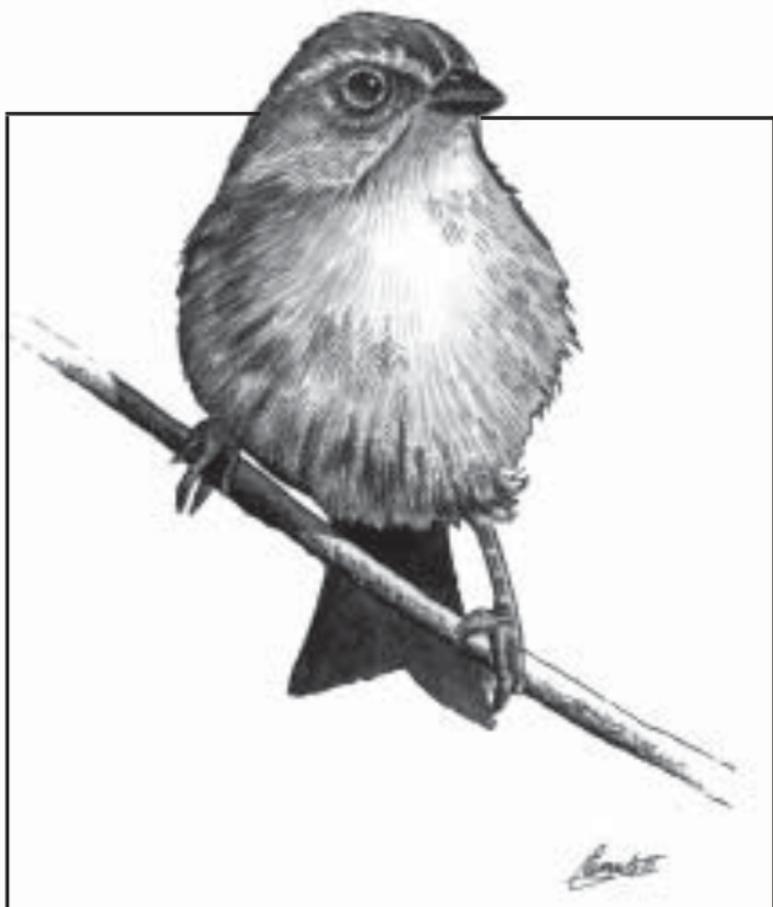


TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

# BIRDS

OF

## DINOSAUR VALLEY STATE PARK



A FIELD CHECKLIST

2003

# Texas Parks & Wildlife Dinosaur Valley State Park

## Legend:

- Hike/joggers
- Dinosaur Tracks
- Interpretive Center
- Picnic Area
- Shower
- Tent Sites
- Water Electric
- Camp Station
- Picnic Shelter
- Amphitheater
- Museum
- Riding Trail
- Sleight Trail
- Equestrian Trail
- Dog Drive
- Group Picnic
- Playground
- Parking
- Scenic Overlook
- Transport Trails
- Saddlepost Trails

**Each Interpretive**  
**512-589-8900**  
[www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)

**Texas State Parks State**  
Call today, visit today, explore  
with us and discover what you  
didn't know you could do in the State  
Parks System.



EQ, Box 206, 101 1st St  
Cleburne, TX 76033  
1-800-851-4088

# INTRODUCTION

**D**inosaur Valley State Park, on the Lampasas Cutplain in Somervell County, contains 1,523 acres, nearly half of which is covered in evergreen Ashe juniper woodlands. This large area of cedar brake on hilly terrain is dissected by several drainages which empty into the Paluxy River - the park's primary watercourse. One of these tributary drainages, Denio Creek, contains habitat which harbors one of the most sought-after birds in the park, the Golden-cheeked warbler. The visiting birder should look for this warbler between late March and late June along the Denio Creek and Ridge Trails.

While searching for the warbler, expect to find Black-chinned Hummingbirds, Bewick's Wrens (year-round), Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Black-and-white Warblers, and Field Sparrows (year-round). Lesser Goldfinches and House Finches can sometimes be found in the park, especially during spring and summer along the Denio Creek Trail. Please stay on the trail so as not to disturb the breeding cycle of our Texas specialties.

