



Naturalist Journeys, LLC and Sunrise Birding, LLC



Big Bend & Davis Mountains, 20 April - 28 April 2012

Guide: Woody Wheeler, with six participants: Robert, Charlotte, Emily, Rosina, Frances and Gail

TOUR SPECIES LIST

Birds

- Gadwall** *Anas strepera*— Several pairs at Lake Balmorhea
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* – One pair at Lake Balmorhea
“Mexican Duck” (Mallard) *A. platyrhynchos*— seen well on Rio Grande River
Blue-winged Teal *A. discors*— Many seen in a roadside pond near Marathon
Northern Shoveler *A. clypeata*— Many at McNary Reservoir and Lake Balmorhea
Redhead *Aythya Americana* – A few on Lake Balmorhea
Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*— On McNary Reservoir and Lake Balmorhea
Scaled Quail *Callipepla squamata*—Balmorhea SP, Davis Mountains SP, and Big Bend NP
Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo* - Nature Conservancy preserve, Davis Mountains
Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*— Balmorhea State Park
Eared Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*— McNary Reservoir, Lake Balmorhea
Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis*—Lake Balmorhea
Clark’s Grebe *A. clarkii*—McNary Reservoir and Lake Balmorhea
Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus* – McNary Reservoir
American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos* – McNary Reservoir
Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*— Lake Balmorhea, Rio Grande River
Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*— McNary Reservoir, Lake Balmorhea, Rio Grande River
Green Heron *Butorides virescens*—Nature Trail at Rio Grande Village, Big Bend N.P.
White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*—NW shore of Lake Balmorhea; Rio Grande River
Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*—5 in the vicinity of Rio Grande Village
Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*—throughout
Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* – 1 at Lake Balmorhea
Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus*— Rio Grande Village and Santa Elena Canyon
Cooper’s Hawk *A. cooperii*— Pair nesting in the Davis Mountains TNC preserve
Gray Hawk *Buteo nitidus*— A nesting pair at Daniel’s Ranch, Rio Grande Village
Swainson’s Hawk *B. swainsoni*— Nesting Pair near Balmorhea S.P.; others along road
Red-tailed Hawk *B. jamaicensis*—seen throughout in small numbers
American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*— El Paso Archaeological Museum; near Balmorhea S.P.
Sora *Porzana carolina*— Seen well at Balmorhea State Park Cienega
American Coot *Fulica americana*—McNary Reservoir and Balmorhea State Park
Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*— Seen at wetlands at Balmorhea SP; Davis Mtns; Rio Grande
Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*— McNary Reservoir; Lake Balmorhea
American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana*—Lake Balmorhea
Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri* —5 at Lake Balmorhea NW shore

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* – 1 at Lake Balmorhea NW shore
Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* –Several on west side of Lake Balmorhea
Wilson’s Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*—McNary Reservoir; Lake Balmorhea
Franklin’s Gull *Leucophaeus pipixcan* – Small flock on Lake Balmorhea
Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*—Lake Balmorhea
Forster’s Tern *Sterna forsteri* – A few on Lake Balmorhea
Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*—present in El Paso, Marathon
Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*—seen in cities and along roads
White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica*—common everywhere, except high Chisos Mountains
Mourning Dove *Z. macroura*—seen most days except on the hike to Boot Springs
Inca Dove *Columbina passerina* – Several in Cottonwood Campground, Big Bend N.P.
Greater Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus*—seen 3 days -1 with lizard at Rio Grande Village
Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus* – On nest with young in Cottonwood, Balmorhea State Park
Elf Owl *Micrathene whitneyi*— 1 seen at dusk at Dugout Wells, Big Bend National Park
Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*— 1 at construction site north of I-10 near Clint exit
Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis*— several flying at dusk, Dugout Wells, Big Bend NP
Common Nighthawk *Chordeiles minor* – Balmorhea State Park
White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis*—In high Chisos and in Santa Elena Canyon.
Blue-throated Hummingbird *Lampornis clemenciae* – Pair near Chisos Basin Campground
Lucifer Hummingbird *Calothorax Lucifer* – Several seen at Christmas Mountains Oasis
Magnificent Hummingbird *Eugenes fagens* – Davis Mountains and around Chisos Basin Lodge
Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri*— Commonly seen hummer throughout
Broad-tailed Hummingbird *Selasphorus platycercus* – Davis Mountains TNC preserve
Belted Kingfisher *Ceryle alcyon* – Balmorhea State Park and Lake Balmorhea
Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus*—Many in the Davis and the Chisos Mountains
Golden-fronted Woodpecker *M. aurifrons*—Common, conspicuous woodpecker at Rio Grande Village,
Cottonwood Campground and the Post
Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Picoides scalaris*— Balmorhea SP; Davis Mtns; the Post; Rio Grande
Village; Cottonwood Campground
Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*— One heard on Boot Springs hike
Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi*—1 at Davis Mountains
Buff-breasted Flycatcher *Empidonax fulvifrons* – Two of these rare flycatchers seen well through
spotting scope high in Ponderosa Pines at TNC Davis Mountains preserve
Dusky Flycatcher *E. oberholseri*—One along the trail to Boot Springs
Say’s Phoebe *S. saya*—common in Balmorhea State Park, Davis Mtns and Chisos Basin
Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*—these brilliantly-colored flycatchers were common at
Balmorhea State Park, Cottonwood Campground & the Post
Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens*—Davis Mtns. ; The Post; Chisos Mountains
Brown-crested Flycatcher *M. tyrannulus*— Cottonwood Campground, Big Bend NP
Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* – Several at Rio Grande Village, Big Bend NP
Couch’s Kingbird *T. couchii* – Several at Cottonwood C.G.
Cassin’s Kingbird *T. vociferans*—common in Davis Mountains
Western Kingbird *T. verticalis*—common and widespread, seen most days
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *T. forficatus* – Great looks at Balmorhea, Gage Gardens, Marathon.
Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus*—a few along highway en route to and from Big Bend
Bell’s Vireo *Vireo bellii*—at least a dozen at Rio Grande Village and many elsewhere in dense Mesquite
thickets. Its song was a constant in most areas in Big Bend N.P.
Plumbeous Vireo *V. plumbeus*—1 in the Davis Mountains
Hutton’s Vireo *Vireo huttoni* – 4 heard clearly on Boot Springs hike
Western Scrub-Jay *Apelocoma californica*—in the Davis Mountains

