



Common Birds of White Sands National Monument

Visitor Center and Vicinity

Spring/Fall Migrants:

Black-headed Grosbeak
Brewer's Blackbird
Brewer's Sparrow
Chipping Sparrow
Lesser Goldfinch
Pine Siskin
White-crowned Sparrow
Wilson's Warbler
Yellow-headed Blackbird
Yellow-rumped Warbler



Swainson's Hawk

Summer/Breeding Residents:

Barn Swallow
Cactus Wren
Great-horned Owl
Greater Roadrunner
House Finch
House Sparrow
Northern Mockingbird
Say's Phoebe
Western Kingbird
White-winged Dove



Western Kingbird

Winter Residents:

Curve-billed Thrasher
Dark-eyed Junco
Green-tailed Towhee
Northern Flicker
Northern Harrier
Pyrrhuloxia
White-Crowned Sparrow



Black-throated Sparrow

Vegetated Areas

Spring/Fall Migrants:

Bewick's Wren
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher
Black-throated Sparrow
Chipping Sparrow
Green-tailed Towhee
Ladder-backed Woodpecker
Rock Wren
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Wilson's Warbler



Roadrunner

Summer/Breeding Residents:

Ash-throated Flycatcher
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher
Black-throated Sparrow
Blue Grosbeak
Cactus Wren
Cassin's Sparrow
Horned Lark
Lesser Nighthawk
Loggerhead Shrike
Mourning Dove
Northern Mockingbird
Pyrrhuloxia
Scott's Oriole
Turkey Vulture
Verdin

Winter Residents:

Curve-billed Thrasher
Dark-eyed Junco
Green-tailed Towhee
Horned Lark
Northern Flicker
Northern Harrier
White-Crowned Sparrow



Red-tailed Hawk



Breeding range



Non-breeding range



Year round range

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica



The barn swallow prefers open areas with low lying vegetation and commonly uses man made structures for breeding. Here at the monument, barn swallows will roost in the visitor center vicinity to raise their young during the summer months and are a common sight in the patio area. After breeding, the swallows will gather in communal roosts in the southern hemisphere up to a thousand strong. Barn swallows are the most wide spread species of swallow in the world. The barn swallow is highly maneuverable enough to feed on insects flying in the air. They will sometimes follow people or machinery to catch disturbed insects.



Pyrrhuloxia

Cardinalis sinuatus



© S. Noil

Also known as the desert cardinal, the pyrrhuloxia makes its home year round in desert shrub and mesquite thickets. The pyrrhuloxia will eat insects, seeds, and fruits. Nests are small in a cup-like shape concealed in dense shrubbery and hold clutches of two to four eggs. During the mating season which usually goes from mid-March to mid-August the males will defend their territory by singing from a good vantage point. For the most part pyrrhuloxia is non-migratory and will stay within its desert habitat.



Great-horned Owl

Bubo virginianus



© G. Fry

The Great-horned Owl is found in different habitats around the Americas, making it one of the most adaptable owls species in the world. Excellent low light vision combined with superb hearing make the great horned owl an excellent hunter. Almost all the owl's prey is killed with its talons, which have a crushing power of approximately 300 pounds per square inch. This impressive gripping power can be compared to much larger raptor species such as the golden eagle. The owl's prey consists of small to medium sized mammals. In the monument the owl can prey on the kit foxes that make their homes in the dune-field.

