

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Great Meadows, Assabet River, and Oxbow

*National Wildlife
Refuges*

Birds



Birding at Great Meadows, Assabet River, and Oxbow National Wildlife Refuges

The Eastern Massachusetts National Wildlife Refuge Complex is made up of eight national wildlife refuges throughout Massachusetts. This checklist has been developed for three of the Eastern Massachusetts Complex's inland refuges located on the Sudbury, Concord, Nashua, and Assabet Rivers. Great Meadows NWR is located in the towns of Sudbury, Wayland, Lincoln, Concord, Framingham, Bedford, Carlisle, and Billerica; Oxbow NWR is located in the towns of Harvard, Shirley, Lancaster, and Ayer; and the Assabet River NWR is located in the towns of Sudbury, Maynard, Hudson, and Stow.

The three refuges are composed of approximately 7,000 acres of diverse habitat, including open water, marshes, and uplands. The wetland portions receive heavy use by waterfowl during the fall migration. All of the over 220 species of birds listed here have been recorded in the past ten years.



Betsy Moyer

Marsh wren



Great blue heron reflections.

Don Crasco

Neotropical Migratory Birds

Neotropical migratory birds are those species that nest in the United States or Canada, and spend the winter primarily south of our border in Mexico, Central or South America, or in the Caribbean. Many of them, including conspicuous or colorful hawks, hummingbirds, warblers, and tanagers, and less colorful but no less important flycatchers, thrushes, and vireos, are experiencing population declines due to widespread loss of habitats important for their survival. Preservation of many different habitats for nesting, wintering, and migratory stopover sites is becoming vital for the survival of many of these birds.

American goldfinch



Bruce Flaig

This list was prepared in cooperation with the Massachusetts Audubon Society, with assistance from author Richard Walton and other knowledgeable local birders. Species are listed in accordance with the seventh edition (1998) A.O.U. checklist and the 42nd supplement to that checklist (July 2000).

Symbols used in this list are defined as follows:

Occurrence

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

Abundance

A Abundant
 A species which is very numerous.
 C Common
 likely to be seen or heard in suitable habitat.
 U Uncommon
 Present, not certain to be seen.
 O Occasional
 Seen only a few times during a season
 R Rare
 may be present by not every year
 X Accidental
 Species outside normal migration /wintering range.
 * Nesting Species
 * Exotic (introduced or escaped)
 Hypotheticals are reported but not verified. They are listed under species heading.

Italics = Federal Threatened or Endangered Status



Bruce Flaig
 Great blue heron

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Loons				
___ Red-throated Loon	R		R	
___ Common Loon	R		R	
Grebes				
___ Pied-billed Grebe	U		U	U
___ Horned Grebe	R		R	
Cormorants				
___ Double-crested Cormorant	U		U	
___ Great Cormorant				X
Herons, Bitterns, and Allies				
___ *American Bittern	U	U	U	
___ *Least Bittern	O	O	R	
___ Great Blue Heron	U	C	C	O
___ Great Egret	O	R		
___ Snowy Egret		R	R	
___ Little Blue Heron		R		
___ Cattle Egret	R		R	
___ *Green Heron	U	U	C	
___ Black-crowned Night-Heron	R	C	U	
___ Yellow-crowned Night-Heron		R	R	
Ibises				
___ Glossy Ibis	R	R	R	
Vultures				
___ Turkey Vulture	O	O	O	
Ducks, Geese, and Swans				
___ Snow Goose	R		R	
___ *Canada Goose	A	C	A	C
___ Mute Swan	R	R	R	
___ *Wood Duck	C	O	A	R
___ *Gadwall	O	O	O	O
___ Eurasian Wigeon	R		R	
___ American Wigeon	U		C	R
___ *American Black Duck	C	U	A	O
___ *Mallard	A	C	A	U
___ *Blue-winged Teal	O	O	O	
___ Northern Shoveler	O		O	
___ Northern Pintail	U		U	O
___ *Green-winged Teal	C	O	A	O
___ Canvasback	R		R	
___ Redhead	R		R	
___ Ring-necked Duck	A		O	
___ Greater Scaup	R		R	
___ Lesser Scaup	R		R	
___ Bufflehead	U		O	R
___ Common Goldeneye	U		R	R
___ Barrow's Goldeneye				X
___ Hooded Merganser	U	R	O	O
___ Common Merganser	U		U	C
___ Ruddy Duck	R		O	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Hawks, Kites, and Eagles				
___ Osprey	U	R	U	
___ <i>Bald Eagle</i>	R		R	R
___ Northern Harrier	O	R	U	R
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk	O		U	O
___ Cooper's Hawk	R		R	R
___ Northern Goshawk	O	O	O	O
___ Red-shouldered Hawk	O	R	R	
___ *Broad-winged Hawk	U	U	C	
___ *Red-tailed Hawk	C	C	C	
___ Rough-legged Hawk	R			R
Falcons				
___ *American Kestrel	U	U	U	U
___ Merlin	R		O	
___ Peregrine Falcon	R		O	
Grouse, Turkey, and Old World Quail				
___ *Ring-necked Pheasant*	U	U	U	U
___ *Ruffed Grouse	U	U	U	U
___ Wild Turkey	R	R	R	R
New World Quail				
___ Northern Bobwhite	R	R	R	R
Rails, Gallinules, and Coots				
___ King Rail	R	R	R	
___ *Virginia Rail	U	U	U	R
___ *Sora	U	U	U	R
___ *Common Moorhen	R	R	R	
___ American Coot	O		O	R
Plovers				
___ Black-bellied Plover			R	
___ American Golden-Plover			R	
___ Semipalmated Plover	R		O	
___ *Killdeer	C	U	C	

