

## Holiday Highlights

### Arizona

20 April – 4 May 2019

**Guides:** Darren Rees and Duncan Macdonald

**Guests:** Gill & Martin Gooch, Christine & Max Maughan, Franky & David Perry, Jane Nickerson, Jan Binnie, Barbara Keville, Marilyn Davidson, Sue Taylor

**Day 1:** We have a leisurely start to our journey with a late meeting time in Heathrow. Nice to see familiar faces and the excitement is tangible as we board our 747 to Phoenix, Arizona.

Our flight takes us up and over Iceland and then over pack ice off Greenland before the majestic icefields of Greenland show beneath us. The flight takes us down over Canada and through the USA to touch down on time in Phoenix. We take the shuttle bus to the car rental offices, collect our vans and head the short distance to our hotel and check in. We walk across the street for some food and then get our heads down. We are here!

**Day 2:** We all meet up before breakfast to get to a local park and do some birding! While we are hanging around the car park we pick up Great-tailed Grackles, White-winged Dove, beautiful little Inca Doves and Cactus Wren. We drive the short distance to Pima Canyon Park. We have forgotten that it is Easter Sunday, so there are lots of people parking up to walk, cycle, run or play golf. The Saguaro Cactus are in bloom on the rocky hillside. Gambel's Quails are first up with their Elvis quiffs and Mocking Birds are singing (sound a bit like Song Thrush). Very quickly we get our first hummingbird. There is a superb Anna's Hummingbird on a dead twig in a roadside tree. We get stunning views. Barbara spots a smart Lark Sparrow and a Hooded Oriole flies over while a smart Verdin appears low in the bushes with his yellow head. There are lots of kingbirds around when Martin gets us onto a Great Egret that is flying over and we also get onto a Red-tailed Hawk that has decided to look for breakfast.

We walk down through the arroyo where Brewer's Sparrows are singing. There are some large Saguaro cacti and one has some holes in the top. A Gila Woodpecker flies in and goes into the hole! We watch as both adult birds come and go from the nest. Darren finds a Ladder-backed Woodpecker and we find a Western Kingbird nice and close. What a great introduction to Arizonan birding, but our tummies are growling and it is time for breakfast.

We load up the vans with all our chattel and head out onto the interstate highway all the way down to Picacho Peak State Park. It is hot outside the air conditioned vans, as we walk through this beautiful landscape of cactus and towering peaks. There are Turkey and Black Vultures soaring above the rocks along with Ravens. We get brief views of Black-throated Sparrow, but not all of us see it. Numerous

Cactus Wrens and Curve-billed Thrashers keep us occupied as we walk. Through the Saguaro Cactus, cholla and mesquite there are various birds singing. Darren picks out a song and uses a bit of playback to lure out a beautiful male Black-tailed Gnatcatcher. It is like walking through a cowboy movie or the series The High Chapparal, making Duncan's boyhood dreams come true!

We have lunch at a nearby subway, where the food is good and it is cool inside, it is really warming up out there! Having fuelled ourselves we carry on south to Saguaro National Park. We drive up to the excellent Visitor Centre where the view out over the landscape from the front of the building is totally stunning. Huge cacti dominate the landscape as far as we can see, in all directions. One of the rangers in the centre has a Bearded Dragon (large Australian lizard) on the counter to explain to visitors the adaptations of desert reptiles. He is very generous with information and gives us a location for one of our target species! We drive the scenic loop and walk up to Signal Peak, where there are some ancient petroglyphs on the rocks and a stunning view. Franky and David find a stonking male Verdin and on the way down Darren finds us a Pyrrhuloxia. It is a bit skulky and not showing readily to everyone, but we will certainly find others.

We come off the Highway in the suburbs of Tuscon, at an area that the ranger gave us directions for. We drive in to a parking lot where the ranger told us that a pair of Burrowing Owls were nesting. We creep along looking into the ditch when suddenly David says, "there it is!" Sure enough, we have been looking too far away and it is pretty much right beside us. What a beautiful owl. It is in the hole swivelling its head around and looking particularly sleepy. What a superb way to end our journey; we all get photos and great views before heading down to Green Canyon and our hotel for the next two nights.

**Day 3:** It is a glorious morning as we head out early to Lower Box Canyon to do some birding before breakfast. We park up on the dirt road and scan out over the dry river gorge with stunning views to the Santa Rita mountains. There is a Lucy's Warbler singing and we get some views as it moves closer, but it is very flighty. One of the targets here is the rare Rufous-winged Sparrow and we hear one singing. We eventually find it singing from the top of a dry bush and get very good scope views, even the small reddish shoulder marking that gives the bird its name. There is a bit of a rush of birds; Martin finds a smart male Phainopepla and while people are trying to get on it Barbara finds a male Cardinal in her scope, Franky spots a bird in a tree that turns out to be an Ash-throated Flycatcher and Darren finds us a Grey Flycatcher. Phew! We hear Crissal Thrasher and Bell's Vireo (sounds like a Whitethroat) and just as we are leaving there is a smart Wilson's Warbler near the vans.

Down the road at Florida Wash we try again for Crissal Thrasher. We can hear one singing but we get no views. We do, however, find a pair of Golden Eagles soaring distantly over the mountains.

We go to a church back near the hotel, as it is Easter Monday! Actually we have gone to the church as there is a pair of Great Horned Owl nesting in a tall tree in the car park! We find two of the three big chicks in the nest, with the third on a branch and a superb adult nearby. Not a bad morning.

After a really lovely breakfast we head out to the Santa Rita Mountains. We drive up Madera Canyon, one of the top birding sites in the state and park where we are surrounded by oaks and beautiful pale barked sycamores. We grab water and walk a trail that leads slowly uphill through the canyon. It is not long before Darren is stopping us to point out the song of Painted Redstart, one of our targets. We wait and watch and eventually we are rewarded with great views of this vibrant warbler. We see it tail-fanning and flicking its wings. What a bird! Suddenly Darren gets onto a fast moving raptor. We all follow and find a stunning male Goshawk as it banks around and shows us the fluffy, white undertail coverts. David says that there are two and we watch both male and female interact, even talon grappling right over our heads. The male even goes into some slow wing flapping display.

A little further up the trail we get a flurry of species – Plumbeous Vireo, Audubon's Warbler, Black-throated Grey Warbler, Hermit Warbler with an amazing yellow head, Hermit Thrush and Yellow-eyed Juncos. There are Acorn Woodpeckers and Mexican Jays when Darren hears another woodpecker calling. We spin around to see an Arizona Woodpecker on a low branch. This near endemic is a brown-backed woodpecker and it shows wonderfully. On our way back down we get more Painted Redstarts as well as stunning butterflies like Two-tailed and Pipevine Swallowtails and the spectacular Arizona Sister.

