



White Sands National Monument

Bird Checklist



Birds of White Sands NM

Much of the dunefield in White Sands National Monument (NM) presents a challenging environment for birds as an active dune system provides little habitat for them. The Heart of the Sands contains little vegetation, and surface water is usually only present for short periods of time after rain storms. However, the margins of the dunefield and the surrounding Chihuahuan Desert provide excellent habitat for a great diversity of bird life. Lake Lucero, an ephemeral lake (or playa) that is intermittently filled with shallow water, presents shorebirds and waterfowl with excellent habitat in White Sands NM. While birds may be scarce in some areas, the monument as a whole contains an abundance of bird life and diversity, with 246 species having been documented within its boundaries.



Loggerhead Shrike

Bird Habitats

The relationship between birds and their habitats are especially evident at White Sands NM. Areas that lack vegetation or water generally lack bird activity, but birds can thrive in areas that provide shelter, food, and water.

Some types of dunes support only sparse vegetation, while others are more richly vegetated. The areas of sparse vegetation in the Heart of the Sands are dominated by barchan (crescent-shaped) and transverse dunes, and have mostly scattered grasses and yucca plants. Ravens and roadrunners may be seen in this part of the dunefield, particularly in interdunal areas that are vegetated. Migrating birds may be seen flying overhead. Parabolic dunes, which are U-shaped with arms that have been stabilized by vegetation, are found in other parts of the dunefield. These dunes host more diverse and abundant vegetation and a wide diversity of birds. These areas support grasses and yucca, as well as shrubs such as sagebrush and fourwing saltbush. Verdins, Black-throated Sparrows, and Cactus Wrens are examples of species that prefer this habitat.

Isolated stands of cottonwood trees are found intermittently in and around the dunefield. These



stands provide some of the richest bird habitat found in the monument. Cottonwoods, like those near the visitor center, provide important nesting and roosting sites for birds. These trees host species such as Bullock's and Scott's Orioles, House Finches, and White-winged Doves.



Adjacent to the dunes, particularly on the west and south sides of the monument are Alkali Flat and Lake Lucero, both playa surfaces. Although vegetation is sparse in these areas, Lake Lucero has abundant bird life when wet.

Migratory Birds in the Tularosa Basin

White Sands NM, which is set within the Tularosa Basin, is along the central flyway for migratory birds. The central flyway is one of four major biological flyways in North America. Flyways are the north-south routes that migratory birds follow during migration between nesting and wintering areas. The central flyway links breeding and wintering habitat for shorebirds and other migratory water birds. Lakes present in the basin, the largest of which is Lake Lucero, provide important habitat for ducks, geese, and shorebirds. Over 60 wetland bird species have been observed at Lake Lucero. Most of these species take advantage of wetland areas during migration; however, several species including the American Coot, Black-necked Stilt, and American Avocet, have nested in the monument.

Holloman Lakes, a constructed wetland on Holloman Air Force Base northeast of the White Sands NM Visitor Center, is an Important Bird Area designated by the Audubon Society. It provides important habitat for shorebirds and is open for public visitation.



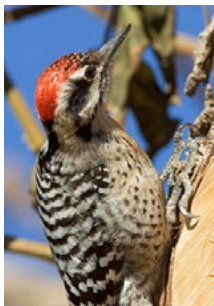
American Avocets and Black-necked Stilts at Lake Lucero

Birding Hot Spots

White Sands NM offers excellent birding opportunities at the visitor center and in several areas off of the Dunes Drive. The list below contains some of the areas that are good locations to observe birds in the monument.

