

ARIZONA SEASONAL REPORTS

WINTER 2007-08

Arizona Field Ornithologists is very pleased to present our first compilation of regional seasonal reports for Arizona. We are confident that these reports over time will create a cumulative record that will be a meaningful contribution to the scientific knowledge of the seasonal status and distribution of birds across the state. Our regional coordinators have assembled the data for the winter season (1 Dec-29 Feb) from the seasonal reports database on the AZFO website, the Arizona-New Mexico Listserv, Christmas Bird Counts, and eBird. As more birders learn about and become participants in this project, we anticipate they will begin submitting more of their noteworthy sightings to the AZFO database located at: <http://azfo.org/reports.html>. This is important because sightings that appear only on the listserv and aren't on the AZFO site may be missed or otherwise not included in the seasonal reports. An interactive map of the eight reporting regions, which are primarily based on biological and geographical criteria, can be found at: <http://azfo.org/regions/regions.html>. Some of the more unusual sightings are documented with photos, a few of which can be found at: <http://azfo.org/gallery/photos.html>. The list of observers cited is at the end of the compilation. Abbreviations used throughout the reports include: Arizona Bird Committee (ABC), Christmas Bird Count (CBC), and photographed (ph.). ABC review species are in boldface and are pending review. Species underlined are exceptional records for the specific county or region.

—*Doug Jenness, Statewide Coordinator, AZFO Seasonal Reports*

Mohave

Compiled by Troy Corman

Abbreviation: Havasu National Wildlife Refuge Christmas Bird Count (HCBC)

Within the lower Colorado River Valley Tundra Swans are typically rare but regular migrants (beginning in November) with some wintering in limited numbers. Therefore, a count of **35** at South Topock Marsh 14 Dec was an exceptional total for anywhere in Arizona (DDe, JA, MPr). Two Tundra Swans were also observed 11 Jan in upper Lake Havasu just south of the Narrows (DK, JRu). The highest reported concentrations of Snow Geese in the region were of 3131 noted on the 28 Dec HCBC and of 2700 estimated at North Topock Marsh 25 Jan (HHo, DDe). Greater White-fronted Geese are typically rare winter visitors in the region, so a count of **121** on the HCBC was exceptional. A lone individual observed 15 Feb in an agricultural field near Pintail Slough was likely a northbound migrant (JA).

The winter status of Blue-winged Teal within the lower Colorado River Valley has likely changed in the past decade or so as it has locally in southern and central Arizona. Historically, it was a casual winter visitor anywhere in the state, but has now become regular in some areas with numbers seemingly increasing every year. One individual was noted at Pintail Slough from 14 Dec through 11 Jan (DDe et al.).

November and early December is typically when scoters move south through Arizona in limited numbers. On 8 Dec, four Surf Scoters were observed n. of Site Six on Lake Havasu and three more were noted the following day at South Telephone Cove just n. of Katherine Landing (KK, SSc). Another was noted at Katherine Landing 23 Feb (JP). Rarer, but still almost annual, was a White-winged Scoter detected 8 Dec near Site Six at Lake Havasu City (CBab, SSt). By far the rarest of the scoters in Arizona and with very few records within the lower Colorado River Valley, a **Black Scoter** was observed at South Telephone Cove 9 Dec (KK, SSc). Always a great find in Arizona, a female Long-tailed Duck graced Lake Havasu City near Site Six 8 Dec (KK, SSc).

Casual in Arizona with approximately a dozen accepted records, **Red-throated Loon** may prove to be of more regular occurrence within the lower Colorado River Valley with more scrutiny. One individual was documented at Site Six 2 Feb (KR, DPo, ph. CR) and remained in the area through at least 28 Feb (BGro). Pacific Loons are considered rare, but regular within the lower Colorado River Valley. A high of three was noted 8 Dec at Site Six (CBab, SSt) and another was observed near Katherine Landing 23 Feb (JP). The high count of Common Loon was of 15+ in the waters surrounding Pittsburg Pt. in Lake Havasu City 8 Dec (KK, SSc). First reported 11 Jan in Lake Havasu City (*vide* MSt), a very rare **Yellow-billed Loon** remained through the period and was most often observed from Site Six (phs. KR, ON, JSm). However, it often spent much of its time on the California side of the lake. There are four previous accepted records for this loon in Arizona.

The high count of Horned Grebe was noted 8 Dec when five+ were observed in upper Lake Havasu from Mesquite Bay north and another three to five were above Davis Dam n. to South Telephone Cove the following day (KK, SSc). A **Red-necked Grebe**, first reported 11 Jan off of Windsor Point Lake Havasu (DK, JRu), was likely the same individual noted the following day in the Site Six area (DK, JRu, ph. CR) where it remained through at least 9 Feb (TL, JC, RR, CL). Documentation was provided for another **Red-necked Grebe** observed 30 Jan just above Davis Dam (TC). Typically very casual in occurrence, this was the second winter in a row that multiple Red-necked Grebes were found in the region. A conservative estimate of approximately 2000 Eared Grebes north of Pittsburg Point in upper Lake Havasu 19 Dec was an impressive concentration (MSt, MPo).

Forster's Terns have become a fairly regular wintering species in limited numbers along the lower Colorado River. Three were noted 28 Dec during the HCBC (*vide* DDe) and one was reported 25 Jan at North Topock Marsh (HHo, DDe). In the rare but regular category, Herring Gulls were reported in small numbers from Lake Havasu to Katherine Landing (m. ob).

A likely second-cycle **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was discovered at Katherine Landing 25 Feb (ph. BGro). If accepted, this will be the second Arizona record with the first also discovered by B. Grossi only 14 months prior!

Always a treat in desert regions of Arizona, a Northern Saw-whet Owl was observed well via headlights and a spotlight 8 Dec along North Dike Road at Havasu N.W.R. (JA, SL). Common Poorwills are casually reported in winter in Arizona, so one noted 7 Dec near Pintail Slough was noteworthy (JA). Documentation was provided for a **Red-breasted Sapsucker** observed 20 Jan at Catfish Paradise north of Topock Marsh (LA, TW). Due to many Red-breasted x Red-naped Sapsucker hybrids occurring in Arizona each fall and winter, full documentation is always appreciated.

Noteworthy passerines discovered during the 28 Dec HCBC included a Cassin's Vireo (CBat et al.), a rare but regular winter visitor to the region, and a White-breasted Nuthatch (JRi, AC) at South Dike, which is a casual winter visitor to the lower Colorado River Valley during flight years. Another exceptional HCBC find was a well-described Rufous-backed Robin (CBat et al.) at Pintail Slough.

Very rare, but almost regular during winter, a Northern Parula was found 19 Dec along New South Dike at Topock Marsh (MST, MPo). Two individuals were noted during the HCBC and likely included the prior reported individual (*fide* DDe). Also rare but regular during the winter, a Yellow Warbler was observed at Pintail Slough on 11 Jan (DDe et al.) and two Black-and-white Warblers were detected during the HCBC (CBat et al.). A casual visitor during flight years, at least one Red Crossbill was heard flying over Bullhead City 9 Dec (KK, SSc). Adding to the widespread influx this fall in Arizona, three Lawrence's Goldfinches were found 28 Dec during the HCBC (*fide* DDe).

Coconino

Compiled by Lauren Harter

Abbreviations: Continental Country Club (CCC), I-40 Sewage Ponds (ISP), Mormon Lake (ML), Oak Creek Canyon (OCC).

Seasonal weather included lengthy periods of well below normal temperatures and much higher precipitation than in recent years.

Two Greater White-fronted Geese seen on Lake Elaine in Flagstaff 13 Feb were likely northbound migrants (DVP, LHar). The continuing Snow Goose and two Ross's Geese at CCC in Flagstaff were last seen 2 Dec (JC, DL, m. ob.). A **Cackling Goose** of either the Richardson's or Taverner's subspecies was seen on Lake Elaine 13 Feb (DVP). The status of this goose in Arizona is largely unknown, particularly in the north.

