

VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS

ARIZONA HUMMINGBIRDS TOUR

JULY 24 - 31, 2005

LEADERS: Bob Sundstrom & Brennan Mulrooney

(Itinerary sketch and bird list compiled by Bob Sundstrom)

ITINERARY SKETCH

Day 1, July 24: Arrival in Tucson. Mid-afternoon visit to Sonoran Desert Museum outside Tucson. Birded on the museum grounds and briefly in nearby Tucson Mountain Park. Night in Tucson.

Day 2, July 25: Early morning departure to reach California Gulch, with a series of stops enroute after leaving the highway and passing through Arivaca, with picnic breakfast and lunch. Returned to Green Valley mid-afternoon and checked in at motel; afternoon break at motel. Late afternoon drive up toward Madera Canyon which had been closed until now because of forest fire control efforts. Birded at Santa Rita Lodge and at upper end of Madera Canyon road. Night in Green Valley.

Day 3, July 26: Heading south from Green Valley, first morning birding stop was Montosa Canyon. Then south again to Rio Rico pond, then east along South River Rd. to Kino Springs first pond and Patagonia Roadside Rest. After lunch in Patagonia watched hummingbirds and other birds at Paton's, before driving on to Sierra Vista and checking in at Windemere. After a break, visited to hummingbird feeders at Ash Canyon B&B. First of two nights in Sierra Vista.

Day 4, July 27: Morning birding in Garden Canyon and Sawmill Canyon on Fort Huachuca. Late afternoon visit to Miller Canyon and Beatty's Guest Ranch hummingbird feeders, followed by dinner at Mesquite Grill at the foot of Carr Canyon, then owling after dark in lower Carr Canyon. Second of two nights in Sierra Vista.

Day 5, July 28: Morning birding in upper Carr Canyon, and lunch in Sierra Vista. Drove east via Bisbee and Douglas to Portal. After checking in and mid-afternoon break, made a late afternoon visit to Cave Creek Ranch feeders. First of two nights in Portal.

Day 6, July 29: Pre-breakfast morning birding along Paradise Rd. After breakfast drove up to bird in the higher elevations of the Chiricahua Mts., from Onion Saddle to Rustler Park to Barfoot Park. Returned to Portal for lunch. Afternoon birding along Stateline Rd. and around the town of Rodeo. Night drive for Poorwills along Paradise Rd. Second night in Portal.

Day 7, July 30: Pre-breakfast morning birding along Stateline Rd. and around the town of Rodeo. After breakfast departed out Paradise Rd., birding along road near settlement of Paradise and at lower elevation of Douglas-firs where Paradise Rd. joins to road up to Onion Saddle. Birded around Barfoot Park, where we also had a sack lunch, before birding west out of the Chiricahuas along Pinery Canyon Rd. Drove on to bird ponds at Willcox, then drove on to Tucson. Farewell dinner in Green Valley and final night in Tucson.

Day 8, July 31: Departures from Tucson.

BIRD LIST

[*bold italicized* species are very rare or extremely local sightings]
[*italicized* species very local specialties, unexpected, or very scarce]

BITTERN & HERONS:

Great Blue Heron – one at Rio Rico pond and half a dozen at Willcox

Great Egret – one at Willcox

Green Heron – working the muddy edge at the far end of Rio Rico pond

AMERICAN VULTURES

Black Vulture – locally distributed, mostly in the south edge of the tour route

Turkey Vulture - widespread

SWANS, GEESE & DUCKS:

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck – Rio Rico and Kino Springs ponds

Mallard – “Mexican” Mallards, a regional form, at the Rio Rico and Kino Springs ponds

Ruddy Duck - scores at Willcox, males still with robin's egg blue bills

EAGLES, HAWKS, FALCONS & ALLIES:

Cooper's Hawk – seen several places, with two groups of immatures near Paradise and below
Onion Saddle

Gray Hawk – seen enroute to California Gulch and along South River Rd.

