

Welcome to the J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge. The 6,000+ acres of the Refuge contain a variety of subtropical habitats, including the upland ridges and freshwater swales of the island’s interior ecosystem as well as the mangrove forest and seagrass beds of its estuarine mangrove fringes. Numerous neotropical migrants and resident birds depend on this variety of habitats for their existence. Refuge managers and biologists are responsible for the management and protection of these valuable habitats. More than half of Sanibel Island is permanently protected, either as part of the National Wildlife Refuge (one of over five hundred in the United States) or by other conservation groups.

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

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

Seasonal abundance

- a abundant (a common species which is very numerous)
- c common (likely to be seen in suitable habitat)
- fc fairly common (present but not always seen)
- u uncommon (present but difficult to find)
- r rare (seen at irregular intervals)

This checklist includes approximately 180 species of birds. A list of approximately 65 accidental sightings (seen a few times during the past several years) has also been included. If you should find an unlisted species, please let us know at Refuge Headquarters. We will appreciate your help in updating our records.

Favorite birdwatching sites are the J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge (the Bailey Tract, Wildlife Drive, Indigo Trail, and the Shell Mound Trail), the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation properties, the causeway islands, gulf beaches, the lighthouse area and Blind Pass.

Over two-thirds of our nation’s land is privately owned and contains some of the most important fish and wildlife habitat in the United States. You can help protect this habitat and contribute to the health of the land and the quality of life by supporting your local conservation efforts. Learn what you can do to promote wildlife usage of your backyard by contacting your local representative of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

When visiting our nation’s public and private lands, it is very important that each of us practice and promote ethical behavior while viewing and photographing wildlife. Although visitors may not think their individual actions are harmful to wildlife, the

cumulative effect of individual actions can jeopardize an animal's ability to survive. Above All, Do Not Disturb Feeding, Resting or Nesting Birds; and Please Do Not Litter or Feed Wildlife on the Refuge.

To learn what you can do to be a more ethical wildlife observer or photographer, ask for information in the Education Center or contact any Refuge Staff.

	F	W	SP	S
Loons and Grebes				
Common Loon	r	r	r	
Pied-billed Grebe	fc	c	fc	r
Pelicans and Allies				
American White Pelican	c	c	r	r
Brown Pelicana	a	a	a	
Double-crested Cormorant	a	a	a	a
Anhinga	c	c	c	c
Magnificent Frigatebird	u	u	u	c
Wading Birds				
American Bittern	r	r	r	
Least Bittern	r	r	r	r
Great Blue Heron	c	c	c	c
Great Egret	c	c	c	c
Snowy Egret	c	c	c	c
Little Blue Heron	c	c	c	c
Tricolored Heron	c	c	c	c
Reddish Egret	c	c	c	c
Cattle Egret	u	fc	u	u
Green Heron	c	c	c	c
Black-crowned Night-Heron	u	fc	u	u
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	c	c	c	c
White Ibis	a	a	a	a
Glossy Ibis	r	r	r	r
Roseate Spoonbill	c	c	c	c
Wood Stork	fc	fc	fc	r
Ducks				
American Wigeon	r	r	r	
Mottled Duck	c	c	c	
Blue-winged Teal	u	c	c	
Northern Shoveler	r	r	r	
Northern Pintail	r	r	r	
Green-winged Teal		u	u	
Lesser Scaup		r	r	
Hooded Merganser		r		
Red-breasted Merganser	u	c	u	

