

Texas' Big Bend | Species List

April 22 – 29, 2022 | with Naturalist Journeys



With guides **Dave Mehlman** and **Michael Good** and participants:
Betsy, Gene, Hal, Jon, Kate, Marcia, Midge, Phil, Ruth, and Steve

Compiled by Dave Mehlman and Michael Good

(HO) = Distinctive enough to be counted as heard only

(GO) = Found by guides only

(I) = Introduced

BIRDS (140 species recorded, of which 2 were heard only and 4 were seen by guides only):

DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS: Anatidae (3)

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*—Found by the early birding team at Balmorhea Lake

Mexican Duck *Anas diazi*—A good number of individuals seen at the Marfa Settling Ponds on the last full day

Blue-winged Teal *Spatula discors*—Found at Balmorhea Lake and again at The Post

NEW WORLD QUAIL: Odontophoridae (2)

Scaled Quail *Callipepla squamata*—A small flock seen from the road on the drive into The Post

Gambel's Quail *Callipepla gambelii*—Found by the early birding team at Balmorhea Lake

GREBES: Podicipedidae (3)

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*— Found by the early birding team at Balmorhea Lake

Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis*— Found by the early birding team at Balmorhea Lake

Clark's Grebe *Aechmophorus clarkii*— Found by the early birding team at Balmorhea Lake

PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae (6)

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia* (I)—Seen in El Paso and Marfa

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* (I)—Found on 4 days of the tour in several of the towns visited

Inca Dove *Columbina inca*—Found on both visits to Gage Gardens

Common Ground-Dove *Columbina passerina*—One flushed from the road in the Rio Grande Village Campground when on our way to the Nature Trail. Considered a rare species by eBird here.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica*—Found on 4 days at several sites

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*— Found on 4 days at several sites

CUCKOOS: Cuculidae (1)

Greater Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus*—Always a favorite, seen on 3 days in Study Butte and in the Chisos Basin

NIGHTJARS: Caprimulgidae (1)

Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis*—One seen flying while in Davis Mountains State Park watching the Elf Owl

SWIFTS: Apodidae (2)

White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis*—Found and photographed at Rio Grande Village Nature Trail

Chimney Swift *Chaetura pelagica*—Seen flying above Santa Elena Canyon by some in the group

HUMMINGBIRDS: Trochilidae (3)

Lucifer Hummingbird *Calothorax lucifer*—Well seen at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri*—Found on 3 days at Davis Mountains State Park and Gage Gardens

Broad-tailed Hummingbird *Selasphorus platycercus*—Several seen during the Chisos Mountains hike

RAILS, COOTS, AND ALLIES: Rallidae (1)

American Coot *Fulica americana*—Found at Balmorhea Lake and in the pond at The Post

STILTS AND AVOCETS: Recurvirostridae (2)

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*—Found at Sandia Wetlands Project

American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana*—Found at Davis Mountains State Park

LAPWINGS AND PLOVERS: Charadriidae (1)

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*—Seen on 3 days at Sandia Wetlands Project, The Post, and Marfa Settling Ponds

SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae (8)

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*—Found at Balmorhea Lake

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*—Found at Balmorhea Lake and Marfa Settling Ponds

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*—Found at Balmorhea Lake

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*—Seen at Sandia Wetlands Project

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*—One observed at the Marfa Settling Ponds

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*—Two seen on the dam at The Post

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria*—Observed twice at Christmas Mountains Oasis in the big tank and again at a Settling Ponds

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*—Found at Balmorhea Lake

GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae (1)

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*—Found at Balmorhea Lake

CORMORANTS: Phalacrocoracidae (2)

Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*—Found at Balmorhea Lake

Double-crested Cormorant *Nannopterum auritum*—Big Bend National Park, Rio Grande Village Nature Trail

IBIS AND SPOONBILLS: Threskiornithidae (1)

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*—Found at Sandia Wetlands Project and Marfa Settling Ponds

NEW WORLD VULTURES: Cathartidae (2)

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*—Seen during the Rio Grande Village Nature Trail hike

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*—Commonly observed on many days of the tour, generally soaring overhead

HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES: Accipitridae (7)

Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus*—Found on 2 days at The Post and once while driving from the Basin to Marfa

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus*—One observed during the Madera Canyon hike in the Davis Mountains

