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**Naturalist Journeys' Texas Big Bend Birding and Nature Tour
 April 18-25, 2015
 TOUR SPECIES LIST**

With Guide Woody Wheeler, and 8 participants:
 Tish, Brendan, Rebecca, Kathy, Judy, Gerhard, Kathleen and Lionel

BIRDS

- Gadwall** *Anas strepera*— At McNary Reservoir
Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*— 2 seen in same pond at Balmorhea State Park
Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*—at McNary Reservoir and in the Rio Grande River
Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* – 2 at McNary Reservoir
Lesser Scaup *Aythya affini* – One resting on bank of pond at Balmorhea State Park
Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola* – A pair at McNary Reservoir
Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*— Several in breeding plumage at McNary Reservoir
Scaled Quail *Callipepla squamata*— Coveys en route to and from Big Bend, Dugout Wells, Rio Grande Village and at Christmas Mountains Oasis
Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*— Several at McNary Reservoir and in roadside pond between Ft. Davis and Alpine
Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis*—at least 2 at McNary Reservoir
Clark's Grebe *Aechmophorus clarkii*— Several at McNary Reservoir; 2 did part of elaborate courtship dance
Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus* – Several over McNary Reservoir
Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*— One on Rio Grande River along nature center trail, constantly vocalizing as it hunted.
Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*— A few perched conspicuously at McNary Reservoir
Green Heron *Butorides virescens*— One hunting in water channel at Balmorhea State Park
White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi* – Two flocks flying low over McNary Reservoir
Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*— Many – especially in Big Bend National Park
Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*—Multiple daily sightings
Osprey *Pandion haliaetis* – Two soaring above Rio Grande Village
Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus*— One on the first day flying over Chihuahuan desert
Common Black-Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus*— One on cliffs north of Ft. Davis; another in protected nesting area near Rio Grande Village.
Gray Hawk *Buteo nitidus*— Excellent looks at 2 at Daniel's Ranch and one in Cottonwood Campground.
Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*—One on drive from El Paso to Ft. Davis; another above Prairie Dog colony outside of Marathon.

Zone-tailed Hawk *Buteo albonotatus*—One that Rebecca found calling and soaring above Chisos Basin Campground

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*—seen throughout trip in small numbers.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* – Three soaring together over Davis Mountains Nature Conservancy preserve

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*— One perched along highway west of Marfa

Sora *Porzana carolina* – One heard clearly along Rio Grande Village nature trail

American Coot *Fulica americana*—Several in McNary Reservoir and along Rio Grande River

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* – One in pond at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis* – Several at McNary Reservoir

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*—In towns including El Paso, Ft. Davis, Alpine and Marathon

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*—In El Paso, Fort Davis and other urban areas

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica*—common everywhere except in the high Chisos

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*—seen most days except on the hike to Boot Springs

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* – Several spotted by Judy in Cottonwood Campground

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo*— One foraging alongside road on the way to Davis Mountains State Park

Greater Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus*—these engaging characters were seen often – especially in Big Bend National Park, and in Rio Grande Village area particularly.

Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus* – Spotted by Gerhard in Cottonwood campground

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*— One seen at Prairie Dog town NE of Marathon

Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis* – Several fly-catching over Dugout Wells at dusk

Common Poorwill *Phalaenoptilus nuttallii* – One on the road at night near Dugout Wells

White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis*— Many at Pinnacles Pass

Lucifer Hummingbird *Calothorax lucifer* – One well spotted by Tish and seen well by everyone in scope at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri*— Most common hummingbird of journey

Broad-tailed Hummingbird *Selasphorus platycercus* – One at Boot Springs

Belted Kingfisher *Ceryle alcyon* – Seen at McNary Reservoir and again at Marathon Post

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus*—abundant in Davis and Chisos Mountains

Golden-fronted Woodpecker *Melanerpes aurifrons*—the common, conspicuous woodpecker at Rio Grande Village, Cottonwood Campground and the Marathon Post County Park

Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Picoides scalaris*— Common in parks and campgrounds visited

Eastern Phoebe *Sayornis phoebe* – Perched conspicuously at Rio Grande Village

Buff-breasted Flycatcher *Empidonax fulvifrons* – Two calling and seen well at TNC Davis Mountains preserve

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* – One at Marathon Post and one seen by Tish and Brendan in Santa Elena Canyon

Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya*—seen almost daily; several nested on eaves at Chisos Basin Lodge

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*—a favorite, these exquisite flycatchers were first spotted by Rebecca in the roadside pond between Ft. Davis and Alpine, and later seen frequently in Rio Grande Village, Cottonwood Campground & at the Post

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens*—several at Davis Mountains State Park and at Cottonwood Campground

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus*—the large, showy flycatcher in Rio Grande Village

Cassin's Kingbird *Tyrannus vociferans*—common in Davis Mountains

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*—common and widespread, seen most days

Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus* – Spotted by Kathleen along road between Ft. Davis and Alpine

Bell's Vireo *Vireo bellii*— First seen at Limpia Canyon and then many more times at Rio Grande Village and elsewhere. Its buzzy song was a constant in Big Bend riparian zones

Hutton's Vireo *Vireo huttoni* – One seen in Boot Springs campground

Western Scrub-Jay *Aphelocoma californica*— Common in the Davis Mountains

Mexican Jay *Aphelocoma ultramarina*— Seen close-up and often in the Chisos Mountains

American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos* – Common in El Paso

Chihuahuan Raven *Corvus cryptoleucus*—Great looks at a pair west of Marfa

Common Raven *Corvus corax*—In the Davis and Chisos Mountains, with some in the lower regions

Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor* – Several flying above McNary Reservoir

Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina* – Seen at Balmorhea State Park and in the Davis Mountains

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*— A few at Limpia Canyon and er at Santa Elena Canyon

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*—Seen most days of trip, often nesting on buildings

Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota* – Abundant at Balmorhea State Park

Cave Swallow *Petrochelidon fulva*—A small colony at McNary Reservoir underpass on I-10; more at Van Horn overpass at the end of our journey

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

Verdin *Auriparus flaviceps*— Heard at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Bushtit *Psaltriparus minimus* – A few in the Davis Mountains

White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis*—One in the Davis Mountains at Madera Canyon trailhead roadside Park

Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis* – One in Boot Springs campground

Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus*— Many encountered at Ft. Davis, in the Chisos Mountains, and in Santa Elena Canyon

Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus*—Heard and seen in the Davis Mountains and on most days in Big Bend National Park at Chisos Basin, in the Pinnacles, and Santa Elena Canyon

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

Cactus Wren *Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*—Seen in Davis Mountains; also frequently heard and seen in Big Bend N.P., including family in Chisos Basin Lodge parking lot

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

Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana*— Several seen well at Madera Canyon in Davis Mountains

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus* – One seen in Boot Springs campground

American Robin *Turdus migratorius*— Seen on first day at Balmorhea State Park

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos*—A conspicuous species, seen every day except two

Curve-billed Thrasher *Toxostoma curvirostre*—First seen well in Davis Mountains, then again at entrance to Big Bend N.P. (Panther Junction), and in Chisos Basin Campground

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

American Pipit *Anthus rubescens*— On shore of pond in TNC preserve, Davis Mountains, and along muddy shore of Rio Grande River

Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum* – One calling and perching at Rio Grande Village

Phainopepla *Phainopepla nitens*— Saw six of these elegant silky-flycatchers at Limpia Creek Primitive Area in the Davis Mountains

Colima Warbler *Vermivora crissalis*— Saw a total of six, including several just below (west) of Pinnacle Pass and the rest in Graves Oaks east to the Boot Springs campground

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*—Seen and heard at Rio Grande Village’s wetlands

Yellow-rumped Warbler Audubon’s and Myrtle races *Dendroica coronata*—common in the Davis Mountains, Rio Grande Village, and at Cottonwood Campground

Townsend’s Warbler *Dendroica townsendi*— A small flock on the Pinnacles Trail just west of pass

Wilson’s Warbler *Wilsonia pusilla*—One in Limpia Canyon Primitive area in the Davis Mountains and one at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Painted Redstart *Myioborus pictus* – One at Boot Springs

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens*—Several at Rio Grande Village calling frequently, plus others at Sam Nail Ranch that perched in plain view

Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus*— Seen in the Chisos Mountains and on Boot Springs hike

Canyon Towhee *Pipilo fuscus*—Seen almost daily, including on our front porches at Chisos Basin

Rufous-crowned Sparrow *Aimophila ruficeps* – Spotted by Tish near Chisos Basin Campground

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*—Multiple individuals seen in Davis Mountains, in Chisos Basin and on Boot Springs hike

Brewer’s Sparrow *Spizella breweri*—Seen and heard at Marfa Lights interpretive center

Vesper Sparrow *Pooecetes gramineus* - One seen at Marfa Lights interpretive center

Black-throated Sparrow *Amphispiza bilineata*—A desert specialist, this dapper sparrow was seen in the Davis Mountains, on our last day in Big Bend N.P.