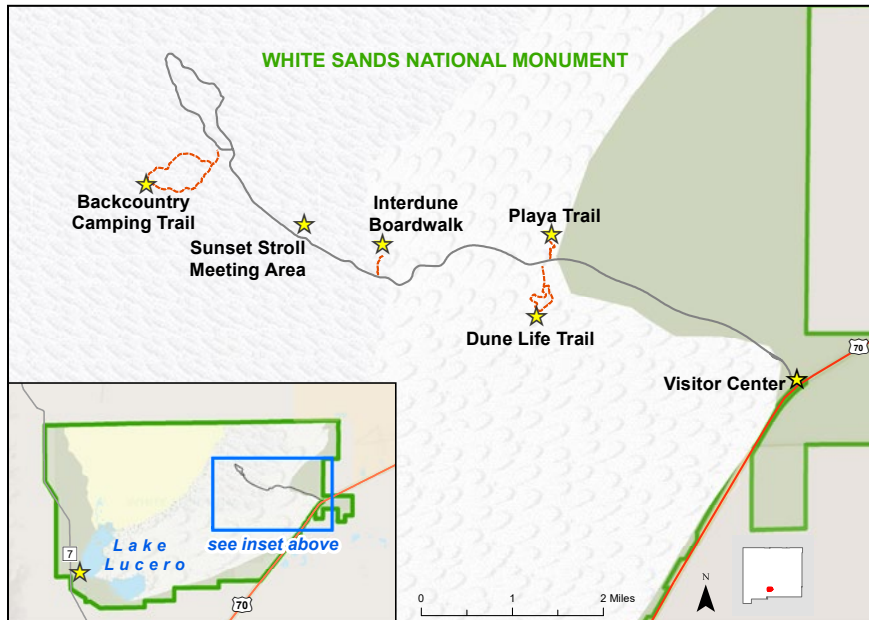
Visitor Center – Many species are found in the desert scrub vegetation around the visitor center. Barn Swallows nest beneath the eaves of the building in the spring.

Dune Life Nature Trail – The Nature Trail is a great place to see Ladder-backed Woodpeckers searching for a meal in an old cottonwood snag. This trail is within the parabolic dunes at the edge of the dunefield. Parabolic dunes are the most-vegetated, slowest-moving dunes in the monument.



Ladder-backed Woodpecker

Birding Locations in White Sands NM



Playa Trail (Ice Age Trail) – This trail goes out to a small playa. When dry, it is a dusty salt flat, but when wet, it comes to life with brine shrimp and tadpoles, bringing in shorebirds and occasional ducks and geese.

Interdune Boardwalk – Loggerhead Shrikes can often be seen perched on the top of sand pedestals near the end of the boardwalk.

Sunset Stroll Meeting Area – This is a great place to see owls and woodpeckers. In the spring, birds may be seen feeding on caterpillars.

Backcountry Camping Trail – This area is good for desert species and wintering sparrows.

Lake Lucero – This lake, located in the southwest corner off the monument, provides excellent habitat for a variety of water birds. It is open to the public only by once-monthly guided tours. See the [White Sands NM website](#) for more information.

Birding Ethics

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

- » Keep 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.



Checklist Key

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

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 monument 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 creeks and lakes with plants such as willows, cottonwoods, and invasive saltcedar trees
- **D** – Desert: Drier, open areas of the dunefield with drought-tolerant vegetation
- **G** – Grassland: Open habitats dominated by grasses (alkali sacaton, gypsum grama, and others) with few shrubs and trees
- **W** – Wetlands: Marshy edges of lakes where vegetation is adapted to or tolerant of regularly-saturated soils

Season

- **Resident** – Found year-round
- **Summer** – Birds found predominantly in the summer months (June–August)
- **Winter** – Birds found predominantly in the winter months (November–February)
- **Migrant** – Birds 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 White Sands NM; however, bird lists are always works in progress. 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 2018.

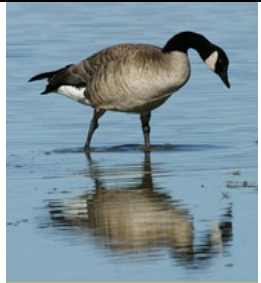
Checklist

Waterfowl (Anatidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Snow Goose	Occasional	W	Migrant
Canada Goose	Occasional	W	Migrant
Blue-winged Teal	Occasional	W	Migrant
Cinnamon Teal	Occasional	W	Migrant
Northern Shoveler	Occasional	W	Migrant
Gadwall	Occasional	W	Migrant
American Wigeon	Occasional	W	Migrant
Mallard	Occasional	W	Migrant
Northern Pintail	Occasional	W	Migrant
Green-winged Teal	Occasional	W	Migrant
Canvasback	Occasional	W	Migrant
Redhead	Occasional	W	Migrant
Ring-necked Duck	Occasional	W	Migrant
Lesser Scaup	Occasional	W	Migrant
Bufflehead	Occasional	W	Migrant
Common Merganser	Occasional	W	Migrant
Ruddy Duck	Occasional	W	Migrant

