

Arizona

Abbreviations: Arizona Bird Committee (A.B.C.), Avra Valley S.T.P. (A.V.S.T.P.), Boyce Thompson Arboretum (B.T.A.), Hassayampa River Preserve (H.R.P.), Lower Colorado River Valley (L.C.R.V.), Navajo Indian Reservation (N.I.R.), Sulphur Springs Valley (S.S.V.), Sweetwater Wetlands, Tucson (Sweetwater), White-water Draw Wildlife Area (Whitewater).

LOONS THROUGH MERGANSERS

A Pacific Loon on L. Havasu 6 Dec–9 Jan (CB, SS) was the only one reported. In Tucson, both of the intermittent Least Grebes re-appeared: the Sweetwater bird 10 Dec+ (DT, m. ob.) and the Sam Lena Park bird 1 Feb+ (J. Massey, m. ob.). A Horned Grebe was reported from Gilbert Water Ranch 5 Dec (D. Stuart). Clark's Grebes were reported from Talkalai L. 21 Feb (KKA et al.), and 6 were at Willcox 23 Feb (SH); they remain casual in winter away from the larger lakes. American White Pelicans are irregular in winter away from the L.C.R.V. Flocks of 17 at Willow L., Prescott 3 Dec (W. Bull), up to 92 at Gillespie Dam 25 Dec–17 Feb (TC, m. ob.), and up to 60 at San Carlos L. 5–21 Feb (JE) were notable. Casual in winter, 2 Brown Pelicans were reported from L. Havasu 6 Dec (CB, SS), and singles were sighted again in the Phoenix area 27 Dec–10 Feb (A. Mendoza, TC).

Neotropical Cormorants were undocumented in Arizona before 1961 and remained restricted mainly to the Patagonia–Nogales area for many years. After several years of building numbers in *Maricopa*, a nesting colony was discovered at a golf course development in Chandler this winter, with 30–35 pairs estimated on 21 Feb (R. Edwards, TC). The only prior nesting in the state was a single failed nest at Paloma. At the species' old stronghold of Patagonia L., numbers rose from 2 to 20 through the season (m. ob.). Double-crested Cormorant numbers are also up in Chandler, with 200–300 reported 12 Jan+ (C. Ross, TC, m. ob.). Holding ponds and artificial lakes in housing developments now support a population that likely exceeds historical numbers in the area.

A Least Bittern at H.R.P. 15 Feb (W. Thurber) was a new locality record. Two were reported from seldom-birded Talkalai L. on 21 Feb (KKA et al.). A Tricolored Heron at Tucson 1 Dec (J. Higgins, ph. MMS) was the latest ever in Arizona. Only the 2nd winter Arizona record, a Reddish Egret was at Paloma 2 Jan (ph. BG). Just as surprising in winter was a White Ibis in Palo Verde 27 Dec+ (TC, ph. MMS), though it may have been a bird reported intermittently since last spring.

A first for *Yavapai*, an ad. blue-morph Snow Goose was at Prescott 1–15 Dec (CST) with 4 white ads. A small Canada Goose at Kayenta S.T.P. 6 Feb (CL) was consistent in size with Cackling forms. Thirty Tundra Swans at Becker L. 27 Nov–2 Dec (JV et al.) was the largest flock reported in recent years. Near Fort Thomas, 2 were present 29 Dec (ph. J. Williams et al.), then just one 1 Jan+ (ph. JE, m. ob.).

It was a good year for Eurasian Wigeon, with single males at McCormick Ranch, Scottsdale 17 Jan–8 Feb (J. Hansen et al.), Paradise Garden, Scottsdale 20 Jan–24 Feb (ph. L. Miller, m. ob.),

Tucson 2 Feb+ (RH, ph. MMS), and Chandler 29 Feb (TC). The hybrid wigeon continued at Willcox through the period (SH, m. ob.). Greater Scaup were slightly more numerous than usual in s. Arizona. At A.V.S.T.P., an imm. male was present 4 Dec (ph. GHR, MMS), a female on 11 Dec (ph. DS), and another male 26–28 Feb (KKA et al.). Single males were at Patagonia L. 13 Dec–10 Mar (C. Marantz, m. ob.) and Tempe 11 Jan–28 Feb (TC). Three were reported from L. Havasu 23 Jan (DP). In contrast, only 10 were seen on a boat trip through their usual Glen Canyon haunts 5 Jan (J. Grahame et al.). The only scoter reports were of 2 Surf Scoters at Parker Dam 6 Dec (CB, SS) and single White-winged at Parker Dam 6 Dec–20 Feb (CB, SS, ph. J. Cochran) and Glen Canyon Dam 5 Jan (MMS, JC et al.). Counts of Barrow's Goldeneye were unimpressive: up to 6 at Parker Dam 2 Dec–15 Feb (CB, SS, m. ob.) and just 11 at Glen Canyon Dam 5 Jan (CL et al.). Hooded Mergansers were more widespread than usual statewide. A Red-breasted Merganser at Kayenta S.T.P. 12 Dec (CL) was the latest fall migrant ever for the N.I.R. Singles at Scottsdale 11 Jan (TC) and Talkalai L. 21 Feb (KKA) were rare.



