

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Big Branch Marsh

*National Wildlife Refuge  
Bird List*



*Osprey*

*Heron*



*Larry W. Richardson*

*Big  
Branch  
Marsh  
National  
Wildlife  
Refuge*



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

*How to use this  
checklist*

*Seasonal  
Appearance*

*Seasonal  
Abundance*

Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge is one of over 500 national wildlife refuges. The refuge is located along the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, approximately 35 miles from New Orleans in St. Tammany Parish. The refuge is about 14,000 acres and is primarily comprised of intermediate marsh and pine flatwoods. Cypress brakes and hardwood areas are also found on the refuge. Many woodland birds are year-round residents of the pine flatwoods, including the Federally endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker. Spring and fall migrations bring many neotropical migrant songbirds through the refuge that breed in northern climates. In winter, thousands of waterfowl species reside in the marshes along the lake shore. At any time of year a wide variety of birds including shorebirds, wading birds, raptors, waterfowl, and songbirds can be found at the refuge.

This bird list conforms to the nomenclature and arrangement established by the American Ornithologists' Union (1998). Symbols used in this brochure represent the following:

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

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 a season)  
r- Rare (seen at intervals of 2 to 5 years)

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
<b>Loons</b>				
___ Common Loon	u		u	u
<b>Grebes</b>				
___ Pied-billed Grebe	c		c	c
___ Horned Grebe	r		r	u
___ Eared Grebe			r	r
<b>Pelicans, Cormorants &amp; Darters</b>				
___ American White Pelican	c		c	c
___ Brown Pelican	c	r	c	c
___ Double-crested Cormorant	c	r	c	c
___ Anhinga	r	r	r	r
<b>Frigatebirds</b>				
___ Magnificent Frigatebird		o		
<b>Bitterns, Herons &amp; Egrets</b>				
___ American Bittern	r		r	r
___ Least Bittern	c	c	u	
___ Great Blue Heron	c	c	c	c
___ Great Egret	c	c	c	c
___ Snowy Egret	c	c	c	c
___ Little Blue Heron	u	u	u	u
___ Tricolored Heron	u	c	c	u
___ Reddish Egret			r	
___ Cattle Egret	u	u	u	u
___ Green Heron	c	c	c	r
___ Black-crowned Night-Heron	r	r	r	
___ Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	u	u	u	
<b>Ibises, Spoonbills, Storks &amp; New World Vultures</b>				
___ White Ibis	c	c	c	c
___ Glossy Ibis	u	u	u	u
___ White-faced Ibis	u	u	u	u
___ Roseate Spoonbill		r	r	
___ Wood Stork			r	
___ Black Vulture	c	u	c	c
___ Turkey Vulture	c	u	c	c
<b>Waterfowl</b>				
___ Greater White-fronted Goose			u	u
___ Snow Goose			c	c
___ Ross's Goose				r
___ Canada Goose			r	r
___ Wood Duck	c	c	c	c
___ Gadwall	c		c	c
___ American Wigeon	u		u	c
___ Mallard	u		u	c
___ Mottled Duck	c	c	c	c
___ Blue-winged Teal	c	r	c	c

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
___ Northern Shoveler	c		c	c
___ Northern Pintail	u		u	c
___ Green-winged Teal	r		u	u
___ Canvasback	r		r	r
___ Redhead	r		r	r
___ Ring-necked Duck	u		u	c
___ Greater Scaup				r
___ Lesser Scaup	u		u	c
___ Common Goldeneye				u
___ Bufflehead	c		c	c
___ Hooded Merganser				u
___ Red-breasted Merganser	u		u	c
___ Ruddy Duck	u		u	u

### **Hawks, Eagles & Kites**

___ Osprey	u	u	u	c
___ American Swallow-tailed Kite	u	u	r	
___ Mississippi Kite	c	c	u	
___ Bald Eagle	u		u	u
___ Northern Harrier	c		c	c
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk	u		u	u
___ Cooper's Hawk	u		u	u
___ Red-shouldered Hawk	c	c	c	c
___ Broad-winged Hawk	c	u	c	
___ Red-tailed Hawk	c		c	c
___ Swainson's Hawk			r	
___ Red-tailed Hawk	c		c	c
___ Rough-legged Hawk			r	

### **True Falcons**

___ American Kestrel	c		c	c
___ Merlin	u		u	u
___ Peregrine Falcon				r

### **Gallinaceous Birds (Quail, Turkey and Allies)**

___ Northern Bobwhite	c	c	c	c
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### **Rails, Gallinules, Coots & Cranes**

___ Yellow Rail				o
___ Black Rail				o
___ King Rail	c	c	c	c
___ Virginia Rail	u		u	u
___ Sora	c		c	c
___ Common Moorhen	u		u	u
___ American Coot	c		c	c

