



## Southeast Arizona Spring Sky Island Sampler May 1 - 9, 2021

With guides Pat Lueders and Carlos Sanchez and the following trip participants: Debbie, Rachel, Don, Linda, Gay, Zosia, Joseph, Diane, Robby, and Steve

Compiled by Carlos Sanchez



(HO)= Distinctive enough to be counted as heard only  
(I)=introduced

Summary: Southeast Arizona in early May is a period of transition, when wintering birds and spring migrants are pouring across the desert on their way north to their breeding grounds. Many birds which winter further south also arrive and stop in southeast Arizona for the summer. A large proportion of these occur nowhere else in the United States. We managed to connect with quite a few of these specialties, including Thick-billed Kingbird, Red-faced Warbler, Olive Warbler, Mexican Chickadee, and Whiskered Screech-Owl. We also managed to see a wide variety of spring migrants from a late Snow Goose and American Pipit to uncommon Hermit Warbler and Snowy Plover. We saw all this while also learning about the plant communities that make the Sky Islands so distinctive and welcoming to these species from the riparian areas dominated by sycamores and cottonwoods to the Madrean pine-oak woodlands.

We also witnessed how bird ranges are dynamic, constantly waxing and waning over time. The Sky Islands consistently receive species from Mexico over the years, wanderers who attempt to colonize these northern outposts. Among these, we saw Rose-throated Becard, White-eared Hummingbird, and Rufous-backed Robin. All in all, a fantastic trip!

### **BIRDS (179 species recorded, of which 3 were heard only):**

#### **DUCKS, GEESE AND SWANS: Anatidae (11)**

**Snow Goose** *Anser caerulescens*—one individual hanging out at the golf course in Tubac that decided not to migrate north with the rest of his species

**Blue-winged Teal** *Spatula discors*—several at Willcox with another individual at Patagonia Lake State Park; a highly migratory duck that tends to linger south longer than other duck species

**Cinnamon Teal** *Spatula cyanoptera*—small numbers of this small and colorful dabbling duck at Willcox and Patagonia Lake State Park

**Northern Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*—at least a couple dozen or so out in Lake Cochise

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*—small numbers at Lake Cochise and Patagonia Lake State Park

**American Wigeon** *Mareca americana*—about a couple dozen at Lake Cochise in Willcox and two more lingering individuals at the Tubac Golf Resort

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*—scattered sightings of this large and common dabbling duck on our tour

**Mexican Duck** *Anas diazi*—pairs observed at Willcox, Casa de San Pedro, and Patagonia Lake State Park; this species was formally recognized in 2018 by Clements as being genetically distinct from the Mallard, reversing the 1983 decision to lump Mexican Duck with that species

**Redhead** *Aythya americana*—two lingering individuals at Lake Cochise in Willcox

**Ring-necked Duck** *Aythya collaris*—a total of four birds seeking shade at the Amado Water Treatment Plant

**Ruddy Duck** *Oxyura jamaicensis*—we saw these stiff-tailed ducks at Willcox, Patagonia Lake State Park, and Amado Water Treatment Plant

### **NEW WORLD QUAIL: Odontophoridae (1)**

**Gambel's Quail** *Callipepla gambelii*—this pretty quail was widespread and quite common in desert areas and around feeders in the arid lowlands

### **PARTRIDGES, PHEASANTS, AND ALLIES: Phasianidae (1)**

**Wild Turkey** *Meleagris gallopavo*—especially conspicuous around Cave Creek Ranch and Madera Canyon, where they would often hang out around feeders; the subspecies in Southeast Arizona is *M. gallopavo merriami*, or Merriam's Wild Turkey

### **GREBES: Podicipedidae (1)**

**Pied-billed Grebe** *Podilymbus podiceps*—a single bird near the Twin Lakes Golf Course in Willcox was our only one of the trip

### **PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae (6)**

**Rock Pigeon** *Columba livia* (I)—incidental sightings around buildings in towns and cities

**Band-tailed Pigeon** *Patagioenas fasciata*—a few flyover individuals in the early morning at Cave Creek Ranch in Portal

**Eurasian Collared-Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto* (I)—common and widespread in the arid lowlands and around feeders; an introduced species from Eurasia that spread explosively in the United States starting in the late 1980s