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KITES THROUGH DOVES

White-tailed Kite numbers remained low. Two continued in the San Rafael Valley (m. ob.), another 2 were seen near Red Rock 29 Dec–30 Jan (JE et al.), and one was at Paloma 26 Jan (BG). A fly-by Northern Goshawk was in the lowlands at B.T.A. 14 Dec (RD). Reports of Gray Hawk along the Santa Cruz R. from Amado to Tumacacori 15 Jan–23 Feb (K. McBride, KKa, DP) likely represented a single bird. There are few winter records. The H.R.P. Red-shouldered Hawk(s) continued through the period (K. & L. Bielek et al.). Along Granite Cr., Prescott, one was seen on 19 Dec–9 Jan, when it was joined by a 2nd bird (†CST). An amazing find was a Broad-winged Hawk picked up from a street in Chandler 26 Jan; it was taken to a rehabilitator but succumbed (ph. A. Payton). Only the 4th *Maricopa* record, it was one of very few Arizona winter records. As has become expected, Zone-tailed Hawks wintered in the Tucson area (m. ob.) Widespread but irregular reports suggest the presence of several birds. Less expected were Zone-taileds at Green Valley 10 Dec (GB), Molino Basin, Catalina Mts. 19 Dec (M. Ali), and Yuma 24 Dec (DT, *vide* HD). The only Rough-legged Hawks reported with details were from Red Rock 12 Dec–29 Jan (GB, †KKa, m. ob.) and near Portal 9 Feb (RWe). One of very few winter N.I.R. reports, a Peregrine Falcon was in Pasture Canyon 8 Dec (CL).

A mostly white Sandhill Crane in the S.S.V. flocks 29 Dec–15 Feb (ph. T. Wood et al.) was a real oddity. Surprising were 2 Snowy Plovers at San Carlos L. 21 Feb–17 Mar (†DJ, KKa). There are few winter records. Up to 60 Mountain Plovers at Paloma 21 Dec–17 Feb (BG, RD) were the first in *Maricopa* in over a decade (*vide* JW). More than 50 were in Yuma in Dec (DTo, HD). In contrast, they were sparse in se. Arizona, with only 3 near Friendly Corner in Dec (KKa et al.) and a single report of 15 in the S.S.V. 3 Jan (T. Wurstel *vide* CDB). Casual in Prescott in winter, 3 Spotted Sandpipers were present in Dec, with one lingering into Jan (W. Anderson, CST, B. Thomen). Casual at any season, single Red Phalaropes were at Patagonia L. 26 Dec (P. Walsh) and Whitewater 28 Dec–3 Jan (R. Hunt, ph. CDB). A Heermann's Gull in Tucson 11 Dec (JM et al., ph. DS, MMS) was a casual wanderer from the Sea of Cortez. A California Gull at Kayenta S.T.P. 6 Feb (CL) was the earliest spring N.I.R. record. The Glaucous-winged Gull at Palo Verde was last reported on 4 Jan (m. ob.).

A few White-winged Doves were noted in the n., where reports are slowly accumulating. Singles were on the Camp Verde C.B.C. 29 Dec (*vide* RR), at Leupp 27 Jan (CL), and Kayenta 6 Feb (CL). Up to 5 in Prescott 29 Nov+ (W. Bull, CST) were a first for winter. An Inca Dove in St. Johns 27 Dec (DR) was also far north. Ruddy Ground-Dove numbers were more typical than during last year's major influx. Up to 11 were near Red Rock 4 Dec+ (ph. GHR, m. ob.), 4 were in Tacna 8 Jan (PL), 2 were in Palo Verde 24 Jan (PM), and 2 more were in the Santa Cruz Flats 14 Feb (RT). One at Granite Dells, Prescott 2–4 Jan (M. Leeper, *vide* CST) was accidental.

