# **Birds** of the Timucuan Preserve

and Duval County, Florida



# About the Preserve

The 46,000 - acre Timucuan Preserve was designated by the United States Congress in 1988 to protect the complex salt marsh/estuarine ecosystem and historic and prehistoric sites between the lower St. Johns and Nassau Rivers.

Public lands within the Preserve are administered by the National Park Service, the State of Florida, the City of Jacksonville, and the United States Navy. The remainder is privately owned. Currently, the National Park Service owns approximately 9,000 acres within the Preserve, which includes Fort Caroline National Memorial, Theodore Roosevelt Area, Kingsley Plantation, and Cedar Point.

The Preserve is a vast expanse of salt marsh grasses and waterways, quiet wooded islands, and long views of a flat horizon. Some views are pristine, while others display striking evidence of humans: shell middens, ancient forts, a historic plantation, modern homes, power-plant towers, Naval Station Mayport, automobile bridges, and the primary pleasure-boat corridor on the east coast - the Intracoastal Waterway.

Much of the salt marsh is among the least disturbed on the southern Atlantic Coast. The estuarine habitats of the Preserve provide important spawning grounds for many economically important fish and invertebrates.

Due to the orientation of the Preserve and the large range of unimpaired habitats found here, a rich diversity of plant and animal life can be readily observed. Rare and sensitive species of plants and animals, representing important and critical habitats in the Preserve, include Sea Oats, Atlantic Loggerhead Turtle, West Indian Manatee, and Wood Stork.

# **Birding in General**

Numbers and species of birds vary depending on the season. Spring is a good time to observe nesting species, whereas fall brings a much wider diversity of migrants. Large numbers of gulls, terns, and shorebirds can easily be observed in the summer months. Wide varieties of water and land birds, and birds of prey, are present during winter. The National Audubon Society's Jacksonville Christmas Bird Count boasts an annual tally of over 150 species (one of the highest in the United States). Most of this count's area lies within the Preserve's boundaries. Birds are attracted to saltwater marshes, beach and shoreflats and a wide variety of upland areas. Birding is good throughout the year. A day spent covering a variety of habitats should produce a list close to, if not over, onehundred species!

During summer, biting insects, afternoon thunderstorms, and sweltering heat and humidity are the rule, but summer is also the best time to observe the largest numbers and species of shorebirds. Winter days can be quite mild and pleasant, but always be prepared for rapidly changing weather patterns.

When looking at a bird, pay close attention to the field marks, such as color, size, shape, and wing and head markings. Study the bird as long as possible, referring to your field guide only after careful observation. Take careful field notes and be sure to report rare, unusual, or out-ofrange birds to Preserve staff.

## **About the Checklist**

This list contains 342 species that have been recorded either in the Timucuan Preserve, or elsewhere in Duval County. The nomenclature and phylogenetic order used in this list follow that of the American Ornithologists' Union's seventh edition check-list (45th supplement) - July 2004.

## Legend

- Sp- Spring, late February through mid-May
- **S** Summer, mid-May through mid-July
- F Fall, mid-July through mid-November
- W Winter, mid-November through late February

**Spring** - Some species migrate much earlier than others, appearing in the Jacksonville area during late February, but are nonetheless considered spring migrants rather than winter visitors. Their status at this time of year is indicated under Spring rather than Winter.

**Summer** - Status under this heading indicates the relative abundance of breeding and summering birds. Observers must remember that a few spring migrants can be found into late May, and that some fall migrants occur by early July. As these are not summering residents, their status as migrants is indicated under Spring and Fall rather than Summer.

**Fall** - Some species, particularly shorebirds, start appearing in the Jacksonville area by early July, however their status as migrants, in July and August, is indicated under Fall rather than Summer.

**Winter -** Status under this heading indicates the relative abundance of wintering birds. As indicated above, some early spring migrants may be present during March, or earlier, as with Purple Martins. Likewise, some late fall migrants linger well into November. However, these occurrences are omitted from the Winter column so as to clearly indicate the true winter residents and visitors.

