

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

National Conservation Training Center

Birds



“Crouching quietly within the canopy of old forest I hear the river murmur nearby. Many birds know I'm here, carefully monitoring me as they busy about their day. Quietly.... so quietly I share their space this moment.”



Eastern Bluebird

Introduction



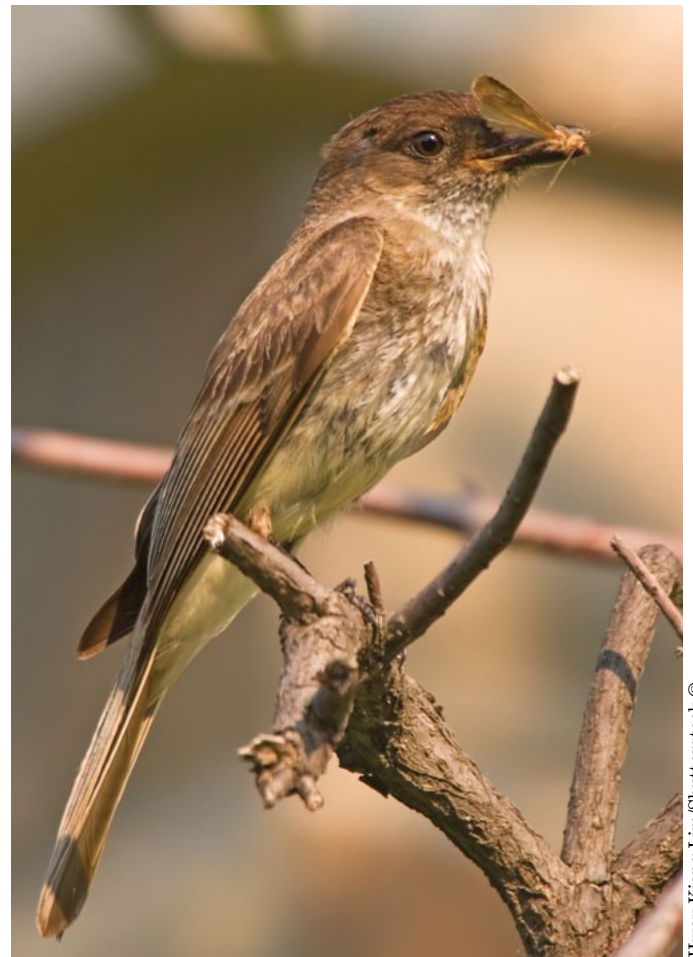
Barn Swallow

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center leads the nation with training and education for natural resource managers to meet the goal of conserving fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the benefit of the American public.

Located in West Virginia's Shenandoah Valley along the Potomac River, NCTC is a pastoral landscape of rolling forested hills and wind-swept farm fields. The campus "footprint" comprises a little over 100 acres, leaving untouched more than 400 acres of natural habitats, including old fields and meadows, deciduous forests, the Potomac River, and shoreline springs, creeks, ponds, small wetlands, and moss-covered limestone cliffs.

The Shenandoah Valley and the Potomac River form natural bird migration corridors, so many species, including over 30 kinds of warblers, can be seen during spring and fall. Year-round residents likely to be seen in winter include the silent, river-stalking Great Blue Heron; the largest of all common woodpeckers, the pileated; and the quintessential eastern winter bird, the brilliant red northern cardinal.

In summer bird enthusiasts delight as they listen to the ethereal, fluty ee-oh-lay calls of the vocal wood thrush. Peer into the green canopy above and catch the fleeting orange and yellow-hued flashes of Baltimore orioles flitting amid sycamore branches. Some lucky birders may even witness a ruby-throated hummingbird, the East's only hummingbird species and one that regularly breeds at NCTC. Over 50 bird species currently nest on campus, including green herons, red-shouldered hawks, barred owls, indigo buntings, and a faithful pair of American bald eagles!



Eastern Phoebe

Tools for birding

For your convenience, binoculars and trail maps are available for check-out at the front desk in the Entry/Auditorium building. Bird identification books are available for checkout in the Conservation Library in the Commons.

Legend

This list was compiled with the help of NCTC personnel, local master naturalists, and the Potomac Valley Audubon Society. NCTC offers special thanks to Carol Del-Colle for her persistent hard work and expertise in creating this list.

Season

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

Relative Abundance

a	abundant	very numerous
c	common	likely to be seen or heard in suitable habitat
u	uncommon	present, but not certain to be seen
o	occasional	seen only a few times during a season
r	rare	may be present, but not every year

* Indicates birds known to nest, or have nested, on or near NCTC.

