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# **N. M. O. S. BULLETIN**

*incorporating the Newsletter of the  
New Mexico Ornithological Society*

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Las Cruces

## **WHOOPING CRANES IN NEW MEXICO!**

The first young Whooping Crane from last summer's dramatic transplant program arrived at the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge on October 25, and as of press time, four of the five birds that left Idaho had arrived in New Mexico. There are now two at the Bosque, and one each at Los Lunas and Bernardo. By now, hundreds of New Mexicans have gone to the Bosque and seen the first fruits of one of the most exciting efforts ever to save a vanishing species.

But these are just the first fruits. These first four birds will have to successfully return to Grays Lake in Idaho, and for each of the next several years, more eggs will be transplanted in Idaho Sandhill Crane nests, in the hope that New Mexico's first whooper flock will grow. Then, perhaps five years from now, will come the crucial test. Will these birds, raised by foster parent Sandhill Cranes, breed with each other, establishing a new permanent flock? It is something we can all look forward to, and hope for. For it will mean not only new hope for one of North America's rarest birds, but will mean that a new, imaginative technique in endangered species management will have been proven.

## **1975 UPDATE OF THE BIRD-LIST OF NEW MEXICO**

BY JOHN HUBBARD

In the *Check-list of the birds of New Mexico*, published in 1970, 476 species

were treated. Based on the AOU Supplement of 1973, the list was reduced to 469 (406 confirmed, 54 hypothetical, 9 unaccepted). By 1974, the list had grown to 477 (415, 50, 12 respectively).

In the period since early 1974, the list has grown to 483 species treated (424, 48, 12 respectively). Thus, since 1970, the overall list has grown by 3.0%, with confirmed species growing by 4.2%, unaccepted by 33.3%, and hypothetical decreasing by 11.1%.

The following annotated list treats all species which have changed in status since the last update in 1974 (Hubbard, *NMOS Newsletter* 2(1):1-2,6). Note that the total numbers of species given there are not based on the 1973 Supplement.

Species treated below include several of which only tentative assessment can be made at this time. The status of these will be further treated in the future.

#### ANNOTATED LIST

Least Grebe (*Podiceps dominicus*) A sight record at Bosque del Apache NWR on 23 October 1973 by R. L. Teuber was rejected by the NMOS Rare Bird Committee, and the species remains on the unaccepted list.

Black Scoter (*Oidemia nigra*) Now confirmed (previously hypothetical) on the basis of two females seen and one collected at Bosque del Apache NWR on 28 October 1975 by Gary Zahm (specimen with NM Game & Fish, to be deposited with US National Museum).

White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*) Now confirmed (previously hypothetical) on the basis of a sub-adult photographed at Bitter Lake NWR on 12 July 1975 by Barnett Schrank (NMOS Photo/Tape File No. 1975-1A-B).

Gray Hawk (*Buteo nitidus*) Now confirmed (previously hypothetical) on the basis of a pair photographed in the southwestern part of the state in May 1975 by Dale Zimmerman (no other details available).

Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*) Status now under review, but probably will remain on the hypothetical list until such time as birds occurring in the state as the result of the experimental program of the US Fish & Wildlife Service become self-reproducing in the wild. The nature of this program is discussed by Sands (*NMOS Bulletin*, 3(3):9-11, 1975). At presstime, four young whoopers were present in the central Rio Grande Valley of New Mexico.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*) Previously confirmed only on the basis of a band recovery; in addition, 21 were photographed at Heron Lake, Rio Arriba Co., on 15 July 1975 (NMOS 1975-3A-C). The information on the recovery is as follows; band No. 42-601412, immature (probably juvenile) banded at Egg Island, Great Salt Lake, Utah, on 6 June 1942 by Angus Woodhury; recovered from carcass at Avalon Lake, Eddy Co., on 28 November 1942 by James Middleton. I am grateful to Brian Sharp for these data.

Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*) Now confirmed (previously hypothetical) on the basis of an adult in breeding plumage photographed at Morgan Lake, San Juan Co., on 15 June 1974 by H. H. Lesperance (NMOS 1974-9A-B).

Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*) Now confirmed (previously

hypothetical – unpublished record) on the basis of an injured bird found at Silver City on 13 September 1974. The bird was turned over to and preserved as a scientific specimen by Dale Zimmerman.

