

# Seven Ponds Nature Center

## New Mexico Birding Tour

December 7-14, 2018

### LEADERS & GUIDES

- **Daryl Bernard** (Executive Director - Seven Ponds Nature Center)
- **Bill West** (Wings West Birding)

### PARTICIPANTS

- **Gavin Awerbuch** – Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
- **Suzy Daley** – Oxford, Michigan
- **Jan Giesken** – Lapeer, Michigan
- **Sue Keener** – Oxford, Michigan
- **Peter Koper** – Mt. Pleasant, Michigan
- **Yvonne Lentner** – Lake Orion, Michigan
- **Colleen Vogler** – Ann Arbor, Michigan

### LODGING

**Comfort Inn Albuquerque Airport** – Albuquerque – December 7, 12, 13

**Comfort Inn & Suites** – Truth or Consequences – December 8, 9

**Days Inn** – Socorro – December 10, 11

### DINNERS

Saturday, December 8 – **La Cocina** – *Truth or Consequences*

Sunday, December 9 – **Latitude 22** – *Truth or Consequences*

Monday, December 10 – **Bodega Burger Co. & Lounge** – *Socorro*

Tuesday, December 11 – **Socorro Springs Restaurant** - *Socorro*

Wednesday, December 12 – **Matanza Beer Kitchen Nob Hill** - *Albuquerque*

Thursday, December 13 – **Tomasita's** – *Santa Fe*

### LUNCH STOPS

Saturday, December 8 – **Sulphur Canyon Picnic Area (Cibola National Forest)** – *Bernalillo County*

Sunday, December 9 – **Forest Service Road 157 "Mud Spring" (Gila National Forest)** – *Sierra County*

Monday, December 10 – **South Monticello Point (Elephant Butte State Park)** – *Sierra County*

Tuesday, December 11 – **Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center** – *Socorro County*

Wednesday, December 12 – **Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center** – *Socorro County*

Thursday, December 13 – **Pecos River Cabins** – *Santa Fe County*

## **BIRDING LOCATIONS**

### **Saturday, December 8**

- **Ojito de San Antonio Open Space** (Bernalillo County)
- **Sandia Crest – Cibola National Forest** (Bernalillo County)
- **Doc Long Picnic Ground – Cibola National Forest** (Bernalillo County)
- **Sulphur Canyon Picnic Area – Cibola National Forest** (Bernalillo County)
- **Bernardo Wildlife Management Area** (Socorro County)

### **Sunday, December 9**

- **Percha Flats – Caballo Lake State Park** (Sierra County)
- **Animas Creek Road** (Sierra County)
- **Las Animas Creek** (Sierra County)
- **Hillsboro Park** (Sierra County)
- **Percha Box** (Sierra County)
- **Forest Service Road 157 “Mud Spring” – Gila National Forest** (Sierra County)
- **Caballo Dairy Farm** (Sierra County)
- **Percha Recreation Area – Caballo Lake State Park** (Sierra County)

### **Monday, December 10**

- **Mims (Oxbow) Lake** (Sierra County)
- **Paseo del Rio County Park** (Sierra County)
- **County Road A008** (Sierra County)
- **Main Marina – Elephant Butte State Park** (Sierra County)
- **South Monticello Point – Elephant Butte State Park** (Sierra County)
- **Bosque del Apache NWR – Visitor Center, Flight Deck, Wetland Roost** (Socorro County)

### **Tuesday, December 11**

- **Bosque del Apache NWR – Flight Deck, Wetland Roost, Visitor Center** (Socorro County)
- **Bosque del Apache NWR – Marsh Loop & North Loop** (Socorro County)
- **West Canyon** (Socorro County)
- **Socorro Paintball Dump** (Socorro County)
- **Turtle Bay Park** (Socorro County)

### **Wednesday, December 12**

- **Water Canyon – Cibola National Forest** (Socorro County)
- **Water Canyon Road cattle pond** (Socorro County)
- **San Lorenzo Canyon area** (Socorro County)
- **Embudito Canyon** (Bernalillo County)

### **Thursday, December 13**

- **El Dorado – Verano Loop** (Santa Fe County)
- **Santa Fe National Forest** (Santa Fe County)
- **Pecos River Cabins** (San Miguel County)
- **Pecos Benedictine Monastery** (San Miguel County)
- **Monastery Lake** (San Miguel County)