A rare migrant and wintering visitor in Arizona, the continuing Eurasian Wigeon at CCC was seen throughout the period (LHar, m. ob.). It was sighted on the Flagstaff-Mt. Elden CBC, providing the first record for this species on the count. Four Hooded Mergansers were at ISP in Flagstaff 22 Dec; one female remained throughout the period (LHar).

Typically a rare but regular winter visitor to northern Arizona, Rough-legged Hawks were found in above average numbers this year in many regions of the state. Up to three individuals were reliably located throughout the winter at ML (TL, m. ob.).

A Sora was seen 22 Dec–29 Dec at ISP (LHar). A Short-eared Owl, first reported 20 Jan at ML, continued throughout the period (TL, m. ob.).

Also at ML, an adult Northern Shrike was found 19 Jan and remained throughout the period (LHar, m. ob.). This species is rare but regular in northern Arizona in winter, although there have been few reports in recent years. A House Wren seen 14 Jan at Grasshopper Point was apparently the first winter record for OCC (LHar, MPe). An American Dipper was found at ISP on the Flagstaff-Mt. Elden CBC 29 Dec (TL, m. ob.). Although regular in OCC in winter, this species is not normally found above the Mogollon Rim. A flock of seven Golden-crowned Kinglets near West Fork in OCC 8 Dec added to the widespread and well above normal numbers reported this winter at lower elevations in Arizona (LHar).

Three Savannah Sparrows seen at ML 19 Feb may have been early arrivals as this sparrow does not normally winter in the state north of the Mogollon Rim (LHar, DVP). A rare but regular migrant and winter visitor to

most of Arizona, a White-throated Sparrow was seen at ISP 22 Dec (LHar). A **Dark-eyed “White-winged” Junco** frequented a Flagstaff feeder during a snowstorm 28 Jan (ph. CLR). This race has occurred only in irruptions in 1936-37 and 2000-01 and in a sight report in 1971. A male Chestnut-collared Longspur was found in a flock of Horned Larks at ML 19 Feb (DVP, LHar).

A female **Purple Finch** was photographed at a Flagstaff feeder 2 Feb (ph. TL). This finch is a casual visitor anywhere in Arizona, with few well-documented records in recent years. Northern Arizona experienced an irruption of Cassin’s Finches, with individuals reported commonly throughout the region and large flocks into pinyon-juniper woodlands. Numbers also increased sharply in February, indicating northbound migration had begun for these finches.

Navajo and Hopi Nations *Compiled by Chuck LaRue*

The Navajo and Hopi Nations of ne. Arizona is one of the chronically underbirded regions of Arizona and such was the case this winter. Birding in this region can be tough with good records often hard to come by. However, any day spent searching for birds will always produce a few noteworthy sightings even if it is only a new early or late date, a new season record, or yet another new record or locality for some rarely encountered species. For example, Philip Kline spent only a couple days birding and found several remarkable birds. This winter was quite wet with above normal snowfall and rain. Roads in February became impassable in many areas. Deep mud, for example, cut short an attempt to reach the cottonwood and Russian olive grove at the east end of Cow Springs Lake.

Six Snow Geese were found at Many Farms on 3 Dec (PK) and one was at Pasture Canyon Reservoir at Tuba City 13 Dec (CLR). A female Hooded Merganser was at the Tuba City STP 13 Dec (CLR). Both species are rare on the Navajo Nation.

Three Rough-legged Hawks were seen on reclaimed surface coal mined lands at Peabody Western Coal Company’s Black Mesa operations 23 Jan (BM). This species occasionally winters at these sites.

Four Virginia Rails were heard in Pasture Canyon 25 Jan (CLR) where they winter regularly. This may be the only location on the Navajo Nation where this species winters. Greater Roadrunner tracks were seen between Kykotsmovi and Leupp 17 Dec (CLR). This is an area where the species, which appears to be markedly increasing on the Navajo Nation, is seen regularly.

A single, recent Northern Saw-Whet Owl feather was found in Pasture Canyon 25 Jan (CLR). This species is rarely encountered at lowland locations on the Navajo Nation.

A Downy Woodpecker, regular in winter in small numbers, was at Many Farms Lake 2 Dec (PK). After several years with no reports, Northern Shrikes made an appearance again this winter. One was seen at mile post 362.5 on highway 160 between Tuba City and Kayenta 9 Jan (CLR). On 13 Jan one was observed in Narrow Canyon about 12 miles north of Kayenta (CLR, ChLR, and RR) and the next day, 14 Jan, CLR and RR saw another along Chinle Wash n. of highway 160 and one mile s. of the Utah state line.

Positively remarkable were two warblers found in early December—a Virginia's Warbler along Ganado Wash at Hubbell Trading Post at Ganado 2 Dec (PK) and a male Townsend's Warbler at Canyon de Chelly Dec 3 (PK). Any warbler other than Yellow-rumped Warbler on the Navajo Nation after mid-November is a remarkable occurrence and both of these represent first winter reports for each.

Six Brewer's Blackbirds were seen at a home near Teec Nez Iah 14 Jan (CLR and RR). Although not unprecedented, winter records of this species from the Navajo Nation are still unusual. A Harris's Sparrow, rarely reported from the Navajo Nation, was observed at Hubbell Trading Post at Ganado 2 Dec (PK).

Yavapai

Compiled by Troy Corman

Overall, the winter season was generally cooler than normal with above average precipitation, including significant amounts of snow in the high country. As in other regions of the state, several species typically considered montane residents irrupted into the lowlands of Yavapai Co. this fall with individuals and flocks remaining into the winter. These include widely reported observations of Red-breasted Nuthatches, Mountain Chickadees, Brown Creeper, Cassin's Finches, and Red Crossbills (m. ob).

Tundra Swans are rare but regular migrants and winter visitors in Arizona. An individual was observed at Willow Lake near Prescott 15-16 Dec (S&SB) and another at the same lake 24 Jan (CTo). Three swans reported as possible Trumpeter Swans were also noted along the Verde River on private property north of Beasley Flat 6-19 Jan (JO). However, because of the difficulties in distinguishing between Tundra and Trumpeter Swans, plus the almost accidental status of the latter in the state, the identity of these individuals are best conservatively left as swan sp. without additional documentation.

A flock of **235** Canvasbacks on Peck's Lake during the Jerome CBC 16 Dec was an impressive concentration for Arizona (JL, TL et al.). A rare winter visitor in Yavapai Co., an American White Pelican was observed at Willow Lake 25 Oct-12 Dec (m. ob.). Except possibly along the lower Verde River, Lake Pleasant, and the larger lakes near Prescott, Great Egrets are rare winter visitors elsewhere in Yavapai Co. Therefore, one at Page Springs 13 Jan was noteworthy (TL et al.). Casual to rare in Yavapai Co. during winter, a Green Heron photographed 13 Jan near Cornville was also an excellent find (ph. DR).

Typically a very rare raptor, it was an exceptional fall and winter for **Red-shouldered Hawks** in the state, with well above normal numbers of individuals reported in southern Arizona. One juvenile was noted along Granite Creek from 28 Nov through at least 26 Dec when it was detected on the Prescott CBC (DM, CTo). It was also a phenomenal year for wintering Rough-legged Hawks in central and southern Arizona. One light-morph adult was observed in Lonesome Valley east of Prescott 20 Dec (RR) and another was reported on the Prescott CBC 19 Dec. (*fide* CTo). Both a dark and light morph were observed at Willow Lake 30 Dec with the latter continuing until at least 23 Feb (SDr, BT, ph. SB). Very seldom reported in the lowlands, even during winter, a Northern Pygmy-Owl was detected near Montezuma Well during the Camp Verde CBC 5 Jan (RR et al.).

