

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Alligator River

*National Wildlife Refuge*  
*Bird List*



*Indigo Bunting*



*Black-throated Green Warbler*

*Alligator  
River  
National  
Wildlife  
Refuge*



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



*Pileated  
Woodpecker*



*Northern Parula*

**Birds of Alligator River National  
Wildlife Refuge**

Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge provides a variety of habitat for over 250 species of birds. The diversity of refuge habitat includes high and low pocosin (pond pine bogs), fresh and brackish water marshes, hardwood swamps, Atlantic white cedar swamps, and managed farming areas. The Refuge is of importance as a major breeding area for many species of songbirds. Truly impressive are the breeding populations of Prairie Warblers, Prothonotary Warblers, and Common Yellowthroats. The Refuge is of special significance as the last major stronghold of the Southeastern Coastal Plain population of Black-throated Green Warblers. Observant birders will notice that several species of “common” songbirds are relatively scarce (completely absent in some cases) as breeders in this coastal location—species like Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, American Redstart, and Summer Tanager. This biologically fascinating area may still hold ornithological secrets—it was recently discovered that Black-billed Cuckoos over-summer (and presumably breed) in the Refuge some years, and that Northern Saw-whet Owls sometimes overwinter in numbers. The Refuge has several colonies of the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, although these are rather inaccessible.

This bird list covers birds found within the Refuge’s 152,000 acres, as well as the 45,000+ acre Dare County Range found within the Refuge’s borders and waters immediately adjacent. Although much of the Refuge can be difficult to access, especially during wet weather, accessible areas are an unexplored adventure for the enthusiastic birder. At any season, The Refuge can be an excellent complement to a birding excursion on the nearby Outer Banks (Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Pea



*Prothonotary Warbler*



*Northern Flicker*



*Eastern Screech-Owl*

Island National Wildlife Refuge). During late fall and winter, the 5,100-acre farming area attracts an impressive variety of waterfowl and raptors, and several rarities—such as Swainson’s Hawk and Ash-throated Flycatcher—have been found here. At any season, you might see Northern Bobwhites, and maybe a King Rail. Please pay attention to refuge regulations and signs marking closed areas.

### **When and Where**

In addition to walking trails, there are 15 miles of paddling trails which offer access to Refuge habitats. Creef Cut Wildlife Trail includes an observation platform which overlooks a moist soil management unit and a boardwalk over a freshwater marsh. Waterfowl (during the winter months), raptors, and woodpeckers are common at this location. Sandy Ridge Wildlife Trail offers access to Milltail Creek wetland areas and wanders through Atlantic white cedar stands, areas with wood duck boxes, and Prothonotary Warbler nesting areas. Swainson’s Warblers have also been heard here.

<b>Sp</b> - Spring	March-May
<b>S</b> - Summer	June-August
<b>F</b> - Fall	September-November
<b>W</b> - Winter	December-February