Swainson's Hawk – over most grassy and desert areas

Zone-tailed Hawk – seen well on the California Gulch route; scope views of a nest with
fledglings in Sawmill Canyon

Red-tailed Hawk - widespread

Golden Eagle – one soaring on our way out of California Gulch

American Kestrel

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS:

Scaled Quail – several groups seen between Portal and Rodeo

Gambel's Quail – widespread on the desert floor

RAILS & COOTS:

Sora – an immature was scoped at Kino Springs pond

American Coot – at Willcox pond

PLOVERS, SANDPIPERS & ALLIES:

Killdeer - Willcox

Black-necked Stilt - Willcox

American Avocet – quite a few at Willcox, nice comparisons of male and female bill shapes

Greater Yellowlegs – one at Willcox

Spotted Sandpiper - Willcox

Semipalmated Sandpiper – one fresh juvenile at Willcox

Western Sandpiper – Willcox

Least Sandpiper - Willcox

Baird's Sandpiper – great views of scaly looking juveniles at Willcox

Pectoral Sandpiper – a surprise, on at Willcox

Stilt Sandpiper – at Willcox, one breeding plumage bird

Long-billed Dowitcher – one at Willcox

Wilson's Phalarope - W; hundreds at Willcox - spinning, flying, swimming, roosting

PIGEONS & DOVES:

Rock Dove

Band-tailed Pigeon – flying birds at several places in the mountains

Eurasian Collared-Dove – becoming well established in the area, we saw them at Arivaca,
Rodeo, and Willcox at least

White-winged Dove – ubiquitous in the valley floors

Mourning Dove - ditto

Inca Dove

Common Ground-Dove – seen well enroute to California Gulch and near Kino Springs

CUCKOOS AND ROADRUNNERS:

Yellow-billed Cuckoo – heard; seen by a few at the Patagonia Roadside Rest

Greater Roadrunner – this wonderful ground-cuckoo was seen every day of the tour

BARN OWLS AND TYPICAL OWLS:

Barn Owl – one emerged from the old cotton gin near Rodeo

Western Screech-Owl - Carr Canyon; wonderful nighttime study of an owl perched in an oak

Whiskered Screech-Owl - Carr Canyon; great view of the second screech-owl species too

NIGHTHAWKS AND NIGHTJARS:

Lesser Nighthawk

Common Poorwill – seen and heard nicely at night outside Portal

SWIFTS:

White-throated Swift

HUMMINGBIRDS:

Broad-billed Hummingbird - brilliant blue-gorgeted, red-mandibled males

White-eared Hummingbird – seen well at the lower and upper feeders during the hummingbird vigil at Beatty's in Miller Canyon

Violet-crowned Hummingbird - a stunning, clean cut looking big hummer, seen at Patagonia, Miller Cyn., and Portal

Blue-throated Hummingbird - whopper hummers, flashing big white tail corners, seen at Beatty's and along the road in the Chiricahua mountains

Magnificent Hummingbird - truly magnificent, when the emerald gorget and purple crown hit the light just right

Lucifer Hummingbird - male and female birds at Ash Canyon

Black-chinned Hummingbird - plenty of these little gems

Anna's Hummingbird - widespread

Costa's Hummingbird - we were very fortunate to see several immatures/females at the Desert Museum and Beatty's

Calliope Hummingbird - lucky to see, there was a female at Beatty's and a male at Portal

Broad-tailed Hummingbird - w; loud wing-whistling males

Rufous Hummingbird - w; feisty all orange males and assorted females and immatures

[*"Beatty's Hummingbird" aka Magdylline Hummingbird* - a hybrid hummingbird seen at Beatty's feeders in Miller Cyn. has been tentatively identified as a Magnificent X Berylline hybrid]

TROGONS:

Elegant Trogon - After first hearing one calling atop the Madera Canyon Rd., we got great views of two in Garden Canyon. Some people glimpsed a trogon again near Cave Cr.

