

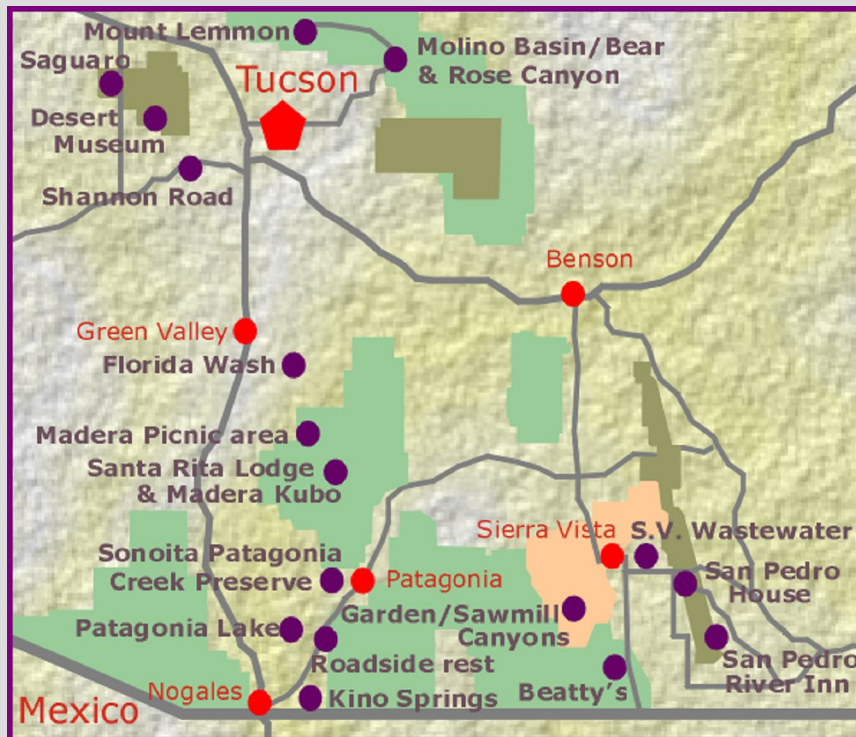
ARIZONA



USA



15th to 23rd May, 2003



Friday, 16th	Shannon Road Saguaro National Park (West) Arizona Sonora Desert Museum	6:00 - 8:30 9:00 - 10:00 10:30 - 15:45
Saturday, 17th	Garden Canyon grassland Garden Canyon Upper picnic site Sawmills Canyon Beatties home, Miller Canyon Mary Jo Cox's home, Turkey Creek Road	5:30 - 6:30 6:30 - 9:30 10:00 - 13:00 15:00 - 18:15 18:30 - 19:30
Sunday, 18th	San Pedro House Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds Rancho del Rio pond San Pedro River Inn	5:30 - 11:20 11:30 - 13:00 14:10 - 14:30 14:30 - 17:20
Monday, 19th	Molino Basin campground Bear Canyon Rose Canyon Lake Irongate Lodge, Mount Lemmon Mount Lemmon summit	6:00 - 8:00 8:30 - 11:00 11:15 - 13:30 14:30 - 17:00 17:00 - 18:00
Tuesday, 20th	Florida Wash Madera picnic site Santa Rita Lodge Madera Kubo gift shop area	6:00 - 7:30 7:30 - 10:00 10:30 - 12:30 12:30 - 17:00
Wednesday, 21st	Kino Springs Patagonia Lake State Park The Patons garden Patagonia Roadside rest	5:30 - 10:30 11:00 - 14:00 14:30 - 17:00 17:15 - 18:00
Thursday, 22nd	Patagonia Roadside rest Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve Santa Cruz Flats	5:45 - 8:45 9:00 - 12:30 17:30 - 19:00

SOUTH-EAST ARIZONA, USA

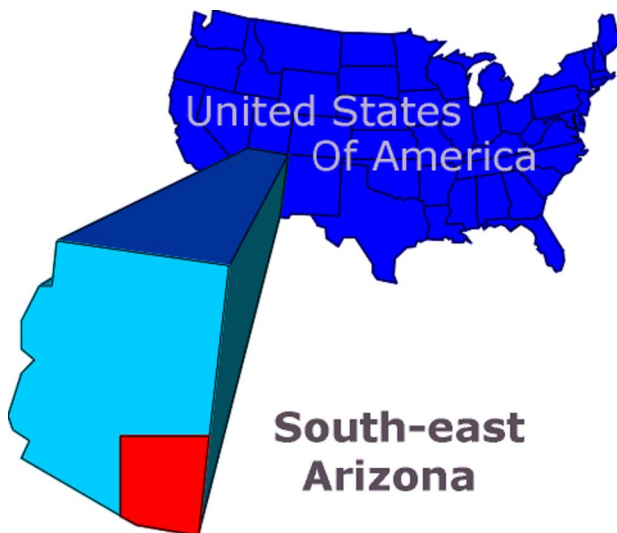
15th to 23rd May, 2003

Introduction

"Arizona – why do you want to come here? Surely it's all desert and no birds?"

This was one of the more memorable quotes from a local, who obviously doesn't appreciate the birdlife he has at his doorstep. To be sure, after a week here I couldn't disagree with the chap more.

So, why Arizona? After having done a fair amount of birding on the East coast of North America, I felt it was time to sample some of the delicacies that the West has to offer. The decision narrowed itself down quite quickly to South-east Arizona, based on the variety of birds that can be seen there, due mainly to a mix of habitats in such a (relatively) small area. So, the plans had to include timing and a specific area to bird.



As for choosing South-east Arizona as a destination, the specific itinerary more or less chose itself. We had seven full days for birding, and even the South-east corner of the state is quite large. Weekends see the exodus of many Tucson residents (and believe me, it's a big city) to the surrounding mountains. The consequence was that prime birding sites such as the Santa Catalina mountains (including Sabino Canyon), and Madera Canyon, which is one of the birding hotspots, can be crawling with merry picnic folk. Another select destination is Sonoita / Patagonia Creek Preserve, and this is closed on Mondays

and Tuesdays. I do like the reason for this – it's to give the wildlife time to recover from the rigours of visitors. Such a delightful and considerate thought!

The tour thus started in the Saguaro Preserve (West) / Desert Museum area on the Friday. An inspired choice, since this was both quiet and we had a superb introduction to the local species. The weekend was spent in the Huachuca Mountains, which were far enough away from the cities to remain quiet (although not for birds) apart from a handful of birders. The closure of the Sonoita / Patagonia Creek Preserve meant that the Patagonia hotspots would have to wait until the end of the week. So we sandwiched the Santa Catalina mountains and Madera Canyon in between, at the start of the week. The Chiricahua Mountains are also a target for birding, but we decided to leave this area until another time, due to a combination of distance, stretching the balance of variety and enjoyment of the birds we saw, and the difficulties with accommodation.

We were by default birding the whole week in a rough triangle bordered by Tucson, Nogales, and Sierra Vista. As mentioned, there are a variety of habitats within this small area:

Mountains – the Santa Catalina mountains, of which Mount Lemmon is the highest peak, are probably the southern most extent of the Rockies, and have a peak of over 9000 feet. The fleeces and long trousers that we took to the peak were an irrelevance in the 80+ degrees at the top, but certain times of the day and perhaps poorer conditions could bring them into action!

Sonoran Desert – not the miles of sand that would be expected, but this desert type in the area of Tucson is hot and littered with the classic scene of Saguaro cactus (of cowboy film fame) and the much smaller Prickly Pear)

Chihuahuan Desert – quite different from Sonoran, with very little if any giant Saguaro and Prickly Pear cactus, but with plenty of spiked plants in the form of Acacia bushes and Tarbrush.

It is difficult to appreciate while there, but South-east Arizona as a whole is at a high altitude (around 4000 feet). However, even small climbs upwards in elevation can again result in different mixes of species. This can be illustrated by the 4 or so species of hummingbird seen at the Pattons home in Patagonia, to the much more diverse range found at the Beatty's in Miller Canyon, which is much higher. Further up still will be the first Red-faced Warblers, Cordilleran Flycatchers, Stellers Jays, and other high altitude specialists.

Timing is not as easy as you would expect in Arizona, since any time of the year can be good – Winter for sparrows and other Northern breeders spending a few months in warmer latitudes, July and August for return migration of hummers not seen here as breeders, and March, April & May for migrants. March and April must be the choice for many migrants, as well as some of the wintering species that would be just about to depart for the North. May still has many migrants going through, but is also good for additional breeding species that arrive late in the Spring. We had set our sights on the Spring, and work commitments meant that mid May would be the time to go. Experience proved that this was as good a time as any. We saw 9 hummers, a selection of sparrows, and many more besides. Plus the fact that, even though we had a brilliant week with plenty of good birds, it leaves further trips open at different times of the year and a new mix of species.

It has to be mentioned at this point that Arizona is hot. No surprise there then! Temperatures each day were up to 100 degrees. This meant that we had to be protected from the sun, full day birding can be cumulatively very exhausting, and the peak birding time is usually first light (around 5:15 am) till mid to late morning (10 to 11 am). Evenings are also supposed to be good, since the temperature is dropping, but we found that this does not actually happen till after 5:00 (light disappears just after 7:30 pm), and by this time, the walking and heat can take its toll on energy levels!

Travel and accommodation

The whole trip was arranged piecemeal. Flights and car were booked from the UK. When you live in the North of England, the most convenient flights seem to be from Manchester, where Phoenix is the preferred destination. We had a connecting flight in Philadelphia. Tucson does have an airport, but further connecting flights to here are much more expensive, and the drive from Phoenix to Tucson only takes about 1½ hours, which is probably less than a connecting flight (including boarding and waiting times) anyway.

The car was booked through Dollar, one of the most well known and respected hire firms in the States. Even so, don't take the booking for granted, since mistakes can be made. Our contract included all taxes (including the necessary Supplementary Liability Insurance – or SLI), yet they still tried to add the already paid local taxes on to this (around \$35). They then had the gall to suggest that refunds could not be done there and then.

Picking up the car was novel. We were led out to a batch of cars to the rear of the office and told to take our pick. The booking was for an Intermediate size, but the choice also seemed to include 4 wheel drives. We chose a saloon, due mainly to the safety factor – belongings could be kept more safely in the boot of the car. The downside of this

is that a lot of the tracks in the area need a high clearance, which we found in places like Garden Canyon, where the drive between Sheelite and Sawmill Canyons often scraped our chassis, despite the 2 passengers leaving the car and guiding it over the many dips in the road. Probably the best compromise is a 4 wheel drive with a package tray over the boot area.

Accommodation was picked up as we travelled. The Chiricahuas are supposed to have limited places to stay, although we didn't travel that far, so haven't any experience of the situation. We did find the odd hotel to be full, but there was usually an alternative to be had. Three chains that we stumbled across between them seem to be well distributed and fit the pocket:

Motel6 – www.motel6.com

Super 8 – www.super8.com

Travelodge – www.travelodge.com

Since there were 3 of us, the price for each averaged out at between £10-15 per night. The standard was more than acceptable, with some even having a fridge and a swimming pool. The bases we used were:

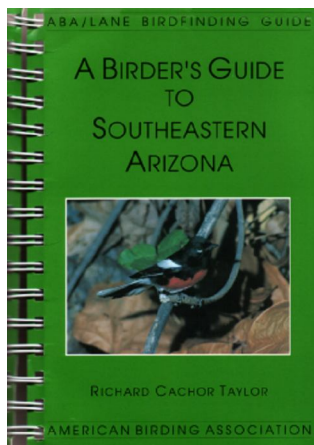
Tucson – Santa Catalina mountains (also good for Saguaro Reserves)

Nogales – only about 25 minutes from Patagonia, and adjacent to Kino Springs

Sierra Vista – central to the Huachuca mountains and upper San Pedro Valley

Green Valley – if you don't stay in Madera Canyon itself (more pricey but probably near to heaven), this is on the doorstep. A little less choice of hotels here, and they cost a few dollars more

References

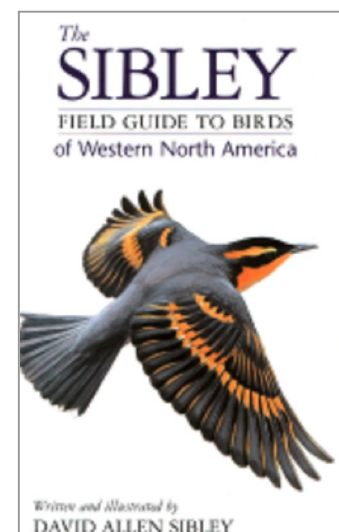


There are many good birding sites in the South-east Arizona area, and the site guide by Lane is absolutely invaluable (ABA / Lane Birdfinding Guide - "A Birder's Guide to South-eastern Arizona", Richard Taylor, published by the American Birding Association, Inc). As with other Lane guides, this book contains a mass of information on where to find the birds, including generally precise directions, although it is useful to be aware of the fact that the odd distance given is incorrect.

Additional information is also available from various sites on the internet. One of the best web sites is that by Stuart Healy (www.aztrogon.com/index.htm), who leads small group tours into the area. There is a vast amount of information on his pages, with particularly useful bird lists for each month, and a journal which is updated almost daily. He has spent a lot of time on this with a very organised catalogue of information as the result.

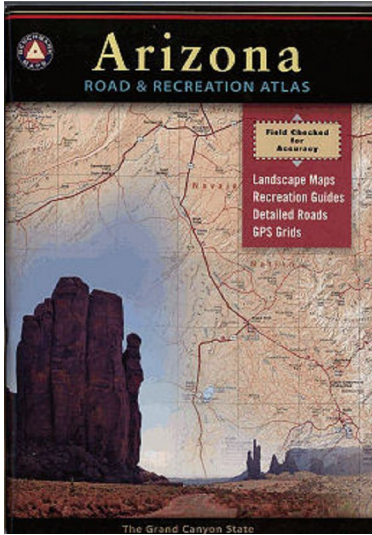
The National Audubon Society has some useful information on their local site (www.tucsonaudubon.org/index.htm). One of their reasons to visit is an up to date list of access and visiting tips to many of the locations within the region.

