferguson); this species is accidental in the state during winter. Four Black-and-white Warblers, perhaps slightly above average, were found during the winter, with one at Tolleson 10 Dec (BG), one in California Gulch 16 Dec (K. Graves), one at the H.R.P. 3 Jan (E. Archer), and one at Peña Blanca L. 3 Mar (WR). The only American Redstart reported this winter was one in Scottsdale 7–20 Jan (*vide* SG). Similarly, the only Northern Waterthrush reported to us this winter was one near Arlington 24 Dec (TC). More interesting were 2 different Louisiana Waterthrushes, still considered a casual winter visitor to the state, one along the upper S.P.R. near Kingfisher Pond 30 Dec (DK et al.) and one along Sonoita Cr. above Patagonia L. 3 Feb+ (WR et al.). A male Wilson's Warbler was at Sweetwater Wetlands in Tucson until at least 18 Feb; this species is casual at best during the winter anywhere in the state. For the 5th year in a row, a Painted Redstart returned to the Camp Creek area near Carefree 29 Dec (TC), and one was well n. of its normal winter distribution in Arizona at Oak Creek Canyon 20 Dec–9 Jan (M. Medina, T. Ellis, D. Creek). The Rufous-capped Warbler that was first located in French Joe Canyon last winter, and persisted there through the fall season, was present all winter (*vide* MMS).

An ad. female Western Tanager, casual in the state during the winter season, lingered at a Tucson feeder 10 Dec (B. Bates). The only Clay-colored Sparrow report of the winter was one at the San Pedro House, upper S.P.R. 22 Jan (JLD). Although regular in s. Arizona during the winter, a Sage Sparrow n. of Prescott 14 Jan (CT) provided a first local winter record. At least 10 different Fox Sparrows were found around the state this winter, with all but one pertaining to the Slate-colored form of the Rocky Mts.; one

seen along the upper S.P.R. near Hereford 28 Jan (JWh) was one of the Red types. Swamp Sparrows were more numerous this winter and reported from a variety of s. Arizona locations, as was White-throated Sparrow. The only Harris's Sparrow report this winter was of one near Claypool, *Gila* 1 Jan (J. Holloway). Single Golden-crowned Sparrows were at Power's Butte Wildlife Area until 10 Dec (M. Baker) and at the Patons' in Patagonia 2 Feb (S. Healy).

The birding event of the season was the invasion of **White-winged Juncos** into Arizona. It began with one individual found at Mormon L. 3 Dec+ (I. Tomlinson, CL et al., ph. RH), followed by a 2nd bird at Chinle Wash near Many Farms 15 Dec (GHR, †MMS; v.t. GHR), and quickly escalated from there. By the end of the period at least 12–14 individuals were located at Flagstaff, and at least 7 individuals were found around Prescott (many of these coming to feeders). In s. Arizona, one was found at Evergreen Cemetery, Tucson 19 Dec+ (K. Kroeson, †MMS et al.; ph. MMS, v.t. GHR), while another was located in Molino Basin, Santa Catalina Mts. 8 March+ (†MMS; ph. GHR). This form, which breeds in the Black Hills of South Dakota, and normally winters due s. of there, was known previously in Arizona from a similar invasion during the winter of 1936–1937, and from a couple of sight reports in 1971. White-wingeds were not the