**C** Common (easily seen in suitable habitat)

**F** Fairly common (seen most of the time in suitable habitat)

**U** uncommon (usually 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)

**A** Accidental (extremely rare; birds that are completely outside of normal range)

\* breeds or has bred on the Refuge

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
___ Greater White-fronted Goose				<b>A</b>
___ Snow Goose	<b>O</b>		<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>
___ Canada Goose	<b>U</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>
___ Brant				<b>R</b>
___ Tundra Swan	<b>U</b>		<b>U</b>	<b>C</b>
___ Wood Duck*	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>
___ Gadwall	<b>U</b>		<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>
___ American Wigeon	<b>O</b>		<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>
___ American Black Duck*	<b>U</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>
___ Mallard	<b>F</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>C</b>
___ Blue-winged Teal	<b>U</b>		<b>F</b>	<b>O</b>
___ Northern Shoveler	<b>F</b>		<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>
___ Northern Pintail	<b>O</b>		<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>
___ Green-winged Teal	<b>U</b>		<b>F</b>	<b>C</b>
___ Canvasback	<b>O</b>			<b>O</b>
___ Redhead	<b>O</b>			<b>O</b>
___ Ring-necked Duck	<b>U</b>		<b>U</b>	<b>F</b>
___ Greater Scaup	<b>O</b>		<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>
___ Lesser Scaup	<b>U</b>		<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>
___ Common Eider				<b>A</b>
___ Surf Scoter	<b>O</b>		<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>
___ Black Scoter	<b>O</b>		<b>O</b>	<b>U</b>
___ Bufflehead	<b>F</b>		<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>
___ Common Goldeneye				<b>O</b>
___ Hooded Merganser	<b>U</b>		<b>U</b>	<b>F</b>
___ Red-breasted Merganser	<b>U</b>		<b>O</b>	<b>U</b>
___ Ruddy Duck	<b>O</b>		<b>U</b>	<b>F</b>
___ Wild Turkey*	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>
___ Northern Bobwhite*	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>
___ Red-throated Loon	<b>O</b>		<b>O</b>	<b>U</b>
___ Common Loon	<b>F</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>F</b>
___ Pied-billed Grebe	<b>U</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>F</b>
___ Horned Grebe	<b>O</b>			<b>U</b>
___ Wilson's Storm Petrel		<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	
___ Brown Pelican	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>
___ Double-crested Cormorant	<b>C</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>
___ Anhinga*	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	
___ American Bittern	<b>U</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>
___ Great Blue Heron*	<b>C</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>
___ Great Egret	<b>U</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>U</b>
___ Snowy Egret	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>O</b>
___ Little Blue Heron	<b>O</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>O</b>
___ Tricolored Heron	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>O</b>
___ Cattle Egret	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>O</b>	
___ Green Heron*	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>U</b>	
___ Black-crowned Night-Heron	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>
___ Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	
___ White Ibis	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>U</b>
___ Glossy Ibis	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	
___ Black Vulture	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>
___ Turkey Vulture*	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
___ Osprey*	F	F	U	R
___ Swallow-tailed Kite	R			
___ Mississippi Kite	R	R	R	
___ Bald Eagle*	U	U	U	F
___ Northern Harrier	C	R	C	F
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk	U		F	F
___ Cooper's Hawk	U	R	U	U
___ Northern Goshawk				A
___ Red-shouldered Hawk*	F	F	F	F
___ Broad-winged Hawk	R			
___ Swainson's Hawk	A			A
___ Red-tailed Hawk*	C	F	F	C
___ Rough-legged Hawk				O
___ Golden Eagle				R
___ American Kestrel	F		C	C
___ Merlin	O		U	O
___ Peregrine Falcon	O		U	O
___ Yellow Rail			R	R
___ Black Rail*	O	O	O	R
___ Clapper Rail*	F	F	F	F
___ King Rail*	U	U	U	U
___ Virginia Rail*	U	O	U	U
___ Sora	O		U	O
___ Purple Gallinule	A			
___ Common Moorhen	R	R	R	R
___ American Coot	O		U	U
___ Black-bellied Plover	R	R	R	O
___ Semipalmated Plover	O	O	O	R
___ Killdeer*	C	C	C	C
___ Black-necked Stilt				A
___ Greater Yellowlegs	U	O	U	U
___ Lesser Yellowlegs	O	O	O	O
___ Solitary Sandpiper	O		O	
___ Spotted Sandpiper	U	U	O	
___ Semipalmated Sandpiper	R	R	R	
___ Western Sandpiper	R	R	O	O
___ Least Sandpiper	O	O	O	R
___ Dunlin	F		F	F
___ Short-billed Dowitcher	R	R	R	R
___ Long-billed Dowitcher	R		O	U
___ Common Snipe	F		F	F
___ American Woodcock*	U	R	U	F
___ Long-tailed Jaeger			A	
___ Laughing Gull	C	C	C	O
___ Franklin's Gull				A
___ Bonaparte's Gull	U			U
___ Ring-billed Gull	F	O	F	C
___ Herring Gull	F	F	F	F
___ Great Black-backed Gull	F	U	F	F
___ Gull-billed Tern	R	O	R	
___ Caspian Tern	O	O	U	
___ Royal Tern	F	F	F	O

