

Birding at Itasca State Park

Itasca's landscape of lakes, pine forests and mixed hardwood forests of birch, maple, oak, and aspen, provide excellent habitat with 222 bird species recorded in the park! Top birding spot is the footpaths around the Mississippi Headwaters and the Schoolcraft Trail. Discover over 20 species of warblers that nest or migrate through the park as they feed along the river!

Listen for Baltimore orioles, grosbeaks and tanagers in the trees along the river banks and lakeshore. Belted kingfishers, green herons and sora rails also frequent the area. Look for pine-loving kinglets, crossbills and certain warblers along the Schoolcraft Trail. Watch osprey, bald eagles and the common loon hunting for fish on Lake Itasca.

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		
Canada Goose	C	C	C	R	
Trumpeter Swan	C	C	C		
Tundra Swan	O		O		
Wood Duck	C	C	C		
Blue-winged Teal	C	U	U		
Northern Shoveler	U	R	U		
American Wigeon	U		U		
Mallard	C	C	C	R	
American Black Duck	U	U	U		
Green-winged Teal	U	O	U		
Redhead	O	R	O		
Ring-necked Duck	C	C	C		
Lesser Scaup	U		U		
Bufflehead	C	U	U		
Common Goldeneye	U	U	U		
Hooded Merganser	C	C	C		
Common Merganser	U	U	U		
Red-breasted Merganser	U	R	U		
Ruddy Duck	O	O	O		
PARTRIDGE, PHEASANTS, GROUSE, TURKEYS					
Ruffed Grouse	C	C	C	C	
Spruce Grouse	R	R	R	R	
Wild Turkey	U	U	U	U	
GREBES					
Pied-billed Grebe	U	U	U		
Horned Grebe	O		O		
Red-necked Grebe	O	O	O		
Western Grebe	R	R			
PIGEONS AND DOVES					
Rock Pigeon	O	O	O	O	
Mourning Dove	C	C	C		
CUCKOOS					
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	U	U			
Black-billed Cuckoo	U	U	U		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
NIGHTJARS					
Common Nighthawk	C	C	C		
Eastern Whip-poor-will	U	U			
SWIFTS					
Chimney Swift	C	C	C		
HUMMINGBIRDS					
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	C	C	C		
RAILS, GALLINULES, COOTS					
Yellow Rail	R				
Virginia Rail	U	U	U		
Sora	C	C	U		
American Coot	U	U	U		
CRANES					
Sandhill Crane	U	U	U		
PLOVERS					
Killdeer	C	C	C		
Semipalmated Plover	O		O		
SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES					
Upland Sandpiper	O	O			
Marbled Godwit	O	O			
Stilt Sandpiper	O	U			
Dunlin	O		O		
Baird's Sandpiper	O	O	O		
Least Sandpiper	U	U	U		
White-rumped Sandpiper	O				
Pectoral Sandpiper	U	U	U		
Semipalmated Sandpiper	U		U		
Short-billed Dowitcher	O	O			
American Woodcock	U	U	U		
Wilson's Snipe	U	U	U		
Spotted Sandpiper	C	C	C		
Solitary Sandpiper	U	U	U		
Lesser Yellowlegs	U	U	U		
Greater Yellowlegs	U		U		
Wilson's Phalarope	O	O			