We have lunch at some picnic tables with shade, where there are lots of Mexican Jays working the crumbs. Once fed we drive down to Kubo where there are feeders in the garden of a house that we can look at. What a place this is! There are birds everywhere. The hummingbird feeders are alive with Broad-billed and Black-chinned Hummingbirds, but every now and again the massive Magnificent hummingbird makes an appearance. There are lots of Black-headed Grosbeaks and Pine Siskins and Acorn Woodpeckers. Max and Christine get us onto a male Scott's Oriole. How can a bird be that yellow? Rock Squirrels are picking around on the ground beneath the feeders. What a place. It is hard to drag ourselves away, but Darren has other feeders to take us too.

Down at Santa Rita Lodges there is a covered area to sit and watch the feeders that have been put out in the yard. The most obvious species when we arrive are the Wild Turkeys picking around the ground. The males displaying to each other and to the females, who are completely not interested. The seed feeders are heaving with Siskins, Lesser Goldfinch and Black-headed Grosbeaks, Acorn Woodpeckers fly to and fro with never any less than five in view at any time. The sugar feeders are attracting lots of Broad-billed Hummingbirds with Black-chinned and Magnificent also visiting. There is a lovely little gift shop and we all enjoy ice creams while watching the busyness of the feeders. A bird starts calling from the

trees. It is an Elegant Trogon!!! We scan for it but it must be further back. We walk a trail that takes us into the vicinity of where we were hearing it calling, on the other side of the river, but we cannot find it. Darren picks up another sound this time from a Summer Tanager. The bird comes right out. The red of this male is almost blinding. The guides walk back to collect the vans while a kettle of 14 Turkey Vultures swirl above us. On the way back to the hotel we encounter a little group of Coue's White-tailed Deer. What an utterly spectacular day.

**Day 4:** We are up early again for a pre-breakfast explore. We drive down the interstate to the pretty little town of Tubac. Colourful adobe houses with vibrant gardens and roadside purveyors of colourful Mexican stuff. We park down by the river where a trail follows it through the state park. Here towering cottonwoods shade our walk pleasantly. We are here to look for the rare Rose-throated Becard, a small flycatcher and probably the only pair in the entire USA. As we walk we get into the other species here – Phainopeplas, Cassin's Kingbirds, Summer Tanagers, Lucy's Warbler, Bell's Vireo, Yellow-breasted Chat and the ridiculous Vermillion Flycatcher. We ponder over groupings of different shaped nest boxes along the way and eventually bump into a couple who are checking them. They have been placed for Lucy's Warblers. We get Say's Phoebe, Lesser Goldfinch and Cardinal along the trail, but no Becard unfortunately.

After another lovely breakfast we load up the vans and head out of Dodge! As we drive down the interstate the skies start to darken and it is soon raining quite heavily and spiralling dust devils out over the desert. We pull into Willcox in the rain and find a railway carriage diner for lunch and it is lovely. Willcox looks a little like a one-horse town where the horse has fled! But it has dried up by the time we get back to the vans.

We drive around to Cochise Lake in the heat and under leaden skies. There are both Cassin's and Western Kingbirds and Darren finds us a couple of Scaled Quail near the road. A very delicately beautiful bird. Out on the first bit of water we find Cinnamon and Blue-winged Teals, Buffleheads and both Barn and Northern Rough-winged Swallows overhead. We drive around the lake and find Black-necked (Eared) Grebes among the American Coots. There are Ruddy Ducks on the water and Duncan's van finds a Horned Lark on the shore. We park up and get the scopes out and find Western Sandpiper, American Avocets, Black-necked Stilts and Wilson's Phalaropes. There are Gadwall and a group of White-faced Ibis to keep us occupied. A really good haul of birds.

We want to reach Cave Creek in good time so we press on and find Paradise Road to take us to Portal on the edge of the Chiricahua Mountains. We arrive, under the looming mountains and find our cabins – what a stunning place to be and what wildlife must wander around the cabins at night? We change quickly and head back out onto the road. We are eating all our meals in New Mexico while we are here and New Mexico is 1 hour ahead! We see Scaled Quail, Curve-billed Thrasher and White-crowned Sparrows while we are eating. Tired, but elated we head for bed.

**Day 5:** Early morning we drive up to South Fork and walk the lower section. It is cold this morning. We can see the sun on the peaks above us but down in the canyon it is definitely cool. We find our first American Robin of the trip singing nicely. Next up is a very smart mammal; an Apache Fox Squirrel. We see plenty of Acorn Woodpeckers and Mexican Jays. Jane asks us, "What growls?" An interesting question and Duncan walks back down with her to where she heard the sound to listen and have a look. There is nothing obvious though. We hit a patch of sun and there is more life here. Plumbeous Vireo, a couple of Ruby-crowned Kinglets and a stunning Grace's Warbler.

We collect our lunches from the diner where we are having breakfast and head back up to South Fork again to take in the upper section. There are other birders around a bridge so we park up to have a look around. The other birders are also looking for trogons, but haven't seen or heard anything. We hear and track down a Brown Creeper and a Painted Redstart gives us amazingly close views before disappearing down on the ground, obviously into a nest.

We park at the end of the road and prepare to walk up the track to look for trogons. The track has been changed by flood waters rushing down from the mountains. The sun is shining and the temperature steadily rising. We bump into a couple of birders coming back down and they tell us precisely where they have seen trogon, superb. We are bolstered by this news and plough on. Further on we hear the sound of an Elegant Trogon barking. We scan around to no avail. Duncan thinks it is further back down the trail so goes for a look. David and Jan follow. We very quickly home in on the bird and realise that it is right above us!! Duncan rushes back to tell the others. There then follows a crazy hour of trogon action. Trying to get the group onto the trogon it flies off downstream. A female is spotted by Darren but again it is tricky to get everyone on it. We go in search of the male who is calling again and wow there he is!! There is not just one though there are two males having a bit of a slow chase. These truly magnificent, tropical looking birds are simply stunning and we cannot believe these unparalleled views.

We have our celebratory lunch down at the Visitor Centre in the shade of the trees. Inside the centre they have tanks with various snake species from the area inside them and one that contains a Gila Monster – an amazing looking lizard that inhabits the dry deserts of Arizona. We hear a Grey Hawk and Daren spots one flying up the valley. One bird then flies in over the centre to land behind us in a tall tree. We get it in the scopes. What a superb small buteo, gorgeous.

