

Sonoran Audubon Picnic Bird Walk
Thunderbird Conservation Park--Arrowhead Lake
Sat Dec 10, 2016 9:00 AM
Reported by Bob McCormick

The field trip started at 9:00 am at the picnic site locating the ordinary desert suspects in the park. The **Cactus Wrens** loved the picnic tables and the large round containers placed nearby.

The first pond we visited was located just West of 59th Ave on Deer Valley Rd. Here a **Cooper's Hawk** was seen hanging out in a palm tree. A **Spotted Sand Piper** slowly circled the lower pond which was filled with **Neotropic Cormorants** and **American Wigeons**.

Our next pond was Arrowhead Lake. Several **Green Herons** sat the sides watching for fish while a **Belted Kingfisher** was busy catching fish on the side directly across from us. Heading to the spillway East of 59th on Melinda, many **Canada Geese** and **Wigeons** were seen on a golf course green. The spillway had several **Double-Crested Cormorants** and **Northern Rough-winged Swallows**. Passing the conservation pond on the way back to the park, we had to make a u-turn to get a better look from the blind. Here we were amazed to see 400+ **Neotropic/Double-crested Cormorants** roosting/feeding on the conservation pond. 100 **Common Mergansers** were mixed in with the Cormorants feeding on the lake. There were also 18 **Hooded Mergansers**, 3 male, and 15 female. The Hooded Mergansers stayed so separate from the Common Mergansers as if they were in a higher social class.

We then joined several other Sonoran Audubon members for a wonderful lunch back at Thunderbird Park.

Birders: Jackie Anderson, Sam Insana, Peggy Cullen, Tim Cullison, Ruth & Dave Kennedy, leader – Bob McCormick

Species 33 species (+2 other taxa) total

Canada Goose, American Wigeon, Mallard, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Neotropic Cormorant, Double-crested Cormorant, Neotropic/Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Cooper's Hawk, American Coot, Spotted Sandpiper, Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon), Mourning Dove, Anna's Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Gila Woodpecker, large falcon sp., Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Verdin, Cactus Wren, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Curve-billed Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Abert's Towhee, Great-tailed Grackle, House Sparrow



Photo by Dave Kennedy