

Missisquoi
National Wildlife Refuge
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www.fws.gov/northeast/missisquoi

Federal Relay Service
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
<http://www.fws.gov>

August 2008



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Missisquoi

*National Wildlife
Refuge*

Birds



Wood Duck drake
Steve Maslowski/USFWS

Welcome



This goose, designed by J.N. “Ding” Darling, has become a symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1943, is on the eastern shore of lake Champlain near the Canadian border in northwestern Vermont. The refuge headquarters is two miles north of Swanton on Route 78. Several diverse habitats make up the 6,729 acre refuge. The flood plain, sloughs and marshes of the Missisquoi River delta provide major nesting grounds for migratory waterfowl. Beds of wild rice (often called “duck candy), stands of arrowhead, bulrush and wild celery along with frogs and fish provide plentiful sources of food. In addition to 5,000 acres of natural marsh, the refuge includes 1,200 acres of managed wetlands formed by three diked impoundments. These pools offer additional sources of food, cover and nesting habitat for waterfowl.

Upland forested areas contain a mixture of hardwood species including white and red oak, white ash, white pine, American beech, hickory and butternut. By far, the majority of forested communities on the refuge are comprised of flood tolerant species such as swamp white oak, silver and red maple, cottonwood, and green ash. The refuge also maintains areas of early successional hardwoods such as alders, birch and poplar for migratory song birds and American woodcock. Shad island, at the mouth of the river delta, is home to the largest great blue heron rookery in Vermont. The refuge provides nesting grounds for ninety-five percent of Vermont black terns. Artificial nesting box structures distributed in suitable habitats throughout the refuge supplement natural tree cavities and augment productivity of cavity nesting species such as wood ducks, goldeneye and hooded mergansers. Other species

such as Northern flying squirrels, screech owls and pileated woodpeckers occasionally use the nesting boxes as well. The installation of nesting platforms and tripods on the refuge to supplement natural nesting sites for osprey have proven successful as osprey numbers continue to rise on the refuge.

The refuge provides habitat for over 200 species of birds.

Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge

This checklist includes more than 200 species of birds and is based on observations by refuge personnel and visiting ornithologists. If you should find an unlisted species, please let us know at refuge headquarters. We appreciate your help in updating our records.

Several trails are located on the refuge and provide good opportunities for bird observation. Insect repellent may be useful during the warmer months.

Most of the refuge is accessible only by boat. Public boat ramps on the refuge are located at Louie’s Landing and Mac’s Bend. Visitors are advised to consult the general refuge leaflet for the boat ramp access and trail locations. Birders, whether on foot or in boats, need to observe refuge signs and cooperate with efforts to minimize disturbances to all wildlife while engaged in birding activities.

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

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

Seasonal abundance

Relative abundance indicates how likely you are to see or hear a bird in its favored habitat.

a	abundant	a common species which is very numerous
c	common	certain to be seen in suitable habitat
u	uncommon	present, but not certain to be seen
o	occasional	seen only a few times during the season
r	rare	seen at intervals of 2 to 5 years

- Birds known or suspected to have nested on the refuge or known to nest locally.

Italics indicate Federally threatened/endangered species.

Swans, Geese and Ducks

	Sp	S	F	W
___ Snow Goose	u		u	
___ • Canada Goose	o	u	c	r
___ Brant	r		r	
___ • Wood Duck	a	a	a	
___ Gadwall	o	o	c	
___ American Wigeon	o	o	c	
___ • American Black Duck	c	c	c	r
___ • Mallard	a	a	a	r
___ • Blue-winged Teal	c	c	o	
___ Northern Shoveler	c	o	c	
___ Northern Pintail	c	o	c	
___ • Green-winged Teal	c	o	c	
___ Canvasback	o		c	
___ Redhead			o	
___ Ring-necked Duck	c	o	c	
___ Greater Scaup	u		u	
___ Lesser Scaup	c		c	
___ Surf Scoter			r	r
___ White-winged Scoter			o	
___ Black Scoter			o	
___ Long-tailed Duck			o	
___ Bufflehead	u		o	
___ • Common Goldeneye	c	c	c	o
___ • Hooded Merganser	c	c	c	
___ Common Merganser	c	o	c	o

	Sp	S	F	W
___ Red-breasted Merganser	r		r	
___ Ruddy Duck	o		o	

Gallinaceous Birds

___ • Gray Partridge	r	r	r	r
___ • Ruffed Grouse	u	u	u	u
___ • Wild Turkey	u	u	u	u

Loons

___ Common Loon	o	o	o	
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Grebes

___ • Pied-billed Grebe	u	c	u	
___ Horned Grebe	o	o	o	
___ Red-necked Grebe	o		o	

Cormorants

___ • Double-crested Cormorant	c	c	c	
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Bitterns, Herons and Egrets

___ • American Bittern	c	c	o	
___ • Least Bittern	r	u		
___ • Great Blue Heron	c	c	c	r
___ Great Egret	o	o	o	
___ Green Heron	u	c	o	
___ Black-crowned Night-Heron	o	c	o	