For identification, we took the tried and tested National Geographic guide to the birds of North America. The more recently published Sibley guide was also invaluable, since it has much more information on differing plumages than the former guide and the quality of the paintings is generally much better. The main drawback of this book is its size – not the most portable one available. However, salvation is to hand



in the form of two new guides: "The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Western (Eastern is the second) North America", by David Sibley, published by Knopf. These are basically just cut down versions of the larger book, and have very similar contents in smaller, more practical, size. I bought a copy of both for \$19.95 while there.

It is also worth mentioning the nature shops that are present. We didn't visit the Tucson Audubon Society Nature Shop (300 E. University Boulevard, Tucson), but the Lane guide espouses its vast stock of birdy articles. Two shops that we did visit were at San Pedro house, just East of Sierra Vista, and the Nature Centre on the main street in Patagonia (www.kazzam.com). Both have a nice selection of books, and the former is owned by a very friendly and helpful chap who also knew the whereabouts of local birds.



For directions, the road maps given by the car hire firms are very basic, so we bought the widely available "Benchmark Map: Arizona Regional Series" for \$4.95. This covers South-east Arizona. An additional map that may be of use is the "South-eastern Birding Trail". It also seemed to be easily available from shops (although we had ours sent free some months before from one of the many web sites on the area), and has all the main bird sites marked. One of the sites bizarrely missed off is at Fort Huachuca, which includes the must visit sites in Garden Canyon, due to the whims of the commanding general in post at the time of publication.

Usefuls and essentials

Water – available at all garages and stores. Once the bottles are bought, they can be refilled with the more than palatable tap water

Bug spray – we only came across the odd mosquito, but there were also some irritating midges and flies. Later in the monsoon season (July to September), chiggers are an even bigger pest. "Off" insect repellent contains Deet, and is available at stores in Arizona

Warm clothes – even at a height of 9000 feet on Mount Lemmon, the sun still shone and kept the temperature high. However, one or two mornings in the more shaded canyons and woods began chilly, and some may find a fleece and long trousers more appropriate at this time of day

Food – if you bird continuously through the day as we did, there are sandwiches available at most petrol stations and some stores

Site information and maps – covered above, but essential

Sunglasses and/or peaked cap – is this getting predictable or what? The light is particularly bright in open desert areas

Paracetamol – for those Brits who are prone to headaches and paracetamol is the best antidote, take some with you, since this particular analgesic isn't available in the States

Waterproofs – okay, our admission is that we took these and, surprise, didn't have to use them. The most we had were a few high clouds at the end of the week. However, the monsoon season mentioned above does see heavy bursts of rain, usually for a short time in the afternoon. The www.weather.com website is useful for current and predicted weather patterns for Tucson before you leave

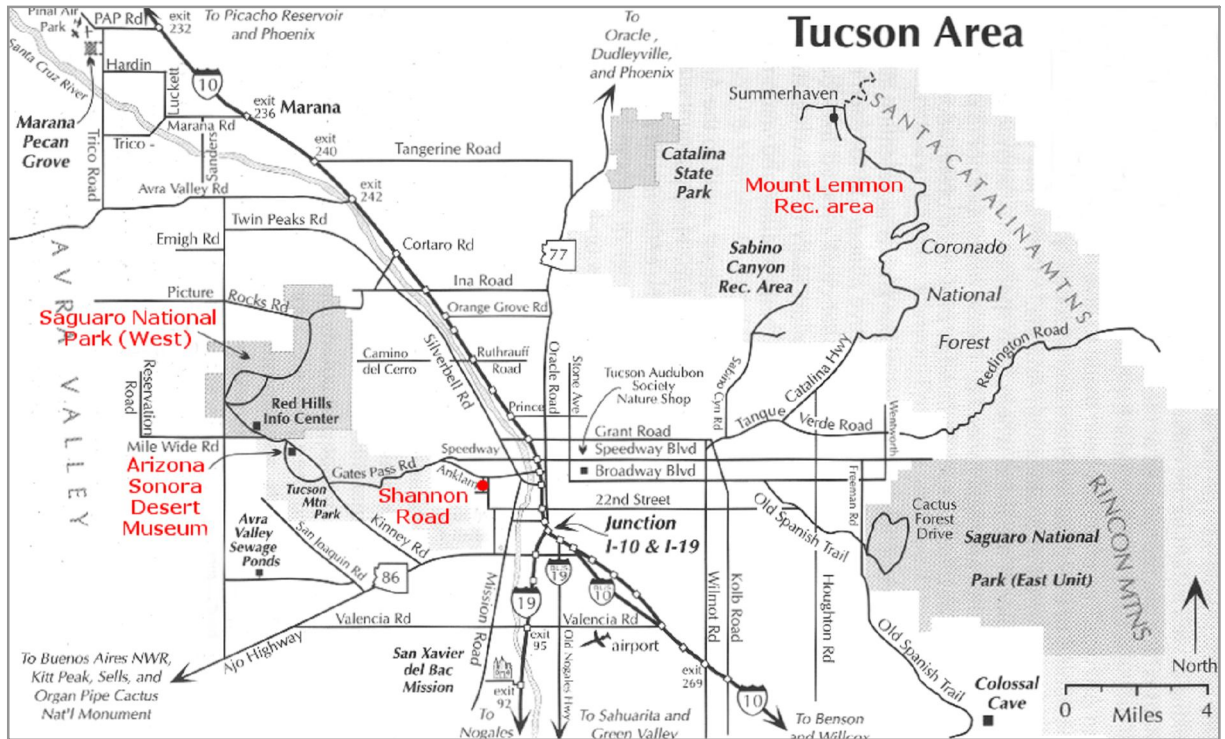
Telescope and camera – this is always the big question. Do you carry the camera / video or telescope? The photographic opportunities are endless, with plentiful close birds. However, a telescope is also necessary at times (Western Bluebird wouldn't have been ID'd without it, for instance)

Rucksac – the answer to the above problem, and also an essential for carrying enough water for longer walks. It is a good idea to keep the telescope with you for the odd important time it will be needed

SITES VISITED

Shannon Road

(Day 1)



After a journey which was about 20+ hours long (can't remember the exact timing, but it was long), we stayed at a Super 8 motel about half an hour out of Phoenix, at Casa Grande (junction of the Interstates 8 & 10). Taking into account the time difference and jet lag, the plan was to set the alarm for 5:30am and reach the outskirts of Tucson and the first birding sites a sedate hour or two after first light. However, the predictable happened – we had very little sleep, woke up at 4:30, and were at Shannon Road by 6:00.



This site is a great introduction to South-east Arizona birds. The road is little more than half a mile long, standing on the very edge of Tucson suburbia, on the fringe of the thorn scrub and low hills of the desert. The problem on leaving the car was which was to

turn – so many birds of so many new species, most of which were quite approachable. This was definitely a foretaste of the superb birding ahead of us. Greater Roadrunner, one of the species that we most wanted to see, fell very early on, following many Gambel's Quail trundling across the roads, seemingly in all directions. Unbelievably, it appeared just behind our car, in front of the houses, before striding the length of the block in front of us. This was to be one of only 3 Roadrunners seen on the trip. Other birds seen at first turned out to be common here, such as Gila Woodpecker, Cactus Wrens, and White-winged Doves (interspersed by the odd Inca Dove). We meandered along to the end of this road, which led us to the base of the thornbush covered hills, and enjoyed some excellent views of Phainopepla, Pyrrhuloxia, Verdin, House Finch, and Gilded Flicker. Birds really were everywhere in this small road, and despite all species being seen at some time later in the week, it was hugely enjoyable.

We also saw the first of our many hummers around here, with 1-2 male Magnificent Hummingbirds feeding on the flowering trees. An earlier Sparrow had been hastily called as Rufous-winged, but we hadn't realised how similar they are to Rufous-crowned. Video evidence in strong light revealed the double malar stripes and white area between, confirming it as the former species. The first of the Flycatchers to show was Ash-throated, which was very approachable. At this stage, we were still using wing patterns to separate from Dusky-capped, but they were quite obviously larger in body and bill. One of the most common sounds, apart from Mockingbird, was that of Curve-billed Thrasher.

Saguaro National Park (West)

I wasn't sure if it was because we had such a superb start to the morning's birding at Shannon Road, or because the severe heat was beginning to kick in over this exposed hilly desert, but there were definitely fewer birds, both of species and numbers. This couldn't detract from the significance of being in such a typical Arizona desert environment, with literally a forest of tall saguaro cactus canvassing the open hills. The temperature was climbing quite rapidly, with clear blue skies and dry heat. We were greeted at the visitor centre by rising Turkey Vultures, and further around on the circular loop, a Red-tailed Hawk with a snake in its talons.



We left the car to hike up part of one of the hill trails a short way around Hohokam Road. A family party of Black-tailed Gnatcatchers were feeding through the bushes almost as we started the walk. The walk was hard going for energy and birds, punctuated by the regular House Finches and Gila Woodpeckers, the latter of which must have been in their element amongst the field of saguaro cactus. There was a suggestion that they had taken the easy way out, since carving out a hole in cactus must be much easier on the head than wood (apart from the psychotic Gila Woodpecker earlier on at Shannon Road which was trying to tap its way through a metal signpost!). Black birds on top of the flowering Saguaro Cactus turned out to be Brown-headed Cowbirds. The first of many! It has to be said, despite these birds usually having the unfortunate position of being passed by, the sun on them at the top of the cacti showed them at their best.

After returning to the car, we continued round the rest of the loop, finding more Red-tailed Hawks high up with Ravens, as well as a female Hooded Oriole across the road.

The next part of the plan was to go straight to the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum, but we stopped to admire a Red-tailed Hawk perched on a telegraph post at the junction of Sandario and Mile Wide Roads, which then led us to a smart Western Kingbird.

Arizona Sonora Desert Museum

We didn't arrive at the museum at the best of times, as testified by hordes of kids and sightseers lurking around the grounds. Yet this is not such a massive problem here (most of the time), until they pop up behind you muttering "ooh, what are you looking at?" at the top of their voices. The grounds cover quite an area, and this tends to swallow most of the other visitors up – a majority hover around the restaurant and gift shop in any case! Temperatures were even hotter now, but there were some birds to be seen. Most of the gardens are reasonably manicured, and divided into differing desert sub habitats, with zoological exhibits (aviaries and caged animals) dotted around. There is a desert loop of about half a mile at the northern end of the trails. This loop was particularly hot, but was provided with plenty of water fountains to drink from, and some birds to keep us company.

Most of the species were becoming familiar from earlier in the day – more copious Cactus Wrens, Gila Woodpeckers, and White-winged Doves. Pick of the crop had to be the hummingbirds, with one small feeder in a shaded culvert being very busy with birds, but slightly off the visitor trail. The hummers here laid on an excellent display, with a handful of individuals trooping in and out regularly. Two of these enjoyed chasing each other through the bushes and high into the air, with a suicide dive downwards to follow. One of these was a smart male Costa's Hummingbird, with a second male possibly being a subadult, with dark throat and purple sheen. Another bird was found on a favoured perch nearby while on the trail of a Wilson's Warbler. The visit was finished with a slow ramble around the desert loop, and was worthwhile for the family of Black-tailed Gnatcatchers and a prominent Verdin, both watched from the comfort of a trailside canopy.

Overall, the variety of birds here is not vast, and all were seen at other times through the week, but it was still an enjoyable diversion.

Garden Canyon

(Day 2)

We arrived at the Huachuca Fort military checkpoint at first light, which was only a 2 minute drive along Fry Avenue from the cheap but comfortable Motel that we had chanced upon in Sierra Vista. After filling in the necessary red tape, showing passports and driving licenses, we accepted the prized token which proudly displayed allowed us entrance into the Canyon. Apparently, the commander who ran the fort 2 years earlier hadn't allowed the Fort and canyon to be shown on the South-east Arizona Birding Trail map – it is worrying to think that he may have been only a step or two away from barring access to this superb and diverse birding site. The new commander is reported to be much more lenient in his views.

The first few miles of the paved road cut through mainly grassland with sparse mesquite bush, and despite our desire to get to the Upper picnic site as soon as possible, the temptation to keep stopping on the way when bird song was heard from open windows or shapes flitted in and out of the grass was too great. Most of these seemed to be sparrows, but were irritatingly distant or elusive. We did have a group of 4 Lark Sparrows which bucked the trend and landed at the edge of the road a short distance away, and a Botteri's Sparrow singing in one place long enough to be scoped. Rufous-winged Sparrows, with a characteristic song reminiscent of European Wood Warbler, were heard regularly but not seen.



Headway towards the Upper picnic site was punctuated by Cassin's Kingbirds and Loggerhead Shrikes, but we eventually arrived just behind an Icelandic trio who we had

met along the grasslands, and the odd American birder wandering the clearing already. We spent quite a few hours walking the woods, although we probably went no further than 200 metres or so from the picnic site, and this time is necessary to turn up an impressive variety of birds. It is recommended that you arrive and leave early on a weekend, due to numerous picnickers, but even when we left after 9 (and when we passed by on the way down later), there were only a few birders to be seen.



The Upper picnic site is exactly as it sounds – the third of 3 picnic sites up Garden Canyon, with a few benches set in a small clearing in the woods. From the early Western Wood-pewees and Acorn Woodpeckers, we enjoyed a range of the commoner species early on, including a spattering of Warblers such as Orange-crowned, Townsend's, & Black-throated Grey. We then walked downhill a short way, picking up the call of an Elegant Trogon as we descended. It was hidden at first, and the call seemed to be coming from much further than the actual location, but the bird was picked up on a dead branch over the small stream running alongside the

road. We stayed here even after the trogon had flown, since other birds appeared as we watched, including Plumbeous Vireo, Swainson's Thrush, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Western Tanager. The species numbers increased up as we continued down the road, such as Bridled Titmouse and Hepatic Tanagers. Swainson's Hawk overhead was added as we returned towards the picnic area, as well as more vireos and warblers. The Acorn Woodpeckers seen on arrival were still lingering around the same trees, and we were stood under a singing Bewick's Wren, which has a much more impressive long tail and song than the books justify.

As we were about to leave to explore one of the higher canyons, a kindly ex-Lancastrian appeared from his car and led us to a spot about half a mile further up the now rapidly deteriorating track, where we were treated to a very close Elegant Trogon, which was not only calling, but also perched for some time a few metres in front of us. We heard its muffled dog like mutterings for some time before it was located, and it is entirely probable that the hole in the broken tree branch that it sat next to was a nesting or roosting chamber. The bird was actually only about 10-15 metres from the road, over a dried up stream bed, but when listened to from the road, it appears as if it were some way up the hillside. We had seen other trogon species in Mexico, and this bird is every bit as stunning, and allows close approach while you decide on which is the best angle to view it.