## Seasonal Abundance Codes

- c Common to Abundant, easily found in suitable habitat.
- Uncommon to Fairly Common, found when looked for in suitable habitat, but can be missed.
- **r** Rare to Very Uncommon, more often missed than seen, even when looked for in suitable habitat.
- Occasional, normally less than five individuals per season, or during any given year, but to be looked for.

Families and Common Names	Sp	S	F	W
Anatidae: Swans, Geese, and Ducks				
Snow Goose (please note if blue subspecies)	0		0	0
Canada Goose (virtually all are feral, breeds)	u	u	u	u
Muscovy Duck (all feral, breeds)	u	u	u	u
Wood Duck (breeds)	u	u	u	u
Gadwall			r	u
American Wigeon	r		r	r
American Black Duck				а
Mallard (virtually all are feral, breeds)	u	u	u	u
Mottled Duck (breeds, watch for Mallard/Mottled hybrids)	ŭ	ŭ	ŭ	0
Blue-winged Teal	r	0	ŭ	C
_ Northern Shoveler	r	0	u	u
Northern Pintail	0		0	r
	r		r	u
	I		I	
				0
	r			0
_ Ring-necked Duck	r		u	u
_ Greater Scaup	0		0	r
_ Lesser Scaup	r		u	С
_ Surf Scoter	0		0	r
_ White-winged Scoter	0		0	0
_ Black Scoter (can be very common in winter)	0		r	u
Long-tailed Duck				0
_ Bufflehead	0		r	u
Common Goldeneye				0
<ul> <li>Hooded Merganser</li> </ul>	r		u	С
<ul> <li>Red-breasted Merganser</li> </ul>	r	0	u	С
_ Ruddy Duck	r		r	u
hasianidae: Turkeys				
Wild Turkey (found in western Duval Co, breeds)	u	u	u	u
	u	u	u	ŭ
dontophoridae: Quail				
_ Northern Bobwhite (declining, local, breeds)	u	u	u	u
aviidae: Loons				
Red-throated Loon (highly variable numbers year to yea	r) 0		r	r
Common Loon (can be abundant during fall migration)	r		u	u
odicipedidae: Grebes				
Pied-billed Grebe (breeds)	u	r	u	u
Horned Grebe	r	1	u	u
	I		u	u
rocellariidae: Shearwaters				
Cory's Shearwater (pelagic)	u	С	u	
Greater Shearwater (pelagic)	r	r	0	
Sooty Shearwater (pelagic)	0	0		
Audubon's Shearwater (pelagic)	0	0	0	

Families and Common Names	Sp	S	F	W
Hydrobatidae: Storm-Petrels Wilson's Storm-Petrel <i>(pelagic)</i> Leach's Storm-Petrel <i>(pelagic)</i>	C r	С	r	
Sulidae: Gannets Northern Gannet	u		u	С
Pelecanidae: Pelicans         American White Pelican (numbers variable in winter)         Brown Pelican	r C	O C	r C	r C
Phalacrocoracidae: Cormorants Double-crested Cormorant	С	u	С	С
Anhingidae: Darters Anhinga (very local, breeds)	u	u	u	u
Ardeidae: Bitterns and Herons American Bittern Least Bittern (very local, breeds)	r r	r	r r	а
<ul> <li>Great Blue Heron (breeds)</li> <li>Great Egret (breeds)</li> <li>Snowy Egret (breeds)</li> </ul>	C C C	C C C	C C C	C C C
<ul> <li>Little Blue Heron (breeds)</li> <li>Tricolored Heron (breeds)</li> <li>Reddish Egret (most easily seen at, or near, beaches)</li> </ul>	С С О	C C U	C C r	С С О
Cattle Egret (breeds) Green Heron (breeds) Black-crowned Night-Heron (breeds)	C C C	C C C	u u c	O U C
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (breeds) Threskiornithidae: Ibises and Spoonbills	u	u	u	u
White Ibis <i>(breeds)</i> Glossy Ibis     Roseate Spoonbill <i>(locally common at times in summer,</i>	C r ) r	u r u	C r r	c r a
Ciconiidae: Storks Wood Stork (breeds)	u	u	u	u
Carthartidae: American Vultures Black Vulture (breeds)	С	С	С	C
Turkey Vulture (breeds)	C	С	C	C C
Accipitridae: Kites, Hawks, Eagles and Allies Osprey (breeds) Swallow-tailed Kite (breeds)	C r	C r	С	С
Mississippi Kite (has bred)     Bald Eagle (numbers variable in winter, breeds)     Northern Harrier	r r	0 r	o r u	r u
Sharp-shinned Hawk Cooper's Hawk (breeds)	r r	r	u u	u u

