



Big Bend & Davis Mountains, 22 April - 29 April 2017

Photo: Golden-fronted Woodpecker taken by Woody Wheeler



Guides: Woody Wheeler and Lynn Tennefoss
Species List

BIRDS

Gadwall *Anas strepera*— At McNary Reservoir

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* – McNary Reservoir and in roadside pond near Alpine

Mexican Duck – Formerly a separate species, this race of Mallard seen at Marathon Post

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors* – Skip spotted a small flock flying over Alpine pond

Cinnamon Teal *Anas cyanoptera* – One at McNary Reservoir

Northern Shoveler *A. clypeata*—Several on the far shore of McNary Reservoir

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*— One female at McNary Reservoir

Common Merganser *Mergus merganser* – One in the Rio Grande

Scaled Quail *Callipepla squamata*— Coveys seen every day

Gambel's Quail *Callipepla gambelii* – Seen and heard at McNary Reservoir

Montezuma Quail *Cyrtonyx montezumae* – Heard at Davis Mountains State Park

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo* – One trotted through Madera Creek Canyon, Davis Mountains

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*— At McNary Reservoir and Balmorhea State Park

Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis*—at least 5 at McNary Reservoir

Clark's Grebe *A. clarkii*— Around 12 at McNary Reservoir, two did part of courtship dance

Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus* – One flying over McNary Reservoir

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*— One at McNary Reservoir

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* – Seen flying over McNary Reservoir and oddly again on drive back from Terlingua on desert stretch in Big Bend N.P.

Green Heron *Butorides virescens*— One spotted by Stephen at Rio Grande nature trail

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi* – One seen in flight between Balmorhea S.P. and Fort Davis

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*— Just a few in flight above Rio Grande Nature trail

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*—Multiple daily sightings

Osprey *Pandion haliaetis* – One near McNary Reservoir and one flying over Alpine ponds

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii* – One over Cottonwood Campground

Common Black-Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus*— Female on nest in protected area near Rio Grande Village.

Gray Hawk *Buteo nitidus*— One seen in flight at Daniel's Ranch and another perched at Cottonwood Campground.

Swainson's Hawk *B. swainsoni*—Many seen on drive from El Paso to Ft. Davis and near Prairie Dog colony outside of Marathon.

Red-tailed Hawk *B. jamaicensis*—seen every day except the first in pale morph

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*— Two perched along Rio Grande; another at Christmas Mountains Oasis

American Coot *Fulica americana*—Several in McNary Reservoir and at Marathon Post pond

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferous* – Heard and seen at McNary Reservoir

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* – One seen along Rio Grande mudflats

Willet *Tringa semipalmata* – A surprise flock flew close by at McNary Reservoir

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis* – Two flew over McNary Reservoir

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

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*—Seen every day but one – the day we all spent in the high Chisos mountains.

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* – A few of these delicate beauties: one at Rio Grande Village, another at Cottonwood Campground, and another at Christmas Mountains Oasis

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica*—Seen and heard daily

Mourning Dove *Z. macroura*—seen at the beginning and end of trip, often perched on roadside power lines.

Greater Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus*—these engaging characters were seen daily and close by, including one on a nest in Christmas Mountains Oasis.

Elf Owl *Micrathene whitneyi* – World's smallest owl made an appearance at dusk at Davis Mountains State Park.

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia* – Thanks to Jan's alert spot, we all saw one on near its roadside burrows by Balmorhea State Park.

Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis* – Several fly-catching over road on way back from Terlingua

Common Nighthawk *Chordeiles minor* – One flitted overhead at Davis Mountains S.P. while waiting for Elf Owl

White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis*— A few seen in flight over hill above Rio Grande Nature Trail, above Pinnacles Pass and in Santa Elena Canyon.

Blue-throated Hummingbird *Lampornis clemenciae* – Four at Boot Springs flying, perching, scuffling and peeping

Lucifer Hummingbird *Calothorax Lucifer* – At least four seen well at Christmas Mountains Oasis on feeders, performing courtship rituals and perching.

