



ARIZONA TRIP REPORT & LIST
July 13 - 20, 2013

July 13

After pick up at the Tucson Airport we headed to Casa de San Pedro for the next three nights. After arriving we were served libations and an excellent southwestern dinner.

July 14

We were up early and walked around the grounds of the inn to see what species we could locate before our gourmet breakfast. We were immediately greeted with the song of a Sonoran Mexico species of Sparrow that comes across the border into Arizona. The Botteri's Sparrow was cooperative and allowed us great views. We also saw Yellow Warbler, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Yellow breasted Chat and a brightly plumaged male Vermilion Flycatcher. Just before heading back in the inn for breakfast we heard two Gray Hawks calling in the distance. Much to our surprise they were in pursuit of an adult Common Black Hawk which gave us excellent views.



After our meal we headed to Miller Canyon, North America's premier hummingbird viewing area. We were presented with Black chinned, Broad-tailed, Broad-billed, Magnificent, Rufous, Anna's Hummingbirds. We then headed up canyon in search of the Mexican Spotted Owl. Twelve feet above our heads, we spotted the comfortable Spotted Owl sleeping in a Maple tree on Miller Canyon Trail. Before long we found a Painted Redstart feeding young, and Plumbeous and Hutton's Vireos calling. We returned to the lower canyon for a picnic lunch and a chat with the Beatty's, owners of the property. We encountered a Lilliani's Eastern Meadowlark along a pasture fence on the way back to Casa de San Pedro for a short siesta before dinner. We dined at a local italian eatery and then headed back out to owl. At Ramsey Canyon to found some cooperative owls. We had an entire family of Western Screech Owls appear over our heads for great views. As we ascended towards Ramsey Canyon Inn, we found cooperative Elf Owls. We headed back to retire for the evening.



July 15

After breakfast we spent the day seeking rarities enroute to Patagonia, AZ. We stopped at the Roadside Rest where we encountered a family of Thick-billed Kingbirds. We headed over to the famous Patton's House to view their Violet-crowned Hummingbirds at the feeders. Other birds we saw were the Yellow-billed Cuckoo & Abert's Towhee. We drove down the road towards the Nature Conservancy property in search of a known Zone-tailed Hawk nest. As we exited the car we overheard a juvenile Zone-tail food begging to the parent who flew over us and landed in a nearby Cottonwood tree. Other birds in



the area were Varied Buntings, Rufous-winged Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Pyrrhuloxia and Gray Hawk. We returned to Casa de San Pedro for an authentic Mexican meal prepared by a local resident.

July 16

After an early breakfast, we departed for the two hour drive to the Chiricahuas. Along the way we had scope great views of a Crissal Thrasher tee'd up on a Mesquite Tree. Before arriving in Portal, we heard a Black-tailed Gnatcatcher singing along the road, along with a singing Black-throated Sparrow. We had good views of each. Around lunchtime we arrived at the Cave Creek Ranch where we enjoyed our picnic lunch while viewing the feeders at the inn. We saw Band-tailed Pigeons, Lesser Goldfinch, Acorn Woodpeckers and Hooded Orioles. We then took a drive up to South Fork, a famous birding destination, where we encountered singing Elegant Trogon along with a flock of Mexican Jays and Bridled Titmice. After a nice afternoon of birding we had dinner at the Portal Peak Lodge. After dinner we took the trail behind the lodge where we called in a pair of Western Screech Owls. We made arrangements with an intern from the Southwest Research Station to



visit a known Common Poorwill spot. We found the Poorwill, and everyone got great looks at it.



July 17

We departed after an early breakfast at the Portal Peak Restaurant and headed toward

Rodeo in search of Sonoran/Chihuahuan species. Along State Line Road we lured in a Bendire's Thrasher. We then stopped at a private pond

and found several early migrants, including Yellow-headed Blackbirds and Violet Green Swallows. We returned to the Southwest Research Station's feeders where we found a colorful male Hooded Oriole; Blue-throated, Magnificent, Anna's & Black-chinned Hummingbirds. We drove up Herb Martyr Road to check a known Northern Goshawk nest. We found two fledglings sitting on a branch next to the nest. Heading up the mountain we stopped after hearing a Black-chinned Sparrow singing in the distance and also found a Rufous-Crowned Sparrow, and a migrating Rufous Hummingbird feeding on Agave. As we drove past the turnoff to Paradise Road we saw evidence of the 2011 fire that destroyed thousands of acres. We listened for high altitude residents and found a flock of Mexican Chickadees and Pygmy Nuthatches. We arrived at Rustler Park and walked to the ranger cabins where we found Olive & Red-faced Warblers, and House Wrens. We returned Cave Creek Ranch for a brief siesta, then headed back to Rustler after dinner at dusk and called in a very cooperative Northern Saw Whet Owl that stayed within 6 feet of us on a nearby branch. We returned to the inn for the night.

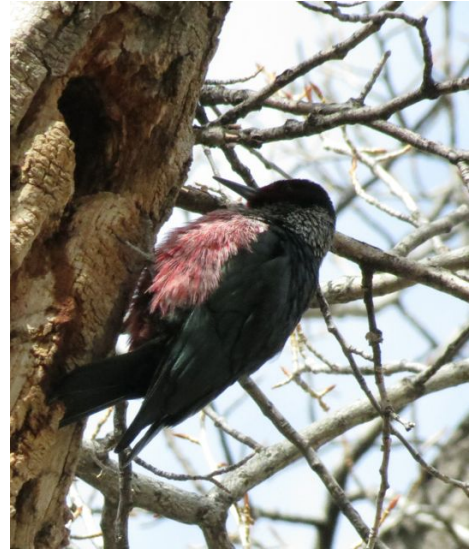


July 18



After breakfast we headed to South Fork, a well known haunt for Elegant Trogons and more. From the parking lot we had an Arizona Woodpecker calling from a nearby Sycamore. We heard a distant calling: a young Red tailed Hawk food-begging. We drove up to

Paradise to find Juniper Titmice. When we arrived at the George Walker House we were elated to find an early arriving Lewis's Woodpecker along with Black-Headed Grosbeaks and Scott's Oriole. After a short walk on the wilderness trail we returned to the ranch for lunch and to caught up on rest from long days and nights of birding. We stayed around the ranch for the afternoon, feeder birding. After dinner we drove into Portal and found numerous nest cavities for Elf Owls.. Flying overhead we had Lesser Nighthawks.



July 19

After an early breakfast at Cave Creek we drove westward on our last day of the trip to Amado, AZ south of Tucson.



After lunch along the way we arrived at Amado after noon and drove deep into California Gulch for the much sought after Five-striped Sparrow. We got the bird just in time for a monsoonal rainstorm. We were able to view three singing males with great scope views. We made a quick departure back to the car before the sky really opened up. The group chose to pass on

continuing to Madera Canyon due to heavy rains and exhaustion. We chose to go back to the Amado Territory Inn for wine and cheese before a special dinner of seafood at the next door restaurant

July 20

After breakfast, we returned to Tucson International Airport for flights home.

Photo Credits: **Yellow-breasted Chat** by Bill Fraser; **Anna's Hummingbird** by John Hoyt; **Varied Bunting** by Bill Fraser; **Whiskered**

Screech Owl by Carl Sheely; **Red-faced Warbler** by Carl Sheely;
Magnificent Hummingbird by Bill Fraser; **Elf Owl** by Carl Sheely;
Lewis's Woodpecker by Forrest Davis; **Five-striped Sparrow** by Carl
Sheely.

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