## **BIRDS (133)**

**Snow Goose** – a few seen at Bernardo, then thousands seen (along with Ross's Geese), at Bosque del Apache, including the breathtaking morning lift-off

**Ross's Goose** – seen in huge mixed flocks with Snow Geese

**Canada Goose** – seen at Mims Lake and Bosque del Apache

**Northern Shoveler** – numerous shovelers seen at close range at Bosque del Apache

**Gadwall** – seen at Percha Flats, Caballo Dairy, and Bosque del Apache

**American Wigeon** – we saw wigeon at several locations, including Percha Flats, Caballo Dairy, Paseo del Rio, Bosque del Apache, and Turtle Bay Park

**Mallard** – seen at numerous locations

**Northern Pintail** – seen in large numbers at Bosque del Apache, including a massive flock feeding in a field on the North Loop

**Green-winged Teal** – we had a few of these small ducks on both of our days at Bosque del Apache

**Canvasback** – a lone individual was spotted at the Main Marina of Elephant Butte SP

**Redhead** – a handful were seen at Bosque del Apache

**Ring-necked Duck** – we had a lone individual at Caballo Dairy and Bosque del Apache, then a real nice, close-up look at two drakes at Turtle Bay Park

**Lesser Scaup** – low numbers at Bosque del Apache and a single bird at Turtle Bay Park

**Bufflehead** – these small ducks were seen at Caballo Dairy, Mims Lake, Bosque del Apache

**Common Goldeneye** – what an interesting sight it was watching a lone drake goldeneye floating down the Rio Grande at South Monticello Point of Elephant Butte SP

**Hooded Merganser** – always a pleasure to see, we had four hoodies on the marsh boardwalk at Bosque del Apache

**Common Merganser** – we saw a few of these large mergansers at Paseo del Rio and Bosque del Apache

**Ruddy Duck** – we had small numbers of these little ducks at Bosque del Apache

**Scaled Quail** – the final bird of the tour, and what a pleasure! We saw these at a private residence on the Verano Loop of El Dorado.

**Gambel's Quail** – we managed to see these quail a few different times, including large numbers at the parking lot of the Bosque del Apache Visitor Center; we also had good close looks at the Visitor Center feeders.

**Wild Turkey** – approximately 80 turkeys feeding in the corn stubble at Bosque del Apache

**Pied-billed Grebe** – we saw lone individuals of this bird at Bosque del Apache and Turtle Bay Park

**Eared Grebe** – a lone bird was seen at Bosque del Apache

**Western Grebe** – there were numerous grebes at the Main Marina at Elephant Butte State Park, perhaps a hundred or more. While some were very close, most were very distant, and could have included a few Clark's Grebes, which would be difficult to separate at that distance.

**Rock Pigeon** – yes, we saw pigeons...every day

**Eurasian Collared-Dove** – nearly every day

**White-winged Dove** – these were the default small doves seen on the tour at numerous locations, and sometimes in large numbers

**Mourning Dove** – not nearly as prevalent as their white-winged cousins, we saw a nice-sized flock at Embudito Canyon

**Greater Roadrunner** – seemingly always elusive, we had glimpses of these birds from the van at South Monticello Point and twice at Bosque del Apache before we got a good, if distant, view at Embudito Canyon

**Virginia Rail** – heard-only from the marsh boardwalk at Bosque del Apache

**American Coot** – seen in several locations, most notably at Bosque del Apache

**Sandhill Crane** – thousands seen during our tour, especially at Bernardo and Bosque del Apache

**Killdeer** – small numbers of these plovers were seen at a few locations, including Bosque del Apache

**Least Sandpiper** – a lone bird was seen at Percha Flats while scoping the gulls

**Wilson's Snipe** – a single bird was seen during both of our days at Bosque del Apache

**Spotted Sandpiper** – we "spotted" this shorebird at Percha Flats while scoping the gulls

**Mew Gull** – after seeing eBird alerts about this wayward gull, we first searched through the roosting gulls at Percha Flats during the early morning, then later in the afternoon headed to Caballo Dairy, where the gull was first reported; we were able to find this gull among hundreds of ring-bills.