New World Vultures

___ Turkey Vulture	u	c	u	
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Osprey, Kites, Hawks and Eagles

___ • Osprey	c	c	c	
___ Bald Eagle	o	o	r	
___ • Northern Harrier	c	c	c	



Bald Eagle

Peregrine Falcon



	Sp	S	F	W
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk	o	o	o	
___ Cooper's Hawk	o	o	o	
___ Northern Goshawk	o	o	o	o
• Red-shouldered Hawk	o	o	o	
___ Broad-winged Hawk	r		r	
• Red-tailed Hawk	c	c	c	o
___ Rough-legged Hawk	u	r	o	o

Falcons and Caracaras

• American Kestrel	c	c	o	
___ Merlin	r	r	r	
___ Peregrine Falcon	o	r	o	

Rails

• Virginia Rail	o	c	c	
• Sora	o	o	o	
• Common Moorhen	c	c	o	
___ American Coot	o	r	c	

Plovers

___ Black-bellied Plover			o	
___ Semipalmated Plover	o		o	
• Killdeer	c	c	c	

Sandpipers and Phalaropes

___ Greater Yellowlegs	c		c	
___ Lesser Yellowlegs	o		o	
___ Solitary Sandpiper	o		o	
• Spotted Sandpiper	o	c	o	
___ Hudsonian Godwit			r	
___ Ruddy Turnstone			r	
___ Sanderling			o	
___ Semipalmated Sandpiper			o	
___ Least Sandpiper			o	
___ White-rumped Sandpiper	o		o	
___ Pectoral Sandpiper			o	
___ Dunlin			o	
___ Stilt Sandpiper			r	
___ Short-billed Dowitcher			r	
• Wilson's Snipe	c	c	c	
• American Woodcock	c	c	c	

Skuas, Jaegers, Gulls and Terns

___ Bonaparte's Gull	r	r	r	
___ Ring-billed Gull	c	c	c	o
___ Herring Gull	u	u	u	
___ Great Black-backed Gull	u	u	u	o
___ Common Tern	c	o	c	
• Black Tern	c	c		

Pigeons and Doves

• Rock Dove	c	c	c	c
• Mourning Dove	c	c	c	c

Cuckoos and Anis

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

Typical Owls

• Eastern Screech-Owl	o	o	o	o
• Great Horned Owl	c	c	c	u
___ Snowy Owl	r		r	r
___ Northern Hawk Owl	r		r	r
• Barred Owl	u	u	u	u
___ Short-eared Owl	o	o	o	
___ Northern Saw-whet Owl	o	o	o	o

	Sp	S	F	W
Nightjars				
___ Common Nighthawk ___	o	o	r	
___ Whip-poor-will ___	r	r	r	
Swifts				
___ • Chimney Swift ___	o	o	o	
Hummingbirds				
___ • Ruby-throated Hummingbird ___	o	c	o	
Kingfishers				
___ • Belted Kingfisher ___	u	c	c	
Woodpeckers				
___ • Red-headed Woodpecker ___		r		
___ • Yellow-bellied Sapsucker ___	c	c	o	
___ • Downy Woodpecker ___	c	c	c	c
___ • Hairy Woodpecker ___	c	c	c	c
___ • Northern Flicker ___	c	c	o	
___ • Pileated Woodpecker ___	u	u	u	u
Tyrant Flycatchers				
___ • Olive-sided Flycatcher ___	o	u	o	
___ • Eastern Wood-Pewee ___	c	c	c	
___ • Alder Flycatcher ___	c	c	o	
___ • Willow Flycatcher ___	u	u	o	
___ • Least Flycatcher ___	c	c	o	
___ • Eastern Phoebe ___	c	c	c	
___ • Great Crested Flycatcher ___	c	c	o	
___ • Eastern Kingbird ___	c	c	c	



