

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



Southern Plains Inventory & Monitoring Network  
Natural Resource Stewardship and Science

# Capulin Volcano National Monument Bird Checklist



**Capulin Volcano National Monument** is located in the High Plains of northeastern New Mexico in the easternmost young volcanic field in North America. The approximately 1,000-ft tall Capulin Volcano formed from an eruption 54,200 years ago and is one of the tallest and most perfectly-formed cinder cones in North America.

The volcanic features in the monument host a variety of vegetation communities, which in turn host at least 155 species of birds. Most of the volcano and much of the vent area near its base (the boca) is covered by pinyon pine-juniper woodland. Grasslands and shrublands are also found in the monument, particularly in the boca and around the base of the volcano.

Pinyon Jay, Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay, Mountain Bluebird, Spotted Towhee, Northern Flicker, and Mountain Chickadee use pinyon-juniper habitat in the monument, and are also found in Gambel's oak thickets. Steller's Jay and Clark's Nutcrackers are occasionally found in the ponderosa pines found in the Boca area.

Western Meadowlark, Spotted Towhee, Horned Lark, Western Wood-Pewee, Western Kingbird, Cassin's Kingbird, and Northern Mockingbird can be found in grassland areas.

Common Ravens and Red-tailed Hawks are frequently seen riding air currents above the volcano, with the migratory Turkey Vulture also being present from the spring through the fall.

Four species of hummingbirds (Black-chinned, Broad-tailed, Rufous, and Calliope) have been documented in the monument. Look for them visiting red flowers such as paintbrush during the summer.

Wild Turkeys are sometimes seen in the flats near the visitor center, especially during the fall. The Greater Roadrunner can also be occasionally observed in the monument.



View of Capulin's crater from the Rim Trail. Look for Spotted Towhees, Pinyon Jays, and Ravens during your hike.



Western Meadowlark  
(NPS PHOTO)



Pinyon pine-juniper woodland along the Crater Rim Trail (NPS PHOTO)

## 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 alarmed pairs.
- » Report bird observations to park rangers at the visitor center. 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 bird sightings over social media.
- » Do not set up bird feeding stations or feed birds in national parks and monuments.



Turkey Vultures exhibiting sunning behavior at Capulin Volcano NM (NPS PHOTO).

# 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
- **Accidental** – Seen no more than a few times; birds that have strayed out of their normal range/habitat

## Habitat

- **G – Grassland:** Habitats dominated by dominated grasses such as blue grama and buffalo grass
- **W – Woodlands:** Habitats dominated by pinyon pine and juniper with some ponderosa pine

## 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 Capulin Volcano NM, and may not be a comprehensive list of all bird species in the monument. The list is arranged by family and uses common names following the American Ornithological Society's Checklist of North American Birds 7<sup>th</sup> edition and its supplements through 2019.*

## 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.



The Spotted Towhee is one of the most common birds seen at Capulin Volcano NM (NPS PHOTO)

## Checklist

### Waterfowl (Anatidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Canada Goose	Occasional	G	Migrant
Blue-winged Teal	Occasional	G	Migrant

### New World Quail (Odontophoridae)

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

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

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

### Pigeons and Doves (Columbidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Uncommon	G, W	Resident
White-winged Dove	Rare	G, W	Summer
Mourning Dove	Common	G, W	Resident

### Cuckoos and Roadrunners (Cuculidae)

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

### Nighthawks (Caprimulgidae)

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

### Swifts (Apodidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
White-throated Swift	Rare	G, W	Resident

### Hummingbirds (Trochilidae)

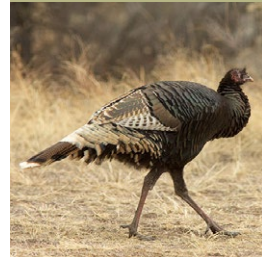
√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Black-chinned Hummingbird	Rare	G, W	Migrant
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	Uncommon	G, W	Summer
Rufous Hummingbird	Rare	G, W	Migrant
Calliope Hummingbird	Rare	G, W	Migrant

