

# Enjoy Birding on Your National Wildlife Refuges



USFWS photo

Refuges are ideal places to connect with birds. Visitors can see thousands of sandhill cranes, watch colorful harlequin ducks raft on ocean waves, witness the courtship sky-dance of the American woodcock, and search the treetops for multiple species of multi-colored warblers during migration. National Wildlife Refuges are in every state, and you can find one within an hour's drive of most major metropolitan areas.

If you enjoy watching birds, whether in your backyard or away from home, you're in good company - nearly 50 million other Americans identify themselves as casual or avid bird enthusiasts.

*Northeast Refuges offer terrific opportunities to watch birds!*

## Blackwater NWR, Maryland

If you're a raptor fan, this is the place for you. Large populations of resident bald eagles and breeding ospreys are always fun to observe. Winter is a great time to look for tundra swans, snow and Canada geese, and over 20 species of ducks. In spring and summer the woodlands and marshes on this 25,000 acre refuge teem with 85 species of breeding birds.

<http://www.fws.gov/blackwater/>  
Bird checklist: [http://www.fws.gov/blackwater/pdf/BLK\\_Birds\\_8-08.pdf](http://www.fws.gov/blackwater/pdf/BLK_Birds_8-08.pdf)

## Montezuma NWR, New York

Good numbers of shorebirds and waterfowl are present in the managed wetlands during spring and fall migration. Many species of small but colorful warblers stop here on their way to northern breeding grounds, and a few kinds nest on the refuge. Bald eagles, ospreys, black terns and wading birds are commonly seen in warmer months.

<http://www.fws.gov/r5mnwr/index.html>  
Checklist: <http://www.npwr.usgs.gov/resource/birds/chekbird/r5/montezum.htm>

## Parker River NWR, Massachusetts

Known for impressive spring and fall migrations of many thousands of shorebirds, waterfowl, and songbirds, this barrier island refuge offers outstanding birding opportunities year round. Look for snowy owls and rough-legged hawks in winter, and nesting least terns and piping plovers during the spring and summer.

[www.fws.gov/northeast/parkerriver](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/parkerriver)  
Checklist: <http://www.npwr.usgs.gov/resource/birds/chekbird/r5/parker.htm>

## Missisquoi NWR, Vermont

The refuge provides important feeding, resting and breeding habitat for migratory birds, especially waterfowl, in the northern Lake Champlain section of the flyway. The refuge is home to the Shad Island great blue heron rookery, the largest colony in the state and one of the few places where black terns nest in Vermont.

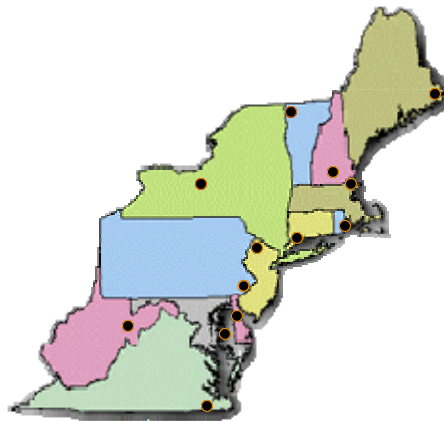
<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/missisquoi/>  
Checklist: <http://www.npwr.usgs.gov/resource/birds/chekbird/r5/missisquoi.htm>



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The National Wildlife Refuge System includes 500 refuges and 150 million acres of valuable habitats that provide homes and resting places for more than 700 species of birds. Many national wildlife refuges were specifically established as important nesting, feeding, and migratory stopovers for birds.

As the principal federal agency charged with protecting and enhancing populations and habitats of more than 700 species of birds, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System welcome you to connect with birds.



### Bombay Hook NWR, Delaware

Situated in the middle of the Atlantic Flyway, this coastal refuge is a popular migratory stopover for birds and birders. In fall and winter, thousands of noisy snow geese make the refuge their home.

