

Circa '85

Birds of the Rattlesnake Springs,
Eddy County, New Mexico Area

Steve West, Box 2489, Carlsbad, NM 88220

The following is a list of species recorded in the Rattlesnake Springs area of southern Eddy County, New Mexico. This area is largely managed by the National Park Service with a smaller, adjacent area owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy.

The following list contains 2/3rds of species recorded in New Mexico. The list is deficient in shorebirds, gull and terns because of the lack of large amounts of surface water. Rattlesnake Springs is visited by hundreds of birders each year from throughout the nation because of the large number of species that can be found here. Rattlesnake Springs is mentioned in every bird-finding guide that covers the southwest and in many field guides. At Rattlesnake Springs alone, during migration, it is possible to find 100 species in a day without leaving the area. Large numbers of eastern warblers have been recorded here and the site is well known as a vagrant trap (Great Kiskadee, Groove-billed Ani, Varied Thrush, etc.).

Even more important than acting as a vagrant trap, Rattlesnake Springs offers a small remnant of riparian vegetation that has not been heavily altered. Much of the native vegetation remains and the result is that a number of T/E species, species on the extreme edge of their range and species that depend on riparian areas can be common here. These same species are often absent from any surrounding, altered territory.

Included in this list are many accidentals and vagrants. Their relative status is noted on the current Carlsbad Caverns National Park checklist of birds.

1. Pied-billed Grebe
2. Eared Grebe
3. Western Grebe
4. American White Pelican
5. American Bittern
6. Great Blue Heron
7. Great Egret
8. Snowy Egret
9. Tricolored Heron
10. Cattle Egret
11. Green-backed Heron-probable nesting riparian species
12. Black-crowned Night-Heron
13. White Ibis
14. White-faced Ibis
15. Black-bellied Whistling-Duck
16. Tundra Swan

17. Snow Goose
18. Canada Goose
19. Wood Duck-recent indications as a possible breeder
20. Green-winged Teal
21. Mallard
22. Northern Pintail
23. Blue-winged Teal
24. Cinnamon Teal-recent indications as a possible breeder
25. Northern Shoveler
26. Gadwall
27. American Wigeon
28. Canvasback
29. Redhead
30. Ring-necked Duck
31. Lesser Scaup
32. Common Goldeneye
33. Bufflehead
34. Hooded Merganser
35. Common Merganser
36. Ruddy Duck
37. Turkey Vulture-large fall roosts of up to 500 birds
38. Osprey
39. Black-shouldered Kite
40. Mississippi Kite-important riparian area for fall
birds, especially immatures, potential
nester, formerly state listed
41. Bald Eagle-Federal and state listed
42. Northern Harrier-local breeding populations at south
end of range
43. Sharp-shinned Hawk
44. Cooper's Hawk-local nester
45. Northern Goshawk
46. Common Black-Hawk-occasional in riparian area, state
listed
47. Harris' Hawk
48. Red-shouldered Hawk
49. Broad-winged Hawk
50. Swainson's Hawk
51. Zone-tailed Hawk
52. Red-tailed Hawk
53. Ferruginous Hawk
54. Rough-legged Hawk
55. Golden Eagle
56. American Kestrel
57. Merlin
58. Peregrine Falcon-occasional spring and fall use
59. Prairie Falcon
60. Ring-necked Pheasant
61. Wild Turkey
62. Northern Bobwhite-western edge of range
64. Scaled Quail
65. Virginia Rail-increasing frequency on Rattlesnake Creek
66. Sora-increasing frequency on Rattlesnake Creek
67. Common Moorhen

