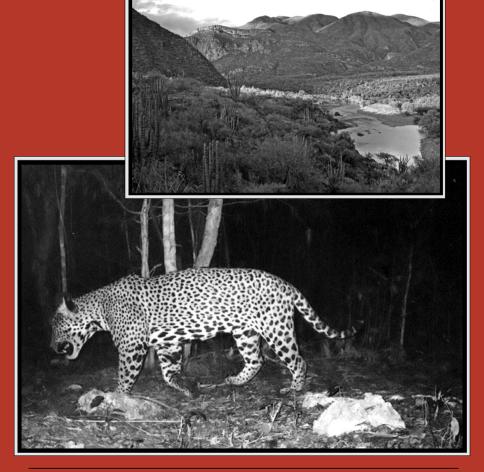
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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Avian Richness,
Status, and
Conservation in
the Northwestern
Neotropics in
Sonora, Mexico

Aaron D. Flesch^{1,4}

¹School of Natural Resources and the Environment University of Arizona The Desert Laboratory – Tumamoc Hill 1675 Anklam Road Tucson, AZ 85745

Peter Warshall² (deceased) Sky Jacobs³

²Northern Jaguar Project 2114 West Grant Road – Suite 121 Tucson, AZ 85745

³Watershed Management Group 1137 North Dodge Blvd Tucson, AZ 85716

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⁴ Corresponding author: flesch@email.arizona.edu; 520-621-7255

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ABSTRACT: We assessed the status and richness of birds in a remote region of northwest Mexico and provided the first description of a bird community in foothills thornscrub vegetation across the full annual cycle of seasons. Our efforts were part of a broad program to describe biodiversity and conservation value of the Northern Jaguar Reserve. This large private reserve was recently proposed for federal protection, in part, because it supports the northernmost breeding population of jaguars (Panthera onca) and extensive riparian woodlands along the largest free-flowing river in western Mexico. The reserve and surrounding region are dominated by foothills thornscrub, which is a vegetation community that covers a vast transition zone between tropical forest and desert-scrub in northwest Mexico but is not represented in the federal system of Natural Protected Areas. Bird species richness was similar to that found in other protected areas in western Mexico. Over seven years, we observed 214 species of birds and estimate that 241 species are present (95% CI = 225–257). Community composition was temporally dynamic; 49% of species were winter residents or passage migrants, 31% were permanent residents, and 15% were summer residents. We observed 10 species that were breeding or wintering north of the previously described limits of their geographic ranges. We observed 13 species of conservation concern in Mexico, including the Bald Eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus) and Military Macaw (Ara militaris) that occur at the extreme southern and northern edges of their breeding ranges, respectively. High environmental variation and unique biogeographic and physiographic settings in this region promote high bird species richness and high conservation value.

Index terms: distribution, foothills thornscrub, Mexico, Natural Protected Area, Northern Jaguar Reserve, richness, Sonora

INTRODUCTION

Information on the diversity and status of wildlife is important for assessing conservation priorities and for designing reserve networks at national and regional scales. Nonetheless, data on wildlife communities to inform conservation efforts are often limited in remote regions with high potential conservation value. In Mexico, data on wildlife communities are often sparse in remote regions, and representation of the full range of biotic communities and vertebrate species in the federal system of Natural Protected Areas (NPAs) is incomplete (Ortega-Huerta and Peterson 2004; Ceballos 2007; Hannah et al. 2007). Conservation efforts in Mexico are of global significance because it is a mega-diverse country that spans a broad Neotropical-Nearctic transition zone (Rzedowski 1978; Halffter 1987; Mittermeier et al. 1998) and because threats to biodiversity are high (Mas et al. 2004; Calderon-Aguilera et al. 2012). Such threats include large-scale deforestation that has reduced some vegetation communities to fractions of their historic coverage, and habitat loss and degradation due to urban growth, overgrazing, and development along the international border (Trejo and Dirzo 2000; Stoleson et al. 2005; Valdez et al. 2006; Flesch et al. 2010).

The primary mechanism for biodiversity conservation in Mexico has been the designation of NPAs by the federal government. A recent national assessment of nearly half of Mexican NPAs, however, found that only 54% were effective at preventing land-use and land-cover change, and that other NPAs were weakly effective or ineffective (Figueroa and Sánchez-Cordero 2008). Because few NPAs are owned exclusively by the federal government, managed solely for biodiversity conservation, or placed systematically based on scientific criteria, additional mechanisms and information on spatial patterns of biodiversity are important for conservation in Mexico (Ortega-Huerta and Peterson 2004; Valdez et al. 2006).

Private efforts and public-private partnerships focused in regions of high conservation value offer additional mechanisms for biodiversity conservation in Mexico (Valdez et al. 2006; Rands et al. 2010; Rosas-Rosas and Valdez 2010). In 2003, two conservation organizations—Naturalia and the Northern Jaguar Project—began a binational partnership to purchase private land in a remote region of northwest Mexico to protect the northernmost breeding population of jaguars (*Panthera onca* L.). Since 2003, the Northern Jaguar Reserve (NJR) has grown to 20,140 ha, its mission has expanded to focus more generally on

biodiversity conservation, and the region has been proposed for federal protection as a NPA. This region has high potential conservation value because it is remote, situated along the largest free-flowing river in western Mexico, and supports extensive riparian woodlands, which in these semi-arid environments provide important resources for wildlife but have been highly degraded in adjacent lowlands. Moreover, the NJR is located near the northern extent of subtropical vegetation in the Western Hemisphere and protects large areas of foothills thornscrub, which is not represented in the federal system of NPAs and has been the focus of very little study despite being among the most dominant vegetation communities in the state of Sonora.

As part of a broad effort to document biodiversity in this region of Mexico and to evaluate the potential merits of a proposed federal NPA, we assessed the status and richness of birds and evaluated the region's conservation value for birds. Our efforts complement recent studies of jaguar (Gutiérrez-González et al. 2012) and herpetofauna (Rorabaugh et al. 2011) in this region and provide the first description of a bird community in foothills thornscrub vegetation throughout the complete annual cycle of seasons. We estimated richness, residency and breeding status, relative abundance, and habitat use of all birds we observed during surveys that spanned all major seasons and habitat types over seven years (2007–2013). To assess conservation value, we compared estimates of avian richness with that in other regions of western Mexico, evaluated the distributional significance of populations by assessing species that were not known to breed or winter in this region, and identified populations of conservation concern in Mexico and the neighboring United States (US).

METHODS

Study Area

The NJR is in east-central Sonora, 55 km north of Sahuaripa and approximately 200 km south of the US-Mexico border (centered near 29°25' N, 109°10' W; Figure 1).

