

## Gila River Spring Migration Area Report

I scheduled this trip for the end of April to make sure most of the spring migrants had arrived. The day was clear with comfortable temps and the Gila River had a good flow as it meandered its way among the cottonwoods and willows. It was a perfect day for birding.

Our first stop was Mangas Springs, 20 minutes from Silver on Hwy 180, where birding along McKinney road turned up 26 species in the diverse habitat of pastures, riparian cottonwoods and marshes.

Our next stop was the Gila River Preserve where we birded from the Iron Bridge. We were delighted by a flock of about a dozen Cedar Waxwings flying back and forth across the river as they foraged. One of my favorite moments was watching the bright yellow Wilson's Warbler and Yellow Throat drinking and catching insects near each other at the river's edge.



At the Hwy 211 bridge we saw nine Great Blue Heron all foraging in the same pasture near the bridge. Scores of Cliff Swallows wheeled over and under the bridge where the colony nests.

At the Nature Conservancy's Lichty Center we had lunch then birded at the pond and along the Gila River.

Our bird list included; Bewick's Wren, Mourning Dove, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Red-winged Blackbird, Northern Cardinal, Gambel's Quail, Common Yellowthroat, Violet-green Swallow, Raven (sp), Western Tanager, Wilson's Warbler, House Finch, Killdeer, Vermillion Flycatcher, Plumbeous Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Lucy's Warbler, Mallard, White-winged Dove, Western Kingbird, Say's Phoebe, White-crowned Sparrow, Black Phoebe, Common Black Hawk, Turkey Vulture, Summer Tanager, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Lesser Goldfinch, Swainson's Hawk, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Common Merganser, Cedar Waxwing, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Chipping Sparrow, Red-tailed Hawk, Great Blue Heron, American Kestrel, Cliff Swallow, Cassin's Kingbird, Gila Woodpecker, Great-tailed Grackle, American Coot, Northern Flicker, Spotted Towhee.