### Plovers (Charadriidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Killdeer	Occasional	G	Migrant
Mountain Plover	Occasional	G	Migrant



Scaled Quail



Wild Turkey



Mourning Dove



Black-chinned Hummingbird



Broad-tailed Hummingbird



Killdeer



Turkey Vulture



Northern Harrier



Red-tailed Hawk



Great Horned Owl



American Kestrel

### Bitterns, Herons and Allies (Ardeidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Great Blue Heron	Occasional	G	Migrant

### New World Vultures (Cathartidae)

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

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

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Golden Eagle	Occasional	G	Migrant
Northern Harrier	Rare	G	Migrant
Cooper's Hawk	Rare	G, W	Resident
Northern Goshawk	Occasional	W	Migrant
Bald Eagle	Occasional	G	Migrant
Swainson's Hawk	Rare	G	Migrant
Red-tailed Hawk	Uncommon	G, W	Resident
Rough-legged Hawk	Occasional	G	Winter
Ferruginous Hawk	Rare	G	Migrant

### Typical Owls (Strigidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Great Horned Owl	Uncommon	G, W	Resident
Burrowing Owl	Occasional	G	Migrant
Long-eared Owl	Occasional	G, W	Migrant
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Occasional	W	Migrant

### Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Belted Kingfisher	Occasional	G	Migrant

### Woodpeckers and Allies (Picidae)

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

### Falcons (Falconidae)

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

## Tyrant Flycatchers (Tyrannidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Ash-Throated Flycatcher	Uncommon	G, W	Summer
Cassin's Kingbird	Common	G, W	Summer
Western Kingbird	Common	G, W	Summer
Eastern Kingbird	Occasional	G	Migrant
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Rare	W	Summer
Western Wood-Pewee	Common	G, W	Summer
Gray Flycatcher	Rare	G, W	Migrant
Cordilleran Flycatcher	Rare	W	Migrant
Black Phoebe	Occasional	G	Migrant
Eastern Phoebe	Occasional	G	Migrant
Say's Phoebe	Uncommon	G, W	Resident

## Shrikes (Laniidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Loggerhead Shrike	Occasional	G	Migrant

## Vireos (Vireonidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Gray Vireo	Rare	W	Migrant
Plumbeous Vireo	Uncommon	G, W	Summer
Warbling Vireo	Rare	G, W	Migrant
Red-Eyed Vireo	Accidental	W	Migrant

## Jays and Ravens (Corvidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Pinyon Jay	Uncommon	G, W	Resident
Steller's Jay	Occasional	W	Migrant
Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay	Uncommon	G, W	Resident
Clark's Nutcracker	Occasional	W	Winter
Black-billed Magpie	Rare	G, W	Resident
American Crow	Occasional	G, W	Migrant
Chihuahuan Raven	Rare	G, W	Resident
Common Raven	Common	G, W	Resident

## Larks (Alaudidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Horned Lark	Uncommon	G	Resident

## Swallows (Hirundinidae)

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



Western Kingbird



Say's Phoebe



Loggerhead Shrike



Steller's Jay



Common Raven



Horned Lark



Mountain Chickadee

### Chickadees and Titmice (Paridae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Black-capped Chickadee	Rare	W	Resident
Mountain Chickadee	Uncommon	G, W	Resident
Juniper Titmouse	Uncommon	G, W	Resident

### Bushtits (Aegithalidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Bushtit	Rare	G, W	Migrant

### Nuthatches (Sittidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Rare	W	Migrant
White-breasted Nuthatch	Rare	G, W	Resident
Pygmy Nuthatch	Occasional	W	Winter



Pygmy Nuthatch

### Treecreepers (Certhiidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Brown Creeper	Rare	W	Winter

### Wrens (Troglodytidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Rock Wren	Common	G, W	Resident
Canyon Wren	Rare	G, W	Resident
House Wren	Uncommon	G, W	Summer
Bewick's Wren	Common	G, W	Resident



Rock Wren

### Gnatcatchers (Poliopitilidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Common	G, W	Summer

### Kinglets (Regulidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Golden-crowned Kinglet	Occasional	W	Winter
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Rare	W	Migrant



