

Voices of
Western Backyard Birds



The sounds of birds fill the airs in backyards, woodlands, and open space throughout the world. This compilation of recordings is an introduction to the vocalizations of 14 common species found in backyards, parks and suburban habitats throughout the western United States.



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VOICES OF WESTERN BACKYARD BIRDS TRACK LIST

1. Western Backyard Bird Medley	Black-capped Chickadee <i>Poecile atricapillus</i> 11. Song (GFB1988) 12. Call (ML 40796)	House Finch <i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i> 23. Song (ML 22938) 24. Call (ML 44967)
Mourning Dove <i>Zenaidura macroura</i> 2. Song (ML 22930)	White-breasted Nuthatch <i>Sitta carolinensis</i> 13. Song (ML 120272) 14. Call (ML 109256) 15. Call 2 (ML 56885)	Pine Siskin <i>Carduelis pinus</i> 25. Song, calls (ML 44845)
Downy Woodpecker <i>Picoides pubescens</i> 3. Calls (ML 107281) 4. Drum (ML 44905)	White-crowned Sparrow <i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i> 16. Song 1 (ML 42260) 17. Song 2 (ML 130914) 18. Call (ML 50106)	American Goldfinch <i>Carduelis tristis</i> 26. Song, call (ML 111054)
Northern Flicker <i>Colaptes auratus</i> 5. Call 1 (ML 119469) 6. Call 2 (ML 105296) 7. Drum (ML 63117)	Red-winged Blackbird <i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i> 19. Song (ML 94234) 20. Calls (ML 106799)	Evening Grosbeak <i>Coccothraustes vespertinus</i> 27. Calls (ML 111139)
Steller's Jay <i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i> 8. Call (ML 44859) 9. Calls (ML 119433)	Cassin's Finch <i>Carpodacus cassinii</i> 21. Song (ML 107518) 22. Call (ML 80354)	
California Scrub-Jay <i>Aphelocoma californica</i> 10. Calls (ML 120228)		

It can be challenging to identify bird vocalizations. The best way to learn is to track down the birds that you are hearing. Grab your binoculars and try and see the mysterious songster. This sort of experience will help you remember the species next time you hear them.

You can also start off by learning a few common birds very well. Focusing on differences in pitch, pattern, and tone will help you learn to distinguish different species.

- Pitch: the frequency of the notes, for example: high-pitched or low-pitched
- Pattern: the rhythm or rate of delivery of the notes, for example: five short notes speeding up at the end of the song
- Tone: the quality of the notes, for example: sweet, burry, hoarse

Notice that a Black-capped Chickadee's simple whistle, *phoe-beee*, is a clear two-note song that drops in pitch on the second note. However, a House Finch's bubbly song is more complex. The song packs in many notes of different pitch, some of which have a burry tone.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Macaulay Library: The Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is the world's largest natural sound and video archive of animal behavior. Its mission is to collect and preserve recordings of each species' behavior and natural history and to make them available for research, education, conservation, zoos and aquaria, wildlife managers, publishers, the arts, and both public and commercial media. Since 1930, recordists of all backgrounds have contributed their recordings, which now number several hundred thousand in total. A large percentage of the recordings can be searched and played online. To hear more recordings of bird sounds or see videos, visit www.macaulaylibrary.org.

eBird: Visit eBird at www.ebird.org—an online database of bird observations providing scientists, researchers, and amateur naturalists with real-time data about bird distribution and abundance across the world. From the eBird home page, click on the 'View and Explore' data tab. Then click on 'Bar Charts' and select the state or county where you live or want to go birding. Finally, click on the link for the species you are interested in finding.

All About Birds: Check out this free online bird guide to help you identify birds of your backyard and beyond. Learn about the life history of nearly 600 North American birds, listen to their sounds, and watch videos of their behavior. www.allaboutbirds.org.

Membership: The Cornell Lab of Ornithology is supported by 35,000 members. Your support furthers the Lab's mission to protect the earth's wildlife through research, education, and citizen science focused on birds. Visit www.birds.cornell.edu/membership to find out how you can join and help conserve the birds that touch our lives and enrich our planet.

Sound Recording Workshop: Each year the Macaulay Library teaches state-of-the-art techniques for recording the sounds of wildlife with skilled staff from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Participants learn through daily field recording sessions, coupled with lectures and demonstrations. If you would like to learn more about recording wildlife, visit www.macaulaylibrary.org/inside/record/workshops/index.do.

CREDITS

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