

CAMP CHIRICAHUA

JULY 13-24, 2010

LEADERS:

ROB DAY AND DAVE JASPER

COUNSELOR: REBEKAH RYLANDER

COMPILED BY: ROB DAY

**VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS, INC.
2525 WALLINGWOOD DRIVE, SUITE 1003
AUSTIN, TX 78746
WWW.VENTBIRD.COM**

VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS, INC.

CAMP CHIRICAHUA
July 13-24, 2010

Tour Leaders: Rob Day and Dave Jasper
Counselor: Rebekah Rylander

Secrets lurk on all sides [and] there is news in every bush.

JOHN BURROUGHS

One way to open your eyes is to ask yourself, "What if I had never seen this before? What if I knew I would never see it again?"

RACHEL CARSON

It is the 12th of July, 2010: Tucson once again. Seen on the inbound flight it has become as hazy as any city in Southern California; the faded landscape of bleached-out colors, blurred mountains, and dun-colored sky increasingly characteristic of the southwest in the new regime of drought and urbanization. But then I remember...

A hike I took with my boys (now 15 and 17) years ago in sage scrub-covered hillsides near our home in Southern California. It was mid-May. Winter rains that year had been stingy, and spring migration poor up to that point; the characteristic flush of spring-time green that blankets the hills absent that year. I honestly expected little in the way of birding, just some fun with my boys.

The prospect of brown hillsides that greeted us at the start of the hike reinforced my diminished expectations, though the air was bright with a perfect blue sky and nimble post-rain clouds. A robust weather system had just passed through providing our only measurable rain for the season. As we entered the hills, unexpected detail began to reveal itself, hidden away in each arroyo we traversed. Here was a male tarantula searching for a mate. There a handsome Lazuli Bunting in vigorous song while a crisply plumaged Townsend's Warbler probed tangles at the base of the same chaparral bush. Most startling was a botanical display in a gully that had recently burned: an elfin forest of larkspur (*Delphinium* sp.) in stunning indigo and an extraordinary wild onion (*Allium* sp.) in fetching pink (the *Allium* has not reappeared in the ten years since). I was mistaken in my apprehensions.

It is the 19th of July, 2010. The meadow at Rustler Park and our camp lie hidden by the wall of conifers beneath us; a lichen-stained outcrop of volcanic rock soars behind, and the vastness of the yellow desert plain beyond. In the sumptuous light of late afternoon, thunderheads potent with malevolence are building to the south. There are purple curtains of rain and a growl of thunder. From our lofty prospect, we study birds at eye level: a jaunty pair of Northern Flickers, a fine Steller's Jay with an improbable crest that bobs wildly, and a domestic dispute between Cordilleran Flycatchers. A stunning male Western Tanager alights on the lichen-bearded crown of a snag immediately in front of us, and then inexplicably disappears into a crevice in the rock wall. Earlier, a mixed-species flock of Mexican Chickadees and Yellow-eyed Juncos, Brown Creeper and Pygmy Nuthatch, and family

groups of Olive Warblers filled the canopy to our left. The fluting of a Hermit Thrush drifts up to us as we sort through the diversity of pyrophytes (plants that follow fire) around us, and admire improbable hanging gardens (yellow Rocky Mountain columbines juxtaposed with mats of hedgehog cactus) tucked into irregularities in the rock wall above. A twin-spotted rattlesnake is discovered at the base of a fire-gutted pine.

Nearly lost in the expanse of desert sea far beyond is the limestone ridge we toiled up in the heat days earlier for Black-chinned Sparrow, Scott's Oriole, and Rock Wren. Here an unexpected Indigo Bunting sang with an urgency punctuated by a backdrop of desert scrub in the scope. We marveled at the extraordinary coloration of a rainbow grasshopper in the tussock grass, and the mighty effort of a female *Pepsis* wasp dragging a paralyzed tarantula across the dirt road for oviposition in a hidden burrow. In the middle distance and off to the right are the spires above Cave Creek, sublime in the waning light. In the canyon shadows below a male Elegant Trogon barks before retiring, and a Painted Redstart flits and tumbles headfirst down the trunk of an Arizona madrone, gleaning one last morsel before the light is gone and the stirring of Whip-poor-wills begins.