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*—Seen at Rio Bosque Park, El Paso, in a brief stop on the way to the airport
Gray Hawk *Buteo plagiatus*—Seen during the Rio Grande Village Nature Trail hike
Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*—Observed on 2 days, at Sandia Wetlands and once from the vans while driving
Zone-tailed Hawk *Buteo albonotatus*—Seen during the Rio Grande Village Nature Trail hike
Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*—Found on 3 days at several sites

OWLS: Strigidae (2)

Elf Owl *Micrathene whitneyi*—Found at its telephone pole roost/nest cavity in Davis Mountains State Park
Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*—Seen at Rio Bosque Park, El Paso, in a brief stop on the way to the airport

KINGFISHERS: Alcedinidae (1)

Belted Kingfisher *Megasceryle alcyon*—Found at Balmorhea Lake

WOODPECKERS: Picidae (4)

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus*—Easily observed on several days in the Davis and Chisos Mountains
Golden-fronted Woodpecker *Melanerpes aurifrons*—Found on 3 days in appropriate habitat with large cottonwoods such as The Post and along the Rio Grande in Big Bend National Park
Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Dryobates scalaris*—Seen on 4 days at Balmorhea Lake, Gage Gardens, and in the Chisos Basin
Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*—Encountered on the Madera Canyon Trail hike, Davis Mountains

FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae (1)

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*—Seen while driving along the highway on one day of the tour

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: Tyrannidae (9)

Gray Flycatcher *Empidonax wrightii*—Seen on the Madera Canyon Trail hike
Cordilleran Flycatcher *Empidonax occidentalis*—(GO) Found on the Laguna Meadows Trail hike, Chisos Mountains
Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya*—Found on 5 days at various sites, often around buildings or other structures
Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*—Found on 3 days at several sites
Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens*—Found on 4 days at several sites
Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus*—Seen in a big cottonwood at The Post
Cassin's Kingbird *Tyrannus vociferans*—Many observed in Davis Mountains State Park on our visit there
Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*—Found on 3 days, sometimes while driving in the vans from one site to another
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus*—Seen once while driving along the highway and then again at Gage Gardens

SHRIKES: Laniidae (1)

Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus*—Seen once while driving from the vans along the highway

VIREOS: Vireonidae (3)

Bell's Vireo *Vireo bellii*—A pretty ubiquitous bird, especially by its song, found on 3 days at various sites
Hutton's Vireo *Vireo huttoni*—One well observed by the group during the Laguna Meadows Trail hike, Chisos Mountains
Plumbeous Vireo *Vireo plumbeus*—One found at The Post, presumably a migrant there

CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae (4)

Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay *Aphelocoma woodhouseii*—Found on 2 days at Davis Mountains State Park
Mexican Jay *Aphelocoma wollweberi*—Encountered most days in the Chisos Mountains
Chihuahuan Raven *Corvus cryptoleucus*—Seen from the vans while driving between El Paso and Fort Davis
Common Raven *Corvus corax*—Found on 4 days at several sites

CHICKADEES AND TITS: Paridae (2)

Mountain Chickadee *Poecile gambeli*—(GO) Seen by Michael in the Chisos Mountains Lodge area

Black-crested Titmouse *Baeolophus atricristatus*—Found on 4 days in the Davis and Chisos Mountains

SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae (4)

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*—Several observed flying in and near Santa Elena Canyon

Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia*—Found at Balmorhea Lake

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*—Found on 4 sites throughout the tour

Cave Swallow *Petrochelidon fulva*—Found on 3 sites at several place during the tour

BUSHTITS: Aegithalidae (1)

Bushtit *Psaltriparus minimus*—Seen on 2 days in the Davis Mountains and once in the Chisos Mountains

KINGLETS: Regulidae (1)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula*—Found 3 times, at Davis Mountains State Park, Gage Gardens, and during the Laguna Meadows Trail hike in the Chisos Mountains

GNATCATCHERS: Polioptilidae (2)

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Polioptila caerulea*—Found during the Laguna Meadows Trail hike in the Chisos Mountains

Black-tailed Gnatcatcher *Polioptila melanura*—One seen by Dave at Christmas Mountains Oasis

WRENS: Troglodytidae (5)

Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus*—Found on 2 days in Big Bend National Park

Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus*— Found on 2 days in Big Bend National Park