An adult female Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was discovered foraging in exotic plantings in a Sedona neighborhood 30 Dec during the Sedona CBC (ph. LHar, AM, MMi). It remained through at least 17 Feb (LHar). These sapsuckers are rare migrants and winter visitors to most regions of Arizona. Several Downy Woodpeckers were noted at lower than normal elevations this winter, including a female first found on the Prescott CBC 19 Dec and remaining through at least 21 Dec (MT, CTo) and in the Middle Verde residential area on 5 Jan during the Camp Verde CBC (RR, CLR et al). White-throated Swifts are considered accidental in the Prescott area during the winter, so two to four at the Granite Dells 4 Dec were likely late migrants (CTo).

There are very few if any documented winter records of "Western Flycatcher" in Yavapai Co., so a report of one 30 Dec in Oak Creek Valley during the Sedona CBC was most intriguing (TL). Although reports are apparently increasing in southern Arizona, the few definitely documented state winter records of this complex have all been of Pacific-slope Flycatchers. A Hammond's Flycatcher was noted along Lynx Creek at the Highland Center for Natural History 3 Dec (BP et al.). Two others were documented on the Sedona CBC 30 Dec, with one individual near Page Springs and the other in Oak Creek Valley (CLR, RR). These flycatchers are casual to rare during winter in the lowlands of Yavapai Co. and are not reported annually during this season.

A Plumbeous Vireo observed at Page Springs 9 Dec may have been a late migrant (RR). This species is reported casually during the winter in Yavapai Co. A Tree Swallow 17 Feb at the Sedona wastewater treatment facility was one of the first northbound migrants noted this season in the region (LHar, DVP, DH et al.). Casually reported in the Prescott area, a Cactus Wren was discovered on the Prescott CBC 19 Dec (*vide* CTo). Two Curve-billed Thrashers were noted in a patch of desert scrub containing cholla near Cottonwood 16 Dec (SDr). This is much farther north within the Verde River Valley than what was documented during the *AZ Breeding Bird Atlas* surveys (1993-2000). Casual in winter in the Prescott area, an Orange-crowned Warbler was observed 1-25 Jan in Prescott Canyon Estates (NM, ND, CTo). First noted 19 Oct, a Black-and-white Warbler continued through at least 10 Jan at Granite Creek s. of Watson Lake, Prescott (m. ob.). Common Yellowthroats are casually reported during the winter in the Prescott area, so one observed in Watson Woods 31 Dec-8 Jan was noteworthy (DM, CTo).

Rare winter visitors in the region, a Swamp Sparrow was detected by its unique call 5 Jan along the Verde River just upstream from the I-17 bridge during the Camp Verde CBC (RR, CLR et al.). White-throated Sparrows are rare but regular migrants and winter visitors to most regions of Arizona. One was noted at Watson Woods 2 Dec (MN). Always a great find anywhere in Arizona, two Golden-crowned Sparrows were discovered at Peck's Lake during the Jerome CBC 16 Dec (ShL LHar, TL, JL). The "Red-backed" race of the Dark-eyed Junco is traditionally known as a sedentary subspecies in Arizona with few records indicating any regular winter movement even into the adjacent lowlands. Thus, a rare encounter with an individual of this race at the Wet Beaver Creek Camp Ground on 1 Feb (LHar) was noteworthy. With closer scrutiny we may find that a few individuals of this race may actually be found each winter in flocks of juncos farther south and at lower elevations. Accidental in the region, a Yellow-eyed Junco apparently spent the winter at the Highland Center for Natural History, north of Lynx Lake, and was last reported 6 Feb (MN). Considered an irregular migrant and winter visitor in the Prescott area, Lawrence's Goldfinches began appearing at a Prescott feeder in August. Numbers began to increase in January with a high of **26** counted (ph. NM). Some remained through the end of the season.

White Mountains

Compiled by Eric Hough

Abbreviations: Pine Meadows Country Club (PMCC), State Route (SR), Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)

During this winter, northern Arizona received above average precipitation and snowfall. This was a change from recent years where little or no snowfall occurred. Temperatures, however, were typical for the winter season. An irruption of Red Crossbills and Cassin's Finches, noted throughout the state, was also evident in the White Mountains.

Thirty-six Eared Grebes were recorded at Telephone Lake during the Timber Mesa CBC 15 Dec (JV, LW). This species is uncommon in winter in northern Arizona, probably due to lack of open water during the colder winter months. One "blue morph" and four "white morph" Snow Geese were observed foraging in a dry agricultural field adjacent to the Hidden Cove Golf Course in Holbrook 9 Feb (ErH). Snow Geese are a rare transient in northern Arizona.

During the Timber Mesa CBC 15 Dec, nine Common Goldeneyes were seen at Fool Hollow Lake in Show Low (JV). This species was also observed throughout the winter season in Overgaard on the pond along the south side of SR260 at the Pinecrest Lake subdivision and on the nearby ponds in the Bison Ranch subdivision (BHo, ErH, ElH). Ten individuals were seen at Pinecrest Lake 22 Jan, seven birds at Pinecrest Lake 10 Feb, and six birds at Pinecrest Lake and one male at Bison Ranch 17 Feb (birds recorded for GBBC). At least two females remained throughout the winter and into the spring season. Common Goldeneyes are an uncommon winter resident in northern Arizona, but they may regularly occur in winter at Pinecrest Lake as a result of circulating water that prevents the pond from icing over.

A highlight of the 15 Dec Timber Mesa CBC was an astounding **36** Hooded Mergansers reported in Pinetop-Lakeside. Twenty-four of the birds were seen at Big Spring (BP) and the other 12 birds were observed at Rainbow Lake (SSi, BD). On 18 Feb, four individuals were seen on Clear Creek Reservoir at McHood Park south of Winslow (ErH). Hooded Merganser is a rare transient and winter resident in the northern part of the state.

On 23 Dec, a light-morph Rough-legged Hawk was observed soaring above the grasslands near milepost 22 along SR377 south of Holbrook (ErH). This species is a rare winter visitor to northern Arizona. A female Merlin (Richardson's form) was photographed along Zeniff Rd. (between SR377 and SR277 north of Heber) 23 Dec (BHo, ErH, ElH). The same observers saw a male Merlin (Richardson's form) at the same location 9 Feb. Merlins are uncommon in the winter in this region.

A Ring-billed Gull was an odd sighting near dumpsters behind the Chevron/Dairy Queen in Heber/Overgaard 16 Feb (ErH). Although this species is a fairly common transient in n. Arizona, the sighting of one in Heber/Overgaard is unusual given the lack of major bodies of water.

At two locations in Overgaard, Red-breasted Nuthatches were observed during the 17 Dec GBBC (BHo, ErH, ElH). One bird was heard and subsequently seen in the PMCC neighborhood in pinyon-juniper habitat. The other was found foraging in a pinyon pine long Buckskin Rd. in a nearby subdivision. The observation of these birds in pinyon-juniper habitat was unexpected, since usually this species is found in higher elevations or north-facing drainages with mixed-conifer forests. These birds may have been part of the irruption into lower elevations in Arizona this winter or they could have come from the small populations in the isolated mixed conifer stands south of Heber/Overgaard that survived the Rodeo-Chediski fire.

On 18 Feb, one Marsh Wren was found in a cattail thicket in the se. cove of Clear Creek Reservoir at McHood Park south of Winslow (ZZ). This species is considered rare in winter in the northern part of the state. However, since McHood Park is at a lower elevation, the occurrence of this species at this location and this time of year may not be "rare." A Golden-crowned Kinglet was observed foraging in a juniper at a residence in Aripine 15 Dec (AM, PMA). This bird was out of its expected high-elevation mixed-conifer habitat, since Aripine lies within pinyon-juniper woodland with scattered ponderosa pines.

