

*New Mexico
Ornithological Society
Field Notes*



Volume 54, Number 3, Summer 2015

NEW MEXICO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY FIELD NOTES

Volume 54, Number 3, Summer 2015

1 June – 31 July 2015

A quarterly publication of the New Mexico Ornithological Society

ISSN 0898-9443

EDITORIAL STAFF

Sartor O. Williams III, *Editor*

William H. Howe, *Assistant Editor*

EDITORIAL OFFICE

Southwest Natural History Institute

1819 Meadowview Drive NW

Albuquerque, New Mexico 87104-2511

(sunbittern@earthlink.net)

Reporting Observations: All individuals interested in birds in New Mexico are encouraged to submit their observations to *NMOS Field Notes*. Especially solicited are records of uncommon species, nesting birds, and early, late, or out-of-season/range birds. Records should be submitted in taxonomic order and should include species name, date, exact location, numbers of birds, age, sex, and color morph (if applicable), and name and contact information of observer. Details are necessary for unusual records; these may be submitted on a report form (available from the address above), but any written format is acceptable. Photographic documentation is strongly encouraged.

NEW MEXICO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

(*Founded 1962*)

The New Mexico Ornithological Society was organized to gather and disseminate accurate information concerning the bird life of New Mexico; to promote interest in and appreciation of the value of birds, both aesthetic and economic, to further effective conservation of the state's avifauna; to facilitate opportunity for acquaintance and fellowship among those interested in birds and nature; and to issue publications as a means of furthering these ends.

Membership and Subscriptions: Membership in the New Mexico Ornithological Society is open to anyone with an interest in birds. Memberships are for a calendar year and annual dues are payable 1 January. Dues are: Regular Membership \$20; Family \$30; Student \$10; Supporting \$50; Life \$500. Address for the New Mexico Ornithological Society: P. O. Box 3068, Albuquerque, NM 87190-3068.

Front cover: Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus aurantiirostris*), Nutria Canyon, Zuni Mountains, McKinley County, New Mexico, 18 July 2015 (see page 43). Photograph by Nicholas D. Pederson.

Back cover: Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*), Bitter Lake NWR, Chaves County, New Mexico, 31 July 2015 (see page 37). Photograph by Mouser Williams.

SUMMER SEASON 2015

Summer 2015 proved to be among the wettest on record for New Mexico; notable for July was a steady plume of moisture from Mexico north into the state, resulting in large areas of New Mexico receiving 150-300 % of normal precipitation. Highlights of the birding season were thriving populations of grassland species in the east and south, and a number of southwestern or Mexican species wandering north of usual, including a Thick-billed Kingbird to the Black Range, an Olive Warbler to the Manzano Mountains, and, most spectacularly, an Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush to the Zuni Mountains. Meanwhile, another sterling effort by North American Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) volunteers in New Mexico, with 100 % of the state's 62 BBS routes conducted this season.

Localities and Counties

Alameda, *Bernalillo*
Albuquerque, *Bernalillo*
Algodones, *Sandoval*
Angel Fire, *Colfax*
Animas, Valley, *Hidalgo*
Bitter Lake NWR, *Chaves*
Black Range, *Grant/Sierra*
Bloomfield, *San Juan*
Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*
Bosque Redondo Lake, *De Baca*
Burnt Cabin Flats, *Sierra*
Burro Mts., *Grant*
Caballo Lake, *Sierra*
Caprock, *Lea*
Carlsbad, Lake, *Eddy*
Cedar Crest, *Bernalillo*
Chama, *Rio Arriba*
Cherry Creek CG, *Grant*
Chloride, Canyon, *Sierra*
Clayton, Lake, *Union*
Cliff, *Grant*
Cliff-Gila Valley, *Grant*
Cloudcroft, *Otero*
Clovis, *Curry*
Conchas Lake, Dam, *San Miguel*
Corrales, *Sandoval*
Deming, *Luna*
Elephant Butte, Lake, Dam, *Sierra*
Encino, *Torrance*
Española, *Rio Arriba*
Farmington, *San Juan*
Fort Sumner, *De Baca*
Gila, *Grant*
Gila Bird Area, *Grant*
Golondrinas, *Mora*
Grenville, *Union*
Guadalupe Canyon, *Hidalgo*
Guadalupe Mts., *Eddy*
Hillsboro, *Sierra*
Jacks Creek CG, *San Miguel*
Jemez Falls, Springs, *Sandoval*
Kingston, *Sierra*
Lake Avalon, *Eddy*
Las Cruces, *Doña Ana*
Las Vegas, NWR, *San Miguel*
Lordsburg, *Hidalgo*
Los Alamos, Canyon, *Los Alamos*
Loving, *Eddy*
Maxwell NWR, *Colfax*
McAlister, *Quay*
Mesilla Bosque SP, *Doña Ana*
Miami, *Colfax*
Morgan Lake, *San Juan*
Oasis SP, *Roosevelt*
Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo, *Rio Arriba*
Organ Mts., *Doña Ana*
Pecos, NM, *San Miguel*
Peloncillo Mts., *Hidalgo*
Placitas, *Sandoval*
Post Office (P.O.) Canyon, *Hidalgo*
Poverty Creek, *Sierra*
Queen, *Eddy*
Radium Springs, *Doña Ana*
Ramah Lake, *McKinley*
Raton, *Colfax*
Rattlesnake Springs, *Eddy*
Rio Grande Nature Center, *Bernalillo*
Rodeo, *Hidalgo*
Rosebud, *Harding*
Sabinoso, *San Miguel*
Sandia Mts., *Sandoval/Bernalillo*
Santa Fe, Canyon, *Santa Fe*

