

Birding Opportunities at Townsend Woods SNA

Townsend Woods SNA is a 73 acre parcel, located in Rice County. Although small, Townsend Woods, is a fine example of the “Big Woods” that once covered parts of south central Minnesota. The site contains an old growth forest stand of sugar maple, red oak, basswood, and oak, with few shrubs. The loose, fertile soil is lush with spring ephemerals. This pristine deciduous forest provides excellent birding opportunities. The woods are mature so there is very little underbrush and, although there are no developed trails, it is relatively easy to walk through the SNA. A total of 122 bird species have been sighted here. A number of resident bird species including great-horned and barred owls can be seen here. There are also good numbers of woodpeckers, nuthatches and chickadees. During the breeding season, look for pewees, least and great-crested flycatchers, wood thrush, grosbeaks, orioles and several warbler species. Woodland warblers are found in significant numbers during spring migration. A marshy areas in the northeast section with open water supports migrating waterfowl. Rarities include sandhill cranes, perhaps nesting nearby. There is a corridor from the parking area to the SNA that is somewhat overgrown. The SNA has a parking area off Co. Rd. 30 and it is about a ½ mile hike from the parking area to the main portion of the SNA. Birder access is rated good.

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	C	U	C	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Duck	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mallard	C	C	C	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue-winged Teal	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Shoveler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ring-necked Pheasant	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Wild Turkey	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Pied-billed Grebe	U	O	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Double-crested Cormorant	U	C	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Great Blue Heron	C	C	C	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Great Egret	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Green Heron	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Turkey Vulture	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bald Eagle	U	U	U	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Harrier	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sharp-shinned Hawk	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cooper's Hawk	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-shouldered Hawk	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Broad-winged Hawk	O		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-tailed Hawk	C	C	C	U
<input type="checkbox"/> American Kestrel	C	C	C	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Sandhill Crane	U	U	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Killdeer	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Franklin's Gull	O		U	

SNA Bird Checklist	Sp	Su	Fa	Wi
<input type="checkbox"/> Ring-billed Gull	C	U	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Forster's Tern	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Rock Pigeon	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Mourning Dove	C	C	C	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-billed Cuckoo	U	C	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Great Horned Owl	U	U	U	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Barred Owl	U	U	U	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Chimney Swift	U	U	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ruby-throated Hummingbird	C	U	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Belted Kingfisher	U	U	U	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-headed Woodpecker	O	O	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-bellied Woodpecker	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	C	O	C	
<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"/> Pileated Woodpecker	U	U	U	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Wood-Pewee	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Acadian Flycatcher	O	O		
<input type="checkbox"/> Least Flycatcher	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Phoebe	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Great Crested Flycatcher	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Kingbird	C	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-throated Vireo	U	O	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue-headed Vireo	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Warbling Vireo	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-eyed Vireo	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue Jay	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> American Crow	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Horned Lark	U	U	U	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Tree Swallow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Rough-winged Swallow	U	U	U	
<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"/> Brown Creeper	U		C	O
<input type="checkbox"/> House Wren	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Winter Wren	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sedge Wren	C	C	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Golden-crowned Kinglet	C		C	O

SNA Bird Checklist	Sp	Su	Fa	Wi
<input type="checkbox"/> Ruby-crowned Kinglet	C		C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Bluebird	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Swainson's Thrush	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hermit Thrush	C		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Thrush	U	O	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Robin	C	C	C	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Gray Catbird	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Brown Thrasher	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> European Starling	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> American Pipit	O		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cedar Waxwing	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue-winged Warbler	U	U		
<input type="checkbox"/> Tennessee Warbler	C		C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Orange-crowned Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Nashville Warbler	C		C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Parula	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow Warbler	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Magnolia Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Chestnut-sided Warbler	C		C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-rumped Warbler	C		C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-throated Green Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blackburnian Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Palm Warbler	C		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bay-breasted Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-and-white Warbler	C		C	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Redstart	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ovenbird	C	U	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Waterthrush	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mourning Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Yellowthroat	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wilson's Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Canada Warbler	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Scarlet Tanager	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Towhee	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Tree Sparrow	C		C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Chipping Sparrow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Clay-colored Sparrow	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Field Sparrow	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Vesper Sparrow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Savannah Sparrow	C	C	C	

SNA Bird Checklist	Sp	Su	Fa	Wi
<input type="checkbox"/> Song Sparrow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lincoln's Sparrow	O		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Swamp Sparrow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> White-throated Sparrow	C		C	
<input type="checkbox"/> White-crowned Sparrow	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dark-eyed Junco	C		C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Cardinal	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Rose-breasted Grosbeak	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Indigo Bunting	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dickcissel	O	U		
<input type="checkbox"/> Bobolink	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-winged Blackbird	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Rusty Blackbird	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Grackle	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Brown-headed Cowbird	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Baltimore Oriole	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> House Finch	U	U	U	O
<input type="checkbox"/> American Goldfinch	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> House Sparrow	C	C	C	C

This checklist contains the names of all birds that have been documented at this site by reliable observers, including Jerry Bonkoski, Skip Mott, volunteer observers, 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 the Project Supervisor/Nongame Specialist Katie Haws at 218-308-2641.

For more information contact DNR Information Center, 500 Lafayette Rd. St. Paul, MN 53155-4000, 651-296-6157 or toll-free 888-MIN-NDNR (646-6367).

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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.

Townsend Woods

Scientific and Natural Area

Checklist



Date: _____

Weather: _____

Observers: _____

Notes: _____

