

Big Branch Marsh

National Wildlife Refuge Bird List





This blue goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become a symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge was established in October 1994 and is one of over 560 National Wildlife Refuges. The refuge is located along the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, approximately 35 miles from New Orleans in Saint Tammany Parish, Louisiana. The purpose of the refuge is to protect a stretch of remaining natural shoreline of Lake Ponchartrain and to provide habitat for a diversity of wildlife species, with special emphases on migratory birds and endangered species.

The refuge is comprised of over 18,000 acres of coastal marsh, pine flatwoods, cypress brakes and hardwood forests.

Many woodland birds are year-round residents of the pine flat woods, including the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker. Many Red-cockaded Woodpeckers can be observed on or near the Boy Scout Road trail and overlook marked on the map. Spring and fall migrations bring many species of neotropical migrants through the refuge. A neotropical migrant is a bird that spends the summer in its breeding range in North America but migrates to Central or South America, or the Caribbean for its nonbreeding range in winter. More than 200 species are considered neotropical migrants. Many warblers, hummingbirds, shorebirds, songbirds and some hawks are neotropical migratory birds.

The refuge supports over 5,000 wintering waterfowl, including Mallards, Gadwall and Northern Pintails. At any time of year a wide variety of birds including shorebirds, wading birds, raptors, waterfowl, and songbirds can be sighted here. Brown pelicans and bald eagles are year-round residents of southeast Louisiana and are commonly seen at Big Branch Marsh.

Opportunities for bird watching on the refuge are plentiful, with over five miles of walking trails at Boy Scout Road, the Lemieux Road Educational Site, and almost four miles of more primitive trails near Paquet Road, Sapsucker Road, and at the end of Lucille Road. Big Branch Marsh maintains two public boat launches (one motorized, one non-motorized) at Lake Road and at the end of Sapsucker Road.

Birders interested in visiting the refuge should consult The American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics.

The following bird list contains 261 species, representing observations on and adjacent to Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge. Sightings of unlisted species should be reported to: Refuge Manager, Big Branch Marsh NWR, 61389 HWY. 434, Lacombe, LA 70445

This list conforms to the nomenclature and arrangement established by the American Ornithologists' Union (1998). Symbols used in this brochure represent the following:

- Sp** Spring (March-May)
S Summer (June-August)
F Fall (September-November)
W Winter (December-February)
C Common (certain to be seen in suitable habitat)
U Uncommon (present but not certain to be seen)
O Occasional (seen only a few times during a season)
R Rare (seen at intervals of 2 to 5 years)

Four primary habitats common where birds are expected to be found on the refuge are identified as follows:

- F** Forest
A Aerial Flyover
W Open Water
M Marsh
 *Species of special concern
 ^ Non-native/exotic species

**Ducks Geese and Swans
 (Anatidae)**

	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Su</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Habitat</i>
Black-bellied					
___ Whistling-Duck	O	O			W
___ Greater White-fronted Goose			O	O	W
___ Snow Goose			U	U	W
___ Canada Goose	R			R	M
___ Wood Duck	C	C	C	C	F
___ Gadwall	U		U	C	W
___ American Wigeon	U		U	C	W
___ Mallard	U		U	U	W
___ Mottled Duck	C	C	C	C	W
___ Blue-winged Teal	C	R	C	C	W
___ Northern Shoveler	R		O	U	W
___ Northern Pintail	U		U	C	W
___ Green-winged Teal	O		U	U	W
___ Canvasback	R		R	R	W
___ Redhead				O	W
___ Ring-necked Duck			R	R	W
___ Greater Scaup				R	W
___ Lesser Scaup	U		R	C	W
___ Bufflehead	U		R	C	W
___ Common Goldeneye				O	W
___ Hooded Merganser*	R		R	O	F
___ Red-breasted Merganser	R		R	U	W
___ Ruddy Duck	R		R	R	W

**New World Quail
 (Odontophoridae)**

___ Northern Bobwhite	U	U	U	U	F
___ Turkeys (Phasianidae)					
___ Wild Turkey	R	R	R	R	F

Sp Su F W Habitat

Loons (Gaviidae)

___ Common Loon O R U W

Grebes (Podicipedae)

___ Pied-billed Grebe C R C C W

___ Horned Grebe O R O W

Frigatebirds (Fregatidae)

___ Magnificent Frigatebird R A

Cormorants (Phalacrocoracidae)

___ Double-crested Cormorant C C C C W

Darters (Anhinga)

___ Anhinga O O O O W

Pelicans (Pelicanidae)

___ American White Pelican C C C W

___ Brown Pelican* C C C W

Bitterns, Herons, and allies

(Ardeidae)