This region is situated west of the northern end of the Sierra Madre Occidental, surrounded on three sides by deep, lowland canyons of the Aros and Yaqui Rivers, and is among the largest and least fragmented wildlands in Mexico. We considered an approximately 50,000-ha study area that included the NJR and adjacent areas along the Aros-Yaqui river corridor (Figure 1).

Climate is seasonally arid with hot summers and cool winters; annual precipitation averages 38 cm in Sahuaripa, of which 72% occurs during the summer monsoon from June through September (Brown 1982). Vegetation in uplands is predominantly foothills thornscrub (FT), which is drought deciduous, in leaf during and soon after the summer monsoon, and dominated by short trees, shrubs, and cacti (Brown 1982). FT covers a large region of foothills and interior valleys west of the Sierra Madre Occidental, and together with its coastal counterpart (e.g., coastal thornscrub; Martin et al. 1998) is the dominant vegetation community in a broad transition zone between tropical forest and desert-scrub at the northwestern edge of the Neotropics. Floristically, FT is similar to but shorter and less floristically and structurally diverse than tropical deciduous forest, into which it transitions in southern Sonora and Sinaloa (Gentry 1982; Búrquez et al. 1999). Dominant plants include the trees Lysiloma divaricatum (Jacq.) J.F. Macbr., L. watsonii Rose, Bursera fagaroides (Kunth), Fouquieria macdougalii Nash, Acacia cochliacantha Humb. & Bonpl. ex Willd., Ipomoea arborescens (Humb. & Bonpl.), Ceiba acuminate (S. Watson) Rose, Parkinsonia praecox (Ruiz & Pav. ex Hook.), and the columnar cactus Stenocereus thurberi (Engelm.) F. Buxb. Riparian areas on deep soils and flats are dominated by woodlands of mesquite (Prosopis velutina Wooton), acacia (A. occidentalis Rose), and Mexican ebony (Havardia Mexicana (Rose) Britton & Rose). In rocky canyons, riparian vegetation is dominated by L. watsonii, palms (Sabal uresana Trel. and Brahea brandegeei (Purpus) H.E. Moore), and a drought deciduous oak known locally as "encino amarillo" (Quercus tuberculate Lieb.). Riparian vegetation in mesic canyons are dominated by willows (Salix bonplandiana Kunth and S. gooddingii C.R. Ball), sycamore (*Platanus wrightii* S. Watson), and button-willow (*Cephalanthus salicifolius* Humb. & Bonpl.). At higher elevations, oak woodlands and mountain scrub are dominated by *Q. chihuahuensis* Trel., *Q. toumeyi* Sarg., *Q. alboncinta* Trel., and other oaks that are often mixed with FT or *Dodonaea viscosa* Jacq.

Design and Field Surveys

To assess bird species richness, status, and habitat use, we surveyed birds using both standardized and unstandardized techniques during four seasons across multiple years. We focused standardized surveys along two sets of transects; eight transects that we placed in representative areas across a full range of vegetation communities at elevations between 470 and 1100 m on the NJR (hereafter "extensive transects"), and 14 additional transects in canyons, beachfronts, and riparian areas along the Aros-Yaqui river corridor on and around the NJR (hereafter "river transects," Figure 1). Transects ranged from approximately 700 to 3000 m in length and followed drainages, narrow roads, or trails. We accessed extensive transects via land and river transects via boat. Upland vegetation along transects was dominated by FT that included short thornscrub at low elevations (<500 m), tall thornscrub on sheltered slopes and in canyons at moderate elevations (550-750 m; see Warshall and Flesch 2013), and by oak woodland, mountain scrub, and grasslands at high elevations (>1000 m).

We used distance-sampling methods to survey birds along transects. We surveyed no earlier than 30 minutes before local sunrise and no later than five hours after sunrise. Surveys in spring, summer, and fall rarely extended more than three hours after sunrise, whereas those in winter typically began one hour after sunrise and continued for four hours due to low bird activity during cold mornings. We surveyed extensive transects up to four times per season for two or three years. We surveyed river transects once in up to three seasons (spring, summer, and winter) during a single year. Sampling in summer was during the monsoon from 9 to 23 July (2007, 2008, 2012)

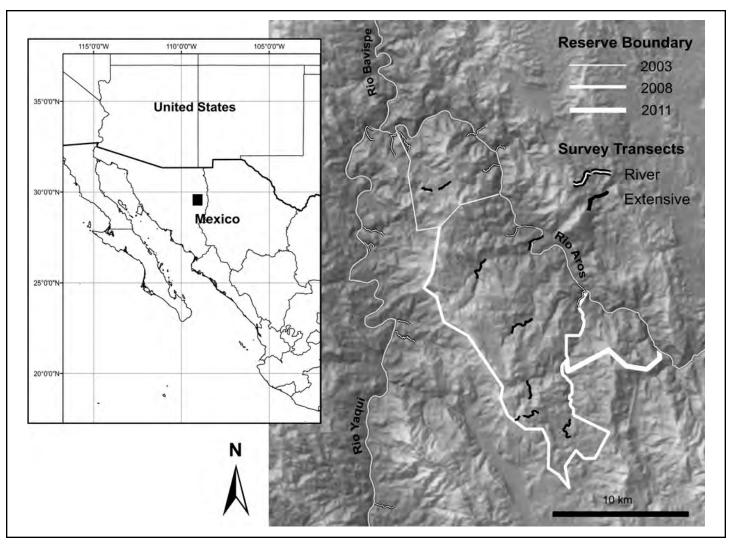


Figure 1. Map of study region on and around the Northern Jaguar Reserve, illustrating the locations of survey transects, reserve boundary, and major rivers in east-central Sonora, Mexico. Different boundary lines show expansion of the reserve to the south and east since its establishment in 2003. The reserve is bounded to the east and north by the Aros River. Solid black lines are extensive transects, which were surveyed up to four times per season in two to three years, and black-and-white lines are river transects, which were surveyed during one year in as many as three seasons (spring, summer, and winter). Only the region east of the Rio Yaqui was included in the study area.

when vegetation was in leaf, most bird species were breeding, and the first fall-season migrants were beginning to arrive. Sampling during spring and fall occurred between 21 March and 27 April (2010 and 2011) and from 12 to 28 September (2007 and 2009), when many migratory bird species were moving through the region and some breeding species were beginning or completing breeding activity. Sampling during winter was between 12 December and 6 January (2009, 2010, 2011), when winter residents were present and early breeders (e.g., hummingbirds) were beginning courtship.

To increase survey coverage, both spatially

and temporally, we gathered observations of birds across a wider range of times, environments, and elevations (360 to 1300 m). Those efforts included unstandardized surveys conducted while floating Rio Aros and Yaqui Rivers, mist netting, and other incidental observations made during expeditions in the backcountry throughout the year. To assess the presence of nocturnal species, we broadcasted recorded calls of owls and nightjars at night on an opportunistic basis. During the breeding season, we searched for nests and young and observed bird behavior to assess breeding status. Collectively, survey effort totaled >1000 person days.

