

*Joshua's Sentinel 17 October 1984*  
**Season change brings  
new mixture of birds**

Now that the days are shorter and the nights quite cool, many of our summer birds are leaving. The nighthawks that had been circling the outdoor floodlights (as they caught the bugs attracted to the lights) are no longer here.

Last week 17 turkey vultures were seen soaring together in ever-higher spirals; they have probably moved south. Western kingbirds, white-winged doves, orioles, some species and individual hummingbirds, and the brown-headed and bronzed cowbirds, together with most great-tailed grackles have gone to winter in Mexico or Central America.

In their place we will be seeing the ruby-crowned kinglet, Say's Phoebe, rock wren, sage and crissal thrashers, and occasionally a green-tailed towhee or canon wren. When you see a larger and darker red-tailed hawk, Cooper's hawk, or great-horned owl, you will know they are from farther north.

The white-crowned sparrows, written about in a recent column, are represented by two subspecies: the Gambel's, from Canada and Alaska, and the Oriantha from Colorado. The latter have a black spot between the eye and the bill. Many are just

passing thru, going to Southeast Arizona and Mexico.

Also moving back are three species which generally nest just a little higher than here — the tiny, neat black-throated sparrow (desert sparrow) the raven, and the black male (or grey female) phainopepla. (More on the phainopepla next week.)

Others more erratic, coming down to the desert when the juniper berry crop fails farther north, are the flocks of scrub jays, Brewer's sparrows, western bluebirds, robins, cedar waxwings, and lesser goldfinches.

Meanwhile, some of our year-round neighbors to watch for are the cardinal, house finch, mourning dove, verdin, black-tailed gnatcatcher, cactus wren, curve-billed thrasher, Harris' and red-tailed hawks, great horned and screech owls, house sparrows, gilded (northern) flicker, ladder-back and Gila woodpeckers, some of the hummingbirds (Anna's and Costas sometimes stay all year), and of course the Gambel's quail and roadrunner.

We are working on a one-page check-list of birds seen in the Cave Creek area; planning to have it available at our booth at the art and craft fair.