

Nature at the Tinneys – Jan 21 – April 1, 2019

(Photos and Story by Bob and Maxine Tinney) - **Beep! Beep! The Greater Roadrunner!**



In the morning of January 25, after a cold night, a **Greater Roadrunner** comes into the yard to get warm. To “sunbathe” and warm up with its back to the sun, the bird raises the feathers across its back and wings to expose its heat-absorbent black skin. Note the different background locations where it stops to sunbathe several times.



When threatened or displaying to a rival, they erect their crest and reveal a bright orange patch of skin behind the eye.



The **Greater Roadrunner** (*Geococcyx californianus*) then lays down briefly for a rest before fleeing the Tinneys' yard. While on the move the Roadrunners startle and flush a meal by opening their wings and flashing the wings' white spots.

The Circle of Life - Hawks and Prey



During periods of the days the yard is empty of birds. On February 4, Bob goes outside and spots the possible reason. An adult **Red-Tailed Hawk** (*Buteo jamaicensis*) is perching motionless (above) in a tree yet scanning for prey.



An adult **Cooper's Hawks** (*Accipiter cooperii*) with gray upperparts, reddish-barred chest, and red eyes also screams through the yard trees numerous times hoping the nab other birds.



The Hawks scare and often run other birds including **Mourning Doves** and **Band-tailed Pigeons** (above) into the windows, then grab the stunned birds away to imbibe their prey as a tasty meal.

Dark-eyed Juncos – Late January Photos with incredible variation in Subspecies



The Oregon Dark-eyed Junco has a dark black hood, light brown back, buffy sides, and white belly.



The Pink-sided Dark-eyed Junco sports a slate-gray head, brown back and pinkish brown sides.



This possible Slate-colored Dark-eyed Junco and Gray-headed Dark-eyed Junco are mostly gray with white belly (left).

The Gray-headed Dark-eyed Junco has a well-defined rufous mantle (right).



The **Band-tailed Pigeons** arriving in flocks of a few to 30, alight in the trees and proceed to the seed trays and ground.



The graceful, slender-tailed, small-headed **Mourning Dove** is common across the continent.



The **American Robins** (above) will be welcoming the emergence of earthworms with the **Full Worm Moon** setting, celebrating the vernal equinox (below) on the morning of March 20 over Sierra Prieta.





1st Winter **Yellow-rumped Warblers** (pale throats above) and four adult **butterbutts** with yellow throats (below).



A female and male **Lesser Goldfinches** dine at the tube feeder, and the **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** at the suet feeder.



The **Bridled Titmouse** enjoys the seed block while the **Chipping** and **White Crowned Sparrows** are ground feeders.



Yard bird sightings include the **Bewick's Wren** (left), **Hermit Thrush** (left-center), and **Woodhouse's Scrub-Jays**.

The Mule Deer Enjoy a Lazy Afternoon



After a small snow on February 6, the Mule Deer seek bird seed that was put on the ground for the birds.



On the afternoon of February 7, the Mule Deer lick and preen one another and enjoy the warmth of the sunshine.



After a cold night, a prominent Mule Deer Buck makes himself comfortable on the snowy ground and falls fast asleep.



A doe and first year fawn also join in the siesta time (first photos awake, second asleep) in the warm sunshine.

Other February - March Animals in the Tinney's Yard



Many **Squirrels**, **Chipmunks** and a **Packrat** (at night) scamper around the yard looking for bits of food.



The **Skunks** (right photo shows two) visit at night and look for leftover bird seed.



Because of the bird seed on the ground the **Javelina** also visit, but are often chased off the property.



The peppery gray back of the **Gray Fox** with reddish brown trim continues to stop by a few nights in February.

The Woodpeckers excavate bark for insects, pin nuts, and seed blocks!