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*—One found at Gage Gardens on the second visit

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii*—Seen or heard on 3 days at Davis Mountains State Park, The Post, and on the Laguna Meadows Trail hike in Big Bend

Cactus Wren *Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*—Found on 3 days in Big Bend, where nesting near the Lodge

STARLINGS: Sturnidae (1)

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* (1)—Seen on 3 days of the tour when in or near towns

MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHER: Mimidae (2)

Curve-billed Thrasher *Toxostoma curvirostre*—Seen at Gage Gardens on the first visit and at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos*—Found on 5 days at many sites, sometimes from the vans while driving

THRUSHES: Turdidae (4)

Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialis*—Found once at Cottonwood Campground, Big Bend

Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana*—Seen on 2 days, first at McDonald Observatory and again at Gage Gardens

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus*—Found by some of the group at the Lawrence Wood Picnic Area, Davis Mountains; on the Laguna Meadows Trail hike; and at Gage Gardens on the second visit

Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina*—A rarity in west Texas, this previously reported bird was seen by the group at Gage Gardens

SILKY-FLYCATCHERS: Ptilonotidae (1)

Phainopepla *Phainopepla nitens*—First seen at Davis Mountains State Park and again at Gage Gardens

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae (1)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* (1)—Found on 3 days when in or near towns

PIPITS AND WAGTAILS: Motacillidae (1)

American Pipit *Anthus rubescens*—Found at Balmorhea Lake, The Post (where several were walking around on the grass), and Marfa Settling Ponds

FINCHES AND EUPHONIAS: Fringillidae (3)

House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus*—Seen on 5 days of the tour at various sites, especially at places with feeders

Pine Siskin *Spinus pinus*—Seen at the feeders at Davis Mountains State Park

Lesser Goldfinch *Spinus psaltria*—Found on two days, first along Daniel's Ranch Road in Big Bend and again at Gage Gardens

NEW WORLD SPARROWS: Passerellidae (16)

Cassin's Sparrow *Peucaea cassinii*—One seen perched on a fence wire on the road into The Post

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*—Seen on 4 days of the tour at several sites

Clay-colored Sparrow *Spizella pallida*—Found twice, first at Christmas Mountains Oasis and again at the Marathon prairie dog town

Black-chinned Sparrow *Spizella atrogularis*—(HO) Heard during the Laguna Meadows Trail hike

Brewer's Sparrow *Spizella breweri*—Found on the visit to Christmas Mountains Oasis

Black-throated Sparrow *Amphispiza bilineata*—Found on 5 days of the trip at many sites

Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus*—Found at Sandia Wetlands and at The Post

Lark Bunting *Calamospiza melanocorys*—Two seen flying at the Marfa Settling Ponds

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis*—One, of the slate-colored race, seen at Santa Elena Canyon

White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*—Found on 3 days at The Post, Christmas Mountains Oasis, and Gage Gardens

Vesper Sparrow *Poocetes gramineus*—Seen by the pond on the visit to Christmas Mountains Oasis

Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis*—One seen at The Post and found again at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolni*—A very cooperative bird seen at one of the blinds at Davis Mountains State Park and seen again at Christmas Mountains Oasis and by Dave at Gage Gardens

Canyon Towhee *Melospiza fusca*—Found on 5 days at several sites, sometimes at very close range!

Rufous-crowned Sparrow *Aimophila ruficeps*—Found by Michael on the Laguna Meadows Trail hike

Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus*—Several found and heard during the Chisos Mountains hike

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: Icteriidae (1)

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens*—(HO) A bird singing off in the distance at The Post was the only one of the trip

NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS: Icteridae (9)

Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*—A single bird in a mixed flock of blackbirds at the Fossil Discovery Exhibit on our way out of Big Bend National Park

Western Meadowlark *Sturnella neglecta*—Found on the first day while early birding at Sandia Wetlands

Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna*—Seen twice from the vans while driving through open grasslands and by the entire group during dinner at Chateau Wright Winery

Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius*—Found at The Post

Scott's Oriole *Icterus parisorum*—Found on 6 days of the trip at several sites, especially in the Chisos Basin

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*—Several at the Marfa Settling Ponds

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater*—Found on 4 days of the tour at several sites

Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus*—Seen on 3 days at Balmorhea Lake, The Post, and at the Fossil Discovery Exhibit when leaving Big Bend

