

Finch Cards: Why so many ground finches in the Galapagos?



Medium Ground Finch
(*Geospiza fortis*)

Diet: Feeds on a variety of seeds, fruits and insects. It takes mainly small seeds, flowers of *Opuntia helleri* cactus, seeds of *Tribulus* plants and insects.

Habitat: Frequents forest edges and scrubby areas. but it can be found in all habitat types and at all elevations. However, it prefers arid lowland zones and transition areas where it is common. During the non-breeding season, it is mostly seen in highlands.

Location (islands where this species is found): Fernandina, Isabela, Santiago, Pinzon, Santa Cruz, Santa Fe, San Cristobal, Floreana islands... And of course, Daphne Major.



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Small Ground Finch
(*Geospiza fuliginosa*)

Diet: Consumes small seeds, buds and insects, but seeds are the main food. It also feeds on fruits from *Opuntia* cactus.

Habitat: Occurs at all elevations, up to 1700 meters, from arid lowland areas with cacti, deciduous shrubs and small trees, to moist highland forest dominated by trees of genus *Scalesia*, endemic to Galapagos.

Location (islands where this species is found): Pinta, Marchena, Fernandina, Isabela, Santiago, Rabida, Pinzon, Santa Cruz, Santa Fe, San Cristobal, and Floreana islands.



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Hispaniola Cactus Finch
(*Geospiza conirostris*)

Diet: Gets most of its food from the prickly-pear cactus *Opuntia helleri*, from which it takes pulp, flowers, fruits and insects feeding on cactus flowers.

Habitat: Frequents the arid lowlands with dry scrub, and the areas with cacti of genus *Opuntia helleri*. Often seen on the ground.

Location (islands where this species is found):
Wolf and Genovesa islands.



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Common Cactus Finch
(*Geospiza scandens*)

Diet: The prickly-pear cactus *Opuntia helleri* provides food to the Common Cactus-Finch. It feeds on pulp, fruits, flowers and insects. According to the season, the diet varies. The flowering cactus provides pollen and nectar, collected thanks to the specialized beak of this species. Fruits and seeds are important components of its diet too.

Habitat: Frequents arid lowland areas where cactus *Opuntia helleri* is present. It is rarely seen higher in more humid areas.

Location (islands where this species is found):
Pinta, Marchena, Isabela, Santiago, Rabida, Pinzon, Santa Cruz, Santa Fe, Floreana islands.



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Large Ground Finch
(*Geospiza magnirostris*)

Diet: Feeds mainly on large seeds but also takes *Opuntia* cactus fruits, caterpillars and large insects. It feeds on seeds of *Bursera graveolens*, but its main seed source includes the woody seeds of *Tribulus cistoides*. Its large, strong bill allows it to crack open these hard seeds.

Habitat: Frequents arid scrubs in the lowland areas of each island.

Location (islands where this species is found): Wolf, Pinta, Marchena, Genovesa, Isabela, Fernandina, Santiago, Rabida, Pinzon, and Santa Cruz islands.



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Vampire Finch
(*Geospiza septentrionalis*)

Diet: The main part of the Vampire Ground Finch's diet is made up of seeds and invertebrates. Other sources of food include bird eggs, guano, leftover fish, and nectar from Galapagos prickly . When these food sources are scarce, the Vampire Finch may feed on the blood of other birds such as the blue-footed boobies.

Habitat: Usually found on or near the ground.

Location (islands where this species is found): Wolf and Darwin islands.

