

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Southern Plains Inventory & Monitoring Network
Natural Resource Stewardship and Science



Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site Bird Checklist



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

Checklist Key

Abundance

- **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

Habitat

- **R – Riparian:** Habitats dominated by riverbottom cottonwood and willow forest along the Arkansas River
- **G – Grassland:** Habitats in the historic site dominated by grassland such as blue grama and buffalo grass
- **W – Wetlands:** Marshy edges in the historic site 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 NPSpecies, Natural Resource Condition Assessments, and Southern Plains Inventory and Monitoring Network Landbird Monitoring surveys at Bent's Old Fort NHS, and may not be a comprehensive list of all bird species in the historic site. The list is arranged by family and uses common names following the American Ornithological Society's Checklist of North American Birds 7th edition and its supplements through 2019.

Birding Ethics

Be mindful by following ethical birding guidelines that protect birds and enhance everyone's birding experience:

- » Keep your distance and avoid disturbing bird nesting sites; move away from any alarmed bird.
- » Report unusual bird observations to park rangers. This helps other birders and supports research.
- » Do not use broadcasting calls to attract birds; calls interfere with nesting activity and may frustrate other birders.
- » Report rare species nesting sites to appropriate park officials only. Use caution when posting sightings of these rare species over social media.
- » Do not set up bird feeding stations or feed birds in national historic sites.

Be aware that livestock roam the hiking trail and may be unexpectedly encountered.

Acknowledgments

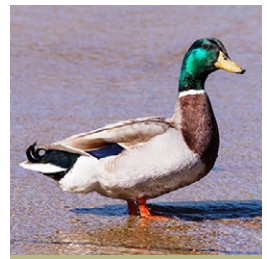
All bird identification photos were generously provided courtesy of [Robert Shantz \(rshantz.com\)](http://rshantz.com).

The [Southern Plains Inventory and Monitoring 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.

Checklist

Waterfowl (Anatidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Canada Goose	Rare	R, W	Resident
Wood Duck	Rare	R, W	Resident
Blue-winged Teal	Rare	R, W	Resident
Cinnamon Teal	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Northern Shoveler	Uncommon	R, W	Winter
Mallard	Uncommon	R, W	Resident



Mallard

New World Quail (Odontophoridae)

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



Scaled Quail

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

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Ring-necked Pheasant	Common	R, G	Resident
Wild Turkey	Rare	R, G	Resident



Ring-necked Pheasant

Pigeons and Doves (Columbidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Rock Pigeon	Rare	G	Resident
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Common	R, G	Resident
Mourning Dove	Common	R, G, W	Resident



Mourning Dove

Cuckoos and Roadrunners (Cuculidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Greater Roadrunner	Occasional	G	Resident
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Uncommon	R, W	Summer



Greater Roadrunner

Nighthawks (Caprimulgidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Common Nighthawk	Uncommon	R, G, W	Summer

Swifts (Apodidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Chimney Swift	Rare	R, G, W	Migrant

Hummingbirds (Trochilidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Black-chinned Hummingbird	Occasional	R, G, W	Migrant



Black-chinned Hummingbird

Rails, Gallinules, and Coots (Rallidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Black Rail	Rare	W	Migrant
Virginia Rail	Rare	W	Migrant
Sora	Rare	W	Migrant
American Coot	Rare	W	Migrant



American Avocet



Killdeer



Turkey Vulture



Northern Harrier



Red-tailed Hawk



Barn Owl

Avocets and Stilts (Recurvirostridae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Black-necked Stilt	Rare	W	Migrant
American Avocet	Occasional	W	Migrant

Plovers (Charadriidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Killdeer	Common	R, G, W	Resident

Sandpipers, Phalaropes, and Allies (Scolopacidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Short-billed Dowitcher	Occasional	R	Migrant
Long-billed Dowitcher	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Spotted Sandpiper	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Lesser Yellowlegs	Rare	R, W	Migrant

Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers (Laridae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Ring-billed Gull	Occasional	R, W	Migrant
Black Tern	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Forster's Tern	Occasional	R, 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
Green Heron	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Rare	R, W	Migrant

Ibises and Spoonbills (Threskiornithidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
White-faced Ibis	Rare	R, W	Migrant

New World Vultures (Cathartidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Turkey Vulture	Rare	R, G, W	Summer

Hawks, Kites, Eagles and Allies (Accipitridae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Northern Harrier	Uncommon	G, W	Summer
Mississippi Kite	Rare	R, G, W	Summer
Swainson's Hawk	Rare	R, G	Summer
Red-tailed Hawk	Uncommon	R, G	Resident
Ferruginous Hawk	Rare	G	Summer

Barn Owls (Tytonidae)

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

Typical Owls (Strigidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Western Screech-Owl	Rare	R	Resident
Great Horned Owl	Rare	R, G	Resident
Burrowing Owl	Rare	G	Resident

Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Belted Kingfisher	Rare	R, W	Migrant

Woodpeckers and Allies (Picidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Lewis's Woodpecker	Rare	R	Migrant
Red-headed Woodpecker	Common	R	Resident
Downy Woodpecker	Uncommon	R	Resident
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	Rare	R	Resident
Hairy Woodpecker	Occasional	R	Resident
Northern Flicker	Common	R	Resident

Falcons (Falconidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
American Kestrel	Common	R, G, W	Resident
Merlin	Rare	R, G	Migrant
Peregrine Falcon	Rare	G, W	Migrant
Prairie Falcon	Rare	G, W	Winter

