

BIRD WALK AT ESTRELLA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL PARK 1 13 18

CONDITIONS: This was an ideal day for birding. The temperature was 40 degrees F at 8:00 AM under clear skies and no breeze. A light haze was over the Gila River drainage basin, either from breached dewpoints or wood smoke, maybe a mix of both factors. The walk finished around 10:35, still with clear skies but an elevated temperature to 64 degrees F and a light intermittent breeze.



PARTICIPANTS: Jerry Molinelli, Wendell and Janet Thrush, Tom Worcester, Lee Bradley, Janet Frolich, Sharon Manyx, Jim Consolloy, Candy Feutz, Harry Polen, Chris McVittie, Marc Shlossman, Erv Johnson, Paul Doucette, Russ Harris, Kathy Turner, Cecilia Turner, Ron Seymour, Marilyn Seymour, Karen Martin (scout), Dave Sussman, Mike Ameigh, Pam Spinella (photo identification consultant) and guide Joe Ford (24)

HIGHLIGHTS: Western Grebes on the east lake, a frisky and very vocal Belted Kingfisher, Anna's Hummingbird working the Blue Gum flowers, 5 woodpecker species, flocks of Lark Sparrows, a lonely but beautiful Black-necked Stilt, graceful American White Pelicans winging west, the howl of a Canis lupus and its magnificent appearance.

COMMENTS: The Gila River had water, mostly in pools. A light rain earlier in the week may have contributed to this, or the source may have been flushed irrigation canals or sewerage plant outflow from up stream. Salt cedar in areas showed orange and yellow as vegetation began to color. Creosote Bush was in bloom and some Brittle Bush.

SPECIES: Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, Ruddy Duck (6), Gambel's Quail (12), Pied-billed Grebe (2), Western Grebe (3) Neo-tropic Cormorant (55), Double-crested Cormorant (15), Great Blue Heron (2), Great Egret (5), White-faced Ibis (50) wedges flying west north of the river, American Coot (15), Osprey (2), Black-necked Stilt, Killdeer (2), Spotted Sandpiper (2), Greater Yellowlegs, Least Sandpiper (12), Anna's Hummingbird (2), Costa's Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher (2), Gila Woodpecker (3), Red-naped Sapsucker (at visitor center), Ladder-backed Woodpecker (2), Northern Flicker, Gilded Flicker, Black Phoebe (4), Say's Phoebe (2), Vermilion Flycatcher (2) (immature male behind visitor center and one male at Area 8), Loggerhead Shrike, Northern Rough-winged Swallow (8), Verdin (7), Rock Wren (parking lot visitor center), Black-tailed Gnatcatcher (2), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (2) Northern Mockingbird (2), European Starling (6), American Pipit, Yellow-rumped Warbler (8), Abert's Towhee (3), Lark Sparrow (15), White-crowned Sparrow (12), Dark-eyed Junco (6), Great-tailed Grackle (3), House Finch (8), American White Pelican (13), Orange-crowned Warbler, Black-throated Sparrow, Curve-billed Thrasher (2), Red-tailed Hawk, Northern Harrier, Greater Roadrunner (seen near golf course while leaving the park), Snowy Egret, Solitary Sandpiper ((54 species))

Counts and other details are at eBird <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S41911896>

Nine people attended the program at the visitor center entitled "Bird Weirdness II, the Sequel". A super thank you to Pam Spinella for once again serving as refreshments chairwoman and providing delicious cookies. Also a big thank you goes out to Ranger Amanda Rothermal for assistance with set up.

From the Photography of Karen Martin. Enjoy!!

