

## **2022 GILA RIVER CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT** — *Linda Moore, Compiler*

The Gila River Christmas Bird Count was conducted on December 31, 2022 after dodging multiple and varying weather forecasts. The day was lovely for the count, with calm winds and a low temperature in the mid-20's and a high in the mid-60's. Sixteen observers ventured out in the field to identify and count birds prior to welcoming in a new year.

Rare and unusual birds were scarce this year, with a dusky flycatcher and 2 orange-crowned warblers being the most uncommon. The 5 vermilion flycatchers seen were on the high side of previous counts. High counts were also noted for 7 other species – Gila woodpecker, Woodhouse scrub jay, Juniper titmouse, Hermit thrush, White-throated sparrow, Northern cardinal and Great-tailed grackles.

Comparing the 2022 CBC with recent year counts, the total number of individual birds was much higher. In 2019 with 6 routes covered, there were 77 species and 1655 individual birds counted. 2020 was 8 routes with 101 species and 4566 birds, 2021 had 10 routes with 105 species and 3456 birds, and 2022 10 routes with 92 species and 5215 individual birds counted.