

Sun City Grand and E-Bird

My wife and I come to Sun City Grand for the winter. Since I have had a life-long interest in birds, I routinely search for whatever bird species I can find in Sun City Grand. Occasionally, I spend about two hours visiting locations where birds are more likely to be seen and survey them by species and total number. I keep track of all this data in E-bird, an on-line service of Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. The laboratory created this as a worldwide data repository on the distribution of birds. Just recently the E-bird site manager has listed Sun City Grand as a Hotspot. A few other Sun City Grand residents already list some of their bird sighting in E-bird but do so under their immediate location. When retrieving composite or summary data for Sun City Grand, these local listing are not included unless canvassed individually. For anyone interested in listing their local bird sightings under the Hotspot for Sun City Grand, it has more extensive scientific value. This subdivision was formally Sonoran Desert before it was converted to orchards. It would be very useful to understand what bird species use the habitat for wintering, for breeding, and as spring and fall migrants. For instance, American Wigeon use this site as a major wintering location, as many as 1,000 are present in winter, a phenomena that was nonexistent in the past. Although there are a few of the original desert birds that populated this location, most are gone but it would be valuable to know which do well here such as Gambel's Quail. Another value of using the SCG Hotspot is that back yard sightings can be entered without identifying your specific address. And a final advantage is that casual sighting could be entered, for instance if someone heard or saw a Great Horned Owl, that would be useful information.

I would like to encourage Sun City Grand residents who are interested in birds to enter their sighting in E-bird using the Sun City Grand Hotspot as the location unless they feel there is specific value to provide more details about where the birds were seen. In order to use E-bird, one has to sign up for an account which is free, easy, not used for advertising and not sold to other interests.

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