But then I remember: this is southeast Arizona. Here there are still hidden things and nothing is as it appears...

ITINERARY

July 13 – Our group assembles in Tucson. Once settled in to our hotel we boarded the vans for Sweetwater wetlands and an introduction to the birds and plants of the Sonoran Desert. A high cloud cover keeps things relatively cool (for Tucson), though with no rain bird activity is reduced this afternoon. We see our first Tropical Kingbirds; one deftly snatches a large hawk moth out of the air and softens it by beating against its sallying perch. There are Bell's Vireo and Verdin in the salt scrub, and *Saltonis* Song Sparrows and Common Yellowthroat in the reeds and willows. A shy male Wood Duck glides out of view.

July 14 – After an early breakfast we visit the Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum. Here we are treated to extraordinary looks at a singing Rufous-winged Sparrow atop a saguaro; a bird once more restricted in range and often presenting us a challenge on the final day of the tour. Not to be outdone, a splendid male Varied Bunting sings energetically from desert shrub-top nearby. Next there is a fine male Pyrrhuloxia, a crisply plumaged adult Verdin attending young, a smart Black-throated Sparrow, and a flight of Purple Martins – and we haven't left the parking lot yet. After a group introduction to hummingbirds in their aviary, and independent explorations of the museum grounds, we return to the hotel to load the vans for the road.

Today is a travel day. We stop for lunch and expedition shopping in Wilcox, followed by a quick circuit of the perimeter of the Wilcox water treatment ponds for waders. Shifts in the wind remind us that this is an active sewage pond. Adorable though they may be, lingering studies of the precocious chicks of Black-necked Stilts and American Avocets are quickly vetoed by our noses. Back on the road as we veer southeast from Bowie, monsoon clouds build and there are columns of rain, lighting flickers, and there is the play of shadow and light across arid basin and the naked geology of desert range. Soon we clatter down San Simon Road and into Portal.

July 15 – Our morning is devoted to exploring the San Simon valley along the Arizona-New Mexico border. There are Swainson's Hawks, Ash-throated Flycatchers and Western Kingbirds, Cassin's Sparrows, and eventually Bendire's Thrasher. We are treated to our first species of horned lizard (we

will see a total of three species); a Texas Horned Lizard in Rodeo New Mexico. At Willow Tank there is a lone and forlorn-looking Lesser Scaup, a Spotted Sandpiper, and an epic battle between rival Scaled Quail. One cotton-topped gladiator proclaims victory atop a fencepost, his combat-fueled defiance a boon to detailed study of feather geography and the subtleties of coloration in the scope.

After a stop at Dave Jasper's feeders, where a Lucifer's Hummingbird is briefly seen, we return to Mullen's cabin for a hearty lunch. We bird Portal in the afternoon.

July 16 – We begin today with our anticipated hike up South-fork trail. There are Yarrow's Spiny Lizards, Cordilleran Flycatchers and Blue-throated Hummingbirds in the understory, and mixed-species flocks allowing our first studies of Painted Redstart, Plumbeous and Hutton's Vireos, a pair of Hepatic Tanagers, and Black-throated Gray Warbler. Elegant Trogons vocalize throughout the hike, though sightings are mere glimpses, short and fleeting. In the upper-canyon, we have a fine study of Sulfur-bellied Flycatcher as opposing pairs dispute territory in the raucous manner of their species. Leaving the canyon we encounter a Black-tailed Rattlesnake, and just shy of the trail head (with just a bit of pushing and shoving) our only long look, and our last, of a splendid male Elegant Trogon.

After lunch we visit the road just past the Southwest Research Station, where Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Black-throated Gray Warbler, and Buff-bellied Flycatcher are examined. Night birding produces Western and Whiskered Screech Owl.