When we had eventually torn ourselves away from the Trogon, we made our way up Garden Canyon to the next destination, which was Sawmill Canyon. It looked a nice and short journey in theory, but was complicated by the fact that the 0.6 miles from the Upper picnic site in Lane's guide was misread as the distance to Sawmill Canyon, but it was in fact another mile further. A second and much more time consuming problem was that the road becomes a track of many holes and bumps, and our beautifully comfortable saloon car might have looked good cruising on the interstates, but had a woefully low road clearance, so we had to regularly get out and guide it over the stones and ramps. We did eventually arrive at the end of the road, which was gated at the entrance to



Sawmill Canyon, and found a much more coniferous woodland at this higher altitude than the mix with deciduous down canyon. It was worth the harrowing journey up, although the beauty of sorting out the much more varied populations of flycatchers up here is definitely in the eye of the beholder. I had heard that even the experts in the States can only achieve a percentage of positive ID's of these birds, so enter a trio of bemused strangers. However, a little study, some obliging birds singing, and some good views helped us sort some of the birds out as Buff-breasted Flycatcher (the most common, and it varied in the depth of buff in

the plumage, from deep to washed out), Cordilleran Flycatcher (the yellowish colour to the throat, seen in the books, is difficult to see), Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western Wood-pewee, and a single Greater Pewee. Warblers at this time of day were few and far between, but we did manage a couple of Red-faced Warblers, one feeding on the ground to the side of the trail, and at least 4 Grace's Warblers. Vireos were located usually by song – both Plumbeous & Hutton's were recorded.

The Beatty's Home

After stuffing ourselves with Mexican fast food at lunchtime, we passed a very close Swainson's Hawk along one of the main Sierra Vista highways, and it stooped and tried to catch something in a nearby field as we watched. This was on the way to Miller Canyon, where the plan was to spend a little time admiring the hummingbirds on the feeders there, and spend the rest of the afternoon looking for other species further down the canyon. We ended up spending the rest of the day taking in the delights of the varied species of hummers that are a speciality of the higher altitudes in South-east Arizona. About 2 miles up the canyon, another rough road (although not in the same league as upper Garden Canyon) reaches the end of the track after about 2½ miles, at a car park adjacent to the Beatty's property. Mr Beatty has very obligingly set up a row of hummingbird feeders along the southern fence of his property, and a canopy opposite so that the birds can be watched in comfort. We saw him in his garden as soon as we arrived, and, after some initial pleasantries, he told us of the better feeders at the rear of the property. On a hillside just above a small (and running) stream, he has erected two small areas with plentiful hummingbird feeders, as well as chairs and canopies. The first feeders, just a few metres above the stream, are good enough, and had an assortment of hummers to and fro as soon as we arrived (Blue-throated Hummingbird was at this set only). Other regulars were Black-chinned and Broad-tailed.

However, Mr Beatty recommended the upper set of feeders, set alongside a small cabin (which could be hired for \$50 a night). The feeding area has less feeders than the lower site, hung from 3-4 small trees, as well as a couple of double chairs for comfort. Hummingbirds here are manic, even though Mr Beatty claimed that this year's numbers were low, they were in and out constantly. Some tolerated the other birds less than others, resulting in some superb squabbles, aerial battles, and high speed chases, with some buzzing very close past our heads. Most of the Hummingbirds here were Black-tailed, Broad-billed, or Anna's, but a male Magnificent had a favourite perch which he constantly visited. Towards the end of our stay, we noticed a female that seemed to

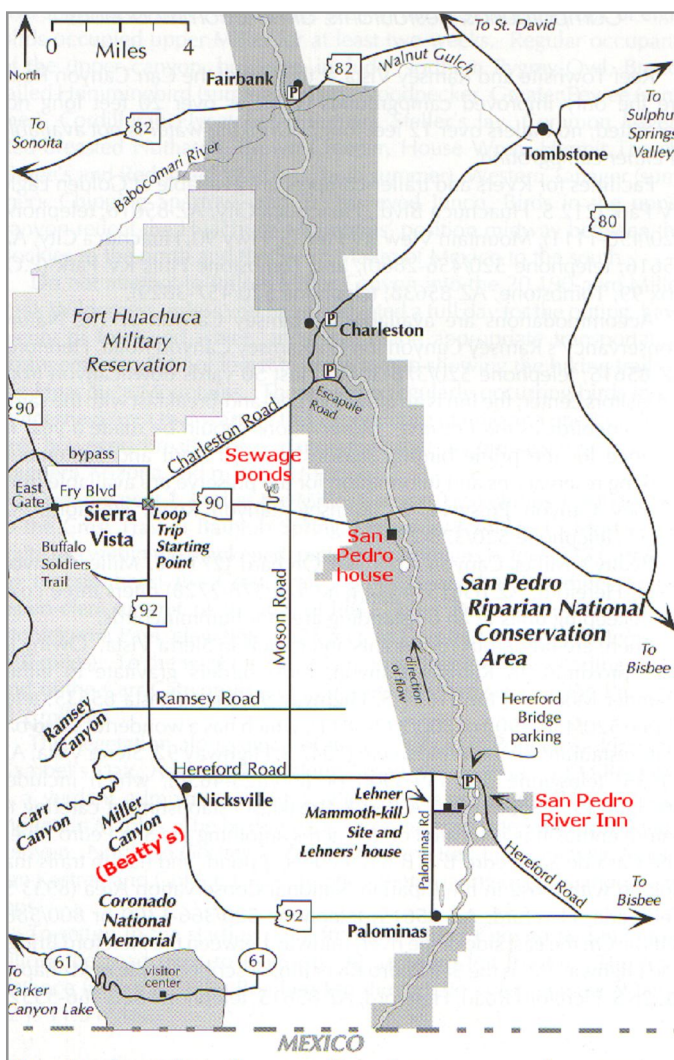


be smaller than the rest, and with a little study, she was identified as a Calliope – a rare visitor here for this time of year. There were other species mingling in the area throughout the afternoon, with Arizona Woodpecker in a low bush nearby, as well as Western Kingbird, Black-headed Tanager, and Mexican Jay.

We were about to leave for Sierra Vista and nourishment, when Mr Beatty informed us of a regular Lucifer Hummingbird a little further South. Thus after travelling another 2½ miles along the main highway, we turned on to Turkey Creek Road, and found ourselves at the end of a short and tortuous track seated rather comfortably, courtesy of Mary Jo Cox and her array of feeders, waiting for the aforementioned star to put in an appearance. However, it didn't bother to turn up – not a big problem due to the action presented by the other hummers utilising the garden. They were again mainly Broad-tailed, Black-chinned & Anna's, with regular cameos from Broad-billed & Magnificent. A pair of Acorn Woodpeckers also found the feeders to their taste (built specifically for hummingbirds, adapted especially by Acorns!), which meant that they were perched only about 3-5 metres in front of us. A most hospitable way to spend the final part of the day!

San Pedro House

(Day 3)



We arrived at San Pedro House at around 5:30, and it was a little chilly, with the sun just beginning to rise. It is set in a large open area, apart from two large cottonwood trees at the end of a 200m drive from the main road, a visitors hut, and plenty of feeders for the birds (hummingbirds at the front, and finches to the rear). Even at this time of the morning, Black-chinned Hummingbirds had started their day, and our first Vermilion Flycatcher was nearby. A Gilded Flicker was even trying its luck at one of the feeders.

The trail begins with a 200m walk across open grassland to the wooded hollow containing Kingfisher Pond, and there were numerous flycatchers in the form of Vermilion and Cassin's Kingbirds, with through flying Summer Tanagers in the open. As we glanced back, a Swainson's Hawk had alighted on a perching post at the edge of the trail. The trail then followed the edge of the trees, and we entered the area containing the (so called) Kingfisher Pond, where there was a constant noise from the Bullfrogs (heard, but generally not seen).

The trees were buzzing with birds in the form of Warblers (Wilson's and Common Yellowthroat), and yet more Vermilion Flycatchers. This was our first site with a profusion of noisy Red-winged Blackbirds. Rough-winged Swallows overflowed the pond, which was devoid of kingfishers, but we continued the circuit, and found Yellow-breasted Chat characteristically skulking, and what we decided were probably numerous Lucy's Warblers, since they were the size, shape and background colour that we expected, but didn't have the clinching rufous showing on crown and rump.



There is also a second, smaller and usually drier, pond off the southern boundary of the park, but this was relatively birdless when we found it, apart from a Red-tailed Hawk perched in one of the surrounding trees. Returning to the trail, heading back on the return leg to the House, the temperatures were beginning to climb rapidly, with a rising wind which was warm and offered little cooling effect. This again seemed very quiet, until about half way along, when a noisy Ash-throated Flycatcher preceded a Black-throated Sparrow and Wilson's Warbler. A few metres further, and a male Lazuli Bunting was calling at the top of the bushes. The remainder of the walk was quiet, but we did stumble across a Gopher Snake, making its way towards either shade or sanctuary from us under a small thorn bush.

After a reasonably long and hot ramble, the intention in arriving at the visitors centre was to relax for some time and watch the hummingbird feeders. Green-tailed Towhee was the first of a group of birds, feeding just in front of the porch, to persuade us to change our plans. It was followed by White-crowned Sparrow, Canyon Towhee, and Vermilion & Brown-crested Flycatchers. As we spent more time shunning the relaxation and wandering the grounds, more and more birds appeared and most were ultimately quite approachable. We added Curve-billed Thrasher, Abert's Towhee and Bewick's Wren to the already impressive list. Another case of putting in the time to turn up the birds!

Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds



This was only 2.9 miles from San Pedro House (towards Sierra Vista), and has changed since the Lane guide was published. A great deal of money seems to have been spent to accommodate visiting birders, and a new track straight through the entrance leads to a rather pleasant raised viewing platform with canopy. This overlooks the very manicured yet inviting water treatment beds, the closest four of which can be seen easily, and are overgrown with mainly reeded vegetation. The main downside is that, although Red-winged Blackbird enthusiasts would be in seventh heaven, a lot of birds probably hide out in this cover, or frequent the more open and exposed mud on the lagoons further to the rear of the plant. This was evident when 8 White-faced Ibis flew in and disappeared on landing behind the raised banks. Patience was rewarded – sitting and watching chalked up Eastern Meadowlark on the fences behind us and on the sewage tracks, passing flocks of Swallows also contained Sand Martin and Cliff Swallow, small groups of White-throated Swifts, and a circling Prairie Falcon.

Standing on the benches of the viewing platform, we could just see inside the adjacent dryish lagoon, and the odd patch of water hosted "Mexican" Mallards, a Shorelark on the bank, and a Swainson's Hawk landing for a drink.

We later chanced upon reports for the birds seen at the works, and these included a note from some birders who had walked out to the lagoons at the rear, and had no problems from workers present. We visited these ourselves, and found 2 lower and much more open lagoons, with mud edgings. They had many more birds to see. These included the earlier White-faced Ibis, as well as Mexican Mallards, Cinnamon Teal, Green Heron in one corner, and a collection of waders in the opposite corner, with 8 Wilson's Phalarope feeding as a group, and 4 Spotted Sandpipers

Rancho del Rio pond, San Pedro valley

We intended popping into this pond and one or two other places in the upper San Pedro valley by taking Hereford Bridge, but this was under repair, and hence closed to traffic. A re-routing of about 15 miles was in order: bi-product of this was a Roadrunner (strangely, running over the road in front of us) on this journey, and the third and last of the trip on the way back from San Pedro River Inn (neither would have been seen but for this diversion). We headed up as far as the Hereford Bridge from the other direction, which was indeed closed, and backed up a mile or so to this small pond. It is surrounded by a single row of trees, and barbed wire, on all sides, and birdwise wasn't very inspiring, apart from at least 3 Ash-throated Flycatchers, and lone Abert's Towhee and Green Heron. Apart from this, it wasn't really worth peeking through the trees.

San Pedro River Inn



A mile to the South, in the opposite direction to the bridge, was a much better place for birds. The Inn consists of 6 or so self contained units, which are open for hire, but they also welcome birders, to the extent that they have a sign up directing us to parking, and asking to register before exploring the area. We parked up in marked bays outside the cabins, and a very helpful lady, who possibly owned or worked on the premises (staying in the "Eagle Nest" cabin), took us down to the river, and pointed out a roosting Great Horned Owl and its chick sitting on branches in a large cottonwood tree. After taking in the Owls for some time, we walked some way along the still flowing river / stream. It was now mid-afternoon, hot, and very windy, but as usual a little patience did turn up some birds. First were 3 of the local race of Song Sparrow, singing and displaying the characteristic dark breast spot, with Abert's Towhee on the opposite side of the river. Continuing the walk found Wilson's Warbler, which was by now becoming a regular, White-breasted Nuthatch, and a close Western Wood-pewee. Walking back and comparing another Wood-pewee, the second of the adult Great Horned Owls was found, only around 100 metres from the nesting tree. Before leaving the woods, we found second helpings of Gila Woodpecker and Vermillion Flycatcher, as well as our first Ladder-backed Woodpecker of the trip.

Hanging around the cabins for some time also encouraged more species to appear. A pair of Vermillion Flycatchers popped up regularly, and were possibly the most confiding

that we had encountered. Eastern Meadowlark was with Red-winged Blackbirds around the pools, and a *Red-shafted* Northern Flicker fed in the open on the lawns. As we steeled ourselves to leave the scene, we found a pair of Scaled Quail. They apparently like to feed under the bird feeders here, but turned out to be the only ones of the whole trip. At one point, one of the Scaled Quails and 2 Curve-billed Thrashers were perched within 5 posts of each other on the same stretch of fencing.