New World Quail (Odontophoridae)

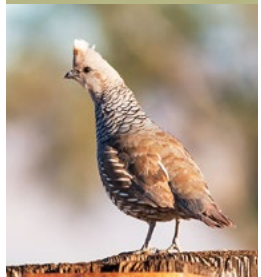
√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Scaled Quail	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
Gambel's Quail	Rare	R, D, G	Resident



Canada Goose



Mallard



Scaled Quail



Gambel's Quail

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Western Grebe



White-winged Dove



Mourning Dove



Lesser Nighthawk



Greater Roadrunner

Grebes (Podicipedidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Pied-billed Grebe	Occasional	W	Migrant
Horned Grebe	Occasional	W	Migrant
Eared Grebe	Occasional	W	Migrant
Western Grebe	Occasional	W	Migrant

Pigeons and Doves (Columbidae)

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

Cuckoos, Roadrunners, and Anis (Cuculidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Greater Roadrunner	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident

Nightjars and Allies (Caprimulgidae)

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

Greater Roadrunner

New Mexico's state bird, the Greater Roadrunner, is a member of the cuckoo family and a year-round resident of the monument. It is a large, long-tailed bird with a shaggy, streaked appearance, and a short, ragged crest, which is often raised. Its preferred prey are lizards, snakes, and rodents. You may see this solitary bird darting across a desert road, reaching speeds of about 15 mph! Despite the roadrunner's incredible ability to run, it can fly to and from elevated perches, which helps it spot its prey from up high.

Swifts (Apodidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
<input type="checkbox"/> White-throated Swift	Rare	D, G	Resident

Hummingbirds (Trochilidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Plain-capped Starthroat	Accidental	G	Migrant
Black-chinned Hummingbird	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant
Rufous Hummingbird	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant

Rails, Gallinules, and Coots (Rallidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Virginia Rail	Occasional	W	Summer
Sora	Occasional	W	Migrant
American Coot	Occasional	W	Migrant

Cranes (Gruidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Sandhill Crane	Occasional	D, G, W	Winter

Migrating Sandhill Cranes

Migrating Sandhill Cranes are seen infrequently within White Sands NM. Visitors are more likely to hear them flying overhead. Their trumpeting call can be heard from great distances.



Black-chinned Hummingbird



Broad-tailed Hummingbird



Rufous Hummingbird



American Coot



Sandhill Crane



American Avocet



Killdeer

Shorebirds & Waterfowl at Lake Lucero

Lake Lucero provides important habitat for a wide variety of bird species including Canvasback, Mallard and other ducks, grebes, American Coot, American Avocet, Killdeer, Long-billed Curlew, sandpipers, Snowy Plover, White-faced Ibis, and Swainson's Hawk.



Long-billed Curlew



Greater Yellowlegs

Avocets and Stilts (Recurvirostridae)

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

Plovers (Charadriidae)

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

Sandpipers, Phalaropes, and Allies (Scolopacidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Long-billed Curlew	Occasional	W	Migrant
Marbled Godwit	Occasional	W	Migrant
Stilt Sandpiper	Occasional	W	Migrant
Baird's Sandpiper	Occasional	W	Migrant
Least Sandpiper	Occasional	W	Migrant
Semipalmated Sandpiper	Occasional	W	Migrant
Western Sandpiper	Occasional	W	Migrant
Long-billed Dowitcher	Occasional	W	Migrant
Wilson's Snipe	Occasional	W	Winter
Spotted Sandpiper	Occasional	W	Migrant
Solitary Sandpiper	Occasional	W	Migrant
Willet	Occasional	W	Migrant
Greater Yellowlegs	Occasional	W	Migrant
Wilson's Phalarope	Occasional	W	Migrant
Red-necked Phalarope	Occasional	W	Migrant