Santa Rosa, *Guadalupe*
 Silver City, *Grant*
 Six Mile Dam, *Eddy*
 Stone Lake, *Rio Arriba*
 Sumner Lake, Dam, *De Baca*
 Taos, Plateau, *Taos*
 Taos Ski Area, *Taos*
 Terrero, *San Miguel*

Tucumcari, *Quay*
 Ute Lake, *Quay*
 Valle de Oro NWR, *Bernalillo*
 Variadero, *San Miguel*
 Virden, *Hidalgo*
 Zuni, *McKinley*
 Zuni Mts., *McKinley/Cibola*

Standard Abbreviations

AFB	Air Force Base	SP	State Park
Bosque NWR	Bosque del Apache NWR	UNM	Univ. of New Mexico
BLNWR	Bitter Lake NWR	USFWS	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
BBS	Breeding Bird Survey	WMA	Wildlife Management Area
CBC	Christmas Bird Count	WSMR	White Sands Missile Range
CCNP	Carlsbad Caverns NP	♂	male (represents sword & shield of Mars)
CG	Camp Ground	♀	female (represents mirror of Venus)
Cr.	Creek	ad(s).	adult(s)
EBL	Elephant Butte Lake	subad(s).	subadult(s)
GBA	Gila Bird Area	imm(s).	immature(s)
L.	Lake, Laguna	juv(s).	juvenile(s)
LVNWR	Las Vegas NWR	sp.	species
MSB	Museum of Southwestern Biology	m.ob	many observers
Mt(s).	Mountain(s)	v.o.	various observers
NM	National Monument	+	others; et al.
NMSU	New Mexico State Univ.	*	written details provided
NP	National Park	**	photo or audio provided
NRT	north <i>Roosevelt</i> trap	***	specimen obtained
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge		
R.	River		
RGNC	Rio Grande Nature Center		
RGV	Rio Grande Valley		

Initialed Observers

JPB	Jonathan P. Batkin	MDM	Martin D. MacRoberts
MJB	Matthew J. Baumann	WEM	William E. Maley
CRB	Charles R. Britt	LKM	Larry K. Malone
CBC	Chris B. Chappell	RN	Robert Nieman
RC	Roger Clark	JRO	Jerry R. Oldenettel
DJC	David J. Cleary	JEP	John E. Parmeter
DC	Dylan Cuellar	NDP	Nicholas D. Pederson
WTE	Wyatt T. Egelhoff	MBR	Megan B. Ruehmann
BRF	Bernard R. Foy	CMR	Christopher M. Rustay
CJG	Coleman J. Goin	JMR	Janet M. Ruth
DJG	David J. Griffin	JIS	Jeffrey I. Sanchez
CG	Cheryl Grindle	MTS	Marcy T. Scott
DLH	David L. Hawksworth	RSS	Roland S. Shook
CLH	Charles L. Hayes	JBS	Jarrod B. Swackhamer
NEH	Nancy E. Hetrick	REW	Richard E. Webster
MOH	Michael O. Hilchey	SW	Steve West
WJ-W	Will Jaremko-Wright	DW	Debra Whitecotton
JPJ	James P. Joseph	MW	Mouser Williams
ABJ	Andrew B. Johnson	SOW	Sartor O. Williams III
DJK	David J. Krueper	JEZ	James E. Zabriskie
CDL	Carroll D. Littlefield		

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

[Mute Swan]—At least one continued at RGNC 11-26 Jul (m.ob., K. Madden**)

Mexican Duck—Broods of 4, 6, and 11 young were at the Deming treatment ponds 9 Jul (LKM).

Redhead—Apparently summering at BLNWR were up to 2 there 17 Jun & 1 Jul (JIS), the 5th consecutive summer for the species there.

Ring-necked Duck—An ad. ♂ lingered in the Chama area 8-28 Jun (WTE**).

Long-tailed Duck—The one with an injured foot at L. Carlsbad since 14 Feb was last reported 14 Jun (RN, m.ob.).