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
___ Sandwich Tern	O	U	U	
___ Common Tern	U	U	O	
___ Forster's Tern	F	F	F	F
___ Least Tern	O	O	O	
___ Bridled Tern			A	
___ Sooty Tern			A	
___ Black Tern		O	O	
___ Black Skimmer	O	O	O	
___ Rock Pigeon*	O	O	O	O
___ Mourning Dove*	C	C	C	C
___ Black-billed Cuckoo*	R	R	R	
___ Yellow-billed Cuckoo*	C	C	F	
___ Barn Owl			R	R
___ Eastern Screech-Owl*	C	C	C	R
___ Great Horned Owl*	F	F	F	F
___ Barred Owl*	F	F	F	F
___ Long-eared Owl				A
___ Short-eared Owl	O	R	O	U
___ Northern Saw-whet Owl			R	R
___ Common Nighthawk	R	R	O	
___ Chuck-will's-widow*	U	U	U	
___ Whip-poor-will*	U	U	U	
___ Chimney Swift*	U	U	U	
___ Ruby-throated Hummingbird*	C	C	C	R
___ Belted Kingfisher*	F	U	F	F
___ Red-headed Woodpecker	O	O	O	
___ Red-bellied Woodpecker*	C	C	C	C
___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	O		U	C
___ Downy Woodpecker*	C	C	C	C
___ Hairy Woodpecker*	F	F	F	F
___ Red-cockaded Woodpecker*	U	U	U	U
___ Northern Flicker*	C	C	C	C
___ Pileated Woodpecker*	C	C	C	C
___ Eastern Wood-Pewee*	F	F	F	
___ Acadian Flycatcher*	U	U	U	
___ Eastern Phoebe	F		C	F
___ Ash-throated Flycatcher				R
___ Great Crested Flycatcher*	C	C	C	
___ Western Kingbird			R	R
___ Eastern Kingbird*	F	F	F	
___ Scissor-tailed Flycatcher			A	
___ White-eyed Vireo*	C	C	F	O
___ Yellow-throated Vireo	O		R	
___ Blue-headed Vireo	F		F	F
___ Philadelphia Vireo			R	
___ Red-eyed Vireo*	F	O	F	
___ Blue Jay*	F	F	F	F
___ American Crow*	C	C	C	C
___ Fish Crow*	C	C	C	F
___ Horned Lark			R	R
___ Purple Martin*	C	C	U	

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
___ Tree Swallow	U	O	F	F
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow	O	O		
___ Bank Swallow	R	O		
___ Cave Swallow				A
___ Barn Swallow*	C	C	C	
___ Carolina Chickadee*	C	C	C	C
___ Tufted Titmouse*	U	U	U	U
___ Red-breasted Nuthatch	O		U	O
___ White-breasted Nuthatch*	O	O	O	O
___ Brown-headed Nuthatch*	C	C	C	C
___ Brown Creeper			U	U
___ Carolina Wren*	C	C	C	C
___ House Wren*	U	O	C	C
___ Winter Wren	U		U	U
___ Sedge Wren	F		F	F
___ Marsh Wren*	F	F	F	F
___ Golden-crowned Kinglet	U		C	C
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet	C		C	C
___ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher*	C	C	C	R
___ Eastern Bluebird*	U	U	U	U
___ Veery	R		R	
___ Gray-cheeked Thrush	R		R	
___ Swainson's Thrush	R		R	
___ Hermit Thrush	F		F	F
___ Wood Thrush*	O	O	O	
___ American Robin*	C	F	C	C
___ Gray Catbird*	C	C	C	C
___ Northern Mockingbird*	U	U	U	U
___ Brown Thrasher*	U	U	U	U
___ European Starling*	C	C	C	C
___ American Pipit			U	U
___ Cedar Waxwing*	C	O	F	F
___ Blue-winged Warbler	R		R	
___ Orange-crowned Warbler	U		U	U
___ Nashville Warbler			R	
___ Northern Parula*	F	F	F	
___ Yellow Warbler	U	U	U	
___ Chestnut-sided Warbler			R	
___ Magnolia Warbler	R		O	
___ Cape May Warbler			O	
___ Black-throated Blue Warbler	O		U	
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler	C		C	C
___ Black-throated Green Warbler*	C	F	U	
___ Blackburnian Warbler	R		R	
___ Yellow-throated Warbler*	F	F	U	
___ Pine Warbler*	C	C	C	C
___ Prairie Warbler*	C	C	C	R
___ Palm Warbler	U		C	U
___ Bay-breasted Warbler			R	
___ Blackpoll Warbler	U		U	



