

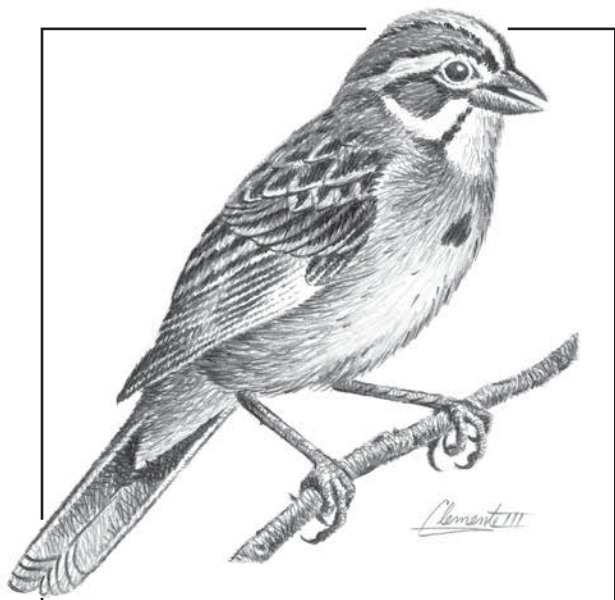
TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

# BIRDS

OF

# GOVERNMENT CANYON

STATE NATURAL AREA AND VICINITY



A FIELD CHECKLIST

2021

*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. A large portion of Government Canyon lies within the limestone hills of the Edwards Plateau, where steep slopes wooded with mature Ashe juniper and live oak are host to the endemic and endangered Golden-cheeked Warbler. Large cedar elm, lacy oaks, live oaks, sycamore, and little walnut trees grow along the bottoms of canyons. This portion of the Natural Area, known as the Backcountry, attracts species such as the Canyon Wren and Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay. In the warmer months, Black-and-white Warblers, Common Ravens and Summer Tanagers 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 American Kestrels, Lark Sparrows, Meadowlarks, and Vermilion Flycatchers. Many of the birds in this area can be found in multi-species foraging flocks.

When trails are closed due to significant amounts of rainfall, the roadways, Visitor Center, and Discovery Trail 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 observed.

This checklist was updated by Jessica Bergner utilizing eBird and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. It was originally 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 Lonna Engleman, Bob Doe, Keith Bartels, and Mark Lockwood.

You can contribute to this checklist by reporting new and unusual sightings or changes in status. Please record both sighting and photograph, if possible, in eBird or other Citizen Science platforms. You may also 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 version 8.0.7 of The American Birding Association Checklist.

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*Please help us protect the natural avian communities in our parks and natural areas by refraining from using playback recordings of bird songs. Frequent use of these recordings disrupts normal avian activity patterns, including 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)
- x = Extremely Rare (Only one or two records exist in the Natural Area)
- \* = Indicates a potential breeding species in the Natural Area

# CHECKLIST

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
<b>DUCKS, GEESE AND SWANS</b>				
___ Black-bellied Whistling-Duck* .....	u	u	r	
___ Wood Duck .....	x			
<b>NEW WORLD QUAIL</b>				
___ Northern Bobwhite* .....	u	f	u	u
<b>PARTRIDGES, GROUSE, TURKEYS, AND OLD WORLD QUAIL</b>				
___ Wild Turkey* .....	f	u	u	u
<b>PIGEONS AND DOVES</b>				
___ Rock Pigeon* .....	u	u		r
___ Eurasian Collared-Dove* .....	r	r		
___ Inca Dove* .....	u	u	r	r
___ Common Ground Dove* .....	c	c	c	c
___ White-tipped Dove .....	r	r		
___ White-winged Dove* .....	c	c	c	c
___ Mourning Dove* .....	c	c	c	c
<b>CUCKOOS, ROADRUNNERS, AND ANIS</b>				
___ Greater Roadrunner* .....	f	f	f	u
___ Yellow-billed Cuckoo* .....	f	f	r	r
<b>GOATSUCKERS</b>				
___ Lesser Nighthawk* .....		r		
___ Common Nighthawk* .....	u	u		
___ Common Pauraque .....	r	r	r	r
___ Chuck-will's-widow* .....	u	u		