Gulls, Terns and Skimmers (Laridae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Bonaparte's Gull	Occasional	W	Migrant
Franklin's Gull	Occasional	W	Migrant
Ring-billed Gull	Occasional	W	Migrant
Least Tern	Occasional	W	Migrant
Black Tern	Occasional	W	Migrant
Forster's Tern	Occasional	W	Migrant

Loons (Gaviidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Common Loon	Accidental	W	Migrant

Pelicans (Pelecanidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Brown Pelican	Accidental	W	Migrant

Hérons and Egrets (Ardeidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Great Blue Heron	Occasional	W	Migrant
Great Egret	Occasional	W	Migrant
Snowy Egret	Occasional	W	Migrant
Cattle Egret	Occasional	W	Migrant
Green Heron	Occasional	R	Migrant
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Occasional	W	Migrant

Ibises and Spoonbills (Threskiornithidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
White-faced Ibis	Occasional	W	Migrant



Ring-billed Gull



Black Tern



Great Blue Heron



Green Heron

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Turkey Vulture

New World Vultures (Cathartidae)

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

Hawks and Eagles (Accipitridae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Golden Eagle	Occasional	D, G	Resident
Northern Harrier	Rare	D, G	Migrant
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Cooper's Hawk	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Bald Eagle	Accidental	R, D	Migrant
Harris's Hawk	Occasional	D, G	Resident
Swainson's Hawk	Common	R, D, G	Summer
Red-tailed Hawk	Common	R, D, G	Resident
Rough-legged Hawk	Occasional	D, G	Migrant
Ferruginous Hawk	Rare	D, G	Winter



Northern Harrier



Swainson's Hawk



Red-tailed Hawk

Hawks

A number of hawk species are found in White Sands NM. Swainson's Hawks can hunt from a perch, while soaring, or while walking on the ground. Their diet consists of rodents, snakes, grasshoppers, and other insects. Usually solitary, they join large flocks while migrating, and fly about 125 miles per day during migration until reaching their destination in South America. Red-tailed Hawks are the most numerous and commonly seen hawks of North America. Look for them perched on utility poles or soaring in circles high above. They feed on small mammals and reptiles. Northern Harriers are often identified by their distinctive white rump patch. They hunt by sound as well as sight, and are likely to be seen flying low over the dunefield margins and visitor center, searching for prey. They hunt small rodents, lizards, and birds, but will occasionally eat larger prey such as rabbits. Northern Harriers nest and often perch on the ground.

Barn Owls (Tytonidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Barn Owl	Occasional	R, D, G	Resident

Typical Owls (Strigidae)

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

Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Belted Kingfisher	Occasional	W	Migrant

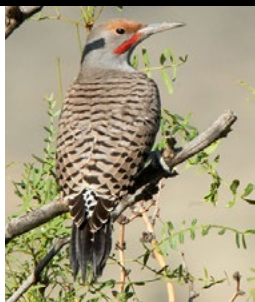
Woodpeckers and Allies (Picidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Red-headed Woodpecker	Accidental	R	Migrant
Acorn Woodpecker	Occasional	R	Winter
Williamson's Sapsucker	Occasional	R	Winter
Red-naped Woodpecker	Occasional	R	Winter
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
Northern Flicker	Rare	R, D, G	Winter

Falcons (Falconidae)

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

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Northern Flicker

Northern Flickers are fairly large woodpeckers that spend a lot of time on the ground foraging. They eat mainly insects, particularly ants and beetles. Flickers also eat berries and seeds, especially during the winter.



American Kestrel

Kestrels are the smallest falcon in North America. They eat small animals such as insects, lizards, mice, voles, and other birds. Strikingly beautiful birds, males have blue heads and wings and a rusty-red back.



