

Birding Opportunities at Ripley Esker

This SNA consists of 216 acres of varied topography and plant communities. There are oak savanna, prairie grasslands and a marshy lake included in the unit. The site contains an excellent example of an esker, which is a glacial deposit that forms a meandering, steep-sided ridge of stream sand and gravel. A total of .75 miles of esker is protected as an SNA, although the total length of the geological feature is 6.75 miles. 85 bird species were recorded on this SNA, making it a very interesting place for birds. Hiking the top of the esker one can look down onto the prairie on one side and look into a marshy lake on the other side while walking through a beautiful oak savanna woods. Swallows are common over the prairie, especially Bank and Rough-winged Swallows which have their nesting burrows located in a nearby gravel pit. Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, American Redstart and Red-eyed Vireo are common in the oak savanna. Ten species of sparrows were recorded during the survey year including Chipping, Clay-colored, Field, Vesper, Grasshopper, Savannah, Song and Swamp during the breeding season. Bobolinks and Eastern Meadowlark's are found on the prairie. Wood Ducks are common on the wooded marshy lake. There are no defined trails on the SNA but hiking is relatively easy throughout the area. Parking is available along County Road 282.

Taxonomy, Season and Abundance Key

The names and taxonomic arrangement of species follows that of the Checklist of the Birds of Minnesota (January, 2005) prepared by the Minnesota Ornithological Union (MOU) Records Committee.

The **seasons** in the checklist are defined as follows:

Sp (Spring) = March, April, May

Su (Summer) = June, July

Fa (Fall) = August, September, October, November

Wi (Winter) = December, January, February

Abundance codes are defined as follows:

C = Common — present, relatively easy to find

U = Uncommon — observed, may be difficult to find

O = Occasional — may or may not be present in any year

R = Rare — has occurred at least once, may recur

SNA Bird Checklist	Sp	Su	Fa	Wi
<input type="checkbox"/> Canada Goose	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Duck	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mallard	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ring-necked Pheasant	U	U	U	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Wild Turkey	U	U	U	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Great Blue Heron	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Green Heron	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Turkey Vulture	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sharp-shinned Hawk	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-tailed Hawk	U	U	U	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Virginia Rail	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sora	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sandhill Crane	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Killdeer	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lesser Yellowlegs	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wilson's Snipe	U	O	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ring-billed Gull	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Rock Pigeon	U	U	U	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Mourning Dove	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-billed Cuckoo	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ruby-throated Hummingbird	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Belted Kingfisher	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-bellied Woodpecker	C	C	C	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Downy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Hairy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Flicker	C	C	C	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Wood-Pewee	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Alder Flycatcher	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Least Flycatcher	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Phoebe	U	U	U	

SNA Bird Checklist	Sp	Su	Fa	Wi
<input type="checkbox"/> Great Crested Flycatcher	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Kingbird	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-throated Vireo	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue-headed Vireo	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Warbling Vireo	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-eyed Vireo	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue Jay	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> American Crow	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Raven	O			
<input type="checkbox"/> Horned Lark	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tree Swallow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Rough-winged Swallow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank Swallow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cliff Swallow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Barn Swallow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-capped Chickadee	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> White-breasted Nuthatch	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> House Wren	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sedge Wren	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Bluebird	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Veery	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Robin	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Gray Catbird	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Brown Thrasher	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> European Starling	U	U	U	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Cedar Waxwing	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Golden-winged Warbler	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tennessee Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Orange-crowned Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Nashville Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow Warbler	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Chestnut-sided Warbler	U	U	U	

SNA Bird Checklist	Sp	Su	Fa	Wi
<input type="checkbox"/> Magnolia Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-rumped Warbler	C		C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-and-white Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Redstart	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Yellowthroat	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Scarlet Tanager	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Chipping Sparrow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Clay-colored Sparrow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Field Sparrow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Vesper Sparrow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Savannah Sparrow	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Grasshopper Sparrow	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Song Sparrow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Swamp Sparrow	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> White-throated Sparrow	C		C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dark-eyed Junco	C		C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Rose-breasted Grosbeak	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Indigo Bunting	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bobolink	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-winged Blackbird	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Meadowlark	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Brewer's Blackbird	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Grackle	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Brown-headed Cowbird	C	C	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Baltimore Oriole	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> House Finch	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Goldfinch	C	C	C	O
<input type="checkbox"/> House Sparrow	U	U	U	

This checklist contains the names of all birds that have been documented at this site by reliable observers, including principal observer Bob Janssen, as well as MOU records, and data contained in research reports. Funding for this project was provided in part by the State Wildlife Grants program administered by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Checklist layout by Jennifer Lintelmann. Persons interested in the sources used in preparation of this list may contact Project Supervisor/Nongame Specialist Katie Haws at 218-308-2641.

For more information contact DNR Information Center, 500 Lafayette Rd. St. Paul, MN 55155-4040 651-296-6157 or toll-free 888-MIN-NDNR (646-6367).

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Ripley Esker

Scientific and Natural Area

BIIRD Checklist



Date: _____

Weather: _____

Observers: _____

Notes: _____



MINNESOTA'S
WILD & RARE

Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare is the state's conservation action plan for protecting Minnesota's native animal species that are rare or likely to become rare in the near future.