68. American Coot
69. Sandhill Crane
70. Killdeer
71. Black-necked Stilt
72. American Avocet
73. Greater Yellowlegs
74. Lesser Yellowlegs
75. Solitary Sandpiper
76. Willet
77. Spotted Sandpiper
78. Upland Sandpiper
79. Long-billed Curlew
80. Semipalmated Sandpiper
81. Western Sandpiper
82. Least Sandpiper
83. Baird's Sandpiper
84. Long-billed Dowitcher
85. Common Snipe
86. American Woodcock
87. Wilson's Phalarope
88. Ring-billed Gull
89. Band-tailed Pigeon
90. White-winged Dove
91. Mourning Dove
92. Inca Dove
93. Common Ground-Dove-state listed, infrequent in area but
seen as often here as almost any
place in the state in recent years,
an excellent site for potential
reintroduction and re-establishment
94. Black-billed Cuckoo
95. Yellow-billed Cuckoo-important nesting area for a
species under consideration for
Federal and state listing
96. Greater Roadrunner
97. Groove-billed Ani
98. Barn Owl
99. Flammulated Owl
100. Western Screech-Owl-one of few local breeding areas
101. Great Horned Owl
102. Burrowing Owl
103. Lesser Nighthawk
104. Common Nighthawk
105. Common Poorwill
106. White-throated Swift
107. Broad-billed Hummingbird-state listed, one record
108. Blue-throated Hummingbird
109. Black-chinned Hummingbird
110. Calliope Hummingbird
111. Broad-tailed Hummingbird
112. Rufous Hummingbird
113. Belted Kingfisher
114. Red-headed Woodpecker
115. Red-bellied Woodpecker

116. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
117. Red-naped Sapsucker
118. Williamson's Sapsucker
119. Ladder-backed Woodpecker
120. Downy Woodpecker
121. Hairy Woodpecker
122. Northern Flicker
123. Olive-sided Flycatcher
124. Western Wood-Pewee
125. Eastern Wood-Pewee
126. Willow Flycatcher-state listed, Federal candidate,
known only as a migrant but may have
nested historically
127. Least Flycatcher
128. Hammond's Flycatcher
129. Dusky Flycatcher
130. Gray Flycatcher
131. Cordilleran Flycatcher
132. Black Phoebe
133. Eastern Phoebe
134. Say's Phoebe
135. Vermillion Flycatcher
136. Ash-throated Flycatcher
137. Great Crested Flycatcher
138. Great Kiskadee
139. Cassin's Kingbird
140. Western Kingbird
141. Eastern Kingbird
142. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
143. Horned Lark
144. Purple Martin
145. Tree Swallow
145. Violet-green Swallow
146. Northern Rough-winged Swallow
147. Bank Swallow
148. Cliff Swallow
149. Cave Swallow-important feeding area for largest US
colony
150. Barn Swallow
151. Steller's Jay
152. Blue Jay
153. Scrub Jay
154. Pinyon Jay
155. Clark's Nutcracker
156. Black-billed Magpie
157. Chihuahuan Raven
158. Mountain Chickadee
159. Plain Titmouse
160. Verdin
161. Red-breasted Nuthatch
162. White-breasted Nuthatch
163. Brown Creeper
164. Cactus Wren
165. Rock Wren

166. Canyon Wren
167. Carolina Wren
168. Bewick's Wren
169. House Wren
170. Winter Wren
171. Sedge Wren
172. Marsh Wren
173. Golden-crowned Kinglet
174. Ruby-crowned Kinglet
175. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
176. Black-tailed Gnatcatcher
177. Eastern Bluebird-important nesting area for very local
state nesting species
178. Western Bluebird
179. Mountain Bluebird
180. Townsend's Solitaire
181. Swainson's Thrush
182. Hermit Thrush
183. Varied Thrush
184. American Robin
185. Gray Catbird
186. Northern Mockingbird
187. Sage Thrasher
188. Brown Thrasher
189. Curve-billed Thrasher
190. Crissal Thrasher
191. American Pipit
192. Cedar Waxwing
193. Phainopepla
194. Loggerhead Shrike
195. European Starling
196. White-eyed Vireo
197. Bell's Vireo-single-most important breeding area for
species in eastern New Mexico, this
species is rare in the state and
declining, it needs(at least in this area)
relatively undisturbed riparian areas,
state-listed and sometimes considered for
Federal listing
198. Gray Vireo-state listed, casual migrant
199. Solitary Vireo
200. Yellow-throated Vireo
201. Warbling Vireo
202. Philadelphia Vireo
203. Red-eyed Vireo
204. Yellow-green Vireo
205. Blue-winged Warbler
206. Golden-winged Warbler
207. Tennessee Warbler
208. Orange-crowned Warbler
209. Nashville Warbler
210. Virginia's Warbler
211. Lucy's Warbler
212. Northern Parula