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
Cassin's Kingbird	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Western Kingbird	Uncommon	R, D, G	Summer
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	Accidental	G	Migrant
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Western Wood-Pewee	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
Gray Flycatcher	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Dusky Flycatcher	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Cordilleran Flycatcher	Occasional	R, D	Migrant
Black Phoebe	Occasional	R, D	Migrant
Say's Phoebe	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
Vermilion Flycatcher	Occasional	R, D	Summer

Shrikes (Laniidae)

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

Vireos (Vireonidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Bell's Vireo	Rare	R, D, G	Summer
Gray Vireo	Occasional	D	Migrant
Plumbeous Vireo	Occasional	R, D	Migrant
Warbling Vireo	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Red-eyed Vireo	Accidental	R	Migrant

Loggerhead Shrike

Loggerhead Shrikes are distinguished by a black mask and a short powerful bill. They feed on insects, rodents, lizards, and other small birds, often impaling their prey on sharp thorns or barbed wire for a future meal, giving rise to their nickname "butcherbird." At White Sands, they may stash lizards and insects harpooned on the sharp leaves of yuccas.

Crows, Jays and Ravens (Corvidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Steller's Jay	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant
Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay	Occasional	R, D	Migrant
American Crow	Occasional	R, D, G	Winter
Chihuahuan Raven	Common	R, D, G	Resident
Common Raven	Common	R, D, G	Resident

Larks (Alaudidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Horned Lark	Uncommon	D, G	Resident

Swallows (Hirundinidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Purple Martin	Occasional	R	Migrant
Tree Swallow	Rare	D, G	Migrant
Violet-green Swallow	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Bank Swallow	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Cliff Swallow	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
Barn Swallow	Uncommon	R, D, G	Summer

Chickadees and Titmice (Paridae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Mountain Chickadee	Occasional	R	Winter

Verdins (Remizidae)

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

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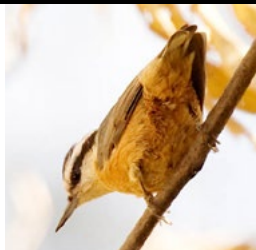
Chihuahuan Raven

Chihuahuan Ravens are large black birds, often seen in pairs or small groups soaring, playing in the wind, or perched on bushes and utility poles. The Chihuahuan Ravens can be identified by white feathers on the base of the neck when ruffled.



Horned Lark

Characterized by the small, black tufts on its head, Horned Larks are year-round residents of the dunefield and its margins, where you are likely to see their delicate tracks. Horned Larks are ground foragers.



Red-breasted Nuthatch



Rock Wren



Canyon Wren



Bewick's Wren



Cactus Wren

Nuthatches (Sittidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Occasional	R	Winter

Treecreepers (Certhiidae)

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Brown Creeper	Accidental	R	Winter

Wrens (Troglodytidae)

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

Cactus Wren

The largest wren species in the United States, Cactus Wrens are year-round residents of both the dunefield and desert scrub. They are one of the most commonly seen birds in White Sands NM. They have a long white “eyebrow,” a cluster of black spots on the breast, and make a somewhat ratchety call. This intelligent bird is known for building its nests in cacti, which provides protection from predators. The Cactus Wren is likely to be spotted hopping under shrubs hunting insects, but it has even been seen picking insects off the radiator grills of parked cars!



Gnatcatchers (Poliotilidae)

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

Kinglets (Regulidae)

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

Thrushes (Turdidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Western Bluebird	Occasional	R, D, G	Winter
Mountain Bluebird	Occasional	R, D, G	Winter
Townsend's Solitaire	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant
Gray-cheeked Thrush	Accidental	R	Migrant
Swainson's Thrush	Occasional	R, D	Migrant
Hermit Thrush	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Wood Thrush	Accidental	R	Migrant
American Robin	Occasional	R	Migrant

Mockingbirds and Thrashers (Mimidae)

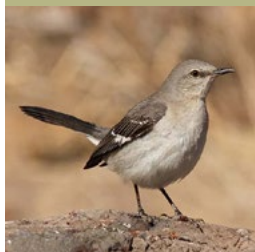
✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Gray Catbird	Accidental	D, G	Migrant
Curve-billed Thrasher	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
Brown Thrasher	Accidental	R	Migrant
Crissal Thrasher	Rare	R, D, G	Resident
Sage Thrasher	Occasional	R, D, G	Winter
Northern Mockingbird	Common	R, D, G	Resident

Starlings (Sturnidae)

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



Curve-billed Thrasher



Northern Mockingbird

Noted for its ability to imitate the songs of other birds, Northern Mockingbirds may be heard before seen.

