

# Bird Species Common to the San Francisco Bay Urban Areas and the Plants That Sustain Them

Sunset Zones 7, 14-17

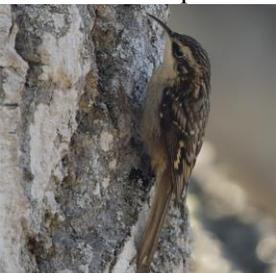
Prepared for the Habitat@Home & Birding the Google Campus Project by the Sequoia Audubon Society. *Photos by P. McGann*

<p>California Quail</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17  Habitat: Coastal and foothill scrub, oak forest, wooded lots, &amp; chaparral. Needs dense cover.   Plants: Ceanothus, current, lemonberry, elderberry, toyon, oaks &amp; sages.</p>
<p>Mourning Dove</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 15-4-17  Habitat: Urban yards and prefers open, dry areas.   Plants: Wildflower seeds, grass seeds, serviceberry and junipers.</p>
<p>Anna's Hummingbirds</p> 	<p>Zone: 14-17  Habitat: All, plus urban yards, balconies. Needs insects for protein.   Plants: Sage, salvias, ceanothus, columbine, penstemon, Woolly Bluecurls, Western Redbud, willows and especially California Fuchsia.</p>
<p>Allen's Hummingbird</p> 	<p>Zone: 15, 17  Habitat: Mountain, occasionally foothills and may wander into urban yards. Needs insects for protein.   Plants: Sage, salvias, ceanothus, columbine, penstemon, Woolly Bluecurls, Western Redbud, willows and especially Cal Fuchsia.</p>
<p>Rufus Hummingbird</p> 	<p>Zone: 15,16, 17  Habitat: Mountain ridges with native flowers in migration spring and fall. More likely along the eastern mountain ranges of the SF Bay. Needs insects for protein.   Plants: Current (Ribes) especially important due to early blooming, plus all of the sages, salvias, ceanothus, columbine, penstemon, Woolly Bluecurls, Western Redbud, willows and especially California Fuchsia.</p>

<p>Acorn Woodpecker</p> 	<p>Zone: 14-16  Habitat: Oak woodlands. Sallies out to catch insects. Stores acorns in holes in tree trunks. Nests in family groups.</p> <p>Plants: Oak acorns and catkins, fruits of dogwood, current, serviceberry, coffeeberry, and grass seeds.</p>
<p>Nuttall's Woodpecker</p> 	<p>Zone: Bayside 16 &amp; 17  Habitat: Common in urban larger trees where it hunts insects.</p> <p>Plants: Mature trees for nest sites and foraging, serviceberries, sumac, and dogwood.</p>
<p>Downy Woodpecker</p> 	<p>Zone: 14-16  Habitat: Open deciduous woodland, riparian areas, parks and suburban yards.</p> <p>Plants: Elderberry, sumac, waxberry, prunus, dogwood, also takes insects &amp; larvae, acorns and small seeds.</p>
<p>Hairy Woodpecker</p> 	<p>Zone: 14-16  Habitat: Often near tree trunk instead of the branch like the smaller Downy Woodpecker, searching for insects &amp; larvae, seeds and fruits. May be seen in suburban green spaces with mature trees including conifers.</p> <p>Plants: Mature trees, sunflowers, current, and holly</p>
<p>Northern Flicker</p> 	<p>Zone: 14, 15  Habitat: Forages on the ground for ants and beetles. Takes fruits and seeds in winter. Leave a patch of dry grass in the yard. Avoid lawn &amp; weed herbicides.</p> <p>Plants: Dogwood, bayberry, elderberry, hackberry, prunus, waxberry, Sumac, ribes, elderberry, vaccinium, viburnum, sunflower and grass seeds.</p>

