

New Mexico: Winter Birds & Grand Landscapes | January 19- 27, 2025 | Trip Report | by James Petersen

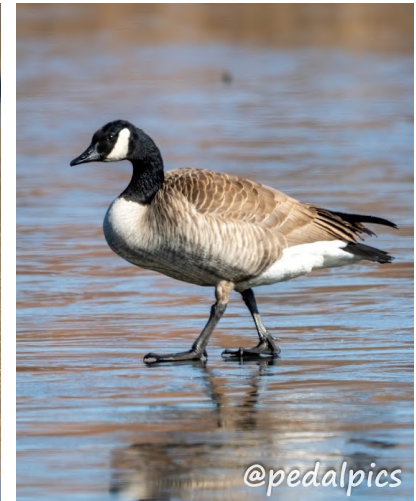


Compiled by guides James Petersen and Vernie Aikins. Our clients included Jim, Betty, Chuck, Terri, Bob, Teresa, Carol



January 19: Rio Grande Nature Park

Once everyone had been picked up from their respective hotels and airport; we started the New Mexico: Winter Birds and Grand Landscapes by heading to the Rio Grande Nature Center. Here, we walked the trails that wove under large Cottonwoods, while picking out some of the more common birds of Albuquerque. Among the forested trail, we picked out Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Bewick's Wren and both Eastern and Western Bluebirds. The trail led to a lake, where a seed feeder was situated nearby. Several "Gambels" White-crowned Sparrows scratched for seed underneath the feeder while a White-throated Sparrow joined in. On the feeder itself, we had many Red-winged Blackbird females jockeying for prime position of getting the seed. On the water, several Wood Ducks hung out by the bank while one Mallard and 2 Wood Ducks eventually came to the feeder. Once inside the nature center, we had a great overlook of the pond, noting a Great Blue Heron as well



as 4 American Wigeon that had flushed from an unseen part of the pond. We slowly made our way back out, only to get distracted by a woodpecker call. After some time of searching, we located and had good views of two Hairy Woodpeckers. While looking for the woodpeckers, we had both White-winged and Eurasian Collared Doves perched in the trees as well as one American Goldfinch. Back at the cars, there was a second pond that held numerous waterfowl, including a pair of Hooded Mergansers and great comparative looks between Cackling and Canada Geese. This gave all perfect looks at how to identify each goose, with the smaller size and beak being very apparent on the Cackling Goose.

We then followed the path to a large field. Here, we had a Northern Harrier cruising back and forth, eventually flushing some of the waterfowl from the 2nd pond. We also spotted a Say's Phoebe perched midway out in the field. With one last check of the ponds before heading back to the hotel to check in, a female Bufflehead had joined the group, and we spent a bit of time before finally getting it in the scope as it quickly would surface and then dive back down again. We finally had to go to check into the hotel and have a fantastic welcome dinner at the High noon restaurant.

January 21: Sandia Crest | Tijeras Ranger Station (Cibola National Forest)

A cold start to the morning. After breakfast, we left the hotel to head up to Sandia Crest in the hopes of finding the Rosy finches that migrate down for the winter. These finches inhabit high elevations, breeding on steep mountain faces, but migrate to lower elevations in winter for food. As we slowly drove up the mountain road, the habitat changed from a dry forest to a Juniper Forest and finally to the Ponderosa Pine and Engelman Spruce forests of the upper Sandias. The crest was at over 10,000 feet and had plenty of snow. Due to a cold front that had moved through the previous night, the temperatures were in the single digits. Even with the cold, we bundled up and set about waiting for the Rosy-finches to come to the feeders.

As we waited, we watched the other birds come in, with 3 races of Dark-eyed Junco. The "Gray-headed" race was most common with Oregon and Pink-sided races also being present. We watched as they fed below the feeders, while flocks of Pine Siskins made appearances. Taking turns between being on the feeders and resting in one of the large pines nearby. Halfway through our two hour wait, a Mountain Chickadee came into the feeder and was followed by two Abert's Squirrels. These large black squirrels with ear tufts and white and black



tails put on a show, with two chasing each other around the base of the pine tree before one finally climbed up the feeder and started eating the bird seed.

