

Field Guide to Birds



Double-crested cormorant

Phalacrocorax auritus

The Double-crested cormorant is the most numerous cormorant in North America. Found in both fresh and salt water. The Double-crested cormorant flies with a kink in its neck. It has a black body with black legs and feet. It has an orange throat pouch.



Great Blue Heron

Ardea herodias

The Great Blue Heron is the largest heron in North America. It has a gray back, long neck and black head plumes. Their nests can be seen high on the Rough Canyon Cliffs on the Devils River.



Great Egret

Ardea alba

The Great Egret has yellow eyes, a yellow bill and long black legs. Its body is white with lacy looking feathers. This bird prefers either salt or fresh water marches, or marshy ponds. The Great Egret stalks its prey by quietly walking through the water. It eats small fish and amphibians.



Black Vulture

Coragyps atratus

All black except for at the tips of its wings. The Black vulture does not have feathers on its head or neck, its skin is gray and wrinkled. The Black Vulture relies on its sight for its food.



American Wigeon

Anas Americana

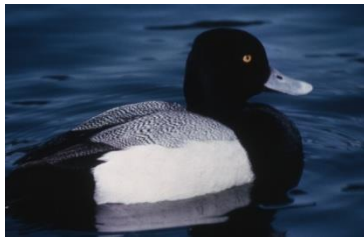
With a distinctive green eye patch that extends to the back of its head the American Wigeon is a medium side duck with a brown body and white belly and rump. It has blue bill with a black tip and a white crown. Its cheeks and throat are speckled black and white.



Redhead

Aythya americana

Male Redheads have chestnut heads and dark gray sides and wings. Their breast and rumps are black and their bellies are white. Females are a brown color and have gray-brown colored wings. Unlike their yellow eyed counter parts the female Redhead has black eyes.



Lesser Scaup

Aythya affinis

The male Lesser Scaup has a barred gray back and light grey belly. Its head, neck and breast are black with a dark purple sheen. Its eyes are yellow and its bill is blue-grey color. The female Lesser Scaup is a brown grey color with white around its bill.



Bufflehead

Bucephala albeola

The male Bufflehead is mostly white with black on parts of its head, wings and back. Its head has a large white patch that starts behind its eye and extends to the back of its head. The black color of its wings has a purple to blue sheen to it. The female Bufflehead is a grayish brown color with a white cheek patch. The head of the male bufflehead is quite puffy. These ducks have been known to be monogamous and can stay with the same mate for several years.



Harris's Hawk

Parabuteo unicinctus

The Harris's Hawk has chestnut shoulders, leggings, and wing linings. It has a long tail with a white base and tip. This Hawk can be seen though out the Southwest and are agile hunters.



Red-Tailed Hawk

Buteo jamaicensis

The Red-Tailed Hawk gets its name from its red tail. Its chest is white and belly has dark streaks. This raptor can be seen soaring high on thermals.



American kestrel

Falco sparverius

This small hawk has a black facial stripe under each eye, a rusty colored tail and back, and a white underside with light brown spots. The American Kestrel eats anything from rodents, bats, insects and small reptiles and birds.



American Coot

Fulica americana

With a black body the American coot is easily identified by its white bill. The American Coots feet are not webbed but lobed.



Killdeer

Charadrius vociferus

The Killdeer has two black bands across the upper breast, and white stripes along the wings that can be seen while in flight. This bird has an orange rump. The killdeer gets its name from its call. This bird is also known to appear to have an injured wing to distract a predator away from its young.



Great Roadrunner

Geococcyx californianus

This icon of the South West is mostly brown with white streaks. Its head is crested and it has a long tale. This bird can run up to 15 mph.



Great Horned Owl

Bubo virginianus

With its distinctive ear tufts the Great Horned Owl is mostly a dark brown color with a white throat. A silent flyer, it can catch prey as large as a rabbit.