<p>Red-breasted Sapsucker</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-16  Habitat: Forest adjacent to riparian areas. Drills a line of holes to provoke sap flow.   Plants: Willow and birch.</p>
<p>Western Wood-Peevee</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-16  Habitat: Woodland and forest habitat. Primary insect eater, perching on a mid-story branch and sallies out to catch flies and wasps.   Plants: Elderberry and grass seeds.</p>
<p>Black Phoebe</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17  Habitat: Common in urban yards, parks and open areas, preferably near water. Will nest under roof eaves or semi-dense tree.   Plants: Primary insectivore</p>
<p>Warbling Vireo</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 15  Habitat: Deciduous forest with tall trees where it hunts for caterpillars.   Plants: Oaks, willows, &amp; toyon.</p>
<p>Western Scrub Jay</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17  Habitat: Dense shrubs in urban yards, commonly in chaparral, oak woodlands and coastal pines. Forages for insects during spring and summer, then switching to seeds and nuts in winter. Takes eggs, nestlings, small birds and lizards. Frequents feeders.   Plants: Oaks, juniper, elderberry, and waxberry.</p>

<p>Steller's Jay</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 15  Habitat: Coniferous forest with dense cover or mixed deciduous with pines.</p> <p>Plants: Oaks, pine, serviceberry. Will eat acorns, seeds, fruit, eggs, nestlings, carrion and your picnic snacks.</p>
<p>Tree Swallow</p> 	<p>Zone: 14-17  Habitat: Catches insects while flying, prefers open fields. Nests in cavities of woodpeckers or nest boxes.</p> <p>Plants: Leave snags of older, medium to large trees with nest holes or install nest box.</p>
<p>Chestnut-backed Chickadee</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17  Habitat: Redwood forest with understory of willows or alders, riparian areas with willows &amp; oak woodlands. Common in urban yards with medium to dense shrubs, feeding in flocks. Eats insects and small berries.</p> <p>Plants: Hunts in conifers, willows, oak for insects and eats small berry fruits from current, serviceberry and seeds of sunflower and grass.</p>
<p>Oak Titmouse</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 15-17  Habitat: Mature trees for nesting, hunting insects and roosting. Gleans bugs from branches, taking insects but also eats seeds, acorns, willow catkins, and small berries.  Nest in previously used woodpecker holes or cavities.  Common in urban yards with mature trees.</p> <p>Plants: Oaks, willows, small berry producers such as ribes, viburnum and serviceberry.</p>
<p>Bushtit</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17  Habitat: Oaks, pine, chaparral and urban yards. Forages rapidly in flocks through dense shrubs or mid-canopy.</p> <p>Plants: Oaks, willows, any medium to dense foliage for insects. Tiny berries currents and seeds of grass.</p>

<p>White-breasted Nuthatch</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17  Habitat: Searches crevices of trunk and branches for insects, prefers mature trees. May be seen in urban yards or parks with mature deciduous mixed hardwood, oak or pine forest. Caches acorns seeds and pine nuts.   Plants: Mature oaks or other large trees, and conifers.</p>
<p>Red-breasted Nuthatch</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 15  Habitat: Mature, dense coniferous forest, climbing up and down the trunk and branches foraging for insects and seeds.   Plants: Pine, oak, birch and maples.</p>
<p>Pygmy Nuthatch</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17  Habitat: Mature forest of conifers mixed with oaks. Surprisingly can be seen in urban yards with mature redwood trees or pines. Searches for bugs along needles and leaves. Caches pine seeds for winter. Cooperative breeding and roosts together at night in family groups. Needs dead snags to chisel nest holes.   Plants: Redwoods and pines.</p>
<p>Brown Creeper</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17  Habitat: Hitches itself up trunks and along branches searching for small insects, larvae and spider eggs. May consume small seeds. Common in urban and suburban street trees. Nests under strips of bark.   Plants: Mature trees, adaptable but prefers oaks.</p>
<p>Bewick's Wren</p> 	<p>Zone: 14-17  Habitat: Dense foliage to search for bugs and for protective cover. Common in urban yards. Oak forest, chaparral and redwood forest's dense understory. Will eat small berries.   Plants: Manzanita, toyon, ribes, Heteromeles arbutifolia, &amp; elderberry.</p>

