



# Amistad National Recreation Area

## Bird Checklist



## Birding at Many Intersections

Amistad National Recreation Area (NRA) contains a great diversity of birds, with 291 species having been documented. Amistad sits at the intersection of three bird conservation regions and offers a great variety of bird habitats. It is also on the central migratory flyway that connects breeding habitats in the Arctic with the Neotropics. This mix of habitats, along with the fact that Amistad is where eastern, western, southern, and northern bird faunas meet, means that the park offers many birdwatching opportunities. The recreation area is a stopover for migratory species and a winter home for some species that nest in the north. Other species use the park during the summer breeding season while some live in the park year-round.



Scaled Quail

## Bird Conservation Regions

Amistad NRA is located at the convergence of three bird conservation regions and contains a mosaic of habitats that represents all three. Bird conservation regions are ecologically-distinct regions in North America with similar bird communities, habitats, and resource management issues. The Chihuahuan Desert contains arid grasslands and shrublands, the Tamaulipan Brushland region has grassland, savanna, and thornscrub habitats, and the Edwards Plateau is dominated by mesquite, juniper, and oak savanna. Hence, Amistad is an ecotone, an area where biological communities converge, and has the resultant avian diversity.

Amistad contains birds that are characteristic of each of the three ecoregions. Black-throated Sparrows, Pyrrhuloxias, Cactus Wrens, Scaled Quail, and Bell's Vireos are typical in the Chihuahuan Desert.

The reservoir provides important riparian and wetland habitats for species such as Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Osprey, Northern Shoveler, and Mallard.

Long-billed Thrasher, LeConte's Sparrow, Green Kingfisher, and White-winged Dove are important species of the Tamaulipan Brushland.



The Edwards Plateau provides important breeding habitat for Black-capped Vireos, Bell's Vireos, and Scissor-tailed Flycatchers.

The Devils and Pecos rivers provide riparian habitat that funnels tropical species like Green Kingfishers and Great Kiskadees from the Tamaulipan Brushland into the park and further north than they might be expected to occur based on latitude.



NPS PHOTO BY JACK JOHNSON

The Devils River above Big Satan Canyon (accessible only by boat).

## Bird Habitats

Amistad NRA offers a mixture of upland, riparian, and shore habitats for birds. The geography of the area consists mainly of low, rolling hills and valleys near Amistad Dam, with steep-walled limestone canyons up to approximately 200 ft (60 meters) deep where the Rio Grande, Pecos, and Devils rivers enter the reservoir.

Upland habitats include shrublands dominated by acacias, mesquite, and cenizo, and grasslands of sideoats grama, slim tridens, three-awn, and bristleglass. Wildflowers are a minor component of upland habitats but attract abundant insect life that in turn attracts feeding birds. Birds commonly seen in shrublands include Scott's Orioles, Northern Mockingbirds, hummingbirds, Cactus Wrens, and gnatcatchers. Birds like Dickcissels, Vermilion Flycatchers, and Grasshopper, Vesper, and White-crowned Sparrows are commonly seen in grasslands.



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Great Egret

The Amistad Reservoir provides a variety of shore and wetland habitats. The open waters of the lake provide habitat for many duck species, pelicans, and flocks of American Coots that number in the hundreds in the wintertime. The rocky shorelines and small islands, despite their sometimes barren appearance, provide excellent foraging and nesting habitat for species like the Snowy Plover, American Avocet

and Interior Least Tern. The lack of vegetation in these areas is desirable for many species as a safeguard against predators. The open habitat also provides foraging space for species like Eastern and Say's phoebes that feed on flying insects.



DAVID JONES

Rocky shorelines provide protected habitat for many bird species.

Riparian species are found along the Rio Grande below Amistad Dam and in canyons near the upstream terminus of the reservoir. In these narrow stretches of river, both riverine and forested wetlands featuring river cane, sycamore, willows, and pecan trees, along with various sedges and rushes, form habitat for many songbird species that either nest there or use the rivers as migratory corridors. Huisache trees and other thorny shrubs form groves that interface between upland and riparian habitats, forming "edge" habitats. Edge habitats are often one of the best places to look for birds. Look for orioles, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Blue Grosbeaks, Painted Buntings, and Northern Cardinals in these areas.

## Central Flyway

The central flyway is one of four major biological flyways in North America. Flyways



NPS PHOTO BY JACK JOHNSON

are the north-south routes that migratory birds follow during migration between nesting and wintering areas. The central flyway links breeding and wintering habitats for shorebirds, waterfowl, songbirds, and other migratory birds. Long-billed Curlew, Black-necked Stilt, and Black Tern are just a few of the species that can be spotted in the skies and along the shorelines in the spring and fall as birds undertake long journeys between breeding and wintering grounds.