The rest of the afternoon is spent relaxing around the cabins and feeders where various orioles, hummingbirds, deer and other species are seen. We have dinner back in Rodeo and then we have a wander around the cabins with torches looking for owls. We hear Elf Owl and eventually we get stunning views of these tiny little owls. They are like bats they are so small.

(We find out that a Mountain Lion had been seen yesterday in precisely the same place as Jane heard her growl this morning!!)

**Day 6:** We have a leisurely morning and meet up at 7.30am and drive down towards Rodeo. We are not going for breakfast just yet, oh no, there are birds to be found! We take the Stateline Road with the wall of the Chiricahua mountains to our right and New Mexico to our left. It is warm and not a cloud in the sky, even this early. Some Scaled Quail run across the road, they really are beautiful. There is a Loggerhead Shrike that flies from one bush to another. Darren spots a meadowlark and we dismount and give it a good grilling through the scopes. Both Eastern and Western Meadowlark occur here so finer detail needs to be examined. We agree that it is indeed a Western Meadowlark. Further on we get some Black-throated Sparrows and then around Gin Road Darren spots a thrasher. It is working its way down the fence line and looks like it has a shorter and straighter bill than the thrashers we have been seeing. It starts to get agitated as if there is a snake around. We get a few more views of the bird before it flies off. It can only be Bendire's Thrasher! Superb.

We drive the rest of the way to the diner for breakfast and enjoy great views of Curve-billed Thrasher to confirm the previous id. Whilst eating breakfast a plan is hatched – to order pizza for dinner tonight and have an al fresco party!! Everyone is in agreement as we love where we are staying at Cave Creek. Pizza is then ordered.

We drive back towards Portal and take a side road to look for Crissal Thrasher again, but to no avail. There are good views of Swainson's Hawk and Turkey Vulture as well as a perched Red-tailed Hawk. We pull into Portal, a pretty little hamlet with its shop and attendant old car and walk in listening for birds. There is a bit of open parkland that provides us with Summer Tanager, Verdin, Audubon's Warblers and Acorn Woodpecker. Up at the quaint Post Office there is a Great Horned owl nesting on the top of a broken sycamore stump. We get her in the scopes and watch as she pants in the heat. There is absolutely no shade for the owl. We wonder why she chose there? She is absolutely beautiful.

As we walk back we find Townsend's, Audubon's and Grace's Warblers in two tall sycamores when Darren hears canyon Wren! Really? Here? But, yes Darren uses a little playback and in it flies and over our heads behind a shed. Wow. We have heard reports of a Northern Beardless Tyrannulet from here and if it is here we want to find it, so Darren uses a little bit of playback again and instantly, like a rocket, the bird appears and starts to sing! What a stunning, tiny flycatcher. It perches above our heads and we can see clearly the broad base to the bill and no beard! This is a very rare bird in the USA, so we are lucky indeed.

Just up the road Dave Jenson has a place where he has world famous feeders. We pull in and settle into some chairs that are provided to see what appears. Well, it is quite a list that we collect over the next hour: Broad-billed, Broad-tailed, Black-chinned, Calliope and Lucifer Hummingbirds, Bullock's, Scott's and Hooded Orioles, Ladder-backed and Acorn Woodpeckers, Northern Cardinal, Pyrrhuloxia, Summer Tanager, White-crowned, Black-throated and Chipping Sparrows, Canyon Towhee, Curve-billed Thrasher, Pine Siskin, Cassin's and House Finch,

White-winged and Collared Dove. What a list! There are also Harris's Antelope Ground Squirrels beneath the feeders. Dave joins us for a while and shares his immense knowledge. A wonderful experience enjoyed by all.

We drive back up to the Visitor Centre to have lunch in the shade and boy is it hot. Inside the Diamond-backed Rattlesnake is in a grumpy mood, rattling furiously and trying to strike through the glass! Great to watch. We drive a little further up the road, following instructions from the centre staff, park at the side of the road and are soon enjoying amazing views of a sleepy Whiskered Screech Owl at the mouth of its nest hole. It opens its eyes every now and again. What an owl!

At the South Western Research Centre we enjoy another superb hummingbird session at their feeders where we add Magnificent and Blue-throated Hummingbirds to our list for the day. Magnificent are truly magnificent but when the light catches the blue throat of a Blue-throated Hummingbird it is an unbelievable colour. We have time for a little retail therapy here in the well stocked bookshop.

Back at Cave Creek Darren heads off to collect the pizzas while Barbara, Franky, David, Marilyn, Jane, Jan, Gill and Martin all get the picnic tables looking fabulous for our al fresco party. Darren arrives back with a huge pink box full of yummy pizza. We have a great time with pizza, beer and wine whilst being serenaded by Black-headed Grosbeak. What a fabulous evening.

We drive back up South Fork after dinner and stop at the bridge where we can hear Mexican Whip poor-will calling. We listen and Martin starts to use his impressive phone app that detects bats and in no time at all he has identified Gray bat, Californian Myotis and Canyon Bat – superb! We carry on up the track, past the Research Centre listening for owls as we go. At one point the stars are so clear we get out and set up the scopes to look at the nebula on Orion! We are looking at the nebula when an owl starts to call from back down the road. It is a Flammulated Owl! It doesn't come any closer neither does the Western Screech Owl that starts to call as well. We enjoy the soundscape before heading back to our cabins for a well-earned sleep.

**Day 7:** There is a problem with one of the van's tyres this morning. It is flat. So the day starts with this van going down to Lance's place in Rodeo to get fixed. Lance is a great guy, born and bred in Rodeo and has a dog called Diesel, who just happened to turn up one day and has never left. While the tyre is being fixed the group chill at the feeders where, along with the usual suspects, they get Band-tailed Pigeon, Lincoln Sparrow and Bullock's Oriole.

We load the vans with the luggage (getting Black Phoebe along the river) and head back to Sky Islands Grill for breakfast. Geoff and the team have been superb here and the breakfast burrito is killer bee. We say our farewells and head out on a new chapter of the adventure.

We take the Trans-Mountain Road that soon becomes a rough dirt track. Duncan is very glad he had the tyre fixed, but will it hold on this road? It winds its way up to 7,500 feet at Onion Saddle before dropping down to Pinery Canyon where we park up and get out to look for Mexican Chickadee. We hear one straight away, but no matter how hard we try we don't see it. Darren tries a different tactic. Small birds out here will sometimes respond to the sounds of Pygmy Owl. So he tries and immediately gets a response from a Pygmy Owl!! We soon track it down and get it in the scopes. What an unexpected delight! A Red Crossbill is calling and we find that on top of a pine as well as a couple of Red-faced Warblers.