Perhaps a third of Dinosaur Valley consists of a large fairly open grassland where live oak, yucca, prickly pear and a diversity of shrubby growth predominate. In summer, this habitat is home for Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, orioles, and Rufous-crowned Sparrows. If you're lucky, you might find a Bell's Vireo in a dense shrubby thicket. On spring and summer evenings, listen for Common Poorwills along Farm Road 1007 as it winds along the park's western border.

Much of the remaining habitat in Dinosaur Valley along the Paluxy River is riparian. Originating some 10 miles north of Stephenville, the Paluxy traverses eastern Erath, southwestern Hood and central Somervell Counties before joining the Brazos east of Glen Rose.

During the dry summer months, the Paluxy normally stops flowing and, within the park, is reduced to only a few pools of water. At this time, you may find herons feeding on fish trapped in the shallow pools or early shorebirds foraging at the water's edge.

It is along the Paluxy that the largest variety of birds can be found. Oaks, elms, hackberry, and to a lesser extent, willows, pecans and sycamore grow heaviest at the river's edge attracting in summer such birds as Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Great Crested Flycatchers, White-eyed Vireo, Summer Tanager, and Painted Bunting. In migration, a variety of flycatchers, vireos, warblers, and sparrows are found near the river as well. Along the dryer banks, the Rufous-crowned Sparrow

can be seen year round. Another resident, the Canyon Wren, should be looked for along the Main Trail where rocky outcroppings occur.

The camping and picnic grounds can be two good areas to find birds as well. In winter, one can expect to see Northern Flicker, Hermit Thrush, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, Spotted Towhee, and many different species of sparrows (including Harris's) at these locations. The large field upriver from the picnic grounds, when it hasn't been mowed, can be an excellent area to look for wintering Le Conte's Sparrow - a rare but perhaps regular winter resident.

This checklist was compiled by Carl B. Haynie and updated by Mark Lockwood. The compiler gratefully acknowledges the cooperation of many contributors who assisted in the preparation of this checklist and especially Charles Crabtree, Charles Easley, Bill Lawley, Kennett Offill, Warren Pulich, J.W. Sifford, and the Fort Worth Audubon Society. Checklist nomenclature and organization follow the A.O.U. **Checklist of North American Birds**, 1998 as amended by supplements.

You can contribute to our knowledge of the park's birdlife by sharing new and unusual sightings or changes in status with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Please report your observations to the Natural Resources Program, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744, or leave your detailed observations at the park headquarters for forwarding.

---

*Please help us protect the natural avian communities in our parks by refraining from using playback tapes of bird songs. Frequent use of these tapes disrupts essential territorial behavior and may lead to nest failure. Thank you for your cooperation.*

---

## LEGEND

### Seasons

Sp= spring (March - May)

S = summer (June - August)

F = fall (September - November)

W = winter (December - February)

## Abundance

A = abundant – should be seen on 75% or more of trips in proper habitat and season

C = common – should be seen on 50% or more of trips in proper habitat and season

U = uncommon – should be seen on 25% or more of trips in proper habitat and season

O = occasional – should be seen on 10% or more of trips in proper habitat and season

R = rare – not seen annually but expected to occur again

X = accidental – only one or two records in the past ten years

I = irregular – absent some years, but may be numerous in others

\* = breeding species – known to breed in park or breeding strongly suspected

## CHECKLIST

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ American White Pelican <sup>3</sup> .....	O		O	
___ Double-crested Cormorant .....	R		R	
___ Great Blue Heron .....	U	U	U	R
___ Great Egret .....		O		
___ Little Blue Heron .....		R	O	
___ Cattle Egret .....	R	R		
___ Green Heron* .....	F	F	U	
___ Black Vulture* .....	F	F	F	F
___ Turkey Vulture* .....	A	A	A	A
___ Canada Goose .....	X			
___ Wood Duck .....	I		I	I
___ Gadwall .....				O
___ Mallard .....				O
___ Blue-winged Teal .....	O		O	
___ Ring-necked Duck .....				X
___ Mississippi Kite <sup>3</sup> .....	R		R	

