

Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*), Green Valley, Pima County

This Magnificent Frigatebird was found by Nancy Bent and Roger Reason on 18 May 2020 and photographed by Nancy Bent on the same date.

Frigatebirds are casual in Arizona, with less than five accepted records of Magnificent Frigatebird in recent years, and a handful of accepted records of "frigatebird sp.", in the past 20 years. Reports of frigatebirds declined sharply after the 1970s, when they were annual in the state.

While frigatebirds as a group are distinctive, ID among species is more challenging. While Magnificent is the most likely species in Arizona and the only one recorded thus far, both Lesser and Great frigatebirds are also possible (there are published reports of Great for the state) especially outside the peak late summer window responsible for the majority of Magnificent Frigatebird records in the west. Those outside this window, such as this one, should be carefully checked for other species. On this individual, which appears to be a juvenile, the white belly patch appears to be diamond shaped, lacking any spurs identifying it as a Magnificent.







18 May 2020, photo by Nancy Bent

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