Abert’s Towhee

The Abert’s towhee is a large sparrow found in riparian areas. It is somewhat secretive, but may be seen scratching on the ground in search of insects and seeds, or probing for food at the base of a tree.

White-crowned Sparrow

This large sparrow is generally seen at Agua Caliente Park only during the winter. It tends to be found in flocks, foraging for insects and seeds.
Great Horned Owl

This is the largest owl in North America and will eat almost anything including packrats, skunks, and snakes. Great horned owls have been known to nest and raise young in the palm trees here at Agua Caliente Park.

Say’s Phoebe

This medium sized flycatcher frequently perches and nests on human made structures. Flycatchers often make “sallies”, swooping from their perch to catch flying insects, and then returning to the same perch.
Though the house sparrow is the only sparrow many people know, it is not actually a native sparrow. It was introduced into North America from Europe in the 1850s. It almost always lives near people and their buildings.

The striking red northern cardinal is the state bird in seven states. While the male is a brilliant red, the female is a duller tan. The cardinal uses its stout bill to crack seeds.
**Mourning Dove**

Often living in flocks you can see and hear mourning doves during almost any season in this area. Its mournful call is heard from deserts to forest edges, and from farmlands to inner cities. It primarily eats seeds on the ground.

*Photo by Doris Evans*

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**White-winged Dove**

The white-winged dove spends its winters in the tropics and its summers in the southwestern United States. It is larger than the mourning dove, and its call sounds as if it is saying “who-cooks-for-you?”

*Photo by Doris Evans*
Anna’s Hummingbird

The Anna’s hummingbird is common in urban areas of the west. The male attracts attention by singing from exposed perches and diving at other hummingbirds, and sometimes even at people. It makes a distinctive series of scratchy sounds when it sings.

American Coot

This bird is often mistaken for a duck, but it is actually a swimming bird of the rail family. Its toes are lobed, not webbed like a duck’s, and it has a chicken-like bill. It inhabits wetlands and open water bodies, and makes scratchy clucking noises and kuk-kuk-kuk notes as it searches for food.
Gila Woodpecker

The Gila woodpecker is a noisy bird that can often be seen perching vertically on the side of palm tree trunks and other trees in the park. It uses its chisel-like bill to drill nesting holes in saguaro cacti. The holes are later used by a variety of other species, including the elf owl.

American Wigeon

The American wigeon is a common duck that is smaller than the mallard. Its call sounds like a squeaky toy. It will often leave the water and graze in the grass.
Green Heron

The green heron is a small, stocky wading bird. See if you can spot it at the edge of the pond, standing perfectly still, waiting for small fish to approach within striking range. Green herons will sometimes drop bait onto the water surface to lure fish closer.

Photo by Doris Evans

American Kestrel

This is the smallest and most common falcon in North America. It used to be known as a “sparrow hawk”. It usually hunts from a perch, but will occasionally hover while hunting. It makes a loud klee-klee-klee call when agitated.

Photo by Paul Berquist
Gambel’s Quail

Gambel’s quail are often seen on the ground feeding on seeds, green plants and insects. They usually forage in groups called coveys.

Red-tailed Hawk

Look for this hawk on open perches in tall trees or soaring in the sky. Don’t be fooled by the name, only the adult hawks have red tail feathers.
Cactus Wren

The cactus wren is the state bird of Arizona. It builds a football-shaped grass nest in a cholla cactus and the spines of the cactus protect the nest from predators. Cactus wrens eat mostly insects.

Curve-bill Thrasher

This bird uses its long, curved beak to pick insects out of the leaf litter and soil. Like the mockingbird, it will imitate sounds it hears. Listen for the curve-billed thrasher's loud whit-wheet call.
Lesser Goldfinch

Lesser goldfinches eat seeds and berries. Males are bright yellow with a black cap, while females are duller and have no cap. Their song is a long combination of notes in a rambling melody, and their call is a high, clear tee-yee.

Great-tailed Grackle

This is a large, noisy blackbird. The males have yellow eyes and a purplish sheen to their feathers. Females are smaller and brownish in color. Look for them on the ground or in the trees near the pond, and listen for their shrill whistles and clucking sounds.
Mallard

Mallards are year-round residents at the park. Watch as they use their specialized beak to filter green plants from the water. Please don’t feed the ducks. Nature provides everything they need.

Photo by Doris Evans

Cooper’s Hawk

The Cooper’s hawk is a medium-sized hawk that specializes in eating birds. It has short wings and a long tail for flying quickly through trees.

Photo by R Schantz
The common raven is one of the most widespread species in the world and is found throughout North America. Perhaps the smartest of all birds, it can survive in almost any habitat type. It eats just about any type of food, and makes a wide variety of sounds.

Verdins are tiny, active, noisy birds that are usually easy to see, despite their size. They build large enclosed ball-shaped grass nests. Verdins pick insects off of plants and eat berries and flowers.
Great Blue Heron

This is the largest heron in North America and is often found at the edge of the pond, silently stalking fish, frogs and other small creatures. It spears its prey with its long sharp bill and has a deep, hoarse croaking call.

Ring-necked Duck

This duck has a bold white ring around its bill. It’s named for the pale ring around its neck, which may be hidden from view. It is a diving duck, which means it submerges all the way below the surface to feed on plants and insects. Though usually silent, it has a soft courting call.
House Finch

Finches have stout bills that are good for cracking seeds. Only the male house finches have red on their heads.

Northern Flicker

Northern flickers are large woodpeckers, with a black crescent-shaped marking on the breast, which frequently feed on ants on the ground. Their white rumps are visible in flight. Listen for their loud klee-ah call.
The “American nightingale” or northern mockingbird is known for its long, complex song that includes imitations of many other birds. It sings loudly all through the day, and often into the night. The next time you hear a mockingbird, try to count how many different sounds it imitates.

The phainopepla is a fly-catching bird, with a crest of feathers on the top of its head and red eyes. Phainopeplas eat the berries of the desert mistletoe. Look for phainopeplas in the mesquite trees along the path to the second pond.