Common Merganser—A ♀ was tending 19 young at GBA 22 Jun (RSS).

Scaled Quail—Vastly improved numbers were reported in the east and south, with numbers in *Eddy* reported as the “highest ever” (SW).

Scaled Quail x Gambel’s Quail—One of these hybrids was near Amistad, *Union* 5 Jun (CLH*).

Eared Grebe—Some 58 were at Stone L. 24-25 Jun (CLH), where the species has nested in past years. A pair was mating and nest-building at LVNWR’s Crane L. 4 Jul (WJ-W). Some 48 birds plus nests with eggs were at the Clovis treatment ponds 31 Jul (WTE), another site where the species has previously nested.

Aechmophorus grebes—At EBL, up to 38 chicks were with ad. **Westerns** on 9 Jun (DJC), while up to 387 chicks were with ad. **Clark’s** there the same day. At least three pairs of **Clark’s** were tending chicks at Caballo L. 12 Jun (DJC).

Neotropic Cormorant—Present at Albuquerque Jun-Jul, including 18 at the Tingley ponds 16 Jun (DLH). An ad. was north to the Ohkay Owingeh lakes 15 Jul (WTE*). One was rescued from the brine pits east of Loving (no date given) and released at L. Avalon 6 Jul (SW).

American White Pelican—Noteworthy for *Grant* was one near Cliff 10 Jun (*fide* RSS).

American Bittern—One at Bosque NWR 26 Jul (A. J. Muller*, M. Linz) provided the only report; the species formerly summered in at least 12 counties statewide.

Least Bittern—Summering birds included 2 at Bosque Redondo L. 2 Jun (MJB) and up to 3 at Bosque NWR’s boardwalk area 12-26 Jul (WTE, J. W. Shipman**).

Cattle Egret—Nested at Las Cruces, with up to 40 ads. in two colonies 23 Jun (DJG).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron—Two were reported, single subads. at Valle de Oro NWR 1 Jun (MOH) and Bosque NWR 2 Jun (S. E. Mendoza**).



Subadult Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Bosque del Apache NWR, 2 June 2015. Photograph by Sonja E. Mendoza.

Glossy Ibis—A late ad. was at RGNC 9 Jun (WEM**, DLH).

Roseate Spoonbill—An imm. first seen at BLNWR 8 Jul (J. Morling**) continued there to 31 Jul (Brandon Wadlington**, JIS, MW**, WTE*). This represents the 16th credible New Mexico record, and the 5th for BLNWR.

Mississippi Kite—Found at numerous locales from the RGV eastward, including dozens in both the Corrales-Albuquerque area (m.ob.) and the Carlsbad area (SW); providing somewhat of an “index” to numbers at Carlsbad, 15 fledglings were “rescued” and taken to rehab during the summer (SW). Noteworthy were one at Las Vegas 21 Jun (WJ-W*), 8 at Clayton 15 Jul (DLH), and 6 in a new area south of Ute L. 20 Jun (CMR).

Northern Harrier—A nest with two nestlings was at Anderson Tank, se. *Socorro* 22 Jun (CRB**). Present and probably nesting at BLNWR Jun-Jul, including 8 on 17 Jun and 5 on 1 Jul (JIS). Often overlooked by field guides and compendia, there is evidence for harriers breeding in at least 20 of New Mexico’s 33 counties.

Northern Goshawk—Active nests were in the Sandia Mts. 14-15 Jun (WEM**) and the Black Range 20-27 Jun (DJC**).

Common Black Hawk—One was in seldom-visited Black Canyon, Aldo Leopold Wilderness, ne. *Grant* 5 Jun (MBR).



Adult Glossy Ibis, Albuquerque, 9 June 2015.
Photograph by William E. Maley.

Gray Hawk—Again summered in the southwest in Guadalupe Canyon (JEP, JRO**, NEH**, CMR, WTE) and in the southeast in the vicinity of Rattlesnake Springs (SW, RN).

Zone-tailed Hawk—A pair was nesting in the Guadalupe Mts. on the Kenagy Ranch south of Queen 28 Jun (SW).

Common Gallinule—Scarce in the state in recent years, up to 2 at Bosque NWR 12-21 Jul (WTE**, M. Linz*) provided this season's only report.

Black-necked Stilt—Ten young were produced at the Deming treatment ponds this season (LKM). High post-breeding count at BLNWR was 280 individuals on 29 Jul (JIS).

American Avocet—Eleven ads. including one on a nest were at the Lordsburg treatment ponds 26 Jun (DJG). High post-breeding count at BLNWR was 291 individuals on 29 Jul (JIS).

Snowy Plover—Noteworthy were 6 on a salt pan on WSMR, e. *Sierra* 9 Jul (D. W. Burkett**). High post-breeding count at BLNWR was 210 individuals on 29 Jul (JIS).