WOODPECKERS & ALLIES:

Acorn Woodpecker – ubiquitous in the oaks

Gila Woodpecker

Ladder-backed Woodpecker

Arizona Woodpecker (formerly part of the Strickland's Woodpecker species) – we had unheeded of luck with this shy woodpecker, seeing them at three different spots the same morning in Garden and Sawmill Canyons; at least two sightings were family groups

Northern Flicker - the "Red-shafted" form in the Huachucas and Chiricahuas

Gilded Flicker – a pair flitting around Tucson Mt. Park, flashing golden underwings

FLYCATCHERS & ALLIES:

Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet - great looks at this dinky flycatcher at our picnic breakfast spot enroute to California Gulch

Greater Pewee – in the higher mountains

Western Wood-Pewee
Cordilleran Flycatcher – seen in the Chiricahuas
Buff-breasted Flycatcher - seen both at the mouth of Sawmill Canyon and in upper Carr Cyn.
Black Phoebe
Say's Phoebe – along Stateline Rd.
Vermilion Flycatcher – a few females and molting males
Dusky-capped Flycatcher – widespread in the mountains
Ash-throated Flycatcher
Brown-crested Flycatcher
Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher – great scope views in Garden Cyn.
Tropical Kingbird – seen near Arivaca and Rio Rico, a very local nester in North America
Cassin's Kingbird - widespread
Thick-billed Kingbird – nice views of this loud calling flycatcher at the Patagonia Roadside Rest
Western Kingbird – widespread
Rose-throated Becard – we were lucky that a pair began nest-building near the Patagonia Roadside Rest not long before the tour started; good views of the male

SHRIKES:

Loggerhead Shrike

VIREOS:

Bell's Vireo – a tiny, skulking vireo with a rapid banjo song
Plumbeous Vireo - in all the wooded canyons
Hutton's Vireo - ditto
Warbling Vireo - heard

JAYS, MAGPIES & CROWS:

Steller's Jay – especially prevalent around the Barfoot picnic area
Western Scrub-Jay – Paradise Rd. and middle Carr Cyn.
Mexican Jay – flocks of these raucous jays in all the wooded canyons and mountains
Chihuahuan Raven - the typical smaller raven of the hot desert floor
Common Raven

SWALLOWS & MARTINS:

Purple Martin – good views at the Sonoran Desert Museum and nearby Tucson Mt. Park, the saguaro nesting form of Purple Martin may some day be named a distinct species
Violet-green Swallow
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Cliff Swallow
Barn Swallow

CHICKADEES & TITMICE :

Mexican Chickadee – in the Chiricahuas, lots of great looks at this sometimes hard to find extreme Southeastern Arizona specialty
Bridled Titmouse
Juniper Titmouse – several along Paradise Rd. in the junipers

VERDIN:

Verdin – widespread in the desert floor brush

BUSHTIT:

Bushtit – seen widely

NUTHATCHES:

Red-breasted Nuthatch – great views in the Chiricahuas of nuthatches coming to owl tooting
White-breasted Nuthatch – seen most days of the tour
Pygmy Nuthatch – flocks in the upper levels of the Chiricahuas

CREEPERS:

Brown Creeper – of the dark, short-billed Mexican form

WRENS:

Cactus Wren - widespread, garrulous denizen of the drier habitats

Rock Wren - fine views at the Patagonia Roadside Rest

Canyon Wren - heard many places, seen along Paradise Rd.

Bewick's Wren – seen or heard most days of the tour

"Brown-throated" House Wren – common at the upper levels of the Chiricahuas

GNATCATCHERS:

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – seen along the road in mid-elevations of Carr Canyon

Black-tailed Gnatcatcher - another regional specialty, good views in Tucson Mt. Park

Black-capped Gnatcatcher – a very rare bird in North America and certainly not annual even in SE Arizona, we were very fortunate to get great views of a pair in Montosa Canyon

THRUSHES & ALLIES:

Hermit Thrush – calling in the mountains

American Robin – seen only at the upper elevations in the mountains

MOCKINGBIRDS & THRASHERS:

Northern Mockingbird

Bendire's Thrasher – several views along Stateline Rd. and in Rodeo, New Mexico

Curve-billed Thrasher – the common large thrasher of the region

Crissal Thrasher – scoped at some distance but quite clear views along Stateline Rd.