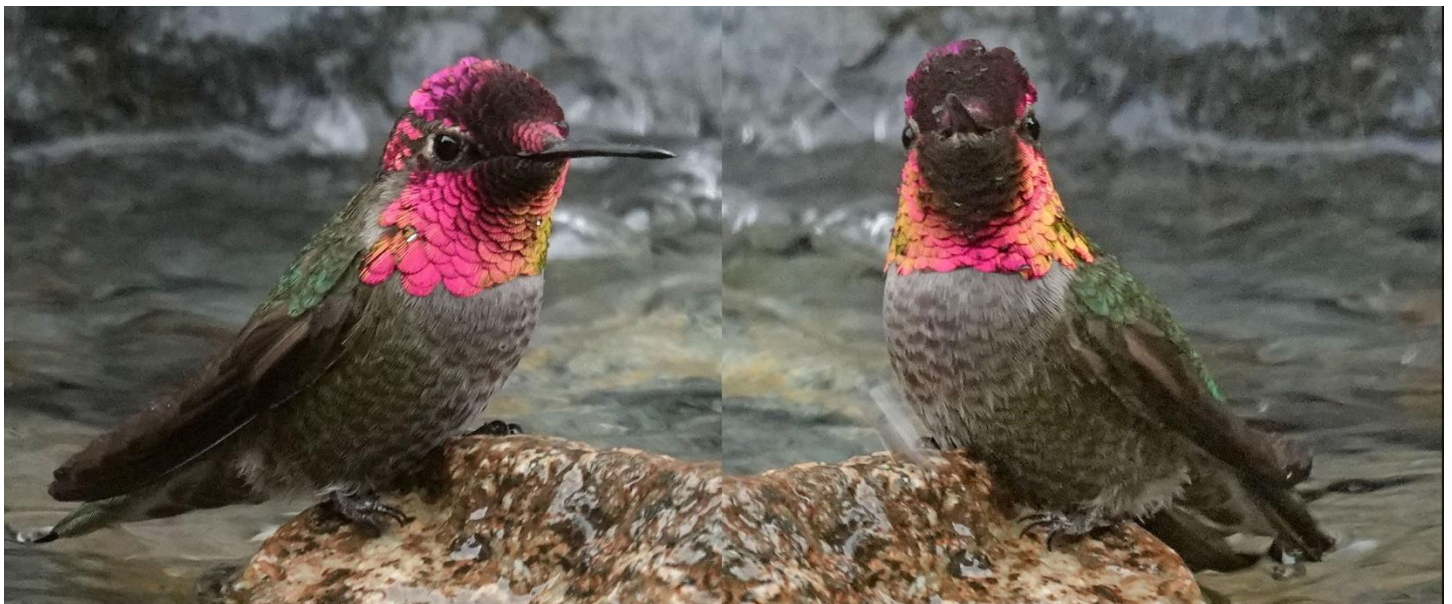
The small powerful male and female **Hairy Woodpeckers** and aggressive **Acorn Woodpeckers** gather pine nuts.



Two aggressive male **Acorn Woodpeckers** with white forehead and red caps run other birds from the seed block then join each other to dine together on one of the seed blocks, while the female with black above the red cap joins them, then takes seed to a nearby tree before devouring her seed procurement.