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Left: Canyons in Amistad NRA provide good migration corridors for birds as well as providing desirable wetland and riparian habitats.

Above: Black-necked Stilts

# Checklist Key

This checklist provides information on the abundance of bird species found in Amistad NRA, the habitat each uses, and in what season each is found.

## Abundance

Abundance information is for suitable habitat and season.

- **Abundant** – May be seen daily & counted in relatively large numbers
- **Common** – May be seen daily but not in large numbers
- **Uncommon** – Likely to be seen monthly; may be locally common
- **Rare** – Present, but usually seen only a few times each year
- **Occasional** – Seen in the park at least once every few years, but not necessarily every year
- **Accidental** – Seen no more than a few times; birds that have strayed out of their normal range/habitat

## Habitat

- **R – Riparian:** Areas that flank the reservoir and its tributaries with reeds, cattail, sedge, rush, sycamore, ash, willow, and mesquite
- **D – Desert/Thornscrub:** Drier, open flats above the reservoir. Typical vegetation includes lechuguilla, yucca, cenizo, acacias, creosote, and mixed grasses
- **G – Grassland:** Open habitats dominated by grasses (sideoats grama, bristlegrass, and others) with few shrubs and trees
- **W – Wetlands:** Marshy edges of the reservoir where vegetation is adapted to or tolerant of regularly-saturated soils

## Season

- **Resident** – Found year-round
- **Summer** – Found predominantly in the summer months (June–August)
- **Winter** – Found predominantly in the winter months (November–February)
- **Migrant** – Found predominantly during spring and/or fall migratory periods (March–May, September–October)

*The information in this list is based on bird observations, inventories and surveys at Amistad NRA; however, bird lists are always works in progress. The list is arranged by family and uses common names following the American Ornithologists' Union's Checklist of North American Birds 7<sup>th</sup> edition and its supplements through 2018.*

# Birding Hot Spots

Amistad NRA offers diverse birding opportunities with lakeshore, riparian, grassland, and upland habitats. Below are some of the good birding areas in the recreation area.

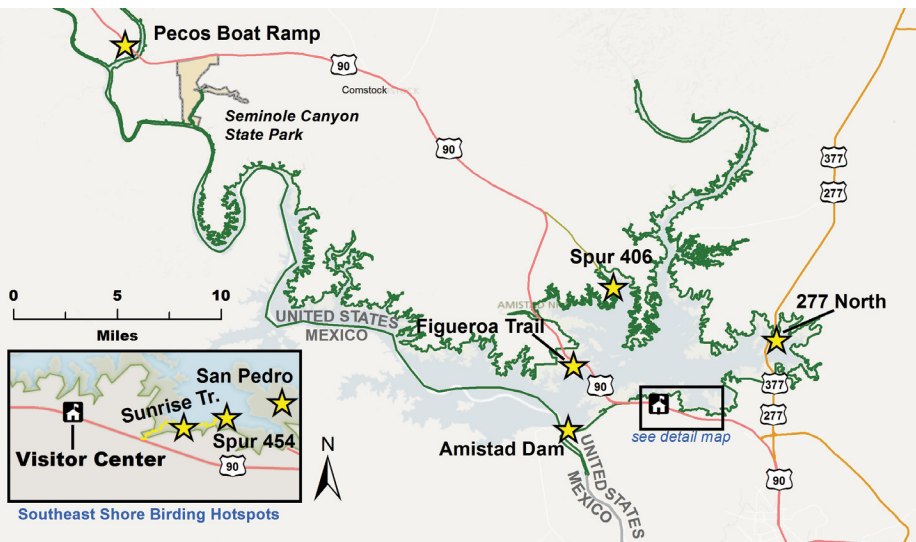
**277 North Campground** – One of the very few places in the park where remnant shortgrass prairie habitat occurs. Riparian woodlands are good places to look for songbirds as well as migrating monarch butterflies in the fall. Interior Least Terns and waterfowl can be spotted from the end of the road where it enters the water.

**Amistad Dam** – Scan below the dam for waterfowl and shorebirds. The Rio Grande is important for riparian woodland birds such as migratory warblers, vireos, and flycatchers. During times of drought, the riparian habitat here serves as a refuge and birders can find larger concentrations of species in small areas. (NPS property below the dam is open only by guided tour. See schedule at [nps.gov/amis/planyourvisit/events.htm](https://nps.gov/amis/planyourvisit/events.htm).)