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ Northern Harrier .....	U		U	U
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk .....	U		U	U
___ Cooper's Hawk .....	R	X	R	R
___ Red-shouldered Hawk .....	R	R	R	
___ Swainson's Hawk .....	U		U	
___ Red-tailed Hawk* .....	F	U	F	F
___ American Kestrel .....	F		F	F
___ Prairie Falcon .....	X			
___ Wild Turkey* <sup>2</sup> .....	R	R	R	R
___ Northern Bobwhite* .....	C	C	C	C
___ Sandhill Crane <sup>3</sup> .....	R		R	
___ Killdeer* .....	F	F	F	U
___ Solitary Sandpiper .....		/U	U	
___ Spotted Sandpiper .....		/U	U	
___ Upland Sandpiper <sup>3</sup> .....	F	/F	F <sup>3</sup>	
___ Franklin's Gull <sup>3</sup> .....	O		O	
___ Mourning Dove* .....	A	A	A	F
___ Inca Dove .....	O	O		
___ Yellow-billed Cuckoo* .....	C	C	U	
___ Greater Roadrunner* .....	R	R	R	R
___ Eastern Screech-Owl* .....	C	C	C	C
___ Great Horned Owl* .....	F	F	F	F
___ Barred Owl .....	X			
___ Common Nighthawk .....	U	U	U	
___ Inca Dove .....	U	U*	U	U
___ Common Poorwill* <sup>2</sup> .....	F	F	F	
___ Chuck-will's-widow* .....	C	C		
___ Chimney Swift* .....	F	F	F	
___ Black-chinned Hummingbird* .....	C	C	C	
___ Ruby-throated Hummingbird .....	R		R	
___ Belted Kingfisher* .....	F	F	F	F
___ Red-bellied Woodpecker* .....	U	U	U	U
___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker .....	R		R	R
___ Ladder-backed Woodpecker* .....	F	F	F	F

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ Northern Flicker .....	C		C	F
___ Olive-sided Flycatcher .....			O	
___ Eastern Wood-Pewee .....	O	O	O	
___ "Traill's" Flycatcher .....	O		O	
___ Least Flycatcher .....	F		F	
___ Eastern Phoebe* .....	C	F	C	U
___ Great Crested Flycatcher* .....	F	F	F	
___ Western Kingbird .....	O	O	O	
___ Eastern Kingbird* .....	U	U	U	
___ Scissor-tailed Flycatcher* .....	C	C	C	
___ Loggerhead Shrike* .....	F	F	F	F
___ White-eyed Vireo* .....	F	F	U	
___ Bell's Vireo* .....	R	R	R	
___ Black-capped Vireo* .....	O	O	O	
___ Blue-headed Vireo .....	R		R	
___ Yellow-throated Vireo .....		X		
___ Red-eyed Vireo .....	R		R	
___ Blue Jay* .....	C	U	C	C
___ American Crow* .....	F	F	F	F
___ Purple Martin .....	U	U	U	
___ Tree Swallow .....			X	
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow* .....	F	F	F	
___ Cliff Swallow .....	F	U	F	
___ Barn Swallow .....	F	U	F	
___ Carolina Chickadee* .....	A	A	A	A
___ Tufted Titmouse* .....	A	A	A	A
___ Bushtit .....	X			
___ Brown Creeper .....				R
___ Canyon Wren* .....	R	R	R	R
___ Carolina Wren* .....	C	C	C	C
___ Bewick's Wren* .....	A	A	A	A
___ House Wren .....	U		U	
___ Winter Wren .....			X	O
___ Golden-crowned Kinglet .....	F		U	F