The road continues down through grasslands. It has become very bumpy indeed with lots of jiggling in the back of the vans. We drive into The Chiricahua National Monument and use the picnic tables and loos here. The Visitor Centre is very good. Lunch includes cold pizza. We drive further on into the monument and stop briefly under huge towers of rock to scan and listen for Canyon Wren. Nothing doing so we carry on and park up at the end of the road. We take a small walk around the rim of the car park giving us views over one of the most extraordinary and magnificent landscapes we think we have ever seen. The surrounding landscape is comprised of rock pinnacles like a petrified army. These are comprised of Rhyolite Tuff, a volcanic rock formed around 30 million years ago when a nearby volcano erupted cataclysmically depositing a thick layer of ash and debris that has since compacted to form the Rhyolite and erosion has done the rest. It is simply breath-taking. The view continues down to the flat plains and other "Ski Islands" rising up out of the flat landscape.

Stopping briefly to fill up with fuel and ice cream, we continue down towards the Mexican border where, if you know what to look for, one can see a wall. The mountains that are ahead of us are in Mexico, we are that close!

We arrive at the wonderful Casa de san Pedro, in the valley of the San Pedro river, just as a hummingbird banding (ringing) session is going on. Perfect timing. We send the group down to watch while the luggage is dealt with. This is a magical experience. The hummingbird feeders have nets over them that are dropped if a hummer starts to feed and then it is carried over to the table where the banding takes place. The banding is being carried out by none other than Sheri Williamson, the author of the Peterson Guide to Hummingbirds of North America!! We are certainly in luck. It is remarkable to watch how she and her team deal with such tiny, delicate birds and place such miniscule bands on their legs. Extraordinary. Some of us purchase Sheri's book before we find our rooms. What luxury. Darren and Duncan head to the pool for a swim and then we have a superb meal and wearily head to bed.

**Day 8:** We gather before breakfast to go for a walk along the river. The hotel sits pretty much on the riverbank. The grounds have feeders and bushes with an adjacent field with a sign on the gate warning the visitor of rattlesnakes! So, through the gate we go. There are Cassin's and Western Kingbirds as well as a Vermillion

Flycatcher (the logo of the hotel) and we also pick up on a distant Northern Harrier. We hear a bird singing from bushes ahead and we eventually get good views of a stunning male Yellow-breasted Chat. A skulking species, he is making the most of the warming sun. Along the riverbank, under the towering cottonwoods we stop and scan at various places. Yellow warbler is another new species and there are quite a few of them in the trees. As we walk back we notice a bat flying around, in fact there are three bats flying around. Darren finds a perched Broad-winged hawk. We get the scopes on this small buteo. It is a migrant heading north, using the San Pedro river to move along. Back at the field we have an American Kestrel fly over.

Breakfast is wonderful. Fresh fruit with maple syrup french toast with delicious sausages and lashings of coffee/tea.

Our destination today is another "sky island", the Huachuca Mountains. We drive to the head of Carr Canyon and park up in habitat that looks good for Montezuma Quail. This is a very hard bird to find but this area of grass and rocky hillside looks good. Blimey it is hot. Darren tries a bit of playback and astonishingly he gets a response! The quail is not close but unmistakable. Wow.

We drive on with the road beginning to climb, steeply. The tarmac gives way to rough road and then starts to switchback back and forth up the side of the mountains. Road is a word we use in the loosest sense of the word it is rocky, rough and steep as it clings precariously to the side of the mountain. The views (if one can bear to look) are wonderful. Inside the vans one can hear a pin drop as we make our way up and park on a bend where there is a trailhead. We manage, just, to get both vans off the road and walk down the trail and try again for Montezuma Quail. No luck but we do get views of Zone-tailed Hawk and can compare it with Turkey Vulture that the hawk mimics. Back at the vans Darren has some fun trying to get his back on the road. He has only three wheels on the ground at one point!! The road narrows even more as we carry on up and finally reach a camping ground among the pines at over 8,000ft up. We take a walk around the camping area and soon hear Great Pewee (jose maria) and we get one in the scopes seeing the hooked tip of the beak. Chris finds us a Hepatic Tanager, very similar to Summer Tanager but with dirty ears rather than the red on Summer. Darren then finds us another target up here the idyllic little Buff-breasted Flycatcher and it performs superbly. There are jose marias going on all over the place, we get better views of Zone-tailed Hawk and we get great views of Grace's Warbler. We try for Olive Warbler and a bird zooms in when Darren plays a bit of the song, but we never find the bird again! Darren then tries with Pygmy Owl instead and we get Black-throated Grey warbler and Hutton's Vireo.

After lunch we try again for Olive warbler, but with no luck. We jump back in the vans and prepare ourselves for the return journey as, after all, what goes up must come down! We retrace our steps back down the switchbacks around which Duncan's van cannot make it in one go, but has to reverse to get around them! The view is absolutely spectacular though. Back on terra firma we breathe a sigh

of relief! Around the rich suburbs of Sierra Vista we look for Harris's Hawk. Franky finds us a perched Red-tailed Hawk, but no Harris's today.

At San Pedro House Conservation Area we park up and enter where we see the hummingbird banders again. We put our scopes onto a hole in a huge cottonwood where there is perched a Western Screech Owl, looking amazingly like a Western Screech Owl! What a beautiful owl. Franky and David find a pair of Inca Dove and other birders alert us to the fact that there are a pair of Common Ground Doves in a bare bush. As we drive out there is a flock of Brown-headed Cowbirds in the bushes by the entrance (Christine took a photo of these birds and on review found that Bronzed Cowbird were among the Brown-headed birds. Bronzed Cowbirds have red eyes. Well done Christine!)

Back at the Casa we have a little down time before meeting up again and walking out into the field where we have a wonderful sunset and a display of about nine Lesser Nighthawks as they get up to start feeding. Martin also finds us another four species of bat with his super gadget and then we enjoy our dinner after a superb day.

**Day 9:** For those up before breakfast there are Yellow-breasted Chat, Vermillion Flycatchers, Cassin's Kingbirds Mourning Doves and a ringtail Northern Harrier to enjoy (Christine photographed a small warbler while out on her own that, on reflection at home, appears to be a Northern Parula!)