Semipalmated Plover—Unseasonal was one at BLNWR 20 Jun (NDP).

Mountain Plover—Few reports in recent years. This season, small numbers were found on the Taos Plateau both east of US 285 12 Jun (JEP) and west of US 285 on 5 Jul (WTE). Four were on the Grenville BBS 14 Jun (CMR).

Spotted Sandpiper—South of historical breeding range, up to 3 summered at BLNWR 17 Jun-15 Jul (JIS).

Solitary Sandpiper—Unusual for the date was one at Alameda 26 Jun (DC*, B. Morris*). Unusual for the locale was one in Guadalupe Canyon 25 Jul (JEP, JRO).

Willet—Presumably early fall migrants were 3 at EBL 23 Jun and one there 1 Jul (DJC), and 2 at BLNWR 1 Jul (JIS).

Whimbrel—Decidedly unseasonal was one at Caballo L. 6 Jul (DJC**).

Marbled Godwit—Early returnees were one at EBL 23 Jun and 3 there 28 Jun (DJC**).

Sanderling—A late one was at EBL 2 Jun (DJC**); earliest in fall there was one on 28 Jul (DJC**).

White-rumped Sandpiper—Noteworthy were 7 on a wet playa near McAlister 6 Jun (CMR). Very late were 2—both thought to be possibly injured—at BLNWR 20 Jun (R. L. VanBuskirk*).

Wilson's Phalarope—Fall migrants at BLNWR peaked at 1070 on 15 Jul (JIS).

Long-tailed Jaeger—An ad. flying over Tucumcari 17 Jul (WTE*) was a surprise; no jaeger is expected in New Mexico in mid-Jul.

Franklin's Gull—Unusual for mid-Jun was one at Maxwell NWR 14 Jun (CMR).

California Gull—Up to 12 were at EBL 2 Jun-14 Jul (DJC**), including 2 ads. “tossing sticks” 9 Jun (DJC**).

Least Tern—Only small numbers at BLNWR, where no more than 7 were counted 3 Jun-15 Jul (JIS).

Caspian Tern—Up to 3 were late at Morgan L. 11-12 Jun (MJB**). Presumably early were 3 at EBL 14 Jul (DJC**), where one was noted 26 Jul (DJC**).

Black Tern—Some 42 were at EBL 9 Jun (DJC**), a high number as regards recent years, but far below historical numbers.

Forster's Tern—Among the few reports were one at Albuquerque 3 Jun (WEM**), 6 at Six Mile Dam 30 Jun (SW), and one at DiMaio Playa, *Curry* 9 Jul (CMR).

Inca Dove—Numbers reported as “slowly recovering” in the Carlsbad area (SW). Up to 5 were at Deming 26 Jun (DJG). Up to 5 were at Elephant Butte 1 Jun-28 Jul, including an ad. on a nest 18 Jul (DJC**).

Common Ground-Dove—Up to 4 were in Guadalupe Canyon 25 Jul (JEP, JRO). One was at Virden 5 Jul (DC). One was vocal near Radium Springs 26-28 Jul (MTS, JEZ). A ground-dove seen but not identified to species in *Harding* south of Gallegos 4 Jun (MJB*) was likely this species.

White-winged Dove—One singing on the Ojo Sarco BBS, *Taos* 6 Jun (JEP) was a first for that route.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo—Noteworthy in the east were 2 mating at Conchas Dam 17 Jul (WTE), one singing at Sumner L. 1-2 Jun (CBC), 2 seen and heard at Bosque Redondo L. 1 Jun (CBC), and 2 at Oasis SP 27 Jun (DW**) that had been present there for several

weeks. Encouraging were 10 in the Rattlesnake Springs-Black River area 25 Jun (SW). One was carrying food along Tierra Blanca Cr., w. *Sierra* 29 Jun (DJC**). In the Cliff-Gila Valley up to 39 detections were obtained on formal surveys from the “Iron Bridge” downstream to the GBA 7-19 Jul (JBS).

Barn Owl—A nest at Rattlesnake Springs had 6 large young 11 Jun (SW) and the same nest had an ad. on 6 eggs 30 Jul (SW). A second brood at Oasis SP had only one nestling 15 Jul (DW). A pair at BLNWR raised two broods during the season (JIS).

Elf Owl—Now well-established in the eastern foothills of the Black Range in *Sierra*, where surveys continuing from this spring again documented up to 15 occupied territories 10-20 Jun (DJC). One was reportedly killed by a dog in McKittrick Draw, sw. Carlsbad 24 Jun (SW).

Long-eared Owl—Noteworthy for *Harding*, a pair was suspected of nesting in an oak grove on Alamocitos Cr., DeHaven Ranch 30 Jun (M. L. Watson**).

