

## BIRD WALK AT ESTRELLA MT. REGIONAL PARK

September 12, 2015

CONDITIONS: Partly cloudy, both high cirrocumulus, cirrus, alto-cumulus: Temperature 85 F at start, 101 F at conclusion: humidity high 45%, little to no breeze: length 1.5 miles

The normal trail was taken through the Mesquite Bosque, east park area, Blue Gum Forest, desert scrub, then across to the riparian area along the Gila River bed (no water present) and to the mitigated east lakes. In contrast to last year when the river was bank full due to a recent rain event of some 3+ inches, this year the river was totally dry until we reached the lakes at the far east end of our trail. Certainly this presented some difficult conditions were water seeking birds as well as food sources. The park area had been experiencing some irrigation, thus the bird presence was a more normal situation. The humidity level was also high and coupled with high temperatures the hiking conditions on this day were not the most ideal and our group was diminished by the time we concluded at 9:30 AM after a 2 hour observing time. A cross-country meet was in process, therefore some birds were probably flushed from the area.



HIGHLIGHTS: A four thrasher day, as Bendire's was seen for the first time on an SAS Bird Walk, and a very cooperative Crissal Thrasher perched up nicely:: raptors thermalling towards the end of the hike, Turkey Vultures, Cooper's Hawk, and Northern Harrier all at one time.



PARTICIPANTS: Karen Martin, Jane Olson, Dave and Mary Lou Willison, Rich and Kiran Mishra and their 2 sons, Giovanni and Carmen Orozco and their sons, Giovanni and Ira, Alexia Hopkins, Deborah Strand, and the guides Paul Doucette, Caleb Strand, and Joe Ford (17 total)

SPECIES OBSERVED: Gambel's Quail, Pied-billed Grebe, Neotropic Cormorant, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Snowy Egret, Green Heron, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Coot, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, "peep species", Greater Yellowlegs, Eurasian Collared Dove, Mourning Dove, Anna's Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Gila Woodpecker, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Western Wood Pewee, Black Phoebe, Say's Phoebe, Vermilion Flycatcher (f), Loggerhead Shrike, Verdin, Rock Wren, House Wren, Marsh Wren, Cactus Wren, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Curve-billed Thrasher, Bendire's Thrasher, Crissal Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Phainopepla, Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Green-tailed Towhee, Abert's Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Black-throated

Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, House Sparrow, White-faced Ibis, Western Sandpiper, Gilded Flicker, American Kestrel, Willow Flycatcher, Common Yellowthroat, Wilson's Warbler, Brewer's Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Lazuli Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, Lesser Goldfinch (63)

Counts and other details are at eBird <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25009199>

PROGRAM: Four people attended the program at the nature center entitled, "Bird Weirdness, Round Three"