Wood Duck



Bruce Flagg

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Sandpipers, Phalaropes, and Allies				
___ Greater Yellowlegs	O	R	O	
___ Lesser Yellowlegs	R	O	O	
___ Solitary Sandpiper	U	U	U	
___ *Spotted Sandpiper	U	C	U	
___ Upland Sandpiper	R		R	
___ Hudsonian Godwit				X
___ Ruddy Turnstone	R		R	
___ Sanderling	R		R	
___ Semipalmated Sandpiper	R	O	O	
___ Western Sandpiper			R	
___ Least Sandpiper	O	O	O	
___ White-rumped Sandpiper	R		R	
___ Baird's Sandpiper				X
___ Pectoral Sandpiper	O	U	U	
___ Purple Sandpiper				X
___ Dunlin	R		R	
___ Stilt Sandpiper			R	
___ Ruff	X		X	
___ Common Snipe	U	U	U	
___ *American Woodcock	U	O	U	R
___ Wilson's Phalarope	R	R	R	
___ Red-necked Phalarope	X		X	
___ Red Phalarope	X		X	
Gulls and Terns				
___ Bonaparte's Gull	R	R		
___ Ring-billed Gull	U	U	U	
___ Herring Gull	C	C	C	C
___ Iceland Gull	R			R
___ Glaucous Gull	R			R
___ Great Black-backed Gull	O	O	O	C
___ Caspian Tern	R		R	
___ Common Tern	R	R	R	
___ Black Tern	R	R		
Doves				
___ *Rock Dove*	U	U	U	O
___ *Mourning Dove	C	C	C	C
Cuckoos				
___ *Black-billed Cuckoo	U	U	U	
___ *Yellow-billed Cuckoo	O	O	O	
Typical Owls				
___ *Eastern Screech-Owl	U	U	U	U
___ *Great Horned Owl	U	U	U	U
___ *Barred Owl	R	R	O	O
___ Northern Saw-whet Owl				R
Goatsuckers				
___ Common Nighthawk	U	U	U	
___ Whip-poor-will	R	R	R	
Swifts				
___ Chimney Swift	C	C	U	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Hummingbirds				
___*Ruby-throated Hummingbird	O	O	U	
Kingfishers				
___*Belted Kingfisher	U	U	U	U
Woodpeckers and Allies				
___Red-headed Woodpecker				R
___Red-bellied Woodpecker	R	R		R
___Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	R			R
___*Downy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C
___*Hairy Woodpecker	U	U	U	U
___*Northern Flicker	C	C	C	O
___Pileated Woodpecker	O	O	O	O
Tyrant Flycatchers				
___*Eastern Wood-Pewee	U	U	O	
___Yellow-bellied Flycatcher			R	
___*Alder Flycatcher	R	R		
___*Willow Flycatcher	U	C		
___Least Flycatcher	R	R		
___*Eastern Phoebe	C	C	U	
___*Great Crested Flycatcher	U	C		
___*Eastern Kingbird	C	C	O	
Shrikes				
___Northern Shrike	O		O	O
Vireos				
___White-eyed Vireo	R	R		
___*Yellow-throated Vireo	O	O		
___Blue-headed Vireo	O		O	
___*Warbling Vireo	C	C	O	
___*Red-eyed Vireo	C	C	C	
Crows and Jays				
___*Blue Jay	C	A	A	
___*American Crow	C	C	A	A
___*Fish Crow	U	U	U	U
Larks				
___Horned Lark	R		R	
Swallows				
___Purple Martin	R			
___*Tree Swallow	A	C	A	
___*No. Rough-winged Swallow	O	R	R	
___*Bank Swallow	C	C	U	
___Cliff Swallow	O	O	O	
___*Barn Swallow	A	C	A	
Chickadees and Titmice				
___*Black-capped Chickadee	C	C	A	C
___*Tufted Titmouse	C	U	C	C
Nuthatches				
___Red-breasted Nuthatch	O	R	U	O
___*White-breasted Nuthatch	C	C	C	C
Creepers				
___*Brown Creeper	U	U	U	U