One Lincoln's Sparrow was seen foraging along the roadside with a flock of White-crowned Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos at the PMCC in Overgaard 13 Dec (ErH). Lincoln's Sparrow is uncommon in winter in n. Arizona. During the Timber Mesa CBC 15 Dec, five Savannah Sparrows were counted at two locations in the Show Low area. Three birds were seen behind White Mountain Ford in Show Low and two birds were found at Telephone Lake (JV, LW). Savannah Sparrow is uncommon in winter in n. Arizona, but casual in the transition zone between the southern and northern parts of the state where these locations are.

Some 30 Red Crossbills were observed in a yard in Heber 13 Dec (BHo, ErH, ElH), an unusually high number. During the GBBC 17 Feb, 18 Cassin's Finches were recorded in the Heber/Overgaard area (BHo, ErH, ElH). Three of the birds were seen in a yard in Heber, five were present in the neighborhood at the PMCC in Overgaard, and 10 were observed along Buckskin Rd. in Overgaard. This species is an uncommon winter resident in the region.

Southwest

Compiled by Henry Detwiler

Abbreviations: Christmas Bird Count-Mittry/Martinez Lake, centered on Imperial Dam (CBC-M/ML), Yuma West Wetlands (YWW), Imperial National Wildlife Refuge (INWR), Bill Williams National Wildlife Refuge (BWNWR), Quigley Wildlife Area (Quigley WA)

A mature and an immature Tundra Swan were observed at INWR during the 15 Dec CBC-M/ML (HD, m. ob.). Although reported almost every year in the Gila Valley during fall and winter, this is the first known at Imperial NWR since the early 1990s.

Greater Scaup was again reported in its usual low numbers. Single birds were on the CBC-M/ML and at INWR 16 Feb (HD). A few were reported at Parker Dam 19 Dec (MSt) and three 23 Feb (CLR). A stunning adult male Long-tailed Duck, first noted at Parker Dam 19 Dec (MSt, MP), was joined by a female 2 Feb (KR, CR, DPo) and the pair remained through at least 23 Feb (CLR). Up to four Barrow's Goldeneyes were at Parker Dam throughout the season (m. ob.).

Hooded Mergansers were abundant this winter compared to the past 18 years: 27 at INWR 15 Dec (HD) and 17 at Cocopah RV Resort in January (HD). However, the numbers of Common and Red-breasted Mergansers were much lower than usual in Yuma Co.—almost nonexistent save for the five Common Mergansers 16 Feb at INWR (HD). In La Paz Co. the situation was very different; scores of Common Mergansers and a few Red-breasted Mergansers were in the Bill Williams Delta 19 Dec (MSt).

MST reported a Common Loon at Havasu Springs 19 Dec. A Pacific Loon and a Horned Grebe were at Take Off Point just above Parker Dam Dec 19 (MSt). A Red-necked Grebe was reported from BWNWR 2 Jan (KB)

and may have been the same individual later observed at Site Six in Lake Havasu City and remained into February.

An exceptional winter count of **14** Brown Pelicans, including a fair number of adults, was noted in the Bill Williams Arm of Lake Havasu 8 Dec (KK, ScS). Three Brown Pelicans and six American White Pelicans were at Bill Williams Delta on 19 Dec (MSt).

Raptors put in a good showing south of Yuma in the huge circular alfalfa and grass fields. Numbers of Ferruginous Hawks varied between 18 on 5 Dec and **50** on 17 Feb. An immature Golden Eagle was spotted over the same crop fields several times during December (HD, AB, HB, MMc). A single immature Bald Eagle reported on the CBC-M/ML was a low number compared to most years.

White-throated Swifts appeared to be more numerous than usual (or at least more were reported than usual), with flocks of several dozen in February in the Gila River Valley (HD, AB) and at Mittry Lake (HD). A male and female Red-naped Sapsucker wintered at the YWW (m. ob.). Some years these birds are completely absent—or not detected by anyone. Very unusual for this region, a Thick-billed Kingbird, back for its sixth winter, remained at the Yuma Main Drain for the entire season (m. ob.). A Gray Flycatcher was seen at the YWW the week of 1 Feb (AB, HB).

A Brown Creeper along the Gila Gravity Canal was the best find of the 15 Dec Yuma-area CBC. Although an invasion species throughout most of Arizona this season, this was the only one reported in Yuma Co. In La Paz Co. four Brown Creepers were reported at BWNWR (KB).

A **Cave Swallow** was reported at BWNWR 2 Feb (KR et al.). It was relocated two days later, but not reported since. There are only five previously accepted records for the state and if accepted, this will be the first for the lower Colorado River Valley. A Gray Vireo at the YWW 16 Feb was unexpected (HD, SDe). The only Bewick's Wren reported this winter was at the YWW. (AB, HB, SD). Three pairs of Le Conte's Thrashers were observed five miles east of Tacna 26 Jan (HD, AB, MMc).

This was not an outstanding winter for warblers. A Black-throated Gray Warbler at Quigley WA, north of Tacna, 12 Jan (HD) may have been wintering. Two early migrant Nashville Warblers were at the YWW during the first week of February (AB, HB). A Palm Warbler was at Quigley WA 30 Nov (HD), but there were no reports as to whether it stayed into December.

MMc had a Golden-crowned Sparrow at his feeder in Yuma until early December. This was an excellent winter for Dark-eyed Juncos, seen in many locations throughout the season (m. ob.). Likewise, it was a good year for wintering Sage Sparrows. Brewer's Sparrows, on the other hand, came in late and in lower numbers than usual. A Fox Sparrow was reported from a yard in the Yuma Foothills in late February (CH).

South-Central

Compiled by Janet Witzeman

Abbreviations: Boyce Thompson Arboretum (BTA), Gilbert Water Ranch (GWR), Hassayampa River Preserve (HRP), Painted Rock Dam (PRD), Phoenix Area Urban Aquatic Bird Survey (PAABS).

Greater White-fronted Geese (formerly considered rare and irregular in winter) continued to increase in numbers. At least 22 individuals were reported (compared with five recorded the previous winter). Up to eight were counted along the Verde River at Ft. McDowell 12-14 Dec (KR, RJ), a second individual joined the one at McCormick Ranch 27 Dec, and both remained through the period (PD, JSm et al.), six were counted at Palo Verde 26 Dec (SB), two were reported at the Pavilions ponds 30 Dec (PD), four were at Sun Lakes 19 Jan (TC), and one was seen at Crystal Gardens in Avondale 1 Feb (JT).

Snow Geese also seemed to be wintering in higher numbers than usual. One was present all winter at the Dave White Golf Course in Casa Grande (m. ob.); at least 10 were in fields near McCormick Ranch in Scottsdale during the period (m. ob.); three were at the Higley Rd. ponds in Chandler 15 Dec (ML); individuals were on the Gila River CBC 27 Dec (*fide* TC), at the Moon Valley Golf Course 19 Jan (DPo), and Sun Lakes 19 Jan (TC); and two were along Arlington School Rd. 24 Jan (RHa). Two Ross's Geese were observed at GWR 2 Dec (MMo), and individuals were reported at ponds on the Gila River Indian Reservation 15 Dec (ML), at Cave Creek 19 Jan (DPo) and at Sun Lakes 19 Jan (TC). The resident Ross's Goose at Chaparral Park (since fall 2006) remained at least until 27 Jan (JSm et al.).

