

Sonoran Audubon Beginning Birder Class

Thunderbird Conservation Park--Arrowhead Lake

Sat Nov 26, 2016 8:00 AM

Reported by Bob McCormick

The field trip started at 8:00 am at the picnic site going over differences in optics. Tom Lazelle had brought several pairs of binoculars so everyone could evaluate the differences between roof prism and porro prism binoculars, different magnifications, and if a higher price range makes a for a better piece of equipment. While we discussed the optics, we kept an eye out for birds. We would stop to point out the identification characteristics of each type noting habits, flight characteristics, where they were found and any individual identification marks that would help to distinguish it from a similar species.

In the park we had good looks at **Curve-billed Thrashers**, **Cactus Wrens**, **Verdins**, **Gamble's Quail**, and **Black-tailed Gnatcatchers**. Here we also observed a pair of large falcons on the hill to the West. Several minutes of watching them fly around and above the hill left us with no positive identification, providing us with a great lesson in the difficulties that may arise while trying to identify a particular species.

The first pond we visited was located just West of 59th Ave on Deer Valley Rd filled with **Neotropic Cormorants** and **American Wigeons**. Several **Great Egrets** lined the edges of the back pool.

The next pond was Arrowhead Lake. Several **Ruddy Ducks** and a lone **Western Grebe** were present.

The spillway East of 59th on Melinda, many provided great looks at **Green Herons**, **Cormorants** and various other common species.

Birders: Jackie Anderson, Tom Lazelle, Natalie Price, Jean Eddins, Donna Hamill, leader – Bob McCormick

30 species total

American Wigeon, Mallard, Ring-necked Duck, Ruddy Duck, Gambel's Quail, Western Grebe, Neotropic Cormorant, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Green Heron, American Coot, Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon), Mourning Dove, Anna's Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Gila Woodpecker, American Kestrel, Black Phoebe, Common Raven, Verdin, Cactus Wren, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Curve-billed Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Great-tailed Grackle, House Finch, House Sparrow