The eggs benedict for breakfast is superb and then we mount up and head out back to the Huachuca Mountains. Miller Canyon is famous to birders as being a site for great hummingbird feeders and the place to find breeding Spotted Owl of the Mexican race. It is hot when we park up at the head of trail up the canyon and meet up with Tom Junior who gives us a little information about the owls and it is not great news. The owls seem to be difficult and quite a distance up the canyon. We head off, glad of the shade from the trees. The path is rocky and steep in places as we meander through a mixture of mixed oak and sycamore. At the pine line Darren and Duncan head off to scan ahead, but with nothing to report. Around the group Chris finds an Hepatic Tanager, Gill finds a Warbling Vireo, Martin finds us a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and there are Red-faced and Audubon's Warblers and stunning Painted Redstarts.

As we retrace our steps a debate starts over the identity of a superb, dark swallowtail-like butterfly. On close examination it proves to be a Red-spotted Admiral. We get another one a little further on that is chasing an Arizona Sister. Both of these stunning butterflies perch up close so that we can get amazing views. Well done to max and Chris to sort these out. At the base of the trail we send the group up to the grandstand feeders while the guides collect the lunches. We eat while enjoying the spectacle of Broad-billed, Broad-tailed, Black-chinned, Anna's, Blue-throated and Magnificent Hummingbirds as well as a Painted Redstart that comes so close we could have stroked it. It is marvellous. We also find Ornate Tree Lizard here.

We drive around to the famous Mary Jo's feeders. As we enter the garden Darren notices a new photography hide here in a roped off area. A sign says that this is dedicated to Montezuma Quail! In a garden!! Really?! There are four chairs set up overlooking the area and we make sure that some of us are in them, just in case. It is a very hot afternoon so we sip on some cold drinks, in the shade and enjoy: Curve-billed Thrasher, Black-headed Grosbeak, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch, Spotted and Canyon Towhees as well as Arizona Grey Squirrel. Up at the roped off area there are lots of Mourning and White-winged Doves coming in for seed. We get the group gathered as the afternoon progresses and we quietly wait. Soon a stunning male Lucifer Hummingbird comes in to a sugar feeder. What a stunning bird with his purple gorget. As the Lucifer Hummingbird flies off Jan starts to get excited and pointing into the bushes ahead of her. Suddenly a truly wondrous bird steps out into view. It is a male Montezuma's Quail!!! What an outrageous bird like some Mayan tribe had just caught it and painted it and let it go. We watch it for ages and it is even joined, briefly by a female. She doesn't hang around, but the male does giving us amazing views and photographic opportunities.

We take a slightly different route home to take in a closer view of the USA/Mexico border. The mountains of Mexico look wonderful. David is sharp as he spots a couple of Coyote trotting through the undergrowth on the other side of the road.

Just before dinner we meet up with Marilyn who has had a relaxing day around the Casa. We all walk back out into the field to look for nighthawks. We start scanning around when Darren suddenly yelps and we spin around to see him pointing out a stunning White-tailed Kite flying over the top of the trees. What a bird! The Lesser Nighthawks perform brilliantly and Martin and Gill provide us with another two species of bat – Western Red Bat and the brilliantly named Greater Bonneted Bat.

Dinner is sumptuous and we head to bed after another superb Arizona day.

**Day 10:** We are moving on again today. Over breakfast we see a Roadrunner outside and there is a White-lined Sphinx inside. After we have eaten we have a little time to enjoy the shop and settle our bills before we load up the vehicles and head out on the open road once more.

We are heading north and soon, near Sonoita, we encounter a small group of Pronghorn near the road. We carry on into Patagonia where we stop at the Patton feeders, a large garden now managed by the Audubon Society, that is famous for its hummingbird species. Within watching the main feeders we get our target bird – Violet-crowned Hummingbird. This is a large hummer with a pale throat and contrasting blue head with pink bill. We get truly superb views. We also get Broad-billed and Black-chinned Hummingbirds, Northern Cardinal, Summer Tanager, Wilson's warbler, Song Sparrow, Inca Dove, Curve-billed Thrasher and Goldfinches. What a great stop.

We have a long way to go so we hit the interstate and head north to the Saguaro National Park where we stop at the eastern side. There is another great Visitor Centre where there is a Tarantula Hawk dancing around on the ground by the entrance, no Tarantula unfortunately. We also get nice views of a Cactus Wren on top of a cactus. We drive past and stop at Davis Monaghan Airbase, deep in the desert where thousands and thousands of military aircraft are parked up in great lines. It is quite a sight. We have lunch at Picacho Peak (like on our first day) where as we eat we watch soaring Turkey and Black Vultures and find a soaring Peregrine.

We pass the enormous spread of Phoenix on our way to Sedona. There are dark, looming clouds in the sky, the first for many days and as we stop to enjoy the views of the sandstone mountains of Bell Rock and Courthouse Butte. The red sandstone glows in the evening sun as we enter Sedona and find our hotel. We eat in a Mexican restaurant with lightning flashing outside and torrential rain thundering down. What a welcome!

**Day 11:** It is dry and overcast when we set out before breakfast. We try and get to Crescent Moon Ranch early, but it is not open yet so we try a couple of other locations. We find a Spotted Towhee, a Gambel's Quail and a Woodhouse's Scrub Jay sitting on wires. At another place we find Dark-eyed Junco. By 8am the Park is open and we park up. As we get out of the vehicles Martin spots an American Crow. We walk to the river and get great views of the amazing red sandstone. There is a Black Phoebe on the rocks by the river and a pair of sandals abandoned on the opposite bank! Our circuit of the park brings us Northern-Rough-winged Swallow, Yellow and Audubon's Warblers, American Robin, Say's Phoebe and Yellow-breasted Chat.

After a busy breakfast we pack up and head north following the Oak Creek Canyon and stopping at various places to enjoy the view. At Midgely Bridge we get nesting Raven and our first Violet Green swallows. We walk a little from here and hear Black-chinned Sparrow. We try a little playback and wow, a Black-chinned Sparrow pops up and shows beautifully. There are noisy White-throated Swifts at Grasshopper Point. They fly low and fast over our heads. We stop for lunch by the river where on arrival Duncan spots a Purple Martin on a rock by the water, but is the only person to see it! Jane spots a superb male Western Tanager and we get Summer Tanager here too.