July 17 – Paradise Road sees our group early this morning as we hope to sample the avian diversity possible here; an ecotone where sycamore riparian, desert scrub, and pinyon-juniper woodland meet. We are surprised by an Indigo Bunting proclaiming territory. He is studied well in the scope, joined eventually by a fine Scott's Oriole, and an all too brief look at Black-chinned Sparrow. Paradise Road is the frontier: Cactus, Rock, and Canyon Wrens share the desert scrub covered limestone slope while Western Scrub Jay, Bridled Titmouse, and Black-headed Grosbeak work the junipers on the opposite side of the road.

In the afternoon we bird the intimate little canyon above John Hands Dam on Herb Martyr Road. The birds are still this afternoon, so the hidden world of insect life beacons. A myriad of gossamer damselflies opens a door to their diversity; easily overlooked and underappreciated as their form, pattern, and color reveal themselves only under the closest scrutiny. Tiger beetles hunt the damp sand; agile and adept both on the ground and in flight. Above the stream a Greater Short-horned Lizard is captured. Its camouflage is perfection against the leaf litter of Madrean oaks. Surprisingly docile, it allows us to marvel at the genius of its mauve, tan, and pink markings, and how cunningly they compliment the texture of horns and scales as it is passed from one pair of eager hands to another. It rains down-canyon. A rainbow arches over the lichen-painted spires of volcanic rock and the tunnel of oaks and Arizona Madrones above the road as we return to camp. Just ahead, like a vision, a perfect male Montezuma Quail and his shy mate materialize on the roadside.

July 18 – Today we load the vans and depart for Rustler Park and the upland realm of the Chiricahuas. Tents are pitched and our campsite organized against the threat of rain. We lunch and then load the vans for a short hike to the overlook above Bar Foot Junction. Topping-out at the overlook borders on the theatrical as we are swept-up by the grandeur of the Chiricahuas. The scale is immense; ridges pile-up against one another, becoming rollers in a frozen mountain sea. Who knows what lies hidden in the maze of canyons tucked in between. Far beyond, the mountains subside in the sweep of desert that vanishes into the curve of the horizon. On our promontory adrift above the expanse of stone and light, tiny blues and skippers flit about in a rock garden of western cordilleran wildflowers, we capture a

splendidly marked Striped Plateau Lizard (a Madrean specialty essentially restricted to the Chiricahuas in the U.S.), and muse over the identities of a tiny gale of insect pollinators working a stunning Parry's Agave in full bloom.

July 19 – Pile jackets and flannel shirts are shed after we sip hot coffee and cocoa to prepare for a day of hiking. The day starts with a hike to the fire look-out on the summit of Bar Foot Peak. We sort out mixed-species flocks: Pygmy and Red-breasted Nuthatches, Mexican Chickadees, a stunning male Olive Warbler, and a Red-faced Warbler pair attending demanding young. The identity of the delicacies the adults procure for them; energetically hover-gleaning clusters of new spruce cones, will remain a mystery. Incongruous amid the conifers, Apache Snaketails; a dragonfly boldly marked in yellow and black, prowl the open canopy of spruces and pines. This air space is shared by thousands of individuals of a species of beetle in family *Meloidae*. These swarm over patches of lupine on the forest floor like a plague. At the summit are elfin groves of an *Eriogonum* (the buckwheats; a genus well-represented in sage scrub plant communities back home in California) pruned hard by light and wind and night-time cold. An adult Short-tailed Hawk hunts the canopy along the crest of a distant ridge (successfully!). As a sobering reminder of change, bark beetle damage is now becoming apparent even here, where conifers are well-adapted to the climate rigors of the American Southwest.

