

CUCULIFORMES

(Cuckoos)

Cuckoos



Family CUCULIDAE (Cuckoos)

Greater Roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*)

Measurements:

Length: 23" Wing Span: 22"

Average Weight: 12 oz

Distinguishing Field Characteristics:

fairly large, streamline size; brown with white streaks; distinctive crest on head; large, dark bill; long, broad tail; **breeding**: bare blue-white-red skin patch behind eye, with the blue closest to the eye; no sexual dimorphism

Notes:

relatively uncommon; native to southern NA w of the Mississippi River, s into Mexico; diurnal and omnivorous, preying on arthropods (insects, spiders, scorpions, etc.), reptiles (lizards, snakes), small birds, fruit, and seeds; known to eat rattlesnakes!

Mojave presence: year-round

Comments:

These birds were enjoying the bounty of grasshoppers available on a beautiful September (2019) day at Bear's Best Golf Gourse in Las Vegas. Usually solitary, there were numerous birds competing here for the fattest, juiciest morsels; the pickings were that good! Roadrunners are always so entertaining to watch.

Comments:

Wildlife is abundant and seasonally variable at the Overton Wildlife Management Area in Overton, NV, about 65 miles north of Las Vegas. While roadrunners are normally ground-dwelling birds, they can and do fly when motivated, like desiring to view their surroundings from higher vantage points. The one on the left ironically chose the roof of a duck blind to survey the adjacent pond; while the one silhouetted at right chose an even higher perch. Though they usually fly just short distances close to the ground, I once saw one soar over my vehicle!



non breeding

Death Vally Junction, CA



courting a lady friend

Red Rock NCA; LV, NV



nice catch!



breeding

blue-white-red
patch behind eye

Clark Co. Wetlands Pk; NV



scored a whiptail

Dolan Springs, AZ



**can you say
velociraptor?**