**Inca Dove** *Columbina inca*—we saw this elegant little dove in small numbers around human habitation and feeders in Portal and elsewhere

**White-winged Dove** *Zenaida asiatica*—common and widespread

**Mourning Dove** *Zenaida macroura*—common and widespread

### **CUCKOOS AND ALLIES: Cuculidae (1)**

**Greater Roadrunner** *Geococcyx californianus*—always a pleasure to see this large terrestrial cuckoo, and we had great views at Ash Canyon, Portal (feeders), and the De Anza Trail at Tumacacori

### **NIGHTJARS: Caprimulgidae (1)**

**Lesser Nighthawk** *Chordeiles acutipennis*—several birds flying around Casa de San Pedro at dusk

### **HUMMINGBIRDS: Trochilidae (9)**

**Rivoli's Hummingbird** *Eugenes fulgens*—several of these large hummingbirds at the Miller Canyon feeders and another individual at the Madera Kubo B&B feeder; formerly known as Magnificent Hummingbird before it was split from the Talamanca Hummingbird in Costa Rica

**Blue-throated Mountain-gem** *Lampornis clemenciae*—quite common at feeders throughout the Portal area; it is the largest hummingbird in the United States by weight

**Black-chinned Hummingbird** *Archilochus alexandri*—observed in Portal, Miller Canyon, the Paton's Center in Patagonia, and Madera Canyon; the western counterpart to Ruby-throated Hummingbird

**Anna's Hummingbird** *Calypte anna*—observed at the Paton's Center in Patagonia and the Behrstock's feeders

**Costa's Hummingbird** *Calypte costae*—a male observed briefly at the Paton's Center and at least three individuals at Montosa Canyon, including a female sitting on a nest

**Broad-tailed Hummingbird** *Selasphorus platycercus*—singles observed at Cave Creek Ranch, Miller Canyon, Behrstock's feeders, Ash Canyon, and Casa de San Pedro

**Broad-billed Hummingbird** *Cyananthus latirostris*—the most common and widespread hummingbird in southeast Arizona, particularly in the drier lowland areas away from the oak and conifer woodlands of the sky islands

**Violet-crowned Hummingbird** *Amazilia violiceps*—one at the Paton's Center in Patagonia, the most famous single site for observing this species in the United States

**White-eared Hummingbird** *Hylocharis leucotis*—we saw this rare but regular visitor from Mexico at the feeders in Miller Canyon – what luck!

### **RAILS, COOTS AND ALLIES: Rallidae (2)**

**Sora Porzana carolina (HO)**—a single bird calling (loudly) at the edge of the wetlands at Whitewater Draw WMA

**American Coot** *Fulica americana*—quite common and often numerous at all wetland areas we visited, particularly those with deeper water

### **STILTS AND AVOCETS: Recurvirostridae (2)**

**Black-necked Stilt** *Himantopus mexicanus*—two at Lake Cochise in Willcox

**American Avocet** *Recurvirostra americana*—about a dozen or so of these elegant shorebirds at Lake Cochise in Willcox

### **PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae (3)**

**Snowy Plover** *Charadrius nivosus*—one of these Near-Threatened shorebirds showed up on the shores of Lake Cochise in Willcox, and we were lucky enough to be there to see it!

**Semipalmated Sandpiper** *Charadrius semipalmatus*—one of these migrants at Whitewater Draw WA

**Killdeer** *Charadrius vociferus*—sightings of this widespread shorebird at Whitewater Draw WA and Willcox

### **SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae (9)**

**Long-billed Curlew** *Numenius americanus*—one at Lake Cochise in Willcox gave us great views before flying off, presumably continuing its northbound migration; the largest shorebird species in North America and one of nine Great Plains breeding endemics

**Marbled Godwit** *Limosa fedoa*—one of these large shorebirds at Lake Cochise in Willcox

**Least Sandpiper** *Calidris minutilla*—about a dozen at Lake Cochise and several dozen more working the drying pond at Whitewater Draw WA; the smallest shorebird species in North America

**Western Sandpiper** *Calidris mauri*—three of these migratory shorebirds at Lake Cochise and a couple more in the drying pond at Whitewater Draw WA

**Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus*—scope views of about a half-dozen birds out in the middle of Lake Cochise, resting on a narrow sandbar