213. Yellow Warbler
214. Chestnut-sided Warbler
215. Magnolia Warbler
216. Cape May Warbler
217. Yellow-rumped Warbler
218. Black-throated Gray Warbler
219. Townsend's Warbler
220. Hermit Warbler
221. Black-throated Green Warbler
222. Blackburnian Warbler
223. Yellow-throated Warbler
224. Grace's Warbler
225. Pine Warbler
226. Palm Warbler
227. Bay-breasted Warbler
228. Blackpoll Warbler
229. Cerulean Warbler
230. Black-and-white Warbler
231. American Redstart
232. Prothonotary Warbler
233. Worm-eating Warbler
234. Swainson's Warbler
235. Ovenbird
236. Northern Waterthrush
237. Louisiana Waterthrush
238. Mourning Warbler
239. Connecticut Warbler
240. MacGillivray's Warbler
241. Common Yellowthroat
242. Hooded Warbler
243. Wilson's Warbler
244. Canada Warbler
245. Yellow-breasted Chat-highest nesting concentrations in
SE New Mexico, riparian species
246. Hepatic Tanager
247. Summer Tanager-large nesting concentration of a
riparian dependent species
248. Scarlet Tanager
249. Western Tanager
250. Northern Cardinal
251. Pyrrhuloxia
252. Rose-breasted Grosbeak
253. Black-headed Grosbeak
254. Blue Grosbeak
255. Lazuli Bunting
256. Indigo Bunting-large nesting concentrations some years
257. Varied Bunting-frequent spring and fall, occasional
summer, state listed, known from only
two areas in state with any regularity
258. Painted Bunting-largest nesting concentrations in New
Mexico, on western extreme edge of
range
259. Dickcissel
260. Green-tailed Towhee

261. Rufous-sided Towhee
262. Canyon Towhee
263. Cassin's Sparrow
264. Rufous-crowned Sparrow
265. American Tree Sparrow
266. Chipping Sparrow
267. Clay-colored Sparrow
268. Brewer's Sparrow
269. Field Sparrow
270. Vesper Sparrow
271. Lark Sparrow
272. Black-throated Sparrow
273. Sage Sparrow
274. Lark Bunting
275. Savannah Sparrow
276. Baird's Sparrow-infrequent, state listed
277. Grasshopper Sparrow
278. LeConte's Sparrow
279. Fox Sparrow
280. Song Sparrow
281. Lincoln's Sparrow
282. Swamp Sparrow
283. White-throated Sparrow
284. White-crowned Sparrow
285. Harris' Sparrow
286. Dark-eyed Junco
287. McCown's Longspur
288. Chestnut-collared Longspur
289. Bobolink
290. Red-winged Blackbird
291. Eastern Meadowlark
292. Western Meadowlark
293. Yellow-headed Blackbird
294. Rusty Blackbird
295. Brewer's Blackbird
296. Great-tailed Grackle
297. Common Grackle
298. Bronzed Cowbird
299. Brown-headed Cowbird
300. Orchard Oriole-largest nesting concentrations in New
Mexico, on extreme western edge of range
301. Hooded Oriole
302. Northern Oriole
303. Scott's Oriole
304. Purple Finch
305. Cassin's Finch
306. House Finch
307. Lesser Goldfinch
308. American Goldfinch
309. Evening Grosbeak
310. House Sparrow