

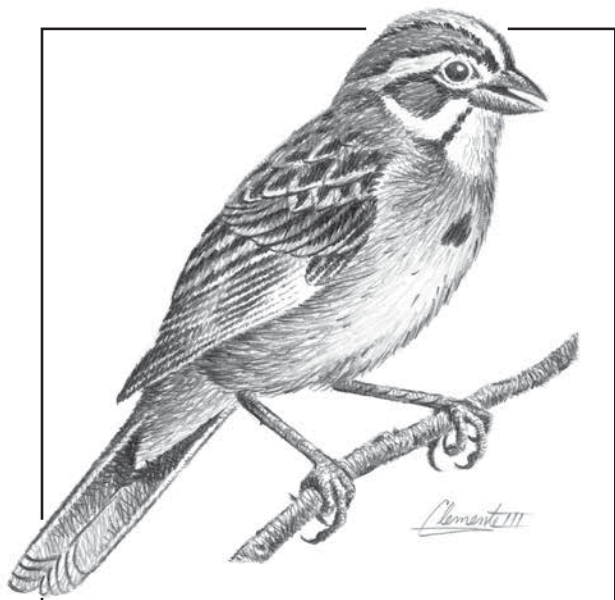
TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

# BIRDS

OF

## GOVERNMENT CANYON

STATE NATURAL AREA AND VICINITY



A FIELD CHECKLIST

2017

*Cover: Illustration of Lark Sparrow by Clemente Guzman III.*

# INTRODUCTION

Government Canyon State Natural Area preserves over 12,000 acres of land, most of which protects a portion of the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. Most of Government Canyon lies within the limestone hills of the Edwards Plateau, where steep slopes wooded with mature Ashe juniper and live oak play host to the endemic and endangered Golden-cheeked Warbler. Large elm, pecan, sycamore, cottonwood and walnut trees grow along the bottom of canyons. This portion of the Natural Area, known as the Backcountry, attracts western, arid species such as the Canyon Wren and Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay. In the warmer months Summer Tanagers, Black-and-white Warblers, and Zone-tailed Hawks can be found.

The southern portion of the Natural Area lies below the escarpment and is relatively level with a mix of Blackland Prairie and juniper/oak savanna habitat. Here, in what is known as the Frontcountry, you are more likely to spot some of your favorite "backyard" birds. The open habitat attracts species such as Meadowlarks, Dickcissels, Vermilion Flycatchers, and Lark Sparrows. Many of the birds in this area can be found in multi-species foraging flocks.

When trails are closed due to rain, the roadways, Visitor Center, and campground are still great places to find birds, including some of nature's showiest species such as the Northern Cardinal, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Painted Bunting, and Yellow-breasted Chat. The Visitor Center's location near the interchange of the Frontcountry and Backcountry means that species from both habitat types can be spotted.

This checklist was compiled by Kelsey Woodward with help from the Birds of Bexar County Checklist by San Antonio Audubon Society, and from observations and input by Steve Hawkins, Georgina Schwartz, Helen Rejzek, Dodge and Lorna Engleman, Bob Doe, Keith Bartels, and Mark Lockwood.

You can contribute to this checklist by reporting new and unusual sightings or changes in status. You may report your sightings at the natural area headquarters or mail them to the Natural Resource Program, Government Canyon State Natural Area, 12861 Galm Road, San Antonio, TX 78254. Nomenclature and organization for this checklist follow the 7th edition of the American Ornithologists Union *Checklist of North American Birds* as currently supplemented.

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*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.*

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## LEGEND

### Seasons

- Sp = spring (March, April, May)
- S = summer (June, July, August)
- F = fall (September, October, November)
- W = winter (December, January, February)

### Abundance

- c = Common (Present, easy to find)
- f = Fairly common (Present, should see or hear)
- u = Uncommon (Present, harder to find)
- r = Rare (May not occur every year)

