



Chuckwalla Desert Bird Ambassadors

Phainopepla

Phainopeplas are the only U.S. representative of the family Ptilonotidae, known as “silky-flycatchers.” They are not related to North American flycatchers. And if the Greek name isn’t helping you picture it, a common nickname might be: the Goth Cardinal.

- **Migration:** Movements are complex and poorly understood. May nest in spring in the desert and then depart for other areas, possibly to nest again elsewhere. They are thought to nest first in the desert from February to April, before moving to oak canyons further west in May.

Symbol key:



Nesting



Migration



Climate vulnerable



Range loss

- **Habitat:** Desert scrub, mesquites, oak foothills, mistletoe clumps. Occurs in many lowland and foothills habitats, moving around with the availability of berries.
- **Nesting:** They are known to nest in Joshua Tree National Park and would benefit from the expansion of protected habitat through the designation of the Chuckwalla National Monument. They are territorial in the desert, but just a month later—some nest in groups in oak forests.
- **Climate vulnerability:** Overall population seems stable. However, extreme heat waves could threaten their future nest success.
- **IUCN Red List Status:** Low Concern.
- **Season:** Year-round.



Western Tanager

While most red birds owe their redness to a variety of plant pigments known as carotenoids, the Western Tanager gets its scarlet head feathers from a rare pigment called rhodoxanthin. Unable to make this substance in their own bodies, Western Tanagers probably obtain it from insects in their diet.

- **Migration:** they may show up in any habitat, including the desert.
- **Habitat:** Winters in the tropics mostly in pine-oak woods or forest edge. In California, may winter in eucalyptus groves.
- **Nesting:** They are known to nest in Joshua Tree National Park and would benefit from the expansion of protected habitat through the designation of the Chuckwalla National Monument.



- **Climate vulnerability:** Widespread, with no indication of declining numbers. However, they are projected to lose 29% - 40% of their range in a warming planet.
- **IUCN Red List Status:** Low Concern.
- **Season:** Year-round.





Verdin

The Verdin is the only bird in the genus *Auriparus*. Although it resembles members of the chickadee family (*Paridae*) superficially, it's in a different family altogether—the only representative of the Old World family *Remizidae* in all of North America.

- **Habitat:** Desert and Arid Habitats, Shrublands, Savannas, and Thickets, Urban and Suburban Habitats
- **Nesting:** They are known to nest in Joshua Tree National Park and would benefit from the expansion of protected habitat through the designation of the Chuckwalla National Monument.
- **Climate vulnerability:** Despite their ability to adapt to urban areas, surveys suggest that Verdin populations have declined during recent decades. They are not projected to lose much of their existing range compared to other species in a warming planet, however, extreme heatwaves threaten birds in the nest and fires may destroy their habitat.



- **IUCN Red List Status:** Low Concern.
- **Season:** Year-round.

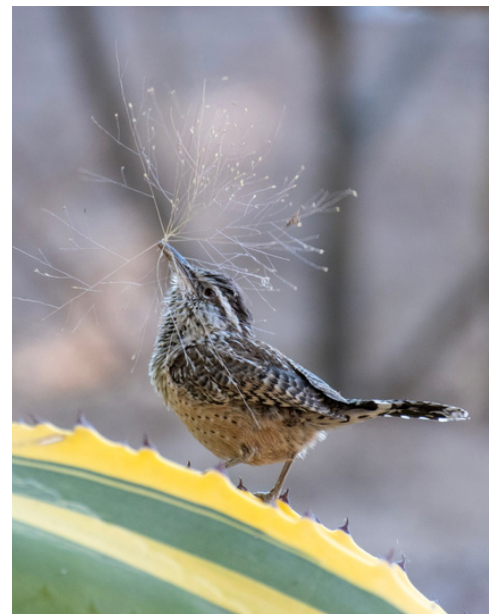




Cactus Wren

May mate for life, pairs remaining together all year on permanent territory. Cactus Wrens are not shy, so with enough time in their habitat you will no doubt come across one or two chasing each other around.

- **Habitat:** Desert and Arid Habitats, Shrublands, Savannas, and Thickets, Urban and Suburban Habitats
- **Nesting:** They are known to nest in Joshua Tree National Park and would benefit from the expansion of protected habitat through the designation of the Chuckwalla National Monument.
- **Climate vulnerability:** Surveys suggest numbers are declining in parts of Texas. Scarce population on coastal slope of southern California may be threatened.



- **IUCN Red List Status:** Low Concern.
- **Season:** Year-round.





Greater Roadrunner

Roadrunners hold a special place in Native American and Mexican legends and belief systems.

The birds were revered for their courage, strength, speed, and endurance. The roadrunner's distinctive X-shaped footprint—with two toes pointing forward and two backward—are used as sacred symbols by Pueblo tribes to ward off evil. The X shape disguises the direction the bird is heading, and is thought to prevent evil spirits from following.



- **Habitat:** Arroyos and Canyons, Desert and Arid Habitats, Forests and Woodlands, Shrublands, Savannas, and Thickets.
- **Nesting:** They are known to nest in Joshua Tree National Park and would benefit from the expansion of protected habitat through the designation of the Chuckwalla National Monument.
- **Climate vulnerability:** Periodically expands range to north and east, is killed back by severe winters. May be in long-term decline in California. They are not projected to lose much of their existing range compared to other species in a warming planet, however, extreme heatwaves threaten birds in the nest and fires may destroy their habitat.
- **IUCN Red List Status:** Low Concern. **note long term decline in California*
- **Season:** Year-round.

