

Birding Opportunities at Pine Bend Bluffs SNA

Pine Bend Bluffs SNA is one of the least disturbed sites along the Mississippi River in the Twin Cities. It is located near the Flint Hills Refinery in Inver Grove Heights. The unit is 256 acres in size, and is located off of Hwy 52 in Dakota County. A 40-acre unit, separate to the NE from the main part of the SNA, has no public road access, with river access the only option. Dry to mesic oak forests occupy most of the site from the river banks to the tops of the 200 foot bluffs, with scattered stands of white pine on north-facing slopes and black ash seepage swamps along the river's edge. Several small dry sand-gravel prairies occur along the south and east facing slopes as well. The site offers stunning views of the Mississippi River.

There have been 111 bird species sighted at this SNA. Unusual aspects include a large number of flyover gulls traveling between the landfill W. of the SNA and the Mississippi River. The prairie areas harbor good numbers of migrating sparrows. The SE section of the SNA is the more productive area for raptors, including bald eagle, red-shouldered and red-tailed hawks. Other woodland species that can be seen here include eastern wood pewee, warbling vireo and chestnut-sided warbler.

Parking for the main part of the SNA is along the Hwy 52 frontage road. There are no developed trails in the SNA but old roads and paths can be found here and there. Birder access is fair to 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	C	C	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Duck	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mallard	C	C	C	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue-winged Teal	C	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Shoveler	O		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hooded Merganser	U	O	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	U	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	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Green Heron	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Turkey Vulture	O	U	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bald Eagle	U	U	U	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Harrier	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-shouldered Hawk	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-tailed Hawk	C	C	C	U
<input type="checkbox"/> American Kestrel	U	U	U	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Killdeer	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Franklin's Gull	O	O	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ring-billed Gull	C	U	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Herring Gull	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Forster's Tern	U		U	

SNA Bird Checklist	Sp	Su	Fa	Wi
<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"/> Chimney Swift	U	U	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ruby-throated Hummingbird	C	U	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Belted Kingfisher	U	U	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"/> Olive-sided Flycatcher	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Wood-Pewee	C	C	C	
<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"/> 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"/> Tree 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"/> Red-breasted Nuthatch	U		U	
<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"/> Golden-crowned Kinglet	C		C	O
<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"/> 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

SNA Bird Checklist	Sp	Su	Fa	Wi
<input type="checkbox"/> American Pipit	O		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cedar Waxwing	C	C	C	
<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"/> 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"/> 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"/> 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	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fox Sparrow	U		U	
<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"/> Harris's Sparrow	U		U	
<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"/> Red-winged Blackbird	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Meadowlark	C	C	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Rusty Blackbird	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Grackle	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Brown-headed Cowbird	C	C	C	

SNA Bird Checklist	Sp	Su	Fa	Wi
<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, 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 Lintemann. 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 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.

Pine Bend Bluffs

Scientific and Natural Area

Checklist



Date: _____

Weather: _____

Observers: _____

Notes: _____