Minutes later, a large flock of Rosy Finches landed in a nearby dead tree. The flock was made up of about 40 birds, with a good chunk being Black Rosy-finches. We watched as these medium-sized black finches fed on the ground before wheeling up at the slightest movement. A portion of the flock settled into the nearby pine tree, where they apparently felt safer. This allowed us to get scope views of both a young Black Rosy Finch and one of the two races of Gray-crowned Rosy Finches—the Hepburn’s or coastal race. This race breeds farther north and has an almost entirely gray head, as opposed to the interior race, which just has a swatch of gray behind the eye. We watched until the Rosy-finches flew off, sharing the scope views with other nearby birders. Once they flew off, we started down the mountain, enjoying the warmth of the car and the scenic drive down.

We had one more stop before lunch and that was the Sulphur Springs picnic area. Here we slowly walked up a trail, listening for birds. As we made our way up, we admired the massive trees which included Ponderosa Pine. At the furthest point of the trail, we found a small flock of birds, which included 4 Mountain Chickadees as well as 4 Red-breasted Nuthatches and 3 White-breasted Nuthatches. With a little bit of sorting through this flock, we found a Brown Creeper who was creeping up trees, before moving over and creeping higher. On the way back to the car, we heard a shredding call of a Steller’s Jay, and with a bit of patience were able to briefly see the Jay before it resumed its morning activities. As we were preparing to leave, we heard a high-pitched squeak from the tall ponderosas behind us. After a bit of searching, we finally located a few Pygmy Nuthatches high up in the canopy of the trees. After some time, we finally found the correct angle, and everyone observed these nuthatches. After viewing the nuthatches, we continued the rest of the way down the mountain to our lunch spot.

Following an excellent lunch, we proceeded further down the mountain to our final destination for the day: the Tijeras Ranger Station. Here, there was a trail to a ruin of a Pueblo community that had inhabited the area during the 1300’s. While walking the trails, we heard the call of a few Woodhouse’s Scrub Jays. With a bit of scanning, we had them fly down and alight near us in a short Rocky Mountain Juniper. Everyone got great looks as it perched and call before flying off to join some other nearby Jays. We then slowly walked back to the trail



that would wind around the ruins of the Pueblo community. We did not get very far before we heard a rapid burst of notes. We again, had to turn back to where we just had come from, finding a plain looking Junco Titmouse by the road. We watched as two Junco titmouse perched out in the open, calling and giving all great looks. After seeing the titmouse, we finally continued onto the trail that wound through the Pueblo ruins. The ruins consisted of collapsed buildings, including pit houses believed to be seasonal dwellings, and Kivas thought to be used for ceremonies. In addition to the ruins, it was thought that small farming practices were also done to help sustain themselves in the dry arid landscape. Once we finished up here, we returned to the hotel and then onwards to dinner after a fantastic day.

January 21: Bernardo Waterfowl Management Area | Very Large Array | Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge

After a breakfast, we packed up to head to our next hotel, with a morning stop at Bernardo Waterfowl Management area. Right at the start of the loop drive, a large brownish bird was spotted perched on one of the telephone poles at the entrance. The brownish bird had pointed wings and a light brown head with a distinct malar stripe—it was a Prairie Falcon. Everyone got great looks at this bird as it first watched our cars, took a couple bites of a prey item and then proceeded to fly to a further telephone pole to enjoy its meal. Once the falcon flew off, our attention shifted to the massive numbers of both Sandhill Cranes and Snow and Ross's Geese that were lounging either on the ice or on the fields.

After a decent amount of time observing both the geese to pick out the smaller, more diminutive Ross's Geese from the Snows and the large mass of Sandhill cranes, we continued down the drive. Our estimation of the numbers we saw here were 8,000 Snow Geese and around 1000 Ross's Geese. We estimated the Sandhill Crane numbers to be around 12,000 birds!!! As we continued along the drive, we were able to pick out a few more waterfowl such as Mallards, Wigeon and Northern Shoveler. We paused our drive to ascend an observation tower, offering a unique view of the Geese and Cranes in the fields, as well as distant fields covered in white geese. With some scanning, we were able to pick out several Red-tailed Hawks along with an incredibly distant large, white-bellied hawk which turned out to be a Ferruginous Hawk. Continuing on, we stopped by a frozen



lake further down the drive and were able to scan onto a number of different sparrows. We slowly worked through the identification features, coming up with a few Savannah Sparrows with their yellow lores, some washed out Vesper Sparrows with their white eye rings, a messy Song Sparrow as well as several American Pipits working the ice/grass boarder looking for insects. By this time, it was getting close to noon and time to head to Socorro for afternoon lunch.

After a delicious lunch, we checked into the hotel and split up for the afternoon. One group rested before heading to Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, while the other went straight to see the Very Large Array west of the refuge. From there, they would meet the first group in the evening at Bosque Del Apache, hoping to observe the cranes and snow geese arriving for the night.