NPS PHOTO BY JACK JOHNSON

## Birding Locations in Amistad NRA



**Figueroa Trail** – A classic desert trail that wanders along low rolling ridges of desert scrub habitat and also crosses a lower-lying riparian woodland. Hummingbirds are found in numbers here in the springtime in the ocotillo patches. Look for Chihuahuan Desert resident bird species on the ridges, and for migratory warblers in the riparian area.

**Pecos Boat Ramp** – A shade shelter provides a great location to set up a spotting scope and view the mudflats where the Pecos River joins the Rio Grande. Ospreys are commonly observed as well as shorebirds foraging on the mudflats. A short nature trail also takes birders through desert scrub habitat atop the high limestone cliffs abutting the river.

**San Pedro Campground** – High-quality grassland habitat where birders can find wintering sparrows and other birds of open habitat such as flycatchers and phoebes.

**Spur 406** – Away from the noise of public highways, this area is a superb location to practice birding by ear. Listen for wrens and Red-winged Blackbirds nesting where the road ends and for forest species further from the water.

**Spur 454** – Where the road enters the water, use a spotting scope or strong binoculars to look for Interior Least Terns, which nest on rocky islands in the summer. Elsewhere, the road crosses the lake bed revealing open grassland habitat forms during lower lake levels. The road also crosses higher elevations with shrubland species.

**Sunrise Trail** – The trail follows the interface between desert scrub habitat and open grass/shrubland in the lake bed below, providing excellent opportunities to see shrubland and grassland birds, as well as raptors.



Upland habitat along the Figueroa Trail



Grassland habitat near the San Pedro Campground

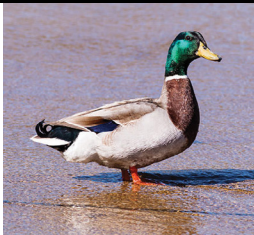
Red-winged Blackbird



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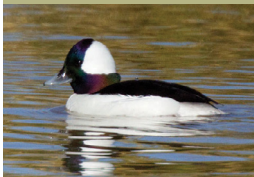
Mallard



Redhead



Lesser Scaup



Bufflehead



Hooded Merganser

## Checklist

### Waterfowl (Anatidae)

√	Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
	Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	Rare	R, W	Winter
	Snow Goose	Rare	R, W	Winter
	Greater White-fronted Goose	Occasional	R, W	Migrant
	Canada Goose	Accidental	R, W	Migrant
	Wood Duck	Rare	R, W	Winter
	Blue-winged Teal	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
	Cinnamon Teal	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
	Northern Shoveler	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
	Gadwall	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
	Eurasian Wigeon	Accidental	R, W	Winter
	American Wigeon	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
	Mallard	Uncommon	R, W	Resident
	Northern Pintail	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
	Green-winged Teal	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
	Canvasback	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
	Redhead	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
	Ring-necked Duck	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
	Lesser Scaup	Rare	R, W	Winter
	Bufflehead	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
	Common Goldeneye	Rare	W	Winter
	Hooded Merganser	Occasional	R, W	Migrant
	Red-breasted Merganser	Rare	R, W	Migrant
	Ruddy Duck	Uncommon	R, W	Winter

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(BOTH PAGES)



## New World Quail (Odontophoridae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Northern Bobwhite	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
Scaled Quail	Common	R, D, G	Resident

## Partridges, Grouse, Turkeys, and Old World Quail (Phasianidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Wild Turkey	Rare	R, D, G	Resident

## Grebes (Podicipedidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Least Grebe	Occasional	W	Resident
Pied-billed Grebe	Uncommon	R, W	Resident
Horned Grebe	Rare	W	Winter
Eared Grebe	Uncommon	W	Migrant
Western Grebe	Uncommon	W	Winter
Clark's Grebe	Uncommon	W	Winter

## Pigeons and Doves (Columbidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Rock Pigeon	Uncommon	D, G	Resident
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
Inca Dove	Rare	R, D, G	Resident
Common Ground-Dove	Uncommon	R, D, G	Summer
White-tipped Dove	Occasional	R	Resident
White-winged Dove	Abundant	R, D, G	Summer
Mourning Dove	Common	R, D, G	Resident



Wild Turkey



Horned Grebe



Western Grebe



Inca Dove



Common Ground-Dove

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Greater Roadrunner

### Cuckoos, Roadrunners and Anis (Cuculidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Rare	R, D	Summer
Greater Roadrunner	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
Groove-billed Ani	Accidental	R, D, W	Migrant