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
<b>SWIFTS</b>				
___ Chimney Swift* .....	u	u	u	
<b>HUMMINGBIRDS</b>				
___ Ruby-throated Hummingbird .....	u	u	r	
___ Black-chinned Hummingbird* .....	c	c	r	
___ Rufous Hummingbird .....	r		r	
<b>CRANES</b>				
___ Sandhill Crane .....			r	r
<b>LAPWINGS AND PLOVERS</b>				
___ Killdeer* .....	u	u	u	u
<b>SANDPIPERS, PHALAROPES, AND ALLIES</b>				
___ Upland Sandpiper .....		x		
___ Long-billed Curlew .....	x			
___ American Woodcock .....				r
<b>GULLS, TERNS, AND SKIMMERS</b>				
___ Franklin's Gull .....	r			
<b>STORKS</b>				
___ Wood Stork .....		x		
<b>CORMORANTS</b>				
___ Double-crested Cormorant .....				r
___ Neotropic Cormorant .....				r
<b>PELICANS</b>				
___ American White Pelican .....		r		r

	Sp	S	F	W
<b>BITTERNS, HERONS, AND ALLIES</b>				
___ Great Blue Heron.....	u	u	r	r
___ Great Egret .....	r	r	r	r
___ Snowy Egret.....	r			
___ Little Blue Heron .....	x			
___ Cattle Egret .....	r	r		
___ Green Heron.....	r			
___ Yellow-crowned Night-Heron.....		x		
<b>NEW WORLD VULTURES</b>				
___ Black Vulture* .....	c	c	c	c
___ Turkey Vulture* .....	c	c	c	c
<b>OSPREYS</b>				
___ Osprey.....			x	
<b>HAWKS, KITES, EAGLES, AND ALLIES</b>				
___ White-tailed Kite .....			x	
___ Northern Harrier .....	r		r	r
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk .....	u		r	u
___ Cooper's Hawk* .....	f	u	u	f
___ Mississippi Kite.....	r	r	r	
___ Harris's Hawk* .....			r	
___ White-tailed Hawk .....		x		
___ Red-shouldered Hawk* .....	f	f	f	f
___ Broad-winged Hawk.....	r	r	r	
___ Short-tailed Hawk.....	x			
___ Swainson's Hawk* .....	u		r	
___ Zone-tailed Hawk*.....	r	u		
___ Red-tailed Hawk* .....	f	f	f	f

**BARN OWLS**

\_\_\_ Barn Owl ..... X

**TYPICAL OWLS**

\_\_\_ Eastern Screech-Owl\* ..... u      r      r

\_\_\_ Great Horned Owl\* ..... r      u      r

\_\_\_ Barred Owl\* ..... r

**KINGFISHERS**

\_\_\_ Belted Kingfisher ..... r

**WOODPECKERS AND ALLIES**

\_\_\_ Golden-fronted Woodpecker\* ..... f      f      f      f

\_\_\_ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker ..... u      u

\_\_\_ Downy Woodpecker ..... u      r      r

\_\_\_ Ladder-backed Woodpecker\* ..... c      c      c      c

\_\_\_ Northern Flicker ..... r      r

**CARACARAS AND FALCONS**

\_\_\_ Crested Caracara\* ..... f      f      f      f

\_\_\_ American Kestrel ..... f      c      c

\_\_\_ Merlin ..... r      r

\_\_\_ Peregrine Falcon ..... r      r

**TYRANT FLYCATCHERS**

\_\_\_ Ash-throated Flycatcher\* ..... f      f      r      r

\_\_\_ Great Crested Flycatcher\* ..... u      u      r

\_\_\_ Brown-crested Flycatcher ..... u      u

\_\_\_ Great Kiskadee ..... r

\_\_\_ Couch's Kingbird ..... r      r      r      r

\_\_\_ Western Kingbird\* ..... u      f



	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ Eastern Kingbird.....	r	r		
___ Scissor-tailed Flycatcher*.....	f	f	u	
___ Olive-sided Flycatcher.....	u	r	r	
___ Eastern Wood-Pewee.....	u			
___ Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.....	x			
___ Acadian Flycatcher*.....	r	r	r	
___ Willow Flycatcher.....	r			
___ Least Flycatcher.....	u	u	u	
___ Eastern Phoebe*.....	c	c	c	c
___ Say's Phoebe.....	r			r
___ Vermilion Flycatcher*.....	f	u	u	

