

BIRD SPECIES ADDED TO THE MARICOPA COUNTY, ARIZONA LIST SINCE 1996
JANET WITZEMAN, 4619 E. ARCADIA LANE, PHOENIX, AZ 85018

Maricopa County (encompassing the greater Phoenix area) is as large as the state of New Hampshire with elevations ranging from approximately 700 to over 7000 feet. Habitat diversity is also great from lowland deserts to mountain slope conifer stands.

When *Birds of Arizona* by Phillips, Marshall, and Monson was published in 1964, only 326 species were on the Maricopa County list. The first edition of *Birds of Maricopa County, Arizona* by Demaree, Radke, and Witzeman, published in 1972, added 20 additional species. The names of only 16 observers were listed in that edition. By the time *Birds of Phoenix and Maricopa County, Arizona* by Witzeman, Demaree, and Radke was published in 1997, 81 species had been added to the County list and the names of more than 90 observers were listed in that edition. This was mainly the result of the surge in the number of birders and the interest in birding in Arizona that began in the 1970s. Since 1996, the number of birders, the areas covered, and the frequency of coverage have all continued to increase.

During that time there have been numerous changes, not only in the status of species, but in earlier or later arrival and departure dates, as well as new nesting records. These changes will all be incorporated in a revised and updated edition of *Birds of Phoenix and Maricopa County, Arizona* that is now in the process of being written.

In the meantime, because of the interest expressed in the number of species that have been added to the county list, what follows are the sixteen species added since the second edition, bringing the new total to 443.

Cackling Goose *Branta hutchinsii*. The first individual to be reported and documented, after Cackling Goose was determined to be a full species, was one at Fountain Hills Lake 21 January – 28 February 2003 (ph. KR). At least two were observed on Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation lands 14 -15 December 2005 (SBu, RWz, KR *et al.*). In 2006, three were reported at McCormick Ranch in Scottsdale 17 January (PL *et al.*) and two were reported at the gravel pit ponds at the confluence of the Agua Fria and Salt rivers 13 February (MMo). A *minima* type was discovered 30 October 2006 at Estrella Mountain Ranch Pond, southwest of Phoenix, where it remained at least until 25 February 2007 (JJa *et al.*). This species has since been determined to likely be a rare winter visitor to the county.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*. One individual was discovered on Lake Pleasant 23 February 1998 (RC). There were six previous records for the state.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea*. An immature individual was photographed below Painted Rock Dam 13 August – 5 September 2005 (BGro *et al.*) and provided the fifth record for the state.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*. An adult was photographed at Arlington 19 – 21 May 2001 (RJ *et al.*). An adult and a first year bird were observed at a pond east of El Mirage, southwest of Phoenix 11 August 2001 (TC). These provided the first and second records for the state as well as for the county. There have since been two additional accepted records for Maricopa County and several others elsewhere in Arizona of this apparently westward expanding ibis.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio martinica*. An adult was first identified and reported at the Gilbert Water Ranch 5 September 2009 (GN), but first photographed there 2 September 2009 (BA). Additional photographs were taken by others during its stay until 8 September 2009 (PD, BGri, TT). The bird may have been present earlier as there was a possible report from 30 August 2009 (*fide* MMo).



07 September 2009, photo by Brendon Grice

Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica*. An individual, photographed at the Gila Bend Sewage Ponds 18 May 1996 (CBa), provided the fifth state record and the first away from Willcox in southeast Arizona.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Tryngites subruficollis*. A juvenile, found at Painted Rock Reservoir 26 September 1993 (DSj *et al.*), was on the hypothetical list for the county and state until another individual was photographed at Paloma, west of Gila Bend 11 - 12 September 2002 (BGro *et al.*). Shortly thereafter, one was discovered at Rousseau Sod Farms, Scottsdale 22 – 29 September 2002 (RJ *et al.*). Two individuals were photographed at Paloma 11 – 16 September 2007 (BGro *et al.*). The fifth record for the county and sixth for the state was provided by an individual observed at Rousseau Sod Farms 25 – 30 September 2007 (KR *et al.*). These last records were part of the largest fall incursion of Buff-breasted Sandpiper ever recorded in western N. America, particularly along the coast.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*. A juvenile was discovered at the Lower River Road Ponds near Palo Verde 9 – 16 December 2006 (BGro *et al.*; photos: CBe & GR). This was a first record for the state as well as for the county.



