



Southeast Arizona Hummingbirds, Specialties and Monsoon Breeders

August 9-16, 2025

Guided by Phil Chaon and Kip Miller

Tour Summary & Sightings List

With the Ramsey Canyon Inn as our comfortable and bird-rich base, we enjoyed a successful week of late summer birding in Southeast Arizona together. As expected at this time of year, the hummingbirds were the main attractions – and we recorded a very impressive 13 species, including Berylline, Lucifer and White-eared, three species that are quite rare north of the Mexican border. We also did well with owls, enjoying views of Elf, Spotted and Great Horned, as well as Western and Whiskered Screech-Owls.



In addition to hummingbirds and owls, we successfully located a long list of other Southeast Arizona specialties, including Mexican Whip-poor-will, Gray and Zone-tailed Hawks, Arizona Woodpecker, Rose-throated Becard, Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, Greater Pewee, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Thick-billed Kingbird, Mexican Jay, Bridled Titmouse, Rufous-winged and Five-striped Sparrows, Abert's Towhee, Chihuahuan Meadowlark, Painted Redstart, Red-faced Warbler, Hepatic Tanager and Varied Bunting. A summary of our daily activities and a link to a listing of all species seen is included below. Thanks again to all for joining us and we hope to see you on a future High Lonesome tour!

Saturday, August 9 – After linking up together at the Tucson airport, we made the afternoon drive to Ramsey Canyon and the Huachuca Mountains near Sierra Vista. Here we checked in, dropped bags in the rooms and then gathered for late afternoon birding on the grounds before dinner. Hummingbirds were busy at the feeders, with Black-chinned and Rufous clearly the most abundant species. However, they were not the only species present and with patience we identified a total of nine species, including Rivoli's, Broad billed and Violet-crowned – an impressive start to the tour!



Sunday, August 10 – We started our first full day birding from the inn parking area, where Acorn Woodpecker, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Hepatic Tanager and Black-headed Grosbeak were among the highlights. Then it was off to the nearby Brown Canyon Ranch, where we successfully located a singing Botteri's Sparrow along the entrance road. We then spent time birding around the old ranch house and a small pond where we found Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, Vermilion



and Brown-crested Flycatchers, Bewick's Wren, Black-throated Sparrow, Lucy's Warbler and Blue Grosbeak, along with a medium-sized Western Diamondback warming in the morning sun.

From here we continued on to two of the Huachuca Mountain's best known hummingbird feeding areas – Beatty's Guest Ranch in Miller Canyon and the Ash Canyon Bird Sanctuary. At Beatty's we enjoyed the "bleacher-style" seating at the feeders, where the repeat views of male Rufous, Broad-tailed and Anna's were quite crowd-pleasing.



A variety of “non-hummingbird” species were also seen here and highlights included Zone-tailed Hawk, Painted Redstart and Western Tanager. Moving on to the nearby Ash Canyon, we continued our Southeast Arizona hummingbird “workshop” and added Costa’s and Lucifer to our growing list. The preserve’s many feeders and water features attracted other species as well, including Gila and Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, Mexican Jay, Bridled Titmouse, Curve-billed Thrasher and Hooded Oriole.

After a return to the Ramsey Canyon Inn for lunch and a short break, we walked up the canyon into the adjacent Ramsey Canyon Preserve. The obvious highlights of our time here included a female Berylline Hummingbird on a nest (Hummingbird species #12 for the tour and day!) and a sleepy immature Elf Owl roosting in one of the oaks adjacent to the parking area. Later, a stop on the way back from dinner provided nice views of a pair of Western Screech-Owls and we then concluded the day with views of a second immature Elf Owl and by watching nectar-feeding bats make feeding visits to the hummingbird feeders – a most amazing experience!

Monday, August 11 – We hit the road this morning for the Patagonia area, where we spent the early morning birding riparian areas in Harshaw Canyon. Here we located a nice variety of Southeast Arizona “specialties”, including Gray Hawk, Rose-throated Becard, Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Thick-billed Kingbird, Bridled Titmouse and Varied

