

Birding at Big Stone Lake State Park

Big Stone Lake State Park is comprised of two units containing over 1000 acres that extend along the eastern shore of Big Stone Lake in western Minnesota. The Meadowbrook Unit contains large areas of grass and marsh plus savanna type woodlands. The lake itself is a splendid place to observe waterfowl migration. In the grasslands, a variety of sparrows and marsh birds can be found. Big Stone Lake Park is one of the best places in the state to see numbers of orchard orioles. The Bonanza Unit features large areas of grasslands on hillsides. With over 200 species recorded in the park, this area is a premier location for birding in Minnesota.

Key

Occurrence

Sp - Spring (Mar—May)

S - Summer (Jun—Jul)

F - Fall (Aug—Nov)

W - Winter (Dec—Feb)

Abundance

C - Common (Present, relatively easy to find)

U - Uncommon (Present, not certain to be seen)

O - Occasional (Infrequent, may not return each year)

R - Rare (Observed at least once, may not return)

Date: Enter the date you saw the bird.

Bird Identification Tips

When you observe a bird, make note of at least three characteristics.

Location: Where did you see the bird? (water, forest, feeder, lower branch, tree trunk, etc.)

Body size and shape: Compare to a known bird. (smaller than a...bigger than a...plump like a...slender like a...) Look at tail, legs and bill. (long, short, thick, thin, curved, straight)

Colors and markings: Look on wings, tail, back, belly, rump and head. (stripe above eye, white spot on tail, etc.)

Sounds and movements: How do they act and sound? (travel alone or in groups, in-flight wing position - soaring, flapping, flap and glide, etc.)

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
GEESE, SWANS, DUCKS					
Snow Goose	U		U		
Ross's Goose	O		O		
Greater White-fronted Goose	O		O		
Canada Goose	C	C	C	O	
Tundra Swan	U		U		
Wood Duck	C	C	C		
Blue-winged Teal	C	C	C		
Northern Shoveler	U		C		
Gadwall	U		U		
American Wigeon	U		U		
Mallard	C	C	C		
American Black Duck	O		O		
Northern Pintail	U		U		
Green-winged Teal	U		U		
Canvasback	U		U		
Redhead	U		U		
Ring-necked Duck	C		C		
Greater Scaup	U		U		
Lesser Scaup	C		C		
White-winged Scoter	O				
Bufflehead	U		C		
Common Goldeneye	U		U		
Hooded Merganser	C	U	C		
Common Merganser	U		U		
Red-breasted Merganser	U		U		
Ruddy Duck	U		U		
PARTRIDGE, PHEASANTS, GROUSE, TURKEYS					
Gray Partridge	O	O	O	O	
Ring-necked Pheasant	C	C	C	C	
Wild Turkey	C	C	C	C	
GREBES					
Pied-billed Grebe	C	C	C		
Horned Grebe	U		O		
Red-necked Grebe	O		O		
Eared Grebe	O		O		
Western Grebe	O		O		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
PIGEONS AND DOVES					
Rock Pigeon	C	C	C	C	
Mourning Dove	C	C	C	O	
NIGHTJARS					
Common Nighthawk	U	O	U		
SWIFTS					
Chimney Swift	U	U	U		
HUMMINGBIRDS					
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	C	U	C		
RAILS, GALLINULES, COOTS					
Virginia Rail	O	O	O		
Sora	U	U	U		
American Coot	C	U	C		
CRANES					
Sandhill Crane	O		O		
PLOVERS					
American Golden-plover	O		O		
Killdeer	C	C	C		
SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES					
Least Sandpiper	O	O	O		
Pectoral Sandpiper	O	O	O		
Semipalmated Sandpiper	O		O		
American Woodcock	O		O		
Wilson's Snipe	C	U	C		
Spotted Sandpiper	C	C	C		
Solitary Sandpiper	O	O	O		
Lesser Yellowlegs	O	O	O		
Greater Yellowlegs	O		O		
GULLS, TERNS					
Bonaparte's Gull	U		U		
Franklin's Gull	U	U	C		
Ring-billed Gull	C	U	C		
Herring Gull	O		O	O	
Black Tern	U	U	U		
Common Tern	O		O		
Forster's Tern	C	C	U		
LOONS					
Common Loon	O		O		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
CORMORANTS					
Double-crested Cormorant	C	C	C		
PELICANS					
American White Pelican	C	U	C		
BITTERNS, HERONS, EGRETS, NIGHT-HERONS					
American Bittern	O		O		
Least Bittern	O		O		
Great Blue Heron	C	C	C		
Great Egret	U	U	U		
Cattle Egret	O		O		
Green Heron	C	C	C		
Black-crowned Night-heron	O	O	O		
NEW WORLD VULTURES					
Turkey Vulture	U	O	U		
OSPREY					
Osprey	U	U	U		
KITES, HAWKS, EAGLES					
Northern Harrier	U	U	U	O	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	U		U		
Cooper's Hawk	U	U	U	O	
Bald Eagle	U	U	U	U	
Red-shouldered Hawk	O	O	O		
Broad-winged Hawk	U	O	U		
Swainson's Hawk	O	O	O		
Red-tailed Hawk	C	C	C	U	
Rough-legged Hawk	O		O	O	
TYPICAL OWLS					
Great Horned Owl	U	U	U	U	
KINGFISHERS					
Belted Kingfisher	C	C	C		
WOODPECKERS					
Red-headed Woodpecker	U	U	U		
Red-bellied Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	U	U	U		
Downy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	
Hairy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	
Northern Flicker	C	C	C	O	
Pileated Woodpecker	U	U	U	U	