Of course, shorebirds are a primary attraction here, and can be observed during spring and fall migration, and throughout the summer months.  
[www.fws.gov/northeast/bombayhook/](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/bombayhook/)  
Checklist: <http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/birds/chekbird/r5/bombay.htm>



Snow Geese

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### Canaan Valley NWR, West Virginia

A variety of habitats - woodland, field, swamp, bog and pond - create good opportunities to see typical birds of the extensive eastern deciduous forest. During spring and fall migrations, neotropical migratory songbirds are the main attractions, with many kinds of warblers (30+ species!), vireos, flycatchers and thrushes present in great numbers.

[www.fws.gov/canaanvalley/](http://www.fws.gov/canaanvalley/)  
Checklist: <http://www.fws.gov/canaanvalley/CVNWRbirdlist.htm>

### Moosehorn NWR, Maine

The easternmost refuge in the Atlantic Migratory Flyway, Moosehorn is known for its bald eagles, osprey, ruffed grouse and American woodcock. Visit from late April to early May at dusk to see woodcocks do their amazing courtship flights.

[www.fws.gov/northeast/moosehorn/](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/moosehorn/)

### Stewart B. McKinney NWR, Connecticut

The ten units of this refuge, spanning 70 miles of coastline, provide habitat for many species of wading birds, shorebirds, songbirds and terns, including the endangered roseate tern. In winter, waterfowl can be abundant.

[www.fws.gov/northeast/mckinney/](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/mckinney/)

### Great Dismal Swamp NWR, Virginia

Bird watching is excellent year round at this 112,000 acre refuge located mostly in southern Virginia (the rest is in NC). More than 200 species have been recorded here. Visitor favorites include barred owl, pileated woodpecker and wood duck. A remarkable 35 warbler species use the refuge to nest or during migration, including the secretive Swainson's warbler and the swamp-loving, neon-yellow prothonotary warbler.

[www.fws.gov/northeast/greatdismalswamp/](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/greatdismalswamp/)  
[www.fws.gov/northeast/greatdismalswamp/pdf/GDSNWRBirdlist06.pdf](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/greatdismalswamp/pdf/GDSNWRBirdlist06.pdf)

### Sachuest Point NWR, Rhode Island

A good place for raptors, you can look for peregrine falcons, northern harriers, and the occasional wintering snowy owl. The refuge is renowned for the largest winter populations of the boldly-patterned harlequin duck on the East Coast. Other species of sea ducks and sea birds are often observed on or near the water.

[www.fws.gov/northeast/sachuestpoint/](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/sachuestpoint/)  
Checklist: [www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/birds/chekbird/r5/44.htm](http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/birds/chekbird/r5/44.htm)



Harlequin Ducks

©Omar Runolfsson

### John Heinz NWR, Pennsylvania

Located just a mile from the Philadelphia International Airport, this refuge is an urban oasis for birds, wildlife and people. Despite its urban location, more than 300 species of birds have been recorded here. Staff and volunteers lead regular bird walks for all levels of birders, and beginners are always welcome.

[www.fws.gov/heinz/](http://www.fws.gov/heinz/)

### Wapack NWR, New Hampshire

Although small in size, this refuge provides good spruce-fir and northern hardwood-mixed habitat for migratory birds. During the fall, hike to the peak of 2,278' North Pack Monadnock Mountain for a chance to observe migrating raptors.  
[www.fws.gov/wapack/](http://www.fws.gov/wapack/)

### Wallkill River NWR, New Jersey

Visit from spring through fall to see beautiful neotropical migratory and nesting songbirds in refuge forests. Find nesting waterfowl in river bottomlands in this rugged corner of the state. And count migrating broad-winged hawks and other raptors from September to November.

[www.fws.gov/northeast/wallkillriver/](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/wallkillriver/)



Broad-winged Hawk

©Allen Dale

*Plan your birding visit to a National Wildlife Refuge today - go to [www.fws.gov/refuges](http://www.fws.gov/refuges) and [www.fws.gov/refuges/birding](http://www.fws.gov/refuges/birding) for more information.*



Young birder

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