Lincoln’s Sparrow *Melospiza lincolnii*— One at Balmorhea State Park, one at the Marathon Post, and one at Chisos Basin Campground – all spotted by Kathleen

White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*— A flock in Limpia Canyon Primitive Area, Davis Mountains State Park

Hepatic Tanager *Piranga flava*— One just when we arrived in Cottonwood Campground

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra*—Several in Davis Mountains State Park, and close-up views at Rio Grande Village and at Cottonwood Campground

Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis cardinalis*— Common in the Davis Mountains, and in riparian areas throughout Big Bend’s lower elevations

Pyrhuloxia *Cardinalis sinuatus*—Beautiful relative of the cardinal seen in the Davis Mountains and at Sam Nail Ranch in Big Bend NP

Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus*—One found by Tish and seen well by all in Cottonwood Canyon

Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*— One seen well in grass at the Post

Varied Bunting *Passerina versicolor*—A gem, seen first at Sam Nail Ranch by Kathy; and later by all at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*—A number seen at roadside pond between Ft. Davis and Alpine

Western Meadowlark *Sturnella neglecta* – Seen along road between Big Bend NP and Marathon

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus*—Abundant most days in towns and cities

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater*—In Davis Mountains and at Sam Nail Ranch, Big Bend N.P.

Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius*— One spotted by Kathleen at Cottonwood Campground

Scott’s Oriole *Icterus parisorum*—Seen well at Chisos Basin Lodge and at Chisos Basin campground

House Finch *Carpodacus mexicanus*—Seen throughout

Pine Siskin *Carduelis pinus*—Numerous at Davis Mountains State Park feeders;

Lesser Goldfinch *Carduelis psaltria*— At the Post, Davis Mountains and at Christmas Mountains Oasis

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*—Common in towns throughout

MAMMALS

Desert Cottontail *Sylvilagus auduboni*—Common in lower elevation desert habitat

Black-tailed Jack Rabbit *Lepus californicus*— One seen from highway in Big Bend N.P

Barbary Sheep (Introduced) *Ovis canadensis nelsoni* – Seven in several family groups on steep rock cliffs north of Ft. Davis alertly spotted by Judy

Rock Squirrel *Spermophilus variegatus*—Two upon entering Chisos Basin Lodge, and another at campground

Black-tailed Prairie Dog *Cynomys ludovicianus*— Dozens seen in dog colonies near Marathon

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus*—A half-dozen in Chisos Basin

Mule Deer *Odocoileus hemionus* – Several in the Davis Mountains

Pronghorn *Antilocapra americana*— 7 NE of Marathon in Prairie Dog town

Coyote *Canis latrans* – One on road at night upon returning from Dugout Wells, Big Bend NP

Rocky Mountain Elk (possibly from Glass Mountain herd?) *Cervis canadensis nelsoni* – One cow struggling to get through fenced- in areas NE of Marathon in Prairie Dog Colony vicinity

HERPS AND OTHER VERTEBRATES

Sagebrush Lizard *Sceloporus graciosus* – One at Davis Mountains TNC preserve

Big Bend Slider *Trachemys gaigeae*– Two basking on nature trail ponds, Rio Grande Village; others in cienega pond at Balmorhea State Park

Spiny Soft-shelled Turtle *Apolone spinifera* – Several swimming in cienega pond at Balmorhea State Park

Black-tailed Rattlesnake *Crotalus molossus* – A large 4-foot specimen encountered by Lionel near Pinnacle Pass where the snake activated its rattles!

Western Coachwhip Snake (Red Racer) *Masticophis flagellum* – Wriggling rapidly to get off road between Study Butte and Christmas Mountains Oasis

AMPHIBIANS

Leopard Frog *Rana sphenocephala* – In Carolyn Ohl-Johnson's ponds at her home in Christmas Mountains oasis