___ American Bittern* R R R M

___ Least Bittern* U U O M

___ Great Blue Heron C C C C M

___ Great Egret C C C C M

___ Snowy Egret C C C C M

___ Little Blue Heron U C U U M

___ Tricolored Heron U C U U M

___ Cattle Egret ^ U U U U F

___ Green Heron R C R R M

___ Yellow-crowned

___ Night-Heron O U O M

___ Black-crowned

___ Night-Heron O U R R M

Ibises and Spoonbills

(Threskiornithidae)

___ White Ibis U U U U M

___ Glossy Ibis* O O O O M

___ White-faced Ibis R R R R M

___ Roseate Spoonbill* R R M

New World Vultures

(Cathartidae)

___ Black Vulture C C C C A

___ Turkey Vulture C C C C A

Osprey (Family Pandionidae)

___ Osprey* U U U U M

Hawks, Kites, Eagles, and

Allies (Accipitridae)

___ Swallow-tailed Kite* U U A

___ Mississippi Kite C C U A

___ Bald Eagle* U R U U A

___ Northern Harrier C C C F

___ Sharp-shinned Hawk U U U F

photo: USFWS

	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Su</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Habitat</i>
___ Cooper's Hawk*	U	U	U	U	F
___ Red-shouldered Hawk	C	C	C	C	F
___ Broad-winged Hawk	U	U	U		F
___ Red-tailed Hawk	C	C	C	C	F
Rails, Gallinules, and Coots					
(Rallidae)					
___ Clapper Rail	U	U	U	U	M
___ King Rail	U	U	U	U	M
___ Virginia Rail	U		U	U	M
___ Sora	O		U	U	M
___ Purple Gallinule	R	R			M
___ Common Gallinule	C	C	C	C	M
___ American Coot	C	C	C	C	M
Plovers (Charadriidae)					
___ Black-bellied Plover				O	M
___ Killdeer	C	C	C	C	F
Stilts (Recurvirostridae)					
___ Black-necked Stilt	C	C	C	U	M
Sandpipers, Phalaropes, and Allies (Scolopacidae)					
___ Spotted Sandpiper	U		U	U	M
___ Solitary Sandpiper*	O		O		M
___ Greater Yellowlegs	C		U	U	M
___ Willet	R		R		M
___ Lesser Yellowlegs	U		U	U	M
___ Ruddy Turnstone			U		M
___ Sanderling			R		M
___ Semipalmated Sandpiper*	O		O		M
___ Western Sandpiper	U		U	U	M
___ Least Sandpiper	U		U	U	M
___ Pectoral Sandpiper	O		O		M
___ Dunlin	U		U	U	M
___ Stilt Sandpiper	R		R		M
___ Short-billed Dowitcher	R		R		M
___ Long-billed Dowitcher	O		O	R	M
___ Wilson's Snipe	U		U	C	M
___ American Woodcock*	O		O	O	F
Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers					
(Laridae)					
___ Bonaparte's Gull	U			U	A
___ Laughing Gull	C	C	C	C	A
___ Herring Gull	U	R	U	U	A
___ Ring-billed Gull	U	R	U	C	A
___ Lesser Black-backed Gull				O	A
___ Least Tern*	O	C	O		A
___ Gull-billed Tern*		R	R		A
___ Caspian Tern*	U	U	U	U	A
___ Black Tern			R		A
___ Forster's Tern	C	C	C	C	A
___ Royal Tern	U	C	C	C	A

Pigeons and Doves

(Columbidae)

___	Rock Pigeon ^			U	U	F
___	Eurasian Collared-Dove ^	U	C	U	U	F
___	White-winged Dove			O	O	F
___	Mourning Dove	C	C	C	C	F

Cuckoos (Cuculidae)

___	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	R	U	U		F
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Barn Owls (Tytonidae)

___	Barn Owl	U	U	U	U	F
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Typical Owls (Strigidae)

___	Eastern Screech-Owl	R	U	U	U	F
___	Great Horned Owl	C	C	C	C	F
___	Barred Owl	C	C	C	C	F

Goatsuckers (Caprimulgidae)

___	Common Nighthawk	O	U	O		F
___	Chuck-will's-widow*	U	U	U		F

Swifts (Apodidae)

___	Chimney Swift	C	C	C		A
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Hummingbirds (Trochilidae)

___	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	C	C	C		F
___	Rufous Hummingbird			R	R	F

Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)

___	Belted Kingfisher	C	C	C	C	W
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Woodpeckers (Picidae)

___	Red-headed Woodpecker*	U	U	U	U	F
___	Red-bellied Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	F
___	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	U		C	C	F
___	Downy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	F
___	Hairy Woodpecker	U	R	U	U	F
___	Red-cockaded Woodpecker*	U	U	U	U	F
___	Northern Flicker	C	C	C	C	F
___	Pileated Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	F

Falcons (Falconidae)