Whiskered Owl (*Otus trichopsis*) Previously unrecorded; confirmed on the basis of an adult male collected in Clanton Canyon, Peloncillo Mts., Hidalgo Co., on 19 April 1974 by J. David Ligon (specimen in Museum of Southwestern Biology no. 3936).

Ferruginous Owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) A sight record of one in the Rio Grande Valley in extreme southern Doña Ana Co. on 15 December 1973 and 28 January 1974 by Gath White and others was rejected by the NMOS Rare Bird Committee. The species thus remains on the list of unaccepted species in New Mexico.

Blue-throated Hummingbird (*Lampornis clemenciae*) This species is demoted to the hypothetical list (previously confirmed) on the basis that Mearn's specimens from the San Luis Mts., taken on 25–26 June and 11–12 July 1892 must have come from Sonora and not Hidalgo Co., New Mexico. There appears to be no suitable habitat for this species in the New Mexico portion of these mountains, and continued acceptance of these as US records is thus unwarranted.

White-eared Hummingbird (*Hylocharis leucotis*) An adult male was reportedly observed in the Animas Mts., Hidalgo Co., about June 1973 by R. R. Johnson and others. Details are being sought on the record to allow it to be evaluated by the NMOS Rare Bird Committee; in the meantime, the species is added to the hypothetical list (no previous record).

Vaux's Swift (*Chaetura vauxi*) Placed on the hypothetical list (no previous record) on the basis of one reported north of Rodeo, Hidalgo Co., on 9 September 1973 by Kenn Kaufmann (*American Birds* 28:89, 1974). Actually, subsequent contacts with the observer about the record leave some doubt as to the firmness of the identification, and the record may be withdrawn.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius varius*) If one follows Short (*Auk* 86:100, 1969) in treating this form as a species separate from the Red-naped Sapsucker (*S. v. nuchalis*) of the Rocky Mountains, the following specimens are assignable to it: MCZ 181657, im male, Las Vegas, 14 October 1917, Arthur Smith; MSB 1197, im male, Eagle Creek, 6 mi. w. of Alto, Lincoln Co., 1 November 1920, J. S. Ligon; NMSU 553, ad female, Las Cruces, 22 February 1957, R. F. Johnston. Inasmuch as hybrids appear numerous (I have examined 11 such specimens from New Mexico), and because the AOU has not accepted Short's split, the two are kept as one species for the present in our state list. *S. v. nuchalis* is the common race in New Mexico.

Baltimore (=Northern) Oriole (*Icterus glabula glabula*) Confirmed (no previous record) on the basis of an adult male photographed at Cedar Crest on 14 May 1974 by B. and D. McKnight. (NMOS 1974–12) A second adult male was observed and well-detailed at Rattlesnake Springs, Eddy Co., on 14 September 1974 by Bill Principe and Carol Dimeff. Although now considered conspecific with Bullock's Oriole (*I. g. bullockii*), the Baltimore Oriole is nevertheless a distinctive race, and its occurrence in New Mexico is well worth recording.

Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphia*) Now confirmed (previously

hypothetical) on the basis of an adult male collected at Bell Lake, Lea Co., 17 May 1975, by John Hubbard (specimen in USNM).

Mourning Warbler (*Oprornis Philadelphia*) Now confirmed (previously unrecorded) on the basis of an adult male collected at Bell Lake, Lea Co., on 20 May 1975 by John Hubbard; also a hybrid with MacGillivray's Warbler (*O. tolmei*) collected there on 20 May (both specimens to USNM; identifications confirmed by A. R. Phillips).

Canada Warbler (*Wilsonia canadensis*) Now confirmed (previously unrecorded) on basis of an adult male collected at Boone's Draw, Roosevelt Co., on 24 May 1975 by C. Gregory Schmitt (specimen to USNM).

#### CONSERVATION COLUMN

BY HENRY ZELLER

The Bureau of Reclamation's Operations and Maintenance Program for the Rio Grande between Velarde, Rio Arriba Co., and Caballo Dam, Sierra Co., is a classic example of the problems men create for themselves when they take on a fight with a river. The Bureau and the Army Corps of Engineers have made what I like to call a "plumber's nightmare" out of the river, what with drains, floodways, levees, channels, dams, and silt traps. The villains in this battle are the old river itself, and the phreatophytes.