11 December 2006, photo by Chris Benesh

Glaucous-winged Gull *Larus glaucescens*. A juvenile was found at the Lower River Road Ponds 23 November 2003 – 9 January 2004 (TC *et al.*; photos: CBe, RJ, GR, MS). There were five previously accepted state records, all from the lower Colorado River, with this the first since 1981.

Green Kinfisher *Chloroceryle americana*. A female was discovered at the Hassayampa River Preserve in Wickenburg 27 February 2010 (DSh, ph. MWe, ph. LS *et al.*) and was still present there 24 April 2010. This represents the second record away from the species' usual haunts in southeast Arizona and the first record for central Arizona.



13 March 2010, photo by Brendon Grice

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*. Following a first state record in March 2000, the first individuals to be reported in the county were in Tempe 28 May 2000 (RJ) and 4 September 2000 (KG). The following year several were reported in Palo Verde. Thereafter, numbers increased and the species rapidly spread throughout the county and state.

Thick-billed Kingbird *Tyrannus crassirostris*. An individual was found at the Hassayampa River Preserve in Wickenburg 21 - 27 September 2003 (TC, PMo). The following year a pair was found nesting at this location and was present from 5 June until 15 August 2004 (JP *et al.*). Two individuals were reported there 7 May 2005 (MV), three were observed 28 May 2005 (PMo, CD), and one was seen collecting nesting material 2 July 2005 (TC, DY). In 2006, 2007, and 2008 at least one individual was present there from 3 May through the summer.

Carolina Wren *Thryothorus ludovicianus*. An individual was photographed during its visit to a yard in Tolleson, west of Phoenix from 7 September until 11 October 2003 (BGro). There was only one previous record for the state. This remains the most western record for the species.

Tropical Parula *Parula pitiayumi*. A male was discovered at Mesquite Wash near Highway 87, northeast of Phoenix 2 June 2002 (PMo, CD).

Prairie Warbler *Dendroica discolor*. A male was found along the Verde River, on Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation lands 16 December 1999 (TC). A second individual, an adult female, was found at the Gilbert Water Ranch 17 November 2005 – 13 March 2006 (MMo *et al.*).

Mourning Warbler *Oporornis philadelphia*. An adult male, discovered in trees along Chandler Boulevard 18 September 1995 (RJ, JJo), was not added to the county list until 1997 when it was accepted by the Arizona Bird Committee. Two individuals have been recorded since then: one, a first year bird found at Morgan City Wash, south of Lake Pleasant 8 September 2007 (TC) and an adult male observed in a northeast Phoenix yard 14 May 2008 (TC).

Observers: Bee Amato (BA), Charles Babbitt (CBa), Chris Benesh (CBe), Scott Burge (SBu), Robert

Chapman (RC), Troy Corman (TC), Pierre Deviche (PD), Cynthia Donald (CD), Kathy Groschupf (KG), Brendon Grice (BGri), Bill Grossi (BGro), Melanie Herring (MHe), Jukka Jantunen (JJa), Jill Jones (JJo), Roy Jones (RJ), Paul Lehman (PL), Mike Moore (MMo), Pete Moulton (PMo), Gary Nunn (GN), John Prather (JP), Kurt Rademaker (KR), Gary Rosenberg (GR), Dominic Sherony (DSh), Liz Sockness (LS), Dave Stejskal (DSj), Mark Stevenson (MS), Terry Thomas (TT), Marceline VandeWater (MV), Magill Weber (MWe), Robert Witze-man (RWz), Daniela Yellan (DY).

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank Troy Corman for reviewing this manuscript and for his helpful comments, and Gary Rosenberg for reviewing species accepted by the Arizona Bird Committee. I thank Mark Stevenson for suggesting that I write this paper.

Submitted 24 August 2009

Accepted 25 April 2010