Mexican Whip-poor-will—Reports from northern mountain ranges included vocal singles in the Zuni Mts. north of McGaffey L., *McKinley* 17 Jul (CMR, WTE), in Los Alamos Canyon, Jemez Mts. 5 Jun (WTE**), and in three Sandia Mts. canyons: Sulphur Canyon 4-8 Jun (CMR, m.ob.), Tree Spring trail head 8 Jun (S. Fitzgerald), and upper Bear Canyon 27 Jun (JPJ).

Black Swift—Up to 12 were in the Jemez Falls area 4-18 Jul (WTE, CMR, JEP), including an ad. on a nest 4 Jul (WTE**).

Chimney Swift—One was west to Las Vegas 7 Jun (CMR). Farther east, high counts were 6 at Clayton 15 Jul (DLH) and 11 at Tucumcari 17 Jul (WTE).

Lucifer Hummingbird—An ad. ♀ was in upper Cottonwood Canyon, Peloncillo Mts. 25 Jul (NEH**, WTE*). High count at P.O. Canyon was 17 ♂♂ and 7 ♀♀ on 6 Jun (CDL); the first hatch-year ♂ was there 7 Jul (CDL).



Female Lucifer Hummingbird, Cottonwood Canyon, Peloncillo Mountains, 25 July 2015. Photograph by Nancy E. Hetrick.

Rufous Hummingbird—Earliest fall migrants were single ♂♂ at Cedar Crest 26 Jun (J. D. Ligon) and Farmington 28 Jun (D. Allen).

Calliope Hummingbird—An ad. ♂ reached Silver City 7 Jul (E. R. Lewis), followed by one to 2 ♂♂ at Terrero (JEP), Elephant Butte (DJC**), and Deming (LKM) 9-10 Jul.

Broad-billed Hummingbird—Increasing numbers now summer north in the Peloncillo Mts. to P.O. Canyon, where 14 (mostly ♂♂) were present in Jun and a hatch-year bird was seen 31 Jul (CDL).

Violet-crowned Hummingbird—Three were in Guadalupe Canyon 25-26 Jul (JEP, NEH*, WTE).

Red-headed Woodpecker—Irregular west to the RGV, a pair nested successfully at Algodones (DLH*, m.ob., m.ph.), where the ads. were feeding fledglings 18 Jul (JPJ*).

Gila Woodpecker—Some 21 were detected in the Cliff-Gila Valley in Jun (*vide* RSS).

American Three-toed Woodpecker—Noteworthy for the Manzano Mts. was a family of 5 on a ridge above Red Canyon, *Torrance* 26 Jun (ABJ*). In the Sacramento Mts., one was 6.5 km southwest of Cloudcroft 12 Jul (CMR*).

Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet—At least 2 were in Guadalupe Canyon 25-26 Jul (JEP, JRO, WTE).

Gray Flycatcher—Now well-established south to the Black Range; this season found 3 near Poverty Creek 18 Jul (DJC), 2 southwest of Chloride 17 Jun (DJC), and 3 north of Kingston 20 Jun & 8 Jul (DJC**).

Dusky Flycatcher—One was described from Angel Fire 7 Jun (WTE*).

Black Phoebe—One was east to Pajarito Cr. near Tucumcari 20 Jun (CMR) and 17 Jul (WTE), the second consecutive year for the species there. This species continued to populate its northern New Mexico range, including 2 at Bloomfield 5 Jun (DLH), one singing near Las Trampas, *Taos* 6 Jun (JEP), one near Mineral Hill, *San Miguel* 7 Jun (CMR), and one in Mills Canyon, *Harding* 20 Jun (CMR).

Eastern Phoebe—A pair was nesting under a Mora R. bridge at Golondrinas 4 Jun-5 Jul (R. Plage).

Vermilion Flycatcher—Two were northeast to Trigg Road, e. *San Miguel* 2 Jul (MDM). A territorial pair was at Bosque Redondo L. near Fort Sumner 3 Jun (MJB).

Dusky-capped Flycatcher—Far east of expected range, a vocal one was at Rattlesnake Springs 7 Jun (RN**). In the southwest, the species continued to press northward, including a vocal 2 at Black Canyon CG, ne. *Grant* 6 Jun (MBR), a vocal one at Cherry Creek CG 2 Jun (M. Cooksey*), 2 in the Burro Mts. in Jun (JBS), and one along the Gila R. at Virden 5 Jul (DC).

Brown-crested Flycatcher—Further evidence of this species' invasion of the lower RGV was provided by one along Tierra Blanca Cr., w. *Sierra* 19 Jun (DJC), which furnished a new locale, and another near Radium Springs 2-3 Jul (MTS*, JEZ*).

Thick-billed Kingbird—Unexpected was a very vocal one along Tierra Blanca Cr., w. *Sierra* 13 Jun (DJC**), which provided a Black Range first. A single pair was in Guadalupe Canyon 25-26 Jul (JEP, JRO**, NEH**, WTE).