Although the Rio Grande stills flows out of the Rockies with all its ancient fury, it is hardly a river any more in central New Mexico, but rather an elaborate aqueduct. Still, the river brings nearly as much silt as water out of the mountains, and in an effort to control it, the Corps has built the Abiquiu, James, Cochiti, and Galisteo Dams for trapping silt, and still finds it necessary to have the Caballo Dam to create the storage capacity for water lost to siltation from Elephant Butte Reservoir.

All of this is necessary because man cannot tolerate the constantly course of the river, and refuses to dwell clear of it. It is too late now, of course, but one cannot help but wonder what the Rio Grande would be like today had we faced the problem a few centuries ago. It would be a broad floodplain teeming with life, with an extensive gallery forest with luxuriant understory. Remnants of that can still be found if one looks hard enough, but even that will disappear under the Bureau's O & M Program.

This brings us to the other "villain," those persistent plants which grow in the silt, and which the Bureau and the Corps call phreatophytes. The Bureau finds these plants guilty of the evapotranspiration of water which New Mexico owes Texas under the Rio Grande Compact. Amusingly, "Texas," in this case, begins just downstream from Caballo Dam, and 60% of the irrigated lands in this "Texas" are actually in New Mexico.

Whether or not the removal of phreatophytes actually results in a net savings of water, and whether such a savings would be worth the time and money, are controversial subjects. Nevertheless, the Bureau plans further removal of these phreatophytes, and issued an Environmental Impact statement of their O & M Program in late August. After consultation with Chuck Hundertmark and John Hubbard, I submitted comments on the draft EIS. While I offered no arguments concerning the Program upstream of San Marcial, I strongly objected to the destruction of wildlife habitat in the San Marcial - South Monticello Point stretch, putting emphasis on the importance of Elephant Butte Marsh.

According to Chuck Hundertmark, this marsh is perhaps the richest breeding

area for marsh birds in New Mexico. It contains, for instance, the only breeding colonies of Olivaceous and Double-crested Cormorant in the state. Great and Snowy Egrets and Black-crowned Night Herons also breed here. It contains the southernmost breeding colony of Tree Swallows in New Mexico. It furnishes wintering habitat for large numbers of waterfowl, and last year six to nine Bald Eagles wintered here. The marsh retains a perennial 150 to 200 acres of water surface and a diversified woodland, with salt cedars, cottonwoods, willows, and a heavy sprinkling of dead snags, thus furnishing a varied habitat.

Yet the Bureau plans to destroy this fine habitat, and other habitats along the entire Rio Grande, in a phreatophyte removal program that naturalists and scientists alike have warned them is of dubious efficacy. We plan to follow up this question in the hope of preserving these remaining riparian habitats.

#### NMOS PHOTOGRAPH TAPE/FILE

BY JOHN HUBBARD

As of November 20, 1975, 146 photographs and 2 tape recordings, substantiating 74 occurrences of birds in New Mexico, have been catalogued into the NMOS P/TF. This file is housed in Santa Fe, and information concerning it may be obtained by writing the author.

This file is a very important part of the bird inventory of the state, including sole substantiation to date of the occurrence in New Mexico of ten species of birds. These are: Little Blue Heron (1961 - B. and D. McKnight), White Ibis (1965 - V. Montgomery; 1974 - G. Zahm), Black Brant (1967 - J. Sands), Oldsquaw (1961 - H. H. Lesperance), Groove-billed Ani (1966 - J. Durrie and McKnight; 1975 - L. Ditto), Anna's Hummingbird (1972 - D. A. Zimmerman; 1973 - L. and M. Sumner), Yellow-throated Warbler (1973 - B. Sorrie and P. Donohue), and White-winged Crossbill (1954 - A. J. Krehbiel).

In addition to the above, the following are contributors: C. Bauer, B. Bleicher, O. Boggs, B. Bolduc, J. Bowen, S. Bryan, W. Cooke, J. Douglass, A. Gennaro, K. Giezentanner, P. Greaves, B. Hayward, J. Hubbard, C. Hundertmark, C. Hyder, E. Klett, L. Kline, S. Listen, L. Toliver, B. Tolle, J. Travis, Y. Yates, E. Washburn, and G. White.

We urge any of you who may have additional material to send it - with complete data - to the P/TF, in care of the author, as soon as possible.

#### MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

All memberships in the NMOS expire on December 31. 1976 dues are being accepted now. Bound in this issue of the Bulletin is a membership renewal form. As previously announced, dues for 1976 have been increased. They are now \$5.00 per year for individuals, \$7.50 for families or institutions, and \$2.50 for students. Please return your renewal form quickly. The NMOS needs your support.

#### A SUMMER IN THE GILA WILDERNESS

BY BILL BALTOSSER

During the summer of 1975, I worked for Dr. John Hubbard and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish on a Peregrine Falcon survey in the Gila

Wilderness of western New Mexico. Unfortunately, the survey was successful only in finding out where these falcons were not. Only one Peregrine was seen the entire summer, and it was probably just passing through.

Nevertheless, Dr. Hubbard and I feel the survey was well worth while, for it provided a good summer survey of the birds of the Gila. Records were kept of all species seen in the Wilderness and associated primitive areas, and the final summer list came to 117 species. Below are described some of the more interesting sightings:

COMMON LOON - A single bird was seen on Snow Lake in Catron County on 4 June. The bird was in full breeding plumage. It was observed from the dam for about 15 minutes, from as close as 200 yards.

GREAT BLUE HERON - A heronry was found on the Middle Fork of the Gila River not far from Snow Lake. There were ten nests among three Ponderosa Pines. Two nests were in a dead pine, while the other eight were in the two live trees. Both adult and young herons were observed. The heronry was situated at the edge of a fairly large beaver bond.

GOSHAWK - Four were seen during the summer, including one immature. A handful of Blue Grouse feathers were found near the immature.

BLUE GROUSE - Blue, or Dusky, Grouse were seen in the high country of the Mogollon Mountains during the first week in August. All observations were made above 9,700 ft. Hens with few young birds were often seen, suggesting that the mortality on grouse in the Mogollons that summer was high.

#### SUMMER BIRDS OF THE GILA WILDERNESS

Common Loon	Great Horned Owl
Eared Grebe	Spotted Owl
Great Blue Heron	Whip-poor-will
Mallard	Poor-will
Northern Shoveler	White-throated Swift
Common Merganser	Black-chinned Hummingbird
Turkey Vulture	Broad-tailed Hummingbird
Goshawk	Rufous Hummingbird
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Belted Kingfisher
Cooper's Hawk	Common Flicker
Red-tailed Hawk	Acorn Woodpecker
Black Hawk	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Golden Eagle	Williamson's Sapsucker
Prairie Falcon	Hairy Woodpecker
Peregrine Falcon	Downy Woodpecker
American Kestrel	Ladder-backed Woodpecker
Blue Grouse	Northern Three-toed Woodpecker
Gambel's Quail	Western Kingbird
Montezuma Quail	Cassin's Kingbird
Turkey	Ash-throated Flycatcher
American Coot	Black Phoebe
Killdeer	Say's Phoebe
Spotted Sandpiper	<u>Empidonax</u> sp?
Band-tailed Pigeon	Western Flycatcher
White-winged Dove	Western Wood Pewee
Mourning Dove	Horned Lark
Flammulated Owl	Violet-green Swallow

Rough-winged Towhee  
Cliff Swallow  
Purple Martin  
Steller's Jay  
Scrub Jay  
Mexican Jay  
Common Raven  
Piñon Jay  
Clark's Nutcracker  
Mountain Chickadee  
Bridled Titmouse  
Common Bushtit  
White-breasted Nuthatch  
Red-breasted Nuthatch  
Pygmy Nuthatch  
Brown Creeper  
Dipper  
House Wren  
Bewick's Wren  
Cañon Wren  
Rock Wren  
Mockingbird  
American Robin  
Hermit Thrush  
Western Bluebird  
Mountain Bluebird  
Townsend's Solitaire  
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet  
Solitary Vireo  
Warbling Vireo

Virginia's Warbler  
Yellow Warbler  
Yellow-rumped Warbler  
Black-throated Gray Warbler  
Townsend's Warbler  
Grace's Warbler  
MacGillivray's Warbler  
Red-faced Warbler  
Wilson's Warbler  
Painted Redstart  
Hooded Oriole  
Northern Oriole  
Brewer's Blackbird  
Brown-headed Cowbird  
Western Tanager  
Hepatic Tanager  
Summer Tanager  
Cardinal  
Black-headed Grosbeak  
Blue Grosbeak  
Lazuli Bunting  
Evening Grosbeak  
House Finch  
Pine Siskin  
Lesser Goldfinch  
Green-tailed Towhee  
Rufous-sided Towhee  
Brown Towhee  
Gray-headed Junco  
Chipping Sparrow  
White-throated Sparrow

