



Urban Birds was created in partnership with the Audubon Center at Debs Park.

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URBAN BIRDS

A Musical Birding Field Guide

This Field Guide Belongs to:

Let's get ready to find some musical birds! Use this journal to keep track of which birds you find on your bird search. Use the blank space on each page to draw a picture, take notes, or journal about each bird.

American Crow

Corvus brachyrhynchos

Crows are thought to be among America's most intelligent birds. Some have learned to even read traffic lights! Their distinctive "CAW!" is a familiar sound across the country. These birds are a friendly bunch, and you can find groups (or murders) of crows flocking together year round.

Performer: **Scott Graff** singing
Composer: **Jason Barabba**

Northern Mockingbird

Mimus polyglottos

The mockingbird's ability to copy the sounds and songs of other birds has made it famous across the country. When running in the open, it might stop and partially spread its wings, flashing white wing patches. When they are nesting, Mockingbirds are territorial, fighting off cats and even humans who get too close.

Performer: **Christopher Adler** playing khaen
Composer: **Vera Ivanova**

Hermit Thrush

Catharus guttatus

One of the hardier thrushes, Hermit Thrushes do most of their foraging on the ground, picking up insects from leaf-litter or soil. These little guys are omnivores, mainly feeding on insects or berries. Their song is a series of clear, musical phrases with a piping introductory note and a reedy tremolo.

Performer: **Jennifer Bewerse** playing cello
Composer: **Brandon J. Rolle**

Ash Throated Flycatcher

Myiarchus cinerascens

This pale flycatcher is common in the arid country of the west. It prefers to nest in holes in trees, but will often settle for other nesting sites. These birds are omnivores and they forage by flying out from a perch to hover and pick insects from foliage or perch on cactuses to feed on fruits.

Performer: **Sean Barela** playing bassoon
Composer: **Christopher Adler**

Barn Owl

Tyto alba

With its ghostly appearance and rasping shrieks, the barn owl has attracted a lot of superstition. Farmers who find them in their barns consider them good luck, since these birds prey chiefly on mice and rats. These nocturnal birds are silent predators – their wings rarely make a sound when they flap.

Performer: **Brian Walsh** playing clarinet
Composer: **Pamela Madsen**

California Towhee

Melospiza crissalis

The California Towhee can be found in Debs Park 365 days of the year. You'll usually find these ground-feeders scratching for food using both their feet at the same time. They also may mate for life if they find the right partner. Babies can leave the nest as early as 8 days after birth, but will follow parents around for several weeks!

Performer: **Xenia-Deviatkina-Loh** playing violin
Composer: **Veronika Krausas**

Mourning Dove

Zenaida macroura

These monogamous birds find a partner and mate for life – returning to each other each mating season. The mournful cooing of the Mourning Dove is one of our most familiar bird sounds. Considered one of America’s most common birds, you’ll find mourning doves abundant in open country and along roadsides – and even in your backyard.

Performer: **Scott Worthington** playing contrabass
Composer: **Jen Wang**

California Thrasher

Toxostoma redivivum

The California Thrasher incorporates imitations of other birds’ songs into its own song. It eats almost exclusively insects and lives in areas called “chaparral,” parts of California that are covered in shrubs and bushes that tend to burn during fire season. Because of this, thrashers are a dull grey-brown color, helping them blend in with soil, burn areas, and rocks.

Performer: **Rachel Beetz** playing flute
Composer: **Dante De Silva**

Red Shouldered Hawk

Buteo lineatus

You'll hear a red-shouldered hawk before you see it. Look up and you'll see them circling around their nesting territory. Red-shouldered Hawks usually show pale crescents near their wingtips, where the sun shines through. When these birds see something delicious, they catch it by dropping directly onto it from the air.

Performer: **Cassia Streb** playing viola
Composer: **Kenji Oh**

Common Raven

Corvus corax

Common Ravens are highly intelligent birds that have become notorious for their creative problem solving and their ability to learn skills from each other. They can mimic sounds including bird calls, drops of water, and even words! You can tell them apart from crows by their distinctive beards and larger size. They stay with one partner for their whole lives, so you will often see them in pairs rather than in large groups.

Performer: **Theodosia Roussos** playing oboe
Composer: **Diana Wade**