# CHECKLIST

	Sp	S	F	W
___ Black-bellied Whistling Duck.....	u	u	u	r
___ Northern Bobwhite .....	u	u	u	u
___ Wild Turkey .....	u	u	u	u
___ Rock Pigeon .....	u	u	u	u
___ Eurasian Collared-Dove .....	r	r	r	r
___ Inca Dove .....	f	f	f	u
___ Common Ground-Dove.....	c	c	c	c
___ White-winged Dove.....	c	c	c	c
___ Mourning Dove.....	c	c	c	c
___ Yellow-billed Cuckoo.....	c	c	c	
___ Greater Roadrunner .....	c	c	c	u
___ Lesser Nighthawk.....	u	u	u	
___ Common Nighthawk .....	c	c	c	
___ Common Pauraque.....	r	r	r	r
___ Chuck-will's-widow.....	f	f	f	
___ Chimney Swift.....	f	f	f	
___ Ruby-throated Hummingbird.....	u	r	u	
___ Black-chinned Hummingbird .....	c	c	u	
___ Rufous Hummingbird .....				r
___ Sandhill Crane .....	r			
___ Killdeer.....	c	c	c	c
___ Upland Sandpiper.....	r			
___ American Woodcock .....				r
___ Wood Stork .....		r		
___ Great Blue Heron.....	r	u	r	
___ Great Egret .....	r	r	r	
___ Snowy Egret.....	r			
___ Green Heron.....	r			

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ Black Vulture.....	c	c	c	c
___ Turkey Vulture .....	c	c	c	c
___ Mississippi Kite.....	u	r	u	
___ Northern Harrier .....			r	r
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk .....	u		u	u
___ Cooper's Hawk .....	u	r	f	f
___ Harris's Hawk.....	u	u	u	u
___ Red-shouldered Hawk .....	f	f	f	f
___ Broad-winged Hawk .....	r			
___ Swainson's Hawk .....	u		u	
___ Zone-tailed Hawk .....	r	r	r	
___ Red-tailed Hawk.....	c	c	c	c
___ Eastern Screech-Owl.....	r		r	
___ Great Horned Owl.....	u	u	u	u
___ Barred Owl.....	u			
___ Belted Kingfisher .....	r			
___ Golden-fronted Woodpecker .....	c	c	c	c
___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.....			u	u
___ Ladder-backed Woodpecker .....	c	c	c	c
___ Downy Woodpecker .....				r
___ Northern Flicker .....			u	u
___ Crested Caracara .....	f	f	f	f
___ American Kestrel .....	c		c	c
___ Merlin .....			r	r
___ Olive-sided Flycatcher.....	u		u	
___ Eastern Wood-Pewee .....	u		u	
___ Willow Flycatcher .....	r			
___ Least Flycatcher .....	u		u	
___ Eastern Phoebe.....	c	c	c	c

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ Say's Phoebe .....	r			r
___ Vermilion Flycatcher .....	f	r	f	u
___ Ash-throated Flycatcher .....	c	c	u	
___ Great Crested Flycatcher .....	c	c	u	
___ Brown-crested Flycatcher .....	u	u		
___ Western Kingbird .....	c	c	f	
___ Eastern Kingbird .....	r			
___ Scissor-tailed Flycatcher .....	c	c	c	
___ Loggerhead Shrike .....	c	f	c	c
___ Black-capped Vireo .....	r	r		
___ White-eyed Vireo .....	c	c	c	c
___ Bell's Vireo .....	f	f	u	
___ Hutton's Vireo .....	f	f	u	u
___ Yellow-throated Vireo .....	r			
___ Cassin's Vireo .....	r			
___ Blue-headed Vireo .....	u		u	u
___ Red-eyed Vireo .....	r			
___ Blue Jay .....		r	r	r
___ Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay .....	c	c	c	c
___ American Crow .....	r			
___ Common Raven .....	c	c	c	c
___ Purple Martin .....	c	c	u	
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow .....		r	r	
___ Cliff Swallow .....	u	u	u	
___ Cave Swallow .....	u	u	u	
___ Barn Swallow .....	u	u	u	
___ Carolina Chickadee .....	c	c	c	c
___ Black-crested Titmouse .....	c	c	c	c
___ Verdin .....	c	c	c	c
___ Bushtit .....		r		