Common Nighthawk

Chordeiles minor

Most active at dusk and dawn the Common Nighthawk eat night-flying bugs and is usually mistaken for a bad when seen flying in erratic patterns. Mostly grey with white tail band, throat and wing patches. The females lack the white throat band.



Black-chinned Hummingbird

Archilochus alexandri

This small bird has a radiant green body with gray under parts and a white breast. The males are the ones that have a black chin and a violet throat.

Ringed Kingfisher

Ceryle torquata

This kingfisher is the largest in the western Hemisphere. Its blue-grey color and white under wings and red chest make it easy to spot. The Ringed Kingfisher also has a white chin and collar. It has a heavy bill and a thick crest.



Belted Kingfisher

Ceryle alcyon

The Belted Kingfisher has a blue-grey back and wings and a white belly. Its head is also a blue-grey color and crested. Males have a blue-gray breast band and females have an added rusty colored breast band.

Golden-fronted Woodpecker

Melanerpes aurifrons

Gold on nape of neck and above the bill, males have a red cap. Body is white with black and white barred wings with a black tail.

Great Kiskadee

Pitangus sulphuratus

Numerous in South Texas the Great Kiskadee has a bright yellow belly with brown back and upper wings. Its head has a yellow crown with a black head and white eye line.

Cliff Swallow

Petrochelidon pyrrhonota

This small swallow has a dark blue back and buff rump. The Cliff Swallow has a dark blue throat patch and a white forehead. Its wings and tail are black.



Cactus Wren

Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus

The Cactus Wren is a common bird throughout the Southwest. This little bird has brown and gray back and wings. Its tail is long and of the same color. The Cactus Wren has black and white streaked chest and underside. Its rump is cinnamon colored. The Cactus Wren builds its nest in thorny plants and will even build several decoy nests for added protection. This bird also has a white eye stripe.



Rock Wren

Salpinctes obsoletus

This small bird has a pail gray chest and cinnamon colored rump. Its back and wings are brownish grey and speckled with white. The Rock Wren has a white eye stripe. The Rock Wren prefers rocky open areas.



Canyon Wren

Catherpes mexicanus

The Canyon Wren is a dusty brown colored bird with a white throat and breast. It has a long tail with brown bars across it. Its head is a gray-brown color and its bill is slightly decurved. The curve in its bill helps it catch the insects it prays on.



Ruby-crowned Kinglet

Regulus calendula

This unique little bird has a tuft of red feathers on its head. Its body is a grayish olive green color and its under parts are a pail yellow color. Its wings are a dark gray color with white bars.



Northern Mockingbird

Mimus polyglottos

The Northern Mockingbird has a dark gray head and back. Its chest and belly are a lighter gray color and its wings and tail are a blackish gray, with two white bars on its wings. The Northern Mockingbird is also the Texas state bird.

Olive Sparrow

Arremonops rufivirgatus

The Olive Sparrow has olive brown colored back wings and tail. Its under parts are an olive gray color. Its head is adorned with olive colored crown stripes and eye lines. Squeaking can coax this bird into view.



Northern Cardinal

Cardinalis cardinalis

The male Northern Cardinal is a crested finch that has a bright scarlet body. It has a black mask and a heavy red bill. It forages for its food and feeds on seeds, fruits and insects. It is mostly seen in the Amistad Lake area during the fall and winter. Females are an olive brown color with red accents.



Pyrrhuloxia

Cardinalis sinuatus

This bird looks much like a Cardinal but with different colors. The Pyrrhuloxia has a gray body with a red tipped crest. Its face and breast also have red accents and red as well. It has a distinctive yellow bill.



Painted Bunting

Passerina ciris

The Painted Bunting is a beautiful colorful bird. With a blue head and red eye ring this bird has a bright green back and bright red under parts. It has dark green wings and shoulder patches. This bird is the only bird in the United States that has a blue head and red chest and under parts. Though the males are brightly colored the females are a modest vivid green color.