

Missisquoi
National Wildlife Refuge
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CELEBRATING A
CENTURY
of CONSERVATION

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Missisquoi

National Wildlife Refuge

Birds



Wood Duck drake
Steve Maslowski/USFWS

Welcome



This goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become a symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1943, is on the eastern shore of lake Champlain near the Canadian border in northwestern Vermont. The refuge headquarters is two miles north of Swanton on Route 78. Several diverse habitats make up the 6,592 acre refuge. The flood plain, sloughs and marshes of the Missisquoi River delta provide major nesting grounds for migratory waterfowl. Beds of wild rice (often called "duck candy), stands of arrowhead, bulrush and wild celery along with frogs and fish provide plentiful sources of food. In addition to 5,000 acres of natural marsh, the refuge includes 1,200 acres of managed wetlands formed by three diked impoundments. These pools offer additional sources of food, cover and nesting habitat for waterfowl.

Upland forested areas contain a mixture of hardwood species including white and red oak, white ash, white pine, American beech, hickory and butternut. By far, the majority of forested communities on the refuge are comprised of flood tolerant species such as swamp white oak, silver and red maple, cottonwood, and green ash. The refuge also maintains areas of early successional hardwoods such as alders, birch and poplar for migratory song birds and American woodcock. Shad island, at the mouth of the river delta, is home to the largest great blue heron rookery in Vermont. The refuge provides nesting grounds for ninety-five percent of Vermont black terns. The 100-150 artificial nesting box structures distributed in suitable habitats throughout the refuge supplement natural tree cavities and augment productivity of cavity nesting species such as wood ducks, goldeneye and hooded mergansers. Other species

such as Northern flying squirrels, screech owls and pileated woodpeckers occasionally use the nesting boxes as well. The installation of nesting platforms and tripods on the refuge to supplement natural nesting sites for the endangered osprey have proven successful as osprey numbers continue to rise on the refuge.

The refuge provides habitat for over 200 species of birds.

This list was updated in 1995 by Michele Patenaude, expert birder and refuge volunteer. The list was again revised in 2001 as a result of grassland and marshbird surveys conducted on the refuge and visitor observations.

Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge

This checklist includes 209 species of birds and is based on observations by refuge personnel and visiting ornithologists. If you should find an unlisted species, please let us know at refuge headquarters. We appreciate your help in updating our records.

Several trails are located on the refuge and provide good opportunities for bird observation. Insect repellent may be useful during the warmer months.

Most of the refuge is accessible only by boat. Public boat ramps on the refuge are located at Louie's Landing and Mac's Bend. Visitors are advised to consult the general refuge leaflet for the boat ramp access and trail locations.

How to use your checklist

The bird checklist was designed to be informative and simple to use. The list is arranged in the order established by the American Ornithological Union. Symbols which appear in this checklist represent the following:

Seasonal appearance

Sp	Spring	March – May
S	Summer	June – August
F	Fall	September – November
W	Winter	December – February

Seasonal abundance

Relative abundance indicates how likely you are to see or hear a bird in its favored habitat.

a	abundant	a common species which is very numerous
c	common	certain to be seen in suitable habitat
u	uncommon	present, but not certain to be seen
o	occasional	seen only a few times during the season
r	rare	seen at intervals of 2 to 5 years

- Birds known or suspected to have nested on the refuge or known to nest locally.

Italics indicate Federally threatened/endangered species.

	Sp	S	F	W
Loons				
___ Common Loon _____	o	o	o	
Grebes				
___ • Pied-billed Grebe _____	u	c	u	
___ Horned Grebe _____	o	o	o	
___ Red-necked Grebe _____	o		o	
Cormorants				
___ • Double-crested Cormorant _____	c	c	c	
Bitterns, Herons and Egrets				
___ • American Bittern _____	c	c	o	
___ • Least Bittern _____	r	u		
___ • Great Blue Heron _____	c	c	c	r
___ Great Egret _____	r	r	r	
___ Green Heron _____	u	c	o	
___ Black-crowned Night-Heron _____	o	c	o	
New World Vultures				
___ Turkey Vulture _____	u	c	u	
Swans, Geese and Ducks				
___ Snow Goose _____	u		u	
___ Canada Goose _____	o	u	c	r
___ Brant _____	r		r	
___ • Wood Duck _____	a	a	a	
___ Gadwall _____	o	o	c	