Bewick's Wren

### Thrushes (Turdidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Western Bluebird	Uncommon	G, W	Resident
Mountain Bluebird	Uncommon	G, W	Resident
Townsend's Solitaire	Occasional	W	Winter
Swainson's Thrush	Rare	W	Migrant
Hermit Thrush	Rare	G, W	Summer
American Robin	Uncommon	W	Summer



Mountain Bluebird

### Mockingbirds and Thrashers (Mimidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Gray Catbird	Occasional	W	Migrant
Brown Thrasher	Occasional	W	Migrant
Sage Thrasher	Occasional	G, W	Migrant
Northern Mockingbird	Common	G, W	Resident



Northern Mockingbird



**Starlings (Sturnidae)**

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

**Waxwings (Bombycillidae)**

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Cedar Waxwing	Rare	G, W	Migrant

**Old World Sparrows (Passeridae)**

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
House Sparrow	Rare	G	Migrant

**Pipits (Motacillidae)**

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
American Pipit	Occasional	G	Migrant

**Finches (Fringillidae)**

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
House Finch	Uncommon	G, W	Resident
Cassin's Finch	Occasional	W	Winter
Red Crossbill	Occasional	W	Winter
Pine Siskin	Rare	G, W	Migrant
Lesser Goldfinch	Uncommon	G, W	Resident
American Goldfinch	Occasional	G, W	Migrant

**Longspurs and Snow Buntings (Calcariidae)**

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Chestnut-collared Longspur	Occasional	G	Winter
McCown's Longspur	Occasional	G	Winter
Snow Bunting	Accidental	G	Winter

**New World Sparrows and Towhees (Passerellidae)**

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Cassin's Sparrow	Uncommon	G	Summer
Grasshopper Sparrow	Occasional	G	Migrant
Lark Sparrow	Common	G, W	Summer
Lark Bunting	Rare	G	Migrant
Chipping Sparrow	Common	G, W	Resident
Brewer's Sparrow	Uncommon	G, W	Migrant
American Tree Sparrow	Occasional	G	Winter
Dark-eyed Junco	Uncommon	G, W	Winter
White-crowned Sparrow	Rare	G, W	Migrant
White-throated Sparrow	Occasional	G, W	Migrant
Vesper Sparrow	Common	G, W	Summer
Savannah Sparrow	Rare	G	Winter
Canyon Towhee	Uncommon	G, W	Resident
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	Rare	G, W	Resident
Green-tailed Towhee	Uncommon	G, W	Summer
Spotted Towhee	Common	G, W	Resident



House Finch



Pine Siskin



Lesser Goldfinch



Brewer's Sparrow



Canyon Towhee



Spotted Towhee



Yellow-headed Blackbird



Bullock's Oriole



Orange-crowned Warbler



Western Tanager



Black-headed Grosbeak



Blue Grosbeak

**Blackbirds, Orioles, and Allies (Icteridae)**

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Occasional	G	Winter
Bobolink	Occasional	G	Migrant
Western Meadowlark	Common	G, W	Resident
Bullock's Oriole	Uncommon	G, W	Summer
Baltimore Oriole	Accidental	W	Migrant
Brown-headed Cowbird	Common	G, W	Summer
Brewer's Blackbird	Rare	G	Winter
Common Grackle	Occasional	G, W	Migrant