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
FALCONS					
American Kestrel	C	C	C	O	
Merlin	O		O		
Peregrine Falcon	O		O		
FLYCATCHERS					
Great Crested Flycatcher	C	C	C		
Eastern Kingbird	C	C	C		
Olive-sided Flycatcher	U		U		
Eastern Wood-Pewee	C	C	C		
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	O		O		
Alder Flycatcher	U		U		
Willow Flycatcher	U		U		
Least Flycatcher	C	C	C		
Eastern Phoebe	C	C	C		
SHRIKES					
Northern Shrike	O		O	O	
VIREOS					
Yellow-throated Vireo	C	C	C		
Blue-headed Vireo	U		U		
Philadelphia Vireo	O		O		
Warbling Vireo	C	C	C		
Red-eyed Vireo	C	C	C		
JAYS, MAGPIES, CROWS, RAVENS					
Blue Jay	C	C	C	C	
American Crow	C	C	C	C	
LARKS					
Horned Lark	C	C	C	O	
MARTINS, SWALLOWS					
Bank Swallow	U	U	U		
Tree Swallow	C	C	C		
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	U	U	U		
Purple Martin	U	U	U		
Barn Swallow	C	C	C		
Cliff Swallow	C	C	C		
CHICKADEES, TITMICE					
Black-capped Chickadee	C	C	C	C	

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
NUTHATCHES					
Red-breasted Nuthatch	O		O		
White-breasted Nuthatch	C	C	C	C	
CREEPERS					
Brown Creeper	U		U		
WRENS					
House Wren	C	C	C		
Winter Wren	O		O		
Sedge Wren	C	C	C		
Marsh Wren	U	U	U		
GNATCATCHERS					
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	O		O		
KINGLETS					
Golden-crowned Kinglet	C		C	O	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	C		C		
THRUSHES					
Eastern Bluebird	C	C	C		
Mountain Bluebird	R				
Veery	U		U		
Gray-cheeked Thrush	O		O		
Swainson's Thrush	U		U		
Hermit Thrush	U		U		
Wood Thrush	U	U	U		
American Robin	C	C	C	O	
THRASHERS, MOCKINGBIRDS					
Gray Catbird	C	C	C		
Brown Thrasher	U	U	U		
STARLINGS					
European Starling	C	C	C	C	
WAXWINGS					
Cedar Waxwing	C	C	C	O	
OLD WORLD SPARROWS					
House Sparrow	C	C	C	C	
FINCHES					
House Finch	U	U	U	U	
Purple Finch	U		U	U	
Common Redpoll	O		O	O	
Pine Siskin	O		O	O	
American Goldfinch	C	C	C	U	

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
LONGSPURS, SNOW BUNTINGS					
Lapland Longspur	U		U		
Snow Bunting	U		U	U	
TOWHEES, SPARROWS					
Grasshopper Sparrow	U	U	O		
Lark Sparrow	O	O	O		
Chipping Sparrow	C	C	C		
Clay-colored Sparrow	C	C	C		
Field Sparrow	C	C	C		
Fox Sparrow	C		C		
American Tree Sparrow	C		C	C	
Dark-eyed Junco	C		C	U	
White-crowned Sparrow	U		U		
Harris's Sparrow	U		U		
White-throated Sparrow	C		C		
Vesper Sparrow	C	C	C		
LeConte's Sparrow	O		O		
Savannah Sparrow	C	U	C		
Song Sparrow	C	C	C		
Lincoln's Sparrow	U		U		
Swamp Sparrow	C	C	C		
Eastern Towhee	U	O	U		
BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES					
Yellow-headed Blackbird	C	C	C		
Bobolink	C	C	C		
Western Meadowlark	C	C	C		
Orchard Oriole	U	U			
Baltimore Oriole	C	C	C		
Red-winged Blackbird	C	C	C		
Brown-headed Cowbird	C	C	U		
Rusty Blackbird	C		C		
Brewer's Blackbird	C	U	U		
Common Grackle	C	C	C	O	

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
WARBLERS					
Ovenbird	C	O	C		
Northern Waterthrush	U		U		
Black-and-white Warbler	C		C		
Tennessee Warbler	C		C		
Orange-crowned Warbler	U		U		
Nashville Warbler	C		C		
Connecticut Warbler	O		O		
Mourning Warbler	U		U		
Common Yellowthroat	C	C	C		
American Redstart	C	C	C		
Cape May Warbler	O		O		
Magnolia Warbler	U		U		
Bay-breasted Warbler	U		U		
Blackburnian Warbler	U		U		
Yellow Warbler	C	C	C		
Chestnut-sided Warbler	U		U		
Blackpoll Warbler	U		U		
Palm Warbler	C		C		
Yellow-rumped Warbler	C		C		
Black-throated Green Warbler	U		U		
Canada Warbler	U		U		
Wilson's Warbler	U		U		
TANAGERS, CARDINALS, GROSBEAKS					
Scarlet Tanager	U	U	U		
Northern Cardinal	C	C	U	U	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	C	C	C		
Indigo Bunting	C	C	C		
Dickcissel	O	U			

Checklist created by Robert B. Janssen, Jerry Bonkoski and MNDNR. Data was gathered from MNDNR staff observations, public observations and Minnesota Ornithologist's Union records. Nomenclature and organization of checklist based off of the *Check-list of North American Birds* (7th edition) as currently supplemented.

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m MINNESOTA
STATE PARKS AND TRAILS

BIRD CHECKLIST

BIG STONE LAKE STATE PARK