Lesser Nighthawk

### Goatsuckers (Caprimulgidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Lesser Nighthawk	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Summer
Common Nighthawk	Rare	R, D, G, W	Summer
Common Poorwill	Rare	D, G	Summer



White-throated Swift

### Swifts (Apodidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Chimney Swift	Rare	R, D, G, W	Summer
White-throated Swift	Rare	R, D, G	Resident



Black-chinned Hummingbird

### Hummingbirds (Trochilidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Black-chinned Hummingbird	Uncommon	R, D, G	Summer
Anna's Hummingbird	Accidental	R	Migrant
Violet-crowned Hummingbird	Accidental	R, D	Migrant



American Coot

### Rails, Gallinules, and Coots (Rallidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Virginia Rail	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Sora	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Common Gallinule	Rare	W	Migrant
American Coot	Abundant	R, W	Resident

## Cranes (Gruidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Sandhill Crane	Rare	R, W	Migrant

## Avocets and Stilts (Recurvirostridae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Black-necked Stilt	Rare	R, W	Summer
American Avocet	Rare	R, W	Winter

## Plovers (Charadriidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Black-bellied Plover	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Snowy Plover	Occasional	R, W	Summer
Semipalmated Plover	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Killdeer	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Resident

## Sandpipers, Phalaropes, and Allies (Scolopacidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Upland Sandpiper	Occasional	R, W	Migrant
Long-billed Curlew	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Stilt Sandpiper	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Dunlin	Accidental	W	Migrant
Baird's Sandpiper	Occasional	R, W	Migrant
Least Sandpiper	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Pectoral Sandpiper	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Semipalmated Sandpiper	Occasional	R, W	Migrant
Western Sandpiper	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Long-billed Dowitcher	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Wilson's Snipe	Rare	R, W	Migrant



Sandhill Crane

The distinctive bugling calls of migrating Sandhill Cranes alert birders to their passage overhead. Commonly heard in the spring, Sandhill Cranes vocalize during flight to communicate among flock members. These noisy, gregarious birds travel from their wintering grounds in the southwestern United States and northern Mexico to breeding areas in Canada. Although not usually seen landing in the recreation area, they use agricultural fields along Highway 90 towards San Antonio for rest and refueling stops.



Snowy Plover

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Spotted Sandpiper



Solitary Sandpiper



Lesser Yellowlegs



Franklin's Gull



Ring-billed Gull

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Spotted Sandpiper	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Solitary Sandpiper	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Lesser Yellowlegs	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Willet	Occasional	R, W	Migrant
Greater Yellowlegs	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Wilson's Phalarope	Rare	R, W	Migrant

### Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers (Laridae)

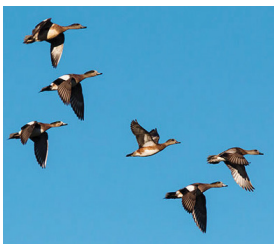
✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Bonaparte's Gull	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
Laughing Gull	Accidental	R, W	Migrant
Franklin's Gull	Uncommon	R, W	Migrant
Ring-billed Gull	Uncommon	R, W	Migrant
California Gull	Accidental	W	Migrant
Herring Gull	Rare	R, W	Migrant

### Wintering Waterbirds

Lake Amistad provides important habitat for many waterbird species looking for a safe haven to rest and feed during the winter. Clear water and abundant prey fish make the lake a dependable resource for birds in their off-season.

Snowy Plovers, Common Loons, American White Pelicans, Northern Pintails, Mallards, Buffelheads, and many other

species can be spotted regularly from November through February or March. Many species that winter on the Texas Gulf Coast can also be found at Lake Amistad. When consulting bird field guides, keep in mind that species depicted as wintering on the Gulf Coast may also be found in Amistad NRA.



American Wigeon

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√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Accidental	W	Migrant
Interior Least Tern	Rare	R, W	Summer
Gull-billed Tern	Accidental	W	Migrant
Caspian Tern	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Black Tern	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Forster's Tern	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Royal Tern	Accidental	R, W	Migrant

### Loons (Gaviidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Pacific Loon	Accidental	W	Winter
Common Loon	Uncommon	W	Winter

### Interior Least Tern

The Interior Least Tern is an endangered species that nests in Amistad NRA. This subspecies of the Least Tern is a river-nesting population found in major Midwestern rivers. Amistad's Interior Least Tern population is thought to be separate from the major breeding colonies in the Midwest. It is unknown how much interchange there is between Amistad's birds and terns breeding on the Gulf Coast. The Interior Least Tern was recognized as federally endangered in 1985 due to population declines, but it has made an impressive comeback thanks to conservation partnerships.