**Ring-billed Gull** – seen in large numbers at Caballo Dairy, perhaps the most impressive sight was watching flock after flock head north in the evening from Percha Recreation Area. One observer tallied 1,590 in total.

**California Gull** – Bill tracked down a lone California Gull at the Main Marina at Elephant Butte SP

**Neotropic Cormorant** – we had these in the scopes along with their larger double-crested cousins at Mims Lake

**Double-crested Cormorant** – we had these in the scopes along with their smaller neotropic cousins at Mims Lake

**American White Pelican** – we had a large, distant flock of these huge white birds across the water at Percha Flats while scoping the gulls

**Great Blue Heron** – we came across one or two of these large herons at several locations

**Great Egret** – we had three egrets at Mims Lake and a flyover at Paseo del Rio

**Black-crowned Night-Heron** – Gavin spotted a young night-heron from the van at Mims Lake while we were searching for Neotropic Cormorants

**Golden Eagle** – we won't soon forget our encounter with this majestic bird as it circled against the canyon wall at Percha Box, dancing with its shadow before disappearing over the rim

**Northern Harrier** – we saw numerous harriers, including birds at Bernardo, Bosque del Apache, Water Canyon Road, and up in El Dorado

**Sharp-shinned Hawk** – we had the smallest accipiter at Las Animas Creek, shortly after seeing the goshawk

**Cooper's Hawk** – a perched Cooper's Hawk was seen at Turtle Bay Park

**Northern Goshawk** – this large accipiter cruised past us at Las Animas Creek, taking us by surprise

**Bald Eagle** – numerous adults and juveniles were seen while we drove the loops at Bosque del Apache

**Red-tailed Hawk** – the default hawk of the New Mexico utility poles, we saw dozens upon dozens of these, always hoping for a Ferruginous

**Belted Kingfisher** – some of us caught a fleeting glimpse of a kingfisher over the river at Percha Recreation Area

**Red-naped Sapsucker** – good looks at Las Animas Creek and again at Hillsboro Park

**Acorn Woodpecker** – we had a whole family clan of these fun woodpeckers at Las Animas Creek

**Downy Woodpecker** – seen at Bosque del Apache, possibly only by Daryl

**Ladder-backed Woodpecker** – we got nice looks at this small woodpecker at Hillsboro Park, Paseo del Rio, and Bosque del Apache

**Northern Flicker** – we saw the red-shafted version of Northern Flicker at several places, including Ojito de San Antonio Open Space, Las Animas Creek, Mims Lake, Bosque del Apache, Pecos River Cabins, and Pecos Benedictine Monastery

**American Kestrel** – we saw numerous kestrels during our time in New Mexico, including Bernardo, Percha Recreation Area, and Bosque del Apache

**Prairie Falcon** – searching every distant utility pole while driving through the desert, Bill spotted an unusual bump on a cross beam on County Road A008, worthy of further inspection; after putting the scopes on it, not only was it a raptor, but it fit the profile of a falcon; we quartered closer to it on foot, and were rewarded with wonderful scope views of this beautiful bird – including nice digiscoped phone pictures; and we left the bird unmolested, continuing its vigil of the open landscape – what a great experience!

**Hammond's Flycatcher**- we had this small flycatcher, late for this bird, at Percha Recreation Area

**Black Phoebe** – we found a lone Black Phoebe at Percha Recreation Area

**Say's Phoebe** – this bird gave us good looks at Hillsboro Park, Bosque del Apache, Percha Recreation Area, and Embudito Canyon

**Loggerhead Shrike** – first seen by the group along a rural road outside of Elephant Butte, we also saw shrikes at Bosque del Apache

**Steller's Jay** – we had a lone jay at Sandia Crest while waiting for the rosy-finches to return

**Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay** – most numerous at Ojito de San Antonio Open Space, we also saw these jays at El Dorado

**Black-billed Magpie** – our only view of this bird was a pair we spotted from the van in Santa Fe National Forest in Santa Fe County on our final day; we were able to put the scope on these birds for good looks

**American Crow** – seen at several locations, most notably at Bosque del Apache

**Chihuahuan Raven** – we had numerous ravens at and near Percha Recreation Area and Caballo Dairy, including some confirmed Chihuahuan

**Common Raven** – seen nearly every day; not always separable from Chihuahuan Raven

**Horned Lark** – a large group of larks alerted us to bird action at a cattle pond on Water Canyon Road, which led to the discovery of a number of Chestnut-collared Longspurs; we also had a huge flock fly over the van while searching the agricultural fields for a Ferruginous Hawk on the final day.