Among more than 1000 Canada Geese wintering in the Scottsdale area were a Giant Canada Goose (a new race for Arizona) at the Pavilions ponds and up to two Giant Canada Geese and 15 Lesser Canada Geese at McCormick Ranch (PD). Three Lesser Canada Geese were also observed at GWR 12-24 Feb (PD, MMo) and two at the Pavilions ponds 30 Dec (TC). A total of 21 Lessers were counted during the PAABS 19 Jan (*fide* TC). Three subspecies of **Cackling Goose** were identified: one to two Richardson's at McCormick Ranch 30 Dec to at least 2 Feb (TC, PD), one Taverner's at McCormick Ranch 2 Feb (PD), and the three Cackling Geese at Sun Lakes 19 Jan included one tiny dark breasted *minima* (TC). Also five to seven Lesser Canada Geese were reported with 100+ Common Canada Geese at Crystal Gardens 10 Feb (MHe).

Four immature Tundra Swans (casual winter visitors) were discovered at GWR 16 Dec (PD) and an adult was observed at Palo Verde 8 Feb through the end of the period (DPo, JBu et al.). Four swans (sp?) were seen flying over during the Gila River CBC 27 Dec (*fide* TC). At least 18 Wood Ducks (more than usual) were reported at various ponds in the Phoenix area during the period (m. ob.). Three Eurasian Wigeons wintered at Scottsdale ponds: the female at Paradise Cemetery remained at least until 8 Jan (PN), and individual males were found at ponds on Hayden Rd. and next to Buster's Restaurant (TC et al.).

Up to three seemingly pure "Mexican" Mallards continued to be seen at GWR during the period (MMo), however, upon close scrutiny most individuals in the region show at least some subtle characteristics suggesting hybridization with typical Mallards. Individual Blue-winged Teal (rare to uncommon in winter before mid-February) were found at GWR 2 Dec (MMo), at PRD 2 Dec (MWeb), in Mesa 19 Jan (PN), and two were seen at the Higley Rd. ponds 15 Dec (ML). An impressive total of **39** were counted on the Phoenix-Tres Rios CBC 20 Dec, with most at the Tres Rios Wetlands (*fide* DP). More than the usual number of Greater Scaup (usually rare winter visitors) were reported: a male and female were found at Saguaro Lake during December (KR, DPo), a pair at Red Mountain Ranch in Mesa 19 Jan (PN), plus individuals at Gila Bend Power Plant 10 Jan (PL), at ASU Research Park 14 Jan (RF), at Kiwanis Park in Tempe all winter (MS), and at a pond in ne. Phoenix 19 Jan (TC).

The White-winged Scoter, discovered at Saguaro Lake in November, was found there again 10 Jan (TC) and provided the first January record for Maricopa Co. A first winter Long-tailed Duck, a casual winter visitor, was found 28 Dec at the Dave White Golf Course in Casa Grande (TJ), where it remained at least until 28 Jan (m. ob.). Greater than usual numbers of Common Goldeneyes were reported during the period: 25 at the Gila

Bend Power Plant 3 Dec (MWeb et al.), 19 on the Gila River CBC 27 Dec (*fide* TC), and 42 tallied during the PAABS 19 Jan (*fide* TC). Four Red-breasted Mergansers (uncommon winter visitors) were found during the Gila River CBC 27 Dec (*fide* TC), eight were counted on Apache Lake 18 Jan (TC), and two were observed on the Val Vista Lakes in Gilbert 15-25 Feb (MMo).

A Common Loon (an uncommon winter visitor) was found on Tempe Town Lake 18-19 Jan (MWeb). A Horned Grebe (a rare winter visitor) was discovered on Bartlett Lake 11 Jan (TC). Large numbers of American White Pelicans wintered in Maricopa Co.: at least 100 were counted at PRD 2 Dec (MWeb), 54 were recorded along the Salt River west of 91st Ave. 20 Dec (TC, JJ, DF), and at least 75 more were reported at several ponds in the greater Phoenix area (m. ob.). Individual immature Brown Pelicans were found in Maricopa Co.: at the Gila Bend Power Plant 3 Dec (MWeb), at Tempe Town Lake 11 Dec (RK), at a pond near PRD 9 Dec (KK), at ponds w. of Price in Chandler 16 Dec-23 Jan (JMa et al.), and at a park pond in Chandler 6 Jan (DC). Numbers of Neotropic Cormorants numbers continued to rise dramatically in Maricopa Co.: **1000** were conservatively tallied on the Phoenix-Tres Rios CBC 15 Dec (*fide* DPo), **330** on the Gila River CBC 27 Dec (*fide* TC), and **1357** were counted during the PAABS 19 Jan (*fide* TC).

Individual American Bitterns were found at Rio Salado from 31 Dec to at least 17 Feb (TGa) and at the confluence of the Salt and Gila Rivers 23-28 Feb (THId, THII).

A White-tailed Kite (an uncommon visitor) was observed in Arlington Valley through the period (m. ob.). A Bald Eagle was seen for the second consecutive year at McCormick Ranch away from its usual haunts 14 and 17 Feb (MB, TC). An adult Harris's Hawk, rare in the Gila River valley, was observed at Avondale Blvd. and the Salt River 16 Dec (TC).

Individual **Red-shouldered Hawks** (casual winter visitors away from the HRP) were discovered at 91st Ave. and the Salt River 16 Dec (TC) and in the town of Queen Creek in Pinal Co. 14 Feb (JSh). Four Red-shouldered Hawks were recorded on the Hassayampa CBC 14 Dec (*fide* VM). Individual Zone-tailed Hawks (casual but increasing winter visitors to the lowlands) were observed flying over ASU Research Park 23 Dec (RDu), over south Scottsdale 18 Feb (JBU), and in Peoria 18 Feb (SA). Two Harlan's Hawks were recorded on the Gila River CBC 27 Dec (*fide* TC). A Rough-legged Hawk (a rare and irregular winter visitor) was discovered in Arlington Valley 22 Dec (MHe) and continued to be seen at least until 24 Jan (RHa et al.). A Golden Eagle (seldom seen in the lowlands) was observed during the Gila River CBC (*fide* TC).

An unusually large number of **750** Sandhill Cranes (normally irregular winter visitors) were reported s. of Gillespie Dam 1 Feb (MK). Between two and four wintering American Avocets were found at the Lower River Rd. ponds in Palo Verde 9-27 Dec (MHe) and another two were seen at the Narramore Rd. pond 9 Dec (MHe). Numbers of American Avocets at GWR increased from four 10 Feb (PD) to several pairs 17 Feb (MWeb) indicating new spring arrivals. The **Northern Jacana** at the Dave White Golf Course in Casa Grande (there at least since the fall of 2007), remained through the period and provided the fourth record for the state and the first for Pinal Co. (m. ob.).

About four times more Greater Yellowlegs than usual were found wintering sw. of Buckeye: 190 were recorded in flooded fields on the Gila River CBC 27 Dec (TC, MHe, DPo, RHa); another 52 were tallied during the PAABS 19 Jan (TC et al.). There were more Lesser Yellowlegs as well (usually no more than one or two of this rare winter visitor are found); up to four were reported in the Arlington area during December and January (m. ob.). Higher than usual numbers of Long-billed Curlews were found sw. of Buckeye during the period: **213** were recorded on the Gila River CBC (*fide* TC). A **Ruff**, discovered along Arlington School Rd. 22-26 Dec (MHe et al.) and observed periodically through 25 Jan is only the third to be documented in Maricopa Co.

A first winter Franklin's Gull was discovered at Kiwanis Park 8 Dec (R&AT) and remained at least until 22 Dec (m. ob.); there were no previous winter records for Maricopa Co. and possibly for the state. A Long-eared Owl (a rare winter visitor) was found at Rio Salado 9 Dec (LHat et al.). A Short-eared Owl (an uncommon winter visitor) was observed at GWR 25 Dec (JiMc et al.). A Northern Saw-whet Owl (a casual visitor to the lowlands) was discovered at BTA 11-17 Jan (RDi et al.); there have been three previous records at that location.