**Wilson's Phalarope** *Phalaropus tricolor*—several dozen at Lake Cochise, but our best views were at Whitewater Draw where we saw several birds in breeding plumage twirling in the drying pond

**Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularius*—one in Willcox and two more at Amado WTP

**Solitary Sandpiper** *Tringa solitaria*—a solitary bird in the drying pond at Whitewater Draw

**Willet** *Tringa semipalmata*—a couple dozen migrants at Lake Cochise in Willcox

#### **GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae (1)**

**Ring-billed Gull** *Larus delawarensis*—about fifty or so at Lake Cochise just passing through

#### **CORMORANTS: Phalacrocoracidae (1)**

**Neotropic Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*—small numbers of this smaller cormorant at Patagonia Lake State Park; this species has recently expanded into southern Arizona over the past two decades from Mexico

#### **HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae (4)**

**Great Blue Heron** *Ardea herodias*—singles at Amado WTP, Whitewater Draw, and Casa de San Pedro

**Snowy Egret** *Egretta thula*—one working the shore at Patagonia Lake State Park

**Green Heron** *Butorides virescens*—two birds observed along the shore at Patagonia Lake State Park

**Black-crowned Night-Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax*—an adult semi-hiding among the cattails at a pond right by the Twin Lakes Golf Course in Willcox

#### **IBIS AND SPOONBILLS: Threskiornithidae (1)**

**White-faced Ibis** *Plegadis chihi*—wonderful and close views at Patagonia Lake State Park, where the lighting really lit up the iridescence of these birds; we also had several at the Amado WTP flying in the distance

#### **NEW WORLD VULTURES: Cathartidae (1)**

**Turkey Vulture** *Cathartes aura*—common and widespread, recorded almost daily

#### **HAWKS, KITES AND EAGLES: Accipitridae (5)**

**Cooper's Hawk** *Accipiter cooperii*—we observed this *Accipiter* at Casa de San Pedro, Paton Center, and at Miller Canyon (two soaring)

**Gray Hawk** *Buteo plagiatus*—we saw this handsome Arizona specialty a few times during the course of our tour: De Anza Trail in Tubac, Madera Canyon, and the Paton Center for Hummingbirds

**Swainson's Hawk** *Buteo swainsoni*—we often saw this raptor on long drives along the road, either perched on a telephone pole or soaring overhead; our best views perhaps as we were exiting Whitewater Draw

**Zone-tailed Hawk** *Buteo albonotatus*—beautiful views of an adult soaring casually overhead at Cave Creek Ranch; uncanny resemblance to a Turkey Vulture when seen from a distance!

**Red-tailed Hawk** *Buteo jamaicensis*—common on long drives either soaring or on telephone poles; our first one was at Willcox as we were driving along the entrance road

### **BARN OWLS: Tytonidae (1)**

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*—flushed and seen by most of the group on the De Anza Trail – a pleasant surprise!

### **OWLS: Strigidae (2)**

**Whiskered Screech-Owl** *Megascops trichopsis*—one bird seen well with another heard with the help of Raymond VanBuskirk at the Sunny Flat Campground at Cave Creek Canyon

**Western Screech-Owl** *Megascops kennicottii* (HO)—heard by some on our owling evening with Raymond VanBuskirk

**Elf Owl** *Micrathene whitneyi*—a few participants got to see this smallest of owls at Cave Creek Ranch one evening

### **WOODPECKERS: Picidae (6)**

**Acorn Woodpecker** *Melanerpes formicivorus*—this charismatic woodpecker was very common in the Madrean pine-oak woodlands of the Chiricahuas and the Santa Rita Mountains (Madera Canyon)

**Gila Woodpecker** *Melanerpes uropygialis*—quite common in the arid lowlands, especially along the De Anza Trail, Paton Center, Patagonia Lake State Park, Ash Canyon, and the Casa de San Pedro

**Ladder-backed Woodpecker** *Dryobates scalaris*—common small woodpecker of arid lowland areas, with sightings at Paton Center, Casa de San Pedro, Ash Canyon, and Portal

**Hairy Woodpecker** *Dryobates villosus*—singles at Cave Creek Ranch (unusual) and Rustler Park

**Arizona Woodpecker** *Dryobates arizonae*—nice views of this Arizona specialty on our walk at Miller Canyon, with a second sighting at Madera Canyon while we were searching for trogons