Families and Common Names	Sp	S	F	W
raptors, continued				
Red-shouldered Hawk (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Broad-winged Hawk	0			а
Red-tailed Hawk (breeds)	u	u	u	С
Falconidae: Falcons				
American Kestrel	r	а	u	С
Merlin	r		r	r
Peregrine Falcon (highest numbers in October)	r		u	0
Rallidae: Rails, Gallinules, and Coots				
Clapper Rail <i>(breeds)</i>	С	С	С	С
King Rail	0	C	0	r
Virginia Rail	r		0	u.
Sora	u		u	u
Purple Gallinule ( <u>very</u> local, breeds)	r	r		
Common Moorhen (breeds)	С	С	С	С
American Coot (breeding status unknown)	u	r	u	С
Gruidae: Cranes				
Sandhill Crane	0		0	
	0		Ū	
Charadriidae: Plovers				
Black-bellied Plover	С	r	С	С
American Golden-Plover (late summer migrant)	0		r	
Wilson's Plover (breeds)	u	u	u	u
Semipalmated Plover	u		С	С
Piping Plover	r	0	u	u
Killdeer (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Haematopodidae: Oystercatchers				
American Oystercatcher (breeds)	u	u	u	u
Recurvirostridae: Stilts and Avocets				
Black-necked Still <i>(breeds)</i>	u	u	u	а
American Avocet	r		r	r
Scolopacidae: Sandpipers, Phalaropes, and Allies				
Greater Yellowlegs	u		С	С
Lesser Yellowlegs	u		С	r
Solitary Sandpiper Willet (breeds)	u	C	u	C
Spotted Sandpiper	C U	С	C C	C U
Upland Sandpiper	u O		0	u
Whimbrel	u		u	
Long-billed Curlew	~		0	0
Marbled Godwit	r		r	0
Ruddy Turnstone	С	r	С	С
Red Knot (sporadic in spring migration)	С		u	u
Sanderling	С		С	С

Families and Common Names	Sp	S	F	W
Sandpipers, Phalaropes and allies, <i>continued</i>	6		6	
Semipalmated Sandpiper (returns mid-summer)	C		C	0
Western Sandpiper (virtually gone by mid-April)	r		С	С
Least Sandpiper ( <i>starts returning mid-summer</i> )	С		С	С
White-rumped Sandpiper	r		r	0
Pectoral Sandpiper	r		u	0
Purple Sandpiper (most records from Huguenot Park) Dunlin	0		0	0
	r		u	С
Still Sandpiper	r		u	0
Buff-breasted Sandpiper		0	r	0
Short-billed Dowitcher	u	0	С	С
Long-billed Dowitcher (found in fresh water areas)	r		r	r
Wilson's Snipe	r		u	С
American Woodcock (breeding status unknown)	r	0	r	u
Wilson's Phalarope	0		r	
Red-necked Phalarope (mostly pelagic)	0		r	r
Red Phalarope (pelagic)			0	r
Laridae: Skuas, Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers				
Pomarine Jaeger	0		r	r
Parasitic Jaeger	0		r	r
Laughing Gull (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Bonaparte's Gull	r		r	u
Ring-billed Gull	u	r	С	С
Herring Gull	u	r	С	С
Lesser Black-backed Gull (most numerous in Oct.)	0		u	r
Glaucous Gull				0
Great Black-backed Gull	u	r	u	С
Gull-billed Tern (breeds, declining)	u	u	r	а
Caspian Tern	u	r	u	u
Royal Tern (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Sandwich Tern (breeds)	u	u	u	r
Common Tern (numbers peak in late summer)	r	r	С	
Forster's Tern	С		С	С
Least Tern (breeds)	С	С	r	
Bridled Tern (pelagic)	r	r	r	
Sooty Tern (pelagic)	u	u	u	
Black Tern (most numerous from land inAug./Sept.)	r	0	u	
Black Skimmer (breeds)	u	ů	ů	u
		C.	ŭ	
Columbidae: Pigeons and Doves				
Rock Pigeon (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Eurasian Collared-Dove (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Mourning Dove (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Common Ground-Dove (breeds)	u	u	u	u
Cuculidae: Cuckoos				
Yellow-billed Cuckoo (breeds)	u	u	u	
	4	u	ч	