SPOTTED OWL - Three were seen during the summer, and a fourth was heard. For the first observation, I had just located a Prairie Falcon eyrie, and was climbing toward it when I heard an owl behind me. Turning around, I saw a Spotted Owl perched low in a Gambel's Oak. The tree was in a tight draw not more than ten feet away, with the bird six feet above the ground. Even with the falcons swooping low overhead, the owl just sat there. I approached it, and put my hand within two feet of it. As I left the area, the bird was still there. In late July, two young Spotted Owls were seen together on a rock ledge just after a rain storm. Both birds still had down on their heads. Despite an attempt, the parent birds were not found.

WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER - A pair were seen on the West Fork of Mogollon Creek on 7 July, at an elevation of 7,500 ft. No nest was located, but they may have been a breeding pair.

NORTHERN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER - Two birds of this rather rare species were seen. The first was a female, seen on 2 August on the east flank of Willow Mountain west of Bead Spring at 9,800 ft. The second bird was seen on the north flank of Whitewater Baldy, at 10,600 ft., being harassed by two Hairy Woodpeckers.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH - During the first week of August, about 15 birds were seen in the Mogollon Mts. above about 10,000 ft. Most were seen between Apache Cabin and Sacaton Mt.

RED-FACED WARBLER - This common warbler was seen at Apache Spring on Black Mountain, at 10,000 ft., fairly high for this species. Bruce Hayward and others also noted this warbler at high elevations this summer.

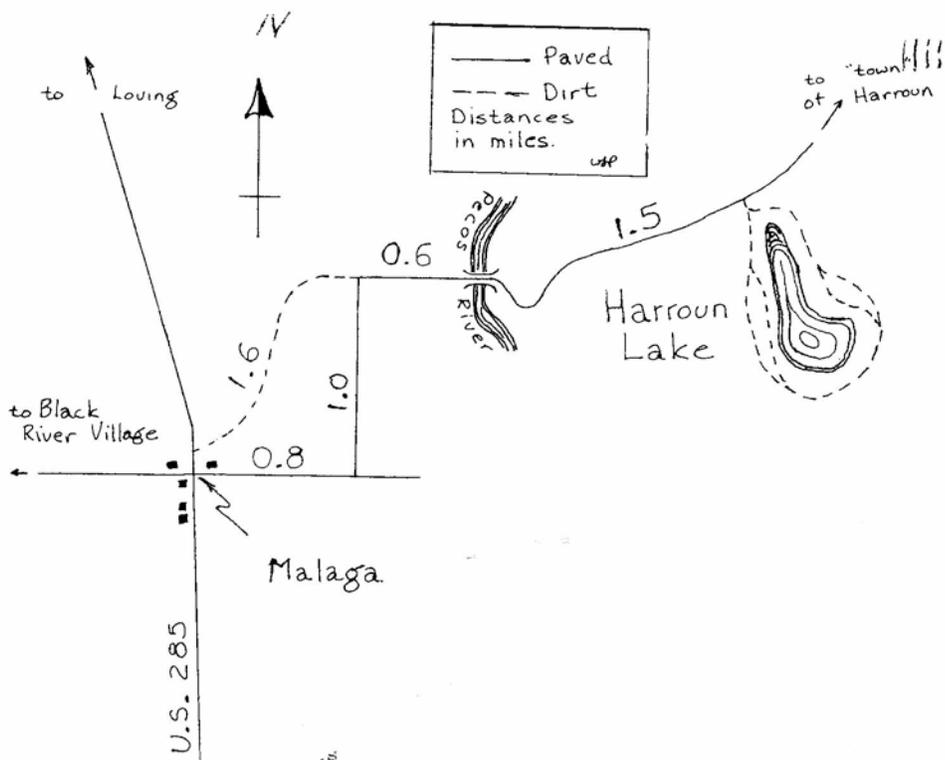
EVENING GROSBEAK - Three were seen on the West Fork of the Gila River near White Creek Cabin on 19 May. This species is sporadic in its movements, and especially unpredictable in this part of the state.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW - A single male was seen 15 May on the West Fork of the Gila River. Earlier in the year, Dr. Dale Zimmerman and I also saw this species along the Gila River near Cliff. These observations suggest that the species was not uncommon this year along the Gila River.