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus*—Noted on 3 days of the trip in El Paso, The Post, and at the Marfa Settling Ponds

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: Parulidae (6)

Colima Warbler *Oreothlypis crissalis*—(GO) Found by Michael on his extended hike at the top of the Laguna Meadows Trail in the Chisos Mountains

MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei*—A skulking bird seen by some at The Post

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*—Found twice, first at The Post and again at Gage Gardens

Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia*—(GO) One found by Dave at Gage Gardens

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata*—By far the most commonly seen warbler; found at many sites; all appeared to be of the western, Audubon's race

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla*—Found on 5 days of the trip at several sites

CARDINALS, GROSBEAKS, AND ALLIES: Cardinalidae (9)

Hepatic Tanager *Piranga flava*—Found in the Davis Mountains and in the Chisos Basin

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra*—Found on 4 days of the tour at most sites with appropriate cottonwood habitat, including The Post and Big Bend National Park

Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis cardinalis*—Observed at Davis Mountains State Park, The Post, and Gage Gardens

Pyrrhuloxia *Cardinalis sinuatus*—This lovely "desert cardinal" was found at Wild Rose Pass picnic area, The Post, Christmas Mountains Oasis, and in the Chisos Basin (where it seemed at an unusually high elevation)

Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus*—Only found on the visit to the feeding stations at Davis Mountains State Park

Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*—Found on 5 days at many sites visited

Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea*—One found on the hike into Santa Elena Canyon

Varied Bunting *Passerina versicolor*—A male observed at very close range on the feeder bucket at Christmas Mountains Oasis

Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris*—Found at Santa Elena Canyon and again at Gage Gardens

MAMMALS (8 species recorded):

Desert Cottontail *Sylvilagus auduboni*—The common "bunny rabbit" of the tour; found on three days

Mexican Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus mexicanus*—Seen on one day from the vehicle

Black-tailed Prairie Dog *Cynomys ludovicianus*—Several seen at their burrows at the Marathon prairie-dog town

Collared Peccary (Javelina) *Tayassu tajacu*—A small group observed crossing the road in Rio Grande Village Campground

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus*—The common deer in the Chisos, these were easily seen on two days right in the Basin

Mule Deer *Odocoileus hemionus*—Found on two days in the Davis Mountains

Pronghorn *Antilocarpa americana*—Found on three days, twice in the grasslands near Fort Davis and a large number on the last day grazing at the Marfa Settling Ponds

Black Bear *Ursus americanus*—Seen by many in the Chisos Basin where several hang out around the Lodge and parking lot

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (4 species recorded):

Western Coachwhip Snake *Masticophis flagellum*—Found twice at Christmas Mountains Oasis and Gage Gardens

Spiny Soft-shelled Turtle *Apolone spinifera*—Seen basking at Rio Grande Village

Gopher Snake *Pituophis catenifer*—Found dead on road in the Davis Mountains

Variable Skink *Plestiodon multivirgatus*—

INSECTS (1 species recorded):

Arizona Sister *Adelpha eulalia*—Numerous individuals flying during the Chisos Mountains hike

LOCATIONS AND NOTES:

Day 1: April 22, 2022; early birding: Balmorhea Lake, Sandia Wetland Project, Balmorhea State Park, Wild Rose Pass picnic area; others: drive from El Paso to Fort Davis

Day 2: April 23, 2022; Davis Mountains State Park, Lawrence Wood Picnic Area, Madera Canyon Trail, Fort Davis

Day 3: April 24, 2022; The Post (Fort Peña Colorado Park), Gage Gardens, drive to Chisos Basin

Day 4: April 25, 2022; Dugout Wells, Rio Grande Village and nature trail, Daniel's Ranch, Boquillas Canyon

Day 5: April 26, 2022; Chisos Basin, Sotol Vista, Santa Elena Canyon, Cottonwood Campground, Christmas Mountains Oasis

Day 6: April 27, 2022; Chisos Basin, Chisos Mountains (Laguna Meadows Trail)

Day 7: April 28, 2022; Chisos Basin, Fossil Discovery Exhibit, Gage Gardens, Marathon prairie-dog town, Marfa Settling Ponds

Day 8: April 29, 2022; Marfa Settling Ponds; drive from Marfa to El Paso