Mexican Jay *A. ultramarina*—these bright blue birds belong to the race *woodhousei*, different from the race in Arizona; they were seen close-up and often in the Chisos Mountains

Chihuahuan Raven *Corvus cryptoleucus*—frequent along Highways 20, 90, and I-10 at Lake Balmorhea and as we drove from and to El Paso

Northern Raven *C. corax*—in the Davis and Chisos Mountains, with a few in the lower regions

Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina*— At nature trail, Rio Grande Village

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*— Several at Santa Elena Canyon

Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*—Balmorhea State Park, Chisos Mountains, Rio Grande

Cave Swallow *P. fulva*— Small colony, McNary underpass on I-10; few at Van Horn underpass

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*—throughout, seen most days except for the hike to Boot Springs

Black-crested Titmouse *Baeolophus atricristatus*—in the Davis Mountains at the TNC preserve; also in the Chisos Mountains

Verdin *Auriparus flaviceps*— Rio Grande Village, Big Bend NP

White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis*—Davis Mountains

Pygmy Nuthatch *Sitta pygmaea* – Boot Springs, Chisos Mountains

Cactus Wren *Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*—Common in Ocotillo at El Paso Archaeological Museum grounds; Davis Mountains; throughout Big Bend NP

Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus*— Common on dry rocky slopes on Davis Mtns; Chisos Mtns

Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus*—Descending song heard in Davis and Chisos Mtns, seen at Fort Davis

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii*—common in the Davis and Chisos Mountains

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula*—Many, mostly in the Davis Mountains and along the trail to Boot Spring

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Poliophtila caerulea*—Many along the trail to Boot Spring

Black-tailed Gnatcatcher *P. melanura*— Seen in brush bordering Rio Grande Campground

Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana*— Several at Nature Conservancy preserve, Davis Mountains

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus*— One at Boot Springs, Chisos Mountains

American Robin *turdus migratorius*—Balmorhea State Park and Gage Gardens in Marathon

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos*—ubiquitous, seen and heard daily

Curve-billed Thrasher *T. curvirostre*—Fabulous look twice at Panther Junction Visitor Center

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*—small groups in El Paso & Fort Davis

American Pipit *Anthus rubescens*— Several seen on NW shore of Lake Balmorhea

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* – One very nice look on Boot Springs hike

Orange-crowned Warbler *Vermivora celata*—only 1, Chisos Basin

Colima Warbler *V. crissalis*— Four heard near Pinnacles, one seen briefly near Boot Springs

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*—Seen at the Post, Rio Grande Village's wetland

Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia* – The Post, Marathon

Yellow-rumped Warbler, Audubon's form *Dendroica coronata*—common at El Paso Archaeological Museum; Lake Balmorhea, in the Davis Mountains, Rio Grande Village, along the Pinnacles Trail, and in the filtration pond at Chisos Basin Campground

Grace's Warbler *Setophaga graciae* – Several seen and heard, Davis Mountains TNC preserve

Townsend's Warbler *D. townsendi*—3 at Sam Nail Ranch

Wilson's Warbler *Wilsonia pusilla*—frequently encountered migrant warbler seen daily

Painted Redstart *Myioborus pictus* – 2 near Pinnacles while looking for Colima Warbler

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens*—several at Rio Grande Village, Sam Nail Ranch

Green-tailed Towhee *Pipilo chlorurus*—Ft. Davis, several at Christmas Mountains Oasis.

