

## Gulls



Bonaparte's Gull is the smallest gull common to this area. It can be distinguished from other gulls by its size.



The Laughing Gull (left) and Ring-billed Gull (right) are both medium-sized gulls. Notice the Ring-bill's yellow beak with black ring.

The plumage for gulls ranges by year and by season. During breeding season many species have a dark hood and darker/brighter beak colors.

## Anhinga and Double-crested Cormorant



Both the Anhinga (left) and Cormorant are large dark-colored fishing birds. The Anhinga has a slightly longer neck and sharp pointed beak, while the Cormorant has a hooked beak.

Both birds can be seen in many wetland habitats.

This brochure is intended to give general information on some of the species of coastal birds in this area - it is not intended to be a comprehensive birding guide. If there are species which you are interested in knowing more about, there are several field guides about birds in this area such as the Peterson Field Guide to Birds of North America or the Sibley Guide to Birds.

If you are thinking about taking up bird watching as a hobby, websites such as [ebird.org](http://ebird.org) and [allaboutbirds.org](http://allaboutbirds.org) will provide you with more information.

Some sites where you can watch coastal birds in the City of Cape Coral include Jaycee Park, Rotary Park, Eco Park, Cape Coral Yacht Club, Glover's Bight, Tarpon Bay and even the canals. Places near the City include Bunche Beach, Fort Myers Beach, Lover's Key, and Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve.

## City of Cape Coral Environmental Resources Division



# Coastal Birds of Southwest Florida

Osprey



Brown Pelican



Roseate Spoonbill

## Use Clues to Determine Species

Size and shape - about how big it is and its posture

Color - main colors or patterns, may change by year and by season

Habitat - where it feeds, nests

Behavior - what it is doing

Sound - call, song, or pecking

## Terns



The smallest Tern common to this area is the Least Tern. Note the sharp yellow beak and yellow legs.



The Sandwich Tern (left) and Forster's Tern (right) are both medium sized, but can be differentiated by beak and leg color. The Sandwich Tern's beak has a yellow tip while the Forster's has a black tip.



The Black Skimmer (left) with its distinct long lower beak (used for skimming surface waters), and Royal Tern (right) are the largest terns seen in this area.

Terns are common at beaches and mudflats.

## Egrets



The Snowy Egret (left) and Cattle Egret (right) are both small white birds, but the Snowy has a black beak and leg and the Cattle Egret has a buff crest. The Snowy Egret population declined in the 1800's, but has rebounded due in part to the Migratory Bird Act of 1918.



The medium-sized Reddish Egret has blue-gray plumage, a rusty-colored neck, and long legs. When hunting for fish it raises and flaps its wings to reduce glare which looks like a dance.



The Great Egret is a large white bird with long dark legs and an S-shaped neck. It breeds in colonies in wetland areas.

Egrets can be seen in many wetland habitats such as beaches, marshes, mangroves and streams.

## Hérons



The Green Heron (left) is the smallest heron; it has orange legs and shining green wings. The Yellow-crowned Night Heron (right) is slightly larger than the Green; it has gray-blue feathers and large orange eyes. Night Herons can often be seen at dusk.



The Tricolor Heron (left) and Little Blue Heron (right) are medium-sized herons, but can be differentiated by beak and leg color. The Tricolor has a distinct white belly.



The Great Blue Heron is a large light blue/gray bird with long legs, a dark blue streak on its head, and an S-shaped neck.

Hérons can also be seen in many wetland habitats.