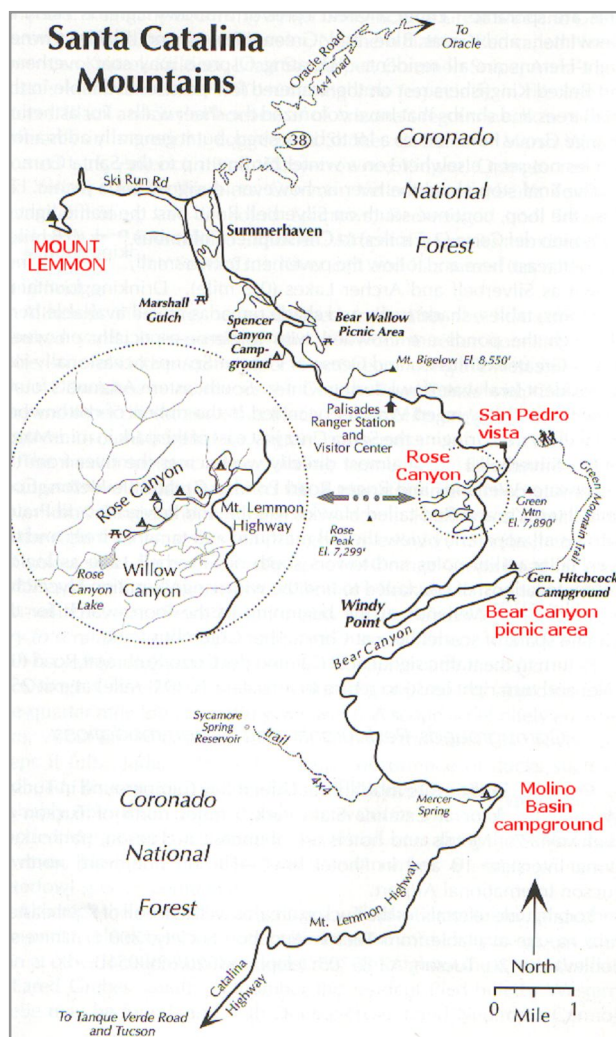
Molino Basin campground

(Day 4)

Today was the day for the mountains, and we decided to bypass Sabino Canyon, and head straight for the Mount Lemmon highway. Our reasoning was that the birds in the canyon would probably be mainly present in the mountain canyons, and it meant that we could get to the best warbler areas at a reasonably early hour.

The Campground is about 5 miles up from the Tanque Verde road. It was not only the first birding site of the day, but also where we paid the \$5 entrance fee to the park in the self pay envelopes at the car park. The elevation here is around 4500 feet, and we expected temperatures to be on the low side at this time in the morning, but at little after 6am, the air was very still, the sun peered over the mountain tops, and it warmed up very quickly. Small groups of birds were evident as we left the car, the first being noisy Mexican Jays, with an additional Western Scrub Jay further along the path, as well as flighty Phainopeplas and numerous Cassin's Kingbirds.

From the tree enclosed camping area, the tarmac road opened up into a sunny and sparsely vegetated (tree wise) valley, with birds waking up and appearing as we progressed along it. Hooded Orioles became regulars, only outnumbered by the common Phainopeplas, supported by less evident Black-throated Grosbeak and Ash-throated Flycatchers. Male Blue Grosbeak and perched Broad-billed Hummingbird added extra colour. One of the



pairs of Hooded Orioles was apparently building a nest somewhere nearby, with the female in particular flying to and fro with nesting material. At one point, the male of the pair displaced a Loggerhead Shrike from an open perch right in front of us.

Bear Canyon



This was the next stop on the mountain trail, and is about 6000 feet above sea level. Even so, the temperature mid morning was still very warm and pleasant, helped by the shade of the coniferous forest surrounds. We found the car park for the canyon trails very easily, about ¼ mile on from mile marker 11 on the right hand side of the road. As would be expected, the parking area was very sanitised, with 10 or so spaces for cars, and toilet facilities.

Only about 200m walk from this stop was a second car park, which was roughly the same size as the first, with similar facilities. Lane recommends beginning the

walk here, but I don't really think it makes a great deal of difference. On the contrary, the short walk between the two found sporadic song and calls from wood-warblers and vireos – Warbling Vireo and White-breasted Nuthatch were seen, the latter a pair nesting in a smallish tree next to the track in a hole about 2 metres from the ground. Chickadees were also here, which were likely to be Mountain, but it took some time before the diagnostic head pattern could be seen.

We had to work quite hard for the birds at this site, due to a combination of only sporadic song and the density of the trees, with most of the birds towards the canopy. The majority of the song came from Vireos – Warbling & Plumbeous in more or less every case. A Red-faced Warbler was eventually found, and it was seen to chase off a Black-throated Grey Warbler. A pair of Dusky-capped Flycatchers frequented the dry stream bed. Overall, the walk around here was pleasant, with some nice birds present, but not in the numbers and variety that we had expected.

Rose Canyon Lake

We had now climbed to above 7000 feet, and the heat increased, with a cooling mild breeze across the mountain. Again, the site was easily found, despite the disappearance of mile markers by the road some distance back, due to the excellent signposting of the lake. There was another \$5 entry fee here, and it was well worth driving the 1¼ miles down to the car park at the end. We were greeted with Violet-green Swallows overhead as we left the car.



We initially took the track to the right of the small lake, which led upwards and eventually overlooked the small dam at the head of the open water. This view in itself would have made the trip worthwhile, but there were also a handful of Red-faced Warblers singing along the gradual ascent, many of which could be seen at close quarters. Apart from the sound of the odd angler and day tripper around the lake, this was a very peaceful and still spot. The open rocks above the dam were also a good vantage point for the Violet-green Swallows, which until now has been at neck-breaking height above the canopy.

As we sat and watched from these bare white rocks, the reason for the name of the swallows became evident, with the sun revealing an iridescent green sheen on their backs.

We walked back down the track and crossed over a few stagnant ponds that passed for a stream filtering into the lake, and scanned the opposite shore from which we had just been sitting to find a male Western Bluebird, perched at the top of one of a pair of high bare trees. While it was there, a Violet-green Swallow landed on to the top branches of the second tree very briefly. An Acorn Woodpecker was followed, after which what appeared to be a female Hepatic Tanager remained mainly hidden in a tree up the slope. Trying to get better glimpses of this bird to confirm its identification unearthed a Pygmy Nuthatch feeding alongside. We climbed up the hill to gain eye level views of this bird.

Lunch was scooped about half a mile further up the mountain road from the Rose Canyon Lake junction, at a vista overlooking the San Pedro River valley. While sat on the wall, a male Magnificent Hummingbird rested on a horizontal branch, with a male Hepatic Tanager in the same area. Birds that got away were a couple of large hawks, which were picked up late. They looked to have different shapes in the air, the second of which had flat wings (possibly Red-tailed Hawk), the first held the wings in a very slight "V", with very dark brown to blackish back (possibly Zone-tailed Hawk).

Mount Lemmon summit / Irongate Lodge restaurant



As we approached the restaurant, we came across some roadwork(s) American style. We were required to stop for what was described as a "whole pile of traffic coming down", wait for 10 minutes, and then follow a pilot car once clear. The "whole pile of traffic" turned out to be half a dozen cars. We parked outside the Irongate Lodge, which is a restaurant in the Mount Lemmon ski valley bowl. This is magnificent for scenery, with ski lifts over the winter runs on one side, and a view of the valley below on the opposite side. First bird seen was a Greater Pewee at the apex of a dead tree about 100m down in the valley (showing the crest on the nape even at this distance), with Violet-green Swallows over the top. There are only four hummingbird feeders on the terrace outside of the lodge, and apart from a single Magnificent Hummingbird, all the others seemed to be Broad-tailed, with at least 3 males and 2 females, but these birds put together an eye-catching show, chasing each other off the feeders, quite often almost brushing us as they motored past, and producing the whistling noise made by the wings of the males (a characteristic of this genus). Although Broad-tailed & Black-chinned Hummingbirds are somewhat different in the field guides, it would appear that the most reliable way of telling them apart, in addition to the tail flicking of the latter when hovering, is to spot the crimson or purple throat sheen respectively in reflected light, both of which appear black at other times. The bill of the Black-chinned is also noticeably longer.

I thought I'd done well when I found a trio of Band-tailed Pigeons and single Steller's Jay perched on the same tree in the valley below. That was until minutes later, when a return to the bird feeders revealed 4 or more Steller's Jays feeding just beneath the balcony on food put out by the owner. Such a gracious act had to be rewarded, so we

bought a portion each of blueberry pie and ice cream – sometimes sacrifices such as this just have to be made! While carrying out this difficult chore, Broad-tailed Hummingbirds were themselves feeding only a few feet away.

We completed the drive up to the radio mast clad summit. On the last leg of the road, we unbelievably passed a couple of small mounds of snow on the roadside, even though the temperature was still high (probably around 65-70 degrees+). We followed one of the trails, supposedly to the outlook, but of course chose the wrong one. We still saw a few birds along the way, however, including another couple of Pygmy Nuthatches, Yellow-eyed Juncos, Western Tanager, and a small yet frustrating flock of calling wood-warblers, which remained elusive.

Madera Canyon

(Day 5)

The morning started well on the drive from Continental to the Box Canyon road junction, where we had a pair of Red-tailed Hawks on overhead wires, 2 Black-throated Sparrows (one sharing a bush with a Botteri's Sparrow), American Kestrel on the wires, and Western Kingbird.

Florida Wash

The minute we set foot out of the car, we found a pair of Lucy's Warblers, which were feeding young in a nearby bush. They showed the very obvious rufous crown, which was nice because it confirmed the first definite Lucy's that we had seen. We had been chasing a few small grey warblers earlier in the week, but nothing clinching had been seen. We crossed the barbed wire fence via a small metal "style" to the East of the road, and wandered down into the Wash itself, which was not in the least bit aptly named at this time, since the river bed was completely dry. We thus "waded" along a rock strewn path, bordered by thorn bush



woodland on the left, and single row of bushes to the right. This was immediately productive for singing Black-throated Sparrows, and perching (briefly) Broad-billed Hummingbirds. A little further down was an unexpected male MacGilvray's Warbler, which was feeding its way through the denser part of the bushes. After following a Northern Beardless-tyrannulet from the wash into the adjacent bushes, we stumbled on a Verdin's nest under construction. The birds themselves added to the nest only a couple of times before we left them to their chores. Putting in an appearance while waiting here were another Beardless-tyrannulet, Wilson's & Grey Warblers, and singing Black-throated Sparrow.

Madera picnic site

Only about 4 miles further up the Canyon from Florida Wash, we parked the car at the Madera picnic site, and paid the \$5 fee. A small gathering of Mexican Jays were pecking up titbits around the picnic tables, and these were accompanied in the surrounding trees by Summer Tanagers, Townsend's Warbler, Acorn Woodpeckers, and Bridled Titmouse. We were taken aback a little when we found running water in the stream, so we set off to look for birds downstream. First to be seen were Flycatchers, in the form of Dusky-capped and Western Wood-pewee, which were both very vocal. We covered a distance of about ½ to ¾ of a mile, criss-crossing the water a couple of times via bridges along the way. Most of this was under the cover of trees, with the occasional open views to the West. Birds were picked off along the way, and it was a particularly good stretch for Hepatic Tanagers (with one Western Tanager male singing) and Mexican Jays (2 parties, one of which almost fed at our feet). A couple of small flocks of Bushtits were nurturing newly fledged young, including one happily resting and begging on a branch which



seemed to take an age to locate. The parents eventually saw to its needs before it moved on. Of the 2 species of Woodpecker here, 1 of the 3 Acorns was almost immobile at the top of a telegraph pole, while an Arizona was more difficult to pin down feeding lower in the denser bushes. A couple of Rufous-crowned Sparrows also preferred to forage in the shade at ground level. We disturbed a pair of Cooper's Hawks when we returned to the car park, which then flew downstream. We had hoped to find Black Phoebes here, but the only Flycatchers here were Dusky-capped and a single Western Wood-pewee.

Santa Rita Lodge

This is a very pleasant small collection of rentable cabins, consisting of about 8-12 properties, a gift shop (closed on our visit), a restaurant and site office. A small wildlife attraction area had kindly been provided, which is a small enclosed section of the premises, with both hummingbird and seed feeders. On first pass, it seems to be overrun by House Finches and Goldfinches, but these can be seen to be augmented by Black-headed Grosbeaks and Black-chinned Hummingbirds. 15-20 minutes into this small spectacle, the first convoy of 3 birders minibuses that we had encountered on the whole trip pulled up and ejected their contents on the surrounds – they did seem to have a habit of sticking together like glue,



and were in fact the only group we were to meet. Apart from these, the sites we visited were fairly quiet, with never more than a few people milling around. The most impressive site around the lodge was at least half a dozen Acorn Woodpeckers plying to and fro, with 3 at the top of one telegraph pole at one time. Another first here were clouds – covering most of the sky, and together with a brisk wind, providing a little bit of cool (making it hot, as opposed to very hot). This also seemed to coincide with a few more birds passing through.

A couple of Broad-billed Hummingbirds were followed by a female Lazuli Bunting (quite a boring little individual, with a buffy coloured breast and barely discernible blue tinge to the tail). The more outstanding birds returning to the feeders were the Black-headed Grosbeaks, with at least 3 females and 2 males.

The trail from the lodge to the amphitheatre, about 400 metres long, was quiet and relatively birdless, apart from Bridled Titmouse and White-breasted Nuthatch, with Acorn Woodpecker seen and Arizona heard. We did find a pair of Bell's Vireos at the amphitheatre car park. They are a very pale vireo, overall quite grey, with barely demarcated spectacles, contrasting starkly with the deeper grey, more obviously patterned Plumbeous. Distant Swainson's Thrushes were on the trail and in the car park.

Madera Kubo

About half a mile up from the Santa Rita Lodge is a rather attractive wooden lodge on the right hand side of the road, which we had thought was another gift shop harbouring more feeders. The latter was true, but the owner told us of a Flame-coloured Tanager which was to be found at times in the Madera Kubo surrounds. This is a collection of 4 holiday cabins set in the woods, and the Madera Kubo gift shop. The lady in the gift shop pointed us to the blue cabin next to a large boulder some metres along the road, which we found very easily. The first quarter of an hour there was lively, with 3 types of Vireos singing and calling (Warbling, Plumbeous, & Bell's), Swainson's Thrush and White-breasted Nuthatch. While we sat on the wall in front of the blue chalet, we spotted a dark flycatcher on the opposite side of road and behind a fence, which turned out to be a Black Phoebe. The unsuccessful search earlier around the Madera picnic site would have fitted the description of the site it was frequenting here, with a bridge over running water – the bird preferred the open perches just down from the bridge.