### **Plovers**

___ Black-bellied Plover	u		u	u
___ Semipalmated Plover	u		u	
___ Killdeer	c	c	c	c

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
<b>Avocets &amp; Sandpipers</b>				
___ Black-necked Stilt	c	c	c	u
___ Greater Yellowlegs	c		c	u
___ Lesser Yellowlegs	c		c	u
___ Solitary Sandpiper	u		u	
___ Willet	r		r	
___ Spotted Sandpiper	c		c	c
___ Sanderling		r		
___ Semipalmated Sandpiper	c		c	
___ Western Sandpiper	c		c	u
___ Least Sandpiper	c		c	u
___ Pectoral Sandpiper	u		u	
___ Dunlin	u		u	u
___ Short-billed Dowitcher	r		r	
___ Long-billed Dowitcher	u		u	
___ Common Snipe	u		u	c
___ American Woodcock	u		u	u
<b>Gulls, Terns &amp; Skimmers</b>				
___ Laughing Gull	c	c	c	c
___ Bonaparte's Gull	u		u	c
___ Ring-billed Gull	c	r	c	c
___ Herring Gull	c		c	c
___ Gull-billed Tern				r
___ Caspian Tern	c	u	c	c
___ Royal Tern	c	u	c	c
___ Common Tern	r		r	r
___ Forster's Tern	c	c	c	c
___ Least Tern	u	c	u	
___ Black Tern			u	
___ Black Skimmer		r	r	
<b>Pigeons &amp; Doves</b>				
___ Eurasian Collared-Dove			o	
___ Mourning Dove	c	c	c	c
___ Common Ground-Dove	r		r	r
<b>Cuckoos</b>				
___ Black-billed Cuckoo	u		u	
___ Yellow-billed Cuckoo	c	c	c	
<b>Owls</b>				
___ Barn Owl				r
___ Eastern Screech-Owl	c	c	c	c
___ Great Horned Owl	c	c	c	c
___ Barred Owl	c	c	c	c
<b>Nightjars</b>				
___ Common Nighthawk	u	u	u	
___ Chuck-will's-widow	u	u	u	
___ Whip-poor-will	r			

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
<b>Swifts &amp; Hummingbirds</b>				
___ Chimney Swift	c	c	c	
<b>Hummingbirds</b>				
___ Ruby-throated Hummingbird	c	c	c	r
___ Rufous Hummingbird				r
<b>Kingfishers</b>				
___ Belted Kingfisher	c	u	c	c
<b>Woodpeckers</b>				
___ Red-headed Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
___ Red-bellied Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	u		c	c
___ Downy Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
___ Hairy Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
___ Red-cockaded Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
___ Northern Flicker	c	u	c	c
___ Pileated Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
<b>Tyrant Flycatchers</b>				
___ Olive-sided Flycatcher			r	
___ Eastern Wood-Pewee	c	c	c	
___ Acadian Flycatcher	c	c	c	
___ Alder Flycatcher		r	r	
___ Least Flycatcher		r	r	
___ Eastern Phoebe	u		c	c
___ Vermilion Flycatcher				r
___ Great Crested Flycatcher	c	c	u	
___ Eastern Kingbird	c	c	u	
<b>Shrikes</b>				
___ Loggerhead Shrike	c	c	c	c
<b>Vireos</b>				
___ White-eyed Vireo	c	c	c	u
___ Yellow-throated Vireo	c	c	c	
___ Blue-headed Vireo	u		u	u
___ Philalephia Vireo			u	
___ Red-eyed Vireo	c	c	c	
<b>Jays &amp; Crows</b>				
___ Blue Jay	c	c	c	c
___ American Crow	c	c	c	c
___ Fish Crow	c	c	c	c
<b>Larks</b>				
___ Horned Lark				r

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
<b>Swallows</b>				
___ Purple Martin	c	c	c	
___ Tree Swallow	c		c	c
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow	u	u	u	r
___ Bank Swallow	u	u	u	
___ Cliff Swallow	r	r	u	
___ Barn Swallow	c	c	c	
<b>Chickadees &amp; Titmice</b>				
___ Carolina Chickadee	c	c	c	c
___ Tufted Titmouse	c	c	c	c
<b>Nuthatches</b>				
___ Red-breasted Nuthatch				r
___ Brown-headed Nuthatch	c	c	c	c
<b>Creepers</b>				
___ Brown Creeper	u		u	u
<b>Wrens</b>				
___ Carolina Wren	c	c	c	c
___ House Wren	c		c	c
___ Winter Wren	u		u	u
___ Sedge Wren	u		u	c
___ Marsh Wren	c	c	c	c
<b>Kinglets &amp; Gnatcatchers</b>				
___ Golden-crowned Kinglet	u		u	c
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet	c		c	c
___ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	c	c	c	c
<b>Thrushes</b>				
___ Eastern Bluebird	c	c	c	c
___ Veery	u		u	
___ Gray-cheeked Thrush	u		u	
___ Swainson's Thrush	u		u	
___ Hermit Thrush	u		u	c
___ Wood Thrush	c	c	c	
___ American Robin	u		u	c
<b>Mockingbirds &amp; Thrashers</b>				
___ Gray Catbird	c		c	c
___ Northern Mockingbird	c	c	c	c
___ Brown Thrasher	c	c	c	c
<b>Starlings</b>				
___ European Starling	c	c	c	c
<b>Pipits</b>				
___ American Pipit	u		u	c



