

Birds of the Bend



Acorn Woodpecker

(*Melanerpes formicivorus*)

This red-capped, white-eyed woodpecker is about eight inches long. Acorn woodpeckers have the unusual characteristic of communal (shared) breeding with one or two males, a harem of females and juveniles from the previous year. They all work together to incubate and feed the young in a shared nest. Another special adaptation of the acorn woodpecker is its collection and storage of acorns in granary trees; the birds drill small holes all over a tree and pound an acorn into each hole, so tightly that even a squirrel can't get them back out. Acorn woodpeckers can be seen in the trees of the Sacramento River Bend area year-round.



Turkey Vulture

(*Cathartes aura*)

Turkey vultures, relatives of the California condor, eat a combined diet of meat and vegetation. They do not and cannot kill prey for a meal, as their claws are too weak to tear a fresh carcass, and their beaks aren't properly shaped or strong enough for tearing. Their digestive tracts kill bacteria and viruses which is a crucial ability for a bird that only eats decaying animals.

Turkey vultures can often be spotted soaring on updrafts of air, with their wingtips pulled up into a "V" shape, as in the adjacent picture. Turkey vultures can be seen in the Sacramento River Bend area year-round.



Brown-headed Cowbird

(*Molothrus ater*)

The petite brown-headed cowbird is roughly six and a half inches long. Males have a black body, brown head and dark eyes, while females have a brown streaked body with a pale, grayish-tan head. This species is a brood parasite. A brood parasite does not build nests, incubate eggs or care for hatchlings; it sneaks its eggs in with those of other bird species, such as red-winged blackbirds, yellow warblers, and common yellow-throats. After the eggs hatch, the larger cowbird can often out-do its smaller nest-mates. Brown-headed cowbirds can be seen on the edges of woodlands and around grasslands of the Sacramento River Bend area from March through September.



Great Egret

(*Ardea alba*)

This large white wading bird with yellow beak and black legs is a common visitor to the wetlands. These egrets can often be seen standing motionless in a pond while hunting. Don't confuse the great egret with its smaller relative, the snowy egret, which has a black beak and yellow feet. Historically hunted for its plumage, the great egret is now threatened by the destruction of wetlands across the country. Great egrets can be seen in the Paynes Creek wetland area year-round.



Great Blue Heron

(*Ardea herodias*)

This large grayish bird with a yellow bill and nearly six-foot wingspan can be seen hunting along the shores of ponds. Herons hunt by standing still or moving slowly to catch unsuspecting fish, frogs, and insects. Herons have a black stripe above the eye and down the front of the neck; their legs and feet are also black. An adult heron may have fancy wispy plumes (feathers) on its head, neck, and back. In flight, the neck is folded. Great blue herons can be seen in the Payne's Creek Wetland area year-round.



Osprey

(*Pandion haliaetus*)

This large hawk's wingspan can measure up to 72 inches across; you can recognize one in flight by the crook in its long, narrow wings. An osprey's diet consists almost exclusively of fish and the birds are often called fish hawks. The lower surfaces of an osprey's toes are covered with tiny spikes, called spicules, that help it hang onto a fish after it makes a catch. Ospreys have a reversible outer toe, like owls, that allows them to grab a fish with two toes on each side. They also have special plumage (feathers) that decrease the absorption of

water when they plunge into the water after a fish. One of the osprey's most noticeable traits is that it carries a caught fish with the prey's head held forward to reduce air resistance. Ospreys are found in this area from March through November.



Paynes Creek Bird List

The Paynes Creek Wetland covers more than 100 of the 17,000 acres of BLM land in the Sacramento River Bend Area. As part of the Pacific Flyway, many migratory waterfowl winter in this part of the Sacramento Valley. These wetlands also attract egrets, herons, raptors, woodpeckers, swallows, warblers, and other songbirds.

The bird checklist below was developed specifically for this site, and may help you identify some common residents of the wetlands and surrounding oak woodlands. Take some time to walk the trails and visit with these beautiful and serene creatures. Please join us in exploring, enjoying, and protecting this excellent birding opportunity.