Interior Least Tern

Boaters should stay clear of islands signed as closed during the breeding season from May 1 – August 31. The best land-based opportunities for viewing Interior Least Terns are at the end of Spur Road 454, 277 North, or the Diablo East Marina. Keep a sharp eye out for the white forehead that distinguishes this small tern from other tern species and gulls in the area.



Caspian Tern



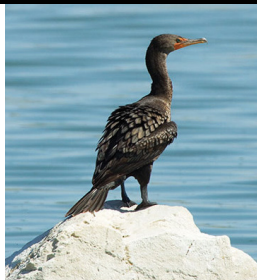
Black Tern



Pacific Loon



Common Loon



Double-crested  
Cormorant



White Pelican



Great Blue Heron



Snowy Egret

### Cormorants (Phalacrocoracidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Neotropic Cormorant	Rare	R, W	Resident
Double-crested Cormorant	Common	R, W	Winter

### Anhingas (Anhingidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Anhinga	Accidental	R, W	Migrant

### Pelicans (Pelecanidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
American White Pelican	Rare	W	Migrant
Brown Pelican	Accidental	W	Migrant

### Bitterns, Herons, and Allies (Ardeidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
American Bittern	Occasional	W	Migrant
Great Blue Heron	Uncommon	R, W	Resident
Great Egret	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Snowy Egret	Rare	R, W	Migrant

### Nesting Great Blue Herons

Great Blue Herons form nesting colonies called *rookeries* along the high limestone cliffs of the river canyons. These inaccessible and steep habitats safeguard the colonies from predators and disturbances. Herons spend the entire year in the park and start nesting as early as February.

Look for their nests high above the water. Nests look like jumbled masses of sticks and vegetation. The male heron gathers nesting material and presents them to the female who builds a platform of sticks and weaves an inner lining of feathers and finer materials. Many of the nests in the park are rebuilt and reused year-to-year.

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Little Blue Heron	Accidental	R, W	Migrant
Tricolored Heron	Accidental	R, W	Migrant
Reddish Egret	Accidental	R, W	Migrant
Cattle Egret	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Green Heron	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	Occasional	R, W	Migrant

### Ibises and Spoonbills (Threskiornithidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
White-faced Ibis	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Roseate Spoonbill	Accidental	R, W	Migrant

### New World Vultures (Cathartidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Black Vulture	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Summer
Turkey Vulture	Common	R, D, G, W	Summer



Cattle Egret



Black-crowned Night-Heron



White-faced Ibis

### Identifying Vultures

Black Vultures and Turkey Vultures, both important scavengers that recycle nutrients in ecosystems, are commonly seen together. Black Vultures have black heads, silver wing tips, and a flat-winged flight profile. Turkey Vultures have red heads, are lighter in color on the trailing edge of the underside of their wings, and have a V-shaped flight profile.



Black Vulture



Turkey Vulture



Osprey



Red-tailed Hawk



Barn Owl



Eastern Screech-Owl

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### Ospreys (Pandionidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Osprey	Rare	R, W	Summer

### Hawks, Kites, Eagles and Allies (Accipitridae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
White-tailed Kite	Accidental	G	Migrant
Golden Eagle	Occasional	D, G	Migrant
Northern Harrier	Rare	D, G, W	Migrant
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Cooper's Hawk	Rare	R, D, G, W	Winter
Bald Eagle	Rare	R, W	Winter
Mississippi Kite	Accidental	R	Migrant
Common Black Hawk	Accidental	R	Migrant
Harris's Hawk	Rare	D, G	Winter
Red-shouldered Hawk	Occasional	R, D	Migrant
Swainson's Hawk	Rare	D, G	Summer
Zone-tailed Hawk	Occasional	R, D	Migrant
Red-tailed Hawk	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
Ferruginous Hawk	Rare	D, G	Winter

### Barn Owls (Tytonidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Barn Owl	Rare	R, D, G	Resident

### Typical Owls (Strigidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Western Screech-Owl	Occasional	R, D, G	Resident
Eastern Screech-Owl	Rare	R, D, G	Resident
Great Horned Owl	Rare	R, D, G	Resident
Elf Owl	Rare	R, D, G	Summer
Burrowing Owl	Occasional	D, G	Resident



## Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Ringed Kingfisher	Occasional	R, W	Resident
Belted Kingfisher	Rare	R, W	Resident
Green Kingfisher	Rare	R, W	Resident

## Woodpeckers and Allies (Picidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Golden-fronted Woodpecker	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Occasional	R	Migrant
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
Northern Flicker	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant

## Caracaras and Falcons (Falconidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Crested Caracara	Rare	D, G	Resident
American Kestrel	Rare	R, D, G	Resident
Merlin	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Peregrine Falcon	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Prairie Falcon	Occasional	R	Migrant

## Kingfishers

All three species of kingfisher that occur in North America can be found in Amistad NRA. Green Kingfishers are the quietest and smallest of the three and prefer sheltered areas with vegetation overhanging quiet pools of water. Ringed and Belted Kingfishers are typically noisier and found in more open water areas.

True to their names, all three kingfishers perform skillful aerobic plunge dives to catch fish.

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(BOTH PAGES)



Belted Kingfisher



Green Kingfisher



Golden-fronted Woodpecker



Crested Caracara



American Kestrel

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Western Kingbird



Say's Phoebe



Vermilion Flycatcher



Loggerhead Shrike

## Tyrant Flycatchers (Tyrannidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Common	R, D, G	Summer
Great Crested Flycatcher	Occasional	R	Migrant
Brown-crested Flycatcher	Rare	R, D	Summer
Great Kiskadee	Rare	R, D, W	Resident
Couch's Kingbird	Uncommon	R, W	Summer
Cassin's Kingbird	Accidental	R, D, W	Summer
Western Kingbird	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Summer
Eastern Kingbird	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	Uncommon	R, D, G	Summer
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Occasional	R	Migrant
Acadian Flycatcher	Occasional	R	Migrant
Least Flycatcher	Rare	R, D	Migrant
Black Phoebe	Uncommon	R, W	Resident
Eastern Phoebe	Occasional	R, W	Migrant
Say's Phoebe	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
Vermilion Flycatcher	Common	R, D, G, W	Resident

## Shrikes (Laniidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Loggerhead Shrike	Rare	D, G	Resident

## Fabulous Flycatchers

Conspicuous by both behavior and plumage, Scissor-tailed and Vermilion Flycatchers stand out to birders and non-birders alike. Vermilion Flycatchers appear as active, bright red jewels in park habitats where larger trees occur for perching and fly into open areas to catch insects. With tails longer than their bodies, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers nevertheless gracefully performs their insect-catching skills in open air in a technique known as hawking.

## Vireos (Vireonidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Black-capped Vireo	Occasional	R, D, G	Summer
White-eyed Vireo	Rare	R, D	Summer
Bell's Vireo	Common	R, D, G	Summer
Gray Vireo	Occasional	D, G	Migrant
Yellow-throated Vireo	Occasional	R	Migrant
Blue-headed Vireo	Occasional	R	Migrant
Plumbeous Vireo	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Warbling Vireo	Occasional	R	Migrant

## Jays and Ravens (Corvidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Green Jay	Accidental	R	Migrant
Blue Jay	Occasional	R	Migrant
Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant
Chihuahuan Raven	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Resident
Common Raven	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Resident

## Larks (Alaudidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Horned Lark	Rare	D, G	Resident

## Swallows (Hirundinidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Purple Martin	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Summer
Tree Swallow	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Migrant
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Summer
Bank Swallow	Rare	R, D, G, W	Migrant

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Black-capped Vireo

Recently, the Black-capped Vireo was removed from the Endangered Species List. Active, committed conservation action by many partners resulted in improved habitat quality. Historically their habitat suffered from overgrazing and fire suppression. Their populations are now also better understood.



White-eyed Vireo



Bell's Vireo



Barn Swallow



Verdin



Rock Wren



Canyon Wren

MARK LOCKWOOD

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Cliff Swallow	Abundant	R, D, G, W	Summer
Cave Swallow	Rare	R, D, G, W	Summer
Barn Swallow	Abundant	R, D, G, W	Summer

### Chickadees and Titmice (Paridae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Carolina Chickadee	Occasional	R	Resident
Black-crested Titmouse	Rare	R	Resident

### Verdins (Remizidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Verdin	Common	R, D, G	Resident

### Bushtits (Aegithalidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Bushtit	Occasional	R	Migrant

### Wrens (Troglodytidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Rock Wren	Uncommon	D, G	Resident
Canyon Wren	Uncommon	D, G	Resident
House Wren	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
Winter Wren	Occasional	R, D	Migrant
Sedge Wren	Occasional	R, W	Migrant
Marsh Wren	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Carolina Wren	Rare	R, D	Resident
Bewick's Wren	Common	R, D, G	Resident
Cactus Wren	Common	D, G	Resident

The **Canyon Wren**, whose song is a descending cascade of notes, is probably the most commonly heard species in the park thanks to the excellent acoustics provided by Amistad's canyon walls.