Analyses

We calculated observed species richness by summing the total number of species detected during surveys. Because detection probability often varies widely among species and, thus, some species that are present are not detected (Boulinier et al.1998), we estimated species richness based on the observed abundance distribution (e.g., number of individuals, pairs, or flocks detected of each species) and a limiting form of the jackknife estimator (Burnham and Overton 1979) implemented by program Specrich (see http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs. gov/software.html). To assess the range of

likely values of richness, we calculated a 95% confidence interval (CI).

To assess breeding status, we used North American Ornithological Atlas Committee (1990) methods to classify the status of each species as possibly, probably, or confirmed breeding, or as nonbreeding. To assess residency status, we used observations gathered during the study and information on migration times from Sonora and adjacent southern Arizona (Russell and Monson 1998; Corman and Wise-Gervais 2005; Flesch 2008). Some species that we classified as permanent residents likely have different wintering and breeding populations. To assess abundance, we used estimates of density based on distance sampling and the total number of encounters of each species to classify abundance in six categories: (1) abundant (conspicuous and invariably seen); (2) common (frequently encountered); (3) fairly common (a few individuals or pairs observed); (4) uncommon (present but may not be found regularly during surveys); (5) rare (present but rarely detected or restricted to localized area); or (6) sporadic (present only during some years). To describe habitat use, we classified the three most frequently used habitat types for each species among 13 types: FT, riparian woodland, oak woodland, grassland, desert-scrub, mountain scrub, beachfronts and emergent vegetation, aquatic, palm groves, cliffs and rocky outcrops, fields and man-made vegetation openings, houses or other developed areas, and aerial. To assess conservation value, we evaluated the distributional significance of populations in the region, compared estimates of species diversity with those in other regions in western Mexico, and calculated the number of species of conservation concern in Mexico and the neighboring United States (USFWS 2008; SEMARNAT 2010).

RESULTS

Richness and Status

We observed 214 species of birds in 17 orders and 42 families, including 161 species that we detected during standardized surveys along transects (Appendix:

See Appendix note Pg. 294). The most diverse families were Tyrannidae (25 species), Parulidae (22), Emberizidae (21), Accipitridae (11), Trochilidae (11), and Cardinalidae (11). We classified 105 species (49%) as predominantly winter residents or passage migrants, 66 (31%) as permanent residents, and 33 (15%) as summer residents (Table 1). The Status of 10 species (5%) was unknown, including: (1) five that are likely winter residents or migrants (Golden Eagle (Aquila chrysaetos) (avian nomenclature follows the American Ornithologists' Union), Greater Yellowlegs (Tringa melanoleuca), Burrowing Owl (Athene cunicularia), Pacific-slope Flycatcher (Empidonax difficilis), and Cordilleran Flycatcher (Empidonax occidentalis)); (2) four that are likely rare summer visitors or rare breeders (Shorttailed Hawk (Buteo brachyurus), Ruddy Ground-Dove (Columbina talpacoti), Plain-capped Starthroat (*Heliomaster constantii*), Yellow Grosbeak (*Pheucticus chrysopeplus*)); and (3) one that may be a rare permanent resident (Common Poorwill (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*)). We classified 108 species (50%) as potential breeders (Table 1, Appendix: See Appendix note Pg. 294). We confirmed breeding for 53 species—49% of all potential breeders. Based on the observed species abundance distribution, which included 23 species we detected only once, we estimate that 241 ± 8.7 (± SE) species occur in the region (95% CI = 225–257).

Most species were uncommon or rare (36–37%) during their season of peak abundance, fewer were common or fairly common (10–15%), and very few were abundant (2%; Table 1). Abundant species were typically breeding summer residents such as Five-striped Sparrow (*Amphispiza*

Table 1. Residency, breeding, abundance, and conservation status of 214 bird species observed on and around the Northern Jaguar Reserve in east-central Sonora, Mexico, between 2007 and 2013.

Group	Species	Percent
Residency		
Summer	33	15.4
Winter and migrant	105	49.1
Permanent	66	30.8
Unknown	10	4.7
Breeding		
Confirmed	53	24.8
Probable	34	15.9
Possible	21	9.8
Nonbreeding	106	49.5
Abundance		
Abundant	4	1.9
Common	32	15.0
Fairly common	21	9.8
Uncommon	77	36.0
Rare	79	36.9
Sporadic	1	0.5
Conservation Concern		
Mexico – endangered	2	0.9
threatened	2	0.9
 special protection 	9	4.2
U.S. – special concern	24	11.1

quinquestriata), Yellow-breasted Chat (Icteria virens), and Hooded Oriole (Icterus cucullatus). Of the 65 species that we classified as permanent residents, 75% had largely static distributions and abundances among seasons, which suggested most individuals made little to no seasonal movements. For other species classified as permanent residents, however, abundances were lower in winter or distributions shifted to lower elevations, suggesting significant proportions of these populations made local seasonal movements. Among passage migrants, we observed Painted Bunting (Passerina ciris) and Orchard Oriole (Icterus spurius) only during fall. We observed Black Swift (Cypseloides niger), Eastern Phoebe (Sayornis phoebe), Northern Parula (Setophaga americana), and Black-andwhite Warbler (Mniotilta varia) only once, and classified them as rare migrants or winter vagrants.

We observed several species of conservation concern including Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and Military Macaw (*Ara militaris*), which are listed

as endangered in Mexico, Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos diazi*; Mexican subspecies) and Golden Eagle, which are listed as threatened, and nine other species that are subject to special protection. Additionally, we observed 24 species that are designated as species of conservation concern in the neighboring United States (Appendix: See Appendix note Pg. 294).

Habitat and Distribution

Riparian woodlands, FT, and oak woodland were the most frequently used habitat types (Figure 2). Despite its limited coverage in the region, riparian woodlands were frequently used by >64% of species, including 42% as their primary habitat type. In comparison, FT and oak woodland, which cover much larger portions of the study area, were used by 50 and 25% of species, respectively. Other habitat types were used with much lower frequency (0–8%), except beachfronts and emergent vegetation, which were used by 14% of the community.