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
GULLS, TERNS					
Parasitic Jaeger			R		
Bonaparte's Gull	U	O	U		
Franklin's Gull	U		O		
Ring-billed Gull	C	C	C		
Herring Gull	U	U	U		
Caspian Tern	U	R	O		
Black Tern	U	U	O		
Common Tern	U	U	R		
Forster's Tern	U	O	O		
LOONS					
Common Loon	C	C	C		
CORMORANTS					
Double-crested Cormorant	O	O	U		
PELICANS					
American White Pelican	R	U			
BITTERNS, HERONS, EGRETS, NIGHT-HERONS					
American Bittern	U	U	U		
Least Bittern	O	R			
Great Blue Heron	C	C	C		
Great Egret	O		R		
Cattle Egret		R			
Green Heron	U	U	U		
Black-crowned Night-heron	O				
NEW WORLD VULTURES					
Turkey Vulture	U	U	U		
OSPREY					
Osprey	C	C	C		
KITES, HAWKS, EAGLES					
Swallow-tailed Kite	R				
Northern Harrier	U	U	U		
Sharp-shinned Hawk	U	U	U	R	
Cooper's Hawk	U	U	U		
Northern Goshawk	O	O	O	O	
Bald Eagle	U	U	U	O	
Red-shouldered Hawk	O	O	O		
Broad-winged Hawk	C	C	C		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
Red-tailed Hawk	C	C	C	R	
Rough-legged Hawk	U		O	U	
TYPICAL OWLS					
Eastern Screech Owl	R	R	R	R	
Great Horned Owl	U	U	U	U	
Snowy Owl				O	
Barred Owl	U	U	U	U	
Great Gray Owl				R	
Long-eared Owl	O	O	O		
Short-eared Owl	U	U	U		
Northern Saw-whet Owl	U	U	U		
KINGFISHERS					
Belted Kingfisher	C	C	C	R	
WOODPECKERS					
Red-headed Woodpecker	O	O	O		
Red-bellied Woodpecker	U	U	U	O	
Williamson's Sapsucker	R				
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	C	C	C		
Am. Three-toed Woodpecker	R	R	R	R	
Black-backed Woodpecker	U	U	U	U	
Downy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	
Hairy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	
Northern Flicker	C	C	C		
Pileated Woodpecker	U	U	U	U	
FALCONS					
American Kestrel	C	C	C		
Merlin	U	U	U	R	
Peregrine Falcon	O		O		
FLYCATCHERS					
Great Crested Flycatcher	C	C	C		
Western Kingbird	O	O			
Eastern Kingbird	C	C	C		
Olive-sided Flycatcher	U	U	U		
Eastern Wood-pewee	C	C	C		
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	O	O	O		
Alder Flycatcher	U	U	U		
Least Flycatcher	C	C	C		
Eastern Phoebe	C	C	C		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
SHRIKES					
Loggerhead Shrike	R				
Northern Shrike	U		U	U	
VIREOS					
Yellow-throated Vireo	U	U	U		
Blue-headed Vireo	C	U	U		
Philadelphia Vireo	U		U		
Warbling Vireo	U	U	U		
Red-eyed Vireo	C	C	C		
JAYS, MAGPIES, CROWS, RAVENS					
Blue Jay	C	C	C	U	
Black-billed Magpie	U	U	O	O	
American Crow	C	C	C	O	
Common Raven	C	C	C	C	
LARKS					
Horned Lark	C	C	C	O	
MARTINS, SWALLOWS					
Purple Martin	U	U	U		
Tree Swallow	C	C	C		
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	C	C	C		
Bank Swallow	C	C	O		
Cliff Swallow	C	C	C		
Barn Swallow	C	C	C		
CHICKADEES, TITMICE					
Black-capped Chickadee	C	C	C	C	
Boreal Chickadee	O	O	O	U	
NUTHATCHES					
Red-breasted Nuthatch	C	C	C	C	
White-breasted Nuthatch	C	C	C	C	
CREEPERS					
Brown Creeper	U	U	U	O	
WRENS					
House Wren	C	C	C		
Winter Wren	C	C	C		
Sedge Wren	C	C	C		
Marsh Wren	C	C	U		
GNATCATCHERS					
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	R	O	O		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
KINGLETS					
Golden-crowned Kinglet	C	C	C	R	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	C	C	C		
THRUSHES					
Eastern Bluebird	U	U	U		
Veery	C	C	O		
Gray-cheeked Thrush	U		U		
Swainson's Thrush	U	U	U		
Hermit Thrush	C	C	C		
Wood Thrush	U	C	O		
American Robin	C	C	C	O	
THRASHERS, MOCKINGBIRDS					
Gray Catbird	C	C	C		
Brown Thrasher	U	U	U		
STARLINGS					
European Starling	U	U	U	U	
WAXWINGS					
Bohemian Waxwing	O			O	
Cedar Waxwing	C	C	C		
OLD WORLD SPARROWS					
House Sparrow	U	U	U	U	
FINCHES					
Evening Grosbeak	U	U	U	O	
Pine Grosbeak	O			U	
House Finch	O	O		R	
Purple Finch	C	U	C	U	
Common Redpoll	U		C	C	
Hoary Redpoll				R	R
Red Crossbill	U	O	U	U	
White-winged Crossbill	U	O	U	U	
Pine Siskin	U	U	U	U	
American Goldfinch	C	C	C	O	
LONGSPURS, SNOW BUNTINGS					
Snow Bunting			U	U	
TOWHEES, SPARROWS					
Lark Bunting		R			
Chipping Sparrow	C	C	C		
Clay-colored Sparrow	C	C	C		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
Fox Sparrow	C		C		
American Tree Sparrow	U		U	U	
Dark-eyed Junco	C	O	C	O	
White-crowned Sparrow	U		U		
Harris's Sparrow	U		U		
White-throated Sparrow	C	C	C	R	
Vesper Sparrow	C	C	C		
Savannah Sparrow	C	C	C		
Song Sparrow	C	C	C		
Lincoln's Sparrow	U		U		
Swamp Sparrow	C	C	C		
Eastern Towhee	U	U	U		
BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES					
Yellow-headed Blackbird	U	U	U		
Bobolink	C	C	U		
Eastern Meadowlark	O	U	O		
Western Meadowlark	U	U	U		
Baltimore Oriole	C	C	U		
Red-winged Blackbird	C	C	C		
Brown-headed Cowbird	C	C	U		
Rusty Blackbird	U		U	R	
Brewer's Blackbird	U	U	U		
Common Grackle	C	C	C		
WARBLERS					
Ovenbird	C	C	C		
Northern Waterthrush	U	O	U		
Golden-winged Warbler	U	U	U		
Black-and-white Warbler	C	C	C		
Prothonotary Warbler	O				
Tennessee Warbler	C	O	C		
Orange-crowned Warbler	U	R	C		
Nashville Warbler	C	C	C		
Conneticut Warbler	U	U	U		
Mourning Warbler	C	C	U		
Common Yellowthroat	C	C	C		
Hooded Warbler	R	R			
American Redstart	C	C	C		
Cape May Warbler	U	O	U		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
Northern Parula	C	C	U		
Magnolia Warbler	U	U	U		
Bay-breasted Warbler	U	O	U		
Blackburnian Warbler	C	C	C		
Yellow Warbler	C	U	C		
Chestnut-sided Warbler	C	C	C		
Blackpoll Warbler	U	R	U		
Black-throated Blue Warbler	O	R	O		
Palm Warbler	C	O	C		
Pine Warbler	U	U	U		
Yellow-rumped Warbler	C	C	C		
Black-throated Green Warbler	U	U	U		
Canada Warbler	U	U	U		
Wilson's Warbler	U	R	U		
TANAGERS, CARDINALS, GROSBEAKS					
Summer Tanager	R				
Scarlet Tanager	U	U	U		
Northern Cardinal	R	O	O	R	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	C	C	C		
Indigo Bunting	C	C	U		
Dickcissel	O	O	R		

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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BIRD CHECKLIST
ITASCA STATE PARK