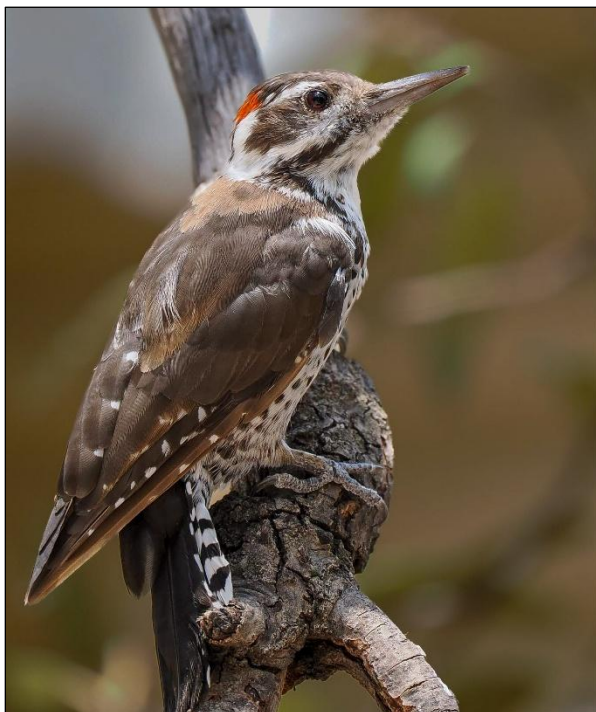


Bunting. Back in Patagonia, Phil led us to a side road where Mississippi Kites were nesting in a tall tree and we enjoyed views of both an adult and an immature. While here we noted a couple of Black Vultures soaring overhead with the more abundant Turkey Vultures and some in the group were able to see a Yellow-billed Cuckoo. We then continued on to the nearby Paton Center for



Hummingbirds, where we spent the remainder of the morning watching the feeders and walking the trails. There are always many birds here and a partial list of our sightings includes Broad-billed and Violet-crowned Hummingbirds, Phainopepla, Abert's Towhee, Summer Tanager and Lazuli Bunting.

Following a pleasant picnic lunch in the town park, we started back towards Sierra Vista with a birding detour through the Las Cienegas grasslands. It was the heat of the day, but we still found birds, including Cassin's and Western Kingbirds, Chihuahuan Raven, Botteri's and Lark Sparrows and Chihuahuan Meadowlark.



Tuesday, August 12 – This morning we made the short drive to Fort Huachuca, the large US Army base on the edge of Sierra Vista. After checking in at the gate, we proceeded to Huachuca Canyon, where we spent several hours birding the pine-oak woodlands. Elegant Trogon was one of our primary targets here, but they can be challenging to locate at this season and our efforts to find one were unsuccessful. However, it was still a productive walk with many birds including Arizona Woodpecker, Western Wood-Pewee, Hutton's and Plumbeous Vireos, Brown Creeper and Black-throated Gray, Wilson's and Red-

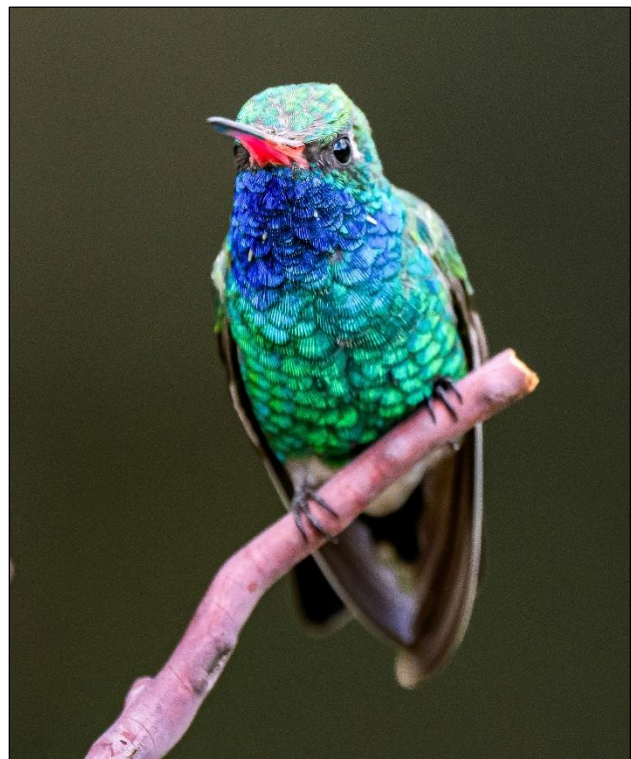


faced Warblers. Before leaving the base, we made a quick stop by a small pond where we found a Great Blue Heron, several swallow species and multiple Lazuli Buntings.

After lunch back at the Ramsey Canyon Inn, we set out for Carr Canyon, another popular birding location in the Huachuca Mountains. On the way we stopped along the lower part of Ramsey Canyon Road, where we found a nice mix of desert grassland species including Gambell's Quail, Greater Roadrunner, Swainson's Hawk, Cactus Wren, Rufous-winged Sparrow, Hooded Oriole and Pyrrhuloxia.

Continuing on to Carr Canyon, we followed the twisting road from desert grasslands up to pine forests, where the temperatures were noticeably cooler and we found birds such as Yellow-eyed Junco, Spotted Towhee and Grace's Warbler. Later, we backtracked to the inn for a short break and then made a return visit to the lower portions of Carr Canyon after dinner, where we enjoyed views of both Common Poorwill and Whiskered Screech-Owl.