	F	W	SP	S
Vultures, Hawks, and Allies				
Black Vulture	c	c	c	fc
Turkey Vulture	a	a	a	a
Osprey	a	a	a	
Swallow-tailed Kite	r		r	r
Bald Eagle	fc	fc	fc	u
Northern Harrier	r	r	r	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	r	r	r	
Cooper's Hawk		r	r	
Red-shouldered Hawk	a	a	a	
Broad-winged Hawk		r	r	
Short-tailed Hawk	r	r	r	r
Red-tailed Hawk		r	r	
American Kestrel	fc	c	r	
Merlin	u	u	u	
Peregrine Falcon	u	u	r	
Rails, Moorhens, Coots, and Limpkins				
Clapper Rail		u	u	
King Rail	r	r	r	r
Virginia Rail		r	r	
Sora		r	r	
Common Moorhen	c	c	c	c
American Coot		c	c	
Limpkin	r	r	r	r
Shorebirds				
Black-bellied Plover	c	c	fc	u
Snowy Plover	u	u	u	fc
Wilson's Plover	r	u	r	r
Semipalmated Plover	fc	c	fc	r
Piping Plover	r	fc	r	
Killdeer	fc	fc	fc	r
American Oystercatcher	r	r	r	u
Black-necked Stilt			fc	fc
Greater Yellowlegs	fc	fc	fc	r
Lesser Yellowlegs	fc	fc	fc	r
Solitary Sandpiper	r		u	
Willet	c	a	c	fc
Spotted Sandpiper	c	c	c	u
Marbled Godwit	r	u	r	
Ruddy Turnstone	c	c	c	r
Red Knot	fc	fc	fc	r
Sanderling	fc	c	fc	r
Semipalmated Sandpiper	r		r	
Western Sandpiper	fc	fc	fc	r
Least Sandpiper	fc	fc	fc	r

	F	W	SP	S
Dunlin	fc	c	fc	r
Stilt Sandpiper		r	r	
Short-billed Dowitcher	fc	fc	fc	r
Common Snipe		r		
Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers				
Laughing Gull	c	a	c	c
Bonaparte's Gull		r	r	
Ring-billed Gull	u	c	u	
Herring Gull		u	r	
Caspian Tern		r	r	
Royal Tern	fc	c	fc	
Sandwich Tern	u	c	u	
Forster's Tern	r	c		
Least Tern	r		u	c
Black Skimmer	r	fc	r	r
Doves				
Eurasian Collared-Dove	c	c	c	c
Mourning Dove	a	a	a	a
Common Ground-Dove	c	c	c	c
Cuckoos				
Yellow-billed Cuckoo			r	
Mangrove Cuckoo	r	r	u	u
Owls				
Barn Owl	u	u	u	u
Eastern Screech-Owl	u	u	u	u
Great Horned Owl	u	u	u	u
Goatsuckers and Swifts				
Common Nighthawk	fc		fc	fc
Chuck-will's-widow	u		u	u
Whip-poor-will			r	
Chimney Swift			r	
Hummingbirds				
Ruby-throated Hummingbird			u	
Kingfishers				
Belted Kingfisher	c	c	u	u
Woodpeckers				
Red-bellied Woodpecker	a	a	a	a
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		u	r	
Downy Woodpecker	r	r	r	r
Northern Flicker	u	u	u	u
Pileated Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
Flycatchers				
Eastern Wood-Pewee			r	
Acadian Flycatcher			r	
Eastern Phoebe	r	fc	u	

		F	W	SP	S
Great Crested Flycatcher	fc	fc	c	c	
Eastern Kingbird	fc	r	u	r	
Gray Kingbird		r	u		
Shrikes and Vireos					
Loggerhead Shrike	r	u	r	r	
White-eyed Vireo	fc	fc	fc	u	
Blue-headed Vireo		fc	fc		
Red-eyed Vireo	r		r		
Black-whiskered Vireo		r	r	u	
Jays and Crows					
Blue Jay	fc	fc	fc	u	
American Crow	fc	u	u	u	
Fish Crow	a	a	a	a	
Swallows					
Purple Martin	r	u	u	u	
Tree Swallow	u	fc	u		
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	r	r	r	r	
Bank Swallow	r		r		
Barn Swallow	u	r	u	r	
Wrens					
Carolina Wren	fc	fc	fc	fc	
House Wren	u	r	u	u	
Sedge Wren		r			
Marsh Wren		r			
Kinglets and Gnatcatchers					
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		r			
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	fc	c	u	r	
Thrushes					
Veery	r				
Wood Thrush	r		r		
American Robin		fc			
Mockingbirds, Thrashers, and Allies					
Gray Catbird	c	c	c	u	
Northern Mockingbird	a	a	a	a	
Brown Thrasher	u	u	u	u	
Waxwings					
Cedar Waxwing		u	r		
Warblers					
Orange-crowned Warbler		r	r		
Nashville Warbler			r		
Northern Parula	u	u	u	r	
Yellow Warbler	r		r		
Magnolia Warbler		r			
Cape May Warbler			r		
Black-throated Blue Warbler			u		