After lunch there are card games and insect field guides, perhaps a nap, and construction of a mini Portal Arizona using locally-sourced building material. We hike the rim of the basin in which Rustler Park sits. There are more mixed-species flocks, and still more wildflowers, and our last prospect of mountains adrift above desert seas. Thunderheads assemble as the heat of the surrounding desert rises at dusk. The sky to the south darkens as we finish dinner. There is thunder and an unsettled wind. The temperature drops. What appears to be a mist in the trees behind camp is a wall of rain. In gathering darkness the storm arrives; a staccato of hard rain and the roar of wind. The lightning is strange – it is actually pink as it flares with unexpected frequency and intensity; the snap of thunder that follows is equally disconcerting in its fury. We burrow into sleeping bags (for some the vans are a refuge) to wait it out.

July 20 – Sunlight illuminates tent walls. Our gear dries during breakfast and the vans are soon packed. We leave Rustler Park, stopping at Whitewater Draw for swallows and shorebirds. Male Lazuli Bunting and Blue Grosbeak share the same field of view in the scope. The diversity of dragonflies here overwhelms: Flame and Roseate Skimmers, Common Whitetail, Red Saddlebags, Blue-eyed and Common Green Darners, and Blue Dasher are recognizable to even recent converts to dragonfly watching. A dozen species or more are tallied by our experts during our short stay. After lunch in Sierra Vista, we settle in at the San Pedro River Inn.

July 21 – Our first outing today finds us at the San Pedro River. On the hard-baked clay soil of the mesquite scrub, a rock morphs into yet another species of horned lizard. This time it is a Regal Horned Lizard. He holds his ground though circled by a ring of giants. His diminutive though splendid horn-arrayed head swivels to accommodate the spectacle of human admirers. As we approach the ribbon of riparian lushness, in the scope there are stunning Blue Grosbeaks, male Vermillion Flycatchers that are truly electric in the morning light, and a brief though exceptional Yellow-breasted Chat. We have our first good looks at Common Ground Dove, a fine pair of Summer Tanagers in the scope, flashy male Yellow Warblers, and briefly an elusive Yellow-billed Cuckoo in the green wall of cottonwoods. There is a Common Egret, all three kingbirds, a close and confiding Common Yellowthroat, but no Green Kingfisher at Kingfisher Pond. Under the canopy perches our only Grey Hawk of the camp, permitting excellent and prolonged studies in the scope. On our way back to the vans a monsoon giant looms

above the floodplain, its leaden top expands and blots out the sun. We drive back to the San Pedro River Inn in a hard rain.

After lunch, the rain has brought out the hummingbirds at the Ash Canyon Bed and Breakfast. There are six species: feisty male Anna's and Broad-billed in large numbers, even more Black-chinned, a lone Rufous Hummingbird slips in not to be seen again, a stunning male Magnificent flashes violet and emerald green, and a cosmic male Lucifer's Hummingbird that poses radiant in perfect post-monsoon afternoon light. It is the finest display of hummingbirds I have seen here.

July 22 – This morning we hike up Miller Canyon. It is overcast as we begin the hike, so bird activity is low at first. Past the first stream crossing we encounter the real gems of Miller Canyon (just where they are supposed to be, in the vicinity of a trail landmark known as Split Rock): the astonishingly serene and approachable roosting pair of Spotted Owls. The nuances of their warm crypsis, the predatory potential of their feathered talons, and the occasional stare of their vastly deep and dark eyes (should some violation of appropriate etiquette offend their calm) are savored by the group. Further up-canyon there are mixed-species flocks to sort through for better studies of Red-faced Warbler, a reexamination of the foraging antics of Painted Redstart (still a joy to observe), and Grace's Warblers which have proved elusive up to now.

Our hike done, we enjoy excellent studies of hummingbirds at Beatty's feeders. The sun is now out, and the lighting spectacular as the birds become more active at the feeders. To yesterday's list at Ash Canyon, we add Blue-throated Hummingbird, dazzling male White-eared, and (with patience) a resplendent Beryline Hummingbird that perches for an exceptional close examination. By the time we pull ourselves away from the spectacle, it is 1:30 in the afternoon.

Following lunch, we visit Ramsey Canyon. It is quiet here now. Only a female Violet-crowned Hummingbird on the nest draws the campers away from the selection of field guides and snappy t-shirts in the gift store.