### Gnatcatchers (Poliotilidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Uncommon	R, D, G	Summer
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher	Uncommon	D, G	Resident

### Kinglets (Regulidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Golden-crowned Kinglet	Occasional	R	Migrant
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Uncommon	R, D, G	Winter

### Thrushes (Turdidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Eastern Bluebird	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Mountain Bluebird	Occasional	D, G	Winter
Swainson's Thrush	Occasional	R	Migrant
Hermit Thrush	Rare	R, D	Migrant
American Robin	Occasional	R	Winter

### Mockingbirds and Thrashers (Mimidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Gray Catbird	Accidental	R	Migrant
Curve-billed Thrasher	Uncommon	D, G	Resident
Brown Thrasher	Rare	R, D	Resident
Long-billed Thrasher	Accidental	R, D	Migrant
Sage Thrasher	Rare	D, G	Winter
Northern Mockingbird	Common	R, D, G	Resident

### Starlings (Sturnidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
European Starling	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident



Eastern Bluebird



Curve-billed Thrasher



Northern Mockingbird



European Starling

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Cedar Waxwing

### Waxwings (Bombycillidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Cedar Waxwing	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant

### Silky-flycatchers (Ptiliigonatidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Phainopepla	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant



Phainopepla

### Old World Sparrows (Passeridae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
House Sparrow	Uncommon	D, G	Resident

### Pipits (Motacillidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
American Pipit	Uncommon	R, W	Migrant
Sprague's Pipit	Rare	R, D, G, W	Winter



House Finch

### Finches (Fringillidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
House Finch	Common	R, D, G	Resident
Pine Siskin	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Lesser Goldfinch	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Resident
American Goldfinch	Occasional	R, D, G, W	Migrant



Lesser Goldfinch

### Longspurs (Calcariidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Chestnut-collared Longspur	Occasional	D, G	Winter
McCown's Longspur	Occasional	D, G	Winter

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## New World Sparrows and Towhees (Passerellidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Olive Sparrow	Rare	R	Resident
Green-tailed Towhee	Uncommon	R, D, G	Winter
Spotted Towhee	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	Uncommon	D, G	Resident
Canyon Towhee	Uncommon	D, G	Resident
Cassin's Sparrow	Common	D, G	Summer
Chipping Sparrow	Common	R, D, G	Migrant
Clay-colored Sparrow	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
Brewer's Sparrow	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
Field Sparrow	Rare	D, G	Resident
Black-chinned Sparrow	Occasional	D, G	Winter
Vesper Sparrow	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Lark Sparrow	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
Black-throated Sparrow	Common	D, G	Resident
Lark Bunting	Uncommon	D, G	Migrant
Savannah Sparrow	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
Grasshopper Sparrow	Rare	D, G	Migrant
LeConte's Sparrow	Occasional	G	Migrant
Fox Sparrow	Accidental	R, D, G	Winter
Song Sparrow	Uncommon	R, W	Resident
Lincoln's Sparrow	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Migrant
Swamp Sparrow	Occasional	R, W	Winter
White-crowned Sparrow	Common	R, D, G, W	Migrant

## Yellow-Breasted Chat (Icteriidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Yellow-breasted Chat	Common	R	Summer



Canyon Towhee



Black-throated Sparrow



Grasshopper Sparrow



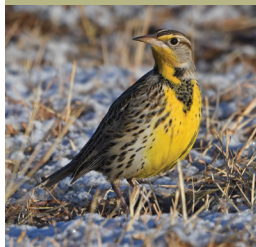
White-crowned Sparrow



Yellow-breasted Chat



Eastern Meadowlark



Western Meadowlark



Hooded Oriole



Great-tailed Grackle

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## Blackbirds, Orioles, and Allies (Icteridae)

✓	Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
	Yellow-headed Blackbird	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Winter
	Bobolink	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant
	Eastern Meadowlark	Rare	D, G	Resident
	Western Meadowlark	Rare	D, G	Winter
	Orchard Oriole	Uncommon	R, D	Summer
	Hooded Oriole	Uncommon	R, D	Summer
	Bullock's Oriole	Uncommon	R, D	Summer
	Baltimore Oriole	Accidental	R	Migrant
	Scott's Oriole	Uncommon	R, D, G	Summer
	Red-winged Blackbird	Abundant	R, D, G, W	Resident
	Bronzed Cowbird	Uncommon	R, D, G	Summer
	Brown-headed Cowbird	Common	R, D, G	Summer
	Brewer's Blackbird	Uncommon	R, D, G, W	Resident
	Great-tailed Grackle	Abundant	R, D, G, W	Resident

