

# Friends of Colorado Lagoon

Birds of the Colorado  
Lagoon  
(video accompaniment)

[www.ColoradoLagoon.org](http://www.ColoradoLagoon.org)



# Brown Pelican



# Brown Pelican

Large, stocky seabirds of saltwater habitats.

Gray-brown birds with yellow heads and white necks.

Have very long bills with a stretchy throat pouch used for scooping fish.

Catches fish by plunging into the water with a big splash.



# California Gull



# California Gull

Larger than Ring-billed Gull, with darker gray back and wings.

Smaller than Western Gull, with lighter gray back and wings.

Adults have a yellow bill with a small black ring and a red spot on the lower mandible

Subadults have cadaverous gray legs.

Small numbers often roost on the beach in fall and winter.



# Canada Goose



# Canada Goose



Big water birds with a long neck, large body, large webbed feet, and a wide, flat bill.

Black head and neck with a white chinstrap.

Small numbers seen around the lagoon and golf course, mainly in fall and winter.

Grazes on turf and up-ends in the water to reach submerged vegetation.

# Double-crested Cormorants





# Double-crested Cormorant

Dark body with orange bare skin at the base of the bill.

Breeding adults are all black; immatures and nonbreeders have a paler breast.



Float low on the surface of water and dive to catch small fish.

After fishing, they stand on docks, rocks, and tree limbs sometimes with wings spread open to dry.

# Golden-crowned Sparrow



# Golden-crowned Sparrow

Large, plump sparrow; darker overall than its frequent companion, the White-crowned Sparrow.

Adults have dark stripes bordering the yellow crown.

Forages on the ground and in low vegetation for seeds and insects.

Small numbers winter in brush habitats around the Colorado Lagoon.



# Great Blue Heron



# Great Blue Heron

Largest of the North American herons, with long legs and a lanky neck.

Blue-gray plumage with a white face and thick, dark streak over the eye.

Hunting GBH wade slowly or stand statue-like, stalking fish and other prey in shallow water or open fields.

Nests locally in tall trees around Long Beach and regularly forages at the Lagoon.



Killdeer - male



# Killdeer

A resident of the Lagoon, with numbers augmented in fall/winter.

Namesake “kill-deer” calls and piercing trills are familiar sounds at the lagoon.

Brownish above and white below, with two black bands on the chest and a face marked with black and white patches.

A few pairs nest at the Lagoon every year; adult “distraction display” attracts attention away from eggs and chicks.



# Long-billed Curlew





# Long-billed Curlew

Large, long-legged shorebird with a very long, curved bill used to probe into mud and snag invertebrates.

In addition to the remarkable bill, note its heavy, football-shaped body, long neck and a small, round head.



Small numbers occasionally seen at the Lagoon or on nearby grassy fields.

Numbers have declined due to widespread destruction of grasslands and estuaries.

# Northern rough-winged Swallow



# Northern rough-winged Swallow

Small, long-bodied bird with a small head and bill. Flies on long and relatively broad, pointed wings.

Entirely brown above with a dingy throat and chest that fades to white.

Twists and turns low above water bodies and open areas, taking insects in midair.

Often perches on wires and exposed branches to preen.



# Osprey





# Osprey

Very large, piscivorous raptor.

In flight, holds its wings with a kink in the wrist (shaped like an “M”).

Distinctive features include gleaming white underparts and head, brown upperparts and eye-stripe, and great wingspan.

Occasionally forages at the Lagoon by wheeling high overhead or perching on trees or power poles, then plunging feet first into the water to grab a fish.

Small numbers nest in the region; may one day colonize the lagoon.

# Spotted Sandpiper



# Spotted Sandpiper

Medium-sized, solitary shorebird with a distinctive teeter.

Foraging birds walk quickly, crouching low, occasionally darting toward prey, all the while bobbing the tail.

Flies low over the water on stiff, shallow wing beats, often giving “weet-weet” calls.

Seen at the lagoon from fall through spring, typically without the spotted underparts acquired on the breeding grounds.





Swinhoe's white-eye



# Swinhoe's White-eye

Introduced Asian species spreading across Long Beach and the larger region; recent colonizer of the neighborhoods around the Lagoon.

Green above and white below with a yellow throat and prominent white eye rings around the eyes.



Forages for insects, fruit, and nectar in the interior of landscape trees.

Inconspicuous, but presence often betrayed by its cheerful, high-pitched twitters.

# Western Kingbird



# Western Kingbird

Fairly large flycatcher that occurs at the Lagoon during spring and fall migration.

Bright yellow below, like the resident Cassin's Kingbird, but paler gray above and across the upper breast; distinctive white outer tail-feathers.



A highly aerobatic species that makes long, looping forays for flying insects from power lines and exposed perches, often hovering and wheeling over open areas.

Call is a jumble of loud, piercing squeaks and twitters.



Western Sandpiper

# Western Sandpiper

Small, portly shorebird with a long, thin bill with a slightly curved tip. It has long, pointed wings, a short tail, and medium-length legs for its size.

Females tend to be larger and have longer bills than males.

Often in large flocks on coastal mudflats and beaches.

Forages by walking slowly through mudflats and similar habitats and pecking or probing to obtain tiny invertebrate prey.



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