The group that went to the very big array had a great time seeing the enormous satellite dishes along with getting the only views of the trip at some Horned Larks and a few Pronghorn.

The second group met in the lobby at 330 pm and headed over to Bosque del Apache. Upon arriving, it was noticed that the main fly in area was completely frozen, but the canals were open. This gave us amazing views at most of the small diving waterfowl. Both male and female Buffleheads and Ring-necked Ducks provided excellent scope views, as did small groups of Ruddy Ducks that floated together. Some of the ruddy ducks were sleeping, giving great views of their stiff tailed silhouette. The Array group finally met us at the flight deck, where we had an uncommon Eastern Phoebe flycatching from a dead tree. By this point we realized the night fly in would be elsewhere due to the frozen main pond, so we took a lap around the northern part of the refuge. Here we observed several Wilson's Snipe hiding along the edge of the frozen marsh, while one Greater Yellowlegs probed the nearby area as well. Continuing, we had many of the same waterfowl species as earlier in the trip, along with a lone Pied-billed and Eared Grebe. Upon circling back to the flight deck, we had a flock of Great-tailed Grackles perched out in the middle of the lake on a dead snag. By this time, light was fading fast, and we turned back to Socorro to have a hearty meal at a local steakhouse before heading back to the hotel and getting to bed. Ready for an early start to the morning to try and catch the morning fly in.



January 22: Bernardo Waterfowl Management Area | Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge

We had an early start this day. Leaving before sunrise, the goal was to drive up to Bernardo Waterfowl management area in time to hopefully catch the morning rise of the Sandhill Cranes and Snow/Ross's Geese. We reached the waterfowl management area just in time to park and get out to a whirling, swirling mass of Snow and Ross's that had just lifted off from a nearby pond. We stepped out and watched in awe as the geese swirled overhead. The cacophony was extreme, as after 15 minutes they finally settled down in the field right in front of us. Once they settled down, we were able to carefully scan through the flock and pick out several Ross's Geese that were mixed in. The total makeup of the flock was about 5000 Snows to 1000 Ross's. Meanwhile, the Sandhill Cranes did the exact opposite of the Snow Geese. They continued sleeping through sunrise. Although, the spectacle of a bright orange sky, and steam rising off the frozen lake was breath taking. With some careful scanning, some of the cranes were slowly waking up and calling, releasing more fog as their warm calls met the cold winter air. By this time, it was approaching breakfast time, so we headed back to a local dinner in Socorro to warm up.

After breakfast and a quick stop at the hotel, we continued south to spend the whole day at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. Due to the recent cold front, most of the front areas were completely frozen. This meant the areas that had open water was crowded with ducks. We saw several pale-headed American Wigeons, Mallards, and black-tailed Gadwalls on the front road heading south. As we slowly continued along the road, we saw a lot more of the same species. Upon reaching the back half of the drive, we found a patch of open water that had some of the larger diving ducks. We observed several Ring-necked Ducks and a few Lesser Scaup here. Once a few of them flew off, we continued scanning and noticed a large female duck with a large sloping bill, a Canvasback. These ducks -prefer deeper water for diving and was in all likely hood waiting for the ice to thaw elsewhere. Meanwhile, this allowed us to get great views of this large diving duck. Continuing, we stopped at a thawed marshy area to get fantastic views of a Wilson's Snipe. We watched it slowly work its way to the other side of the marsh and then back, probing the mud for food. At the same spot we had a distant Loggerhead Shrike and a quick flyover of an adult Peregrine Falcon. With 1230 rapidly approaching, we decided it was time to finish the southern part of the drive and head to the visitor center for lunch.

We had a delicious picnic lunch at the visitor center. While everyone was dining, we observed the nearby



feeders and noted the presence of Chipping Sparrows, Gambel's Quail, as well as both White-winged and Mourning Doves. In the drier vegetation, we had a Verdin. Back at the feeders, we had multiple, White-crowned Sparrows. By the visitor center, a mockingbird sized bird was spotted and turned out to be the only sage thrasher seen on the trip. It posed for little bit longer before flying away. After everyone finished lunch, we walked around the nearby gardens, looking at several species of cactuses while enjoying more of the birds. We had to try hard, but some got great views of a secretive Curve-billed Thrasher. After another 15 minuets in the visitor center, it was time to get back to the refuge and bird the northern half of the loop.