We observed 10 species north of the previously described limits of their breeding or wintering ranges. Among breeding species, we observed Fan-tailed Warbler (Basileuterus lachrymosa) breeding in wet canyon bottoms and Military Macaw breeding on tall limestone cliffs approximately 150 and 230 km north of the previously described limits of their breeding ranges, respectively. Among wintering species, we observed Common Black-Hawk (Buteogallus anthracinus), White-eared Hummingbird (Hylocharis leucotis), Berylline Hummingbird (Amazilia beryllina), Tufted Flycatcher (Mitrephanes phaeocercus), Cassin's Kingbird (Tyrannus vociferans), Brown-backed Solitaire (Myadestes occidentalis), Wilson's Warbler (Cardellina pusilla), and Slate-throated Redstart (Myioborus miniatus) north of their known winter ranges. Six of these species were observed in the same areas during two or more winters, suggesting they regularly occur, and two others (Common Black-Hawk and Tufted Flycatcher) were observed along portions of the Aros-Yaqui

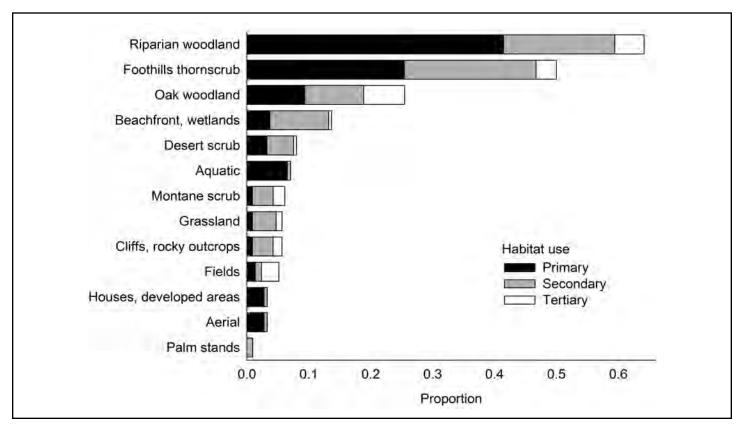


Figure 2. Habitat use of birds observed on and around Northern Jaguar Reserve in east-central Sonora, Mexico, 2007–2013. The primary, secondary, and tertiary habitat types used by each species were classified among 13 habitat types represented in the region.

river corridor during the only winter we surveyed those areas. Nonetheless, all extralimital wintering species were rare and distributed locally except Brown-backed Solitaire, which was uncommon in riparian woodlands along the Aros-Yaqui river corridor in December 2011 (21 individuals, including 18 singing). Other notable breeding species included Least Grebe (Tachybaptus dominicus) nesting approximately 100 km north of the northernmost known breeding locality in Sonora. Moreover, Yellow-green Vireo (Vireo flavoviridis), Blue Mockingbird (Melanotis caerulescens), and White-striped Woodcreeper (Lepidocolaptes leucogaster) were paired in breeding habitat during two or more years and historically, have been observed in breeding habitat only once or twice to the north.

DISCUSSION

Richness and Status

We observed 214 species of birds in FT, riparian woodland, oak woodland, and other habitat types on and around the NJR over seven years. Thus, this region supports at least 40% of the 531 bird species that have been documented in Sonora, 46% of the 467 species that have been documented in Sonora that are not associated exclusively with marine environments, and 20% of the 1070 bird species known in Mexico (Howell and Webb 1995; Villaseñor-Gómez et al. 2010). Based on the observed species abundance distribution, we estimate 241 species of birds occur in the region, with a range of likely estimates as high as 257 species.

Avian richness in this region of Sonora is similar to that observed in other regions of western Mexico, including some that are larger, more tropical, and include a much broader range of elevations. Manzano-Fischer et al. (2006), for example, observed 227 bird species over 10 years in a much larger region (250,000 ha) of temperate grassland, shrubland, and riparian woodland in northwest Chihuahua that was recently designated as a NPA. Further south in tropical deciduous forest on the Chamela-Cuixmala Biosphere Reserve

in western Jalisco, Ornelas et al. (1993) observed 153 species over two years. Moreover, in a larger region and broader range of vegetation communities on and around Chamela-Cuixmala, Ramírez-Albores (2007) observed 246 species, including 26 associated largely with marine environments. Similarly, in a broader range of vegetation types between tropical deciduous forest and pine (Pinus spp.) forest in southern Sinaloa and western Durango, Medina-Macíaset et al. (2010) observed 209 species. Because tropical deciduous forest is similar to FT but taller, more structurally and floristically diverse, and occurs at more southern latitudes (Gentry 1982), similar richness that we report at this relatively high latitude in Sonora is notable. High bird species richness in this region is driven by broad elevation and vegetation gradients, extensive riparian woodlands that provide important stopover and wintering habitats along an inland migratory corridor, and close proximity to the Madrean, Sinaloan, Sonoran, and Chihuahuan biogeographic provinces.

We provided the first overall assessment of richness and status for a bird community in FT vegetation across the full annual cycle of seasons. Formerly, assessments of breeding and residency status of birds in FT were limited to studies at Lo de Campa in central Sonora (Russell and Monson 1998). Prior to our efforts, data on birds in this region of Sonora were limited to accounts of notable species near Sahuaripa, records from highland forests east of Sahuaripa, and observations obtained along the Aros, Bavispe, and Yaqui Rivers (Clark 1984; Brown 1988; Rodríguez-Estrella and Brown 1990; Russell and Monson 1998; O'Brien et al. 2006). More generally, data on birds in many lowland vegetation communities in western Mexico are still limited in seasons other than winter (Hutto 1980, 1992; Villaseñor-Gómez 2006, 2008).

Distribution

The NJR and surrounding region provide important habitat for many species of breeding and wintering birds found at the margins of their geographic ranges. We documented 10 species that were not

known to breed or winter this far north in Mexico, and others that have been observed in breeding habitat during the breeding season at very few localities to the north. Wintering species at the northern edge of their range included three species of elevational migrants-Tufted Flycatcher, Brown-backed Solitaire, and Slate-throated Redstart-that breed in montane forests in the adjacent Sierra Madre Occidental, and that seem to have expanded their breeding ranges northward in recent decades (Flesch 2014). Other extralimital winter residents are species that likely migrate longer distances (e.g., Common Black-Hawk, Cassin's Kingbird, Wilson's Warbler), were thought to winter only as far north as extreme southern Sonora (Howell and Webb 1995; Russell and Monson 1998), and that may also be expanding their winter ranges northward. Importantly, all of those species were observed wintering in riparian areas or FT along the vast lowland corridor formed by the Aros and Yaqui Rivers, which in winter provides a warm subtropical environment unlike any other in east-central Sonora. For those elevational migrants, areas along the river corridor provide what are likely the closest potential wintering habitats. For long-distance migrants, subtropical lowland vegetation at these relatively high latitudes in interior Sonora are connected to similar environments to the south only by this narrow river corridor.