<p>Ruby-crowned Kinglet</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-16  Habitat: Migratory, seen during winter in trees and brushy shrubs searching for insects and small fruit and seeds.   Plants: Willows, oaks, dogwood berries.</p>
<p>Western Bluebird</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17  Habitat: Open woodland or parks with mature trees. Occasionally in suburban yards, more commonly seen in urban parks with mature trees and bluebird boxes for nesting. Sallies out to catch flying insects and hunts for bugs on the ground. Also eats small berries.   Plants: Elderberry, coffeeberry, juniper, toyon and bluebirds, &amp; native grass.</p>
<p>Swainson's Thrush</p> 	<p>Zone: 15, 17  Habitat: Seen in summer during breeding season, prefers dense undergrowth near streams. Feeds on insects and fruits.   Plants: Red berries, serviceberry and especially elderberries,</p>
<p>Hermit Thrush</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17  Habitat: Moist undergrowth with leaf litter, a summer breeding bird often seen in suburban yards.   Plants: Red berries of toyon, serviceberry, and holly leaf cherry.</p>
<p>American Robin</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17  Habitat: Common on urban lawns and grassy parks as well as foothills and redwood forest. May nest in your backyard tree. Insects and fruits.   Plants: Toyon, juniper berries, dogwood, chokecherry, and serviceberry</p>

<p>Red-winged Blackbird</p> 	<p>Zone: 14-17</p> <p>Habitat: Marshy ponds near the coast or inland lakes.</p> <p>Plants: Sunflowers</p>
<p>California Thrasher</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17</p> <p>Habitat: Forages for insects in leaf litter and plucking low hanging berries. May be seen in yards adjacent to parks with mature trees and dense, low shrubs with good cover. Oak woodlands and chaparral.</p> <p>Plants: Toyon, current, serviceberry and oaks (acorns).</p>
<p>Northern Mockingbird</p> 	<p>Zone: 14-17</p> <p>Habitat: Common in urban yards, parks &amp; forests. Prefers dense low shrubs with some open areas. Known for its varied song and aggressive nest defense. Eats bugs and berries.</p> <p>Plants: Berries from current, toyon, and elderberry</p>
<p>American Pipit</p> 	<p>Zone: 16-17</p> <p>Habitat: Seen in winters foraging for grass seeds and small bugs.</p> <p>Plants: Grass seeds in dry open areas.</p>
<p>Cedar Waxwing</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17</p> <p>Habitat: Forages in flocks in any fruiting tree or hedge, common in urban yards, parks and preserves. Diet is mostly berries but will hunt bugs.</p> <p>Plants: Berries of dogwood, prunus, juniper, coffeeberry, blackberry and many ornamental berries.</p>

## Warblers

Orange-crowned



Nashville



Yellow



Wilson's



Yellow-rumped



## Zones & Habitats:

These warblers may be found in all zones 7, 14-17. Warblers are migratory birds, passing through in spring and winter. In spring they will focus on a variety of bugs for protein with some fruits, and in winter primarily on fruits and seeds.

Orange-crowned Warblers are more common in oak, riparian and chaparral habitats, and edges of woodland forests.

Nashville Warbler might be seen along forested riparian streams or bayside with dense shrubbery.

Yellow and Wilson's Warblers prefer moist riparian areas with willows and oaks.

Yellow-rumped Warblers are the most versatile foragers, common in all zones and habitats, especially in urban yards.

Plants: Willows, ribes, prunus, ceanothus, manzanita, dogwood, oaks, & madrone.

Yellow-rumped Warblers are the only warblers which can digest the waxy bayberry (*Myrica*).

