

# MADERA CANYON BIRDS: Fall 2020 – Sept 1 through Nov 30

There appears to be an apparent decline in the number of cases of the Coronavirus Covid-19 locally and regionally. Birding and nature viewing can be healthy and safe when exercising caution and care. Let us continue to avoid gatherings, wear masks when in close proximity to others, avoid direct human-to-human contact, and wash your hands in case touch surfaces that someone else may have touched.

A modified form of the Madera Canyon Birds follows. The format of this report has changed such that “specialty” species are discussed rather than generally all birds.

A complete checklist of Madera Canyon birds is available for download on the FOMC web site: [www.friendsofmaderacanyon.org](http://www.friendsofmaderacanyon.org) and in print at the Visitor Information Station as you enter the canyon and in brochure boxes attached to trail map panels in the canyon. To learn what unusual species are being seen in the canyon and in southeast Arizona generally, go to the local birding hotline on the web at: <http://birding.aba.org/maillist/AZ>.

## General Summary:

The past season has been hotter and drier than normal. Madera Canyon received a small fraction of the normal monsoon rains. The flow in Madera Creek is minimal to none existent, rather unusual for late summer/early fall. Hopefully the birds and wildlife will find the few available pools of water and these pools will persist until the winter rains late in the year. It will be interesting to see how the birds adapt to these conditions. At least we can look forward to cooler temperatures this fall.

## Bird Possibilities:

This season is a time of transition for birds. Many of the specialty birds that breed in Madera Canyon migrant elsewhere during the fall season to winter in Mexico. Fortunately a few of these individuals remain in Madera Canyon for the winter. Many other species migrant through Madera Canyon and some of these remain also remain to winter here. The tables below delineate when some of the more interesting birds should be departing (or arriving) in the fall months.

Many of the birds that breed in Madera Canyon linger into the fall and then depart. The following species should have moved on by these dates:

Early September	Lesser Nighthawk, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Brown-crested Flycatcher
Mid September	Mexican Whip-poor-Will, Elf Owl, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Late September	Cordilleran Flycatcher, Red-faced Warblers
Early October	Gray Hawk, Zone-tailed Hawk, Warbling Vireo, Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Grace's Warbler, Virginia's Warbler
Mid October	Black-chinned Hummingbird, Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Rufous Hummingbird, Hooded Oriole, Bullock's Oriole, Black-head Grosbeak, Blue Grosbeak, Summer Tanager, Western Tanager
Late October	Western Wood Pewee

A few individuals of several of the species that breed in or migrate through Madera Canyon linger into late fall and stay to winter. Most of the individuals of the following species leave by these dates:

Early September	Hammond's Flycatcher
Mid September	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Late September	Townsend's Warbler
Early October	Elegant Trogon*, Greater Pewee, Hepatic Tanager, Scott's Oriole
Early November	Painted Redstart, Plumbeous Vireo

\*A special note about **Elegant Trogon** – For the most part family units will have broken up and mostly silent individuals may be encountered foraging for caterpillars and berries in throughout the Canyon. For the past several years, one or two **Elegant Trogons** have remained past early October to winter in the canyon or just below along Madera Creek. The trogons typically develop a foraging pattern where they may feed at a particular spot early in the morning and then forage elsewhere for much of the rest of the day.

Several species that migrant through Madera Canyon should have completed their passage by these dates:

Mid September	Swainson's Thrush
Early October	Olive-sided Flycatcher, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Cassin's Vireo, Nashville Warbler, MacGillivray's Warbler, Hermit Thrush, Wilson Warbler, Lazuli Bunting

Several winter residents for Madera Canyon should be arriving by these dates:

Mid September	Red-naped Sapsucker
Late September	Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Townsend's Solitaire, Cedar Waxwing
Early October	Williamson's Sapsucker, Western Bluebird, Dark-eyed Junco

A number of species of interest in Madera Canyon area residents can be found year round. The **Montezuma Quail** is a highly desired species though difficult to find. They occur through much of the canyon and are very skittish. Look for them crossing a road or trail, or perhaps stake out a water hole and wait. Several resident species are common throughout the canyon; **Hutton's Vireo**, **Mexican Jay**, **Bridled Titmouse**, **Bushtit**, **Yellow-eyed Junco**, and **Hermit Thrush**. Two of the species are restricted to the lower portion of the canyon (Proctor Road area) for the most part; **Rufous-winged Sparrow** and **Black-capped Gnatcatcher**. The distribution of **Olive Warbler** is interesting in Madera Canyon. This species breeds higher elevation portions in the canyon and come down to the middle and lower portions of the canyon in the late fall when cold weather occurs.