

Birding at Nerstrand Big Woods State Park

Nerstrand Big Woods State Park contains excellent woodland habitat for migratory and nesting birds. The presence of such species as cerulean warblers, Acadian flycatchers, blue-gray gnatcatchers and red-shouldered hawks indicates a quality mature forest. Good riparian habitat is also present to provide for an even wider variety of birds. Warblers, flycatchers, woodpeckers, thrushes and vireos are common in the park with 31 species of neotropical wablers and vireos having been recorded.

The trails along Prairie Creek are a good place to view a variety of species, especially during late spring and summer. Woodpeckers are easily viewed amongst the trees and snags along Fox, Basswood, and Maple trails. While out hiking listen for the numerous owls and woodpeckers that frequent the park.

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		
Cackling Goose	U		U		
Canada Goose	C	C	C		
Wood Duck	C	C	C		
Blue-winged Teal	C	C	C		
Mallard	C	C	C	O	
PARTRIDGE, PHEASANTS, GROUSE, TURKEYS					
Gray Partridge	O	O	O	O	
Ring-necked Pheasant	C	C	C	C	
Ruffed Grouse	C	C	C	C	
Wild Turkey	C	C	C	C	
PIGEONS, DOVES					
Rock Pigeon	C	C	C	C	
Mourning Dove	C	C	C	U	
CUCKOOS					
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	U	U	U		
Black-billed Cuckoo	U	U	U		
NIGHTJARS					
Common Nighthawk	C	C	C		
Eastern Whip-poor-will	U	O			
SWIFTS					
Chimney Swift	C	C	C		
HUMMINGBIRDS					
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	C	U	U		
CRANES					
Sandhill Crane	U	R	U		
PLOVERS					
Killdeer	C	C	C		
SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES					
Upland Sandpiper	O	O			
American Woodcock	U	U	U		
Wilson's Snipe	U		U		
Spotted Sandpiper	U	U	U		
GULLS, TERNS					
Ring-billed Gull	U		U		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
BITTERNS, HERONS, EGRETS, NIGHT-HERONS					
Great Blue Heron	U	U	U		
Green Heron	C	C	C		
NEW WORLD VULTURES					
Turkey Vulture	C	C	C		
KITES, HAWKS, EAGLES					
Northern Harrier	U	U	U		
Sharp-shinned Hawk	U		U	O	
Cooper's Hawk	U	U	U	O	
Bald Eagle	U	U	U	O	
Red-shouldered Hawk	U	U	U	U	
Broad-winged Hawk	C	U	C		
Swainson's Hawk	O	R	O		
Red-tailed Hawk	C	C	C	C	
Rough-legged Hawk	O		O	U	
TYPICAL OWLS					
Eastern Screech Owl	U	U	U	U	
Great Horned Owl	U	U	U	U	
Barred Owl	U	U	U	U	
Northern Saw-whet Owl	O		O		
KINGFISHERS					
Belted Kingfisher	C	C	C	U	
WOODPECKERS					
Red-headed Woodpecker	U	U	U	O	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	C	U	C		
Downy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	
Hairy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	
Northern Flicker	C	C	C	O	
Pileated Woodpecker	U	U	U	U	
FALCONS					
American Kestrel	C	C	C	U	
Peregrine Falcon	O		O		
FLYCATCHERS					
Great Crested Flycatcher	C	C	C		
Eastern Kingbird	C	C	C		
Olive-sided Flycatcher	U	R	U		
Eastern Wood-pewee	C	C	C		
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	U		U		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
Acadian Flycatcher	O	U	O		
Alder Flycatcher	U	O	U		
Willow Flycatcher	U	U	O		
Least Flycatcher	C	C	C		
Eastern Phoebe	C	C	C		
SHRIKES					
Northern Shrike			O	O	