Olive-sided Flycatcher

	Sp	S	F	W
Shrikes				
___ Northern Shrike ___	u	r	u	u
Vireos				
___ Yellow-throated Vireo ___	o	c	o	
___ • Blue-headed Vireo ___	u	u	u	
___ • Warbling Vireo ___	o	c	o	
___ Philadelphia Vireo ___	o	o	r	
___ • Red-eyed Vireo ___	c	c	o	
Crows, Jays and Magpies				
___ • Blue Jay ___	c	c	c	o
___ • American Crow ___	c	c	c	o
___ • Raven ___	o	o	o	o
Larks				
___ Horned Lark ___	o	o	o	o
Swallows				
___ • Purple Martin ___	o	c	o	
___ • Tree Swallow ___	c	a	c	
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow ___	u	u	u	
___ • Bank Swallow ___	c	c	o	
___ Cliff Swallow ___	o	o		
___ • Barn Swallow ___	c	c	o	
Titmice and Chickadees				
___ • Black-capped Chickadee ___	a	c	c	a
___ Boreal Chickadee ___			r	r
___ Tufted Titmouse ___	u	u	u	
Nuthatches				
___ Red-breasted Nuthatch ___	r	r	r	r
___ • White-breasted Nuthatch ___	c	c	c	c
Creepers				
___ • Brown Creeper ___	c	u	c	c
Wrens				
___ • House Wren ___	o	u	u	
___ Winter Wren ___	r	r	r	
___ • Marsh Wren ___	o	c	o	
Kinglets				
___ Golden-crowned Kinglet ___	o	r	o	
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet ___	u	r	u	r



Barn Swallow

Old World Warblers

	Sp	S	F	W
___ • Blue-gray Gnatcatcher _____	u	c		

Thrushes

___ Eastern Bluebird _____	r	r	r	
___ • Veery _____	c	c	o	
___ Swainson's Thrush _____	r	r		
___ • Hermit Thrush _____	c	c	c	
___ • Wood Thrush _____	c	c	u	
___ • American Robin _____	c	c	c	

Mimic Thrushes

___ • Gray Catbird _____	c	c	o	
___ Northern Mockingbird _____	r	r		
___ Brown Thrasher _____	o	o	o	

Starlings

___ • European Starling _____	a	c	a	c
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Wagtails and Pipits

___ American Pipit _____	u	o	u	
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Waxwings

___ • Cedar Waxwing _____	o	c	c	
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Wood Warblers

___ Tennessee Warbler _____		r	r	
___ Orange-crowned Warbler _____			r	
___ Nashville Warbler _____	o	o	o	
___ Northern Parula _____			r	
___ • Yellow Warbler _____	c	c	o	
___ Chestnut-sided Warbler _____	o	o		

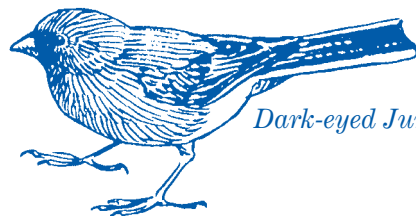
	Sp	S	F	W
___ Magnolia Warbler _____	r	r		
___ Cape May Warbler _____	o	o		
___ Black-throated Blue Warbler _____	o	o	o	
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler _____	o	r	o	
___ Black-throated Green Warbler _____	u	r	u	
___ Blackburnian Warbler _____	o	o	o	
___ Palm Warbler _____	o		o	
___ Bay-breasted Warbler _____	o	o	o	
___ Blackpoll Warbler _____	u		u	
___ Black-and-white Warbler _____	u	u	u	
___ • American Redstart _____	c	c	o	
___ • Ovenbird _____	o	o		
___ • Northern Waterthrush _____	o	c	o	
___ Louisiana Waterthrush _____	o	u		
___ • Common Yellowthroat _____	c	c	c	
___ Canada Warbler _____	o	o	o	

Tanagers

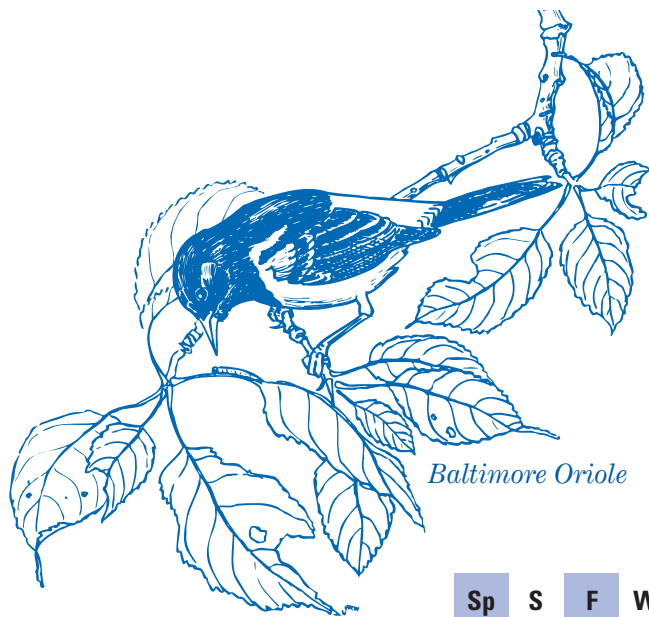
___ Scarlet Tanager _____	r	r	r	
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Sparrows and Towhees