	Sp	S	F	W
___ American Wigeon _____	o	o	c	
___ • American Black Duck _____	a	a	a	r
___ • Mallard _____	a	a	a	r
___ • Blue-winged Teal _____	c	c	o	
___ Northern Shoveler _____	c	o	c	
___ Northern Pintail _____	c	o	c	
___ • Green-winged Teal _____	c	o	c	
___ Canvasback _____	o		c	
___ Redhead _____			o	
___ Ring-necked Duck _____	c	o	c	
___ Greater Scaup _____	u		u	
___ Lesser Scaup _____	c		c	
___ Surf Scoter _____			r	r
___ White-winged Scoter _____			o	
___ Black Scoter _____			o	
___ Oldsquaw _____			o	
___ Bufflehead _____	u		o	
___ • Common Goldeneye _____	c	c	c	o
___ • Hooded Merganser _____	c	c	c	
___ Common Merganser _____	c	o	c	o
___ Red-breasted Merganser _____	r		r	
___ Ruddy Duck _____	o		o	

Osprey, Kites, Hawks and Eagles

___ • Osprey _____	c	c	c	
___ <i>Bald Eagle</i> _____	o	o	r	
___ • Northern Harrier _____	c	c	c	
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk _____	o	o	o	
___ Cooper's Hawk _____	o	o	o	
___ Northern Goshawk _____	o	o	o	o



Bald Eagle

Peregrine Falcon



	Sp	S	F	W
• Red-shouldered Hawk _____	o	o	o	
• Broad-winged Hawk _____	r		r	
• Red-tailed Hawk _____	c	c	c	o
• Rough-legged Hawk _____	u	r	o	o

Falcons and Caracaras

• American Kestrel _____	c	c	o	
• Merlin _____	r	r	r	
• Peregrine Falcon _____	o	r	o	

Gallinaceous Birds

• Gray Partridge _____	u	u	u	u
• Ruffed Grouse _____	u	u	u	u
• Wild Turkey _____	u	u	u	u

Rails

• Virginia Rail _____	o	c	c	
• Sora _____	o	o	o	
• Common Moorhen _____	c	c	o	
• American Coot _____	o	r	c	

Plovers

• Black-bellied Plover _____			o	
• Semipalmated Plover _____	o		o	
• Killdeer _____	c	c	c	

Sandpipers and Phalaropes

• Greater Yellowlegs _____	c		c	
• Lesser Yellowlegs _____	o		o	
• Solitary Sandpiper _____	o		o	
• Spotted Sandpiper _____	o	c	o	
• Hudsonian Godwit _____			r	
• Ruddy Turnstone _____			r	
• Sanderling _____			o	
• Semipalmated Sandpiper _____			o	
• Least Sandpiper _____			o	
• White-rumped Sandpiper _____	o		o	
• Pectoral Sandpiper _____			o	
• Dunlin _____			o	
• Stilt Sandpiper _____			r	
• Short-billed Dowitcher _____			r	
• Common Snipe _____	c	c	c	
• American Woodcock _____	c	c	c	

Skuas, Jaegers, Gulls and Terns

• Bonaparte's Gull _____	r	r	r	
• Ring-billed Gull _____	c	c	c	o
• Herring Gull _____	u	u	u	
• Common Tern _____	c	o	c	
• Black Tern _____	c	c		

Pigeons and Doves

• Rock Dove _____	c	c	c	c
• Mourning Dove _____	c	c	c	c

Cuckoos and Anis

• Black-billed Cuckoo _____	u	u	u	
• Yellow-billed Cuckoo _____	u	u	u	

Typical Owls

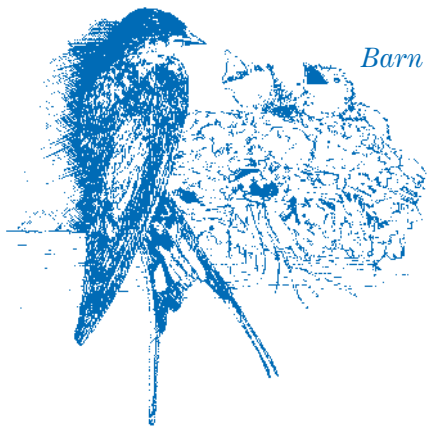
• Eastern Screech-Owl _____	o	o	o	o
• Great Horned Owl _____	c	c	c	u
• Snowy Owl _____	r		r	r
• Northern Hawk Owl _____	r		r	r
• Barred Owl _____	u	u	u	u
• Short-eared Owl _____	o	o	o	
• Northern Saw-whet Owl _____	o	o	o	o