___	American Kestrel*	C		C	C	F
___	Merlin	U		U	U	F
___	Peregrine Falcon*			R	R	F

Tyrant Flycatchers (Tyrannidae)

___	Eastern Wood-Pewee	C	C	C		F
___	Acadian Flycatcher	U	U	U		F
___	Alder Flycatcher			O		F
___	Least Flycatcher			R		F
___	Eastern Phoebe	C		U	C	F
___	Great Crested Flycatcher	U	C	U		F
___	Eastern Kingbird	C	C	C		F

photo: Bill Lang

Sp Su F W Habitat

Shrikes (Laniidae)

___ Loggerhead Shrike* C C C C F

Vireos (Vireonidae)

___ White-eyed Vireo C C C U F

___ Yellow-throated Vireo C C C F

___ Blue-headed Vireo U U C F

___ Red-eyed Vireo C F

Jays and Crows (Corvidae)

___ Blue Jay C C C C F

___ American Crow C C C C F

___ Fish Crow C C C C W

Swallows (Hirundinidae)

___ Purple Martin C C U A

___ Tree Swallow C C C A

___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow U U U A

___ Bank Swallow U U A

___ Cliff Swallow O O A

___ Barn Swallow C C C A

Chickadees and Titmice (Paridae)

___ Carolina Chickadee C C C C F

___ Tufted Titmouse C C C C F

Nuthatches (Sittidae)

___ Red-breasted Nuthatch R R F

___ Brown-headed Nuthatch* C C C C F

Creepers (Certhiidae)

___ Brown Creeper U U F

Wrens (Troglodytidae)

___ House Wren U C F

___ Winter Wren O O R F

___ Sedge Wren* U U O M

___ Marsh Wren C C C M

___ Carolina Wren C C C C F

Gnatcatchers (Sylviidae)

___ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher C C C C F

Kinglets (Regulidae)

___ Golden-crowned Kinglet O O U F

___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet C C C F

Thrushes (Turdidae)

___ Eastern Bluebird C C C C F

___ Hermit Thrush O O F

___ Wood Thrush* O F

___ American Robin C U U F

Sp Su F W Habitat

Mockingbirds and Thrashers (Mimidae)

Gray Catbird	U		C	C	S
Northern Mockingbird	C	C	C	C	F
Brown Thrasher	C	C	C	C	S

Starlings (Sturnidae)

European Starling ^	C	C	C	C	F
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Pipits (Motacillidae)

American Pipit	R		R	U	F
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Waxwings (Bombycillidae)

Cedar Waxwing	C		R	C	F
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Warblers (Parulidae)

Worm-eating Warbler*	O	R	R		F
Northern Waterthrush	O		U		F
Blue-winged Warbler*	U		U		F
Black-and-white Warbler	O		O		F
Prothonotary Warbler*	C	C	U		F
Swainson's Warbler*	O		O		F
Tennessee Warbler	U		U		F
Orange-crowned Warbler	U		U	C	F
Kentucky Warbler*	U		U		F
Common Yellowthroat	C	C	C	C	F
Hooded Warbler	U	U			F
American Redstart*	R	U	U		F
Northern Parula	C	C	C		F
Magnolia Warbler	R		R		F
Bay-breasted Warbler	R		R		F
Yellow Warbler	O		U		F
Palm Warbler	U		U	C	F
Pine Warbler	C	C	C	C	F
Yellow-rumped Warbler	C		U	C	F
Yellow-throated Warbler	O	O	O	R	F
Prairie Warbler*	R		R		F
Black-throated Green Warbler				R	F
Canada Warbler*			R		F
Wilson's Warbler	R		O	R	F
Yellow-breasted Chat	U		U		F

Emberizids (Emberizidae)

Eastern Towhee	C	C	C	C	F
Bachman's Sparrow*	U	R	R	R	F
Chipping Sparrow	U			U	F
Field Sparrow	R		R	U	F
Vesper Sparrow	R		R	R	F
Lark Sparrow*	R		R		F
Savannah Sparrow	C		O	C	M
Henslow's Sparrow*	O		R	R	F
Le Conte's Sparrow*	O		R	R	F
Nelson's Sparrow*	R		R	U	M
Seaside Sparrow*	U	U	U	U	M
Song Sparrow	U		R	C	M

photo: Bill Lang

	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Su</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Habitat</i>
Lincoln's Sparrow	U			R	F
Swamp Sparrow	C		C	C	M
White-throated Sparrow	C		U	U	F
White-crowned Sparrow	O		R	U	F
Dark-eyed Junco	R		R	U	F

**Tanagers, Cardinals, Saltators,
and Allies (Cardinalidae)**

Summer Tanager	U	U	U		F
Scarlet Tanager	R		R		F
Northern Cardinal	C	C	C	C	F
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	U		U		F
Blue Grosbeak	U		U		F
Indigo Bunting	U	U	U		F
Painted Bunting*		U			F
Dickcissel*			R		F