**New World Warblers (Parulidae)**

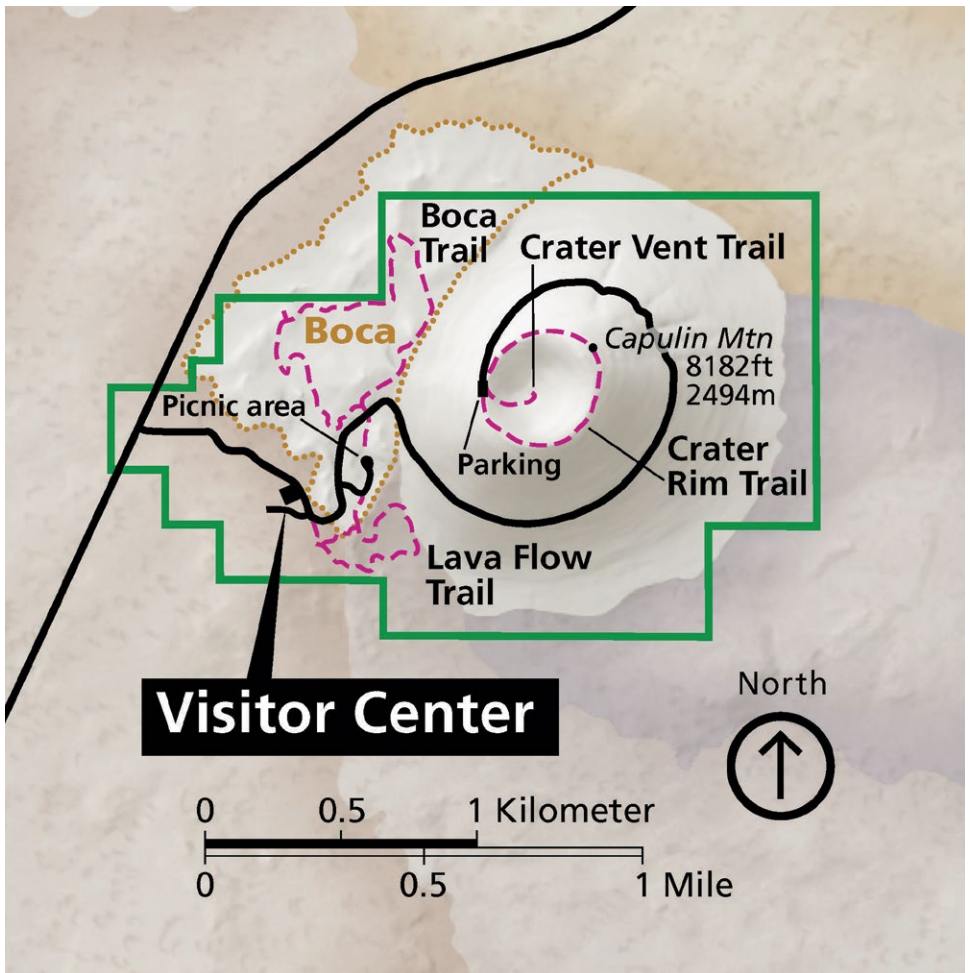
✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Orange-crowned Warbler	Rare	W	Migrant
Virginia's Warbler	Uncommon	G, W	Summer
MaGillivray's Warbler	Rare	G, W	Migrant
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Uncommon	G, W	Migrant
Black-throated Gray Warbler	Rare	W	Migrant
Wilson's Warbler	Rare	W	Migrant
Red-faced Warbler	Accidental	W	Migrant

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

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Hepatic Tanager	Uncommon	G, W	Summer
Summer Tanager	Rare	W	Migrant
Western Tanager	Uncommon	G, W	Summer
Northern Cardinal	Rare	G, W	Resident
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	Accidental	G, W	Migrant
Black-headed Grosbeak	Common	G, W	Summer
Blue Grosbeak	Rare	G	Migrant
Lazuli Bunting	Rare	G, W	Migrant
Indigo Bunting	Occasional	G, W	Migrant



Great Horned Owl and owlets (NPS PHOTO)



## Hiking Trails

Capulin Volcano's hiking trails provide many opportunities to observe birds in the national monument

**Boca Trail:** Unimproved, 2-mile loop through the boca, the vent area at the base where the volcano's lava flows erupted

**Lava Flow Trail:** Unimproved, 1-mile loop that crosses one of the volcano's lava flows

**Crater Rim Trail:** Paved, 1-mile loop around the rim of the volcano

**Crater Vent Trail:** Paved, 0.2-mile trail leading to the bottom of Capulin's crater

**Nature Trail:** Short accessible trail next to the Visitor Center

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October 2020