**Tree Swallow** – we saw two very late swallows swooping above the cranes at the Wetland Roost of Bosque del Apache

**Black-capped Chickadee** – one individual was seen at the feeders at the Pecos River Cabins

**Mountain Chickadee** – seen at Water Canyon and Pecos River Cabins as well as other locations

**Bridled Titmouse** - we found this wonderful little bird at Las Animas Creek and again at Hillsboro Park

**Juniper Titmouse** – although quite plain, we enjoyed seeing this bird at Ojito de San Antonio Open Space, Forest Service Road 157 in Gila National Forest, and up in El Dorado

**Verdin** – we had a lone Verdin on Animas Creek Road, where we also had a number of other great birds

**Bushtit** – a nice-sized flock of these spunky little birds made an appearance while we were scanning the Verano Loop neighborhood of El Dorado for Scaled Quail

**Red-breasted Nuthatch** – our only view of this nuthatch occurred on Forest Service Road 157 in Gila National Forest just beyond Mud Spring

**White-breasted Nuthatch** – we saw several of these familiar nuthatches in ones and twos in numerous locations

**Pygmy Nuthatch** – a small group of these diminutive nuthatches descended on us on a mountain curve way up Water Canyon

**Brown Creeper** – we saw our creeper ascending a tree trunk at Paseo del Rio

**Rock Wren** – we had at least three individuals giving us good views at “West” Canyon

**Canyon Wren** – two of these songsters made a nice appearance below the old bridge at Percha Box

**Marsh Wren** – a lone bird was heard-only by a few of our group on the marsh boardwalk at Bosque del Apache

**Bewick’s Wren** – one of these wrens (pronounced like the car!) was seen at Hillsboro Park

**Cactus Wren** – nice looks were had at our “random” stop along Animas Creek Road

**American Dipper** – we had the great pleasure of watching the water ouzel for a good ten minutes as it continued to plunge into the frigid Pecos River at the Pecos Benedictine Monastery

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet** – seemingly everywhere, in every conceivable habitat!

**Eastern Bluebird** – of the bluebird trio, we saw fewer of these familiar birds than the other two species; we saw a lone bird at Hillsboro Park and a half-dozen at Bosque del Apache while driving the Marsh Loop

**Western Bluebird** – seemingly everywhere we went, we had Western Bluebirds at numerous locations

**Mountain Bluebird** – we saw a few individuals on utility wires on the way up to Sandia Crest, but had our best look when we came upon a huge flock of them in El Dorado

**Townsend's Solitaire** – one of the first “good” birds of the tour, we first saw these thrushes at Ojito de San Antonio Open Space, then saw one or two at several other locations throughout the tour

**Hermit Thrush** – seen at Bernardo WMA and Hillsboro Park

**American Robin** – seen daily and at many locations

**Curve-billed Thrasher** – we saw these desert thrashers at Animas Creek Road and Embudito Canyon, where we had four

**Crissal Thrasher** – we had good looks at this target bird at three locations: Animas Creek Road, Bosque del Apache Visitor Center, and Embudito Canyon

**European Starling** – yes, we saw starlings...lots of starlings

**American Pipit** – seen at both Percha Flats and Percha Recreation Area out on the mudflats; also seen in flight at the Bosque del Apache Wetland Roost

**Phainopepla** – certainly a highlight bird for many, we had very nice looks at these beautiful birds at Hillsboro Park, Percha Recreation Area, and Paseo del Rio Park

**Evening Grosbeak** – seen on our final day of birding together near the feeders at Pecos River Cabins

**Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch** – a small number of gray-crowns were mixed in with the large flock of rosy-finches we saw at Sandia Crest

**Black Rosy-Finch** – the majority of the birds in the rosy-finch flock at Sandia Crest were Black Rosy-Finches, about 45 total