Thick-billed Kingbird, Tierra Blanca Creek, Black Range, Sierra County, 13 June 2015. Photograph by David J. Cleary.

Eastern Kingbird—Maintaining an upper RGV presence, a pair was at the Ohkay Owingeh lakes 12 Jun (JEP) and one was at Española 8 Jun (WTE). Noteworthy for the prairie was one near Rosebud 4 Jun (CLH).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher—Some high counts were 7 in *Harding* north of Ute L. 4 Jun (MJB) and 7 on the Variadero BBS, e. *San Miguel* 6 Jun (CMR). Numbers were reported as much improved in the Carlsbad area (SW). One was west to the vicinity of Santa Rosa 9 Jul (CMR).

White-eyed Vireo—Continuing from late May, one to 2 were present and singing at the Santa Fe Canyon Preserve 30 May-6 Jun (T. Taylor, JPB, BRF, CMR*, CG, D. Paez). One found singing at Rattlesnake Springs 12 Jul continued there into Aug (RN**, SW).

Gray Vireo—A pair in the seldom-visited Hardscrabble Mts., e. *Sierra* was carrying food 8 Jun (CJG**). One was reported singing in pinyon-juniper habitat just south of the Gallinas Mts., n. *Lincoln* 20 Jun (WTE). Two were singing from hillsides south of Jemez Springs 5 Jul (CMR). Widely reported elsewhere during the season, including in *San Juan*, *Rio Arriba*, *Santa Fe*, *Cibola*, *Sandoval*, *Bernalillo*, *Catron*, and *Eddy*, but little recent information on breeding success or population trends is available.

Cassin's Vireo—Unseasonal was one at the GBA 7 Jul (JBS).

Red-eyed Vireo—One was found along Trigg Road, e. *San Miguel* 2 Jul (MDM).

Horned Lark—A species that flies beneath the radar of most birders, BBS data show that the Horned Lark has suffered significant declines rangewide as well as in New Mexico. It continued rare in *Eddy* this season, where shrub encroachment into desert grasslands may be a problem (SW). Countering that trend, some 100 were detected on the Fence Lake BBS in *Cibola* 19 Jun (DJK).

Purple Martin—Found nesting at 3050 m in aspens north of Jacks Creek CG near the *Mora* line 8 Jul (ABJ*), and one was seen near Guadalupita, *Mora* 21 Jun (DLH); the species now breeds widely in the Sangre de Cristo Mts., from the vicinity of Raton southward.

Bank Swallow—A significant population was nesting in Montoyas Arroyo northwest of Corrales, where some 500 ads. were present 12-19 Jul (DJK**).

Cave Swallow—A culvert-nesting colony at Kenna, *Roosevelt* numbered some 34 birds 31 Jul (WTE, MW). In *Eddy*, nesting continued at several Pecos Valley locales (SW), and the species had a good year at Carlsbad Cavern [main cave], where some 200 hatch-year birds were banded (SW).

Carolina Wren—One or more were singing at Bosque NWR Jun-Jul (m.ob.), where resident since 2011.

Mountain Bluebird—Surprising for the eastern plains was a pair feeding recent fledglings near Rosebud 4 Jun (CLH*); the young were being fed on the axel of a long-abandoned semi-trailer.

Townsend's Solitaire—Two, including a stub-tailed, spotted fledgling, were near Cloudcroft 12 Jul (CMR).



Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush, Nutria Canyon, Zuni Mountains, McKinley County, 18 July 2015. Photograph by Roger Clark.

Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush—Certainly unexpected was a singing ♂ in Nutria Canyon, Zuni Mts., *McKinley* 18 Jul (audio CMR*, audio WTE*, audio NEH*, RC**, NDP**). Filling the densely-forested, well-watered canyon with song, especially in the morning and early evening hours, the nightingale-thrush was seen and heard multiple times between 0900 and 1830, but some 50 man-hours of searching the following day failed to re-locate it (*fide* JEP), as did subsequent surveys 22 Jul and 4 Aug (*fide* MJB). This occurrence represents the fourth confirmed record for this Mexican mountain species in the U.S., following spring singles in s. Texas 8 Apr 1996 and 28 May 2004

and, more recently, a summer record of one singing in the Black Hills, South Dakota 10 Jul-19 Aug 2010.

Wood Thrush—Noteworthy for early summer, one was singing west to the Sandia Mts. near Cedar Crest at Ojito de San Antonio Open Space 6-9 Jun (WEM**, JEP*, m.ob.).



Wood Thrush, near Cedar Crest, Sandia Mountains, 6 June 2015. Photograph by William E. Maley.

Gray Catbird—One singing at Rattlesnake Springs 24 Jul (SW) was likely an early fall migrant.