This highly territorial year-round resident is 10-inches long and is gray with conspicuous white wing patches. The mockingbird's diet consists of prickly pear cactus fruits and other plant fruits. This bird also preys on ants, beetles, and grasshoppers. They are important seed dispersers and help control insect populations.



Phainopepla



House Finch



Pine Siskin



Lesser Goldfinch

Waxwings (Bombycillidae)

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

Silky-flycatchers (Ptiliogonatidae)

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

Old World Sparrows (Passeridae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
House Sparrow	Uncommon	D	Resident

Wagtails and Pipits (Motacillidae)

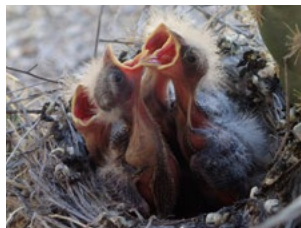
✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
American Pipit	Rare	D, G	Migrant

Finches (Fringillidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Evening Grosbeak	Occasional	R	Winter
House Finch	Common	R, D, G	Resident
Cassin's Finch	Occasional	R	Winter
Pine Siskin	Rare	R, D, G	Winter
Lesser Goldfinch	Rare	R, D, G	Resident
American Goldfinch	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant

House Finch

House Finches nest in a variety of trees as well as on cacti and rock ledges. They lay 2-6 small pale blue to white speckled eggs that they incubate for about 2 weeks. Young remain in the nest 12-19 days before fledging.



NPS PHOTO

Longspurs (Calcariidae)

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

New World Sparrows and Towhees (Passerellidae)

✓ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
Green-tailed Towhee	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
Spotted Towhee	Occasional	R, D	Winter
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	Occasional	D, G	Resident
Canyon Towhee	Rare	D, G	Resident
Cassin's Sparrow	Uncommon	D, G	Summer
Chipping Sparrow	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
Clay-colored Sparrow	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant
Brewer's Sparrow	Common	R, D, G	Migrant
Black-chinned Sparrow	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant
Vesper Sparrow	Rare	R, D, G	Winter
Lark Sparrow	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
Black-throated Sparrow	Common	R, D, G	Resident
Sagebrush Sparrow	Occasional	D, G	Winter
Lark Bunting	Rare	D, G	Migrant
Savannah Sparrow	Rare	D, G	Winter
Baird's Sparrow	Accidental	D, G	Migrant
Song Sparrow	Occasional	R	Migrant
Lincoln's Sparrow	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
White-throated Sparrow	Occasional	R, D, G	Winter
Harris's Sparrow	Accidental	R, D, G	Winter
White-crowned Sparrow	Common	R, D, G	Migrant
Dark-eyed Junco	Rare	R, D, G	Winter



Rufous-crowned Sparrow



Canyon Towhee



Brewer's Sparrow



Black-throated Sparrow

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROBERT SHANTZ (BOTH PAGES)



Hooded Oriole



Bullock's Oriole



Red-winged Blackbird



Great-tailed Grackle

Yellow-Breasted Chat (Icteriidae)

✓	Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
	Yellow-breasted Chat	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant

Blackbirds, Orioles, and Allies (Icteridae)

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

Wood-Warblers (Parulidae)

✓	Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
	Ovenbird	Accidental	R	Migrant
	Worm-eating Warbler	Accidental	R	Migrant
	Northern Waterthrush	Occasional	R	Migrant
	Black-and-white Warbler	Accidental	R	Migrant
	Tennessee Warbler	Accidental	R	Migrant
	Orange-crowned Warbler	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
	Lucy's Warbler	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
	Nashville Warbler	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
	Virginia's Warbler	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant

√ Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
MacGillivray's Warbler	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Kentucky Warbler	Accidental	R	Migrant
Common Yellowthroat	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Hooded Warbler	Accidental	R	Migrant
American Redstart	Accidental	R	Migrant
Northern Parula	Accidental	R	Migrant
Yellow Warbler	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Chestnut-sided Warbler	Accidental	R	Migrant
Black-throated Blue Warbler	Accidental	R	Migrant
Palm Warbler	Accidental	R	Migrant
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
Yellow-throated Warbler	Occasional	R	Migrant
Black-throated Gray Warbler	Occasional	R	Migrant
Townsend's Warbler	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
Wilson's Warbler	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant

Bird Tracks

Tracks are one of the most evident signs of bird life in the dunes. The soft sands, particularly when moist, provide the perfect canvas to record bird life. Greater Roadrunner and Horned Lark tracks are two of the most common types of tracks seen in White Sands NM. Roadrunner tracks are always in the shape of an "X" because roadrunners have two back toes in addition to the two front ones. The length of one print is three inches. Look for Greater Roadrunners near the visitor center where there is a lot of vegetation. Horned Larks are most prevalent in White Sands NM when wildflowers are in bloom. They prefer to run rather than hop, so tracks are continuous and in a line. The length of one print can be up to one and a half inches.



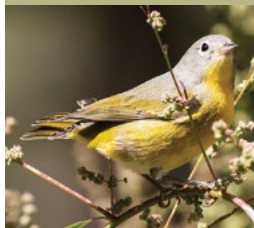
Horned Lark tracks



Orange-crowned Warbler



Lucy's Warbler



Nashville Warbler



Yellow Warbler



Yellow-rumped Warbler



Summer Tanager



Western Tanager



Northern Cardinal



Pyrrhuloxia



Black-headed Grosbeak

Pirange Tanagers, Cardinals and Allies (Cardinalidae)

√	Common Name	Abundance	Habitat	Season
	Hepatic Tanager	Occasional	R	Migrant
	Summer Tanager	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant
	Scarlet Tanager	Accidental	R	Migrant
	Western Tanager	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
	Northern Cardinal	Accidental	R, D, G	Migrant
	Pyrrhuloxia	Uncommon	R, D, G	Resident
	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	Accidental	R	Migrant
	Black-headed Grosbeak	Uncommon	R, D, G	Migrant
	Blue Grosbeak	Rare	R, D, G	Summer
	Lazuli Bunting	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
	Indigo Bunting	Rare	R, D, G	Migrant
	Painted Bunting	Occasional	R, D, G	Migrant
	Dickcissel	Accidental	R, D, G	Migrant

Climate Change

The wintering status of Great Horned Owls is expected to remain stable at White Sands NM; however, a changing climate with rising temperatures and increasing periods of drought could affect the migratory and nesting patterns of species such as Burrowing Owls and Swainson's Hawks.



OLLOHd SdPn

Great Horned Owl nestlings peer out from their nest atop a yucca pedestal.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROBERT SHANTZ



Scott's Oriole

Report Your Sightings

Please contact the White Sands NM Visitor Center if you have rare or unusual sightings. Provide observer(s), date, species, location, and habitat. Include a description of the bird (especially for species not on the list) and, if possible, a photo. The visitor center is open daily from 8 am to 5 pm with extended hours seasonally, or you may call the visitor center at (575) 479-6124.

You may also comment on the species list or report new sightings at [NPSSpecies](#), the National Park Service species information portal.

Acknowledgments

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This bird checklist is a collaboration between the [Chihuahuan Desert Inventory and Monitoring Network](#) and [White Sands NM](#). 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: NPS PHOTO. INSET: HORNED LARK, NPS PHOTO
REAR COVER: AMERICAN ROBIN, NPS PHOTO

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**Chihuahuan Desert Network
Inventory & Monitoring Program**

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U.S. Department of the Interior



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