Breeding species that we documented at or near the northern margins of their geographic ranges all had strong affinities to subtropical lowland environments to the south. Military Macaw and Fan-tailed Warbler, for example, are more common in tropical forest to the south, and nests we observed in this region are the northernmost confirmed breeding localities and the second and first nests, respectively, for these species in Sonora (Howell and Webb 1995; Russell and Monson 1998). The northern range limits of these bird species correspond to those of some important plant species and the northern extent of subtropical vegetation communities in general. The tree species Ficus pertusa L. f., F. insipida Willd., Tabebuia impetiginosa (Mart.), and Sideroxylon persimile (Hemsl.), which are important components of tropical forests

to the south, all reach the northern limits of their geographic ranges in this region of Sonora (Flesch and Jacobs, unpubl. data). Plants in these genera provide important foods for Military Macaw (Loza 1997; Contreras-González et al. 2009). Thus, presence of these and other plants, combined with tall limestone cliffs for nesting, explains the species' occurrence in this region. Although the structure and composition of FT varies widely across its range (Brown 1982; Búrquez et al. 1999; Warshall and Flesch 2013), the NJR supports some of the northernmost stands of tall, well-developed FT. These stands are where we observed Yellow Grosbeak, Blue Mockingbird, and other species with more tropical affinities at or near the margins of their geographic ranges.

Conservation

Although the importance of this region for jaguar conservation is well established (Sanderson et al. 2002; Rabinowitz and Zeller 2010), our results indicate it also has high conservation value for birds. In addition to protecting large areas of FT and riparian woodland, high environmental richness and unique biogeographic and physiographic settings promote high bird richness. This level of richness is similar to that found in other regions of western Mexico, including some regions that have been designated NPAs and that are larger and more tropical. Moreover, this region also provides habitat for numerous populations of birds at or near the margins of their geographic ranges, and species that are rare and of conservation concern, such as Bald Eagle and Military Macaw, which are endangered in Mexico.

Our results suggest this region is especially important for migratory birds. Approximately half the species we observed were winter residents or passage migrants, and another 15% were summer residents that migrate from the south. Thus, the proportion of migrants (approximately 65%) vs. permanent residents (31%) is similar to that found in more temperate environments in neighboring northwest Chihuahua (Manzano-Fischer et al. 2006) and much higher than that found in more

tropical southern regions (Ornelas et al. 1993; Vázquez et al. 2009; Medina-Macías et al. 2010). The geographic position and presence of extensive riparian woodlands likely promotes this region's importance to migratory birds (Villaseñor-Gómez 2008). Most migratory songbirds that breed in the western United States and Canada, winter and migrate across a relatively small area of western Mexico between the coastal plain and Sierra Madre (Fitzpatrick 1980; Hutto 1985). Along this route, riparian areas provide important stopover habitats for migrants that must cross vast arid lowlands in contrast to their eastern counterparts (Skagen et al. 2005). Thus, the geographic location and vegetation communities used by migratory birds along the western flyway are uniquely narrow in comparison to other landbird migration systems worldwide (Skagen et al. 2005; Faaborg et al. 2010). Because migrants often move in broad bands and follow major geographic features such as mountains and rivers (Hutto 2000; Gauthreaux et al. 2003; Faaborg et al. 2010), the position of this region along the largest lowland river corridor in northwestern Mexico, combined with the north-south orientation of the river and adjacent mountains, likely promote its value to migratory birds.

Although nearly 8% of Sonora has been designated as conservation reserves by the Mexican federal government, most reserves are not owned by the federal government or managed exclusively for biodiversityconservation. Additionally, no federal reserve in Mexico protects the FT vegetation community (Búrquez and Martínez-Yrízar 1997, 2007). This lack of representation is noteworthy because FT is among the most dominant vegetation communities in Sonora (Brown 1982). Given this lack of representation, the region's value to birds and other wildlife (e.g., Rabinowitz and Zeller 2010; Rorabaugh et al. 2011), unique biogeographic and physiographic settings, and its remote and wild character, this region warrants consideration for federal protection.

Efforts to preserve and restore habitats for birds and other wildlife are major management foci on the NJR. Nonetheless, conservation efforts in the region face a range of threats, including clearing of native vegetation, planting and natural invasion of exotic buffelgrass (Pennisetum ciliare Link), overgrazing by domestic livestock, and large-scale mining and hydroelectric projects that could alter hydrologic regimes and flood large areas of the Aros-Yaqui valley. The NJR provides protection from land clearing and overgrazing, and recent and proposed expansion of the reserve will protect more area. Nonetheless, only federal protection can limit threats from large-scale mining and hydroelectric projects. Efforts by both public agencies and private organizations, such as those by Naturalia and the Northern Jaguar Project in this region, are important for realizing the conservation of biodiversity in Mexico at large scales.

NOTE: All data referred to in Appendix are posted online and available at: http://www.aaronflesch.com/Appendix_NAJ. Vol.35(2).pdf>.

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Aaron D. Flesch is an ecologist interested in processes that drive the distribution and abundance of terrestrial wildlife population and in applying ecological theory to the conservation and management of wildlife. He has studied wildlife in Sonora, Mexico, since 2000.

Peter Warshall was an ecologist, anthropologist, and writer focused on conservation and conservation-based development issues. He served as Science Coordinator for the Northern Jaguar Project and helped establish the Northern Jaguar Reserve. He passed away in April 2013.

Sky Jacobs is a naturalist with interests in biogeography and conservation in the Sonoran Desert and Madrean Sky Islands regions.

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This table is the appendix for: Flesch, A.D., P. Warshall, and S. Jacobs. 2015. Avian richness, status, and conservation in the northwestern Neotropics in Sonora, Mexico. Natural Areas Journal 35(2):288-296.

APPENDIX: Status of 214 bird species observed on and around the Northern Jaguar Reserve in east-central Sonora, México, between 2007 and 2013. Abundance was classified as: A-abundant, C-common, F-fairly common, U-uncommon, R-rare, and S-sporadic. Residency status was classified as: PR-permanent resident, SR-summer resident, WR-winter resident, M-migrant, FM-fall migrant, and V-visitant. Breeding status was classified as: Co-confirmed breeder, Pr-presumed breeder, Po-possible breeder, O-nonbreeder, and U-unknown. Species of conservation concern in México (Mx) are listed as E-endangered, T-threatened, and P-subject to special protection (SEMARNAT 2010), whereas those listed in the U.S. by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are listed as US-CC (USFWS 2008). Avian nomenclature follows the American Ornithologists' Union.