	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
<b>Waxwings</b>				
___ Cedar Waxwing	c		c	c
<b>Wood Warblers</b>				
___ Blue-winged Warbler	u		u	
___ Golden-winged Warbler	r		r	
___ Tennessee Warbler	u		u	
___ Orange-crowned Warbler	c		c	c
___ Nashville Warbler	r		u	
___ Northern Parula	c	c	c	
___ Yellow Warbler	c		c	
___ Chestnut-sided Warbler	u		u	
___ Magnolia Warbler	u		u	
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler	c		c	c
___ Black-throated Blue Warbler	r			
___ Black-throated Green Warbler	u		c	
___ Blackburnian Warbler	r		r	
___ Yellow-throated Warbler	u	u	u	
___ Pine Warbler	c	c	c	c
___ Prairie Warbler	r		r	
___ Palm Warbler	u		u	u
___ Bay-breasted Warbler	u		u	
___ Cerulean Warbler	r		r	
___ Black-and-white Warbler	u		u	r
___ American Redstart	u		c	
___ Prothonotary Warbler	c	c	c	
___ Worm-eating Warbler	u	u	u	
___ Swainson's Warbler	u	u	u	
___ Ovenbird	u		u	
___ Northern Waterthrush	u		u	
___ Louisiana Waterthrush	r		r	
___ Kentucky Warbler	u	u	u	
___ Common Yellowthroat	c	c	c	c
___ Hooded Warbler	c	c	c	
___ Wilson's Warbler	u		u	u
___ Yellow-breasted Chat	c	c	c	r
<b>Tanagers</b>				
___ Summer Tanager	c	c	c	r
___ Scarlet Tanager	r		r	
<b>Sparrows</b>				
___ Eastern Towhee	c	c	c	c
___ Bachman's Sparrow	r	r	r	r
___ Chipping Sparrow	c	u	c	c
___ Field Sparrow	u		u	c
___ Vesper Sparrow	u		u	u
___ Savannah Sparrow	c		c	c
___ Grasshopper Sparrow	r		r	r
___ Henslow's Sparrow	u		u	u
___ Le Conte's Sparrow	u		u	u
___ Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	r		r	r

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
___ Seaside Sparrow	u	u	u	u
___ Fox Sparrow				u
___ Song Sparrow	c		c	c
___ Lincoln's Sparrow	u		u	u
___ Swamp Sparrow	c		c	c
___ White-throated Sparrow	c		c	c
___ White-crowned Sparrow	u		u	u
___ Dark-eyed Junco	u		u	c

### **New World Finches**

___ Northern Cardinal	c	c	c	c
___ Rose-breasted Grosbeak	c		c	
___ Blue Grosbeak	c	u	c	
___ Indigo Bunting	c	u	c	
___ Painted Bunting	c	u	c	
___ Dickcissel	u	u	u	r

### **Blackbirds**

___ Red-winged Blackbird	c	c	c	c
___ Eastern Meadowlark	c	c	c	c
___ Rusty Blackbird	u		u	c
___ Brewer's Blackbird	r		r	u
___ Common Grackle	c	c	c	c
___ Brown-headed Cowbird	c	c	c	c
___ Boat-tailed Grackle	r	r	r	r
___ Orchard Oriole	c	c	c	
___ Baltimore Oriole	u		u	r

### **Old World Finches**

___ Purple Finch	u		u	u
___ House Finch	u		u	u
___ Pine Siskin				u
___ American Goldfinch	c		u	c
___ House Sparrow	u	u	u	u

### **Ethics for Birdwatching**

Take care not to disturb nesting birds which could expose eggs and young to extreme temperatures and predation.

Please do not litter. Many birds die when they become entangled in fishing lines, 6-pack rings and other trash, or when they mistake garbage for food.

## Sighting Notes

*Date*

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*Time*

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*Weather*

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*No. of species*

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*Route or area*

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*Observers*

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*Remarks*

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*Walter Clifton*

*Downy Woodpecker*

**Big Branch Marsh  
National Wildlife Refuge  
61389 Highway 434  
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**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
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