Families and Common Names	Sp	S	F	W
Tytonidae: Barn Owls				
Barn Owl (very rare breeder)	0	0	0	0
Strigidae: Typical Owls				
Eastern Screech-Owl (breeds)     Great Horned Owl (breeds)	C	C	C	C
Barred Owl (breeds)	С С	C C	C C	C C
	0	0	Ū	Ū
Caprimulgidae: Goatsuckers				
Common Nighthawk (breeds)	С	С	u	а
Chuck-will's-widow (breeds)	С	С	r	0
Whip-poor-will (numbers highest mid/late-March)	r		0	0
Apodidae: Swifts				
Chimney Swift (breeds)	С	С	С	
Trochilidae: Hummingbirds	0	0	0	0
Ruby-throated Hummingbird (breeds)     Black-chinned Hummingbird	С	С	С	0 0
Rufous Hummingbird				0
Alcedinidae: Kingfishers				
Belted Kingfisher (breeds)	r	0	С	С
Picidae: Woodpeckers				
Red-headed Woodpecker (breeds)	r	r	r	r
Red-bellied Woodpecker (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	r		u	u
Downy Woodpecker (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Hairy Woodpecker (breeds, very local, w. Duval Co.)     Northern Flicker (breeds)	0	0	0	0
Pileated Woodpecker (breeds)	u u	r u	u u	u u
			ŭ	
Tyrannidae: Tyrant Flycatchers				
Eastern Wood-Pewee (breeds, western Duval Co.)	r	r	r	
Acadian Flycatcher (breeds, very local, w. Duval Co.)	r	r	r	
Willow Flycatcher     Least Flycatcher	0		0	
Eastern Phoebe	0 r		0 C	С
Great Crested Flycatcher (breeds)	C	С	C	a
Western Kingbird	a		0	
Eastern Kingbird (breeds, western Duval Co.)	u	u	u	
Gray Kingbird (breeds, very local near beaches)	0	r	0	
Laniidae: Shrikes				
Loggerhead Shrike (breeds)	u	u	u	u
,				

Families and Common Names	Sp	S	F	W
Vireonidae: Vireos				
White-eyed Vireo (breeds)	С	С	С	r
Yellow-throated Vireo ( <i>rare breeder, w. Duval Co.</i> )	r	r	r	'
Blue-headed Vireo	r		u.	u
Warbling Vireo	0		0	
Philadelphia Vireo	0		0	
Red-eyed Vireo (breeds)	C	С	C	
Corvidae: Jays and Crows				
Blue Jay (breeds)	С	С	С	С
American Crow (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Fish Crow (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Hirundinidae: Swallows				
Purple Martin (breeds)	С	С	r	
Tree Swallow	u		С	С
Northern Rough-winged Swallow (breeds, very	<i>local)</i> U	r	u	
Bank Swallow	r		r	
Cliff Swallow			r	
Barn Swallow (breeds)	С	u	С	
Paridae: Titmice and Chickadees				
Carolina Chickadee (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Tufted Titmouse (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Sittidae: Nuthatches				
Brown-headed Nuthatch (breeds)	u	u	u	u
Tradedutidae				
Troglodytidae: Wrens Carolina Wren (breeds)	С	C	C	C
Length Carolina Wren <i>(breeds)</i> House Wren	r	С	с u	C U
Winter Wren	I		u	0
Sedge Wren	r		u	u
Marsh Wren (breeds)	C	u	u	C
	0	u	ŭ	0
Regulidae: Kinglets				
Golden-crowned Kinglet			0	0
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	r		u	С
Sylviidae: Gnatcatchers				
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (breeds)	u	u	u	u