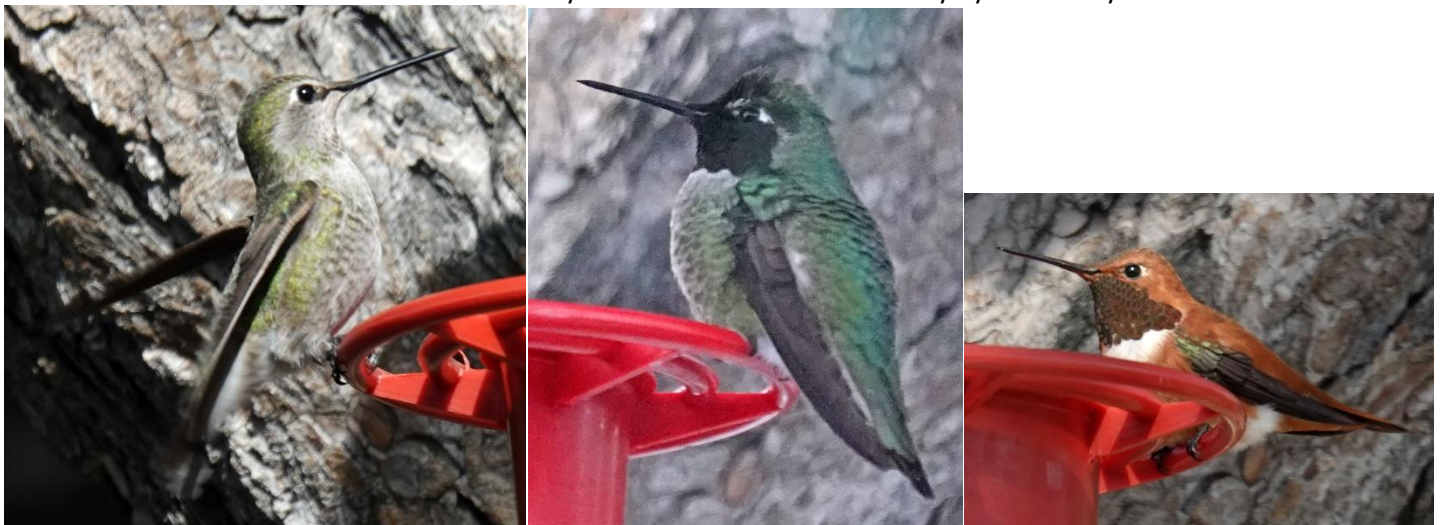
Although the male **Red-napped Sapsuckers** with extensive red chin/female center with white chin spot will dine at the seed blocks. They also have a taste for sugar and drill neat little rows of holes in aspen tree then lap up the sugary sap.



Happy Valentine's Day from the Tinneys
 Male Anna's Hummingbird - 13 February 2019 - Tinneys' Water Feature - Prescott, AZ



Above Valentine's Day Card sent to friends and family by the Tinneys.



Also in February/March a female and male **Anna's Hummingbirds** and **Rufous Hummingbirds** visit the yard.

Animals of Snow Days of February 21-23



During the Winter Storm on February 21, **Mule Deer Bucks** (one with broken-off tines - above, another with 7 to 9-inch tines - below) enter the yard with difficulty through three-to-four-foot snow drifts.



We had two feeding pans with seed on the patio for the birds, and the deer stop for a bite to eat, then depart.



As the storm cleared on February 23, the Mule Deer still has difficulty lifting their feet to move through the drifts.



As the snow begins, instinct tell the **Spotted Towhees, Cassin's and House Finches, White Crowned Sparrows, Oregon and Gray-headed Dark-eyed Juncos, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Ruby-crowned Kinglets** to eat during the storm.



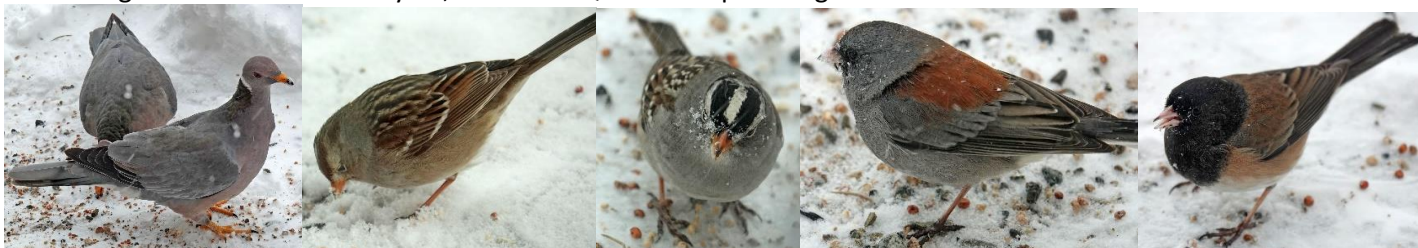
As the snow continues even the **Crissal Thrashers**, with distinctive rufous undertail coverts, move to the seed blocks to feed.



