

## BIRD WALK AT ESTRELLA MOUNTAIN REGIONAL PARK

DATE: October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017

CONDITIONS: Clear skies with little to no breeze and a temperature of 64 degrees F at 7:30 AM when we began observations and 84 degrees under clear skies and a slight breeze at 10:15 AM at the walks conclusion.

PARTICIPANTS: Robert Lemke, David and Delores Sussman, Peggy Cullen, Yvonne Bentley, Pam Spinella, Donna Meyerhoff, Lee Bradley, Lucinda Mullins, Paul Doucette, Cris and Elspeth Morgan, Pete Herstein, Ranger Amanda Rothermal, Guide Joe Ford

ROUTE: The group took a short tour around the visitor center, then caravanned to the east side and walked the Mesquite Bosque, Blue Gum Grove, the grassy area, desert scrub, and finally the riparian trail along a dry Gila River and finished at the mitigated ponds just east of the park.

COMMENTS: Once again, the absence of water within the river bed and dry conditions in the sometimes marsh area were limiting factors. Therefore, the usual Song Sparrows and Common Yellowthroats (maybe gone south?) just were not there and no rail species either. No swallow species were seen either and no falcons. A sassy Rock Wren perched nicely for us and the ibis and cormorant flocks made for some nice aerial visions. Lots of White-crowned Sparrows and a small group of Yellow-rumped (Audubon) Warblers were comforting in that migrants, at least some, have made it back from the "high country".

SPECIES: Gadwall, Ruddy Duck, Gambel's Quail, Pied-billed Grebe, Neotropic Cormorant, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Green Heron (some question as to whether this was a bittern species, but the consensus was a juvenile Green Heron ((our guide still thinks this may have been a Least or vagrant American Bittern)), Black-crowned Night Heron, White-faced Ibis, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Cooper's Hawk, Harris's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Coot, Mourning dove, Belted Kingfisher, Gila Woodpecker, Gilded Flicker, Black Phoebe, Say's Phoebe, Loggerhead Shrike, Verdin, Rock Wren, Canyon Wren, Blue-grey Gnatcatcher (a possible near the visitor center), Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Curve-billed Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Abert's Towhee, White-crowned Sparrow, Great-tailed Grackle, House Finch, House Sparrow, Black-throated Sparrow, Least Bittern, and was there a Common Loon among those cormorants??? We will probably never know, but it was fun to speculate. (40 species)

Counts and other details are at eBird <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S39923793>

Six people attended the program, "Birds, Memorable Sounds and Colors", held at the Nature Center