We still have a ways to go so we head off again, stopping for a final view down Oak Creek Canyon and scan for Black Hawk. A beautiful view but no hawks. We drive on up to Flagstaff where we stop for the obligatory photo of Route 66 that we all know goes from Chicago to LA! We push on after filling the vans and into endless pine forest. We pass the airfield for Grand Canyon and we start to get very excited. Soon Darren radios for everyone to close their eyes (not Duncan!) We park up and face the road with our eyes closed. There are few mumblings from the group but Darren is whipping them into shape like a drill instructor! We all turn to the right and put hands on the shoulders of the person

in front and, with Duncan in the lead, we conga up the path (passing some amused looking tourists) to then stand (still with our eyes closed) next to a railing. Darren gets us to turn to the right again and then counts down from 5 – 4, 3, 2, 1 – WOW!!!!!! The world falls away in front of us in a knee trembling sight that will never be forgotten. The GRAND CANYON! No words do this place justice, they cannot, but it is truly awesome.

With elation pulsing through our veins we drive into Canyon Village and find our hotel. There is a bit of a wait as we check in and then set a time to meet up for dinner. Wow, there are a lot of people here. The guides set off to find a place to eat and in front of the main buildings there is a superb view over the canyon from the edge. The guides have a look over the edge (it can be good for condor) and immediately find two Californian Condors perched in trees below! We keep the scopes on them and eventually the group wander back over for dinner and we get great views of this, one of the world's rarest birds before dinner! What a fitting end to another great day at one of the Wonders of the World.

**Day 12:** After a good night's sleep we meet up before breakfast, for those that wish too and walk along the rim of the canyon westwards. The condors have gone from below the rim as we walk along towards the Bright Angel Trailhead. Violet Green Swallows and White-throated Swifts are up having their breakfast. Time for ours. Boy does it take some time; the staff are obviously in no rush!

This truly is an amazing place and very difficult to get one's head around the scale of it. As we walk there are few birds as we make our way back towards the Bright Angel Trailhead and beyond. There are great views of Violet Green swallows and White-throated Swifts. Ravens are a common bird here and we get some great views as they cronk and soar out over the rim. We hear Juniper Titmouse and find Black-throated Grey Warbler and Bushtit. A raptor soars up out of the canyon and up over our heads. It is a Goshawk! We get on it and follow it against the bright sky. At times it is difficult to keep one's footing, not because the ground is uneven but the overwhelming sense of enormity makes the knees wobble and give a feeling of vertigo. We walk out along the rim to Maricopa Point and from here jump on the free bus to Mohave Point where the view just gets better and we can get a bus from here back to the main village where we have lunch by the main area where we saw the condors last night.

After lunch we board the vans and drive around to the main Visitor Centre of the Canyon here. We have a little time to use the facilities, grab a coffee and then drive along (past the conga location) Mather Point. The colours of the canyon are constantly changing and the reds are now beginning to stand out as the sun starts to descend. We get some superb views of Zone-tailed Hawk here. What a bird they are. Very similar in size and shape to a Turkey Vulture, it is understood that they mimic the vultures, with whom they fly, to hide from their prospective prey. Very clever and they are a beautiful hawk. We get our first views of the mighty Colorado River, the engineer of this massive hole on the Earth's surface. The river has carved this canyon over eons and is still doing so.

We finish up at Grandview Point and trailhead. There are some great Ravens to be seen on our walk to the point as well as Mexican Jay and Audubon's Warbler. We allow the group to find their own spot to take in the view and marvel at the sheer scale of what lies before us. As a visitor to the canyon in 1895 wrote, *"No language can fully describe, no artist paint the beauty, grandeur, immensity and sublimity of this most wonderful production of Nature's great architect. Grand Canyon must be seen to be appreciated."*

Some of the group head down the trail and some stay nearer the top. Darren finds a secluded spot to do some painting and we all have our own experience of this amazing place. Those who have walked downhill have been warned not to go too far as the altitude will affect how one walks back up! We don't lose any to the condors however and we drive slowly back to Canyon Village and our hotel for a little down time before dinner. As we meet up for dinner we get the most amazing fly-by of Californian Condor. These huge birds sweep past us and up and over the US flag on the point ahead. Wow that would have been some picture if we had been quick enough! This is the largest flying bird in the USA, with a wingspan of about 9ft. They were on the brink of extinction due to mainly persecution, when a government conservation programme was instigated. The last wild birds were caught and brought in to captivity where a breeding programme started in 1987. In 1992 birds were released back into the wild in Southern California and later Baja before birds were released in to the Grand Canyon in 1996. We are so lucky to be seeing them at all given how rapidly they were disappearing. Another two wing past, we have had four today out of an overall population (both captive and wild) of only 400!

**Day 13:** It is another beautiful day in Arizona as we have a long breakfast (as usual), but a tasty one. Some have expressed an interest in seeing the geological museum so we suggest that we walk the rim trail to it. All agree this is a good idea, so after welcoming the day with another Condor, we strike out. The colours in the canyon are different again this morning. We lose ourselves to the Hopi House and museum that sells things that are First nation from a traditional building. The stuff is beautiful and they have a very good stock of books, including *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* by Dee Brown, a must for every library, but not a happy read.

We walk out along the Rim Trail where tourists seem to be dedicated in trying to get the most extreme selfies of themselves with the canyon behind. No wonder so many fall off each year. We get a fantastic view of a pair of Pygmy Nuthatches by their nest hole. What beautiful little birds. The trail here has very little in the way of barrier and clear air. What is nice about this trail is that there are examples of the geology all along taking the visitor back in time to the origins of the geology that form the rocks of the canyon. This is explained in more detail in the geology Museum that we eventually reach and spend some time at. Darren and Duncan set a time to pick the group up at the main Visitor Centre which is just next door and then they take the bus back to the village to collect the vans. We load up and head south as we have an appointment at the airfield.

We stop in at the little town of Tusayan and have lunch at a little deli which is very nice indeed and is cool with air conditioning. Some of the group want to take a helicopter ride out over the canyon and it is from Tusayan that they depart. After lunch we head to the airport and those that are going on the helicopters check in and weigh in. It is then that Duncan gets the shock of finding out that the group have chipped together to get him on a helicopter too, if there is space!! We sit through a safety video and get stickered and then go through another door to the waiting area (just an extension of the room we were already in). There are a lot of other people waiting for helicopters when a lady appears and asks for a Mr Duncan Macdonald. Well, you could have knocked him down with a feather. Duncan is whisked away to the other terminal to join another helicopter while the others all get aboard their own. The rest of the group wave us off and then it is an extraordinary hour or so in the air.

Duncan cannot thank you all adequately enough for your generosity and goodwill. It is an experience that he will never forget – thank you.