Curve-billed Thrasher—A pair at Corrales nested four times 30 Mar-2 Aug, producing eggs each time, and fledging 2 on 30 Apr, 4 on 7 Jun, abandoning the third effort in mid-Jul, and having 2 nestlings plus an unhatched egg 7 Aug (JMR*).

Bendire's Thrasher—One was found on the Salt Lake BBS, *Catron* in Jun (MBR), where the species had been detected in years past.

Sage Thrasher—East of expected summer range, 6 were in juniper savannah on the southwest slope of Rowe Mesa, *San Miguel* 28 Jun (CMR*).

Cedar Waxwing—Apparently summering birds were reported at several locales in north-central and northwestern areas Jun-early Jul, but no evidence of breeding was detected; many represented small flocks of 4 to 8 that were feeding on mulberries. Reports from known breeding areas included several along the San Juan R., in the Chama area, and at the Ohkay Owingeh lakes.

Olive Warbler—A vocal ♂ in Red Canyon, Manzano Mts. 26 Jun (ABJ*) provided a *Torrence* first.

American Redstart—One was singing at Valle de Oro NWR 7-20 Jun (G. Soehnel, MOH) and another was singing near Jemez Springs 1 Jul (R. E. Wiltraut).

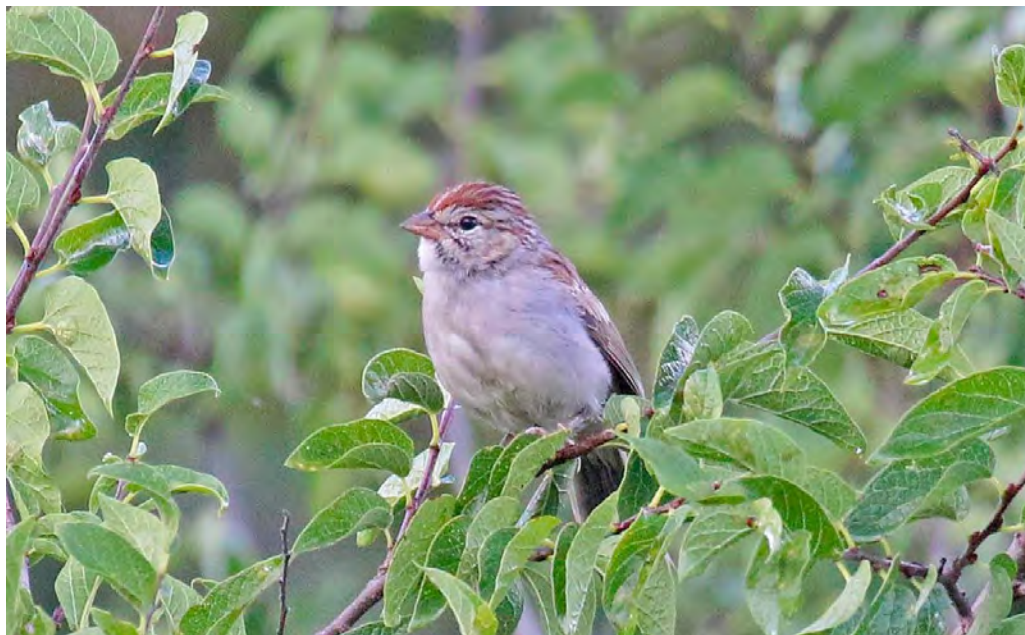
Wilson's Warbler—One was late at the Pecos NM 13 Jun (CMR). Two singing along the Williams Lake Trail above the Taos Ski Area 12 Jun (JEP) were in a known breeding area.

Red-faced Warbler—Regular in the Sacramento Mts., a high 5 were on the Cloudcroft BBS 5 Jun (DJK).

Rufous-crowned Sparrow—A ♂ was singing at 2650 m on Borrego Mesa, *Santa Fe* 8 Jun (JPB).

Abert's Towhee—One was singing at the GBA 3 Jul (RSS), where generally scarce.

Rufous-winged Sparrow—At least 2 were singing in Guadalupe Canyon 25-26 Jul (JEP*, JRO**, NEH**, CMR*, WTE*). The species has been resident there since 2011.



Rufous-winged Sparrow, Guadalupe Canyon, 25 July 2015.
Photograph by Jerry R. Oldenettel.

Botteri's Sparrow—In addition to birds detected in their middle Animas Valley stronghold, up to 5 were singing at the “Rodeo Estates” northwest of Rodeo 26 May-16 Jun (REW).

Cassin's Sparrow—Excellent mesquite-grassland conditions in the east and south yielded record or near record numbers at many locales, e.g., 233 on the Sabinoso BBS 20 Jun (CMR) and 203 on the Variadero BBS 6 Jun (CMR).