STARLINGS & ALLIES:

European Starling - w

SILKY-FLYCATCHERS

Phainopepla - w; lots of these fancy, crested aerial foragers in the riparian zones

WOOD WARBLERS

Lucy's Warbler - SRR,PH; the best view was of one coming through the Paton's bushes during our hummingbird watch in their back yard

Yellow Warbler -

Yellow-rumped Warbler - CH

Black-throated Gray Warbler - MI,RC

Hermit Warbler – CH

Grace's Warbler – Carr Cyn., CH

Common Yellowthroat - K (heard)

Red-faced Warbler - MA,CH; some very nice views near Pinery Canyon

Painted Redstart - w; lots of these flashy warblers

Yellow-breasted Chat - SRR,PH; perched in the open, singing

TANAGERS:

Hepatic Tanager - RC,HC,CH; seen very well near Summers and Westerns

Summer Tanager - w

Western Tanager - w

SPARROWS & ALLIES:

Spotted Towhee

Canyon Towhee

Abert's Towhee – in the Paton's back yard in Patagonia

Botteri's Sparrow - singing and perching for very nice views - a monsoon season nester

Cassin's Sparrow - another monsoon nester, seen well near Arivaca

Rufous-winged Sparrow – excellent and very close views of a singing bird the first afternoon of the tour, in Tucson Mt. Park; one of the most local of the regions specialty sparrows

Rufous-crowned Sparrow

Five-striped Sparrow – An extremely localized bird in North American, we tracked it to its haunts in remote California Gulch because Madera Canyon (or normal destination) was closed due to forest fires. Not a bird we normally have time to reach on this tour.

Chipping Sparrow – Barfoot Park
Black-chinned Sparrow – scoped in the junipers out Paradise Rd. a few miles
Lark Sparrow - good numbers of these very handsome sparrows
Black-throated Sparrow – widespread on the valley floors
Lark Bunting – a small flock along Stateline Rd.
Savannah Sparrow - Willcox
Song Sparrow – a few near the ponds we visited on the tour
Yellow-eyed Junco – ubiquitous in the upper elevation forest

CARDINALS, GROSBEAKS & BUNTINGS:

Northern Cardinal
Pyrrhuloxia – a spectacular view the first afternoon in Tucson Mt. Park
Black-headed Grosbeak - widespread
Blue Grosbeak - ditto
Varied Bunting – several nice views of this splendid red and purple bunting

BLACKBIRDS & ALLIES:

Red-winged Blackbird
Eastern Meadowlark - the *liliana* form which might be split as a separate species
Great-tailed Grackle
Bronzed Cowbird
Brown-headed Cowbird
Hooded Oriole – wonderful views of this orange-yellow oriole at several locations
Bullock's Oriole – right in Portal

FINCHES:

House Finch – common denizen of the region
Red Crossbill – seen by part of the group in Portal
Lesser Goldfinch - widespread

OLD WORLD SPARROWS:

House Sparrow

MAMMALS

Black Bear
Hooded Skunk
Coyote
Javelina
Pronghorn
"Coues" White-tailed Deer
Black-tailed Jackrabbit
Desert Cottontail
Rock Squirrel
Arizona Gray Squirrel
Mexican Fox Squirrel
Harris's Antelope Squirrel
Cliff Chipmunk
White-throated Woodrat

HERPS:

Sonoran Mud Turtle
Desert Iguana
Desert Grassland Whiptail
Desert Spiny Lizard
Clark's Spiny Lizard

Yarrow's/Mountain Spiny Lizard
Lesser Greater Earless Lizard
Bunchgrass Lizard
Texas Horned Lizard
Sonoran Whipsnake
Common Kingsnake
Black-tailed Rattlesnake
Twin-spotted Rattlesnake
Bullfrog

SELECT INVERTEBRATES

Tarantula

BUTTERFLIES

(list compiled by Brennan Mulrooney)

Pipevine Swallowtail
Two-tailed Swallowtail
Checkered White
Southern Dogface
Mexican Yellow
Sleepy Orange
Marine Blue
Ceraunus Blue
Reakirt's Blue
"Spring" Azure
Variegated Fritillary
Sagebrush Checkerspot
Mourning Cloak
Painted Lady
Red Admiral
Tropical Buckeye
Red-spotted Purple
California Sister
Empress Leilia
Red Satyr
Monarch
Queen
Dull Firetip
Short-tailed Skipper
Northern Cloudywing
Golden-headed Scalopwing
Checkered-Skipper sp.
Clouded Skipper
Orange Skipperling
Hesperia sp.
Taxiles Skipper