July 23 – Today is a travel day as we return to Tucson. There are stops at the Patagonia Road-side Rest for Black Vulture and Thick-billed Kingbird. At our second stop at Patagonia Lake, a pair of Black-bellied Whistling Ducks and a lone Brown Pelican are sorted-out from among other more familiar waterbirds seen in the scope. A hike through the mesquite scrub to the lake shore yields an old-school tape-responsive Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, and a splendid Elegant Earless Lizard. Our final stop is Proctor Road at Miller Canyon, where we are granted a final look at Varied Bunting, a perched Cooper's Hawk, and a fine study of Rufous-crowned Sparrow in the extraordinary patch of thorn scrub where there is granite bedrock exposed on the mountainside. An alarmingly violent monsoon cloudburst just shy of Tucson demands we pull-over due to zero visibility on the interstate.

July 24 – The participants of Camp Chiricahua 2010 return home.

BIRDLIST

Ducks (*Anatidae*)

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*)

(A handsome, distant pair seen well in the scope at Patagonia Lake)

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)

(A shy male allowing brief views at Sweetwater Wetlands)

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)
Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*)
Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)

Pheasants and allies (*Phasianidae*)

Wild Turkey (*Meleagris galopavo*)
(Seen at Rustler Park and Madera Canyon)

New World Quails (*Odontophoridae*)

Scaled Quail (*Callipepla squamata*)
(Seen frequently, including the gladiators at Willow Tank in San Simon Valley)
Gambel's Quail (*Callipepla gambelii*)
Montezuma Quail (*Cyrtonyx montezumae*)
(WOW! A nice look at a pair alongside the road in Cave Creek)

Gebes (*Podipicedidae*)

Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*)
Eared Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*)

Pelicans (*Pelecanidae*)

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*)
(A lone bird at Patagonia Lake)

Cormorants (*Phalacrocoracidae*)

Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*)
Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)

Hérons and Egrets (*Ardeidae*)

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)
Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*)
Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

New World Vultures (*Cathartidae*)

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*)
Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)

Hawks and Eagles (*Accipitidae*)

Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)
Grey Hawk (*Asturina nitidia*)
(Wow! An excellent scope study of a cooperative bird at the San Pedro River.)
Short-tailed Hawk (*Buteo brachyurus*)
(Wow! Studies of a distant yet successful hunt by an adult bird from Barfoot Peak.)
Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)
Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*)
Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)
Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)

Falcons (*Falconidae*)

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)

Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)

Rails, Coots, and Gallinules (*Rallidae*)

Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)

American Coot (*Fulica americana*)

Plovers (*Charadriidae*)

Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferous*)

Avocets and Stilts (*Recurvirostridea*)

Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)

American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*)

Sandpipers and allies (*Scolopacidae*)

Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*)

Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*)

Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*)

Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*)

Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*)

Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*)

Baird's Sandpiper (*Calidris bairdii*)

Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*)

Wilson's Phalarope (*Phalaropus tricolor*)

Doves and Pigeons (*Columbidae*)

Rock Pigeon (I) (*Columba livia*)

Band-tailed Pigeon (*Patagioenas fasciata*)

Eurasian Collared-Dove (I) (*Streptopelia decaocto*)

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*)

Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)

Inca Dove (*Columbina inca*)

Common Ground-Dove (*Columbina passerina*)

Cuckoos (*Cuculidae*)

Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*)

Greater Roadrunner (*Geococcyx californicus*)

Barn Owls (*Tytonidae*)

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

Typical Owls (*Strigidae*)

Flammulated Owl (*Otus flammeolus*)

(Heard by all/seen by some of the group at Rustler Park.)

Western Screech-Owl (*Megascops kennicottii*)

Whiskered Screech-Owl (*Megascops trichopsis*)

Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*)

Elf Owl (*Micrathene whitneyi*)

Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis*)

(Wow! Stunning close views of a serene pair roosting trail-side in Miller Canyon.)

