

BIRD WALK AT ESTRELLA MOUNTAIN REGIONAL PARK

DATE: July 14th, 2018

CONDITIONS: Cloudy skies, mostly altocumulus, stratocumulus, some cirrocumulus, 65% sky cover with a temperature of 86 degrees F, no significant breeze, at inception: sky condition was almost the same at conclusion, perhaps 75% sky cover, a NE breeze 3-8 mph, and a temperature of 93 degrees F. Hike began at 6:10 AM, concluded at 8:20 AM.

ROUTE: The path followed was similar to past hikes: Mesquite Bosque, Blue Gum Grove, the meadow, Salt-bush Sand Area alias Badger Flats, the riparian trail south of the dry Gila River channel, then a stop at the mitigated ponds to the east.



PARTICIPANTS: Wendell and Janet Thrush, Lee Bradley, Jerry and Linda Molinelli, Haylie Hewitt, David Glaeseman, Jorge Lopez, Nancy Kearsey, Daniel Lopez, Pam Spinella, Paul Doucette, Joe Ford

COMMENTS: Monsoon conditions were in full effect as humidity was high (compared to past hikes), some 65%. Strong rain events earlier in the week still had not made a great difference in the conditions surrounding the river. It still appeared to be a dry habitat with very little bird presence in the riparian area. White-winged Doves along with Black-tailed Gnatcatchers were the birds of the day. No raptors were seen until two Turkey Vultures were spotted upon leaving the park around 8:45 AM. Last year we had kestrels, Northern Harriers, and Red-tailed Hawks. Not this year. More shore birds last year, but

then again, this had been a very dry two months leading up to the monsoon entrance around July 4th. The two mitigated ponds were at the lowest level witnessed in the last two years. Good looks at a melodious Common Yellowthroat, and the ever beautiful pair of Vermilion Flycatchers were still in residence.

SPECIES: Gambel's Quail, Neotropic Cormorant, cormorant species, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Turkey Vulture, American Coot, Killdeer, Eurasian Collared Dove, White-winged Dove, Mourning Dove, Greater Roadrunner, hummingbird species (probably Anna's or Costa's), Gila Woodpecker, Gilded Flicker, flicker species, Say's Phoebe (visitor center), Vermilion Flycatcher, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Loggerhead Shrike, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Verdin, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Crissal Thrasher (visitor center), Curve-billed Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Phainopepla, Common Yellowthroat, Abert's Towhee, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Great-tailed Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, House Finch (35)

Counts and other details are at eBird <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S47191473>