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ Ruby-crowned kinglet .....	C		C	F
___ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher* .....	C	C	F	
___ Eastern Bluebird .....	U		U	F
___ Swainson's Thrush .....	R		R	
___ Hermit Thrush .....	U		U	U
___ American Robin .....	C		C	A
___ Gray Catbird .....	O			
___ Northern Mockingbird* .....	A	A	A	A
___ Brown Thrasher* .....	U	U	U	U
___ European Starling .....	O	O	O	O
___ American Pipit .....			O	
___ Cedar Waxwing .....	A		U	A
___ Orange-crowned Warbler .....	U		U	O
___ Nashville Warbler .....	F		F	
___ Yellow Warbler .....	U		U	
___ Magnolia Warbler .....	O			
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler .....	C		C	C
___ Golden-cheeked Warbler <sup>1*</sup> .....	F	F		
___ Black-throated Green Warbler .....	R		R	
___ Black-and-white Warbler <sup>1*</sup> .....	F	F	F	
___ American Redstart .....	O			
___ Louisiana Waterthrush .....		O		
___ Northern Waterthrush .....	O			
___ Common Yellowthroat .....	R		R	
___ Wilson's Warbler .....	U		U	
___ Yellow-breasted Chat* .....	R	R	R	
___ Summer Tanager* .....	F	F	F	
___ Spotted Towhee .....	A		F	A
___ Eastern Towhee .....	O		O	O
___ Canyon Towhee .....			X	X
___ Cassin's Sparrow* .....	I	I		
___ Rufous-crowned Sparrow* .....	C	C	C	C
___ Chipping Sparrow .....	F	R	R	O
___ Clay-colored Sparrow .....	U		R	

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ Field Sparrow* .....	A	F	C	A
___ Vesper Sparrow .....	F		F	F
___ Lark Sparrow* .....	A	A	A	
___ Savannah Sparrow .....	C		C	C
___ Grasshopper Sparrow* .....	U		U	
___ Le Conte's Sparrow .....			R	R
___ Fox Sparrow .....	C		F	C
___ Song Sparrow .....	C		F	C
___ Lincoln's Sparrow .....	C		C	U
___ Swamp Sparrow .....				X
___ White-throated Sparrow .....	A		C	A
___ Harris's Sparrow .....	C		F	C
___ White-crowned Sparrow <sup>2</sup> .....	U		U	F
___ Dark-eyed Junco .....	A		A	A
___ Northern Cardinal* .....	A	A	A	A
___ Blue Grosbeak* .....		R		
___ Lazuli Bunting .....	X			
___ Indigo Bunting .....		O		
___ Painted Bunting* .....	A	A	A	
___ Dickcissel* .....	R	R		
___ Red-winged Blackbird .....	F	U	F	F
___ Eastern Meadowlark* .....	A	A	A	A
___ Western Meadowlark .....				R
___ Yellow-headed Blackbird .....	X			
___ Brewer's Blackbird .....				O
___ Common Grackle .....	F	U	F	U
___ Great-tailed Grackle .....	O	O	O	O
___ Brown-headed Cowbird* .....	C	C	C	O
___ Orchard Oriole* .....	U	U		
___ Baltimore Oriole* .....	R	R	R	
___ Purple Finch .....				I
___ House Finch* .....	U	U	U	U
___ Pine Siskin .....	A		C	A
___ Lesser Goldfinch* .....	R	R	R	

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ American Goldfinch .....	A		C	A
___ House Sparrow* .....	0	0	0	0

## citation

Haynie, Carl B. compiler. February 2003. Birds of Dinosaur Valley State Park: a field checklist. Natural Resources Program, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

---

In 1983, the Texas Legislature created the Special Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Fund. This fund may be used for nongame wildlife and endangered species research and conservation, habitat acquisition and development and dissemination of information pertaining to nongame management. Money for this fund is obtained through private donations and sale of nongame wildlife art prints and stamps. This fund now gives Texans a unique opportunity to help support this state's valuable and sensitive nongame resources. Your individual contributions and purchases of nongame art prints and stamps will help determine the level of nongame conservation activities in Texas. For more information call toll-free (1-800-792-1112) or contact: **Nongame and Endangered Species Program, Texas Parks and Wildlife, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744.**

---



Natural Resources Program  
Texas Parks and Wildlife  
4200 Smith School Road  
Austin, Texas 78744