Mallard Hen



Donna Dewhurst/USFWS

Loons

	Sp	S	F	W
___ Common Loon	r		r	r

Grebes

___ Pied-billed Grebe	u		u	o
___ Horned Grebe	o		u	r
___ Red-necked Grebe				r

Bitterns & Herons

___ American Bittern	r			
___ Great Blue Heron	c	c	c	c
___ Great Egret	r			
___ *Green Heron	c	c	u	

Swans, Geese, & Ducks

___ Tundra Swan	o			o
___ *Canada Goose	c	c	c	c
___ *Wood Duck	c	u	u	u
___ American Wigeon	o			o
___ Gadwall	o			o
___ Green-winged Teal	r		r	
___ *Mallard	c	c	c	c
___ American Black Duck	u	u	u	u
___ Blue-winged Teal	r			r
___ Redhead			r	
___ Ring-necked Duck	u		r	r
___ Greater Scaup	r			r
___ Lesser Scaup	u		o	r
___ Long-tailed Duck	r			
___ Common Goldeneye	o			o
___ Bufflehead	u		u	o
___ Hooded Merganser	u		o	u
___ Common Merganser	u		u	u
___ Red-breasted Merganser				o
___ Ruddy Duck	r		r	

Red-tailed Hawk



Lee Karney/USFWS



Dave Menke/USFWS

Mourning Dove

Vultures, Hawks, & Falcons

___ Turkey Vulture	c	c	c	c
___ Black Vulture	c	u	c	c
___ Osprey	u	o	u	u
___ *Bald Eagle	u	o	u	u
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk	o	o	u	r
___ Cooper's Hawk	o	o	u	r
___ Broad-winged Hawk	r	o	u	u
___ *Red-shouldered Hawk	u	u	u	u
___ *Red-tailed Hawk	c	c	c	c
___ *American Kestrel	u	o	u	u

Grouse, Quail, & Turkey

___ *Wild Turkey	u	u	u	u
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Rails & Coots

___ American Coot	o	u	o	
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Plovers & Sandpipers

___ *Killdeer	c	c	u	o
___ Solitary Sandpiper	u	u	o	
___ Spotted Sandpiper	u	u	o	
___ American Woodcock	r			

Gulls & Terns

___ Bonaparte Gull	r			
___ Ring-billed Gull	u		o	o
___ Herring Gull	r			o

Pigeons & Doves

___ Rock Pigeon	c	c	c	c
___ *Mourning Dove	c	c	c	c

Cuckoos

___ Yellow-billed Cuckoo	u	u		
___ Black-billed Cuckoo	o			

Owls

___ Eastern Screech-Owl	o	o	o	o
___ Great Horned Owl	c	o	o	r
___ *Barred Owl	u	u	u	u
___ Northern Saw-whet Owl	r		r	

Goatsuckers

___ Common Nighthawk	u		u	
___ Whip-poor-will	r			

Swifts

___ Chimney Swift	c	c	c	
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Hummingbirds

___ *Ruby-throated Hummingbird	u	u	u	
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Kingfishers

___ Belted Kingfisher	c	c	c	o
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Woodpeckers

___ *Red-bellied Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	r		u	u
___ *Downy Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
___ *Hairy Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
___ *Northern Flicker	c	c	c	c
___ *Pileated Woodpecker	c	c	c	c

Northern Flicker



Dave Menke/USFWS

Flycatchers

___ *Eastern Wood-Pewee.....	c	c	u	
___ *Acadian Flycatcher	c	c	o	
___ *Eastern Phoebe.....	c	c	u	r
___ *Great Crested Flycatcher	u	c		
___ *Eastern Kingbird	c	c		

Larks

___ Horned Lark			o	
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Swallows

___ Purple Martin	o	o		
___ *Tree Swallow	c	c	u	
___ Bank Swallow	o	r	o	
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow ..	o	o	o	
___ *Barn Swallow	c	c	c	

Crows & Jays

___ *Blue Jay	c	c	c	c
___ *American Crow.....	c	c	c	c
___ Fish Crow	u	c	o	r
___ Common Raven.....	o	o	o	o

Chickadees & Titmice

___ Black-capped Chickadee			r	IR
___ *Carolina Chickadee.....	c	c	c	c
___ *Tufted Titmouse	c	c	c	c

Nuthatches

___ Red-breasted Nuthatch.....	r		r	
___ *White-breasted Nuthatch	c	c	c	c

Creepers

___ Brown Creeper	u		u	u
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American Robin



Dr. Barnes/USFWS



George Gentry/USFWS

Common Yellowthroat

Wrens

___ *Carolina Wren.....	c	c	c	c
___ *House Wren	u	u	o	
___ Winter Wren	r			o

Kinglets & Gnatcatchers

___ Golden-crowned Kinglet	u	u	u	u
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet.....	o			r
___ *Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.....	c	c		