## Potential New Species

Bird observations that visitors report to park managers are extremely valuable and may be used to update species lists such as this bird checklist. For example, the Montezuma Quail recently has been sighted within a few miles of park boundaries. It was once found in grasslands throughout the Edwards Plateau but declined greatly due to loss of habitat.

Conservation efforts have allowed the species to expand into its former range. Two tropical warbler species, the Northern Parula and Tropical Parula, also have been observed very close to the park on the Devils River and soon may be spotted inside Amistad NRA.



Montezuma Quail

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## Wood-Warblers (Parulidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Worm-eating Warbler	Accidental	R	Migrant
Black-and-white Warbler	Occasional	R	Migrant
Tennessee Warbler	Accidental	R	Migrant
Orange-crowned Warbler	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
Lucy's Warbler	Occasional	R, D	Summer
Nashville Warbler	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
MacGillivray's Warbler	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Common Yellowthroat	Uncommon	R, W	Summer
American Redstart	Accidental	R	Migrant
Yellow Warbler	Uncommon	R	Summer
Black-throated Blue Warbler	Accidental	R	Migrant
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
Yellow-throated Warbler	Occasional	R	Migrant
Townsend's Warbler	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant
Rufous-capped Warbler	Accidental	R, D	Migrant
Wilson's Warbler	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant

## Piranga Tanagers, Cardinals, and Allies (Cardinalidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Summer Tanager	Common	R	Summer
Western Tanager	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant

## Threats

Beloved in Texas for the welcome splash of color they bring to summer, Summer Tanagers and Painted Buntings are predicted to be harmed by a warming climate. Summer Tanagers may lose summer range in the park. Along with a changing climate, the riparian areas that Summer Tanagers depend on are continuously threatened by water overuse via groundwater pumping and surface water diversions.



Orange-crowned Warbler



Nashville Warbler



Common Yellowthroat



Yellow-rumped Warbler



Summer Tanager



Northern Cardinal



Pyrrhuloxia



Blue Grosbeak



Dickcissel

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Northern Cardinal	Common	R, D, G	Resident
Pyrrhuloxia	Common	R, D, G	Resident
Black-headed Grosbeak	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Blue Grosbeak	Common	R, D, G	Summer
Indigo Bunting	Uncommon	R, D, G	Summer
Varied Bunting	Rare	R, D, G	Summer
Painted Bunting	Uncommon	R, D, G	Summer
Dickcissel	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant

### Seedeaters (Thraupidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Morelet's Seedeater	Accidental	R	Migrant

Once essentially extirpated from the United States due to overuse of pesticides, the **Morelet's Seedeater** is now expanding its range up the Rio Grande basin. Sightings in the park may be on the rise.

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ROBERT SHANTZ

and Rufous-capped Warbler

(especially for species not on the list) and, if possible, a photo. The visitor center is open daily from 8 am to 4:30 pm, or can be reached at 830-775-7491.

You may also comment on the species list or report new sightings at NPSpecies, the National Park Service species information portal, at <https://irma.nps.gov/NPSpecies/Suggest>.

## Acknowledgments

All bird identification photos, unless otherwise noted, were generously provided courtesy of Robert Shantz (rshantz.com). Mark Lockwood of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department also provided bird identification photos. All other photos were provided by Amistad NRA. Image by Jerod Roberts used by permission.

This bird checklist is a collaboration between the Chihuahuan Desert Inventory and Monitoring Network and Amistad NRA. The Chihuahuan Desert Network is one of 32 National Park Service inventory and monitoring networks that assess the condition of park ecosystems and develop a stronger scientific basis for stewardship of natural resources.

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COVER: FIGUEROA TRAIL. NPS PHOTO BY JACK JOHNSON. INSET: CACTUS WREN. PHOTO BY ROBERT SHANTZ  
REAR COVER: DEAD MANS CANYON. NPS PHOTO BY JACK JOHNSON. INSET: GREAT BLUE HERON. NPS PHOTO BY JACK JOHNSON

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# Chihuahuan Desert Network Inventory & Monitoring Program

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U.S. Department of the Interior



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