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH FLICKERS

A Broad-billed Hummingbird again wintered at B.T.A. 6 Dec–4 Jan (JB et al.). On 18 Feb, an apparent Berylline Hummingbird x Magnificent Hummingbird hybrid was seen in upper Ramsey Canyon on a perch used the previous two springs by a Berylline (J. Hirth). Violet-crowned Hummingbirds took advantage of feeders again this winter, with 9 present in Dec and Jan across se. Arizona. Spring migrants began to arrive in early Feb (R. Baxter, S. Williamson, m. ob.).



This second-year Reddish Egret at Paloma Ranch 2 January 2004 furnished only the second winter record for Arizona. Photograph by Bill Grossi.

Prescott saw its highest number of wintering Anna's Hummingbirds ever (CST), reflecting a mild winter. Late Rufous Hummingbirds were at Portal 1–18 Dec (T. & L. Gates), Ash Canyon 7 Dec (M.J. Ballator), and B.T.A. 1–4 Jan (*vide* SG). There are very few records later than Dec.

Elegant Trogons winter in small numbers in se. Arizona; singles were upstream from Patagonia L. 19 Oct+ (m. ob.), in lower Madera Canyon 4–6 Feb (RH et al.), and Montosa Canyon, Santa Rita Mts. 19 Feb (B. Koenig). Green Kingfisher numbers remain low. The only reports were of one heard above Patagonia L. 4 Jan (WR) and another seen along the Santa Cruz R. from Tubac to Tumacacori 1–5 Feb (DP, B. Zimmer et al.). Becoming more regular but still rare, single Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were at Continental 10 Dec+ (GB, †C. Blake), in lower Madera Canyon 18 Feb (ph. RH), and below Patagonia L. 18 Feb (DS, †MMS). Four others were reported without details. A Red-naped Sapsucker in Canyon de Chelly 4–13 Dec (CL, M. Murov) was one of few winter N.I.R. records. One of few recent well-documented Red-breasted Sapsuckers, a *daggetti* type, was at Oak Flat near Superior 4 Jan–7 Feb (PM, ph. C. Donald, MMS). Another was reported from Kingman 28 Nov (K. Garrett). Hybrid or intergrade sapsuckers masquerading as Red-breasted were reported from Patagonia L. 30 Nov–18 Dec (PD, R. Palmer, ph. MMS, GHR), Tucson 25 Dec–4 Jan

(MMS et al.), and Yuma West Wetlands 8–16 Feb (ph. J. Coker, HD). Out of habitat, a Downy Woodpecker was in pinyon-juniper at Saddle Mt., *Coconino* 11 Jan (CL). Another was at Watson L. 21 Dec–10 Jan (CST), where casual. Northern (Yellow-shafted) Flickers were at the Salt River/91st Ave. Cobble Ponds 17 Dec (TC) and Welton 8 Jan (PL).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH THRASHERS

A Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet found on the Superior C.B.C. 4 Jan (*vide* SG) was n. of where this species normally winters. Both Hammond's and Dusky Flycatchers are rare and irregular winter visitors anywhere n. of se. portions of the state. A Hammond's wintering at Granite Basin, *Yavapai* 18 Dec–11 Mar (D. Moll, CST), and another found on the Salt/Verde Rivers C.B.C. 16 Dec (KR), were both considered north of usual winter occurrence. The Pacific-slope/Cordilleran Flycatchers found during the winter season were in sw. Phoenix 18 Dec (TC) and on the Gila River C.B.C. 30 Dec (*vide* TC); all certain winter records pertain to Pacific-slope. A Black Phoebe at Tuba City 16 Jan (CL) represented one of the few winter records ever for the N.I.R. Only 3 Eastern Phoebes were found this winter; the Patagonia L. individual from fall remained into Mar (SH, m. ob.), another was found along the Santa Cruz R. near Tubac 24–25 Feb (DP et al.), and one was foraging near a swimming pool in a Tucson yard 12–22 Jan (D. Smyth). This species remains a rare but somewhat irregular winter visitor to s. Arizona. As many as 3 Vermilion Flycatchers, casual in winter anywhere n. of Phoenix, were found at Chino Valley 1 Dec, with at least one remaining until 1 Jan (R. Duerksen et al., *vide* CST). Another was found on the Camp Verde C.B.C. 29 Dec (RR et al.). The Tropical Kingbird (eventually heard) that was located at the Gilbert Water Ranch in Nov was last reported 7 Dec (B. Ison et al., ph. RJ). As reported during the fall, Cassin's Kingbirds lingered in numbers late into the season; our latest reports received included one at lower Ramsey Canyon 2 Dec (J. & M. Hirth), one in the San Rafael Valley 7 Dec (M. Moore), and at least 2 wintering on a Tucson golf course seen into Mar (D. Davis, GHR et al.). A Thick-billed Kingbird returned to a Yuma neighborhood for 2nd year 18 Feb+ (ph. J. Coker, HD); the few previous winter records for Arizona are all from the L.C.R.V. Perhaps one of the best finds of the season was a male Rose-throated Becard along the Santa Cruz R. at Tumacacori 27 Jan+ (GB et al.; ph. J. Woodley), representing only a 3rd winter report from Arizona.