Nightjars and allies (*Caprimulgidae*)

Lesser Nighthawk (*Chordeiles acutipennis*)

Common Poorwill (*Phalaenoptilus nuttalli*)

(Briefly seen at the San Pedro River Inn)

Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferous*)

(A brief look at Rustler Park)

Swifts (*Apodidae*)

White-throated Swift (*Aeronautes saxatalis*)

Hummingbirds (*Trochillidae*)

Broad-billed Hummingbird (*Cyanthus latirostris*)

(This bird has expanded its range considerably since I began birding in SE Arizona over 25 years ago. Once restricted as a common specialty hummingbird only in the Santa Rita Mountains in Madera Canyon, it is now regularly seen in virtually all of the SE Arizona “sky islands”.)

White-eared Hummingbird (*Hylocharis leucotis*)

(Wow! A splendid and very cooperative duo of adult males, allowing long studies both feeding and perched at the upper feeders at Beatty’s in Miller canyon. This species has become regular at this location.)

Violet-crowned Hummingbird (*Amazilia violiceps*)

(A well-seen male in the Chiricahuas at Portal on territory, and a nesting female at Ramsey Canyon in the Huachucas. This species was once principally restricted to the Sonoita Creek drainage.)

Blue-throated Hummingbird (*Lampornis clemenciae*)

Beryline Hummingbird (*Amazilia beryline*)

(Wow! Our patience was rewarded with an excellent study of the nuances of this bird’s plumage at Beatty’s feeders in Miller Canyon.)

Magnificent Hummingbird (*Eugenes fulgens*)

(Truly magnificent in good light. It was a pleasure to see several “wild” individuals in habitat on our hikes in the Chiricahuas and Huachucas.)

Lucifer Hummingbird (*Calothorax lucifer*)

(A splendidly illuminated male and what appears to be an Anna’s/Lucifer male hybrid at the feeders in Ash Canyon)

Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*)

Anna’s Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)

Calliope Hummingbird (*Stellula calliope*)

(All too briefly at the Portal Store Feeders)

Broad-tailed Hummingbird (*Selasphorus platycercus*)

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*)

Trogon (*Trogonidae*)

Elegant Trogon (*Trogon elegans*)

(We had to work hard for the bird again this year; though at least four individual males were conspicuously vocal during our South Fork Cave Creek hike. With effort the group was eventually allowed a study of an elusive male.)

Woodpeckers (*Picidae*)

Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*)

Gila Woodpecker (*Melanerpes uropygialis*)

Ladder-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides scalaris*)

Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides vilosis*)

Arizona Woodpecker (*Picoides arizonae*)

(Tough again this year, but eventually seen by all.)

Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*)

Guilded Flicker (*Colaptes chrysoides*)

(At the last minute at the San Pedro River Inn.)

Tyrant Flycatchers (*Tyrannidae*)

Northern Beardless-tyrannulet (*Camplostoma imberbe*)

(Seen well in the mesquite-scrub at Patagonia Lake.)

Western Wood-Pewee (*Contopus sordidulus*)

Cordilleran Flycatcher (*Empidonax occidentalis*)

Buff-breasted Flycatcher (*Empidonax fulvifrons*)

(Nice studies of a responsive bird above the SW Research Station.)

Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)

Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*)

Vermillion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*)

(Wow! Many splendid views in the scope along the San Pedro and at Patagonia Lake.)

Dusky-capped Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*)

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*)

Brown-crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*)

Sulfur-bellied Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*)

(We enjoyed exceptional studies of this splendid species.)

Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*)

(First at Sweetwater Wetlands, and once again a regular on the grounds of the San Pedro River Inn.)

Cassin's Kingbird (*Tyrannus vociferans*)

Thick-billed Kingbird (*Tyrannus crassirostris*)

(Scope studies of a single bird at Patagonia Roadside Rest. Once again, scarce and inconspicuous compared to past years.)

Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*)

Shrikes (*Laniidae*)

Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)

Vireos and allies (*Vireonidae*)

Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*)

Plumbeous Vireo (*Vireo plumbeus*)

Hutton's Vireo (*Vireo huttoni*)

Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*)

Crows and Jays (*Corvidae*)

Steller's Jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*)

Western Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma californica*)

Mexican Jay (*Aphelocoma ultramarina*)

(We enjoyed a fascinating study of this species social behavior as birds cooperated to mob an impressively large specimen of Western Diamond-backed Rattlesnake in Ash Canyon.)

Chihuahuan Raven (*Corvus cryptoleucus*)

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*)

Swallows (*Hirundinidae*)

Purple Martin (*Progne subis*)

(In the saguaros at ASDM.)

Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*)

Violet-green Swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina*)

Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)

Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*)

Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrronota*)

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

Chickadees and Titmice (*Paridae*)

Mexican Chickadee (*Poecile sclateri*)

Bridled Titmouse (*Baeolophus wollweberi*)

(Everyone's favorite: at once perky, cheeky, and adorable as busy flocks tumbled through the oaks in the Chiricahuas and Huachucas)

Juniper Titmouse (*Baeolophus ridgwayi*)

(Responsive at the Paradise cemetery)

Verdin (*Remizidae*)

Verdin (*Auriparus flaviceps*)

Bushtit (*Aegithalidae*)

Bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*)

Nuthatches (*Sittidae*)

Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta Canadensis*)

White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*)

Pygmy Nuthatch (*Sitta pygmaea*)

Creepers (*Certhiidae*)

Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana*)

Wrens (*Troglodytidae*)

Cactus Wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*)

Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*)

Canyon Wren (*Caterpes mexicanus*)

Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*)

House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*)

Kinglets (*Regulidae*)

Golden-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa*)

(In a mixed-species flock by some of the group our first afternoon at Rustler Park.)

Gnatcatchers (*Sylviidae*)

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*)

Black-tailed Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila melanura*)

Thrushes and allies (*Turdidae*)

Western Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*)

Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*)

American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*)

Mockingbirds and Thrashers (*Mimidae*)

Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*)

Bendire's Thrasher (*Toxostoma bendirei*)

Curve-billed Thrasher (*Toxostoma curvirostre*)

Crissal Thrasher (*Toxostoma crissale*)

Starlings (*Sturnidae*)

European Starling (I) (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

Silky-Flycatchers (*Ptilonotidae*)

Phainopepla (*Phainopepla nitens*)

Olive Warbler (*Peucedramiidae*)

Olive Warbler (*Peucedramus taeniatus*)

(Immature-plumaged birds were well-represented in mixed-species flocks at Rustler Park. We were treated to a splendid male on our descent from Barfoot Peak.)

New World warblers (*Parulidae*)

Lucy's warbler (*Vermivora luciae*)

Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*)

Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*)

Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigriscens*)

Grace's Warbler (*Dendroica graciae*)

(Tough this year; eventually seen well in mixed-flocks in Miller Canyon.)

Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)

Red-faced Warbler (*Cardellina rubrifrons*)

(Wow! Exceptional studies above Rustler Park and on our Miller Canyon hike.)

Painted Redstart (*Myioborus pictus*)

(Everyone's favorite: a pleasure to observe as it showcased its animated foraging antics in the Chiricahuas and Huachuacas.)

Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*)

Tanagers (*Thraupidae*)

Hepatic Tanager (*Piranga flava*)

Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*)

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*)

(Repeated studies of dapper males at Rustler Park.)

Buntings, Sparrows, and allies (*Emberizidae*)

Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*)

Canyon Towhee (*Pipilo fuscus*)

Abert's Towhee (*Pipilo aberti*)

Rufous-winged Sparrow (*Aimophila carpalis*)

(Wow! Seen exceptionally well again in the Arizona upland desert scrub in the parking area at the Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum.)

Cassin's Sparrow (*Aimophila cassini*)

Botteri's Sparrow (*Aimophila botteri*)

Rufous-crowned Sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps*)

(An exceptional last-minute study in the thorn scrub along Proctor Road)

Black-chinned Sparrow (*Spizella atrogularis*)

(We had brief but good looks at this often challenging species along Paradise Road.)

Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*)

Black-throated Sparrow (*Amphispiza bilineata*)

Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)

Yellow-eyed Junco (*Junco phaeonatus*)

Saltators, Cardinals, and Buntings (*Cardinalidae*)

Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*)

Pyrrhuloxia (*Cardinalis sinuatus*)

Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*)

Blue Grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*)

Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*)

Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*)

(Wow! Studied in the scope along Paradise Road in the Chiricahuas at along the San Pedro River.)

Varied Bunting (*Passerina versicolor*)

(Wow! Seen stunningly well and on multiple occasions.)

Blackbirds and allies (*Icteridae*)

Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)

Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*)

Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)

Great-tailed Grackle (*Quisicalus mexicanus*)

Bronzed Cowbird (*Molothrus aeneus*)

Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*)

Hooded Oriole (*Icterus cucullatus*)

Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*)

Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*)

Finches (*Fringillidae*)

House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*)

Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*)

Lesser Goldfinch (*Carduelis psaltria*)

OldWorld Sparrows (*Passeridae*)

House Sparrow (I) (*Passer domesticus*)

AMPHIBIANS, REPTILES, AND MAMMALS

Red-spotted Toad (*Bufo punctatus*)
Woodhouse's Toad (*Bufo woodhousii*)
American Bullfrog (I) (*Rana catesbeiana*)
Zebra-tailed Lizard (*Callisaurus draconoides*)
Elegant Earless Lizard (*Holbrookia elegans*)
Ornate Tree Lizard (*Urosaurus ornatus*)
Side-blotched Lizard (*Uta stansburiana*)
Striped Plateau Lizard (*Sceloporus virgatus*)
Southwestern Fence Lizard (*Sceloporus cowlesi*)
Desert Spiny Lizard (*Sceloporus magister*)
Clark's spiny Lizard (*Sceloporus clarkii*)
Yarrow's Spiny Lizard (*Sceloporus yarrovii*)
Texas Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma cornutum*)
Regal Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma solarae*)
Greater Short-horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma hernandesi*)
Chihuahuan Spotted Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis exsanguis*)
Sonoran Spotted Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis sonorae*)
Desert Grassland Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis uniparens*)
Tiger Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris*)
Madrean Alligator Lizard (*Elgaria kingii*)
Gophersnake (*Pituophis catenifer*)
Green Ratsnake (*Senticolis triaspis*)
Coachwhip (*Masticophis flagellum*)
Sonoran Mountain Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis pyromelana*)
Black-necked Gartersnake (*Thamnophis cyrtopsis*)
Checkered Gartersnake (*Thamnophis marcianus*)
Western Diamond-backed Rattlesnake (*Crotalus atrox*)
Black-tailed Rattlesnake (*Crotalus molossus*)
Twin-spotted Rattlesnake (*Crotalus pricei*)
Desert Cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*)
Black-tailed Jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*)
Mexican (Apache) Fox Squirrel (*Sciurus nayaitensis*)
Arizona Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus arizonensis*)
Rock Squirrel (*Spermophilus variegatus*)
Round-tailed Ground Squirrel (*Spermophilus tereticaudus*)
Cliff Chipmunk (*Tamias dorsalis*)
Bat sp. (There are up to 24 species of bats possible in the variety of SE Arizona habitats we visited. An evening or two of mist-netting would be illuminating in this regard.)
Coyote (*Canis latrans*)
Hooded Skunk (*Mephitis macroura*)
Collared Peccary (*Peccari tajacau*)
White-tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*)

(The taxonomy followed in the trip list is derived from Dunn and Alderfer *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of Western North America* (2008) and Howell and Webb *A Guide to the Birds of Mexico and Northern Central America* (1995) for birds. The taxonomy of reptiles and amphibians is derived from the classic *Western Reptiles and Amphibians* by Stebbins (2003) and the excellent *Amphibians and Reptiles in Arizona* by Brennan and Holycross (2006). The mammal list is from *Mammals of North America* by Kays and Wilson (2002).)