The official snow was designated as 28", but being high on a ridge, the winds during the storm blows drift up to 3-5 feet.



During the storm on February 21, **Gambel's Quail** attempt to negotiate and ford the drifts of snow to find seed.



On February 22 Bob shovels an area around the house and places seed on the snow for the **Band-tailed Pigeons, White-crowned Sparrows** (1st winter and adult), **Dark-eyed Juncos** and other birds to find some seed.



The male and female **Cassin's Finches** with straight culmen, pointed crest and unique dark area on face (left), and male and female **House Finches** with curved culmen beak and curved head (right) partake of seeds.



A **Spotted Towhee** is stressed and two **Woodhouse's Scrub-Jays** gleans morsels of ground seed.



The cold is stifling, but the **Chipping Sparrow** and Audubon **Yellow-rumped Warblers** seek food and preen.



The **Common Raven**, **Mourning Dove**, and **White-breasted Nuthatch** seek sources of food for energy.

When the snow melts and warm weather returns



The **Gambel's Quail** and **Canyon Towhee** are happy to again find food and enjoy the warmer days.



The **Common Raven**, member of the Corvid Family, is very intelligent and several ravens glide, soar, and play together.



In Winter the female **Red-Shafted Northern Flickers** eat suet for energy and with the Spring arrival will enjoy tasty ants.

An early March 9 Quick Stroll at Fain Park and Lynx Lake



The male with spot near the bill and female with brown head **Common Goldeneye** dive for invertebrates at Fain Park.



The male **Hooded Merganser** dives and then raises its collapsible fan-shaped crest.



A rich-brown female **Lesser Scaup** dives and leaves the purplish-iridescent-headed male by himself.



At Lynx, a **Great Blue Heron**, accompanied by an **American Coot**, waits patiently to catch a fish with its daggerlike bill.

The gangly **Double-crested Cormorant** is a prehistoric-looking, matte-black fishing bird with orangey facial skin.



Part bird, part submarine the **Pied-billed Grebe** (left) shares the Lynx waters with a pair of **Mallards** (center) which dabble about while waiting for someone to share some bread. A regal **Bald Eagle** (right) is seen flying from the treetops on the east side of Lynx Lake to the Southwest.

Northern Flickers

Photos and Story by Maxine Tinney
(Prescott Audubon *Wingtips* Submission)

An incessant tapping/drilling sound along with *wika-wika-wika* calling awakens my husband and I one early Spring morning. Going outside, we find the source of the drumming. A male Red-shafted Northern Flicker is gripping the side of one of our bird houses using his two toes pointing forward and two toes backwards for support and his tail as a prop. He proceeds drilling on the surface of the wood roof with his robust, slightly down-curved bill to claim his territory, including intermittent calling of his *wika-wika-wika* love song to attract a mate. He is a large, light-brown woodpecker measuring about 12.5 inches with a handsome black-scalloped plumage, barred upperparts and spotted underparts, has a black bib, gray face, tan crown, red malars, and would be a catch for any tan-malared flicker female. As he flies away, rising and falling smoothly with interspersed



Male Red-shafted Northern Flicker
in The Ranch at Prescott.

On March 16, 2019, a group of birders led by Ryan Crouse, visits the 19.6-acre Coldwater Farm in Dewey-Humboldt belonging to Garry and Denise Rogers. The bird-of-the-day rare find is a male Yellow-shafted Northern Flicker (a group of two subspecies) which sits boldly atop a green shed, with brown face, black malars, red crest on the nape, and a black upper breast patch. According to "Birds of Prescott, Arizona" by Carl S. Tomoff, this bird is considered cas-T,W (more than five records; not occurring annually; Transient; Winter). If you travel to the east and far north of the United States, you will commonly find this subspecies.