Tyrant Flycatchers (Tyrannidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Uncommon	R, G, W	Summer
Great Crested Flycatcher	Rare	R	Summer
Cassin's Kingbird	Rare	R, G, W	Summer
Western Kingbird	Common	R, G, W	Summer
Eastern Kingbird	Common	R, G, W	Summer
Western Wood-Pewee	Uncommon	R, W	Migrant
Willow Flycatcher	Rare	R, W	Migrant
Say's Phoebe	Rare	G, W	Resident

Shrikes (Laniidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Loggerhead Shrike	Rare	G	Migrant

Vireos (Vireonidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
White-eyed Vireo	Rare	R	Migrant
Bell's Vireo	Rare	R	Summer
Warbling Vireo	Uncommon	R	Migrant
Red-eyed Vireo	Occasional	R	Migrant



Great Horned Owl



Belted Kingfisher



Peregrine Falcon



American Kestrel



Say's Phoebe



Loggerhead Shrike



Common Raven



Horned Lark



Rock Wren



Eastern Bluebird



Northern Mockingbird



Cedar Waxwing

Jays and Ravens (Corvidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Blue Jay	Uncommon	R	Resident
Black-billed Magpie	Rare	R, G, W	Resident
American Crow	Rare	R, G, W	Resident
Chihuahuan Raven	Rare	R, G, W	Resident
Common Raven	Occasional	R, G, W	Resident

Larks (Alaudidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Horned Lark	Rare	G	Resident

Swallows (Hirundinidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Violet-green Swallow	Rare	R, G, W	Migrant
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Uncommon	R, G, W	Migrant
Barn Swallow	Common	R, G, W	Summer
Cliff Swallow	Uncommon	R, G, W	Summer

Nuthatches (Sittidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
White-breasted Nuthatch	Rare	R	Migrant

Wrens (Troglodytidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Rock Wren	Occasional	G	Resident
House Wren	Common	R	Resident

Thrushes (Turdidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Eastern Bluebird	Rare	R, G	Migrant
American Robin	Common	R, G	Resident

Mockingbirds and Thrashers (Mimidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Brown Thrasher	Common	R	Resident
Northern Mockingbird	Common	R, G, W	Resident

Starlings (Sturnidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
European Starling	Common	R, G, W	Resident

Waxwings (Bombycillidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Cedar Waxwing	Rare	G	Winter

Old World Sparrows (Passeridae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
House Sparrow	Uncommon	R, G	Resident

Pipits (Motacillidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
American Pipit	Rare	R, G, W	Migrant

Finches (Fringillidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
House Finch	Rare	R, G, W	Resident
Lesser Goldfinch	Uncommon	R, G, W	Resident
American Goldfinch	Uncommon	R, G, W	Migrant



House Finch

New World Sparrows and Towhees (Passerellidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Cassin's Sparrow	Common	G	Summer
Grasshopper Sparrow	Occasional	G	Migrant
Lark Sparrow	Common	R, G, W	Resident
Lark Bunting	Rare	G	Migrant
Chipping Sparrow	Uncommon	R, G, W	Migrant
Spotted Towhee	Rare	R	Migrant



Spotted Towhee

Yellow-breasted Chat (Icteridae)

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



Yellow-headed Blackbird

Blackbirds, Orioles, and Allies (Icteridae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Rare	R, G, W	Migrant
Western Meadowlark	Common	G	Resident
Orchard Oriole	Uncommon	R, W	Summer
Bullock's Oriole	Common	R, W	Summer
Red-winged Blackbird	Common	R, G, W	Resident
Brown-headed Cowbird	Common	R, G, W	Summer
Brewer's Blackbird	Uncommon	R, G, W	Resident
Common Grackle	Uncommon	R, G, W	Resident
Great-tailed Grackle	Uncommon	R, G, W	Resident



Red-winged Blackbird

New World Warblers (Parulidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Common Yellowthroat	Common	R, W	Summer
Yellow Warbler	Common	R, W	Summer
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Uncommon	R	Migrant



Common Yellowthroat

Piranga Tanagers, Cardinals and Allies (Cardinalidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Western Tanager	Rare	R, G, W	Migrant
Black-headed Grosbeak	Uncommon	R	Migrant
Blue Grosbeak	Common	R, G, W	Summer
Lazuli Bunting	Rare	R, G, W	Summer
Indigo Bunting	Rare	R, G, W	Migrant
Dickcissel	Rare	G, W	Migrant



Yellow Warbler



Blue Grosbeak



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Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site commemorates the role that this trading post played in the "opening of the West." It features a reconstruction of an 1830s–1840s adobe post located on the Santa Fe Trail where traders, trappers, travelers, and the Cheyenne, Arapaho, and other tribes peacefully came together for trade.

The historic site contains 799 acres along the Arkansas River in southeastern Colorado. The native flora and fauna of the river bottoms, wetlands, and grasslands surrounding Bent's Old Fort help visitors "step back in time," and provide important habitat for birds. More

than 120 species of birds have been identified in the historic site.

The 1.5-mile hiking trail is the best place to observe birds in the park as it goes along the Arkansas River and by the Arch wetland, a large marsh. Cottonwood stands provide important habitat for Great Horned Owls, Wild Turkeys, Northern Bobwhites, and Red-headed Woodpeckers. Red-winged Blackbirds utilize the wetland year-round and Mallards, Snow Geese, and Canada Geese can be found there in the winter. Burrowing Owls, Northern Harriers, Horned Larks, and Loggerhead Shrikes utilize the area's grasslands.