**Northern Flicker** *Colaptes auratus*—pairs at Rustler Park and East Turkey Creek in the Chiricahuas

### **FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae (1)**

**American Kestrel** *Falco sparverius*—a lone female at Whitewater Draw

### **TITYRAS AND BECARDS: Tityridae (1)**

**Rose-throated Becard** *Pachyramphus aglaiae*—we observed this special tropical species on the De Anza Trail at Tubac, where the female was actively building a very large hanging nest

### **TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: Tyrannidae (17)**

**Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet** *Camptostoma imberbe*—we saw this tiny flycatcher in Portal and Patagonia Lake State Park; the name ‘beardless’ refers to the absence of rictal bristles, present on most flycatchers, at the base of the bill

**Olive-sided Flycatcher** *Contopus cooperi*—one of these sturdy migrant flycatchers in the lower elevations of Montosa Canyon, sallying for insects from an exposed snag

**Greater Pewee** *Contopus pertinax* (HO)—we heard the characteristic ‘Jose Maria’ call at Barfoot Park, but it would not show itself; this species seemed to be arriving late this year, as it is usually a common species

**Western Wood-Pewee** *Contopus sordidulus*—only a couple sightings towards the last few days of the tour, one at Madera Canyon and the other near the De Anza Trail

**Hammond’s Flycatcher** *Empidonax hammondii*—a couple sightings of this migrant flycatcher at Cave Creek Canyon and East Turkey Creek in the Chiricahuas; small numbers of this *Empidonax* flycatcher winter in southeast Arizona and head north in early May

**Gray Flycatcher** *Empidonax wrightii*—a single bird observed at Cave Creek Ranch early one morning; perhaps the easiest species of *Empidonax* flycatcher to identify in the field due to its habit of wagging its tail in a gentle downward movement like a slowed-down tail wag of a phoebe

**Cordilleran Flycatcher** *Empidonax occidentalis*—a pair of these relatively colorful *Empidonax* flycatchers on our hike up Miller Canyon

**Black Phoebe** *Sayornis nigricans*—we encountered this water-loving flycatcher several times near bodies of water both big and miniscule such as the Paton Center, Casa de San Pedro, Cave Creek Ranch, and Whitewater Draw

**Say's Phoebe** *Sayornis saya*—we saw one on the New Mexico side of the border near Portal at the Sky Island Grill

**Vermilion Flycatcher** *Pyrocephalus rubinus*—we observed this vibrantly colored flycatcher almost daily throughout the length of the tour

**Dusky-capped Flycatcher** *Myiarchus tuberculifer*—our best views were of a (presumably) nesting pair at Miller Canyon; its plaintive, whistled call is a common sound in the Madrean pine-oak woodlands of southeast Arizona during the late spring and summer months

**Ash-throated Flycatcher** *Myiarchus cinerascens*—we heard and then saw this southwestern *Myiarchus* flycatcher at Stateline Road and near the Sky Island Grill (New Mexico)

**Brown-crested Flycatcher** *Myiarchus tyrannulus*—became increasingly common towards the end of the tour, mostly in the lowlands near Arizona Sycamore and cottonwoods such as the De Anza Trail, Madera Canyon, and Casa de San Pedro

**Tropical Kingbird** *Tyrannus melancholicus*—one of these uncommon (in Arizona) flycatchers made a surprise appearance at a fruiting tree we were watching in Tumacacori

**Cassin's Kingbird** *Tyrannus vociferans*—several birds working the field near Casa San Pedro, giving their distinctive vocalizations

**Thick-billed Kingbird** *Tyrannus crassirostris*—great views at Santa Gertrudis Lane not far from flowing water; this kingbird typically nests near riparian woodlands composed of large sycamores and cottonwoods

**Western Kingbird** *Tyrannus verticalis*—the most common kingbird in southeast Arizona, and we recorded it almost daily in a variety of open habitats

### **VIREOS: Vireonidae (5)**

**Bell's Vireo** *Vireo bellii*—we heard this little skulker many times throughout our trip, but our best views were in Peg's garden in Portal while we were having lunch and Patagonia Lake State Park

**Hutton's Vireo** *Vireo huttoni*—nice views at Cave Creek Canyon (South Fork), East Turkey Creek, and Madera Canyon (Proctor Road); superficially similar to Ruby-crowned Kinglet but much sturdier body structure