Wednesday, August 13 – Today we traveled west again; this time to Madera Canyon in the Santa Rita Mountains. Our route took us through Box Canyon, a narrow and scenic canyon with interesting birds, so of course we made several stops along the way. Some of highlights here included Thick-billed Kingbird, Bell's Vireo, Five-striped Sparrow, Hooded and Scott's Orioles, Summer Tanager and Varied Bunting. Arriving later in Madera Canyon, our first stop was at a well-known feeder location, where we enjoyed close views of several oak canyon species including Arizona Woodpecker, Mexican Jay, Bridled



Titmouse, Lesser Goldfinch and Black-headed Grosbeak. After a picnic lunch, we spent time watching the feeders at the Santa Rita Lodge (and some hit the gift shop for souvenirs and/or ice cream!). Here we found many now familiar species such as Wild Turkey, White-winged Dove and Acorn Woodpecker. The hummingbird feeders were busy as well, and in addition to the regular species, several in the group enjoyed bonus views of another Berylline Hummingbird.



For the trip back, we opted for a route that permitted a stop at the Benson water treatment ponds. (Because no birding tour is complete without at least one visit to a water treatment location!) As hoped, we found a variety of water and shorebirds here, including Wood, Mexican and Ruddy Ducks, Wilson's Phalarope, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and Great Egret. We then continued on back to Sierra Vista for the night to rest up for our scheduled road trip to the Chiricahuas the next day.



Thursday, August 14 – We hit road early today for our much-anticipated road trip to the Chiricahua Mountains. This year we opted to visit the west side of the mountains first, which allowed us to make a stop at Lake Cochise (another water treatment facility) in Willcox during the cooler morning hours. Black-necked Stilts, American Avocets and Wilson's Phalaropes were the most abundant species, with good numbers of Baird's and Western Sandpipers also present. We also



added a few new landbird species to our list here, including Loggerhead Shrike and Yellow-headed Blackbird.

While difficult to leave such a bird-rich location, we managed to tear ourselves away and push on to the mountains, where we explored Pinery Canyon and Rustler Park in the Chiricahua's higher elevations. Here we enjoyed good success, locating the range-restricted Mexican Chickadee, an *extremely* crowd-pleasing juvenile Spotted Owl, Band-tailed Pigeon, Greater Pewee,

Steller's Jay, Cassin's Vireo, Pygmy Nuthatch and Hermit and Red-faced Warblers. We then descended the east side of the mountains and made stops at a couple of popular feeding locations, where new species for the tour included White-eared Hummingbird (our 13th hummingbird species of the tour!), Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay and Crissal Thrasher. To conclude the birding on this busy day, we walked a side-road along the Arizona-New Mexico border, where memorable sightings included a couple of Coyotes and 80 or more migrant Lazuli Buntings.

Friday, August 15 – After our long road trip yesterday, we opted to stay “close to home” today and returned to the nearby Fort Huachuca for a walk up Garden Canyon. Temperatures were pleasant and we found a nice mix of birds including Gray Hawk, Great Horned Owl, Western Flycatcher, Bushtit and Black-throated Gray Warbler – and some were even fortunate to get eyes on a fly-by Elegant Trogon!



After lunch back at the inn, we took another walk in the Ramsey Canyon and then returned to the Ash Canyon Preserve for a final bit of hummingbird watching. Here we again enjoyed numerous individuals of eight species (including our first adult male Lucifer), along with a bird determined to be a Lucifer x Costa's hybrid.

Later, to conclude our final full day of the tour, Art graciously hosted an Arizona wine tasting at the inn, followed by take-out pizzas and then a successful Mexican Whip-poor-will outing – right in the inn parking lot, no less!

Saturday, August 16 – This morning we sadly packed up and departed the Ramsey Canyon Inn for flights home. Fortunately, we still had a few hours to spare and we made a couple of targeted stops in desert scrub habitat along the way. In these locations we found species typical of this habitat such as Greater Roadrunner, Cactus Wren, Gila and Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, Verdin and Curve-billed Thrasher – along with Gilded Flicker, Purple Martin and Black-tailed Gnatcatcher – all species new for the trip. It was a fun conclusion to the tour and we then returned to the Tucson airport and said our good byes, with fond memories of a great Arizona birding adventure together!

An eBird Trip Report with a composite list of our bird sightings and additional photos by participants is available at the link below:

[Arizona Hummingbirds Tour | August 9-16, 2025 | Bird Sightings List](#)

Tour Summary Photos

Page 1 – Violet-crowned Hummingbird **Page 2** – Nectar-feeding bat feeding on one of the Ramsey Canyon Inn's hummingbird feeders (*Larry Chapin*), Rufous Hummingbird **Page 3** – Whiskered Screech-Owl, sleepy juvenile Elf Owl **Page 4** – Lucifer x Costa's Hummingbird (hybrid) at the Ash Canyon Preserve, Arizona Woodpecker **Page 5** – Fishhook Barrel Cactus in bloom (*Geri Dillon*), Broad-billed Hummingbird **Page 6** – a very fluffy juvenile Spotted Owl, White-eared Hummingbird **Page 7** – preening Rose-throated Becard, Bridled Titmouse

Phil Chaon photos unless otherwise noted.

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