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

Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris* – Several seen stopping over on migration at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Broad-tailed Hummingbird *Selasphorus platycercus* – Seen in Davis Mountains, at Boot Springs in Big Bend NP, and at Christmas Mountains Oasis.

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus*—Seen and heard every day except the first.

Golden-fronted Woodpecker *M. aurifrons*—Beginning at Marathon Post, this charismatic woodpecker was seen on the next four days in Big Bend NP

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

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus* – One seen and heard in Davis Mountains

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* – Seen on most days in open areas. Best views in Rio Grande Village.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* – Dramatic view of two soaring together over Casa Grande mountain on Boot Springs hike; another one heard at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi* – One seen very well on Window trail

Western Wood Pewee *Contopus sordidulus* – One at Rio Grande Village

Cordilleran Flycatcher *Empidonax occidentalis* – Heard at Boot Springs Canyon and seen at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Buff-breasted Flycatcher *Empidonax fulvifrons* – Three seen and heard well on Madera Canyon hike through The Nature Conservancy’s Davis Mountains preserve

Say’s Phoebe *Sayornis saya*—Seen daily; several nested on eaves at Chisos Basin Lodge

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*—an eye-popping favorite, these radiant flycatchers were first at Balmorhea State Park, and later at the Post, Rio Grande Village, and Cottonwood Campground

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens*—Seen on all days, except two: at Rio Grande Village and in the high Chisos.

Brown-crested Flycatcher *M. tyrannulus*—the large, showy flycatcher in Rio Grande Village and at Cottonwood Campground.



Cassin's Kingbird *T. vociferans*—common in Davis Mountains
Western Kingbird *T. verticalis*—First at McNary Reservoir, then at other lowland roadside locations
Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus* – One seen on Madera Canyon hike, Davis Mountains
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus* – Many seen on one day near Marathon – especially on the way to the Prairie Dog colony
Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus* – Common roadside bird between Ft. Davis and Alpine, and between Marathon and Big Bend N.P.
Bell's Vireo *Vireo bellii*— Heard more often than seen at Rio Grande Village and elsewhere in dense riparian vegetation. Had glimpses at Marathon Post and Rio Grande Village.
Black-capped Vireo *vireo atricapilla* – One of these rare birds seen along the Window trail
Hutton's Vireo *vireo huttoni* – One at Davis Mountains State Park; several on Boot Springs hike; and another on Window trail
Plumbeous Vireo *Vireo plumbeus* – One along Window trail
Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus* – Several singing in Boot Springs canyon
Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay *Aphelocoma californica*— Common in the Davis Mountains
Mexican Jay *A. ultramarina*— Seen close-up and frequently in the Chisos Mountains
American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos* – Common in El Paso
Chihuahuan Raven *Corvus cryptoleucus*—Good look at one at Cottonwood Campground. Many seen elsewhere in desert environs
Common Raven *C. corax*—In the Davis and Chisos Mountains, with some in the lower regions
Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina* – Seen at McNary Reservoir, circling Hueco Tank at Madera Canyon in the Davis Mountains, picking up bugs off of the water surface.
Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*— At several sites on the Rio Grande
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*—Seen on first four days of trip, often nesting on buildings
Cave Swallow *P. fulva*—A colony of 10+ at McNary Reservoir underpass on I-10
Mountain Chickadee *Poecile gambeli* – Heard more than seen in Davis and Chisos Mountains
Black-crested Titmouse *Baeolophus atricristatus*—In the Davis Mountains at TNC preserve and the state park; also in the Chisos Mountains



Verdin

Verdin *Auriparus flaviceps*— Seen going in and out of nest in Christmas Mountains Oasis
Bushtit *Psaltriparus minimus* – Small groups in the Davis Mountains
White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis*– On the Davis Mountains and Boot Springs hikes
Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta Canadensis* – One in the Davis Mountains
Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus*— Common and vocal 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, Santa Elena Canyon and in cliffs above Christmas Mountains Oasis
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., especially around Chisos Basin

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Polioptila caerulea*—Many along Rio Grande and on the trail to Boot Springs

Black-tailed Gnatcatcher *Polioptila melanura* – Seen all four days in Big Bend N.P.

Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana*— One at Madera Canyon in Davis Mountains

Townsend’s Solitaire *Myadestes townsendi* – One heard making its repetitive “eek!” call near Pinnacle Pass, then seen flying overhead

Swainson’s Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* – One found by Dave in Christmas Mountains Oasis

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus* – Several seen on Windows trail hike

American Robin *Turdus migratorius*— Seen only on two days – in Davis Mountains and in Chisos Basin

Curve-billed Thrasher *T. curvirostre*—First seen in Davis Mountains, then again in Chisos Basin and near its nest in Christmas Mountains Oasis

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos*—The Texas state bird was seen every day

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*— Saw only one on trip, at Balmorhea State Park

American Pipit *Anthus rubescens*— Small group on grass at Marathon Post Park

Phainopepla *Phainopepla nitens*— Saw one of these elegant silky-flycatchers in the Davis Mountains

Colima Warbler *V. crissalis*— Saw at least four at Boot Springs and Boot Springs Canyon, and heard half-a-dozen more near Pinnacle Pass

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*—Heard and seen at Rio Grande Village’s wetlands; seen again at Santa Elena Canyon in riparian zone leading up to the overlook

Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia* – Seen on three days in Big Bend NP in riparian areas

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronate* – Seen every day except the first. All were the “Audubon’s” race, and their plumage was vivid

Townsend’s Warbler *D. townsendi*— One seen at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Wilson’s Warbler *Wilsonia pusilla*—Seen on last five days of the trip in moist, riparian zones

Painted Redstart *Myioborus pictus* – One spotted by Lynn high in tree canopy at Boot Springs

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens*—Heard and seen on four consecutive days along Rio Grande in Big Bend N.P. and at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*—Multiple individuals seen in Davis Mountains, in Chisos Basin and at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Black-chinned Sparrow *Spizella atrogularis* – Had good looks at this handsome sparrow on the Window trail

Black-throated Sparrow *Amphispiza bilineata*—A desert specialist, this dapper sparrow was seen both days in the Davis Mountains and all four days in Big Bend N.P.

Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus* – Had excellent looks at Marathon Post and in Rio Grande Village on dry hillside above nature trail

Lark Bunting *Calamospiza melanocorys* – Dave found two on hill above Rio Grande nature trail.

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis* – A few sightings at Madera Canyon and Boot Springs

Rufous-crowned Sparrow *Aimophila ruficeps* – Seen on three days in Big Bend and Christmas Mountains, including great look of singing male on Boot Springs hike.

White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*— Seen in Davis Mountains State Park and at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia* – Incredibly, just one heard in Davis Mountains State Park

Spotted Towhee *P. maculatus*— Seen in the Chisos Mountains on Boot Springs hike

Canyon Towhee *P. fuscus*—A common resident of Davis Mountains and Chisos Basin

Hepatic Tanager *Piranga flava* – Best looks were at Rio Grande Village and especially at the start of our Boot Springs hike at Chisos Basin

Summer Tanager *P. rubra*—Common and close in Davis Mountains State Park, Rio Grande Village, and at Cottonwood Campground

Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana* – One of these gorgeous birds seen on Window Trail

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

Pyrrhuloxia *C. sinuatus*—Beautiful relative of the cardinal seen near town of Balmorhea and again at trailhead for nature trail at Rio Grande Village

Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus*—Seen at Davis Mountains State Park, Boot Springs and most conspicuously at Christmas Mountains Oasis, eating a caterpillar

Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*— One seen well in grass at the Post; and another at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Varied Bunting *P. versicolor*—Half-a-dozen seen in beautiful lighting on Window Trail; and later at Christmas Mountains Oasis feeding station

Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris* – A brief but showy look at Cottonwood Campground

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*—A number seen at McNary Reservoir and at roadside pond near Alpine

Western Meadowlark *Sturnella neglecta* – Seen in Davis Mountains

Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna* – Seen and heard on last two days of trip in Big Bend and at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus* – Several in flooded campground at Rio Grande Village

Brewer’s Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus* – Seen on the first and two other days in the Davis Mountains and in Rio Grande Village

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

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater*—In Davis Mountains, at Rio Grande Village and at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius*— One at Cottonwood Campground and one at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Bullock’s Oriole *Icterus bullockii* – One at Balmorhea State Park, another on Window trail

Scott’s Oriole *I. parisorum*—Most common oriole of trip, seen all days but one.