Thrushes

___ *Eastern bluebird.....	c	c	u	u
___ Hermit Thrush	o			o
___ *Wood Thrush	c	c	r	
___ *American Robin	c	c	c	u

Mockingbirds & Thrashers

___ *Gray Catbird	c	c	o	
___ *Northern Mockingbird.....	c	c	c	c
___ *Brown Thrasher	c	c	o	

Waxwings, Shrikes & Starlings

___ Cedar Waxwing.....	u	u	u	u
___ Loggerhead Shrike.....			r	r
___ *European Starling	c	c	c	c

Indigo Bunting



Mark Tegges/Shutterstock ©

Vireos

___ * White-eyed Vireo	c	c	o
___ Blue-headed Vireo	o		o
___ Yellow-throated Vireo	o	o	
___ Warbling Vireo	o	u	
___ Philadelphia Vireo	r		r
___ * Red-eyed Vireo	c	c	

Wood Warblers

___ Blue-winged Warbler	o	o	o
___ Tennessee Warbler	o		o
___ Nashville Warbler	o		o
___ * Northern Parula	u	u	
___ * Yellow Warbler	u	u	
___ Chestnut-sided Warbler	o		o
___ Magnolia Warbler	o		o
___ Cape May Warbler	o		o
___ Black-throated Blue Warbler	o		o
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler	u	u	u
___ Black-throated Green Warbler	o		o
___ Blackburnian Warbler	o		o
___ Yellow-throated Warbler	u	u	o
___ Pine Warbler	u	u	u
___ Prairie Warbler	u	u	
___ Palm Warbler	o		o
___ Bay-breasted Warbler	o		o
___ Blackpoll Warbler	o		r
___ Cerulean Warbler	o	o	o
___ Black-and-white Warbler	o		o
___ American Redstart	u	o	r
___ Prothonotary Warbler	o	o	

___ Worm-eating Warbler	o		r
___ Ovenbird	u	u	r
___ Northern Waterthrush	o		o
___ Louisiana Waterthrush	u	u	u
___ Mourning Warbler	r		r
___ * Common Yellowthroat	c	c	u
___ Wilson's Warbler	o		o
___ Canada Warbler	r		
___ Yellow-breasted Chat	o	o	o

Tanagers

___ * Scarlet Tanager	c	u	
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Cardinals and Grosbeaks

___ * Northern Cardinal	a	a	a	a
___ Rose-breasted Grosbeak	o		o	
___ * Indigo Bunting	c	c	o	

Sparrows

___ * Eastern Towhee	c	c	c	c
___ American Tree Sparrow			r	o
___ * Chipping Sparrow	c	c	o	
___ * Field Sparrow	u	u	u	o
___ Grasshopper Sparrow	r	r		
___ Fox Sparrow	o		o	
___ * Song Sparrow	c	c	c	c
___ Lincoln's Sparrow	r		r	
___ Swamp Sparrow	u	u	u	o
___ White-throated Sparrow	o			c
___ White-crowned Sparrow	o			u
___ Dark-eyed Junco	c	u	u	c

Red-winged Blackbird



George Gentry/USFWS

Blackbirds & Orioles

___ *Red-winged Blackbird	c	c	u	o
___ Eastern Meadowlark	u	u	o	r
___ *Common Grackle	c	c	c	o
___ *Brown-headed Cowbird	u	u	u	u
___ *Orchard Oriole	c	c		
___ *Baltimore Oriole	c	c		

Finches

___ Purple Finch	o		o	r
___ *House Finch	u	u	u	u
___ Pine Siskin			r	

IR

___ *American Goldfinch	c	c	c	c
___ *House Sparrow	c	c	c	c

If you see an unlisted or rare species, please send a detailed e-mail, including sighting notes, to: birdlist@fws.gov.

If you have found an injured bird or other wildlife please contact the NCTC land manager at 304/876-7432.

For information on the live eagle Web cam visit: <http://www.fws.gov/nctc/cam/>

Baltimore Oriole



David Brezinski/USFWS

Eastern Towhee



Mark Tegges/Shutterstock ©

Sighting Notes

Trail / Habitat: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Species: _____

Observers: _____

Weather: _____

Remarks: _____

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