Families and Common Names	Sp	S	F	W
Turdidae: Thrushes				
Eastern Bluebird (breeds)	u	u	u	С
Veery	r		u	
Gray-cheeked Thrush			r	
Swainson's Thrush	0		u	
Hermit Thrush	u		u	С
Wood Thrush	0		0	
American Robin (very local, breeds)	u	r	u	С
Mimidae: Mockingbirds and Trashers				
Gray Catbird	u		u	С
Northern Mockingbird (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Brown Thrasher (breeds)	u	u	u	u
Sturnidae: Starlings				
European Starling (breeds)	С	С	С	С
	C	C	C	C
Motacillidae: Pipits				
American Pipit	r		r	u
Bombycillidae: Waxwings				
Cedar Waxwing (numbers highly variable in winter)	u		u	u
Parulidae: Wood-Warblers				
Blue-winged Warbler	r		u	
Golden-winged Warbler	0		0	
Tennessee Warbler	r		u	
Orange-crowned Warbler	r		u	u
Nashville Warbler	а		0	а
Northern Parula (breeds)	С	С	u	0
Yellow Warbler	u		u	
Chestnut-sided Warbler	0		u	
Magnolia Warbler	0		u	
Cape May Warbler	u		u	
Black-throated Blue Warbler	u		u	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	u		С	С
Black-throated Green Warbler	0		r	
Blackburnian Warbler	0		r	
Yellow-throated Warbler (breeds)	С	С	С	u
Pine Warbler (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Prairie Warbler	С		С	0
Palm Warbler	С		С	С
Bay-breasted Warbler	0		u	
Blackpoll Warbler	u		u	
Cerulean Warbler			0	
Black-and-white Warbler	u		u	u
American Redstart	u		С	
Prothonotary Warbler (very local as breeder)	r	r	r	
Worm-eating Warbler	u		u	
Swainson's Warbler	0			
Ovenbird	u		u	0

Families and Common Names	Sp	S	F	W
Warblers, continued				
Northern Waterthrush	u		С	0
Louisiana Waterthrush	0		r	
Kentucky Warbler	0		0	
Common Yellowthroat (breeds)	C	С	C	С
Hooded Warbler (very local, breeds western Duval Co.)	r	r	u	Ū
Wilson's Warbler	0		r	0
Canada Warbler	0		0	U
Yellow-breasted Chat (very local as breeder)	r	r	r	
Thraupidae: Tanagers				
Summer Tanager (breeds)	С	С	С	0
Scarlet Tanager	r	0	u	Ū
	I		u	
Emberizidae: New World Sparrows and Allies				
Eastern Towhee (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Bachman's Sparrow (local, breeds western Duval Co.)	r	r	r	0
Chipping Sparrow	u		С	С
Clay-colored Sparrow	0		0	0
Field Sparrow	r		r	u
Vesper Sparrow	r		r	r
Lark Sparrow			0	0
Savannah Sparrow	С		С	С
Grasshopper Sparrow	0		0	0
Henslow's Sparrow	0		0	r
Le Conte's Sparrow	0		0	0
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	u		u	u
Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow	u		u	u
Seaside Sparrow (breeds)	С	u	С	С
Fox Sparrow	0		0	0
Song Sparrow	0		u	u
Lincoln's Sparrow				0
Swamp Sparrow	r		u	u
White-throated Sparrow	r		r	ŭ
White-crowned Sparrow	r		r	r
Dark-eyed Junco	•		0	0
Lapland Longspur (most often seen at Huguenot Park)			0	0
Cardinalidae: Cardinals, Buntings, and Grosbeaks				
Northern Cardinal (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	r	C	r	r
Dhua Craala alu ()		r		1
	u	r	u	
Indigo Bunting (used to breed)	u	0	u	0
Painted Bunting (breeds)	u	u	u	0
Icteridae: Blackbirds and Orioles				
Bobolink	u		u	
Red-winged Blackbird (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Eastern Meadowlark (very local, declining as breeder)	u	r	u	u
Rusty Blackbird	0		0	r
Common Grackle (breeds)	С	С	С	С