Spotted Towhee *P. maculatus*—Davis and Chisos Mountains

Canyon Towhee *P. fuscus*—common; seen almost daily

Rufous-crowned Sparrow *Aimophila ruficeps*—seen well in Davis Mountains, Christmas Mtns

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*—very common throughout

Clay-colored Sparrow *S. pallida*— 1 seen at Balmorhea State Park in ranger's back yard
Brewer's Sparrow *S. breweri*—Christmas Mountains Oasis
Vesper Sparrow *Pooecetes gramineus*—Lake Balmorhea and at Christmas Mountains Oasis
Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus*—a striking species, seen very well at Ft. Davis and Christmas Mountains Oasis
Black-throated Sparrow *Amphispiza bilineata*—a desert specialist, this dapper sparrow was seen at El Paso Archaeological Museum, and at Christmas Mountains Oasis
Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia* – The Post, Marathon
Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolni*—only 2, at Sam Nail Ranch
White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*—small groups at Balmorhea State Park, Lake, and at Sam Nail Ranch
Hepatic Tanager *Piranga flava*—several in Cottonwood Campground, Big Bend NP
Summer Tanager *P. rubra*—several in Davis Mountains State Park, Rio Grande Village
Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis cardinalis*—a few at Balmorhea State Park, in the Davis Mountains, and in riparian areas throughout Big Bend's lower elevations
Pyrrhuloxia *C. sinuatus*—beautiful relative of the cardinal, seen at El Paso Archaeological Museum and at Christmas Mountains Oasis
Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus*—regularly encountered in Davis Mountains and Big Bend NP
Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*— One seen well in grass at the Post
Varied Bunting *P. versicolor*—a gem, seen at Christmas Mountains Oasis and Chisos Campground
Painted Bunting *P. ciris*—Quick view of this stunning bird at Cottonwood Campground
Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*—a number seen at Balmorhea State Park and Lake Balmorhea
Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna*—individuals were heard around Chisos Basin Lodge
Western Meadowlark *Sturnella neglecta* – Seen and heard in Balmorhea and Davis Mountains
Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*—1 at Rio Grande Village; 1 at Gage Gardens, Marathon
Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus*— Common in Balmorhea, Gage Gardens
Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus*—abundant in El Paso and Marathon
Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater*—Balmorhea State Park; lots at Gage Gardens, Marathon
Bullock's Oriole *I. bullockii*— Several at Balmorhea State Park near Great Horned Owl
Scott's Oriole *I. parisorum*—Seen well at Davis Mountains State Park, Rio Grande Village, Christmas Mountains
House Finch *Carpodacus mexicanus*—seen throughout
Pine Siskin *Carduelis pinus*—numerous at Davis and Christmas Mountains feeders;
Lesser Goldfinch *C. psaltria*—several at Balmorhea State Park, the Post, Christmas Mtns Oasis
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*—common in towns throughout

Mammals

Desert Cottontail *Sylvilagus auduboni* – Lake Balmorhea State Park
Black-tailed Jackrabbit *Lepus californicus* – One near highway leading to Balmorhea State Park
Mexican Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus mexicanus* – Several at Balmorhea State Park
Rock Squirrel *S. Variegatus* – A few in colony above Chisos Basin Campground
Black-tailed Prairie Dog *Cynomys ludovicianus* – About a dozen seen in colony NE of Marathon
Collared Peccary (Javelina) *Tayassu tajacu* – Ten in Davis Mountains State Park at close range
White-tailed Deer *O. virginianus* – A few in the Davis Mountains
Mule Deer *Odocoileus hemionus* – About a dozen total in Davis Mountains
Pronghorn *Antilocarpa Americana* – One pair east of Marfa

Coyote *Canis latrans* – Several seen in Chihuahuan Desert

Reptiles

Blotched Water Snake *Nerodia erythrogaster transversa* – 3 in water eating catfish at Balmorhea State Park

Rock Rattler *Crotalus Lepidus* – On rock along trail in Davis Mountains TNC preserve

Western Coachwhip *Mastocophis flagellum* – At Santa Elena Canyon

Texas Spiny Soft Shell Turtle *Apalone spinifera pallida* – A few at Balmorhea State Park

Painted Turtle – *Chrisemys picta* – Balmorhea State Park

Fish

Comanche Pupfish *Cyprinodon elegans* – Balmorhea State Park

Pecos Mosquitofish *Gambusia nobilis* – Balmorhea State Park

Headwater Catfish *Ictalurus lupus* - Balmorhea State Park

Dragonflies

Roseate Skimmer *Libellula saturate* – In wet areas of Davis and Chisos Mountains

Blue-eyed Darner *Rhionaeschna multicolor* – In ponds and backwaters of Big Bend NP

Amphibians

American Bull Frog *Rana catasbeiana* – Heard loudly at Rio Grande Village wetlands

Butterflies

Monarch *Danaus Plexippus* – Seen frequently throughout trip

And many others – enjoyed but not identified due to time constraints and focus on birding – we have a list available from another year...