Here, we had many of the same species of waterfowl as we had in the southern loop, with more good looks at Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon and Northern Shovelers. About halfway through the drive, we came across a small area of shallow open water that held Mallards. We scanned the large gathering of Mallards for different species. We finally found a similar looking duck with a bright yellow bill and a more demarcated pattern between head and body—a Mexican Duck. These ducks are seen in the area but take a while to pick out as they look extremely similar to Mallards. It was once thought they were the same species! Included with all the ducks, we had a large flock of blackbirds that were making rounds, landing and then quickly taking off. Most of the birds were Red-winged Blackbirds, but we had quick scope views of a second species in the flock, a few yellow eyed Brewer's Blackbirds as well. We continued slowly on the drive as the wetlands turned to a farmland habitat. This caused it to become more of a raptor afternoon, with several Red-tailed Hawks seen—including a very dark morph bird perched in a tree nearby. None of them turned out to be any other species until we rounded the bend, and Vernie noticed a large white raptor kiting in the wind. This bird was different, with black shoulders and pointed falcon-like wings. Everyone got views of this White-tailed Kite as it seemed to effortlessly kite back and forth. We quickly tried to get ahead of it for better views, but it stayed airborne, hovering over different parts of the large field. As the sun crept lower on the horizon, large flocks of both Northern Pintail and Northern Shoveler winged northwards—presumably headed again to some unknown open body of water further north. By this time, we took the cue of a deeping sunset and continued back to Socorro to eat and rest up before another full day of birding tomorrow.



January 23: Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park | Soledad Canyon (Organ Mountains)

After a solid breakfast, we loaded up the cars and headed out for the day. Today was a moving day, birding our way down to Las Cruces, where we would stay for the next 2 nights. Our first stop for the morning was Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park. Due to the drought, birding was slow, but we managed to find some cool birds and get stunning looks at a couple of hard-to-find species. As we walked down to the Rio Grande, we identified some of the plants that inhabit the area, as well as a few White-crowned Sparrow and a very furtive Northern House Wren that refused to come out for the group. It just stayed hidden, calling from the thick vegetation as wrens like to do. Back near the visitor center, we had a quick look at a Crissal Thrasher. On the way back from the Rio Grande, the thrasher decided to do the very un-thrasher like behavior of perching out in the open for all to see. All got great looks at the rusty undertail coverts and long curved bill field marks of the bird before it flew off.

After a delicious lunch and stop at the hotel to check in and drop things off. We continued out for an afternoon stroll up the western side of the Organ Mountains. The birds were streaming around us right as we pulled into the parking lot. This trail gave all great identification pointers on how to identify these “little brown birds” that all look the same. The most common sparrow was Brewer’s Sparrow—a plain brown bird with no distinctive markings, yet distinctive in its own way. Mixed in were 2-3 larger sparrows with Rufous crowns—Rufous-crowned Sparrows. They approached towhee size and were flitting around on the ground. In the same flock, several Canyon Towhees scratched about on the ground as well.

As we continued up the trail, the sparrow flock slowly followed us, with even more Brewer’s Sparrows flying from right to left. Suddenly, a darker sparrow that looked like a junco popped up in front of us for what felt like half a second. Only long enough to get a glimpse of a dark breasted sparrow with a brownish back and pink bill—a Black-chinned Sparrow. This was the only time we saw this species and it disappeared in the sparrow flock. Continuing further up, we left the sparrow flock behind and stared in awe at the rugged mountains that framed the valley that held Las Cruces below.



We finished the hike by running into the same sparrow flock by the cars again. This time, the flock included 3 Rufous-crowned Sparrows, one that posed for us nicely so all could get on this large sparrow. This bird also happened to be molting its feathers and had no tail. After watching the sun slowly set and the twinkling lights of Las Cruces turn on, we headed back down to the restaurant for dinner. On the way to dinner, one car happened to drive by a perched Great-horned Owl in one of Las Cruces neighborhoods. The restaurant was in this historic building that stood when New Mexico was part of Mexico and the wagon trains would stop there. The food was also delicious as well. After dinner, we all headed back to the hotel to plan for our scenic day tomorrow.