Several Broad-billed Hummingbirds and the Violet-crowned x Broad-billed hybrid present at BTA remained through the period (m. ob). Individual Lewis's Woodpeckers were reported at Rio Salado from late November at least to 9 Dec (TGa), at Ft. McDowell 15 Dec (KR), and in Peoria 17 Dec at least to 14 Jan (BIn et al.). The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, present at BTA in the fall, remained at least until 22 Jan (ErH, RHo) and another individual, found at Oak Flat 29 Dec, remained at least until 4 Jan (PM, CD). A probable **Red-breasted Sapsucker** (a casual winter visitor) was photographed sw. of 107th Ave. and the Salt River 15 & 20 Dec (TC et al.); photos were submitted to the AZ Bird Committee. The Hairy Woodpecker, reported at Whitlow Dam (an unusually low elevation) in October, was observed there again 6 Dec (JBa).

A Hammond's Flycatcher (an uncommon winter visitor) was found near Needle Rock along the Verde River 17 Feb (ML). For the third consecutive year a Bell's Vireo remained for all or part of the winter at GWR – this year until at least 25 Jan (MMo et al.). Two Cassin's Vireos (an uncommon winter visitor) were noted on the Salt-Verde Rivers CBC Dec.14 (*fide* KR) and another was observed at BTA 2 Jan (PN). Between two and three Western Scrub-Jays were found at Whitlow Dam 6 & 28 Dec (JBa), and individuals were reported at BTA and Devil's Canyon 19 Dec (ErH), and at Sunflower 13 Jan (ErH).

Numbers of wintering Tree and Northern Rough-winged Swallow have been increasing the past six or seven years; 10 Tree Swallows and 46 Northern Rough-winged Swallows were recorded on the Gila River CBC (*fide* TC); smaller numbers of Tree Swallows were reported at GWR, Rio Salado, Fountain Hills, and Gila Bend (m. ob.), and 50 Northern Rough-winged Swallows were counted at GWR during January (MMo). Individual Violet-green Swallows were observed at Ft. McDowell 9 & 14 Dec (JJ, TC) and early migrants were at GWR 14-16 Feb (MM). For the past six years Cliff Swallows have been arriving in early February (instead of early March in previous years); this winter the date of the first to arrive at GWR was 11 Feb (MMo) and the date of the first arrivals at Rio Verde was 17 Feb (TB).

Two **Cave Swallows** were discovered during the period: one at the Dave White Golf Course in Casa Grande 9 Dec (PL et al.) provided the first record for Pinal Co. and one at GWR 9-21 Feb and possibly through 2 Mar (BGri et al.), provided only the second record for Maricopa Co. There have been only five previous state reports. A few Barn Swallows (uncommon in winter) were reported: three on the Salt/Verde CBC 14 Dec (*fide* KR), one on the Gila River CBC (*fide* TC), and four in Gila Bend 10 Jan (PL).

The Mountain Chickadee first reported at Whitlow Dam in November, was seen there again 6 Dec (JBa), and another individual was observed at Ft. McDowell 14 Dec (ErH). Red-breasted Nuthatches continued to be widespread during the period: two in Peoria (BIn), one each at Ft. McDowell (ErH), HRP (CF), BTA (JBa), and several in Tempe (m. ob.). Two White-breasted Nuthatches continued to be seen at Whitlow Dam at least until 28 Feb (JBa). It was an exceptional year for lowland records of Brown Creepers this winter throughout the region with a local high of 27 recorded on the Hassayampa CBC 16 Dec (*fide* CF).

A Winter Wren (a rare winter visitor) was discovered at Rio Salado 15 Dec and remained at least until 31 Dec (TG, JaMc): another three were recorded on the Hassayampa CBC (*fide* CF). It was also an exceptional winter for Golden-crowned Kinglets in lowland riparian areas throughout the region with many individuals and small flocks reported (m. ob.). The highest concentrations included **36** reported on the Hassayampa CBC 16 Dec (*fide*

CF) and 11 along Queen Creek upstream from BTA on the Superior CBC 4 Jan (ErH, ElH, AMo, PW).

Part of this winter's invasion of higher elevation species to the lowlands was a Townsend's Solitaire found at HRP 2 Jan (MHe). A Varied Thrush was discovered at Rio Salado 24 Dec (HB) and remained at least until 28 Jan (DPe et al.). A Sage Thrasher (an uncommon winter visitor) was found at Sunflower 13 Jan (ErH). The Brown Thrasher, back at BTA for the eighth consecutive winter, continued to be seen there, at least until 17 Feb (JBa et al.), and another was found at Oak Flat 4 Jan (PM, CD).

The late-staying Lucy's Warbler at GWR remained through the fall until the late date of 2 Dec (MMo); there have been only three previous December records for Maricopa Co. An immature female Northern Parula was discovered at GWR 14 Dec and remained through the period (MMo et al.). Numbers of wintering Yellow Warblers have been increasing in recent years and even more than usual were reported this winter: individuals were found at GWR 2-20 Dec (PMo et al.), along the lake by Buster's Restaurant in Scottsdale 2 Dec (TC), on the Salt/Verde CBC 14 Dec (*fide* KR), sw. of Buckeye 24 Dec (DPo), and at Rio Salado 30 Dec (TGa); two were observed along the Salt River w. of 91st Ave. 16 & 20 Dec (TC et al.), and three were recorded on the Hassayampa CBC 16 Dec (*fide* VM). A Townsend's Warbler (an irregular winter visitor), discovered along Lower Camp Creek 2 Jan (TC), provided the second record for the Carefree CBC; it remained at least until 1 Mar (WT et al.). An immature male Black-and-white Warbler (rare, but regular winter visitor) was found along the Verde River near Needle Rock 17 Feb (ML). A **Worm-eating Warbler** was discovered at HRP 22 Feb (MHe); there have been nine previous county reports. A Northern Waterthrush (an uncommon winter visitor) was recorded during the Salt/Verde CBC (*fide* KR). Individual Wilson's Warblers (casual to rare winter visitors) were found along Indian Bend Wash, Scottsdale 2 Dec (TC) and along the Salt River, w. of 91st Ave. 16 Dec (TC). Individual Painted Redstarts (rare winter visitors in the lowlands) were observed at BTA 2-4 Jan (PN, ErH et al.) and in Tempe 19-21 Jan (LHu, SG). A male Summer Tanager (a casual winter visitor) was found in a neighborhood adjacent to the Heard Museum, mid-town Phoenix 8 Dec (LHat). Three Western Tanagers, an unusually high number for winter, were reported (one was photographed) on the Hassayampa CBC 16 Dec (VM), and one was found along the Salt River w. of 91st Ave. 20 Dec (TC et al.).

Two "Slate-colored" Fox Sparrows continued at GWR at least until 3 Dec (BW), and one remained there at least until the end of the period (RDi, MMo). Individuals were also reported at HRP 16-23 Feb (m. ob); Oak Flat 29 Dec (PM, CD); and the one in a Scottsdale yard since October, was last seen there 30 Dec (JBa). A Swamp Sparrow (uncommon winter visitor) was found at a pond along the Agua Fria riverbed 16 Dec (TC). Individual White-throated Sparrows (uncommon winter visitors) were discovered at Rio Salado from mid-November at least to 29 Dec (TG), at Ft. McDowell 15 Dec (KR), and in the BTA residential area 4 Jan (J&SH). An individual "white-lored" Pacific form of White-crowned Sparrow was observed at Rio Salado 8 Dec–25 Jan (MMo et al.). A Golden-crowned Sparrow (an uncommon winter visitor) was discovered during the Carefree CBC 2 Jan (GL, TL). The Pyrrhuloxia (at GWR since November) remained through the winter (MMO, RDi), one was reported at BTA 4 Jan (CF), and one was found at the Desert Botanical Garden 16 Jan (CO). The Painted Bunting (found at Rio Salado 24 Nov) remained through the period (m. ob.).