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Wrens				
___Carolina Wren	O	O	O	O
___*House Wren	C	O	U	
___Winter Wren	R		O	R
___Sedge Wren	R	R	R	
___*Marsh Wren	C	C	U	R
Kinglets				
___Golden-crowned Kinglet	O		U	O
___Ruby-crowned Kinglet	C		C	R
Gnatcatchers				
___*Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	O	O		
Thrushes				
___*Eastern Bluebird	O	O	O	O
___*Veery	U	U	O	
___Gray-cheeked Thrush	O		O	
___Bicknell's Thrush	R		R	
___Swainson's Thrush	U		U	
___Hermit Thrush	U	O	U	R
___*Wood Thrush	C	U	U	
___*American Robin	C	C	C	U
Mockingbirds and Thrashers				
___*Gray Catbird	C	C	U	R
___*Northern Mockingbird	C	C	C	C
___*Brown Thrasher	O	O	O	R
Starlings				
___*European Starling*	A	A	A	A
Pipits				
___American Pipit	R		O	
Waxwings				
___Bohemian Waxwing				X
___*Cedar Waxwing	U	U	C	O
Wood-Warblers				
___*Blue-winged Warbler	O	O		
___Golden-winged Warbler	R			
___Tennessee Warbler	O		O	
___Nashville Warbler	U	R	O	
___Northern Parula	O		O	
___*Yellow Warbler	C	A	O	
___*Chestnut-sided Warbler	O	R	O	
___Magnolia Warbler	U		O	
___Cape May Warbler	O		O	
___Black-throated Blue Warbler	O	R	O	
___Yellow-rumped Warbler	C		C	O
___Black-throated Green Warbler	U		U	
___Blackburnian Warbler	O	O		
___Pine Warbler	U	O	R	
___*Prairie Warbler	O	O	O	
___Palm Warbler	C		U	R
___Bay-breasted Warbler	O		O	
___Blackpoll Warbler	O		A	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Wood-Warblers, Continued				
___*Black-and-white Warbler	C	O	O	
___*American Redstart	O	O	U	
___Prothonotary Warbler	R	R		
___*Ovenbird	U	U	O	
___Northern Waterthrush	U	R	U	
___Mourning Warbler	R	R		
___*Common Yellowthroat	C	C	C	R
___Wilson's Warbler	O		O	
___Canada Warbler	O			
___Yellow-breasted Chat	R		R	
Tanagers				
___*Scarlet Tanager	C	U	O	
Sparrows				
___*Eastern Towhee	C	U	U	R
___American Tree Sparrow	U		C	C
___*Chipping Sparrow	U	C	U	
___*Field Sparrow	U	U	U	U
___Vesper Sparrow	R		R	
___Savannah Sparrow	U	R	C	R
___Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow			O	
___Fox Sparrow	O		O	R
___*Song Sparrow	C	C	C	U
___Lincoln's Sparrow	R		U	
___*Swamp Sparrow	C	C	C	O
___White-throated Sparrow	C		C	O
___White-crowned Sparrow	O		O	
___Dark-eyed Junco	C		C	C
___Snow Bunting	R		R	R

Birding can be fun for all age groups.



Cheryl Simpson

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Cardinals				
___*Northern Cardinal	C	C	C	C
___*Rose-breasted Grosbeak	C	U	O	
___*Indigo Bunting	O	O	O	
___Dickcissel			R	
Blackbirds				
___*Bobolink	U	U	U	
___*Red-winged Blackbird	A	A	A	O
___Eastern Meadowlark	R	R	R	R
___Rusty Blackbird	C		C	R
___*Common Grackle	C	C	A	R
___*Brown-headed Cowbird	C	C	C	O
___Orchard Oriole	O	O		
___*Baltimore Oriole	C	U	O	
Finches				
___Pine Grosbeak				R
___Purple Finch	O	R	O	O
___House Finch	U	U	C	U
___Common Redpoll	R			R
___Pine Siskin	R		R	R
___*American Goldfinch	C	C	C	O
___Evening Grosbeak	O		O	O
Old World Sparrow				
___*House Sparrow*	C	C	C	C

Please re-use this brochure or return your copy for others to enjoy.

Savannah Sparrow



Bruce Flaig

**Eastern Massachusetts
National Wildlife Refuge Complex
Weir Hill Road
Sudbury, Massachusetts 01776
978/443 4661
978/443 2898 Fax
r5rw_gmnwr@fws.gov**

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
<http://www.fws.gov/r5fws/ma/grm.htm>**

**For Refuge Information
1 800/344 WILD**

October 2000



**Cover photograph of Eastern Bluebird
by Bruce Flaig**