

Birding Opportunities at Bonanza Prairie SNA

Bonanza Prairie SNA is a wonderful example of undisturbed, glacial till hill prairie. The site is located within the Bonanza Unit of Big Stone Lake State Park. From the hilltop, visitors have a panoramic view of the South Dakota prairie landscape and Buffalo Ridge across scenic Big Stone Lake. The gravelly, well-drained soils on the steep, west-facing slopes support dry prairie, mesic prairie, and bur oak savanna plant communities. Prescribed burning and removal of trees and brush at this site have dramatically enhanced the prairie savanna community. To see prairie plants in bloom and their attendant butterfly species, late summer is a good time to visit, but for birding, May through August are the most interesting. Eighty-three bird species have been observed within the SNA, and the adjacent State Park has an additional 68 species! Look for eastern bluebirds, field sparrow and bobolink in the open fields, with hairy woodpeckers and white-breasted nuthatch in the brushy hillside ravines. There are no trails on the hillside, but the open prairies can be hiked throughout. Parking and access is from the park road, and birder access is excellent.

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	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Duck	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mallard	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue-winged Teal	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ring-necked Pheasant	U	U	U	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Wild Turkey	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> American White Pelican	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bald Eagle	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Harrier	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cooper's Hawk	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Broad-winged Hawk	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-tailed Hawk	U	U	U	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Rough-legged Hawk			O	O
<input type="checkbox"/> American Kestrel	O	O	O	O
<input type="checkbox"/> American Coot	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Killdeer	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ring-billed Gull	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mourning Dove	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-billed Cuckoo	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-billed Cuckoo	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Nighthawk			O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-bellied Woodpecker	U	U	U	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Downy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> Hairy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C

SNA Bird Checklist	Sp	Su	Fa	Wi
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Flicker	U	U	U	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Pileated Woodpecker	O	O	O	O
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Wood-Pewee	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Great Crested Flycatcher	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Western Kingbird	O	O		
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Kingbird	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-throated Vireo	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Warbling Vireo	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-eyed Vireo	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue Jay	C	C	C	C
<input type="checkbox"/> American Crow	C	C	C	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Horned Lark	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Purple Martin	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tree Swallow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Rough-winged Swallow	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cliff Swallow	O	O	O	
<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"/> House Wren	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ruby-crowned Kinglet	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Bluebird	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Swainson's Thrush	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Robin	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Gray Catbird	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Brown Thrasher	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> European Starling	U	U	U	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Cedar Waxwing	U	O	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tennessee Warbler	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow Warbler	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-rumped Warbler	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-and-white Warbler	O		O	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Redstart	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Yellowthroat	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Tree Sparrow	C		C	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Chipping Sparrow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Clay-colored Sparrow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Field Sparrow	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Vesper Sparrow	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lark Sparrow	O	O		
<input type="checkbox"/> Savannah Sparrow	O		O	

<input type="checkbox"/> Grasshopper Sparrow	O	O		
<input type="checkbox"/> Song Sparrow	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Harris's Sparrow	U		U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dark-eyed Junco	C		C	U
<input type="checkbox"/> Rose-breasted Grosbeak	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Indigo Bunting	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dickcissel	O	O		
<input type="checkbox"/> Bobolink	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-winged Blackbird	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Western Meadowlark	U	U	U	
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Grackle	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Brown-headed Cowbird	C	C	C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Orchard Oriole	U	U		
<input type="checkbox"/> Baltimore Oriole	O	O	O	
<input type="checkbox"/> House Finch	U	U	U	O
<input type="checkbox"/> American Goldfinch	C	C	C	U
<input type="checkbox"/> House Sparrow	O	O	O	O

Additional Observations

This checklist contains the names of all birds that have been documented at this site by reliable observers, including Bob Janssen, 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 at Katie Haws at 218-308-2641.

Bonanza Prairie Scientific and Natural Area

Checklist



Date: _____

Weather: _____

Observers: _____

Notes: _____

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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