___ Eastern Towhee _____	r	r		
___ American Tree Sparrow _____	c	r	o	c
___ • Chipping Sparrow _____	c	c	c	
___ • Field Sparrow _____	o	u	o	
___ Vesper Sparrow _____	o	o	o	
___ • Savannah Sparrow _____	c	c	c	
___ Grasshopper Sparrow _____	r	r		
___ Fox Sparrow _____	o		o	o
___ • Song Sparrow _____	c	c	c	
___ Lincoln's Sparrow _____			r	
___ • Swamp Sparrow _____	c	c	c	
___ • White-throated Sparrow _____	c	c	o	
___ White-crowned Sparrow _____	o	o	o	o
___ Dark-eyed Junco _____	c	r	o	c
___ Snow Bunting _____	o	r	o	c



Dark-eyed Junco



Baltimore Oriole

Cardinals, Grosbeaks and Allies

___ • Northern Cardinal	u	u	u	c
___ • Rose-breasted Grosbeak	c	c	o	
___ Indigo Bunting	o	o	o	

Blackbirds and Orioles

___ • Bobolink	c	a	o	
___ • Red-winged Blackbird	a	a	c	
___ • Eastern Meadowlark	c	c	o	
___ Rusty Blackbird	u	u	u	
___ • Common Grackle	c	c	o	
___ • Brown-headed Cowbird	c	c	c	
___ • Baltimore Oriole	c	c		

Finches

___ Pine Grosbeak			r	r
___ Purple Finch	o	o	o	o
___ • House Finch	u	c	u	u
___ White-winged Crossbill	o	r	o	
___ Common Redpoll				r
___ Pine Siskin	r	r	r	
___ • American Goldfinch	c	c	c	o
___ Evening Grosbeak	c	o	o	c

Old World Sparrows

___ • House Sparrow	c	c	c	c
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Birding Ethics

The membership of the American Birding Association believes that all birders have an obligation at all times to protect wildlife, the natural environment, and the rights of others and asks that all birders adhere to the following guidelines of good birding behavior:

I. Birders must always act in ways that do not endanger the welfare of birds or other wildlife.

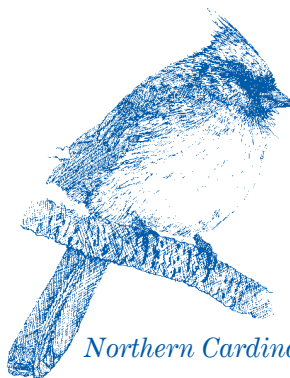
In keeping with this principle, we will:

- Observe and photograph birds without knowingly disturbing them in any significant way.
- Avoid chasing or repeatedly flushing birds.
- Keep an appropriate distance from nests and nesting colonies so as not to disturb the birds or expose them to danger.
- Disturb wintering wildlife as little as possible, particularly during critical feeding and resting periods. They need all their energy reserves to withstand the stresses of harsh winter and migration.

II. Birders must always act in ways that do not harm the natural environment.

In keeping with this principle, we will:

- Stay on existing roads, trails and pathways whenever possible to avoid trampling.
- Leave all habitat as it was found. Many birds die when they become entangled in discarded fishing lines, 6 pack rings and other trash, or when they mistake garbage for food.



Northern Cardinal

III. Birders must always respect the rights of others.

*In keeping with this principle,
we will:*

- Respect the privacy and property of others by observing “No Trespassing” signs.
- Observe all laws and the rules and regulations that govern public use of birding areas.
- Always behave in a manner that will enhance the image of the birding community in the eyes of the public.

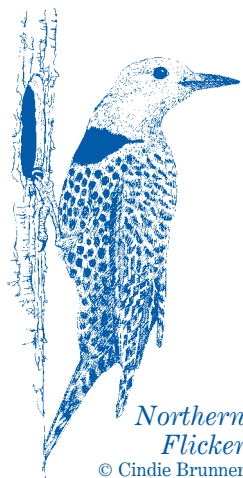
IV. Birders in groups should assume special responsibilities.

As group members, we shall:

- Take special care to alleviate the problems and disturbances that are multiplied when more people are present.
- Act in consideration of the group’s interest, as well as our own.
- Support by our actions the responsibility of the group leader(s) for the conduct of the group.

As group leaders, we will:

- Assume responsibility for the conduct of the group.
- Learn and inform the group of any special rules, regulations or conduct applicable to the area or habitat being visited.
- Limit groups to a size that does not threaten the environment or the peace and tranquility of others.
- Teach others birding ethics by our words and example.



*Northern
Flicker*

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*Great Blue
Heron*

Sighting Notes

Date

Time

Weather

No. of species

Route of area

Observers

Remarks