At Coldwater Farm in Dewey-Humboldt, the left photo shows the male Yellow-shafted Northern Flicker with black malars and red crest on nape. The right photo shows the yellow shafts and eyelid closing.

With luck and a keen eye, whilst visiting forests and environs in the Prescott area, you might see an intergrade or hybrid cross Northern Flicker which has some traits from each of the two forms, red-shafted and yellow-shafted.

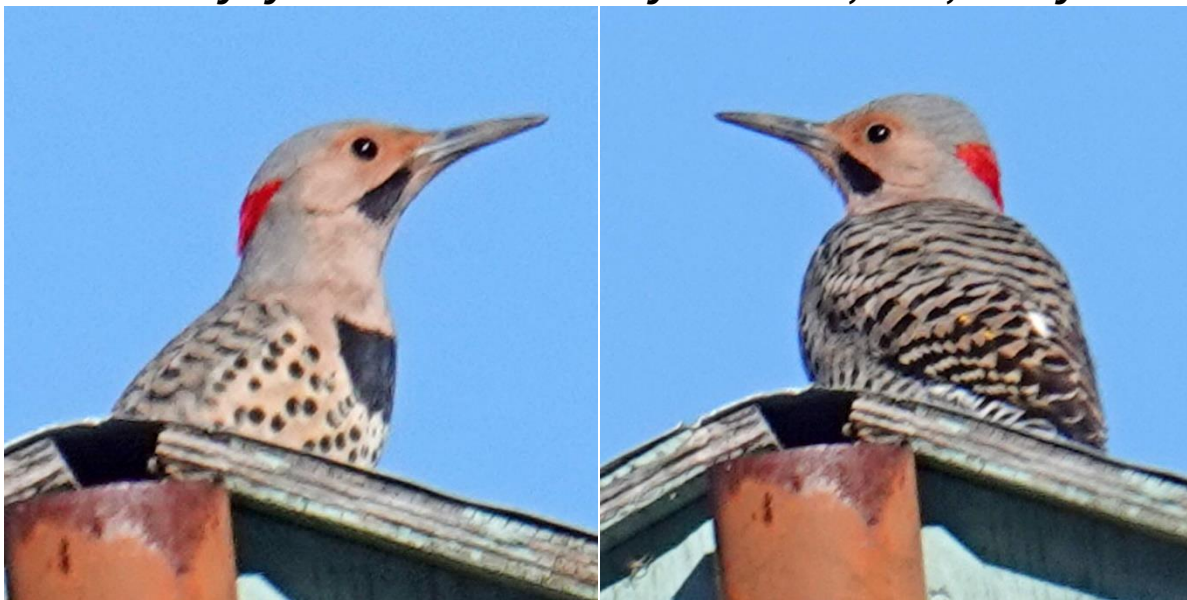


In The Ranch, the left photo shows a male Red-shafted Intergrade Northern Flicker, red malar and red crest on nape and with red feather shafts. The right photo shows a male Intergrade Yellow-shafted Northern Flicker, red malar, and red crest on nape with yellow shafts on the tail feathers.

The Northern Flickers live in open woods and forest edges and feed on ants, beetles and insects on the ground or in snags with their barbed tongues that can extend 2 inches beyond the bill and is covered with a sticky saliva. These ground foraging woodpeckers also eat flies, butterflies, moths, snails, berries and seeds and can be attracted by backyard suet and seed blocks and a pan of water for drinking and bathing. The Northern Flicker is protected by the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Although still abundant and widespread in the United States, recent surveys indicate declines of both groups of Northern Flickers.