**Cassin's Vireo** *Vireo cassinii*—sightings of this spring migrant at Madera Canyon (Proctor Road), Miller Canyon, and Casa de San Pedro

**Plumbeous Vireo** *Vireo plumbeus*—we saw this summer breeder in southeast Arizona at Madera Canyon (Amphitheater and Proctor Road) and Miller Canyon; this species and the preceding species were formerly lumped together with the eastern Blue-headed Vireo as 'Solitary Vireo'

**Warbling Vireo** *Vireo gilvus*—we saw this quite plain vireo at Madera Canyon (Proctor Road) and in the garden of Casa de San Pedro

### **SHRIKES: Laniidae (1)**

**Loggerhead Shrike** *Lanius ludovicianus*—sightings at Whitewater Draw, Stateline Road, and the entrance road to Lake Cochise in Willcox

#### **CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae (4)**

**Steller's Jay** *Cyanocitta stelleri*—very common in the higher elevations of the Chiricahuas, such as East Turkey Creek, Barfoot Park, and Rustler Park, where it seems to be one of the most numerous resident landbirds

**Mexican Jay** *Aphelocoma wollweberi*—locally very common in the Sky Islands, especially in areas of Madrean pine-oak woodland

**Chihuahuan Raven** *Corvus cryptoleucus*—we saw this corvid really well at Willcox, showing off the white-based neck feathers in the stiff breeze

**Common Raven** *Corvus corax*—the most common and widespread corvid on our tour in southeast Arizona, recorded almost daily in a variety of habitats; this is the world's largest passerine

#### **TITS AND CHICKADEES: Paridae (2)**

**Mexican Chickadee** *Poecile sclateri*—great views of this Arizona specialty at Barfoot Park in the high elevations of the Chiricahuas, one of only two mountain ranges where this species occurs in the United States

**Bridled Titmouse** *Baeolophus wollweberi*—a classic and common species in the Madrean pine-oak woodlands, recorded at all sites we visited with this habitat including Portal, Miller Canyon, Ash Canyon, and Madera Canyon

#### **PENDULINE TITS: Remizidae (1)**

**Verdin** *Auriparus flaviceps*—we saw this penduline-tit mostly at feeders, such as Jasper's feeders in Portal and Ash Canyon

#### **SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae (5)**

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow** *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*—small numbers over Lake Cochise in Willcox, Casa de San Pedro, and Whitewater Draw WA

**Tree Swallow** *Tachycineta bicolor*—seen at Lake Cochise in a mixed flock of swallows

**Violet-green Swallow** *Tachycineta thalassina*—we saw this attractive western swallow only at Whitewater Draw WA

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*—small numbers at a variety of lowland sites, frequently near water

**Cliff Swallow** *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*—small numbers at Whitewater Draw WA and Amado WTP

#### **BUSHTITS: Aegithalidae (1)**

**Bushtit** *Psaltriparus minimus*—although this species is extremely social, we only encountered singles and pairs at East Turkey Creek and Miller Canyon respectively; the only New World member of the Long-tailed Tits, a family found primarily in Europe and Asia

#### **KINGLETS: Regulidae (1)**

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet** *Regulus calendula*—very common at the beginning of the tour in the Chiricahuas, but their numbers really petered out by the time we got to Madera Canyon; common winter resident in southeast Arizona

#### **NUTHATCHES: Sittidae (3)**

**Red-breasted Nuthatch** *Sitta canadensis*—one coming to the feeders at Cave Creek Ranch in Portal, a rare and special late spring record for the area

**White-breasted Nuthatch** *Sitta carolinensis*—a regular patron of feeders in southeast Arizona, and we saw them at Ash Canyon, Paton Center, Madera Kubo B&B, and Casa de San Pedro

**Pygmy Nuthatch** *Sitta pygmaea*—three of these cute little birds at Rustler Park, a higher elevation park in the Chiricahuas

### **CREEPERS: Certhiidae (1)**

**Brown Creeper** *Certhia americana*—two at Rustler Park and another at East Turkey Creek in the Chiricahuas; the subspecies in this part of southeast Arizona is found mostly in the Sierra Madre of Occidental of Mexico

### **GNATCATCHERS: Polioptilidae (2)**

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** *Polioptila caerulea*—one at Madera (Proctor Road) as we were looking for Black-capped Gnatcatcher