January 24: Organ Mountains (Aguirre Springs Campground | Hwy 70 | White Sands National Park

Today was billed as more of a day for scenery than birds. We started the day leaving Las Cruces to bird the eastern side of the Organ Mountains, the Aguirre Spring Campground. Below the Campground, lay an expansive grassland that we slowly birded on our way up. Here, we spotted a covey of Gambel's Quail with a grayish Scaled Quail mixed in. Unfortunately, the birds ran off before long, giving us only fleeting looks at this cool quail. We left the grasslands and entered a stunted juniper forest. This was where the campground was located, so we parked and slowly made a loop of the campground. Here we came across a small flock of Dark-eyed Juncos as well as quick looks at a Black-tailed Gnatcatcher. It was calling steadily, but was not being cooperative, wanting to stay hidden for long periods of time before popping out quickly and then darting back into the undergrowth. As we continued onwards, we heard the high pitch calls of some Bushtits. We watched as one, then two, and then 15 Bushtits flew into one of the nearby Junipers, filling the air with chips and the tree with small bouncing birds as they foraged for insects. This gave most good looks at how to sex the bushtits, with males having a dark eye and females having a yellow eye. Further down the road, we had multiple Canyon Towhees and heard a few more Woodhouse's Scrub Jays. By now, it was lunch time, so we headed into Alamogordo for lunch at a small burger joint. Afterwards, we made a stop at the world's largest Pistachio and spent some time inside where many clients got pistachio ice cream. By now, it was three o'clock and time to go to White Sands National Park.

White Sands National Park was stunning with everyone getting looks at these massive white dune fields that made up the park. The sand was formed by the erosion of gypsum rock on the nearby mountains, blowing onto



this land area. The Dunes are a living ecosystem, with the edges of the dunes moving inches to feet in a year. The dunes in the interior of the park move much slower, but overtime can cover up massive trees. We spent some time on a trail before driving further into the park and letting clients just wander among the dunes. Instead of wandering, everyone joined up on the top of a dune to watch a fantastic sunset. The weather was ideal, with no wind and just enough clouds to create a spectacular sunset over the white dune fields—a perfect end to a perfect day.

January 25: Percha Dam State Park | Eagle Point (Caballo Lake)

Today after breakfast at the hotel, we packed up the cars and headed north to Truth or Consequences. We had two birding stops planned before arriving at the hotel, those were Percha Dam State Park and Eagle point at Cabello Lake.

Upon arriving at Percha Dam, we got out of the vans and were greeted by huge numbers of Phainopeplas that were flying around. These dark colored birds are the only member of the Silky Flycatcher family that makes it into the United States. In addition, these birds are mistletoe specialists and were feeding on the large number of mistletoe berries that many of these trees had. In addition to the Phainopeplas, we also had huge numbers of Western Bluebirds throughout our time birding here. From the vans, we spotted our only Red-naped Sapsucker of the trip, watching as he quickly flew off. We started to walk towards the forested area that is by the Rio Grande River, but first scanning the dam area. On the exposed rocks, we had amazingly close looks at an American Pipit feeding while a Say's Phoebe perched on the top of the dam. These birds soon scattered as a Coopers Hawk came racing in and perched on the far riverbank.

We then continued on towards the woods, where we had heard a Ladder-backed Woodpecker. This bird had continued to elude us throughout the trip and after a thorough search we finally located the male and female. We watched as they gave brief looks while hiding behind both branches and unshed leaves of the large Cottonwood trees. We then continued to slowly work our way down the park, picking up numerous Sandhill Cranes flying over while the calls of Phainopeplas still filled the air. Down the road, we finally had amazing looks at some more Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, while working a tree with no leaves. Continuing further down the



road, we reached the Rio Grande trail and followed that as it wound by the river. The highlight here was finally getting scope views of a Black Phoebe as it dipped and flycatched over the water. Briefly returning to the same rock before flying out again. This bird again scattered as a falcon flew over and perched on the opposite riverbank, an American Kestrel. Continuing further down the trail, we encountered another raptor perched in a tree. This bird had a washed out streaky breast and was small. This meant it was a Merlin. The Merlin allowed us fantastic views in the spotting scopes before it also decided it was done watching us and took flight. Further down, we had a flock of Vesper Sparrows, who took 4 tries to get in the scope for all to see this washed-out sparrow.

At the furthest reaches of the trail, we had several Gambel's Quail flush from the undergrowth into the nearby Pecan Orchard. By the river, a handful of Mallards and several Gadwall also took flight, alert to our distant presence. By this point it was getting near lunch time, so we started our slow trek backwards to the vans. We were interrupted halfway back by the same Merlin flying above us, but that was soon interrupted by a Sharp-shinned Hawk as it decided that was its space and proceeded to chase the Merlin off.