	Sp	S	F	W
Nightjars				
___ Common Nighthawk _____	o	o	r	
___ Whip-poor-will _____	r	r	r	
Swifts				
___ • Chimney Swift _____	o	o	o	
Hummingbirds				
___ • Ruby-throated Hummingbird _____	o	e	o	
Kingfishers				
___ • Belted Kingfisher _____	u	e	e	
Woodpeckers				
___ • Red-headed Woodpecker _____		r		
___ • Yellow-bellied Sapsucker _____	e	e	o	
___ • Downy Woodpecker _____	e	e	e	e
___ • Hairy Woodpecker _____	e	e	e	e
___ • Northern Flicker _____	e	e	o	
___ • Pileated Woodpecker _____	u	u	u	u
Tyrant Flycatchers				
___ • Olive-sided Flycatcher _____	o	u	o	
___ • Eastern Wood-Pewee _____	e	e	e	
___ • Alder Flycatcher _____	e	e	o	
___ • Willow Flycatcher _____	u	u	o	
___ • Least Flycatcher _____	e	e	o	
___ • Eastern Phoebe _____	e	e	e	
___ • Great Crested Flycatcher _____	e	e	o	
___ • Eastern Kingbird _____	e	e	e	



Olive-sided Flycatcher

	Sp	S	F	W
Shrikes				
___ Northern Shrike _____	u	r	u	u
Vireos				
___ Yellow-throated Vireo _____	o	e	o	
___ • Blue-headed Vireo _____	u	u	u	
___ • Warbling Vireo _____	o	e	o	
___ Philadelphia Vireo _____	o	o	r	
___ • Red-eyed Vireo _____	e	e	o	
Crows, Jays and Magpies				
___ • Blue Jay _____	e	e	e	o
___ • American Crow _____	e	e	e	o
Larks				
___ Horned Lark _____	o	o	o	o
Swallows				
___ • Purple Martin _____	o	e	o	
___ • Tree Swallow _____	e	a	e	
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow _____	u	u	u	
___ • Bank Swallow _____	e	e	o	
___ Cliff Swallow _____	o	o		
___ • Barn Swallow _____	e	e	o	
Titmice and Chickadees				
___ • Black-capped Chickadee _____	a	e	e	a
___ Boreal Chickadee _____			r	r
___ Tufted Titmouse _____	u	u	u	
Nuthatches				
___ Red-breasted Nuthatch _____	r	r	r	r
___ • White-breasted Nuthatch _____	e	e	e	e
Creepers				
___ • Brown Creeper _____	e	u	e	e
Wrens				
___ • House Wren _____	o	u	u	
___ Winter Wren _____	r	r	r	
___ • Marsh Wren _____	o	e	o	
Kinglets				
___ Golden-crowned Kinglet _____	o	r	o	
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet _____	u	r	u	r



Barn Swallow

Old World Warblers

___ • Blue-gray Gnatcatcher _____ **Sp** **S** **F** **W**
u c

Thrushes

___ Eastern Bluebird _____ r r r
___ • Veery _____ c c o
___ Swainson's Thrush _____ r r
___ • Hermit Thrush _____ c c c
___ • Wood Thrush _____ c c u
___ • American Robin _____ c c c

Mimic Thrushes

___ • Gray Catbird _____ c c o
___ Northern Mockingbird _____ r r
___ Brown Thrasher _____ o o o

Starlings

___ • European Starling _____ a c a c

Wagtails and Pipits

___ American Pipit _____ u o u

Waxwings

___ • Cedar Waxwing _____ o c c

Wood Warblers

___ Tennessee Warbler _____ r r
___ Orange-crowned Warbler _____ r
___ Nashville Warbler _____ o o o
___ Northern Parula _____ r
___ • Yellow Warbler _____ c c o
___ Chestnut-sided Warbler _____ o o

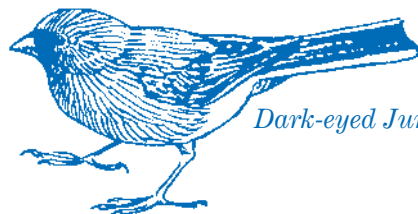
___ Magnolia Warbler _____ r r
___ Cape May Warbler _____ o o
___ Black-throated Blue Warbler _____ o o o
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler _____ o r o
___ Black-throated Green Warbler _____ u r u
___ Blackburnian Warbler _____ o o o
___ Palm Warbler _____ o o
___ Bay-breasted Warbler _____ o o o
___ Blackpoll Warbler _____ u u
___ Black-and-white Warbler _____ u u u
___ • American Redstart _____ c c o
___ • Ovenbird _____ o o
___ • Northern Waterthrush _____ o c o
___ Louisiana Waterthrush _____ o u
___ • Common Yellowthroat _____ c c c
___ Canada Warbler _____ o o o