**Black-tailed Gnatcatcher** *Polioptila melanura*—one of these desert gnatcatchers at the Amerind Foundation

### **WRENS: Troglodytidae (3)**

**House Wren** *Troglodytes aedon*—one singing away at Barfoot Park

**Bewick's Wren** *Thryomanes bewickii*—a regular species at Cave Creek Ranch in Portal, Casa de San Pedro, and Paton Center; this long-tailed wren favors open woodlands in southeast Arizona

**Cactus Wren** *Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*—a classic species of the Sonoran Desert ecosystem; we recorded it several times around Portal, Stateline Road, and Casa de San Pedro

### **STARLINGS AND MYNAS: Sturnidae (1)**

**European Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris* (1)—a few of these introduced birds were hanging around Tubac

### **MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS: Mimidae (3)**

**Gray Catbird** *Dumetella carolinensis*—seen by a few at Tumacacori, a rare wanderer to southeast Arizona

**Curve-billed Thrasher** *Toxostoma curvirostre*—the most common and widespread thrasher in southeast Arizona, particularly common in the dry lowlands away from the Sky Islands

**Bendire's Thrasher** *Toxostoma bendirei*—one posed beautifully at Stateline Road; this was the last thrasher to be described in mainland North America

**Northern Mockingbird** *Mimus polyglottos*—sightings of this widespread North American species at Tumacacori, Casa de San Pedro, and Whitewater Draw WA

### **THRUSHES: Turdidae (4)**

**Western Bluebird** *Sialia mexicana*—great views of a pair at Rustler Park, foraging in the lower levels of an open forested habitat dominated by conifers

**Swainson's Thrush** *Catharus ustulatus*—a migrant spotted at Madera Canyon, noted by its buffy eye-ring

**Hermit Thrush** *Catharus guttatus*—sightings at Miller Canyon and the Amphitheater of Madera Canyon, a spring migrant at these sites

**American Robin** *Turdus migratorius*—our best views of this classic and widespread North American species were at Barfoot and Rustler Park in the higher elevations of the Chiricahuas

**Rufous-backed Robin** *Turdus rufopalliatus*—a continuing individual behind the Paton Center for Hummingbirds in Patagonia was a very special sighting! This Mexican species is a rare but annual visitor to southeast Arizona

### **WAXWINGS: Bombycillidae (1)**

**Cedar Waxwing** *Bombycilla cedrorum*—a few right by the feeders at Cave Creek Ranch in Portal

### **SILKY-FLYCATCHERS: Ptilogonatidae (1)**

**Phainopepla** *Phainopepla nitens*—this distant relative of the waxwings was pleasantly numerous on our tour; we saw them at Patagonia Lake State Park, Madera Canyon, Montosa Canyon, and the De Anza Trail among others

### **OLIVE WARBLER: Peucedramidae (1)**

**Olive Warbler** *Peucedramus taeniatus*—one at Rustler Park gave us great views! A genetic analysis revealed that this species is not a warbler at all but an early branch of the enormous nine-primaried oscine radiation that led to the New World Blackbirds, New World Warblers, New World Sparrows, Tanagers, and Cardinalids

### **OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae (1)**

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus* (1)—a few individuals here and there at feeders throughout the tour, unfortunately

### **PIPITS AND WAGTAILS: Motacillidae (1)**

**American Pipit** *Anthus rubescens*—one individual in breeding plumage at Whitewater Draw, working the mudflats along with the smaller shorebirds

### **FINCHES: Fringillidae (4)**

**House Finch** *Haemorhous mexicanus*—common and widespread, recorded almost daily

**Cassin's Finch** *Haemorhous cassinii*—a few lingering individuals around the Portal feeders were a nice bonus

**Pine Siskin** *Spinus pinus*—ubiquitous visitor to feeders throughout

**Lesser Goldfinch** *Spinus psaltria*—very common at feeders throughout, although not as numerous as Pine Siskin

### **NEW WORLD SPARROWS: Passerellidae (16)**

**Rufous-winged Sparrow** *Peucaea carpalis*—we only saw one of these handsome little sparrows on the De Anza Trail at Tumacacori, perhaps a sign of the extreme drought impacting the area; of all North American birds, this one may depend the most on rainfall as a stimulus for nesting

