

BIRD WALK AT ESTRELLA MOUNTAIN REGIONAL PARK 7 8 17

At 7:00 AM approximately we began our 2 hour bird walk, caravanning from the visitor center to the east side of the park. We observed on the riparian trail alongside a dry Gila River bed and finally encountered water at the inlet off the large mitigated lake. Both lakes were lower than normal with shoreline exposed. We then returned to traverse the Mesquite Bosque and briefly stopped in the Blue Gum Grove. The recent span of high temperatures had taken its toll on the vegetation.



CONDITIONS: It was a warm day with little to no breeze. The temperature at the walk inception was 98 degrees F, and our thermometer read 104 degrees at conclusion. Clouds were cumulus, altocumulus, cirrocumulus and cirrus with approximately 40% sky cover.

COMMENTS: It was a quiet day sound wise. Most bird families had fledged young by this time of the year and some were still feeding young. We encountered a family group of Black-tailed Gnatcatchers and a pair of Northern Harriers (male and female) gave us good looks. One obvious fact was exemplified by the abundance of White Winged Doves. It had been a good breeding year. Lots of doves, several flocks flying overhead. Mourning Doves were not quite as numerous, but certainly abundant. Swallows were traversing the airways above the lakes and within the mixed flock were several White-throated Swifts. This may be the first bird walk in which no House Finches were seen or heard.

PARTICIPANTS: Pam Spinella, Gerry and Linda Molinelli, Paul Doucette, Ranger Amanda Rothermal, and guide Joe Ford

SPECIES: Mallard, Ruddy Duck, Gambel's Quail, Pied-billed Grebe, Neotropic Cormorant, Double-crested Cormorant, Least Bittern, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, American Coot, Black-necked Stilt, Killdeer, White-winged Dove, Mourning Dove, Greater Roadrunner, White-throated Swift, Gila Woodpecker, Gilded Flicker, American Kestrel, Empidonax species, possibly a Pacific Slope Flycatcher, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Loggerhead Shrike, Rough-winged Swallow, Cliff Swallow, (possibly a Tree Swallow) Verdin, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Curve-billed Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Abert's Towhee, Black-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Great-tailed Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Lesser Goldfinch (39 plus a maybe))

Counts and other details are at eBird <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S38035187>