Black-chinned Sparrow—Reports from the fringes of the range included singles at The Narrows, *Cibola* 19 Jun (DJK**), Ortiz Mts., *Santa Fe* 9 Jun (BRF), and Burro Hill, e. *San Miguel* 21 Jun (CMR).

Vesper Sparrow—Noteworthy were 10 singing in high elevation grasslands in the Sangre de Cristo Mts. north of Jacks Creek CG 7 Jul (ABJ*). Up to 4 were singing and others were seen in the Black Range at Burnt Cabin Flats 10 Jun-25 Jul (DJC**).

Lark Bunting—Took advantage of lush grassland conditions in the northeast, including 111 on the Grenville BBS 14 Jun (CMR). Somewhat south of the usual range, 7 ♂♂ were skylarking 5 km south of Encino 12 Jul (CMR).

Grasshopper Sparrow—Enjoyed a good season in the east; noteworthy were ads. and fledglings in the Clayton area 17-26 Jul (DLH), 2 near McAlister 6 Jun (CMR), singles near Solano, *Harding* 21 Jun (CMR) and at Trigg Ranch, e. *San Miguel* 1 Jul (MDM), and one south to Caprock 2 Jun (SOW).

Song Sparrow—Maintaining a Zuni Mts. presence, 4 were in Nutria Canyon 19 Jul (MJB). In the Gila Valley, one was singing near Gila 30 Jun (RSS).

White-crowned Sparrow—Unusually early was a dark-lored one at Issack's L. near Las Cruces 27 Jul (N. G. Stotz**).

Summer Tanager—In the northeast, 5 were along Trigg Road, e. *San Miguel* 2 Jul (MDM), where now regular.

Northern Cardinal—Present in w. *Sierra* at Kingston and along Tierra Blanca Cr. Jun-Jul (DJC), where resident. A ♂ was in Twin Butte Canyon, sw. *Chaves* 3 Jun (SOW), where the species was first detected in the 1990s.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak—Lingering were a first-year ♂ at Sumner L. 31 May-2 Jun (CBC) and a ♂ along the La Luz trail, Sandia Mts. 26 Jun (W. Kuehn*).

Lazuli Bunting—Noteworthy south to the Black Range, single ♂♂ were at four locales from Kingston north to Chloride 22-25 Jul (DJC**).

Lazuli Bunting x Indigo Bunting—Single hybrids were at Ramah L. 18 Jul (CMR) and Corrales 19-26 Jul (CLH*).

Varied Bunting—North of expected, a ♂ was along Tierra Blanca Cr., w. *Sierra* 27 Jun (DJC**). Two ♂♂ were singing in Texas Canyon, Organ Mts. 1 Jun (CRB**). In expected locales, up to 5 were in Guadalupe Canyon 25 Jul (JEP) and the species was present in both Walnut and Slaughter canyons, *Eddy* during the season (SW, T. J. Hines).

Painted Bunting—Continuing from May, one was singing at Sumner Dam 2 Jun (MJB). The species has been spreading westward into east-central New Mexico in recent years.

Dickcissel—Responding to excellent habitat conditions, the species staged a memorable invasion, with relatively large numbers throughout the northeast in *Colfax*, *Union*, *Mora*, *Harding*, *San Miguel*, *Quay*, and *Roosevelt*; an alert observer could easily count up to three dozen on a drive through the area. Some high counts included 16 near Miami 21 Jun (CMR, NEH**), 7 near Grenville 14 Jun (CMR), and 12 at Golondrinas 3 Jun (WTE). One was west to Valle de Oro NWR 14-16 Jun (WEM**, NEH**, G. K. Froehlich**, J. Liddell** m.ob.).

Eastern Meadowlark—In high elevation grasslands were 2 singing north of Jacks Creek CG 9 Jul (ABJ), 2 singing near Mineral Hill, w. *San Miguel* 7 Jun (CMR), and 3 in the Black Range at Burnt Cabin Flats 1 Jul (DJC**).

Bronzed Cowbird—Two subspecies occur in the state, the western *loyei*, the most widespread of the two in New Mexico, and the eastern *aeneus*; only the ♀♀ can be distinguished in the field, the western *loyei* being more grayish, the eastern *aeneus* more blackish. Both occur at Rattlesnake Springs and certain other locales in eastern New Mexico. This season, ♀♀ of both races were described from Placitas 20 Jun (J. McPhee*).

Orchard Oriole—East of usual, a ♂ was singing at Bosque Redondo L. 1 Jun (CBC) and a pair was at Mesilla Bosque SP 27 Jun (CJG**).

American Goldfinch—A small population summered at Fred Baca Park in Taos Jun-Jul, including an ad. ♂ there 22 Jul (R. D'Antonio**).



Dickcissel, near Miami, Colfax County, 21 June 2015.
Photograph by Nancy E. Hetrick.



NEW MEXICO COUNTIES