		Abundance –	Breeding		Conservation
Common name	Species	Status	Status	Habitat ^a	status, notes
Greater White-fronted Goose	Anser albifrons	R-M	O	Be, Aq	
American Wigeon	Anas americana	U-WR and M	O	Aq	
Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	R-PR	Po	Aq	Mx-T, subspecies diazi
Cinnamon Teal	Anas cyanoptera	U-WR and M	O	Aq	
Green-winged Teal	Anas crecca	U-WR and M	O	Aq	
Ring-necked Duck	Aythya collaris	U-WR and M	O	Aq	
Common Merganser	Mergus merganser	U-WR and M	O	Aq	
Elegant Quail	Callipepla douglasii	C-PR	Pr	FT, RW, Fi	
Gambel's Quail	Callipepla gambelii	R-PR	Pr	DS, FT, RW	lowlands
Montezuma Quail	Cyrtonyx montezumae	U-PR	Co	OW, Gr, FT	Mx-P, highlands
Wild Turkey	Meleagris gallopavo	U-PR	Co	OW, FT	
Least Grebe	Tachybaptus dominicus	R-PR	Co	Aq, Be	
Pied-billed Grebe	Podilymbus podiceps	U-WR and M	O	Aq	
Double-crested Cormorant	Phalacrocorax auritus	R-M or V	O	Aq	
Great Blue Heron	Ardea herodias	F-PR	Po	Aq, RW, Be	
Great Egret	Ardea alba	R-PR	Po	Aq, Be	
Green Heron	Butorides virescens	R-WR	O	Aq, Be	
Black Vulture	Coragyps atratus	U-SR, R-WR	Po	FT, OW	
Turkey Vulture	Cathartes aura	C-SR, R-WR	Po	FT, OW	
Osprey	Pandion haliaetus	U-M, R-WR	O	Aq, Be, RW	
Bald Eagle	Haliaeetus leucocephalus	R-PR	Co	Aq, Be, Cl	Mx–E, US–CC
Northern Harrier	Circus cyaneus	R-M	O	DS, Gr	

		Abundance –	Breeding		Conservation
Common name	Species	Status	Status	Habitat ^a	status, notes
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Accipiter striatus	U-WR and M	O	FT, RW	Mx-P
Cooper's Hawk	Accipiter cooperii	R-SR, U-M	Po	RW, OW	Mx-P
Common Black-Hawk	Buteogallus anthracinus	F-SR, R-WR	Co	RW, Be	Mx-P, C river
Gray Hawk	Buteo nitidus	U-SR	Co	RW, FT	
Short-tailed Hawk	Buteo brachyurus	R-SR?	U	FT, OW	
Swainson's Hawk	Buteo swainsoni	U-M	O	FT, OW, Gr	Mx-P, US-CC
Zone-tailed Hawk	Buteo albonotatus	R-SR	Co	OW, RW	Mx-P
Red-tailed Hawk	Buteo jamaicensis	U-PR	Co	FT, OW, Cl	
Golden Eagle	Aquila chrysaetos	R-WR?	O	Gr, OW, FT	Mx-T
American Kestrel	Falco sparverius	U-WR and M	O	FT, RW	
Merlin	Falco columbarius	R-WR and M	O	FT, Fi	
Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus	U-PR	Co	FT, Cl, RW	Mx-P, US-CC
Killdeer	Charadrius vociferus	R-SR?	U	Be	
Spotted Sandpiper	Actitis macularius	C-WR and M	O	Be	
Solitary Sandpiper	Tringa solitaria	R-M	O	Be	
Greater Yellowlegs	Tringa melanoleuca	R-WR? and M	O	Be	
Wilson's Snipe	Gallinago delicate	R-WR or V	O	Be	
Band-tailed Pigeon	Patagioenas fasciata	R-WR or V	O	ow	
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Streptopelia decaocto	R-V	O	Но	
White-winged Dove	Zenaida asiatica	A-SR, U-WR	Co	FT, RW	
Mourning Dove	Zenaida macroura	F-PR	Pr	FT, OW, RW	
Inca Dove	Columbina inca	U-PR	Pr	Ho, RW, Fi	
Common Ground-Dove	Columbina passerina	C-SR, U-WR	Pr	FT, RW, Fi	
Ruddy Ground-Dove	Columbina talpacoti	R-SR or V?	U	Ho, RW, Fi	
White-tipped Dove	Leptotila verreauxi	U-PR	Co	FT, RW	
Military Macaw	Ara militaris	R-SR	Co	FT, Cl	Мх-Е
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Coccyzus americanus	F-SR	Pr	FT, RW	US-CC
Greater Roadrunner	Geococcyx californianus	U-PR	Po	FT, DS, RW	
Western Screech-Owl	Megascops kennicottii	U-PR	Pr	FT, RW	lowlands
Whiskered Screech-Owl	Megascops trichopsis	U-PR	Pr	OW, RW	highlands

		Abundance –	Breeding		Conservation
Common name	Species	Status	Status	Habitat ^a	status, notes
Great Horned Owl	Bubo virginianus	R-PR	Po	FT, RW	
Northern Pygmy-Owl	Glaucidium gnoma	R-PR	Pr	OW, RW	
Elf Owl	Micrathene whitneyi	U-SR	Po	FT, RW	US-CC
Burrowing Owl	Athene cunicularia	R-M?	O	Fi	
Lesser Nighthawk	Chordeiles acutipennis	R-SR	Po	FT, DS	lowlands
Common Poorwill	Phalaenoptilus nuttallii	R-PR or WR?	O	FT, Cl	
Buff-collared Nightjar	Caprimulgus ridgwayi	U-SR, R-WR	Pr	FT, RW, OW	
Black Swift	Cypseloides niger	R-M	O	Ae, Cl	US-CC
White-throated Swift	Aeronautes saxatalis	R-SR, R-WR	Po	Ae, Cl	
Broad-billed Hummingbird	Cynanthus latirostris	C-SR, U-WR	Co	FT, RW, OW	
White-eared Hummingbird	Hylocharis leucotis	R-WR	O	RW	
Berylline Hummingbird	Amazilia beryllina	R-WR and M	O	RW, FT	
Violet-crowned Hummingbird	Amazilia violiceps	F-SR, R-WR	Co	RW, FT	
Plain-capped Starthroat	Heliomaster constantii	R-M or SR?	U	FT, RW	
Black-chinned Hummingbird	Archilochus alexandri	U-M	O	RW, FT	
Anna's Hummingbird	Calypte anna	U-WR	Po	FT, DS	early breeder
Costa's Hummingbird	Calypte costae	U-WR and M	Pr	DS, FT	US-CC, early breede
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	Selasphorus platycercus	U-M	O	FT, RW	,
Rufous Hummingbird	Selasphorus rufus	U-M	O	FT, RW	
Allen's Hummingbird	Selasphorus sasin	R-M	O	RW	US-CC
Elegant Trogon	Trogon elegans	F-SR, R-WR	Co	RW, OW	US-CC
Belted Kingfisher	Megaceryle alcyon	U-M, R-WR	O	RW, Be	
Green Kingfisher	Chloroceryle americana	R-PR	Pr	RW, Be	
Acorn Woodpecker	Melanerpes formicivorus	U-PR	Pr	OW	
Gila Woodpecker	Melanerpes uropygialis	C-PR	Co	FT, RW, DS	
Red-naped Sapsucker	Sphyrapicus nuchalis	R-WR and M	O	RW	
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	Picoides scalaris	C-PR	Co	FT, DS, RW	
Arizona Woodpecker	Picoides arizonae	U-PR	Po	OW	US-CC
Northern Flicker	Colaptes auratus	R-SR, R-WR	Pr	OW	
Gilded Flicker	Colaptes chrysoides	U-PR	Co	FT, DS	