When we have all landed there are hugs and smiles all around and the sharing of experiences. We then mount up and head around to the Arizona Trail for a walk in the afternoon heat. We park up and walk out through the pines. Some of them have been affected by mistletoe and there are interpretation boards explaining this. There are a few birds around and it is pretty quiet. In an opening we find some birds on the top of the trees that turn out to be Western Bluebirds. A nice addition. On our way out again some of us get great views of a really inquisitive Grace's Warbler that sits out really close and sings. We also get good views of Black-throated Grey warbler and Hermit Thrush in here. On the drive back out we find some Elk close to the road.

We drive out to Desert Viewpoint to take in the sunset from this eastern point. The landscape here drops away to the flat lands to the east and we get more extensive views of the Colorado River. The viewing tower is about to close so those that want to ascend do so quickly. Ravens stand guard at the entrance. The fading light catches the yellows and reds in the canyon rocks and sets them on fire. It is a breath-taking scene.

Back at the village we catch sight of a man in a hat and carrying a radio receiver. Follow that man!! We follow him and find out that he is the main guy that tracks the condors and has been doing so since their release in 1996. He is reticent at first but soon warms to the Speyside Wildlife charm and the obvious curiosity of the group. He tells us about the condors and their breeding cycle and a little about the two identified birds we saw on our first evening. They are mother and daughter and daughter was hatched from a nest nearby, but he is keeping an eye on them as they are showing no fear of people and are happy to land next to folk which is increasingly alarming for the people concerned and concerning for the conservation staff who, obviously, don't need any bad press about these already threatened birds. He is very interesting but has work to do.

We have dinner on our final night in Arizona.

**Day 14:** Amazingly, after all the adventures, we have come to our last day! We take in the canyon for the last time and have our breakfast which is nicely slow as none of us are particularly keen to leave. We have to though if we are to catch a plane back to the UK.

Just as we are leaving a pair of adult condors sweep up out of the canyon in formation and glide out over the visitor Centre and away. Just like two military aircraft out on patrol and also like they are saying goodbye to us. Wow!

The vans are loaded and we hit the road. What a place the grand canyon is and it brings back to mind something Duncan had read by John Muir: *"In the supreme flaming glory of sunset the whole canyon is transfigured as if the life and light of centuries of sunshine stored up in the rocks was now being poured forth as from one glorious fountain flooding both earth and sky."*

We head south towards Flagstaff taking the smaller road around Humphrey's Peak and around to Flagstaff where on the outskirts we find Lake Mary for lunch that we have picked up from Flagstaff. We need to pay to get into the picnic site but there are covered areas to eat under. We eat and have time to scan around the water where there are Mallard and Coot and then we find some new birds – Ospreys are flying around and we find Western Grebe and Neotropic Cormorant out on the water.

We go through the voting here as it is a wonderful place as well as being the only time that we are likely to have for the rest of the day. As usual there is a wide spread of votes for our experiences over the last two weeks. Darren has been very generous and given everyone five species instead of one:

**Species of the trip:** We asked for everyone to chose a hummingbird as one of their five and there was a two way split between Magnificent and Violet-crowned Hummingbirds with Black-chinned coming in second. Other votes for Anna's, Lucifer and Blue-throated. The other species was won again by two species – Montezuma Quail and Elegant Trogon. Californian Condor is high up there and then a whole array of species from Painted Redstart, Great Horned Owl, Vermillion Flycatcher and a shout out for a butterfly with Red-spotted Admiral as well as Red-faced Warbler, Pyrrhuloxia and Pygmy Nuthatch.

**Place of the Trip:** The Grand Canyon wins hands down and almost unanimous with other votes for Casa de San Pedro, South Western Research Station, Cave Creek, Chiricahua National Monument and Picacho Peak.

**Magic Moment:** Always very personal but the helicopter ride and the hummingbird ringing both received multiple votes as well as votes for the first hummingbird of the trip and condors in the canyon as well as successfully standing by the rim of the canyon.

As always this is a fabulous way to remember the great times we have had.

We hit the highway and head south. There is no stopping as we have to get to the airport on time. We hit the outskirts of Phoenix and the traffic becomes huge on the highway, but eventually we are handing the keys of the vehicles back to the hire desk and boarding the bus back to the airport. We check in and are soon boarding our overnight flight to London Heathrow.

**Day 15:** We have landed back in the UK and collected our luggage. It is time to say our farewells and to say a thank you from these two guides to you all for your fun, laughter, sharp eyes and general good company and look forward to travelling with you again soon. Colorado anyone?

## SPECIES LIST

### BIRDS

Mallard  
Mexican Duck  
American Wigeon  
Blue-winged Teal  
Cinnamon Teal  
Northern Shoveler  
Ring-necked Duck  
Ruddy Duck  
Pied-billed Grebe  
Montezuma Quail  
Gambel's Quail  
Scaled Quail  
Wild Turkey  
Eared Grebe  
Western Grebe  
Neotropic Cormorant  
Great Blue Heron  
Great Egret  
Snowy Egret  
White-faced Ibis  
Californian Condor  
Turkey Vulture  
Black Vulture  
Northern Harrier  
Osprey  
White-tailed Kite  
Cooper's Hawk  
Goshawk  
Zone-tailed hawk  
Gray Hawk  
Swainson's Hawk  
Broad-winged hawk  
Red-tailed Hawk  
Golden Eagle  
American Coot  
Killdeer  
Black-necked Stilt  
American Avocet  
Spotted Sandpiper  
Western Sandpiper  
Least sandpiper  
Wilson's Phalarope  
Feral Pigeon  
Band-tailed Pigeon  
White-winged Dove  
Mourning Dove  
Collared Dove  
Inca Dove  
Common Ground Dove  
Greater Roadrunner  
Great Horned Owl  
Burrowing Owl  
Elf Owl  
Flammulated Owl (H)  
Whiskered Screech Owl  
Western Screech Owl  
Northern Pygmy Owl  
Mexican Whip poor-will  
Lesser Nighthawk  
White-throated Swift  
Anna's Hummingbird  
Costa's Hummingbird  
Black-chinned Hummer  
Broad-tailed Hummingbird  
Lucifer Hummingbird  
Broad-billed Hummer  
Violet-crowned Hummingbird  
Blue-throated Hummingbird  
Magnificent Hummer  
Rufous Hummingbird  
Elegant Trogon  
Acorn Woodpecker  
Gila Woodpecker  
Ladder-backed Woodpecker  
Arizona Woodpecker  
Hairy Woodpecker  
Northern Flicker  
Gilded Flicker  
Peregrine  
American Kestrel  
Greater Pewee  
Wester Wood Pewee(H)  
Cordilleran Flycatcher  
Willow Flycatcher  
Gray Flycatcher  
Buff-breasted Flycatcher  
Black Phoebe  
Say's Phoebe  
Vermillion Flycatcher  
Dusky-capped Flycatcher  
Ash-throated Flycatcher  
Brown-crested Flycatcher  
Cassin's Kingbird  
Western Kingbird  
Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet  
Loggerhead Shrike  
Bell's Vireo  
Plumbeous Vireo  
Cassin's Vireo  
Warbling Vireo  
Hutton's Vireo  
Steller's Jay  
Woodhouse's Scrub Jay  
Mexican Jay  
Chihuahuan Raven  
Common Raven  
American Crow  
Horned Lark  
Violet Green Swallow  
Northern Rough Winged Swallow  
Barn Swallow  
Mountain Chickadee  
Mexican Chickadee (H)  
Juniper Titmouse  
Bridled Titmouse