Normally, when there is a major corvid flight into se. Arizona, there are telltale signs during the fall. While Western Scrub-Jays appeared in the fall, this year's semi-impressive flight of Steller's Jays into s. Arizona began in early Dec, with much of the movement detected later in Jan. Two Black-billed Magpies on the Havasu C.B.C. 30 Dec (*vide* N. Miller) were well s. of normal areas of occurrence and are thought likely to have been escapees. American Crows were apparently on the move in n. Arizona, with

relatively large flocks detected between mid-Dec and mid-Jan at Canyon de Chelly and near Tuba City (CL). The only s. Arizona reports were of 200 at Pima, *Graham* (B. Metheny) and 3 near Red Rock 14 Feb (RT).

Late or lingering Barn Swallows included 2 at A.V.S.T.P. 10–11 Dec (DJ, DS). Even scarcer were a few mid-winter reports, one from Palo Verde 7 Jan (MP, MMS), one from Marana 26 Jan (DJ), and 2 from Tucson 6 Dec–3 Feb (PS, GB, JM). At least 2 Mountain Chickadees were detected in the lowlands, one at the B.T.A. 6 Dec–12 Mar (JB et al.) and another at H.R.P. 7 Feb (E. Latturner). Also unusual were House Wrens lingering in s. Arizona into the winter, with one in Flagstaff 27 Dec (JC), perhaps providing a first local winter record, and another in Pasture Canyon 16 Jan (CL), providing only a 2nd winter N.I.R. report. Perhaps not a coincidence, unusually high numbers were detected in the Prescott area (CST). No fewer than 11 Winter Wrens were found nearly statewide this winter; it is an irregular but sometimes uncommon winter visitor mainly to s. Arizona.

A relative explosion of Black-capped Gnatcatcher reports were received this winter, some well documented, others unconfirmed. Given the unprecedented nature of the number of reports, the past possibilities of hybrids, and the possibility that observers have become somewhat complacent with regard to reporting this species in recent years, the A.B.C. would like to review documentation on all of the following reports: the pair that was located upstream from Patagonia L. along Sonoita Cr. during the fall was seen again 4 Jan (JB, MMS et al.); another pair that was located in Montosa Canyon, Santa Rita Mts. during the fall was seen again 17 Jan–25 Feb (PL et al.); the pair that nested successfully at Patagonia L. last summer remained until at least 4 Jan (M. Brown et al.), then was found again 14 Feb+ (MMS et al.); one was reported along the Elephant Head Bike Trail 19 Dec (S. Johnsen); one was reported from Chino Canyon 3 Jan (*fide* R. Freeman); one was in the Tumacacori Mts. n. of Rock Corral 30 Jan (K. Graves), and a pair was nearby at Rock Corral Springs 1–23 Feb (MK, DS, †MMS et al.); one was along Proctor Rd. near Madera Canyon 18 Feb (RH et al.); and finally another pair was detected downstream from Patagonia L. 18 Feb (DS, †MMS).

The only Rufous-backed Robin of the winter was one continuing along Sonoita Cr. through the period (R. Shaw, ph. GHR, J. Cochran). No fewer than 9 Varied Thrushes were reported, a greater number than usual, with sightings scattered from Flagstaff to Portal. Quite amazing was a Gray Catbird found in Pasture Canyon 8 Dec–16 Jan (J. Grahame, JC, CL et al.), providing the first winter N.I.R. report. The Brown Thrasher that wintered last year at B.T.A. returned for another season (m. ob.; ph. DS), while another was located at Patagonia L. 30 Dec–4 Jan (B. Fitch, CDB et al.). Amazingly early by at least two weeks was a Le Conte's Thrasher nest with three eggs found near Tacna 8 Jan (PL).