	F	W	SP	S
Yellow-rumped Warbler	fc	a	c	
Black-throated Green Warbler			r	
Blackburnian Warbler	r		r	
Yellow-throated Warbler	fc	fc	fc	
Pine Warbler	u	u	fc	fc
Prairie Warbler	fc	fc	fc	fc
Palm Warbler	fc	c	fc	
Blackpoll Warbler			r	
Black-and-white Warbler	fc	fc	fc	
American Redstart	u		u	
Prothonotary Warbler			r	
Worm-eating Warbler		r	r	
Ovenbird	fc	fc	fc	
Northern Waterthrush		r	r	
Louisiana Waterthrush		r	r	
Common Yellowthroat	fc	c	fc	fc
Hooded Warbler	u		u	
Tanagers				
Summer Tanager	r		r	
Scarlet Tanager	r		r	
Sparrows, Cardinals, Buntings, and Finches				
Eastern Towhee	u	u	u	u
Swamp Sparrow		u		
Northern Cardinal	a	a	a	a
Rose-breasted Grosbeak			r	
Blue Grosbeak			r	
Indigo Bunting			r	
Painted Bunting	r		r	
American Goldfinch		u		
Blackbirds, Grackles, Cowbirds, and Orioles				
Red-winged Blackbird	u	fc	fc	u
Common Grackle	a	a	a	a
Boat-tailed Grackle	c	c	c	c
Brown-headed Cowbird	r	r	r	r
Baltimore Oriole			r	
Starlings and Old World Sparrows				
European Starling	fc	fc	fc	fc
House Sparrow	c	c	c	c

Accidentals (Birds seen only a few times during the past several years):

Horned Grebe	Vermilion Flycatcher
Northern Gannet	Western Kingbird
Greater Flamingo	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
Fulvous Whistling-Duck	Yellow-throated Vireo
Snow Goose	Philadelphia Vireo
Muscovy Duck	Tufted Titmouse
Wood Duck	Eastern Bluebird
Gadwall	Swainson's Thrush
Eurasian Wigeon	Hermit Thrush
Mallard	American Pipit
Canvasback	Blue-winged Warbler
Redhead	Golden-winged Warbler
Ring-necked Duck	Tennessee Warbler
Bufflehead	Nashville Warbler
Ruddy Duck	Chipping Sparrow
Swainson's Hawk	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Black Rail	Savannah Sparrow
Purple Gallinule	Bay-breasted Warbler
Sandhill Crane	Bobolink
American Avocet	Kentucky Warbler
Whimbrel	Eastern Meadowlark
Long-billed Curlew	Wilson's Warbler
White-rumped Sandpiper	Shiny Cowbird
Pectoral Sandpiper	Yellow-breasted Chat
Parasitic Jaeger	Orchard Oriole
Lesser Black-backed Gull	
Great Black-backed Gull	
Gull-billed Tern	
Roseate Tern	
Common Tern	
Black Tern	
Rock Dove/ Pigeon	
White-crowned Pigeon	
White-winged Dove	
Monk Parakeet	
Green Parakeet	
Black-billed Cuckoo	
Smooth-billed Ani	
Barred Owl	
Short-eared Owl	
Red-headed Woodpecker	
Hairy Woodpecker	
Least Flycatcher	