



## CORONADO A BACKYARD BIRDING HOTSPOT



Black phoebe

San Diego has over 500 bird species, and the San Diego Audubon Society is celebrating the region's avians and their habitats with the San Diego Bird Festival Feb.22 to 26, 2023. (For more information, go to [sandiegoaudubon.org](http://sandiegoaudubon.org) and click on events.)

Spring is a great time to spot an amazing variety of birds. Pause by any Coronado backyard to enjoy their songs, chirps, and colors. Here are some of the birds you are likely to spot.

- **BLACK PHOEBE.** With a matte black upper body and wings, a white belly, and a long tail that pumps up and down, the black phoebe is typically seen alone or in pairs. You'll find phoebes sitting on a low perch, ready to hunt insects. Their vocals include a simple, two-part whistled song from January to July and a repeated one-note call the rest of the year.

- **ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD.** These petite, colorful birds with green bodies and rose accents have tiny legs that can't hop or walk. With no sense of smell, Anna's hummingbirds seek brightly colored flowers with curved petals for easy access to nectar. Hummingbirds are territorial and will stay close to a reliable food source year-round. You can attract Anna's hummingbirds with a feeder filled with one part sugar to four parts water.

- **HOUSE FINCH.** The most abundant bird in San Diego, finches gather in flocks and produce a loud, cheerful song. The males' coloring is in shades of red while females are a gray-brown. Fans of both seeds and sugar water, finches appreciate backyard bird feeders.

- **MOURNING DOVE.** Identified by their small head, plain brown overall color, dark wing spots and a long, pointed tail, these doves often sit on telephone wires in pairs or small flocks. Listen for their distinctive cooing song and whistling wings at takeoff. They are primarily seed eaters and will visit your backyard bird feeder year-round.

- **NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD.** Recognized by its mostly gray color, whitish throat, long, narrow tail and a dark line connecting the bill and the eye, the mockingbird will sing from telephone lines and low trees, nearly nonstop, day-and-night, all year long. Mockingbirds hang out in residential areas with large dense shrubs, where they eat insects and berries.

- **LESSER GOLDFINCH.** This tiny bird displays a black crown, a mostly olive-green back, and yellow underparts. Listen for its distinctive chime and downward "TEE-yeer" call note. The goldfinch's diet consists of seeds, flowers, buds, and a few small fruits.

Coronado is a birding hotspot, with an ideal climate, a coastal location and plenty of vegetation. Coronado gardens rely on these birds to help pollinate flowers and eat insects.

Unfortunately, nearly half of the world's bird species are in decline due to loss of habitat and pesticides.

**HOW CAN YOU HELP?** We can all help bird survival by planting native plants, avoiding pesticides, turning off evening outdoor lights and picking up trash.



House finch



Anna's hummingbird



Mourning dove



Northern mockingbird



Lesser goldfinch