VIROES					
White-eyed Vireo	R				
Bell's Vireo	O	O			
Yellow-throated Vireo	U	U	U		
Blue-headed Vireo	U		U		
Philadelphia Vireo	U		U		
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	U	O	U	U	
MARTINS, SWALLOWS					
Bank Swallow	U	U	U		
Tree Swallow	C	C	C		
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	C	C	C		
Purple Martin	U	U	U		
Barn Swallow	C	C	C		
Cliff Swallow	C	C	C		
CHICKADEES, TITMICE					
Black-capped Chickadee	C	C	C	C	
NUTHATCHES					
Red-breasted Nuthatch	U		U	U	
White-breasted Nuthatch	C	C	C	C	
CREEPERS					
Brown Creeper	U		U	U	
WRENS					
House Wren	C	C	C		
Winter Wren	U		U		
Sedge Wren	C	C	U		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
GNATCATCHERS					
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	C	C	C		
KINGLETS					
Golden-crowned Kinglet	C		C	U	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	C		C		
THRUSHES					
Eastern Bluebird	C	C	C	O	
Townsend's Solitaire			R		
Veery	U	U	O		
Gray-cheeked Thrush	U		U		
Swainson's Thrush	U		U		
Hermit Thrush	U		U		
Wood Thrush	U	U	U		
American Robin	C	C	C	U	
THRASHERS, MOCKINGBIRDS					
Gray Catbird	C	C	C		
Brown Thrasher	C	C	C		
STARLINGS					
European Starling	C	C	C	C	
WAXWINGS					
Cedar Waxwing	C	C	C	U	
OLD WORLD SPARROWS					
House Sparrow	C	C	C	C	
FINCHES					
House Finch	O	O	O	O	
Purple Finch	U		U	U	
Common Redpoll	O		O	O	
Pine Siskin	U		U	U	
American Goldfinch	C	C	C	C	
LONGSPURS, SNOW BUNTINGS					
Lapland Longspur	U		U	U	
Snow Bunting				U	
TOWHEES, SPARROWS					
Grasshopper Sparrow	U	U	O		
Chipping Sparrow	C	C	C		
Clay-colored Sparrow	U	U	U		
Field Sparrow	C	C	U		
Fox Sparrow	C		C		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
American Tree Sparrow	C		C	C	
Dark-eyed Junco	C		C	C	
White-crowned Sparrow	U		U		
Harris's Sparrow	U		U		
White-throated Sparrow	C		C		
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	C		
Eastern Meadowlark	C	C	C		
Western Meadowlark	C	C	C		
Orchard Oriole	U	U	U		
Baltimore Oriole	C	C	C		
Red-winged Blackbird	C	C	C		
Brown-headed Cowbird	C	C	U		
Rusty Blackbird	U		U	O	
Common Grackle	C	C	C	O	
WARBLERS					
Ovenbird	C	C	C		
Northern Waterthrush	C		U		
Golden-winged Warbler	U	U	O		
Blue-winged Warbler	U	U	O		
Black-and-white Warbler	C		C		
Prothonotary Warbler	U	U	O		
Tennessee Warbler	C		C		
Orange-crowned Warbler	U		U		
Nashville Warbler	C		C		
Conneticut Warbler	U		O		
Mourning Warbler	U		U		
Common Yellowthroat	C	C	C		
American Redstart	C	C	C		
Cape May Warbler	U		U		
Cerulean Warbler	U	O	O		

STATE PARK BIRDS	Sp	S	F	W	DATE
Northern Parula	U		U		
Magnolia Warbler	U		U		
Bay-breasted Warbler	U		U		
Blackburnian Warbler	U		U		
Yellow Warbler	C	C	C		
Chestnut-sided Warbler	C		C		
Blackpoll Warbler	U		U		
Palm Warbler	C		C		
Pine Warbler	U		U		
Yellow-rumped Warbler	C		C	R	
Yellow-throated Warbler	O	O			
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	C	C	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	C	C	C		
Indigo Bunting	C	C	C		

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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STATE PARKS AND TRAILS

BIRD CHECKLIST

NERSTRAND BIG WOODS STATE PARK