Once back at the vans, a picnic lunch from Butter Smith Kitchen and Pies place was served. While eating, we all continued to watch for birds, with Terri spotting a White-throated Swift cruising by. After a tasty Pecan Pie, the White-throated Swift again, made an appearance before disappearing. After finishing up at the state park, we loaded up and continued up to Caballo Lake State Park. Here, we visited one lookout, where we had a huge number of Ring-billed Gulls as well as distant Common Mergansers and a few Long-billed Dowitchers. In addition, we also had a distant American White Pelican, and 40 Sandhill Cranes fly in front of us. By this time, the afternoon was wearing on and we had to get checked into the hotel to allow clients time in the hot springs for the afternoon.

January 26: South Monticello Point- Lost Canyon | Hot Springs Cove | Main Marina | Dam Overlook | Paseo

Our last full morning. After breakfast, birding area for the day was the Elephant Butte Lake State Park. Within the lake, our first stop was South Monticello Point. We slowly drove the entrance road, looking for any sparrows in this sagebrush dominated habitat. With a little bit of looking, we came across a couple small grey headed sparrows that took turns perching in the open for everybody and running on the ground with their tails cocked



up like small mice. Everyone got great looks at these wintering Sagebrush Sparrows. From here, we continued further down to the lookout where we numerous duck species on the very low reservoir. The last time this reservoir was full was in the early 2000's, currently it sat at 11 percent full. On some of the open mudflats, we came across a small group of sandpipers that included both yellow-legged Least Sandpipers and a larger group of Long-billed Dowitchers. On our way back up to our next spot, we had good looks at a Rock Wren as well. We slowly spent the rest of the day working our way around the different viewpoints of the lake, visiting the lost Canyon viewpoint where we had several American White Pelicans and a Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Springs Cover- where we had 2 Crissal Thrashers running on the ground. We ended the morning birding the Marina, where we had a Neotropic Cormorant, and both Western and Clark's Grebes. Perched on one of the boats was a Belted Kingfisher that gave decent looks as well as some Brewer's Blackbirds foraging both at the docks and on the shoreline.

After lunch, we visited the dam overlook where we had better looks comparing the finer identification points between Western and Clark's Grebe (greenish-yellow bill vs. bright yellow bill) and (eye in the black vs eye in the white). We were also wowed by a flotilla of over 100 Common Mergansers who were all in a circle when we first got there. We watched as they disbanded and spread out over the body of water. Mixed in, was a lone, Red-breasted Merganser. After a quick stop at Paso del Rio, where we walked next to the Rio Grande River, we headed back to the hotel to enjoy the hot springs before dinner.

At dinner, we all reviewed the highlights of the trip. Carol's was seeing the Sagebrush sparrow and the morning fly in by the Snow/Ross's Geese. Teresa's was the magical sunrise with the fly-in of Snow Geese and Sandhill Cranes as well as Bosque del Apache and White Sands National Park. Betty's was seeing/learning more about Sparrow and Duck identification. Jim's was the morning sunrise with the geese and finally getting good looks at a Ladder-backed Woodpecker. Bob's was getting to know everyone, the White Sands sunset with everyone's shadows and the very large Array. Terri's was meeting everyone and seeing the Wild Turkeys fighting while at Bosque del Apache. Chucks was his 5/6 lifers and seeing Sage Thrasher, Sagebrush Sparrow and a Crissal Thrasher. James's was the Golden Eagle, Oryx and White Sands National Park. Lastly, Vernie's was seeing everyone enjoy the trip, the geese flying in during the morning sunrise and the White Sands National Park sunset.

January 27: Back to Albuquerque

Our last day of the trip, after an early rise to check a pond for any birds. We had breakfast and drove back to Albuquerque. As everyone dispersed after a fantastic time birding southern New Mexico.

Photos: Snow/Ross's Geese (Mixed flock) (Vernie Aikins - VA), Hooded Merganser (VA), Canada Geese (VA), Group Birding (VA), Red-breasted Nuthatch (VA), Juniper Titmouse (VA), Snow Geese (Blue race of Snow Geese in center) (VA), Snow Geese (VA), Large flock of Red-winged Blackbirds (VA), Sandhill Cranes (VA), Bufflehead (VA), Sandhill Cranes (VA), Red-tailed Hawk (James Petersen - JP), Morning Doves (VA), Loggerhead Shrike (VA), Group Birding (JP), Rufous-crowned Sparrow (VA), Group Birding (VA), Canyon Towhee (VA), Scenics (VA), American Avocet (VA), Merlin (VA)