

**New River Nature Preserve**  
**June 7, 2014**  
**Reported by Bob McCormick**



It was a warm but beautiful morning when we arrived at the New River Nature Preserve on June 7, 2014. The 20-acre preserve is located just north of the New River exit off I-17 and is managed by the Desert Foothills Land Trust.

Blooms on the nearby Saguaros at the parking area attracted many hungry visitors including Curve-billed Thrashers and House Finches. Entering the preserve, the mesquite canopy over the road contained many Lucy's Warblers and Bell's Vireos but good looks of these small elusive birds were hard to come by. Verdins were everywhere, some still singing. A Yellow-breasted Chat was happily singing away somewhere out in the 'jungle'. From a giant dead Eucalyptus tree a Sharp-shinned Hawk watched us as we watched him/her, and Western Kingbirds flew among the Eucalyptus's upper branches. Overhead were Lesser Nighthawks and a lone Turkey Vulture.

The walk to the water was hot and shade was at a premium. On the way back, the Eucalyptus tree again produced a surprise, a Bullock's Oriole. The preserve road is well used by friendly locals either on horseback or in 4-wheel vehicles. On the way out, we tried a new trail into the jungle where the last traces of water attracted a thirsty Lucy's Warbler. Again many birds were flitting through the trees but catching a good look was difficult.

Our group of 12 birders were Deirdre Sparling, Susan & Rich Miller, Haylie Hewitt, Vera Markham, Nancy Lewis, Tom Lazelle, Emily Roth, Clem Titzch, Fran Baughman, Jo E. ( a local resident who just happened to be walking by as we were meeting), and leader Bob McCormick.

We saw the following 28 species: Curve-billed Thrasher, Verdin, House Finch, Lesser Nighthawk, Northern Cardinal, Yellow Warbler, Bell's Vireo, Mourning Dove, White-winged Dove, Cactus Wren, Common Raven, Lesser Goldfinch, Turkey Vulture, Yellow-breasted Chat, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Western Kingbird, Gila Woodpecker, Lucy's Warbler, Brown-headed Cowbird, Abert's Towhee, Northern Flicker, Bullock's Oriole, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, House Sparrow, Black-chinned Hummingbird, and Summer Tanager