House Finch *Carpodacus mexicanus*—Seen throughout trip, except on Boot Springs hike

Pine Siskin *Carduelis pinus*—Abundant on Davis Mountains State Park feeders

Lesser Goldfinch *C. psaltria*— At Balmorhea State Park, the Post, and in the Davis Mountains

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*—Common in towns throughout journey



Varied Bunting

MAMMALS



Black-tailed Jackrabbit

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

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

Rock Squirrel *S. variegatus*—Common in Davis Mountains, at Ft. Davis and on Boot Springs hike

Mexican Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus mexicanus* – One of these highly patterned squirrels seen at Balmorhea SP

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

Gray Fox *Urocyon cinereoargenteus* – Many of us came across one that frequented Chisos Basin Lodge grounds

White-tailed Deer *O. virginianus*—Several in Davis Mountains; a half-dozen in Chisos Basin

Mexican Black Bear *Ursus americanus* – Two cubs seen on roadside climbing over stone wall from highway on way back from Terlingua

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

Pronghorn *Antilocapra americana*— At Prairie Dog Colony and along roads in open desert

Javelina *Pecari tajacu* – Several hanging around the edges of Daniel’s Ranch and several seen along the road in Big Bend N.P.

HERPS AND OTHER VERTEBRATES



Texas Spiny Softshell Turtle

Desert Grassland Whiptail *Aspidoscelis aniporens* – Seen in Davis Mountains and Chisos Basin

Chihuahuan Spotted Whiptail *Aspidoscelis exsanguis* – Seen on several hikes in Chisos Basin. Very long!

Southwestern Fence Lizard *Sceloporus cowlesi* – Common small lizard in Davis and Chisos Mountains

Blotched Water Snake *Nerodia erythrogaster transversa* – Linda found one a Rio Grande nature trail in the water

Big Bend Slider *Trachemys gaigeae*– Joan spotted two basking on logs in nature trail ponds, Rio Grande Village

Spiny Soft-shell Turtle *Apolone spinifera* – Several in cienega pond at Balmorhea S.P.

AMPHIBIANS

American Bull Frog *Lithobates catesbeianus* – Many vocalizing in Rio Grande wetlands

FISH



Green Sunfish

Comanche Springs Pupfish *Cyprinodon elegans* – In Cienega at Balmorhea State Park

Green Sunfish *Lepomis cyanellus* – One seen clearly in waters along at Rio Grande Nature Trail

Headwater Catfish *Ictalurus lupus* – Closely related to Channel Catfish, these small catfish seemed to prefer channels of flowing spring water at Balmorhea State Park

Pecos Gambusia (Mosquito Fish) *Gambusia Nobilis* – Although endangered, this fish was locally abundant in Balmorhea Springs, in same area with Spiny Soft-shell Turtle



Arizona Sister

BUTTERFLIES

Cabbage White *Pontia protodice* – Seen along trails and roadways

Pipevine Swallowtail *Battus philenor* – Seen near bird feeding station at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Arizona Sister *Adelpha Eulalia* – Found in Chisos Basin by Hilary

Arizona Skipper *Codatractus arizonensis* – In Rio Grande Village

Band-celled Sister *Adelpha fessonia* – One perched beside pool in Boot Springs Canyon

Marine Blue *Leptotes marina* – Found in Rio Grande Village

Monarch *Danaus plexippus* – One seen in shrub at Balmorhea S.P.

Two-tailed Swallowtail *Papilio multicaudata* – Balmorhea S.P.



Flame Skimmer

DRAGONFLIES

Flame Skimmer *Libellula saturate* – Also flying over Christmas Mountains Oasis pond

Roseate Skimmer *Orthemis ferruginea* – Saw purple-colored males near waters of Rio Grande

INSECTS

Tarantula *aphonopelma chalcodes* – Stephen spotted one by the road