**Chipping Sparrow** *Spizella passerina*—these small sparrows were quite common around the feeders in Portal in the Chiricahuas, and we saw a handful of individuals at Ash Canyon as well

**Brewer's Sparrow** *Spizella breweri*—a few migrant individuals in the desert along Stateline Road; this species nests further north in the northern Rockies, particularly in areas of sagebrush

**Black-throated Sparrow** *Amphispiza bilineata*—our best views were at the feeders in Portal, where it was a regular visitor in several yards

**Lark Sparrow** *Chondestes grammacus*—one of the most common and numerous sparrows on this early May tour, recorded at a wide variety of sites

**Lark Bunting** *Calamospiza melanocorys*—a large flock of migrants near the Sky Island Grill first thing in the morning

**Dark-eyed Junco** *Junco hyemalis*—singles at Cave Creek Ranch and elsewhere in Portal, represented by the Pink-sided race

**Yellow-eyed Junco** *Junco phaeonotus*—great views of this Arizona specialty at East Turkey Creek and Rustler Park

**White-crowned Sparrow** *Zonotrichia leucophrys*—common and widespread sparrow

**Song Sparrow** *Melospiza melodia*—sightings at Casa de San Pedro, Patagonia Lake State Park, Paton Center, and the Tubac Golf Resort; represented by the distinctive *M. melodia fallax* subspecies in this part of its range

**Lincoln's Sparrow** *Melospiza lincolnii*—a couple at the feeders at Cave Creek Ranch and elsewhere near Portal, as well as one seen at Patagonia Lake State Park

**Canyon Towhee** *Melospiza fusca*—common around Portal, particularly around feeders

**Abert's Towhee** *Melospiza aberti*—we saw this Arizona specialty at the Paton Center for Hummingbirds and again at Casa de San Pedro; usually a common species, which may be less active and numerous due to the ongoing drought

**Rufous-crowned Sparrow** *Aimophila ruficeps*—nice views of a cooperative individual at Patagonia Roadside Rest Area; a southwestern sparrow that prefers dry hillsides and canyons

**Green-tailed Towhee** *Pipilo maculatus*—this winter visitor was still quite common around Portal, and there was also a lingering individual at Casa de San Pedro

**Spotted Towhee** *Pipilo maculatus*—our best views were at the picnic spot at Chiricahua National Monument

#### **YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: Icteriidae (1)**

**Yellow-breasted Chat** *Icteria virens*—they seem to have started arriving on the second half of our tour, as we suddenly started encountering them at several sites such as Casa de San Pedro, Patagonia Lake State Park, Paton Center for Hummingbirds, and the De Anza Trail at Tumacacori; formerly classified as a warbler but now known to belong in its own bird family

#### **NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS: Icteridae (8)**

**Eastern Meadowlark** *Sturnella magna*—a couple sightings near Portal and the Sky Island Grill

**Hooded Oriole** *Icterus cucullatus*—a couple individuals visiting the feeders at Cave Creek Ranch and elsewhere in Portal

**Bullock's Oriole** *Icterus bullockii*—the most numerous oriole in southeast Arizona and the western counterpart of Baltimore Oriole; a regular patron of feeders, and we also saw them at Patagonia Lake State Park, Montosa Canyon, and Whitewater Draw WA

**Scott's Oriole** *Icterus parisorum*—great views of this large black-and-yellow oriole at Behrstock's yard in the Huachucas

**Red-winged Blackbird** *Agelaius phoeniceus*—small numbers foraging along the shore at Patagonia Lake State Park

**Bronzed Cowbird** *Molothrus aeneus*—one of these striking cowbirds came down to the feeders at Madera Kubo B&B

**Brown-headed Cowbird** *Molothrus ater*—small numbers around the feeders in Portal and Casa de San Pedro, as well as in more natural surroundings at Patagonia Lake State Park and Montosa Canyon

**Great-tailed Grackle** *Quiscalus mexicanus*—small numbers at Patagonia Lake State Park and Amado WTP; the largest blackbird species in Arizona by a large margin

#### **NEW WORLD WARBLERS: Parulidae (13)**

**Orange-crowned Warbler** *Oreothlypis celata*—sightings at a feeder in Portal and in the garden at Casa de San Pedro, but it did not linger long enough for everyone to see