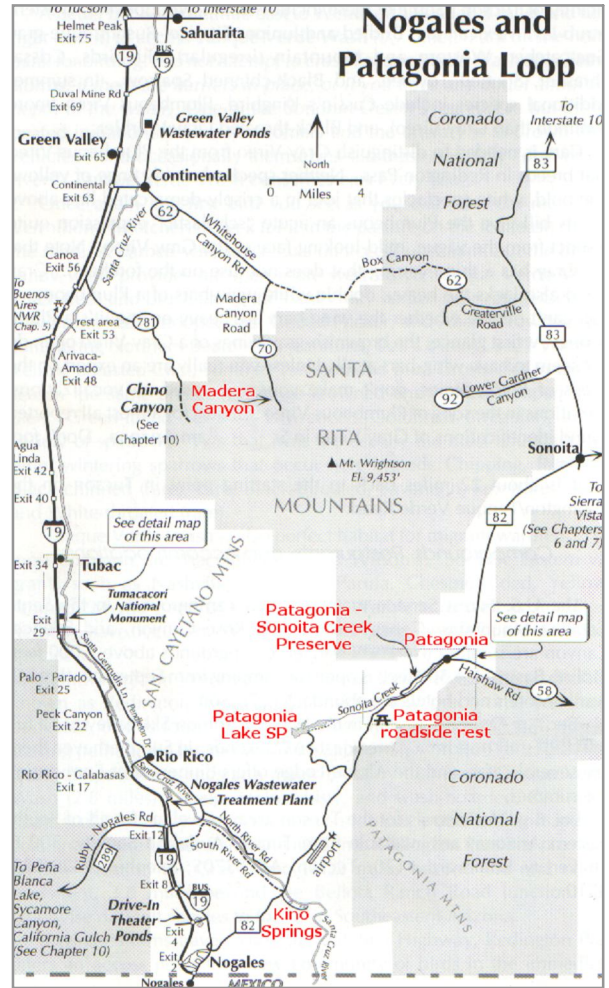
As we continued our pilgrimage between the blue chalet and the gift shop, birds of varying species kept appearing. The 3 previous Vireos were upped to 4, with the addition of a very unexpected Red-eyed, a species which is seen with difficulty in the western states. Plumbeous Vireo proved very common, with more singing birds, and even one on a nest overhanging the road. We thought for a brief moment that we had found the Flame-coloured Tanager, but it proved to be a male Western Tanager, sporting the much paler yellow underparts, as compared with bright orange of the rarer species. In the same tree outside of the gift shop were Hooded Orioles and a lone Painted Redstart. For some reason, this location improved as the afternoon progressed, despite the clouds dispersing, the wind dropping, and the temperature rising. The Painted Redstart became bolder, and fed right in front of us, down to about 3 metres distant. A sortie back to the blue cabin finally pinpointed the Flame-coloured Tanager. Once seen, it isn't hard to miss, with bright orange head and breast, spotted double white stripes in the wings, greyish ear coverts, and dark thick set bill. Returning yet again to the gift shop, we heard Canyon Wren singing, and thought that a long hike up the hill was needed to find it. Instead, we decided to try to improve on our Black Phoebe photos, which was still returning to the stream behind cabin #3. While there, we were pleasantly surprised when a pair of Canyon Wrens appeared in the cabin yard, initially on the back of a truck and apex of a shed roof. They were taking food to a nest in the adjacent cabin #4. They returned repeatedly, singing and perching on the shed, veranda, and truck in front of us for around 10-15 minutes before their silence set in. It was then that the lady who was hiring cabin #4 entered the scene and pointed out the nests of Cooper's Hawk over cabin #3, which was vacant at the time, and Western Wood-peewee, sitting on the nest. A female Lazuli Bunting put in a brief appearance in the surrounding trees. The one job outstanding was to return to look for the Flame-coloured Tanager, since one of our party was yet to see it. Returning to the vicinity of the blue cabin and our earlier success, it was only a matter of about 5-10 minutes before it was relocated, this time with much more prolonged periods out in the open.

The day finished well. We checked into the Motel 6 in Nogales, which is just off junction 4 in Interstate 19 (definitely recommended at only \$45 for a 4 person room). A quick dip in the swimming pool to shake out the Arizona dust also totted up an interesting pool list – the more interesting species included Phainopepla, House Finch, Cassin's Kingbird, and Great-tailed Grackle seen from the water, and topping the bill single Barn and 3 Cliff Swallows drinking from the surface of the water on the wing while we were still half submerged (an even better reason to stay here). The hotel was used for two nights, and was not only cheap and cheerful, but also in a convenient location for the Patagonia sites.

Kino Springs

(Day 6)

It only took us 10 minutes to arrive at Kino Springs from the Nogales motel, and we ticked off Say's Phoebe as soon as we passed the entrance to the track leading to the golf club area. This was an immature bird, which was being attended by one of its parents. Not only was this predicted by the Lane guide (the species and not the family



setup), but the other bird he made note of was also here – singing Varied Bunting on the other side of the dried up river bed, perched at the apex of one of the line of bushes. Scoping the bird revealed the expected – black overall, with slightly lighter edges to the wing feathers, not the more vivid colours which can be occasionally seen in better light. With Phainopepla and Lucy’s Warbler evident, we decided to park up and start our day’s birding here. Parking off track was a good idea, since some cars and vans were already out and about, and weren’t taking any prisoners with their speed. Most of the birds were on the bush covered hill side of the track to the West, with Phainopepla the predominant species by number and activity. We had the strange sight of an Ash-throated Flycatcher mobbing a female Lesser Goldfinch all the way down to the ground. The first Hummingbird of the day was a superb male Costa’s, at the top of a bare tree half way up the hillside, proudly displaying the rather ridiculous “Speedy Gonzales” moustache. Shortly after, a male Vermilion Flycatcher flew in from the dry river bed, displaying in flight all the way over to the hillside.

The first pond of Kino Springs is only about half a mile along this dirt track. The dry pond certainly didn’t stop some good birding at an interesting site. Even from the parked car we had singing Song Sparrow and Yellow-breasted Chat in the open, Cassin’s Kingbird overhead, and various types of bird song from all directions. The centre and rear of the pond, to the East, was even better. As we walked around here, there were numerous Brown-crested Flycatchers, Summer Tanagers, and Curve-billed Thrasher, with Yellow and Wilson’s Warblers overhead. Approaching the rear of the pond found “Yellow-



breasted Chat city", with 6 birds in view at one particular time. Warbling Vireos were setting up singing territories here, along with many Lucy's Warblers, and busy Bewick's Wrens foraging in and out of the basement vegetation. The mesquite and low thorn scrub that we found to the rear of the pond continued to be alive with birdlife, with more Lucy's & Wilson's Warblers, and Yellow-breasted Chats. We were easily fooled by the exotic drooping song of a Northern Cardinal, which sounded novel until the bird put in an appearance. Red-eyed Vireo is supposed to be very difficult to see on this side of the States, but we found a second at this location. The track was followed to the dry river bed – it's hard to imagine this ever containing water, never mind enough to form banks about 30 metres apart. Growing plants along the bed aid the dry argument, but there were one or two darker patches which may have indicated more recent water presence. Slightly different birds here were Canyon Towhees, and Ladder-backed Woodpecker over, which landed briefly on a dead tree. The most abundant bird was Lucy's Warbler, the vast majority of which seemed grey all over, with little if any distinguishing marks.

The purpose of the track was to lead to Kino Springs, which is a golf course, restaurant, and country club. As usual with this type of development in desert areas, it provides a more open and lush oasis for the wildlife, although we had apparently arrived during an unusually dry spell. A Gilded Flicker was the first bird seen, preceding the numerous Cassin's Kingbirds, Starlings, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Barn & Cliff Swallows. The second pool is directly to the front of the restaurant, the nearest edge being dry, and stagnant water to the far end. The trees in the drier part were supporting a



Grey Hawk's nest, as well as Vermilion Flycatchers. The water was quiet for birds, apart from a single Great Blue Heron which flew in. More Brown-crested Flycatchers and Cassin's Kingbirds were watched here, before we located the nest of Vermilion Flycatcher – the female incubating while the male watched on. The putting greens and lawns around the clubhouse were good for Sparrows, with small collections of White-crowned, single Rufous-crowned, and a pair of Lark Sparrows in conifers.

Patagonia Lake SP



We went here more in the hope of catching up with *Empidonax* flycatchers than aquatic species. It was even something of a surprise to see a body of water – the lake stretches for 2-3 miles, and is fringed along most of the shore by trees, with reeded edges at the upper East end. A mix of 18 Double-crested & Neotropic Cormorants were perched towards the centre of the lake here. Only one of these – a Double-crested – was

in full breeding plumage, although one of the Neotropics sported white ear tufts, and the difference in size was obvious. The car was parked at the beginning of the Trailhead Walk, which progressed for about half a mile towards the reeded East of the lake. It was here that we had the initial look at the Cormorants. The first 100 metres or so was through low thorn scrub – this was very hot and quiet. It then descended to shaded woodland. First find was our second Verdin nest, with the birds actively building, with singing Warbling Vireo nearby. Lucy's Warblers were also here, naturally. We continued on through the trees, where the track opened slightly to horse pasture, and crossed a small stream. There proved to be many Flycatchers around, but all were a mix of adult and juvenile Vermilion. A single Woodpecker landing nearby was Ladder-backed. A Green Heron frequented the stream. Overhead, amongst the circling Turkey Vultures, was a lone Grey Hawk.



The edge of the reed beds were reached via a precarious arrangement of logs across acrid mud (thankfully mainly dry). It was a worthwhile balancing act, resulting in close White-faced Ibis, Spotted Sandpiper, pairs of Redhead & Ruddy Duck, and numerous American Coots. The Cormorant collection was very much closer. Hot and aching feet would have welcomed a dip in the cooling waters of the lake, but one look at the slime and smelly mud at the edges was more than a put off. It had to wait to later (and did!).

Patagonia and the Paton's Home



On to Patagonia, where we drove straight past the 4th Avenue turn for The Patons garden, but ended right outside the Nature Shop after completing our U-turn. We just had to have a look inside! Not only were there good books, but the owner was also very helpful.

We again aimed for The Patons garden, but were stopped half way along California Avenue by a couple of birders, who kindly pointed out a Thick-billed Kingbird in the large bare tree opposite. This is quite an impressive and large flycatcher, being much more

thickset in the body and bill than the kingbird species already seen. It does have a hint of yellow on the belly, and the bill is reminiscent of Couch's Kingbird of Central America, although it is even longer and thicker.

We eventually pulled up at the renowned and much anticipated Patons home, and it was everything that we expected. It was typical of the birding hospitality that we had already received, that the Patons set up their own back yard with hummingbird feeders at the rear of the property, and seed feeders at either end of the garden. They had erected "Birders Welcome" signs, and even a sun canopy with three rows of seats, and ID books provided. The garden is mainly famous as one of the best sites in the country for Violet-crowned Hummingbird, as well as the rarities that make occasional appearances, rather than the variety and numbers of birds (this tends to increase with altitude). The Beatty's home was the place for the latter, yet this was again Hummingbird watching par excellence. The species we saw here were Violet-crowned, Broad-billed, & Black-chinned. The former was represented by at least 2 individuals, which show variation in plumage, one being more drab than the other, and they favoured one or two particular feeders. The garden was also good for many other birds: a bold, strutting Bronzed Cowbird was parading among the more common Brown-headed; Sparrows were White-crowned, Rufous-crowned & Lark; Inca Dove and Common Ground-dove; Black-headed Grosbeak, and Bewick's Wren, which may well have been nesting in one of the nest boxes. On the large tree between the feeders, we also had Gila Woodpecker and White-breasted Nuthatch. Unbelievably, our first Acorn Woodpecker of the day was at the far end of the garden. Another pleasant surprise was that we were the only birders here for most of the afternoon. We stayed until late in the afternoon, when the crowds started to appear.

The Patagonia Roadside rest was visited briefly on the way back to the hotel, more in hope than expectation at this time of the day. Yet we did find our first, and last, Cedar Waxwings of the trip, and one or two other species as we walked. We dug up male and female Broad-billed Hummingbird, and probably the brightest male Western Tanager so far. It's surprising how such a colourful bird can disappear in small bushes. Other birds at this time were Lucy's Warbler, Warbling Vireo, and American Kestrel overhead. As luck would have it, we were just about to get back into the car to leave, when a Rock Wren appeared a little way down the lay-by. This was also to be the first and last of the trip!

Patagonia Roadside rest

(Day 7)



After information from other birders, we crossed the road to the stream side this morning, which is reputed to be much better for birds. After a short walk through the trees, we came upon a couple of very interesting passerines, feeding in the canopy, and obtained good scope views from below for 5-10 minutes of birds that we failed to identify. Both seemed to be vireos, with rounded shape and quite stout bills, greyish back tinged with olive, an eye ring which was fairly obvious, dark to black upper tail, and two wing bars which were more or less just thin lines. Both had yellowish undertail coverts, one with beige underparts, the other with pale yellow continuous up to the throat. This trail through the woods was

quite short – only about 100 metres – and quite cool this early in the morning, being in the shade of the cliffs and trees. More birds appeared as we covered this small location, the best spell being when we stopped for a Violet-crowned Hummingbird, which had a favourite perch that it returned to for very short periods of time. An absolutely pristine male Broad-billed Hummingbird fed on the flowers only about 2 metres from our lookout

point, and showed off magnificent colours even in the shade. Aside from Yellow Warbler and Dusky-capped & Ash-throated Flycatchers, the most surprising find was as we about to leave – 2 Black-bellied Whistling-ducks flew presumably from the stream below us.

Back to the other side of the road where the car was parked, more birds responded to the increasing warmth of the morning. Amongst the usually ubiquitous Phainopepla were Summer Tanager, Lucy's Warbler, and one or two other passerines which couldn't be seen very well. However, our best find here was a pair of Thick-billed Kingbirds, which were building a nest in a tall tree directly above a "Camping Prohibited" sign. They visited regularly, often alighting on open branches, in the vicinity. The find of yet another species either on a nest or nest building just had to be celebrated, so we constructed an improv breakfast by making up ham and cheese sandwiches in the boot of the car. Delicious!

Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve



The first job here was to spray well with Deet insect repellent, since chiggers are apparently a major problem in this type of habitat. The wetter months between July to September turned out to be the crucial months for this, but better safe than sorry! We were also greeted at the visitor centre car park by a mass of parked cars – this location obviously becomes quite popular by mid morning. On the positive side, we were also greeted by Say's Phoebe and single Black amongst Turkey Vultures circling overhead. Other Flycatchers in the open area surrounding the visitor centre were Vermilion, with at least a couple of males, and Cassin's Kingbird. We decided to do a circuit of the preserve, starting on the Creek Trail, which consisted of pleasantly open woodland, with a centre of grassland. We had again been hoping for some frustrating *Empidonax* flycatchers, but this was probably a little too late in the season for them. They were replaced by an abundance of other flycatchers, the most common being Cassin's Kingbirds, Western Kingbird, and Dusky-capped Flycatcher, but we also realised by now that Thick-billed Kingbird was a little easier to see in this part of the state than we had expected, with another 2 separate birds along the Creek Trail. On the paths we had some Sparrows, which mainly consisted of Song, and singles of Abert's Towhee, White-crowned & Lark Sparrow. At the beginning of the trail, we had Grey Hawk which landed in one of the high trees to the rear, and Hermit Thrush closer to. A stop for a rest about half way along the Creek Trail unearthed Yellow-breasted Chat and plenty of Western Wood-pewees. Shortly after dragging our backsides from the comfort of the seat, we came across a pair of Grey Hawks, male Blue Grosbeak, Common Yellowthroat and White-breasted Nuthatch all in the same area. This was just above a small flowing stream. Predominant Woodpeckers along the trail were Gila, with only lone Acorn at the start, and a much smaller Ladder-backed at the end of the Creek Trail.

Returning back towards the visitor centre on the Railroad Trail, the first half was very much more enclosed than the Creek Trail, with not much more than a pair of Dusky-capped Flycatchers. This opened up somewhat after the half way mark, and we

immediately found another male Summer Tanager, with a female in close attendance. The trail following this continued to be fairly quiet, apart from single of Wilson's Warbler and Brown-crested Flycatcher.



After a lunch of pre-made cheese and ham sandwiches, which were big enough to fill a horse, we had two aborted attempts at different sites. We initially walked some way around the Roadside Trail, still at Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve, which lived up to its reputation as the dry area of the preserve, with a bit of a climb through open thorn scrub. The dryness and time of day most likely explained the lack of birds – we only saw 2 Black-throated Sparrows as we walked back to the car. Next, we tried for Nogales Sewage Works, which we found with little problem, but it was reported by security to be under construction. Dead loss here as well!

Santa Cruz Flats



The last stop of the day, and the trip, was the best of the afternoon. We left the Interstate just before Arizona City (at junction 212), and headed into some of the very, very, very flat farmland. This looks just as you would expect in Arizona – extremely flat with mountains dotted around in the background. Initial sparse low cactus and scrub gave way to miles of gravelled, and dusty, track. Along this track, we found a couple of Blue Grosbeaks, Eastern Meadowlarks, and 8-10 Shorelarks. We eventually arrived at cultivated turf fields, which were huge – about 800m wide by 1km, and are wide

strips of very flat turfed soil, with a linked 16 part watering spray system standing at the entrance. Along the central channel for the motorised hub of the spray system, and 150 metres or so along, were 2 Burrowing Owls, perched characteristically out in the open. This was an excellent bird to end the trip on, being seen as the light started to fade, and was possibly even matched by a Coyote which was stood stock still in a ploughed field as we left Arizona City towards Phoenix.

SPECIES SEEN

Pied-billed Grebe

Podilymbus podiceps

3 birds in breeding plumage at Patagonia Lake

Double-crested Cormorant

Phalacrocorax auritus

6 birds were perched on posts above the surface of Patagonia Lake, among slightly more numerous Neotropic Cormorants. None of these were in breeding plumage

Neotropic Cormorant

Phalacrocorax brasilianus

12 on exposed posts on Patagonia Lake. They are noticeably smaller than Double-crested, and the gular pouch could be seen to be different. Only one of the birds showed the light coloured ear feathers

Great Blue Heron

Ardea herodias

Regularly seen in the Patagonia area with 3 at Patagonia Lake and 6 the next day around the Roadside rest pull in. The only other bird was at the San Pedro River Inn

Cattle Egret

Bubulcus ibis

3 birds over Arizona City

Green Heron

Butorides viriscens

Three single birds seen at: Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds; Rancho del Rio Pond (near San Pedro River Inn); Patagonia Lake

Night Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax

A pair of birds over the car just before nightfall in Phoenix on the last night

White-faced Ibis

Plegadis chihi

8 birds flew in and landed on Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds, and were seen more closely on the rear scrape, with a single bird later in the week at the reeded eastern end of Patagonia Lake



Black-bellied Whistling Duck

Dendrocygna autumnalis

After a pair of birds flew up from the stream of the Roadside rest near Patagonia, 2 sets of 4 birds were seen flying to the West from the same area

(Mexican) Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos diazi

This subspecies of Mallard looks like a midway version of female Mallard and Black Duck: Sierra Vista (3 on 16th); Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds (~50); Green Valley Sewage Ponds (1); Patagonia Lake(1)

Blue-winged Teal

Anas discora

Male and female pair on one of the lagoons at Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds

Cinnamon Teal

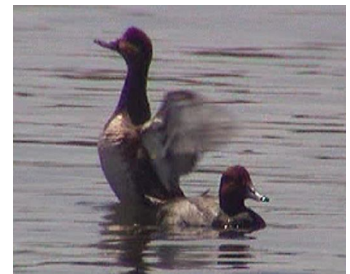
Anas cyanoptera

About 8 birds (mix of males and females) on the rear lagoon at Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds

Redhead

Aythya americana

One pair at the reeded eastern end of Patagonia Lake



Ruddy Duck

Oxyura jamaicensis

Pair near the reeds on the East side of Patagonia Lake

American Black Vulture*Coragyps atratus*

Few and far between (as compared with the common and regular Turkey Vulture). 4 early morning perched between Fort Huachuca and Garden Canyon; ~6 flying over Sonoita / Patagonia Creek Preserve among Turkey Vultures

Turkey Vulture*Cathartes aura*

Common – seen every day with numbers from ~6 on 19th and 20th to many

Cooper's Hawk*Accipiter cooperii*

Garden Canyon Upper picnic site (1); San Pedro River Inn (1); Mt Lemmon summit (2)

Grey Hawk*Asurina nitida*

South-east Arizona is the very Northern most tip of this species' breeding range, and a handful of pairs can be seen in the San Pedro / Patagonia area: drive between Tucson and Sierra Vista on 16th (3 towards the Sierra Vista area perched on telegraph poles); Kino Springs (pair at nest opposite golf course club house); Patagonia Lake (1); Sonoita / Patagonia Creek Preserve (1 pair and a separate single bird)

**Swainson's Hawk***Buteo swainsoni*

All but one were light phase, and are quite easy to distinguish from Red-tailed Hawk. The red tail on the latter is usually easy to see, but the two have quite different underwing patterns, with Swainson's always showing dark flight feathers. The light patterning on the scapulars of Red-tailed is not as helpful, since this seems to vary on both species. The most seen was around 7 on the 18th (San Pedro River valley area), including one close bird perched at the San Pedro House. None were seen in the Patagonia area

Red-tailed Hawk*Buteo jamaicensis*

The commoner of the two large *Buteo* species. A maximum of 6 seen on any day, and the only day without a sighting was 19th, when we visited the Santa Catalina mountains

**American Kestrel***Falco sparverius*

All birds seen in flight – approach to Madera Canyon (1); Kino Springs (2); Patagonia roadside rest (1); Tucson (1)

Prairie Falcon*Falco mexicanus*

1 in flight over the Sierra Vista Wastewater ponds

Scaled Quail*Callipepla squamata*

We thought these would be a lot easier to see, but only one pair was found, hanging around the cabins at the San Pedro River Inn. Apparently, they are very easy to see here, often feeding underneath the bird tables



Gambel's Quail

Callipepla gambelii

A very common bird, and in fact one of the first species seen (at Shannon Road). Quite a few of the parties seen contained young birds. The only day when none were seen was on the 17th, and daily numbers ranged from 2 (19th, 20th, 22nd), to around 50 (Tucson desert area)



American Coot

Fulica americana

Only seen on the Kingfisher Lake at San Pedro House (6) and Patagonia Lake (~30)

Killdeer

Charadrius vociferus

Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds (7); Santa Cruz Flats (3)

Long-billed Dowitcher

Limnodromus scolopaceus

The only bird seen was a breeding plumaged bird on the Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds. Although we were fairly sure of its identity in the field, this is the only dowitcher likely in this area (occurs quite commonly in spring and autumn migration times)

Spotted Sandpiper

Actitis macularia

All birds seen were either in full breeding plumage, or at least in partial breeding plumage for a minority. Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds (4); San Pedro River Inn (3 together on one of the small ponds adjacent to the cabins); Patagonia Lake (1 on mud near the eastern reeded end of the lake)

Wilson's Phalarope

Phalaropus tricolor

A rather impressive looking group of 8 birds were feeding together on the Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds. These included 1 full and 1 part breeding plumaged birds, and 3-4 juveniles

Band-tailed Pigeon

Columba fasciata

We had expected these to be a common and easily seen bird, but they do seem to stay rigidly in the more mountainous areas. The only birds we saw were at the Irongate Lodge on Mount Lemmon. 3 birds were initially seen perched on one branch of a tree just below the car park, and 2 subsequently came to feed on the tarmac under the hummingbird feeders of the lodge

Mourning Dove

Zenaida macroura

Common – seen every day

White-winged Dove

Zenaida asiatica

Common – seen every day apart from 17th



Inca Dove

Columbina inca

Shannon Road (3); The Patons garden (6)

Common Ground-dove

Columbina passerina

Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds (1); San Pedro River Inn (1); Molino Basin campground (1); The Patons garden (2); Kino Springs (8); Sonoita / Patagonia Creek Preserve (4); Santa Cruz Flats (6)

Greater Roadrunner

Geococcyx californianus

This was the bird that we most wanted to see, in particular because 2 of the party had

missed the Lesser Roadrunner I had seen briefly in Mexico 3 years earlier. We did expect to see them, but were a little surprised to only turn up 3 during the week, especially when we were told of birds in birders back gardens who lived in Arizona. However, events are strange, and it was fitting that the first Roadrunner that we saw was on Shannon Road, only about 15 minutes after we had arrived, and it was motoring its way along the line of household gardens, before making a speedy exit towards the desert area. The 2 other birds were seen crossing the road on the journey to the San Pedro River Inn, both of which stopped briefly at the side of the road before disappearing



Great Horned Owl

Bubo virginianus

At San Pedro River Inn, a breeding pair had one chick in a large tree next to the river. The chick looked recently fledged, and one of the parents was in the same tree. We found the other parent in a tree about 100 metres away as we returned from the river walk



Burrowing Owl

Athene cunicularia

The Lane guide had given a site at the Santa Cruz Flats, but the distances were not all correct. Because of this, we ended up finding a pair along the central watering channel of the turf fields on Greene Reservoir Road, just West of the sign for Western Sod. They were quite approachable, although there was always the feeling that the 800 metre long watering jet system would start at any time, since the owls were nesting along the rut created by the systems' engine. When we left these birds and drove another few hundred metres to the West, we came upon the concrete slabs that were mentioned in the book as the preferred Burrowing Owl area – there were no birds there. Sometimes mis-directions are not a bad thing. This also happened to be the last of the new birds we saw only about half an hour before dusk on the last evenings birding!

Lesser Nighthawk

Chordeiles acutipennis

Only 2 birds seen, both briefly over the car at dusk – 1 at Green Valley, the other over Arizona City

White-throated Swift

Aeronautes saxatalis

These turned out to be a reasonably regularly seen bird, usually occurring in small flocks, and are a very smart member of the family - Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds (7); Rose Canyon Lake (10); Patagonia Roadside rest (6 on 21st, 25 on 22nd); Patagonia Lake (5); Kino Springs (3); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (10)

Hummingbirds

This is probably one of the families of birds that are a target for birders in South-east Arizona. At this time of year, there are 8 regular breeding species usually possible, with a few extras as incidentals that are also possible. Many birds will be chanced upon as the area is covered, and this is certainly an enjoyable way to experience them (we saw almost all species at some time through the week away from feeders). However, for more success in variety of species seen, and for close views, there are some gardens with feeders where birders are welcomed by the owners for hummer watching (and other species). The most accommodating that we visited were:

The Patons home in Patagonia – 4 regular species including regular Violet-crowned

Tom Beattys' at the upper end of Miller Canyon – the best for variety and numbers due to higher elevation

Mary Jo Cox at the upper end of Turkey Creek Road. More nice hummers, and the additional possibility of Lucifer Hummingbird while we were there

Broad-billed Hummingbird*Cyanthus latirostris*

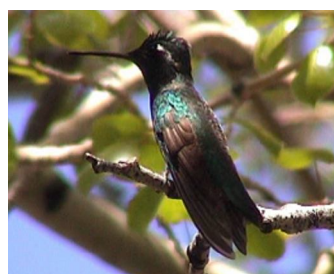
This is one of the more outstanding species, with bottle green tones contrasting with the red bill in the males, and the females easy to identify by the long bill with (usually but not always) a red base: Tom Beatty's garden (1 male); Turkey Creek Road (2 males and 1 female); Molino Basin campground (1 male); Madera picnic site (2); Florida Wash (2); Santa Rita Lodge (2); Madera Kubo (4); Patagonia Roadside rest (3 on 21st, 2 on 22nd); The Patons garden (10); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (2)

**Violet-crowned Hummingbird***Agyrtia violiceps*

The Patons garden is reputedly the best place in the States to see this species, and there were at least 2 birds which regularly returned to the same 2 favourite feeders while we were there. They are very distinctive, since they are relatively large and are the only local hummingbird to have a brown back. Although there is apparently no difference in male and female plumage, one of the birds we saw there was definitely paler than the other. We also found a further single bird returning to a regular spot at the Patagonia Roadside rest

Blue-throated Hummingbird*Lampornis clemenciae*

This seems to be more of a Canyon dweller of slightly higher elevations, and not very commonly seen. Both males and females are easily identified, due to their largish size, and overall dark colour with white stripe behind the eye. 1 male was on a favoured perch at the lower of the 2 feeding areas behind Tom Beatty's garden, and a pair were returning to the feeders and perches on nearby trees at cabin #3, Madera Kubo