### **SHRIKES**

___ Loggerhead Shrike.....	u	u	u	f
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### **VIREOS**

___ Black-capped Vireo*.....	u	r		
___ White-eyed Vireo*.....	c	c	c	c
___ Bell's Vireo*.....	u	u	r	
___ Hutton's Vireo.....	f	f	u	f
___ Yellow-throated Vireo*.....	r	r		
___ Cassin's Vireo.....	r			
___ Blue-headed Vireo.....	u		u	u
___ Philadelphia Vireo.....	r			
___ Warbling Vireo.....	x			
___ Red-eyed Vireo*.....	r	u		

### **JAYS AND CROWS**

___ Green Jay.....	x			
___ Blue Jay.....	u	u	u	r
___ Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay*.....	f	f	c	c

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ American Crow.....	u	r	u	r
___ Common Raven*.....	f	f	f	f

### **SWALLOWS**

___ Bank Swallow.....		r	r	
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow.....	r		r	
___ Purple Martin.....	f	u		
___ Barn Swallow*.....	f	f	u	
___ Cliff Swallow*.....	u	u	u	
___ Cave Swallow.....	r	u	u	r

### **CHICKADEES AND TITMICE**

___ Carolina Chickadee*.....	c	c	c	c
___ Black-crested Titmouse*.....	c	c	c	c

### **VERDIN**

___ Verdin.....	f	f	f	f
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### **BUSHTITS**

___ Bushtit.....		r	r	r
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### **NUTHATCHES**

___ Red-breasted Nuthatch.....	r			
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### **WRENS**

___ Rock Wren.....	x			
___ Canyon Wren*.....	f	f	f	f
___ House Wren.....	f		f	f
___ Carolina Wren*.....	c	c	c	c
___ Bewick's Wren*.....	c	c	c	c
___ Cactus Wren.....	r	u		r

	Sp	S	F	W
<b>GNATCATCHERS AND GNATWRENS</b>				
___ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher*.....	c	c	f	u
<b>KINGLETS</b>				
___ Golden-crowned Kinglet .....	r		r	u
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet.....	f		f	c
<b>THRUSHES</b>				
___ Eastern Bluebird* .....	r	r	r	u
___ Mountain Bluebird .....				r
___ Veery .....	x			
___ Swainson's Thrush .....			x	
___ Hermit Thrush .....	u		u	f
___ American Robin.....	u	r	r	f
<b>MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS</b>				
___ Gray Catbird .....	r		r	
___ Curve-billed Thrasher* .....	u	u	u	u
___ Brown Thrasher .....	r		r	r
___ Long-billed Thrasher .....	f	f	f	f
___ Sage Thrasher.....			r	r
___ Northern Mockingbird* .....	c	c	c	c
<b>STARLINGS</b>				
___ European Starling* .....	u	u	u	u
<b>WAXWINGS</b>				
___ Cedar Waxwing.....	f		r	c
<b>OLD WORLD SPARROWS</b>				
___ House Sparrow.....	u	f	u	u

**WAGTAILS AND PIPITS**

___	American Pipit.....				r
___	Sprague's Pipit.....	x			

**FRINGILLINE AND CARDUELINE FINCHES AND ALLIES**

___	House Finch*.....	f	f	f	f
___	Pine Siskin.....	r		r	r
___	Lesser Goldfinch*.....	c	c	c	c
___	American Goldfinch.....	u		r	c