		Abundance –	Breeding		Conservation
Common name	Species	Status	Status	Habitat ^a	status, notes
White-striped Woodcreeper	Lepidocolaptes leucogaster	R-PR	Pr	RW	
Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet	Camptostoma imberbe	U-PR	Pr	RW	
Tufted Flycatcher	Mitrephanes phaeocercus	R-WR	O	RW	
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Contopus cooperi	U-M	O	RW, FT	US-CC
Greater Pewee	Contopus pertinax	R-WR	O	RW, FT	
Western Wood-Pewee	Contopus sordidulus	U-SR and M	Pr	RW, FT, OW	
Willow Flycatcher	Empidonax traillii	R-M	O	RW	US-CC
Hammond's Flycatcher	Empidonax hammondii	F-M, U-WR	O	RW, FT	
Gray Flycatcher	Empidonax wrightii	U-M and WR	O	RW	
Dusky Flycatcher	Empidonax oberholseri	F-M, U-WR	O	RW	
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	Empidonax difficilis	R-WR?, C-M	O	RW, OW	
Cordilleran Flycatcher	Empidonax occidentalis	R-WR? and M	O	RW, OW	
Buff-breasted Flycatcher	Empidonax fulvifrons	R-WR	O	RW	
Black Phoebe	Sayornis nigricans	U-PR	Co	RW, Be, Cl	A along rivers
Eastern Phoebe	Sayornis phoebe	R-WR or V	O	RW, Be	
Say's Phoebe	Sayornis saya	U-WR and M	O	Ho, Be	
Vermilion Flycatcher	Pyrocephalus rubinus	C-SR, R-WR	Co	RW, Be	
Dusky-capped Flycatcher	Myiarchus tuberculifer	C-SR, R-WR	Co	FT, OW, RW	
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Myiarchus cinerascens	U-PR	Pr	DS, FT, OW	
Nutting's Flycatcher	Myiarchus nuttingi	R-SR, F-WR	Pr	RW, FT	
Brown-crested Flycatcher	Myiarchus tyrannulus	F-SR	Co	RW	
Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher	Myiodynastes luteiventris	F-SR	Co	RW	
Tropical Kingbird	Tyrannus melancholicus	U-SR	Pr	RW, Be	
Cassin's Kingbird	Tyrannus vociferans	U-M, R-WR	O	RW	
Thick-billed Kingbird	Tyrannus crassirostris	F-SR	Co	FT, OW, RW	
Western Kingbird	Tyrannus verticalis	C-M	O	FT	
Rose-throated Becard	Pachyramphus aglaiae	F-SR	Co	RW	
Loggerhead Shrike	Lanius ludovicianus	R-WR and M	O	OW, Gr	US-CC
Bell's Vireo	Vireo bellii	C-SR, R-WR	Co	RW	US-CC
Gray Vireo	Vireo vicinior	R-M	O	RW, FT	US-CC

		Abundance –	Breeding		Conservation
Common name	Species	Status	Status	Habitat ^a	status, notes
Plumbeous Vireo	Vireo plumbeus	R-WR, F-M	O	RW, OW	
Cassin's Vireo	Vireo cassinii	R-WR, U-M	O	RW, OW	
Hutton's Vireo	Vireo huttoni	U-WR and M	O	OW, RW	
Warbling Vireo	Vireo gilvus	C-M	O	RW, OW	
Yellow-green Vireo	Vireo flavoviridis	R-SR	Pr	RW, FT	
Western Scrub-Jay	Aphelocoma californica	R-WR	O	FT, MS	
Mexican Jay	Aphelocoma wollweberi	F-PR	Pr	OW, MS	
Common Raven	Corvus corax	U-PR	Co	RW, FT	
Tree Swallow	Tachycineta bicolor	U-M	O	Ae	
Violet-green Swallow	Tachycineta thalassina	F-M, R-WV	O	Ae	
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Stelgidopteryx serripennis	U-SR and M, R-WV	/Pr	Ae, Be	
Cliff Swallow	Petrochelidon pyrrhonota	U-SR	Po	Ae, Cl	
Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica	U-M, R-WV	O	Ho, Ae	
Bridled Titmouse	Baeolophus wollweberi	U-PR, S-V	Pr	OW, RW	PR in OW, V in RW
Verdin	Auriparus flaviceps	C-PR	Co	RW, FT	
Cactus Wren	Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus	C-PR	Pr	FT, DS	
Rock Wren	Salpinctes obsoletus	U-PR	Pr	Cl, DS, TS	
Canyon Wren	Catherpes mexicanus	F-PR	Pr	Cl, Ho, RW	
Sinaloa Wren	Thryothorus sinaloa	C-SR, U-WR	Co	RW, FT	
Happy Wren	Thryothorus felix	R-PR	Po	RW, Be	dense thickets
Bewick's Wren	Thryomanes bewickii	R-WR and M	O	RW	
House Wren	Troglodytes aedon	F-WR and M	O	RW, FT	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Polioptila caerulea	U-SR, F-WR	Co	RW, FT	
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher	Polioptila melanura	U-PR	Pr	OW, MS	
Black-capped Gnatcatcher	Polioptila nigriceps	C-PR	Co	DS	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Regulus calendula	C-WR and M	O	FT, RW	
Western Bluebird	Sialia mexicana	S-WV	O	FT, OW	
Brown-backed Solitaire	Myadestes occidentalis	U-WR	O	RW	Mx-P
Swainson's Thrush	Catharus ustulatus	U-M	O	RW	
Hermit Thrush	Catharus guttatus	U-WR and M	O	RW	