	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
___ Black-and-white Warbler*	F	F	F	R
___ American Redstart	U	R	F	
___ Prothonotary Warbler*	C	C	U	
___ Worm-eating Warbler*	C	C	F	
___ Swainson's Warbler*	U	U	O	
___ Ovenbird*	C	C	U	R
___ Northern Waterthrush	R		O	
___ Kentucky Warbler	R		R	
___ Mourning Warbler			A	
___ Common Yellowthroat*	C	C	C	F
___ Hooded Warbler*	F	C	U	
___ Wilson's Warbler			R	
___ Canada Warbler			R	
___ Yellow-breasted Chat*	O	O	O	R
___ Summer Tanager	U	O	U	
___ Scarlet Tanager	U		U	
___ Eastern Towhee*	C	C	C	C
___ American Tree Sparrow			A	A
___ Chipping Sparrow	U	O	U	U
___ Clay-colored Sparrow			R	
___ Field Sparrow*	O	O	U	O
___ Vesper Sparrow			R	R
___ Lark Sparrow			R	
___ Savannah Sparrow	C		C	C
___ Grasshopper Sparrow	O		O	O
___ Henslow's Sparrow	R		R	R
___ Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	O		U	R
___ Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow	O		U	R
___ Seaside Sparrow*	O	O	O	R
___ Fox Sparrow			U	U
___ Song Sparrow	C		C	C
___ Lincoln's Sparrow	R		R	R
___ Swamp Sparrow	C		C	C
___ White-throated Sparrow	C		C	C
___ White-crowned Sparrow	R		O	O
___ Dark-eyed Junco	O		U	U
___ Snow Bunting			R	R
___ Northern Cardinal*	C	C	C	C
___ Rose-breasted Grosbeak	O		U	
___ Blue Grosbeak*	F	F	F	
___ Indigo Bunting*	C	C	C	
___ Painted Bunting	R		R	R
___ Dickcissel*	R	R	O	
___ Bobolink	O		U	
___ Red-winged Blackbird*	C	C	C	C
___ Eastern Meadowlark*	C	C	C	C
___ Yellow-headed Blackbird			R	R
___ Rusty Blackbird	O		O	O
___ Brewer's Blackbird				A
___ Common Grackle*	C	C	C	C

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
___ Boat-tailed Grackle	U	U	U	U
___ Shiny Cowbird		A		
___ Brown-headed Cowbird*	C	C	C	C
___ Orchard Oriole*	U	U	R	
___ Baltimore Oriole	O		F	R
___ Purple Finch	R		R	R
___ House Finch*	U	U	U	U
___ Common Redpoll			A	A
___ Pine Siskin	O		O	O
___ American Goldfinch*	U	O	U	U
___ Evening Grosbeak	A			A
___ House Sparrow*	U	U	U	U



*Great Egret*

*All photos courtesy of Jeff Lewis  
(jlewis\_obx@yahoo.com).*

Please assist the Refuge by reporting sightings of new species to [alligatorriver@fws.gov](mailto:alligatorriver@fws.gov) or by calling 252/473 1131.

### Field Notes



*Yellow-billed Cuckoo*

**Alligator River  
National Wildlife Refuge  
P.O. Box 1969  
Manteo, North Carolina 27954**

**<http://www.fws.gov/alligatorriver>  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
1 800/344 WILD**

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