**Magnificent Hummingbird***Eugenes fulgens*

Another distinctive species, with size, shape and base colours (apart from the throat) similar to Blue-throated, but it has only an easily seen white spot behind the eye, rather than the stripe of Blue-throated. Males show a brilliant green throat when the light catches it. Shannon Road (1 male); Tom Beatty's garden(1 male and 1 female); Turkey Creek Road (3 males and 1 female); San Pedro vista on Mount Lemmon (1 male); Irongate Lodge, Mount Lemmon feeders (2 males); Santa Rita Lodge (1 female)

Black-chinned Hummingbird*Archilochus alexandri*

This is superficially similar to Broad-tailed Hummingbird, since both show black throats until the light highlights the purple lower edge (compared with red of Broad-tailed), and both males have a green wash to the sides of the breast. However, this species has a longer bill, and the most characteristic feature is the constant tail dipping when it hovers. It also appeared to be the most aggressive bird at the feeders. Tom Beatty's garden / Turkey Creek Road (common at both sets of feeders)



Anna's Hummingbird*Calypte anna*

When the sun caught the red hood of the male, they looked quite spectacular. We saw at least 1 male at the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum, and both males and females were common at Tom Beatty's garden and Turkey Creek Road. None were seen elsewhere

**Costa's Hummingbird***Calypte costae*

This is most commonly found in the lowlands of the Tucson area, and we saw our closest birds at the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum (2 adult and 2 immature males), where they are allegedly attracted to the artificially hospitable environment. However, we did see one further male on the hillside at the entrance to Kino Springs

Calliope Hummingbird*Stellula calliope*

Since this species is rare on passage in South-east Arizona in the Spring, we were more than pleased to identify a female coming back regularly to the upper feeding area at Beatty's home. We had been watching the other species for some hours when this much smaller bird started to appear on one specific feeder. Plumage matched the book exactly, even down to the throat streaking

**Broad-tailed Hummingbird***Selasphorus platycercus*

The similarities with Black-chinned Hummingbird have been mentioned, but in addition to the bright red throat in certain lights, an additional interesting feature is the loud whistle made by the wings of the male as it flashes past. This tends to be one of the species that prefers the higher altitudes, hence its absence from places like The Patons garden, but good numbers in the Huachuca Mountains: common at the Beatty's home / Turkey Creek Road; Irongate Lodge, Mount Lemmon (10+, mainly at the feeders); Madera Kubo (2)

Elegant Trogon*Trogon elegans*

This is another of the speciality birds of South-east Arizona, and we struck luckily at the Upper picnic site in Garden Canyon. It is best located by listening for the call, which sounds strangely like a small dog barking in a car. Another important point to make with the call is that bird is a lot closer when calling than it sounds – the first bird we found seemed to be some way up a hillside, but was in fact only around 30-40 metres distant. This bird was calling over a stream, about 200m downstream from the Upper picnic site. We were told of the second bird by a friendly American based Lancashire birder. He eventually took us to below the exact tree from which it was calling, yet we looked up and couldn't find it. The reason for this was that it was calling from a hole in the tree for some time (presumably a nest hole), until it appeared on a branch only inches from the hole. It remained there for some time despite our presence. Both birds that we saw were the brightly coloured males, and were typical in their preference for locations above streams

**Acorn Woodpecker***Melanerpes formicivorus*

This is a characteristic and stunning woodpecker, and also very easy to see throughout

the region. They are also very easy to approach, seemingly more intent on their perching posts than watching birders. Upper picnic site (3); Turkey Creek Road (2 on feeders and close tree branches); Rose Canyon Lake (2); Madera Canyon (the most populous area, with 50+ seen throughout the day); The Patons garden (2 on feeders); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (1 only at the start of the woodland trails, on the same tree as a Gila Woodpecker)



Gila Woodpecker

Melanerpes uropygialis

The most common, and noisy, woodpecker seen. In addition to it being very common in the Tucson desert area on the first day: San Pedro river valley (10+); Kino Springs (4); The Patons garden (2 on feeders in front of viewing area); Patagonia Roadside rest (2); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (10+)

Ladder-backed Woodpecker

Picoides scalaris

San Pedro River Inn (1 in wood near stream); Kino Springs (1); Patagonia Lake (1); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (1 at end of Creek Trail)

Arizona Woodpecker

Picoides arizonae

Only 2 seen, but they are a striking woodpecker due to their predominantly brown markings: Miller Canyon (1); Madera picnic site (1)

Northern (Red-shafted) Flicker

Colaptes auratus cafer

San Pedro River Inn (1 on ground alongside cabins); Bear Canyon (1)

Gilded Flicker

Colaptes chrysoides

The differences in head colour between this and the Northern Flicker can be separated if the bird is seen well, but it is only when they fly and the yellow (or red in the latter) underwings are seen that ID is positive: Shannon Road (2); Kino Springs (1)



Northern Beardless-tyrannulet

Camptostoma imberbe

This is a remarkably long name for a small and understated flycatcher. The 4 birds we saw were all either in or alongside the dry river bed of the Florida Wash. Their feeding action is noticeably different from other flycatchers – more akin to the foraging of wood-warblers. Although they do not have a great deal going for them in the looks department, these birds are nevertheless quite characteristic when seen

Greater Pewee

Contopus pertinax

These are a flycatcher of the higher altitudes, and look noticeably larger than the other pewees, with an obvious crest at the back of the head when seen well. Close up, they have a wholly orange lower mandible. Sawmill Canyon (2); Irongate Lodge, Mount Lemmon (1 at the top of a tall, bare tree below the car park)

Western Wood-pewee

Contopus sordidulus

A very common flycatcher, seen every day in small numbers apart from on the first day in the Tucson desert area. Easy to tell from other flycatchers in this part of the States due to lack of eye ring and size. Upper picnic site (6); Sawmill Canyon (3); San Pedro River Inn (1 in wood); Irongate Lodge, Mount Lemmon (1); Madera picnic site (4); Madera Kubo (6); Kino Springs (4); Patagonia Lake (4 in woods); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (4)



Dusky Flycatcher*Empidonax oberholseri*

Mid May onwards is probably a little late for many of the *Empidonax* genus, since many leave their wintering grounds here earlier than this. This is likely to be the reason why we saw only singles in Sawmill Canyon and Madera picnic area

Cordilleran Flycatcher*Empidonax occidentalis*

Usually only found at higher altitudes (our only 1 was singing in Sawmill Canyon), it is fortunate that Pacific-slope Flycatcher is very rare at this height, and that this bird was singing (latter tends to be found lower down in valleys on migration)

Buff-breasted Flycatcher*Empidonax fulvifrons*

Due to its altitude, Sawmill Canyon is a prime spot for this bird. We saw c6 along the track, most singing. Although the books show a bright buff breast, and some birds do exhibit this, others can be noticeably paler

**Black Phoebe***Sayornis nigricans*

Surprisingly, only one bird was found in a characteristic place (next to a stream, perching low down) opposite the Madera Kubo gift shop

Say's Phoebe*Sayornis saya*

A parent and juvenile were the first birds seen as we entered Kino Springs. The only other birds were a second adult at Kino Springs and a single bird feeding in the open grassland around the visitor centre of Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve

**Vermilion Flycatcher***Pyrocephalus rubicus*

The males of this species are literally stunning, with the most vivid red face and breasts. They also prefer lowland open areas, and usually perch out in the open, and when found are often in good numbers. Some of the pairs of birds found had well grown young in tow, and a nest was found at Kino Springs. We actually only saw them on 3 days, in the San Pedro valley, and Kino Springs to Patagonia areas: San Pedro House (8); San Pedro River Inn (4); Kino Springs (10); The Patons garden (1); Patagonia Lake (10); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (1)

Dusky-capped Flycatcher*Myiarchus tuberculifer*

The *Myiarchus* flycatchers were at first separated very technically, with this species tracked down by characters such as rufous edges to secondaries and lack of rufous in the undertail. After some experience, the smaller size and bill quickly became much better features, the former being used purely as backup. Sawmill Canyon (1); Molino Basin campground (2); Bear Canyon (4); Madera picnic site (8); Madera Kubo (4); Kino Springs (2); Patagonia Roadside rest (2); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (12)



Ash-throated Flycatcher*Myiarchus cinerascens*

These birds are much larger than the Dusky-capped, but have smaller bills and are paler than Brown-crested. All were seen in the first 2-3 days, which generally covered the more low lying, open desert areas. Shannon Road (2); Sawmill Canyon (4); San Pedro House (10); Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds (2); San Pedro River Inn (6)

Brown-crested Flycatcher*Myiarchus tyrannulus*

Arizona Sonora Desert Museum (1 adult and 1 juvenile); San Pedro River Inn (2); Kino Springs (12); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (4)

**Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher***Myiodynastes luteiventris*

These birds were quite a lot larger and bulkier than expected, and had been on the shopping list since we failed to see them in Mexico (February, 2000). Only seen around the Upper picnic site, where there were at least 3 birds

Cassin's Kingbird*Tyrannus vociferans*

The darker head and mantle as compared with Western Kingbird was usually sufficient to separate the two, but there was some variation in this, and lighter coloured Cassin's would sometimes need the unmarked tail to be seen to confirm identity. They are a common and regular kingbird, usually seen in more open countryside. Garden Canyon grassland (2); Upper picnic site (4); San Pedro House (6); Molino Basin campground (6); Florida Wash (2); Kino Springs (12); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (8)

**Thick-billed Kingbird***Tyrannus crassirostris*

This is an uncommon bird in South-east Arizona, although we discovered that one area that it can be seen comparatively easily is in the Patagonia area. We even found a pair building a nest directly above the Patagonia Roadside rest. Other single birds were in Patagonia (in a bare tree off California Drive), and Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (2 separate birds)

Western Kingbird*Tyrannus verticalis*

The white edges to the tail were often used as confirmation to ID from Cassin's Kingbird, although most birds were light enough on the head and mantle to avoid confusion. Saguaro National Park (West) to Arizona Sonora Desert Museum (2); Garden Canyon (2); Miller Canyon (2); San Pedro House (6); Madera Canyon (1); Kino Springs (2); Santa Cruz Flats (6)

**Shorelark***Eremophila alpestris*

A single bird was adjacent to the hide at Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds, and the final 10 or so were in singles and small groups at Santa Cruz Flats

Purple Martin*Progne subis*

3 of this local subspecies were seen – 1 on wires and 2 flying overhead at Shannon Road

Violet-green Swallow*Tachycineta thalassina*

These birds seem to prefer the higher altitudes, and when seen from above, as we did towards the top of Mount Lemmon, the reason for their name can be clearly seen by the iridescent green colour of their backs. Rose Canyon Lake (6); Irongate Lodge, Mount Lemmon (10+)

Northern Rough-winged Swallow*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*

Turkey Creek Road (1); Patagonia Lake (1)

Sand Martin*Riparia riparia*

The only birds seen were 10+ presumably on migration through Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds

Cliff Swallow*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*

Most birds were seen at a little distance on the wing, until we had a dip in the swimming pool of the Motel 6 in Nogales, where the birds not only joined us for a drink, but also landed in the eaves of the hotel next to the pool (presumably to roost). Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds (1 with other hirundines); Kino Springs (4); Motel 6 in Nogales (3+ on 21st and 22nd)

**Swallow***Hirundo rustica*

Very common, and seen on all days apart from the 19th

Phainopepla*Phainopepla nitens*

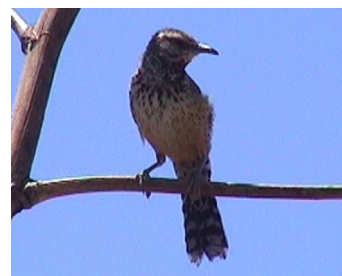
We only saw one of these smart looking birds (Shannon Road) in the first 3 days, and thought they may be quite difficult to find. However, after the 20+ deluge around Molino Basin campground, and only 1 from the swimming pool in Nogales, they were very common in the Patagonia area (Kino Springs 20+; Patagonia Lake 30+; Patagonia Roadside rest 12; Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve 10)

**Cedar Waxwing***Bombycilla cedrorum*

8 birds at the Patagonia Roadside rest on the evening of the 21st

Cactus Wren*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*

This bird was very common on the first day at all sites visited in the Tucson desert area, with many birds both seen and heard. However, only 2 further birds were seen during the trip (Molino Basin campground)

**Rock Wren***Salpinctes obsoletus*

We were just about to leave the Patagonia Roadside rest on the evening of the 21st, when we spotted our only Rock Wren about 30 metres away feeding around the base of the cliffs

Canyon Wren*Catherpes mexicanus*

The location of this species came as something of a surprise. We had been listening for them all the way up Madera Canyon, and straining our eyes to see them on the distant rocky outcrops. However, when we heard one calling from cabin #3 at Madera Kubo, we were deciding on whether to follow the calls of a much closer bird when one appeared right in front of us on a truck. 4 birds in 2 pairs were subsequently seen in this yard, and they seemed to be nesting in the houses and sheds



Bewick's Wren*Thryomanes bewickii*

The most common and vocal of the wrens that we saw. Upper picnic site (2); San Pedro House (2 around Kingfisher Pond); San Pedro River Inn (1); Molino Basin campground (1); Madera picnic site (2); Patagonia Lake (1); Kino Springs (2 at the first pond); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (4)

Northern Mockingbird*Mimus polyglottos*

Common in the Tucson desert areas on the first day; Upper picnic site (1); San Pedro river valley area (6); Molino Basin campground (2); Kino Springs (6)

[Bendire's Thrasher]

A single bird at Shannon Road seemed unlikely, since it is apparently usually a skulking bird. However, the bill (looked at again closely on video) shows the straight lower edge of this species, and the bird did not look like a juvenile, where young Curve-billed would show a similar shape in some cases

Curve-billed Thrasher*Toxostoma curvirostre*

In some lowland and open areas, the sight and sound of this confiding bird were common. Tucson desert areas on first day (30+); San Pedro House (2); San Pedro River Inn (2); Kino Springs (6); Patagonia Lake (2)

**Western Bluebird***Sialia mexicana*

A single male was at the very top of a dead tree on the opposite bank of Rose Canyon Lake. Thankfully, the telescope was available to clinch the specific ID