Cormorants		Season
Double-crested Cormorant		All
Herons		
Green Heron		Sp Su Fa
Snowy Egret		Sp Fa Wi
Great Egret		Sp Fa
Great Blue Heron		All
Ducks and Geese		
Canada Goose		All
Wood Duck		Sp Su Fa
Mallard		All
Gadwall		Sp Fa Wi
Green-winged Teal		Sp Fa
American Wigeon		Sp Fa Wi
Northern Pintail		Sp Fa Wi
Cinnamon Teal		Sp Su Fa
Canvasback		Sp Fa Wi
Redhead		Sp Fa Wi
Common Goldeneye		Fa Wi
Bufflehead		Sp Fa Wi
Common Merganser		All
Ruddy Duck		Fa Wi
Vultures, Hawks, Eagles, and Falcon		
Turkey Vulture		All
Osprey		Sp Su Fa
Northern Harrier		Sp Fa Wi
Bald Eagle		All
Sharp-shinned Hawk		Fa Wi
Cooper's Hawk		Sp Fa Wi
Red-shouldered Hawk		All
Red-tailed Hawk		All
American Kestrel		Sp Fa Wi

Upland Ground Bird and Quail		Season
Ring-necked Pheasant		All
Wild Turkey		All
California Quail		All
Coots and Cranes		
American Coot		All
Sandhill Crane		Sp
Plovers and Sandpipers		
Killdeer		All
Greater Yellowleg		Sp Fa Wi
Spotted Sandpiper		Sp Su
Pigeons and Doves		
Band-tailed Pigeon		Sp Su Fa
Rock Dove		All
Mourning Dove		All
Owls		
Great Horned Owl		All
Western Screech-Owl		All
Hummingbirds		
Black-chinned Hummingbird		Sp Su Fa
Anna's Hummingbird		All
Rufous Hummingbird		Sp Fa
Kingfishers		
Belted Kingfisher		All
Woodpeckers		
Acorn Woodpecker		All
Northern Flicker (red-shafted)		All
Nuttall's Woodpecker		All
Downy Woodpecker		All
Hairy Woodpecker		All
Flycatchers		
Western Wood-Pewee		Sp Su
Black Phoebe		All
Ash-throated Flycatcher		Sp Su
Western Kingbird		Sp Su
Vireos		
Hutton's Vireo		
Cassin's Vireo		
Crows, Jays and Magpies		
Western Scrub-Jay		All
Yellow-billed Magpie		All
American Crow		All
Swallows		
Tree Swallow		Sp Su
Violet-green Swallow		Sp Su
Northern Rough-winged Swallow		Sp Su
Barn Swallow		Sp Su

Babblers, Titmice, Bushtits, Nuthatches		Season
Oak Titmouse		All
Bushtit		All
White-breasted Nuthatch		All
Wrens		
House Wren		Sp Su
Bewick's Wren		All
Marsh Wren		Sp Su
Thrushes		
Western Bluebird		All
American Robin		All
Mockingbirds and Thrashers		
Northern Mockingbird		All
Starlings		
European Starling		All
Wood Warblers		
Orange-crowned Warbler		Sp Su Fa
Yellow-rumped Warbler		All
Yellow Warbler		Sp Su
Wilson's Warbler		Sp Su
Common Yellowthroat		Sp Su
Yellow-breasted Chat		Sp Su
Tanagers		
Western Tanager		Sp Su
Towhees, Sparrows, and Buntings		
California Towhee		All
Spotted Towhee		
Lark Sparrow		Sp Su Fa
White-crowned Sparrow		Sp Fa Wi
Golden-crowned Sparrow		Sp Fa Wi
Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)		All
Lazuli Bunting		
Grosbeaks		
Black-headed Grosbeak		
Blue Grosbeak		
Blackbirds and Orioles		
Western Meadowlark		All
Red-winged Blackbird		All
Brewer's Blackbird		All
Brown-headed Cowbird		Sp Su
Hooded Oriole		Sp Su
Bullock's Oriole		
Finches		
House Finch		All
Lesser Goldfinch		All
House Sparrow		All

Leave No Trace

Leave No Trace is a national program that strives to educate visitors about their recreational impacts and techniques to prevent and minimize such impacts on America's public lands. For more information, go to www.LNT.org or call (800) 332-4100.

1. Plan ahead and prepare
2. Travel and camp on durable surfaces
3. Dispose of waste properly
4. Leave what you find
5. Minimize campfire impact
6. Respect wildlife
7. Be considerate to other visitors



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