**Brown-capped Rosy-Finch** – at least one Brown-capped Rosy-Finch graced us with its presence when it perched atop a sunlit conifer tree at the Crest House, giving some of us a very nice, albeit short look

**House Finch** – seen at a few places during our tour, including Paseo del Rio Park, Bosque del Apache, Socorro Paintball Dump, and El Dorado

**Pine Siskin** – these small finches were seen at a few places; most notably at Bosque del Apache while we drove the Marsh Loop

**Lesser Goldfinch** – about 10 birds were seen while driving the Marsh Loop of Bosque del Apache

**American Goldfinch** – seen while driving the Marsh Loop of Bosque del Apache

**Chestnut-collared Longspur** – a serendipitous sighting, we got on these birds when we stopped to look at the flock of Horned Larks congregating around a cattle pond on Water Canyon Road

**Chipping Sparrow** – this familiar summer sparrow of Michigan was seen at Bernardo WMA, Hillsboro Park, and Cibola National Forest

**Black-chinned Sparrow** – a nice surprise on our tour, we found one of these “somewhat out of range” sparrows at Percha Box

**Brewer’s Sparrow** – we had a lone bird at the Visitor Center at Bosque del Apache

**Black-throated Sparrow** – we saw this handsome desert sparrow at a handful of places, including Animas Creek Road, a roadside stop near Elephant Butte, a desert stop on Socorro County, the San Lorenzo Canyon area, and Embudito Canyon

**Dark-eyed Junco** – everywhere – the default sparrow in many of the places we visited

**White-crowned Sparrow** – like juncos, these sparrows were seen throughout our tour in many different locations

**Harris’s Sparrow** – a great bird that we had fantastic looks at while watching the feeders at the Bosque del Apache Visitor Center

**White-throated Sparrow** – not common on our tour, we did see these familiar sparrows at Bernardo WMA

**Sagebrush Sparrow** – another handsome desert sparrow, we first found these birds at a roadside stop near Elephant Butte, then again at the San Lorenzo Canyon area

**Savannah Sparrow** – this sparrow was seen on day five (December 11) at Bosque del Apache

**Song Sparrow** – seen at Paseo del Rio Park and the Bosque del Apache Visitor Center

**Lincoln’s Sparrow** – this sparrow was seen by some of our group on day four (December 10)

**Canyon Towhee** – this short-billed towhee was seen at Percha Box, Embudito Canyon, and El Dorado

**Rufous-crowned Sparrow** – another great bird seen at Percha Box – we had at least four of them

**Green-tailed Towhee** – seen by some (but unfortunately not all) of our group at the feeder area at the Bosque del Apache Visitor Center

**Spotted Towhee** – seen many times throughout our tour at several locations

**Yellow-headed Blackbird** – at least one of these handsome western blackbirds was seen at the Caballo Dairy Farm amidst all the other blackbirds and starlings

**Western Meadowlark** – seen numerous times during our tour, mostly from the van as we were scanning open grasslands for hawks or driving the wildlife loops at Bosque del Apache

**Eastern Meadowlark** – seen near the cattle pond on Water Canyon Road; identified by the narrow dark central area and the extensive white outer area in the tail – and by habitat

**Red-winged Blackbird** – seen in very large numbers, particularly at Bosque del Apache

**Brewer's Blackbird** – this shiny western blackbird was seen at the Caballo Dairy Farm, Elephant Butte SP Main Marina, and Bosque del Apache

**Yellow-rumped Warbler** – the default warbler of the tour, we had a chance to see plenty of the Audubon's subspecies of this familiar warbler (in Michigan we almost always see the Myrtle subspecies)

**Pyrrhuloxia** – this striking relative of our cardinal was seen at Animas Creek Road, Paseo del Rio Park, and the Bosque del Apache Visitor Center

**House Sparrow** – yes, we saw House Sparrows

**TOTAL BIRDS SEEN/HEARD BY OUR GROUP: 133**  
(your total may differ)

### **MAMMALS (3)**

**Coyote** – *Canis latrans*

**Mule Deer** – *Odocoileus hemionus*

**Abert's Squirrel** – *Sciurus aberti*