Verdin  
Bushtit  
White-breasted Nuthatch  
Pygmy Nuthatch  
Brown Creeper  
Bewick's Wren  
House Wren  
Cactus Wren  
Canyon Wren  
Rock Wren  
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet  
Western Bluebird  
Hermit Thrush  
American Robin  
Northern Mockingbird  
Crissal Thrasher (H)  
Curve-billed Thrasher  
Bendire's Thrasher  
European Starling  
Phainopepla  
Lucy's Warbler  
Virginia's Warbler  
Common Yellowthroat  
Yellow Warbler  
Grace's Warbler  
Black-throated Grey Warbler  
Audubon's Warbler  
Hermit Warbler  
Townsend's Warbler  
Wilson's Warbler  
Red-faced Warbler  
Painted Redstart  
Yellow-breasted Chat  
Green-tailed Towhee  
Spotted Towhee  
Canyon Towhee

Abert's Towhee  
Rufous-crowned Sparrow  
Rufous-winged Sparrow  
Brewer's Sparrow  
Chipping Sparrow  
Black-throated Sparrow  
Black-chinned Sparrow  
Song Sparrow  
Lincoln's Sparrow  
Dark-eyed Junco  
Yellow-eyed Junco  
White-crowned Sparrow  
Lark Sparrow  
Hepatic Tanager  
Summer Tanager  
Western Tanager  
Northern Cardinal  
Pyrrhuloxia  
Black-headed Grosbeak  
Lazuli Bunting  
Brewer's Blackbird  
Great-tailed Grackle  
Red-winged Blackbird  
Yellow-headed Blackbird  
Brown-headed Cowbird  
Bronzed Cowbird  
Western Meadowlark  
Hooded Oriole  
Scott's Oriole  
Bullock's Oriole  
Cassin's Finch  
House Finch  
Red Crossbill  
Pine Siskin  
Lesser Goldfinch  
House Sparrow  
Bufflehead

**MAMMALS**

Botta's Pocket Gopher  
Raccoon  
Ringtail  
Striped Skunk  
Coyote  
Gunnison's Prairie Dog  
Rock Squirrel  
Harris's Antelope Ground Squirrel  
Cliff Chipmunk  
Arizona Grey Squirrel  
Apache Fox Squirrel  
Wood Rat  
Black-tailed Jackrabbit  
Desert Cottontail  
Elk  
Mule Deer  
Coue's White-tailed Deer  
Pronghorn  
California Myotis  
Long-legged Myotis  
Canyon Bat  
Yuma Myotis  
Long-eared Myotis  
Silver-haired Bat  
Hoary Bat  
Big Brown Bat  
Western Red Bat  
Great Bonneted Bat  
Mexican Free-tailed bat

**REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS**

Chiracahua Leopard Frog  
Ornate Tree Lizard  
Yarrow's Spiny Lizard  
Dessert Grassland Whiptail  
Sonoran Spotted Whiptail  
Collared Lizard  
Gopher Snake

**BUTTERFLIES & MOTHS**

Cabbage White  
Chequered White  
Orange Sulphur  
Chequered Skipper  
White-barred Skipper  
Silver Spotted Skipper  
Orange Skipperling  
White Chequered Skipper  
Pipevine Swallowtail  
Two-tailed Swallowtail  
Black Swallowtail  
Arizona Sister  
Dark Tropical Buckeye  
Zela Metalmark  
Arizon Hairstreak  
Dainty Sulphur  
Spring Azure  
Marine Blue  
Acmon Blue  
Common Buckeye  
Canyonland Satyr  
Mylitta Crescent  
Funereal Duskywing  
Texan Crescent  
Rekirts Blue  
Sagebrush Chequerspot  
Elada Chequerspot  
Queen  
Red-spotted Admiral  
Large Orange Sulphur  
Mexican Yellow  
Arizona Juvenal's Duskywing  
Bordered Patch  
Painted Lady  
Red Admiral  
Golden-headed Scallopwing  
White-lined Sphinx

## PLANTS

Agave  
Alligator spruce  
Annual townsend daisy  
Apache plume  
Arizona sycamore  
Banana yucca  
Barestem larkspur (tall mountain larkspur)  
Barrel cactus  
Basin bladderpod  
Blackfoot daisy  
Blue phacelia  
Bluebonnet lupine  
Bristly nama  
Brittlebrush  
Buckthorn cholla  
California suncup  
Common monkeyflower  
Coral bells  
Creeping wood sorrel  
Creosote bush  
Dakota mock vervain  
Dalmatian toadflax  
Desert globe mallow  
Desert indian paintbrush  
Desert marigold  
Desert prickly pear  
Dogweed  
Dwarf mistletoe  
Fairy duster  
Feather peabrush  
Filaree (redstem stork's bill)  
Fineleaf hymenopappus  
Giant saguaro  
Golden columbine  
Golden corydalis  
Gordon bladderpod  
Greenleaf five eyes  
Hedgehog cactus  
Mexican gold poppy  
Mexican manzanita  
Mexican primrose  
Milkvetch sp.  
Mojave lupine  
Mountain phlox  
New Mexican thistle  
New Mexico bird's-foot trefoil  
Nuttall's larkspur  
Ocotillo  
Parry penstemon  
Prairie spiderwort  
Purple owl's clover  
Rimrock milkvetch  
Roseheath  
Silverleaf nightshade  
Slender woodland star  
Small-leaf globemallow  
South western prickly poppy  
Spreading fleabane  
Teddy bear cholla  
Western blue flax  
Western wallflower  
White ratany (or range ratany?)  
Wholeleaf indian paintbrush  
Winding mariposa lily  
Wright's deervetch  
Yellow salsify