OLIVE WARBLER THROUGH ORIOLES

Olive Warbler is a rare but regular winter resident, normally involving overwintering individuals in areas where the species breeds. Therefore up to 2 present at the B.T.A. 4 Jan–29 Feb (SG, CST et al.) and one at Camp Creek 1 Jan (TC) were of interest. An Orange-crowned Warbler at Cow Springs L. 12 Dec (CL) represented the latest N.I.R. report away from the Colorado R. Northern Parulas, rare but annual during the winter, were reported at Dudleyville 3 Jan (TC), in Tucson 4–12 Jan (C. Green, m. ob.), and at Phoenix 9 Jan (MK). Normally, Yellow Warbler is casual at best in s. Arizona during the winter, yet this year no fewer than 7 were reported, all from either Tucson or Phoenix areas. A Chestnut-sided Warbler at Granite Creek near Prescott 14 Dec–8 Jan (C. Woodley et al., *fide* CST) provided the first local winter report. At least 9 Black-and-white Warblers were found this winter, a few more than usual. The only American Redstart (usually more regular in winter) was one upstream from Patagonia L. 4 Nov–17 Dec (MK et al.). Five different Louisiana Waterthrushes were reported, with up to 2 along different sections of Sonoita Cr. (SH, WR, m. ob.), one in Florida Canyon 23 Jan (R. Wilt), one along the Santa Cruz R. near Tumacacori 8–27 Feb (T. Linda, m. ob.), and one seen sporadically along the San Pedro R. near Hwy 90 beginning last fall. A male MacGillivray's Warbler in Flagstaff 27



This male Rose-throated Becard along the Santa Cruz River at Tumacacori 27 January 2004 (here) and later provided Arizona with its third winter record of the species. Photograph by Joe Woodley.

Dec–12 Feb (JC) was considered to be an injured bird. Two Wilson's Warblers found at Sweetwater lingered into mid-Dec, with one remaining to at least 1 Mar (GB, m. ob.), while singles were on the Tres Rios C.B.C. 18 Dec (*fide* TC) and near Tubac 12 Feb (GB); like Yellow Warbler, Wilson's has been considered casual at best during the winter. Unreported since Sep, the resident Rufous-capped Warblers in French Joe Canyon were noted 31 Jan+

(KKa et al.). Another was reported (for the 2nd time this year) from Pima Canyon, Santa Catalina Mts. 14 Dec (†J. McCabe), which would represent the northernmost record for the state.

Always exciting and providing one of the latest reports for the state, a Scarlet Tanager was found at Parker 6 Dec (†CBA). A very late Western Tanager was at Canyon de Chelly 16 Dec (CL). Another found along Sonoita Cr. 6 Dec remained until 1 Jan (KKa et al., †DTo), and another was in Tucson 9 Jan (B. Pollock); this species is a casual winter visitor anywhere in s. Arizona.

Following what was certainly the best fall ever for Clay-colored Sparrows in s. Arizona, one was in Scottsdale 1 Jan (†RJ), for only an 8th *Maricopa* record, one was in Tucson 4 Nov–18 Feb (MMS et al.), and another bird was located in Tucson 24 Feb (MMS). A Savannah Sparrow was seen on the strange date of 6 Feb in Pasture Canyon (CL), where this species does not winter. Of the 9 different Fox Sparrows reported, several different subspecies were thought to have occurred, but without documentation received for any of the reports, it is difficult to sort out what exactly was seen. A Lincoln's Sparrow was at Pasture Canyon 16 Jan (CL), where it is casual during winter. Despite generally low numbers of sparrows overall, no fewer than 30 Swamp Sparrows and 20 White-throated Sparrows were reported statewide, a far greater number than usual for each. More in line with past seasons, 4 Harris's and 5 Golden-crowned Sparrows were reported. Up to 6 McCown's Longspurs were found at Green Valley 8 Dec+ (GHR et al.), away from known areas of occurrence. As many as 12 Chestnut-collared Longspurs were found in Arlington 25–27 Dec (TC), the first local reports since 1988 (*fide* JW).

A male Black-headed Grosbeak, casual in winter, was found along the Santa Cruz R. at Tubac 25 Feb (S. Johnsen, B. Massey). Up to 7 Brewer's Blackbirds in Flagstaff 13 Jan (JC) provided, amazingly, a first local winter record. An Orchard Oriole, also casual in winter, was reported on the Gila River C.B.C. 29 Dec (*fide* TC), while another returned to an Ahwatukee yard for the 3rd winter in a row (ph. G. & S. Barnes). Also casual, a female Bullock's Oriole was at the B.T.A. 9–14 Jan (MK, MMS, DS).

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