## Sparrows

Spotted Towhee



White-crowned Sparrow



California Towhee



Golden-crowned Sparrow



Fox Sparrow



White-throated Sparrow



Song Sparrow



Lark Sparrow



Lincoln's Sparrow



Dark-eyed Junco



## Zones & Habitats: 7, 14-17

Sparrows are a large family of birds both common resident yard birds like the towhees and juncos, and highly migratory ones like the Golden and White-Crowned Sparrows, Fox, and Lincoln Sparrows. Song Sparrows have several subspecies around the bay and it is a fun challenge to try to identify all of them.

Towhees are commonly seen in urban yards scratching in leaf litter.

White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows migrate to the Bay Area in winter, with the exception of a resident race of White-crowns who live along the coast. They feed on seeds and small insects.

Song Sparrows will be found close to water, either along the bayside or riparian areas. Seeds are their primary diet supplemented by insects.

The handsome Fox Sparrow, another winter visitor from the north, prefers moist, wet habitats and will be seen under dense shrubs scratching for insects and small seeds.

Junco scratch on the ground for small insects, fruits and seeds. Common birds of yards, parks and forests.

Plants: Oaks, ceanothus, buckwheat, grass seeds, elderberry, coffeeberry, serviceberry and blackberries.

<p>Western Tanager</p> 	<p>Zone: All zones passing through in migration.</p> <p>Habitat: When migrating through may be seen in yards, parks and wooded forests, preferring pine-oak woodlands and forest edges.</p> <p>Plants: Elderberries, blackberries, serviceberries, chokecherry.</p>
<p>Black-headed Grosbeak</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17</p> <p>Habitat: Prefers a mix of tall trees and dense berry producing shrubs. It can take large hard shelled beetles with its huge beak.</p> <p>Plants: Crabapple, elderberry, Holly-leafed Cherry, chokecherry and serviceberry.</p>
<p>Evening Grosbeak</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17</p> <p>Habitat: Coniferous and deciduous forest, urban parks and suburban yards near sources of seeds and fruits. Needs gravel and minerals from the soil for digestion.</p> <p>Plants: Pine, junipers, crabapple, snowberry, elderberry, serviceberry, oaks and willows</p>
<p>Hooded Oriole</p> 	<p>Zone: 14,17</p> <p>Habitat: Female builds a hanging nest often under palm leaves. Feeds mostly on insects, berries and nectar from flower blossoms.</p> <p>Plants: Palms for nesting, penstemon for flower blossoms</p>
<p>Bullock's Oriole</p> 	<p>Zone: 16, 17</p> <p>Habitat: Riparian and wooded areas, parks. Takes insects, fruits and nectar.</p> <p>Plants: Milkweed (for nest material), dogwood</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">House Finch</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17</p> <p>Habitat: Common in all urban yards, parks and woodlands</p> <p>Plants: Exclusively vegetarian, unusual among birds, taking seeds, fruit and buds of native and many ornamental plants. No need to plant for them, very common.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Purple Finch</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 15, 17</p> <p>Habitat: Prefers higher elevation forest but may be seen in woody neighborhoods.</p> <p>Plants: Toyon, manzanita, pines, crabapples, juniper and nectar rich flowers.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Lesser Goldfinch</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 14-17</p> <p>Habitat: Common in weedy fields, urban yards and parks.</p> <p>Plants: Oaks, willow, sage, grasses, coffeeberry, elderberry, madrone, sunflowers and asters.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">American Goldfinch</p> 	<p>Zone: 15-17</p> <p>Habitat: Weedy open fields with adjacent trees for cover.</p> <p>Plants: Strict vegetarian. Aster, sunflower.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Pine Siskin</p> 	<p>Zone: 7, 15, 17</p> <p>Habitat: Weedy fields to pine forests, may be seen in parks and wooded urban yards where they search for seeds.</p> <p>Plants: Grasses, sunflowers, pine, willows.</p>