Birding at Rogers' Coldwater Farm

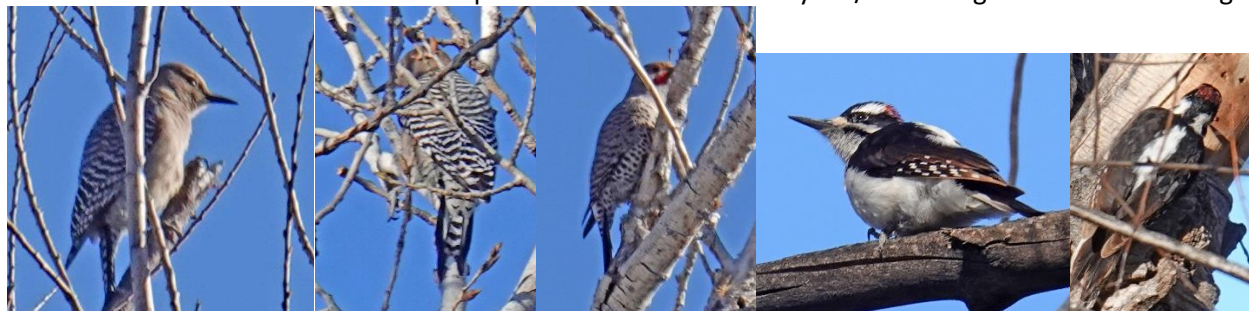
(Photos and Story by Bob and Maxine Tinney – March 16, 2019, Dewey-Humboldt)



While a group of birders, led by Ryan Crouse, visit Denise and Garry Rogers' 19.6-acre Coldwater Farm in Dewey-Humboldt, the *bird-of-the-day* is a male **Yellow-shafted Northern Flicker** (*Colaptes auratus auratus*) with brown face, black malar stripe, red nape crescent, and black upper breast patch which sits stately atop a green shed.



The above left photo shows the red crescent on the back of the neck, while the right photo shows the yellow wing-shafts of the **Yellow-shafted Northern Flicker** with possible third translucent eyelid/nictitating membrane covering its eye.



Two female, brown-headed **Gila Woodpeckers**, a male **Red-shafted Northern Flicker** with red malar, and male **Hairy Woodpeckers** are seen in the cottonwood trees.



The Agua Fria River flows (above) through the Coldwater Farm with tributaries (below left) to two ponds.



Photographed birds include the American Robin, American Wigeon, Great Blue Heron, Red-tailed Hawk (above) Ruby-c Kinglet, Black Phoebe, Brown Creeper, White-c Sparrow, Euro Starling, and Red-wing Blackbirds (below).



Rabbit Carcass, Coyote Skull and Anthills are discovered



and nests of Black, Sharp-shinned Hawks, & Cormorant.

The birding group learns details about the Coldwater Farm birds and environs (above left).

Thanks to **Denise and Garry Rogers**, owners, Coldwater Farm; **Jeanne Trupiano**, Project Manager Coldwater Farm Conservation Easement, Arizona Land Conservation Services; **Åsa Björklund**, Communications Specialist, Central Arizona Land Trust; and birding-leader **Ryan Crouse**, Board of Directors, Prescott Audubon Society, and Jay's Bird Barn for their help in providing a delightful birding visit to the Coldwater Farm.



On April 1, 2019 about 10:45 a.m., Tinneys spot a **Glover's Silkmoth**. **Wing Span:** 3 1/8 - 3 15/16 inches. Adults do not feed. The **Glover's Silkmoth**, *Hyalophora gloveri*, and now considered a subspecies of *Hyalophora columbia*. Recently there has been some evidence and support to reestablish this taxon as a distinct species.



The **Junipers** and **Arizona Cypress**, are popping their pollen and bursting it into the air this Spring. According to **The Daily Courier** Prescott's tree pollen is essentially as high as the scales can measure. There are many sufferers with sneezing, congestion, watery eyes and allergy symptoms.



Spring has burst forth with Blossoms of fruit trees and natural plants.

🌸 Hope each of you enjoyed this *Nature at the Tinneys* document. 🌸