Families and Common Names	Sp	S	F	W
Blackbirds and Orioles, continued				
Boat-tailed Grackle (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Brown-headed Cowbird (breeds)	С	С	С	С
Orchard Oriole (breeds)	u	u	r	
Baltimore Oriole	r		r	0
Fringillidae: Finches Purple Finch House Finch <i>(very local, breeds)</i>	r	r	r	0 r
Pine Siskin	0			0
American Goldfinch	r		u	u
Passeridae: Old World Sparrows House Sparrow (breeds)	С	С	С	С

Accidentals: the following 51 species have been seen 10 times or less in Duval County; however, keep them in mind for potential sightings depending on the season and/or habitat.

Black-bellied Whistling Duck Fulvous Whistling Duck Ross's Goose Brant Tundra Swan Common Eider Harlequin Duck Common Merganser Red-necked Grebe Eared Grebe Band-rumped Storm-Petrel White-tailed Tropicbird Great Cormorant Magnificent Frigatebird Snowy Plover Bar-tailed Godwit Baird's Sandpiper Curlew Sandpiper Long-tailed Jaeger Franklin's Gull Black-headed Gull Iceland Gull Sabine's Gull Black-legged Kittiwake Arctic Tern Atlantic Puffin White-winged Dove Monk Parakeet Black-billed Cuckoo Short-eared Owl Calliope Hummingbird Yellow-bellied Flycatcher

Alder Flycatcher Ash-throated Flycatcher Tropical Kingbird Scissor-tailed Flycatcher Bell's Vireo Horned Lark Cave Swallow Red-breasted Nuthatch **Brown Creeper** Connecticut Warbler Western Tanager **Snow Bunting** Black-headed Grosbeak Dickcissel Yellow-headed Blackbird Brewer's Blackbird Shiny Cowbird Bullock's Oriole **Evening Grosbeak** 

# **Field Notes**

Date:	No. of Species:
TimeAfield:	
Areas Covered:	
Observer(s):	
Weather:	

### **Birding Areas Worth a Visit**

### National Park Areas (Timucuan Preserve):

Kingsley Plantation Fort Caroline National Memorial Theodore Roosevelt Area Spanish Pond Cedar Point for more information call (904) 641-7155

### Florida State Parks:

Big and Little Talbot Islands State Parks Fort George Island Cultural State Park Pumpkin Hill Preserve State Park George Crady Bridge State Fishing Pier for more information call (904) 251-2320

### **City of Jacksonville Parks and Preserves:**

Huguenot Memorial Park Westside Regional Park Kathryn Abbey Hanna Park Helen Cooper Floyd (Little Jetties) Park Betz Tiger Point Preserve Thomas Creek Preserve Alimacani Boat Ramp Dutton Island Park and Preserve Jacksonville Baldwin Rail Trail Pope Duval Park for more information call (904) 630-4100

**The Great Florida Birding Trail**, administered by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, is a great resource available to learn about the excellent birding opportunities located in the Timucuan Preserve and beyond. Many of the sites listed above are included. Detailed information can be found by visiting their website at: http://www.floridabirdingtrail.com

Ilustration of the Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow by: Ashleigh Boice

Contact Information:

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Please send any records of rare birds, birds not on this list (for any season), abundances, or any other comments to the above address.

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