A female **Rusty Blackbird** was discovered at Rio Salado 30 Dec (TC) and remained at least until 6 Jan (HBon, LHat, BHi, ME). There were only four previous county records; this was the first for December.

Numbers of Cassin's Finches and Red Crossbills (irregular winter visitors) continued to grow from late October and early November when they first appeared as part of the invasion into the lowlands. Although a few crossbills were reported in several Phoenix area neighborhoods, high counts were 25 along Queen Creek upstream from BTA on the Superior CBC 4 Jan (ErH, ElH, AMo, PW), 15 at HRP 16 Feb (LHar, DVP), and up to 18 at BTA during the season and into March (CTo). Small numbers of Lawrence's Goldfinches (irregular winter

visitors) were reported in the Phoenix area throughout the period. A high of 23 was recorded on the Hassayampa CBC 16 Dec (*fide* VM), and 53 were noted on the Gila River CBC 27 Dec (*fide* TC).

Gila County

Compiled by Jeff Estis

Gila County continues to be underbirded, but hopefully the current work being done by the AZFO, including a two-day field trip to the Mogollon Rim drainages 26-27 Apr, will help increase the birding done in this area.

An adult Brown Pelican, accidental in December, was seen flying across San Carlos Lake 23 Dec (DJ, KK) between Gila and Pinal Counties.

A Winter Aquatic Bird Survey at Roosevelt Lake 21 Jan (TC, BB, JDi) produced nearly 10,500 aquatic birds. Of the 5600 ducks and geese seen were 1500 Canada Geese, 800 Gadwalls, 900 Mallards, 650 Northern Pintails, 800 Green-winged Teal, **250** Canvasbacks, three Wood Ducks, and three Cinnamon Teal. Other aquatics included **2800** Western/Clark's Grebes (**130** positively identified as Clark's), 1800 American Coots, and a casual Horned Grebe. Interestingly, no wintering Eared Grebes were seen on the lake, although considerable numbers were found downstream on both Apache and Saguaro Lakes on earlier surveys. In addition, 10 Bald Eagles and 39 American White Pelicans were seen.

A Palm Warbler, accidental in winter, was reported in Payson 2 Feb. It remained for three days, visiting the suet feeders in both the front and backyards of a private residence (LE).

This has been an extraordinary year for Cassin's Finches in the state, especially in this region. Numbers have surpassed 50 in a single yard in Pine 6-24 Feb (JE).

Southeast Arizona

Compiled by Mark Stevenson

Despite La Niña conditions in the Pacific Ocean, several storms delivered enough precipitation to put snow in the mountains and set up the desert for a wildflower bloom. Insectivore numbers dropped after the New Year and sparrow numbers were relatively low. The irruption that began last fall continued with nuthatches, kinglets and finches present in moderate numbers.

Following the recent split of Canada Goose, reports of **Cackling Goose** in Arizona are slowly accumulating. Documented reports of singles this season came from Willcox on 3 Dec (TGo, MPo, MS) and Saint David 19-24 Dec (DS, SH). A small white-cheeked goose at Kansas Settlement 18 Jan- 6 Feb (J&JU) was controversial, with opinions leaning toward *parvipes* Canada Goose; the AZ Bird Committee will review all of these records. Common Goldeneye is a rare winter visitor to se. Arizona; two were reported from Picacho Reservoir on 17 Feb (DJ). A **Red-throated Loon** found and photographed at Roper Lake State Park 2-8 Dec (KK, SSc) was the first to be documented in se. Arizona. Brown Pelicans are typically rare summer to fall visitors to s. Arizona from the Gulf of California; one adult at San Carlos Lake 23 Dec (DJ, KK) was part of a larger influx of the species associated with an episode of strong winds. A Neotropic Cormorant at Sweetwater Wetlands, Tucson 13-19

Dec (PK) was only the fourth reported there. Though numbers of these cormorants are exploding in Maricopa Co., they remain rare and local in se. Arizona. Unlike its larger relatives, Snowy Egret is casual in winter in se. Arizona; one was at Reid Park, Tucson 23 Jan (MSt, MPo). Osprey is also casual in winter; one was in Green Valley 1 Dec- 1 Jan (MMA). Casual anywhere in Arizona, a **Red-shouldered Hawk** was well-documented in Saint David 20-27 Feb (CC). Looking out his front window, Dave Stejskal spotted a startling sight: a **Short-tailed Hawk**. Acting quickly he photographed it as it soared away. The species has become regular in small numbers in se. Arizona during the breeding season since 1999 but this juvenile that apparently wintered in urban Tucson 11 Feb+ was totally unprecedented. This century has seen an increase in the numbers of Crested Caracaras found outside the species' core Tohono O'odham Reservation range. The largest phenomenon has been of groups of caracaras wintering in the Santa Cruz Flats, where up to **19** were seen again this winter (DJ). An immature caracara first reported at Rio Rico 15 Dec (MMA) apparently wintered. A Red Phalarope at Willcox 8 Jan (HHa) was casual. This species has been found in every month except March in se. Arizona. A few Ruddy Ground-Doves were reported at the Red Rock feedlot intermittently through the winter (DJ).

Northern Saw-whet Owl is a scarce winter visitor to the lowlands from points farther north. Singles were found at Organ Pipe Cactus N.M. 21 Dec (BPh) and the Santa Cruz Flats 28 Dec (TJ et al). Lewis's Woodpeckers regularly winter in se. Arizona, often near nut orchards. One found in the San Rafael Valley 22 Dec (MMA) was in an unusual location.

Recent winters have seen a few Greater Pewees lingering in se. Arizona instead of migrating south as expected; one was in Madera Canyon 1 Jan (MMA). **White-eyed Vireo** is a casual transient to Arizona, usually in the warmer months, so a well-documented bird that wintered along the Santa Cruz River at Tubac 2 Dec-13 Mar (TS, MMA) was very unusual. A northbound Bell's Vireo arrived in Tucson on the early date of 24 Feb (PK). Small but increasing numbers of swallows are being reported in se. Arizona in winter, perhaps reflecting warmer temperatures. Reports included two Tree Swallows at Arthur Pack Park 11 Jan (MSt, MPo), three Violet-green Swallows at Picacho Reservoir 17 Feb (DJ), and one at San Carlos Lake 23 Dec (KK, DJ), two Northern Rough-winged Swallows along the Santa Cruz River in Marana 6 Jan (MSt, MPo), four Barn Swallows at Arthur Pack Park 11 Jan (MS, MPo), and three Barn Swallows at Sweetwater Wetlands 6 Jan (MPo, MSt). Red-breasted Nuthatches irrupted across the region. One was at Arivaca Cienega 5 Jan (MMA) and another along Arivaipa Creek 5 Jan (DJ, MWei). Though they nest in very small numbers as far south in Arizona as the Pinaleño Mts., American Dippers are seldom seen anywhere else in se. Arizona so one along Sonoita Creek near Patagonia 22 Dec-27 Jan (MSt, MPo) was a surprise. Golden-crowned Kinglets were seen in greater than usual numbers at middle elevations in the mountains. One was in Peppersauce Canyon 9 Dec (DJ). **Black-capped Gnatcatchers** persisted in Montosa Canyon on the west side of the Santa Rita Mts. where up to four were reported (CTa)