Tanagers

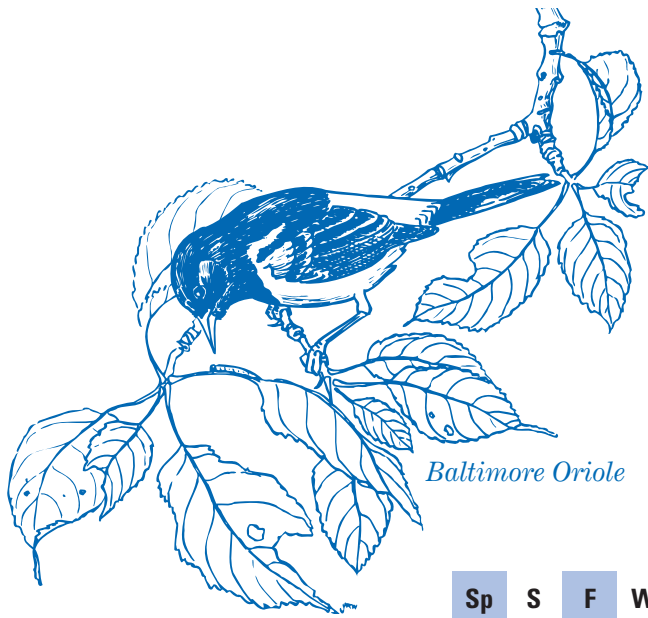
___ Scarlet Tanager _____ r r r

Sparrows and Towhees

___ Eastern Towhee _____ r r
___ American Tree Sparrow _____ c r o c
___ • Chipping Sparrow _____ c c c
___ • Field Sparrow _____ o u o
___ Vesper Sparrow _____ o o o
___ • Savannah Sparrow _____ c c c
___ Grasshopper Sparrow _____ r r
___ Fox Sparrow _____ o o o
___ • Song Sparrow _____ c c c
___ Lincoln's Sparrow _____ r
___ • Swamp Sparrow _____ c c c
___ • White-throated Sparrow _____ c c o
___ White-crowned Sparrow _____ o o o o
___ Dark-eyed Junco _____ c r o c
___ Snow Bunting _____ o r o c



Dark-eyed Junco



Baltimore Oriole

Cardinals, Grosbeaks and Allies

	Sp	S	F	W
___ • Northern Cardinal _____	u	u	u	c
___ • Rose-breasted Grosbeak _____	c	c	o	
___ Indigo Bunting _____	o	o	o	

Blackbirds and Orioles

___ • Bobolink _____	c	a	o	
___ • Red-winged Blackbird _____	a	a	c	
___ • Eastern Meadowlark _____	c	c	o	
___ Rusty Blackbird _____	u	u	u	
___ • Common Grackle _____	c	c	o	
___ • Brown-headed Cowbird _____	c	c	c	
___ • Baltimore Oriole _____	c	c		

Finches

___ Pine Grosbeak _____			r	r
___ Purple Finch _____	o	o	o	o
___ House Finch _____	u	c	u	u
___ White-winged Crossbill _____	o	r	o	
___ Common Redpoll _____				r
___ Pine Siskin _____	r	r	r	
___ • American Goldfinch _____	c	c	c	o
___ Evening Grosbeak _____	c	o	o	c

Old World Sparrows

___ • House Sparrow _____	c	c	c	c
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Birding Ethics

The membership of the American Birding Association believes that all birders have an obligation at all times to protect wildlife, the natural environment, and the rights of others and asks that all birders adhere to the following guidelines of good birding behavior:

I. Birders must always act in ways that do not endanger the welfare of birds or other wildlife.

In keeping with this principle, we will:

- Observe and photograph birds without knowingly disturbing them in any significant way.
- Avoid chasing or repeatedly flushing birds.
- Keep an appropriate distance from nests and nesting colonies so as not to disturb the birds or expose them to danger.
- Disturb wintering wildlife as little as possible, particularly during critical feeding and resting periods. They need all their energy reserves to withstand the stresses of harsh winter and migration.

II. Birders must always act in ways that do not harm the natural environment.

In keeping with this principle, we will:

- Stay on existing roads, trails and pathways whenever possible to avoid trampling.
- Leave all habitat as it was found. Many birds die when they become entangled in discarded fishing lines, 6 pack rings and other trash, or when they mistake garbage for food.



Northern Cardinal

III. Birders must always respect the rights of others.

In keeping with this principle, we will:

- Respect the privacy and property of others by observing “No Trespassing” signs.
- Observe all laws and the rules and regulations that govern public use of birding areas.
- Always behave in a manner that will enhance the image of the birding community in the eyes of the public.

IV. Birders in groups should assume special responsibilities.

As group members, we shall:

- Take special care to alleviate the problems and disturbances that are multiplied when more people are present.
- Act in consideration of the group’s interest, as well as our own.
- Support by our actions the responsibility of the group leader(s) for the conduct of the group.

As group leaders, we will:

- Assume responsibility for the conduct of the group.
- Learn and inform the group of any special rules, regulations or conduct applicable to the area or habitat being visited.
- Limit groups to a size that does not threaten the environment or the peace and tranquility of others.
- Teach others birding ethics by our words and example.



Great Blue Heron

Sighting Notes

Date

Time

Weather

No. of species

Route of area

Observers

Remarks



Northern Flicker

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