Blackbirds (Icteridae)

Red-winged Blackbird	C	C	C	C	M
Eastern Meadowlark	U	U	U	U	F
Rusty Blackbird*	O		O	U	M
Brewer's Blackbird				R	F
Common Grackle	C	C	C	C	F
Boat-tailed Grackle	C	C	C	C	M
Bronzed Cowbird	U	U			F
Brown-headed Cowbird	C	C	C	C	F
Orchard Oriole*	U	U	O		F
Baltimore Oriole			R		F

**Frigilline and Cardueline Finches
and Allies (Fringillidae)**

House Finch ^	U	U	U	U	F
Pine Siskin				R	F
American Goldfinch	U		R	C	F

**Old World Sparrows
(Passeridae)**

House Sparrow ^	U	U	U	U	F
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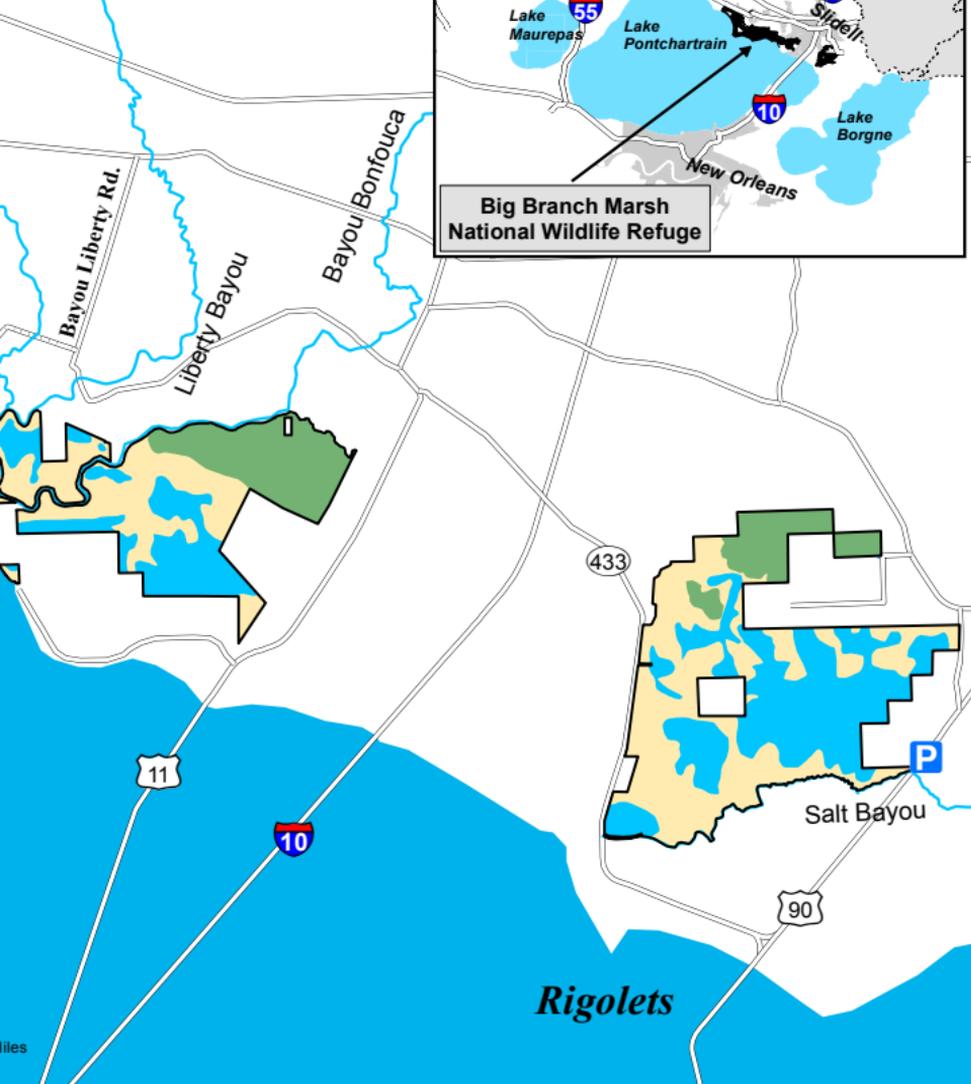


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made each year by both recreational and professional bird watchers. The program is one of the largest and fastest growing biodiversity data resources in existence. The reports on eBird serve as a vital foundation for better understanding bird distribution. The program resources are free to access and are used by a global community of educators, land managers, ornithologists, and conservation biologists.

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Responsible birders should abide by the American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics. More information can be found at <http://www.aba.org>

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.
2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.
3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.
4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

**Big Branch Marsh
National Wildlife Refuge
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Lacombe, LA 70445
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**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD**

August 2013