A rare winter visitor in s. Arizona, a Rufous-backed Robin was at Catalina State Park 26 Dec-25 Jan (SP). With only one previous winter record in the U.S. a well-documented **Aztec Thrush** was a real surprise in upper Madera Canyon 5-18 Jan (IW). Casual in winter, a Gray Catbird was near Dudleyville 5 Jan (DPo et al.). Le Conte's Thrasher has been seldom seen in se. Arizona since the 1980s as its preferred habitat is reduced to difficult-to-access areas. One was seen near Picacho Reservoir on 17 Feb (DJ) where there have been just a few prior reports. Two Le Conte's Thrashers reported at San Carlos Lake 23 Dec (DJ, KK) were far from the known range of the species; it is hoped that they will be photographed at this location. A real bit of casually occurring eye-candy was a hard-to-find yet confiding **Golden-winged Warbler** well-documented in lower Madera Canyon 16-31 Dec (JMo). Likely the same bird found during the fall season, a **Crescent-chested Warbler** well-documented in upper Madera Canyon 25 Dec-13 Feb (KC) joined the individual that spent two successive winters in Patagonia as the only winter Arizona records of this casual visitor. Another treat was a confiding male Black-throated Blue Warbler near downtown Tucson 17 Jan+ (JDO); although not unprecedented in

winter, this was the first one found in January. Presumably a returning individual, a Louisiana Waterthrush was along Sonoita Creek above Patagonia Lake 30 Dec (ErH) and another was along the Santa Cruz River at Tubac 5 Dec-26 Jan (DT, DDi). The species winters in small numbers along permanent streams in se. Arizona. Though still quite rare in winter, Hepatic Tanagers are being found with increasing frequency in se. Arizona. Two were reported in upper Madera Canyon 22 Jan (DVP, LHar, OJ).

Fox Sparrow is a rare winter resident in se. Arizona. An individual of the expected Slate-colored form visited a yard in Stump Canyon in the Huachuca Mts. 15 Dec-20 Feb (PS). A White-throated Sparrow was a rare visitor to the Paton's in Patagonia 30 Dec (ErH) and a Harris's Sparrow was in Dudleyville 5 Jan (RHo et al). Blue Grosbeak is casual in se. Arizona in winter; a male was in lower Ash Canyon, Huachuca Mts. 20 Jan+ (KL, RB) and another was at the Paton's 30 Dec (ErH). Casual primarily in winter in se. Arizona, a **Common Grackle** was well documented in ne. Tucson 10-15 Dec (PL). Hooded Oriole is casual as a wintering species in s. Arizona, typically at nectar feeders. Up to two were present in Green Valley 5-11 Dec (MMa). Photos of a **Streak-backed Oriole** at a Portal feeder on 30 Dec (MHi) suggested that it may have been an escaped cage bird as it was of a southern subspecies and was missing claws. All accepted Arizona records to date have been of the northern subspecies *microstictus*. Scott's Oriole is another species that winters in small numbers. Up to two were at a feeder in Stump Canyon through the winter (PS). **Purple Finch** is a very rare winter visitor to Arizona. Its true status is clouded by the challenge of identifying *carpodacus* finches. Several reports were submitted to the ABC this winter. Two from upper Madera Canyon 23 Jan (DVP, LHar, OJ) and one in ne. Tucson 15 Dec (JY, KK). Lawrence's Goldfinch is an irregular winter visitor to s. Arizona; moderate numbers were widely reported this winter.

Cited observers: James Aliberti (JA), Scott Atkinson (SA), Liga Auzins (LA), Charlie Babbitt (CBab), Steve Barlow (SB), Jack Bartley (JBar), Christine Bates (CBat), Robert Behrstock (RB), Mary Berkley (MB), Kathleen Blair (KB), Terry Brodner (TB), Terry Brodner (TB), Harold Bond (HBon), Bill Burger (BB), Al Borgardt (AB), Helga Borgardt (HBor), Steve & Sue Burk (S&SB), Jim Burns (JBU), Cliff Cathers (CC), Al Clare (AC), Dale Clark (DC), John Coons (JC), Troy Corman (TC), Barb Davis (BD), DeeDee DeLorenzo (DDe), Henry Detwiler (HD), Suzanne Detwiler (SDe), Pierre Deviche (PD), John Dickson (JDi), Dick Dionne (DDi), Rich Ditch (RDi), Cynthia Donald (CD), Jason Douglas (JDo), Nancy Drown (NDR), Sue Drown (SDr), Robert Dummer (RDU), Mike Erickson (ME), Jeff Estis (JE), Lee Estis (LE), Rob Fergus (RF), Dave Ferreira (DF), Herb Fibel (HF), Craig Fischer (CF), Steve Ganley (SG), Tom Gaskill (TGa), Tony Godfrey (TGo), Brendon Grice (BGri), Bill Grossi (BGro), Jerry & Sherry Hammon J&SH), Homer Hansen (HHa), Ron Haaseth (RHa), Lauren Harter (LHar), Liz Hatcher (LHat), Stuart Healy (SH), Melanie Herring (MHe), Bill Higgins (BHi), Michael Hilchey (MHi), Tom Hildebrandt (THld), Terry Hill (THll), Dottie Hook (DH), Bob Hough (BHo), Elaine Hough (ElH), Eric Hough (ErH), Helen Howard (HHo), Rich Hoyer (RHo), Lori Hurley (LHu), Cody Hurlock (CH), Brenda Inskip (BIn), Brian Isson (BIs), William Jenisch (WJ), Doug Jenness (DJ), Oscar Johnson (OJ), Tom Johnson (TJ), Justin Jones (JJ), Roy Jones (RJ), Karen LeMay (KL), Keith Kamper (KK), Melody Kehl (MK), Philip Kline (PK), Richard Krebill (RK), Dave Krueper (DK), Jim Logan (JL), Dave Lamkin (DL), Mark Larson (ML), Chaz LaRue (ChL), Chuck LaRue (CLR), Paul Lehman (PL), Sherry Lewis (ShL), Steven Lewis (StL), Tom Linda (TL), Grant Loomis (GL), Tyler Loomis (TL), Carl Lundblad (CL), Anita MacFarlane (AMac), Jon Mann (JMa), Michael Marsden (MMa), Bryce Marshall (BM), Adam Martin (AMar), Phyllis Martin (PMa), James McKay (JaMc), Mickey McLain (MMc), Nancy McMahan (NM), Jimmy McMoran (JiMc), Michelle Michaud (MMi), David Moll (DM), Vanessa Montgomery (VM), Jym Mooney (JMo), Mike Moore (MMo), Amanda Moors (AMo), Pete Moulton (PMo), Michael Nicosia (MN), Oliver Niehuis (ON), Phil Norton (PN), Jeni O'Callaghan (JO), Charles Oldham (CO), Jan Parrott (JP), Bob Pena (BPe), Bryant Phillips (BPh), Dave Pearson (DPe), Mike Petriello (MPe), Sara Pike (SP), Molly Pollock (MPo), Dave Powell (DPo), Bonnie Pranter (BPr), Martha Prumers (MPr), Cindy Radamaker (CR), Kurt Radamaker (KR), Roger Radd (RR), Debbie Rasmussen (DR), Jan Richmond (JRi), Janet Ruth (JRu), Scott Schuette (SSc), John Schulte (JSc), Myron Scott (MSc), Sue Sitko (SSi), Allison Shock (AS), James Smith (JSm), Darlene Smyth (DSm), Pete Sockness (PS), Thomas Staudt (TS), Dave Stejskal (DSt), Mark Stevenson (MSt), Sig Strangeland (SSt), Ron & Ann Thomas (R&AT), Bob Thomen (BT), Walter Thurber (WT), Carl Tomoff (CTo), Diane Touret (DT), Mary Trevor (MT), Jolan Truan (JT), John & Judy Ulreich (J&JU), David Vander Pluym (DVP), Jimmy Videle (JV), Isah Webb (IW), Magill Weber (MWeb), Michael Weinholt (MWei), Russ Widner (RW), Lorraine Wiesen (LW), Barb Winterfield (BW), Paul Wolterbeck (PW), Tom Wurster (TW), John Yerger (JY), Zack Zdinak (ZZ)