Swainson's Thrush*Catharus ustulatus*

Upper picnic site (4); Beatty's home (2); Madera Kubo (12)

Hermit Thrush*Catharus guttatus*

Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (3)

American Robin*Turdus migratorius*

Uncommon - Upper picnic site (1); Madera picnic site (1); Madera Kubo (1)

Black-tailed Gnatcatcher*Poliophtila melanura*

Only 2 groups were found, both on the first day - Saguaro National Park (West) (6); Arizona Sonora Desert Museum (2 adults & 2 juveniles)

Bushtit*Psaltriparus minimus*

Shannon Road (2); Sawmill Canyon (6); Madera picnic site (family party of ~10)

**Mountain Chickadee***Poecile gambeli*

The only chickadees seen were a nesting pair at Bear Canyon, and while the habitat pointed to Mountain, it was some time before the characteristic head pattern could be seen to confirm this

Bridled Titmouse*Baeolophus wollweberi*

Upper picnic site (12+); Beatty's home (1); Bear Canyon (1); Madera picnic site (4); Santa Rita Lodge (2); Madera Kubo (6); Patagonia Roadside rest (1 on 21st, 4 on 22nd)

Pygmy Nuthatch*Sitta pygmaea*

Singles seen at Rose Canyon Lake and Mount Lemmon summit

White-breasted Nuthatch*Sitta carolinensis*

Beatty's home (1); San Pedro River Inn (1); Bear Canyon (nesting pair); Rose Canyon Lake (2); Mount Lemmon summit (1); Madera picnic site (2); Santa Rita Lodge (1);

Madera Kubo (8); Patagonia Lake (1); Patagonia Roadside rest (1); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (2)



Verdin

Auriparus flaviceps

Regularly seen in lowland areas, this is a stunning little bird. 2 nesting pairs were found. Tucson desert areas (12); Florida Wash (4, including a pair nest building); Patagonia Lake (1 seen nest building); Kino Springs (2 behind the first pool); Patagonia Roadside rest (1)

Loggerhead Shrike

Lanius ludovicianus

Garden Canyon grasslands (2 singles); San Pedro River Inn (1); Molino Basin campground (1)

Steller's Jay

Cyanocitta stelleri

This is a bird of the higher altitudes. After taking some time to see a single bird crossing the slopes below Irongate Lodge, Mount Lemmon, at least 10 birds were subsequently seen coming for food under the feeders. 1 further bird was seen on the Mount Lemmon summit



Western Scrub Jay

Aphelocoma californica

Only 1 seen amongst the more numerous Mexican Jays at Molino Basin campground

Mexican Jay

Aphelocoma ultramarina

Small parties totalling around 25+ birds were seen from Upper picnic site to Sawmill Canyon, ~6 were in a group at Molino Basin campground; Madera picnic site (~20); Santa Rita Lodge (6); Madera Kubo (20+)



Chihuahuan Raven

Corvus cryptoleucus

A common bird of the more open lowlands, with most seen in the Tucson desert and San Pedro River valley areas, with a few on the approaches to Madera Canyon, and only one noticed at Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve

Raven

Corvus corax

Saguaro National Park (West) (1); Mount Lemmon (4); Madera picnic site (2); Kino Springs (a pair with a nest in the trees of the first pool); Patagonia Roadside rest (2 on both days); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (2)

Starling

Sturnus vulgarus

Common

House Sparrow

Passer domesticus

Common

Bell's Vireo

Vireo bellii

1 at Florida Wash, and 3 of these rather drab vireos were at Madera Kubo

Hutton's Vireo

Vireo huttoni

Only one of these was seen in Sawmill Canyon

Warbling Vireo

Vireo gilvus

The harsh rattling song of these birds, reminiscent of European *Sylvia* warblers, was

often quite commonly heard in dense bushy areas. Upper picnic site (1); Bear Canyon (4); Madera picnic site (2); Madera Kubo (2); Patagonia Roadside rest (1); Patagonia Lake (~10)

Plumbeous Vireo*Vireo plumbeus*

As opposed to the Bell's Vireo, these slatey grey coloured vireos are a rather smart bird, as is their bubbling warble of a song. Upper picnic site (6); Sawmill Canyon (4); Bear Canyon (2); Madera Kubo (8, including one pair on a nest directly above the road)

**Red-eyed Vireo***Vireo olivaceus*

This species is a rare migrant in the Spring and Autumn, and, according to Lane, does not occur at all during some years. Imagine our surprise when we found no fewer than 3 separate birds: Madera Kubo; Kino Springs (2)

House Finch*Carpodacus mexicanus*

Very common – seen on all days and in almost all habitats

**Lesser Goldfinch***Carduelis psaltria*

Upper picnic site (5); Beatty's home (1); San Pedro River Inn (1 on feeders); Madera picnic site (2); Santa Rita Lodge (~12 on feeders); Kino Springs (1); Patagonia Roadside rest (1); Patagonia Lake (~10)

Orange-crowned Warbler*Vermivora celata*

1 at Upper picnic site

Lucy's Warbler*Vermivora luciae*

These small, grey warblers often show no distinctive features, and it took some time before we saw some with the characteristic rufous on crown and rump. It is therefore likely that we saw some unidentified birds before this. Florida Wash (6); Kino Springs (~20); Patagonia Roadside rest (1 on both visits); Patagonia Lake (2); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (3)

**Yellow Warbler***Dendroica petechia*

San Pedro House (~20); San Pedro River Inn (4); Kino Springs (1); Patagonia Roadside rest (1 on 21st & 2 on 22nd); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (2)

Black-throated Grey Warbler*Dendroica nigrescens*

Upper picnic site (2); Beatty's home (1); Madera picnic site (1)

Townsend's Warbler*Dendroica townsendi*

Upper picnic site (2); Beatty's home (1); Madera picnic site (1)

Grace's Warbler*Dendroica graciae*

Sawmill Canyon (1); Rose Canyon Lake (1)

MacGillivray's Warbler*Oporonis tolmieri*

A stunning male was seen all too briefly at Florida Wash, and was a little unexpected as it

is seen only on migration in the area

Common Yellowthroat

Geothlypis trichas

Common in wet areas: San Pedro House (10); Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds (4); San Pedro River Inn (2); Patagonia Lake (1); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (3)

Wilson's Warbler

Wilsonia pusilla

The most common of the wood-warbler migrants, seen in good numbers despite the fact that this was likely to be towards the end of migration. Arizona Sonora Desert Museum (2); Upper picnic site (2); San Pedro River Inn (1); San Pedro House (2); Florida Wash (2); Kino Springs (6); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (4)

Red-faced Warbler

Cardellina rubrifrons

This is a stunning little bird, with the brilliant red of the face contrasting with the grey tones on the rest of the body. They tend to be found only at higher altitudes, but almost all were singing and thus fairly easy to locate (preferred perches were towards the middle to high canopy). Sawmill Canyon (1); Molino Basin campground (1); Rose Canyon Lake (4); Bear Canyon (4)



Painted Redstart

Myioborus pictus

Another outrageously stunning bird. 2 were seen – the first at Upper picnic site was feeding along the tops of trees, the second at Madera Kubo, was much more obliging, spending an prolonged time feeding opposite the gift shop itself, sometimes landing only a few metres away

Yellow-breasted Chat

Icteria virens

This bird is usually secretive and thus hard to pin down, despite the easily located harsh and chattering song. When we tracked down the first bird around Kingfisher Lake, San Pedro House, it fit the bill perfectly, giving only brief and half obstructed views. However, a portion of the population at the first pond, Kino Springs, mustn't have read the books carefully, since following the first bird we saw, singing happily at the top of an open bush 20-30 metres away, there were ~10 or so also in the area. At one time, I was stood amongst a group of 3-5 birds chasing each other through the bushes at the rear edge of the pond, and more were seen singing in the thorn bush scrub. Other birds seen were: Patagonia Lake (1); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (2); Patagonia Roadside rest (1)



Hepatic Tanager

Piranga flava

Once seen, the dark bill, grey back & ear coverts of both sexes make this species easy to tell apart from the equally prominent Summer Tanager. Upper picnic site (4); Beatty's home (2); Rose Canyon Lake (1); Madera picnic site (4)



Summer Tanager

Piranga rubra

San Pedro House (8); Molino Basin campground (1); Madera Kubo (2); Kino Springs (6); Patagonia Lake (1); The Patons garden (1); Patagonia Roadside rest (2); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (6)

Flame-coloured Tanager

Piranga bidenata

For American birders, this is one of the birds to see, since it is a very rare vagrant to South-east Arizona from Mexico, and so is an American listers' delight. A bird was present further up the canyon from the Beatty's home, and Mr Beatty did in fact take trips up to find this bird. However, a much easier bird was in the Madera Kubo area. We

had heard of its presence while birding in the very vicinity, and were lucky enough to see it 3-4 times between us. It seemed to be doing a circuit, and was found roughly every ½ to 1 hour

Western Tanager

Piranga leucoptera

Shannon Road (1 male); Upper picnic site (6); Beatty's home (1); Irongate Lodge, Mount Lemmon (1); Mount Lemmon summit (1); Madera Kubo (2), Patagonia Roadside rest (2)



Green-tailed Towhee

Pipilo chlorurus

Mid to late May represents the very end of the Spring migration for this species, although numbers do fluctuate each year. We were thus very pleased to see 4 of these at San Pedro House. They were mostly to be seen feeding around the visitor centre, alongside both Canyon & Abert's Towhees

Canyon Towhee

Pipilo fuscus

Easily the most common of the towhees seen, usually preferring a certain amount of cover, feeding under thickets or trees. San Pedro House (4); Molino Basin campground (6); Florida Wash (2); Patagonia Lake (2); Kino Springs (2)



Abert's Towhee

Pipilo aberti

San Pedro House (1); Rancho del Rio pond (1); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (3)

Botteri's Sparrow

Aimophila botterii

A few were heard singing along the grasslands towards Garden Canyon, but only 1 was seen singing from an exposed perch. One further bird was sharing a bush with a Black-throated Sparrow on the approach to Florida Wash

Rufous-crowned Sparrow

Aimophila ruficeps

These birds vary in the depth of their plumage colour, but most are a lot drabber than they appear in the books. They were often seen singing low down on exposed perches. Molino Basin campground (1); Florida Wash (1); Madera picnic site (2)

Rufous-winged Sparrow

Aimophila carpalis

The first bird was close up, although briefly seen, on Shannon Road. It may have joined 2+ other birds, but these were not seen well. Only one other bird was located – it was heard singing in the Garden Canyon grasslands

Lark Sparrow

Chondestes grammacus

A group of 4 landed at the roadside of the grasslands approaching Garden Canyon; 2 were in a conifer opposite the Kino Springs clubhouse; The Patons garden (1 around the closest feeder); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (1)



Black-throated Sparrow*Amphispiza bilineata*

This understated sparrow is very impressive when seen in the field. San Pedro House (1); Florida Wash (6); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (2)

**Song Sparrow***Melospiza melodia fallax*

The birds of South-east Arizona are much paler and more rufous than their eastern counterparts, although all birds found still showed the characteristic breast spot when seen well. San Pedro River Inn (4); Kino Springs (4, with at least 2 singing birds at the first pond); Patagonia Lake (2); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (15+)

White-crowned Sparrow*Zonotrichia leucophrys*

This species is a winter visitor to the southern States, but good numbers were still present – San Pedro House (6); San Pedro River Inn (4); Santa Rita Lodge (1); Kino Springs (6); The Patons garden (10); Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve (1)

**Yellow-eyed Junco***Junco phaeonotus*

Any Dark-eyed Juncos seemed to have left the area by the time we arrived, leaving the stage to this species, which has a foothold in the USA thanks to the birds in South-east Arizona. The two have similar plumages when found here in the Winter, but the yellow eye stands out when seen well. They are also specialists of higher altitudes, preferring the cover of coniferous or mixed forest. Sawmill Canyon (6); Molino Basin campground (2); Bear Canyon (2); Rose Canyon Lake (2); Mount Lemmon summit (1)

Northern Cardinal*Cardinalis cardinalis*

Shannon Road (2); Arizona Sonora Desert Museum (6); San Pedro House (1); Kino Springs (4); Patagonia Roadside rest (2 on both visits); The Patons garden (2)

**Pyrrhuloxia***Cardinalis sinuatus*

Shannon Road (4); Madera Canyon (1); Kino Springs (1)

**Blue Grosbeak***Passerina caerulea*

All 4 birds seen were lone males at Molino Basin campground, Patagonia Lake, Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve, and along the main track at Santa Cruz Flats

Lazuli Bunting

Passerina amoena

A male was seen briefly along the return track at San Pedro House, and single females (possibly the same bird?) at Santa Rita Lodge and Madera Kubo

Varied Bunting

Passerina versicolor

Male singing on the opposite bank of the dried river bed at Kino Springs, and 1 overhead a little further down the track

Black-headed Grosbeak

Pheucticus melanocephalus

This species was seen regularly on all days, with a maximum of almost 30 birds in the Madera Canyon area



Red-winged Blackbird

Agelaius phoeniceus

Very common when found, with double figures at Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds, San Pedro House area, San Pedro River Inn, Patagonia Lake, and Santa Cruz Flats. Single figure numbers seen at Kino Springs (2 at first pond), Patagonia Roadside rest (2), and Sonoita Patagonia Creek Preserve

Eastern Meadowlark

Sturnella magna

Sierra Vista Wastewater Ponds (4); San Pedro River Inn (2); Santa Cruz Flats (4)



Great-tailed Grackle

Quiscalus mexicanus

Common, with up to 30 birds or so seen on all days



Bronzed Cowbird

Molothrus aeneus

A strutting male amongst Brown-headed Cowbirds at The Patons garden



Brown-headed Cowbird

Molothrus ater

Very common, seen every day, in good numbers, and in almost all habitats

Bullock's Oriole

Icterus bullockii

Only 3 males seen at Upper picnic site (2) and San Pedro House

Scott's Oriole

Icterus parisorum

A single male around the Upper picnic site

Hooded Oriole

Icterus cucullatus

Shannon Road (1); Garden Canyon (2); Upper picnic site (1); Molino Basin campground (4 males and 2 females, including one pair building a nest); Madera picnic site (4); Madera Kubo (3)



TOTAL SPECIES = 153