**TOWHEES AND SPARROWS**

___	Cassin's Sparrow*.....	u	r		
___	Grasshopper Sparrow.....	u		r	u
___	Olive Sparrow.....	f	f	u	u
___	Black-throated Sparrow.....	u	u	u	u
___	Lark Sparrow*.....	f	f	u	u
___	Lark Bunting.....				r
___	Chipping Sparrow*.....	f	u	u	c
___	Clay-colored Sparrow.....	u		u	r
___	Field Sparrow*.....	u	u	u	c
___	Fox Sparrow.....				r
___	Dark-eyed Junco.....	r		r	u
___	White-crowned Sparrow.....	u		u	f
___	Harris's Sparrow.....				u
___	White-throated Sparrow.....	u		r	f
___	Vesper Sparrow.....	u		u	f
___	Savannah Sparrow.....	u		u	f
___	Song Sparrow.....	r		r	u
___	Lincoln's Sparrow.....	f		u	c
___	Swamp Sparrow.....				x
___	Canyon Towhee.....	u	u	r	r

	Sp	S	F	W
___ Rufous-crowned Sparrow .....	u	u	u	u
___ Green-tailed Towhee .....				r
___ Spotted Towhee .....	c		c	c

### YELLOW-BREASTED CHATS

___ Yellow-breasted Chat* .....	f	c	r	
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### BLACKBIRDS

___ Eastern Meadowlark .....	r		r	u
___ Western Meadowlark .....	r		r	u
___ Orchard Oriole* .....	u	u		
___ Hooded Oriole .....	x			
___ Bullock's Oriole* .....	u	u		
___ Audubon's Oriole .....	u	u	r	r
___ Baltimore Oriole .....	u	r	u	
___ Scott's Oriole .....	r		r	
___ Red-winged Blackbird .....	u	u	r	u
___ Bronzed Cowbird .....	r	r		
___ Brown-headed Cowbird* .....	c	c	u	
___ Brewer's Blackbird .....				x
___ Common Grackle* .....	u	u	r	r
___ Great-tailed Grackle* .....	f	u	u	u

### WOOD-WARBLERS

___ Ovenbird .....	r		r	
___ Louisiana Waterthrush* .....	r	r		
___ Northern Waterthrush .....	r			
___ Golden-winged Warbler .....	x			
___ Black-and-white Warbler* .....	f	f	u	
___ Tennessee Warbler .....	r			
___ Orange-crowned Warbler .....	f		f	c

	<b>Sp</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>W</b>
___ Nashville Warbler .....	f	r	f	
___ Mourning Warbler .....			r	
___ Common Yellowthroat* .....	u		r	
___ Hooded Warbler .....	r			
___ American Redstart .....	r			
___ Northern Parula .....	u			
___ Magnolia Warbler .....	r			
___ Blackburnian Warbler .....	r			
___ Yellow Warbler .....	u	r	u	
___ Chestnut-sided Warbler .....	r			
___ Pine Warbler .....			r	f
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler .....	u		u	f
___ Yellow-throated Warbler .....	x			
___ Golden-cheeked Warbler* .....	c	f		
___ Black-throated Green Warbler .....	u		r	
___ Canada Warbler .....	x			
___ Wilson's Warbler .....	u		u	

**CARDINALS, PIRANGA TANAGERS AND ALLIES**

___ Summer Tanager* .....	f	c	u	
___ Scarlet Tanager .....	x			
___ Northern Cardinal* .....	c	c	c	c
___ Pyrrhuloxia .....	u	u	u	u
___ Rose-breasted Grosbeak .....	r		r	
___ Black-headed Grosbeak .....				x
___ Blue Grosbeak* .....	u	u		
___ Lazuli Bunting .....	x			
___ Indigo Bunting* .....	f	f	r	
___ Painted Bunting* .....	f	c	u	
___ Dickcissel* .....	u	u	r	

# CITATION

Citation: Bergner, Jessica. February 2021. *Birds of Government Canyon State Natural Area and Vicinity: a field checklist*. Natural Resource Program, Texas Parks and Wildlife.

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