NEW MEXICO BIRD FINDING - HARROUN LAKE, EDDY COUNTY

BY STEVE WEST

Located just east of the Pecos River, Harroun Lake is one of the better places to easily observe good numbers of waterbirds in arid southern New Mexico. The lake is not so large as to make a scope absolutely necessary. The area surrounding the lake is predominately catclaw-mesquite desert with farmland to the north and south of the lake. In many places, there is a narrow margin of saltcedar between the road and lake edge. A road traverses all sides of the lake and although this has benefitted the birder, it has also benefitted the hunter as well. Large numbers of herons, ducks, and other waterbirds which once frequented the inaccessible right side no longer do so. Generally though, this has not hurt or reduced the overall list of species, only the relative abundances of some of them.



Harroun Lake serves as an irrigation water storage area for the nearby Harroun Farms. The lake is currently under lease from Harroun Farms to Carlsbad to serve as a recreational area. At one time, the lake was fairly litter free, but this is not true now.

When in the area, keep your eyes open for rattlesnakes. There are quite a few in the area, especially on the east side of the lake. But with the continued heavy use of the area by Carlsbad hunters, this may no longer be the case. The roads can vary greatly, perhaps overgrown or washed out. Always drive slowly and watch out for weakened bridges. This is not said to discourage the birder, but to help make his visit hazard free.

Permanent residents at Harroun Lake and nearby include Great Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Mallard, Shoveler (rare summer), Ruddy Duck (uncommon summer), Harris' Hawk (look on telephone poles north of the road after you cross the Pecos) Scaled Quail, Ring-necked Pheasant, American Coot, Green Heron, Killdeer, Mourning Dove, White-winged Dove (status uncertain), Roadrunner, Great Horned Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Say's Phoebe, White-necked Raven (uncommon), Verdin (nests in *Acacia*), Cactus Wren, Northern Mockingbird, Crissal and Curve-billed Thrashers, Loggerhead Shrike, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Pyrrhuloxia, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch, and Black-throated Sparrow.

Summer provided the most interesting variety of birds at the lake. Double-crested Cormorant has nested here at least once. Great Blue Herons are usually present, although uncommon. Green Herons are usually common, and found easily as they hunt for fish along the cement ditch. Other ardeids sometimes present include Great and Snowy Egrets, and Black-crowned Night Heron.

Waterfowl are uncommon during the summer, with the Mallard being the most common. They often nest in the marshy area at the north end of the lake. Just about any other duck can be occasional in the summer. Turkey Vultures are common here, as elsewhere in the county, during the summer. In case the lake is low, with a large fish kill, TV's and some herons become abundant temporarily. Birds of prey in the summer include Swainson's and Harris' Hawks, with Red-tailed and Marsh Hawks and Kestrels showing up by August.

The only common summer shorebird is Killdeer, although Black-necked Stilt probably nests here rarely. Early fall migrants return by mid-July, and include Snowy Plover (rare), Mountain Plover (uncommon), Common Snipe, Long-billed Curlew (formerly common, now very rare), Upland, Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers, Willet (uncommon), Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral (uncommon), Baird's (uncommon), and Least Sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitchers, Western Sandpiper, Marbled Godwit, Hudsonian Godwit (three records), American Avocet, Wilson's Phalarope (sometimes from mid-June on), and Northern Phalarope (uncommon to rare) . If the water level is low, as is often the case by late August and September, there may be several thousand shorebirds here in good years. By mid-October, most have left.

Rarely are any larids present throughout the summer, although some may stay until early June, and other return by mid-July. Herring, Ring-billed, Franklin's and Bonaparte's Gulls, plus Forster's, Least (rare), and Black Terns have all been recorded during migration.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo is very common along the lake edges during the summer, but definite nesting has not yet been recorded. Both nighthawks are common,

with Lessers in the majority.

Black-chinned Hummingbirds are common from May through mid-September, and can easily be seen at saltcedar or *Acacia* blossoms. Belted Kingfishers, first found in 1965, are increasing, though not yet common. Ladder-backs are the only summer woodpeckers, as flickers don't arrive until September.