**Lucy's Warbler** *Leiothlypis luciae*—singles and pairs seen at the Amerind Foundation, Madera Canyon (Proctor Road), and the De Anza Trail (Tubac); one of only two warbler species that nest in tree cavities  
**MacGillivray's Warbler** *Geothlypis tolmiei*—observed by Joseph and Zosia at Madera Canyon  
**Common Yellowthroat** *Geothlypis trichas*—a pair showed well for those present at the pond at Casa de San Pedro

**Yellow Warbler** *Setophaga petechia*—common in riparian areas of southeast Arizona, but our best views were in Patagonia Lake State Park where they seemed to be thriving in the cottonwoods by the lake

**Yellow-rumped Warbler** *Setophaga coronata*—common around Portal and further up in the mountains of the Chiricahuas but falling sharply in numbers in the second half of the tour; the birds here belong to the 'Audubon's' race, which will likely be resplit back into Audubon's Warbler

**Grace's Warbler** *Setophaga graciae*—great views of this pretty little warbler at East Turkey Creek

**Black-throated Gray Warbler** *Setophaga nigrescens*—multiple sightings of this handsome warbler on our tour: Cave Creek Canyon – South Fork, East Turkey Creek, Casa de San Pedro, Miller Canyon, and Madera Canyon -- Amphitheater

**Townsend's Warbler** *Setophaga townsendi*—we observed this lovely migrant at Cave Creek Canyon – South Fork, East Turkey Creek, Miller Canyon, and Madera Canyon

**Hermit Warbler** *Setophaga occidentalis*—we seemed to have hit the spring migration window for warblers just right, observing this species twice during our tour: Cave Creek Canyon – South Fork and East Turkey Creek

**Wilson's Warbler** *Cardellina pusilla*—the most common migrant warbler on our tour, observed at multiple sites throughout

**Red-faced Warbler** *Cardellina rubrifrons*—spectacular views at South Fork in Cave Creek Canyon of one low in a tree

**Painted Redstart** *Myioborus pictus*—our best views of this Arizona specialty were in the Chiricahuas, particularly Cave Creek Canyon – South Fork and East Turkey Creek

### **CARDINAL-GROSBEAKS: Cardinalidae (6)**

**Summer Tanager** *Piranga rubra*—becoming more common towards the second half of the tour, with multiple sightings at Patagonia Lake State Park and along the De Anza Trail in Tubac and Tumacacori

**Western Tanager** *Piranga ludoviciana*—we saw this colorful tanager almost daily on our tour

**Northern Cardinal** *Cardinalis cardinalis*—the southwestern subspecies of this familiar eastern bird was common at feeders throughout the tour

**Pyrrhuloxia** *Cardinalis sinuatus*—we saw the 'desert cardinal' twice around Portal, both times around feeders

**Black-headed Grosbeak** *Pheucticus melanocephalus*—very common and widespread; the western counterpart of Rose-breasted Grosbeak

**Lazuli Bunting** *Passerina amoena*—observed multiple times at feeders in and around Portal, Casa de San Pedro, and the Paton Center

### **Mammals (11 species)**

**Pronghorn** *Antilocapra americana*—seen on our drive from the Chiricahuas to Casa de San Pedro in the San Rafael grasslands

**White-tailed Deer** *Odocoileus virginianus*

**Collared Peccary** *Pecari tajacu*—seen at Cave Creek Ranch in Portal

**Striped Skunk** *Mephitis mephitis*—seen at Cave Creek Ranch in Portal

**Desert Cottontail** *Sylvilagus audubonii*

**Black-tailed Jackrabbit** *Lepus californicus*—once along Stateline Road

**Cliff Chipmunk** *Tamias dorsalis*

**Spotted Ground Squirrel** *Xerospermophilus spilosoma*—present at feeders in Portal

**Harris's Antelope Squirrel** *Ammospermophilus harrisi*

**Arizona Gray Squirrel** *Sciurus arizonensis*—the most frequently recorded mammal on our tour

**Mexican Fox Squirrel** *Sciurus nayaritensis*

### Reptiles (3 species)

**Yarrow's Spiny Lizard** *Sceloporus jarrovi*

**Ornate Tree Lizard** *Urosaurus ornatus*

**Sonoran Spotted Whiptail** *Aspidoscelis sonorae*

### Photo Credit:

Vermilion Flycatcher, Steve Wolfe.