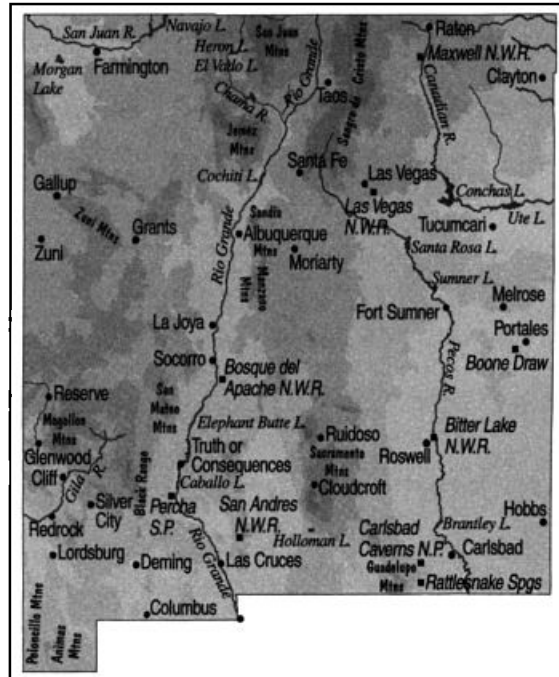
only form of junco on the move: Slate-colored were more numerous than usual in and around Arizona, and individual Red-backed Juncos (*J. h. dorsalis*), a form that is usually sedentary in the mountains of e. Arizona, were found at Molino Basin 30 Dec (K. Kertell), at Madera Canyon 18 Jan (PL), and at Miller Canyon 22 Jan (JLD). Two Lapland Longspurs, still considered casual anywhere in the state, were reported from the Empire Cienega Ranch 11 Jan (A. Guthrie), and another was in the Sulphur Springs Valley n. of Elfrida 14 Jan (JLD). After the report of 6 Chestnut-collared Longspurs at the Western Sod Farm during the fall, another was located there 21 Dec (G. Seegert).

A female Black-headed Grosbeak, very casual in the state during winter, was found near Double Adobe 3 Jan (CDB). Perhaps more exciting was the discovery of a **Common Grackle** at Apache L. ne. of Phoenix 27 Feb+ (ph. tRMJ, m.ob; ph. MMS); there were fewer than 10 previous records from s. Arizona. Yet another Streak-backed Oriole was found wintering at Cook's L., lower S.P.R. 5 Jan+ (TC, D. Laush); although this species probably breeds in small numbers along the river to the n. of this area, it has been found during multiple winters wintering at Cook's L. perhaps pertaining to the same individuals. A male Bullock's Oriole, casual in the state during winter, was at Continental 25 Dec (D. Flower). The 65 **Black Rosy-Finches**



Perhaps a once-in-a-lifetime event was the genuine invasion of White-winged Juncos into the Southwest and as far as California. This beauty was photographed 11 March 2001 in the Molino Basin of Arizona's Santa Catalina Mountains. *Photograph by Gary Rosenberg.*

New Mexico



located along the Echo Cliffs s. of Page in Nov were seen in decreasing numbers during the winter, with only 2 individuals seen 3 Feb (MMS, PL, JO). Red Crossbills were very prevalent at a number of lowland s. Arizona locations in Jan and Feb (m.ob.). Lawrence's Goldfinches had a better-than-average showing in s. Arizona this winter, with a high count of 170 present along the Santa Cruz R., Tucson 10 Dec (MMS).

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Winter 2000–2001 began dry, but widespread and frequent precipitation by Christmas improved conditions nearly statewide. Continuing a trend, many species lingered late or overwintered north of usual, while several southern species continued to push north. The season was marked by significant submontane movements by several groups, including jays, parids, nuthatches, and finches, but sparrows were conspicuously scarce. Meanwhile, a long-awaited Mexican species was added to the state list.

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

Loons Through Waterfowl

Continuing from Nov was an imm. **Yellow-billed Loon** at Farmington L. 1 Dec–29 Jan (phs. TR, JO), New Mexico's 11th in 11 years Elsewhere on the loon front, single Pacifics were at L.V.N.W.R 4 Dec (DC) and Brantley L 18 Dec & 3 Feb (SW). Among the few Horned Grebes was one n. to Farmington L. 3 Dec–31 Jan (TR, CR). Some 200 Clark's Grebes were among 900 Westerns at Caballo L. 30 Dec (BZ), where both species remained into mid-Jan (GE). Notably n. for the season were 2 American White Pelicans at Sumner L. 26 Jan (WH). An American Bittern at B.L.N.W.R. 8 Dec & 5 Jan (GW) provided the only report for this now rare species. Late for the n. was a Snowy Egret at Farmington 16 Dec (AN), and another Snowy lingered at Bosque untl 30 Dec (JEP); the only Jan report was of one at Six Mile Dam, *Eddy* 7–10 Jan (JO, WW, JN-M). A Green Heron was n. to Corrales 8 Jan (HS), where unusual in winter. Turkey Vultures do not winter in New Mexico, so surprising was one at Corrales 4 Jan (RG); notably early were singles at Percha 7 Feb (WW, JN-M), Salem 14 Feb (MS, JZ), and Carlsbad 25 Feb (SW). A **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** made a brief