	Abundance –	Abundance –	Breeding		Conservation
Common name	Species	Status	Status	Habitat ^a	status, notes
Rufous-backed Robin	Turdus rufopalliatus	R-WR or V	O	RW	
American Robin	Turdus migratorius	R-WR	O	RW, FT	
Northern Mockingbird	Mimus polyglottos	F-PR	Pr	FT, DS	
Curve-billed Thrasher	Toxostoma curvirostre	U-PR	Co	FT, DS	
Blue Mockingbird	Melanotis caerulescens	R-SR	Pr	RW, FT	
American Pipit	Anthus rubescens	R-WR or V	O	Be	
Phainopepla	Phainopepla nitens	F-WR and M, R-SR	Po	RW	
Louisiana Waterthrush	Parkesia motacilla	R-WR and M	O	RW, Be	
Northern Waterthrush	Parkesia noveboracensis	R-M	O	RW, Be	
Black-and-white Warbler	Mniotilta varia	R-M	O	RW, OW	
Orange-crowned Warbler	Oreothlypis celata	U-WR, C-M	O	RW, FT, OW	
Lucy's Warbler	Oreothlypis luciae	C-SR and M	Pr	RW, FT	US-CC, spring breede
Nashville Warbler	Oreothlypis ruficapilla	C-M	O	RW, FT	
Virginia's Warbler	Oreothlypis virginiae	U-M	O	RW, FT	US-CC
MacGillivray's Warbler	Geothlypis tolmiei	U-M	O	RW, FT, OW	
Common Yellowthroat	Geothlypis trichas	R-WR, U-M	O	RW, Be	
Northern Parula	Setophaga americana	R-M	O	RW	
Yellow Warbler	Setophaga petechia	U-M	O	RW, FT	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Setophaga coronata	C-WR and M	O	RW, OW, FT	
Grace's Warbler	Setophaga graciae	R-M	O	OW	US-CC
Black-throated Gray Warbler	Setophaga nigrescens	F-WR and M	O	RW, FT, OW	
Γownsend's Warbler	Setophaga townsendi	R-WR, U-M	O	RW, FT, OW	
Hermit Warbler	Setophaga occidentalis	U-M	O	RW, FT, OW	
Fan-tailed Warbler	Basileuterus lachrymosa	U-SR	Co	RW, Cl, FT	in wet canyons
Rufous-capped Warbler	Basileuterus rufifrons	F-PR	Co	RW, FT	
Wilson's Warbler	Cardellina pusilla	R-WR, C-M	O	RW, FT, OW	
Painted Redstart	Myioborus pictus	R-WR and M	O	RW	
Slate-throated Redstart	Myioborus miniatus	R-WR	O	RW	
Yellow-breasted Chat	Icteria virens	A-SR	Co	FT, RW	
Green-tailed Towhee	Pipilo chlorurus	U-WR and M	O	FT, RW	

		Abundance –	Breeding		Conservation
Common name	Species	Status	Status	Habitat ^a	status, notes
Spotted Towhee	Pipilo maculatus	R-WR and M	O	OW, MS, FT	
Rusty Sparrow	Aimophila rufescens	R-SR	Co	OW, MS	highlands
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	Aimophila ruficeps	U-PR	Co	OW, Gr, MS	
Canyon Towhee	Melozone fuscus	C-PR	Co	FT, RW, MS	
Rufous-winged Sparrow	Peucaea carpalis	C-PR	Co	FT, RW	US-CC
Botteri's Sparrow	Peucaea botterii	R-M	O	Gr, OW	
Cassin's Sparrow	Peucaea cassinii	R-SR	Po	Fi, Gr	
Chipping Sparrow	Spizella passerina	C-WR, F-M	O	RW, FT, Gr	
Clay-colored Sparrow	Spizella pallida	R-WR and FM	O	RW, Gr	
Brewer's Sparrow	Spizella breweri	U-WR	O	RW, FT, MS	US-CC
Black-chinned Sparrow	Spizella atrogularis	R-WR	O	FT, MS	US-CC
Vesper Sparrow	Pooecetes gramineus	R-WR	O	Gr, MS, Fi	
Lark Sparrow	Chondestes grammacus	U-WR and M	O	Fi, Gr	
Five-striped Sparrow	Amphispiza quinquestriata	A-SR, R-WR	Co	FT, RW, MS	US-CC
Black-throated Sparrow	Amphispiza bilineata	U-WR	O	DS, FT	
Grasshopper Sparrow	Ammodramus savannarum	R-WR	O	Gr	
Lincoln's Sparrow	Melospiza lincolnii	U-WR and M	O	RW, Be, FT	
White-crowned Sparrow	Zonotrichia leucophrys	C-WR and M	O	RW, FT	
Dark-eyed Junco	Junco hyemalis	U-WR	O	MS, Gr, OW	
Hepatic Tanager	Piranga flava	U-SR, U-WR	Po	OW, RW	OW in S, RW in W
Summer Tanager	Piranga rubra	C-SR	Co	RW, FT	
Western Tanager	Piranga ludoviciana	F-M	O	RW, FT, OW	
Northern Cardinal	Cardinalis cardinalis	C-PR	Co	FT, RW	
Pyrrhuloxia	Cardinalis sinuatus	U-PR	Pr	DS, FT	
Yellow Grosbeak	Pheucticus chrysopeplus	R-SR or V?	U	FT, RW	
Black-headed Grosbeak	Pheucticus melanocephalus	C-SR, R-WR	Co	FT, OW, RW	
Blue Grosbeak	Passerina caerulea	C-SR	Co	FT, RW, OW	
Lazuli Bunting	Passerina amoena	C-M, U-WR	O	RW, FT	
Varied Bunting	Passerina versicolor	C-SR	Co	FT, RW	US-CC
Painted Bunting	Passerina ciris	U-FM	O	FT, RW	Mx-P, US-CC

		Abundance –	Breeding		Conservation
Common name	Species	Status	Status	Habitat ^a	status, notes
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus	R-M	О	Be	
Bronzed Cowbird	Molothrus aeneus	U-SR	Co	Ho, Be	
Brown-headed Cowbird	Molothrus ater	U-SR	Co	FT, RW, OW	
Black-vented Oriole	Icterus wagleri	U-SR, R-WR	Co	RW, Pa	
Orchard Oriole	Icterus spurius	R-FM	О	RW, FT	
Hooded Oriole	Icterus cucullatus	A-SR, R-WR	Co	RW, Pa, FT	A in palms
Streak-backed Oriole	Icterus pustulatus	U-SR, R-WR	Co	RW, FT	
Bullock's Oriole	Icterus bullockii	U-M	O	RW, FT	
Scott's Oriole	Icterus parisorum	U-SR, R-WR	Pr	MS, OW	in <i>Yucca</i>
House Finch	Carpodacus mexicanus	C-PR	Co	FT, RW	
Pine Siskin	Spinus pinus	R-M	O	OW, Fi	
Lesser Goldfinch	Spinus psaltria	C-SR, F-WR	Pr	RW, FT, Fi	

^a Habitat types: foothills thornscrub (FT), riparian woodland (RW), oak woodland (OW), grassland (Gr), desert-scrub (DS), mountain scrub (MS), beachfronts and emergent vegetation (Be), aquatic (Aq), palm groves (Pa), cliffs and rocky outcrops (Cl), fields and man-made vegetation openings (Fi), houses or other developed areas (Ho), and aerial (Ae).