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ Rock Wren .....	r	r		
___ Canyon Wren .....	c	c	c	c
___ House Wren.....	f		f	f
___ Carolina Wren .....	c	c	c	c
___ Bewick's Wren .....	c	c	c	c
___ Cactus Wren .....	r		r	r
___ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher .....	c	f	f	u
___ Golden-crowned Kinglet .....	u		u	u
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet.....	c		c	c
___ Eastern Bluebird.....	u			f
___ Hermit Thrush.....			f	f
___ American Robin.....	f		f	c
___ Gray Catbird .....	r		r	
___ Curve-billed Thrasher.....	f	f	f	f
___ Brown Thrasher .....	r			r
___ Long-billed Thrasher .....	f	f	f	f
___ Sage Thrasher.....			r	r
___ Northern Mockingbird.....	c	c	c	c
___ European Starling.....	c	c	c	c
___ Cedar Waxwing.....	c			c
___ House Sparrow .....	c	c	c	c
___ American Pipit.....				u
___ Sprague's Pipit.....				r
___ House Finch .....	c	c	c	c
___ Pine Siskin.....				r
___ Lesser Goldfinch.....	c	c	c	c
___ American Goldfinch.....	c		u	c
___ Ovenbird .....	r			
___ Louisiana Waterthrush.....	r			
___ Northern Waterthrush.....	r			



	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ Black-and-white Warbler .....	c	c	u	
___ Orange-crowned Warbler .....	c		c	c
___ Nashville Warbler .....	f		f	
___ Mourning Warbler .....			r	
___ Common Yellowthroat .....	u		u	
___ American Redstart .....	r			
___ Northern Parula.....	r			
___ Magnolia Warbler .....	r			
___ Blackburnian Warbler .....	r			
___ Yellow Warbler .....	u		u	
___ Pine Warbler .....				r
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler.....	c		c	c
___ Golden-cheeked Warbler.....	c	c		
___ Black-throated Green Warbler .....	r		r	
___ Wilson's Warbler .....	u		r	
___ Yellow-breasted Chat .....	f	f	f	
___ Olive Sparrow.....	f	u	u	u
___ Green-tailed Towhee.....				r
___ Spotted Towhee .....	c		c	c
___ Rufous-crowned Sparrow .....	f	f	f	u
___ Canyon Towhee.....	u	u	u	
___ Chipping Sparrow.....	c		u	c
___ Clay-colored Sparrow .....	r		r	
___ Field Sparrow .....	c		u	c
___ Vesper Sparrow .....	c			c
___ Lark Sparrow.....	f	u	f	f
___ Black-throated Sparrow.....	r	r	r	r
___ Lark Bunting.....	r			
___ Savannah Sparrow .....	c		c	c
___ Song Sparrow .....				r

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ Lincoln's Sparrow.....	c		c	c
___ White-throated Sparrow.....	u			u
___ Harris's Sparrow.....			r	r
___ White-crowned Sparrow.....	c		c	c
___ Dark-eyed Junco.....	u			u
___ Summer Tanager.....	f	u	f	
___ Scarlet Tanager.....	r			
___ Northern Cardinal.....	c	c	c	c
___ Pyrrhuloxia.....	u	u	u	u
___ Rose-breasted Grosbeak.....	r			
___ Black-headed Grosbeak.....		r		
___ Blue Grosbeak.....	u	f	u	
___ Lazuli Bunting.....	r			
___ Indigo Bunting.....	f	u	u	
___ Painted Bunting.....	c	c	u	
___ Dickcissel.....	c	c	r	
___ Red-winged Blackbird.....	u	u	u	u
___ Eastern Meadowlark.....			u	c
___ Western Meadowlark.....			r	r
___ Common Grackle.....	u		r	r
___ Great-tailed Grackle.....	c	c	c	c
___ Bronzed Cowbird.....	r	r		
___ Brown-headed Cowbird.....	c	c	u	u
___ Orchard Oriole.....	u	u		
___ Bullock's Oriole.....	u	u		
___ Baltimore Oriole.....	u			
___ Scott's Oriole.....	r		r	

# CITATION

Woodward, Kelsey. April 2017. Birds of Government Canyon State Natural Area and vicinity: a field checklist. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Natural Resources Program, Austin, Texas.

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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 Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744.**

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Natural Resources Program  
Texas Parks and Wildlife  
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