Among flycatchers, Western Kingbird, Say's Phoebe, and Scissor-tailed and Ash-throated Flycatchers are present in summer, with Western Wood Pewees sometimes present until mid-June. Barn Swallows nest commonly under bridges, and Rough-winged and Cliff Swallows, though uncommon, probably nest nearby also. The White-necked Ravens, formerly common, are now rare in the area.

Bell's Vireo has been found here in recent years, and is spreading throughout most of the lower Pecos Valley. Yellow-throat and Yellow-breasted Chat are the only warblers regular during the summer.

Both Eastern and Western Meadowlarks are present. The only oriole is the Northern, and Red-winged Blackbirds (common nester) and Brown-headed Cowbirds are the only other summer icterids.

Blue Grosbeaks are very common on the lake, both in mesquite and saltcedar. Painted Bunting, though uncommon, can be found here without fail, and there is one probable record of a female Varied Bunting during early summer. Other summer finches include Lark and Cassin's Sparrow.

Fall begins here by mid-July with the arrival of many shorebirds, listed earlier. Other fall birds, not mentioned before, include Horned (rare), Eared and Pied-billed Grebes, White-faced Ibis (uncommon and declining), many duck species, Sharp-shinned, Cooper's and Ferruginous Hawks, Golden Eagle (very rare), Prairie Falcon, Sandhill Crane, Sora, Broad-tailed and Rufous Hummingbird<sub>5</sub>, Western Flycatcher, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Tree Swallow, House, Bewick's and Long-billed Marsh Wrens, American Robin, Hermit Thrush, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (uncommon), Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Solitary (uncommon) and Warbling (uncommon) Vireos, Orange-crowned, Yellow, Yellow-rumped (both races) and MacGillivray's Warblers, Yellow-headed Blackbirds (by mid-August or early September), Brewer's Blackbirds, Western and Summer Tanagers, Lazuli Bunting (uncommon), American Goldfinch, Green-tailed and Rufous-sided Towhees, Lark Bunting, Savannah, Vesper, and Sage Sparrows, Dark-eyed and Gray-headed Juncos, Chipping, Clay-colored, Brewer's, White-crowned, White-throated, Lincoln's, Swamp (since 1970) and Song Sparrows. Chestnut-collared Longspur is found in the desert surrounding the lake,

In winter, in addition to the birds listed above, the birder may find Common Loon (as late as the end of May), Canada and Snow Geese, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, and Rough-legged Hawk.

All other birds of prey listed above, except Swainson's Hawk, are here in winter. Winter shorebirds include Killdeer, Common Snipe, Greater Yellowlegs, Least Sandpiper, and Long-billed Dowitcher (rare). Mourning Doves are here in reduced numbers. Ring-billed Gulls are common, with a few Herring and Bonaparte's Gulls, and one January record of molting Franklin's Gulls.

Common Flickers (including a few yellow-shafted) are common. Say's Phoebe is the only winter flycatcher recorded, although Black Phoebe and Vermilion Flycatcher can probably be expected. Mockingbirds and Curve-billed, Crissal, and Sage Thrashers are uncommon, and Brown Thrashers are rare.

American Robins and sometimes Western and Mountain Bluebirds and Townsend's Solitaires can be found, although the latter is sporadic. Vireos, and all warblers except Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) are absent. Eastern and Western Meadowlarks, Red-winged and Brewer's Blackbirds, Great-tailed Grackles (rare wanderers from Artesia?), and Brown-headed Cowbirds can be found.

In winter, among sparrows, expect Pyrrhuloxia (very common), House Finch, American and Lesser Goldfinch, Green-tailed, Rufous-sided and Brown (uncommon to rare) Towhees, Lark Bunting, Vesper, Black-throated, Savannah and Sage Sparrows, juncos, Chipping, Brewer's, Field (rare to uncommon), White-crowned, White-throated (uncommon), Lincoln, Swamp and Song Sparrows.

The only birds recorded in the spring and not the fall are Osprey, Eastern Phoebe, and Violet-green and Bank Swallows. Sparrow variety appears lower in spring than fall.

All in all, Harroun Lake is a good and easily found birding area, and offers many possibilities. Good Birding!

*Steve West is currently working on a checklist of the birds of Eddy County. He would be interested in any sightings you make in the county, whether or not you consider them unusual. Please send sightings to Steve West, 1012 N. Edwards, Carlsbad 88256.*

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