

Columbia National Wildlife Refuge  
51 South Morgan Lake Road  
Othello Washington 99344  
509-488-2668  
cwash@fws.gov  
www.fws.gov/refuge/columbia

People with hearing impairments can reach  
Columbia through the Federal Information  
Relay System at 1-800-877-8339.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
1 800-344-WILD (9453)  
www.fws.gov

May 2025

Cover: *Red-tailed Hawk*  
© Chuck & Grace Bartlett



## Please keep these ethical wildlife observation tips in mind while visiting the refuge.

- Observe and photograph wildlife without chasing or repeatedly flushing the animal.
- Stay away from nests so the parents are not scared away, leaving the chicks exposed to danger.
- Overwintering birds need all their energy to survive. Avoid disturbing them.
- If possible, stay on existing roads, trails, and pathways to avoid trampling habitat.
- Take all trash with you! Wildlife may die, suffer amputation, or risk other injury after becoming entangled or consuming litter.
- Respect all signs laws and regulations. Areas may be closed to reduce disturbance to nesting, wintering, or migrating birds.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Columbia

## *National Wildlife Refuge*

### *Bird Checklist*



## Welcome



*American Bittern*  
© Rick Bohn

Columbia National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1944 for the protection of migratory birds and other wildlife. The refuge's 28,554 acres include a rich mosaic of marshes, farm fields, small lakes, and cliff faces providing habitat for over 200 species of birds. The refuge is known for its abundance of wintering waterfowl, tundra swans, Sandhill cranes, bald eagles, and migrating songbirds. Other familiar refuge favorites include the great blue heron, American bittern, rails, and numerous warblers.

## Access



*Western meadow-lark males develop a repertoire of up to a dozen songs and may switch the songs they sing in response to an intruder.*  
© Tony LePriour

While much of the refuge is open year-round, some areas are closed for specific wildlife needs. Please honor these closures.

On October 1, the area where the trails are located closes for the winter (through the end of February). However, you may still hike the Crab Creek and Rimrock Trails; you must stay on the trail, though. The Marsh Loop Trail is closed until the following spring. There is also a short seasonal closure in March and April in Marsh Unit I during the Sandhill crane migration; the cranes use the area as a day roosting site. You can observe the cranes from the Marsh Unit I Overlook.

## Finding Birds

Bird finding on the refuge is easiest with an understanding of seasonal occurrence and abundance, daily habits, and the habitat preferences of each species or group of species. Migratory cranes and waterfowl typically feed in crops morning and evening while spending the night and mid-day periods in wetlands. Migrant songbirds, and

most nesting birds, are most active foraging and displaying in the morning hours but will often become silent and difficult to find as the day warms or the breeding season wanes. Some shorebirds begin fall migration in late June.

This list includes birds known to be found on the refuge and surrounding lands. If you find an unusual species, please let us know at [cwash@fws.gov](mailto:cwash@fws.gov). Photos are always appreciated. You can also submit your sightings on eBird or iNaturalist.

By the way, we know some of these are not listed according to the American Ornithologists' Union Checklist. This was to keep the list as compact as possible.

## Legend

The tables that follow have been developed over years of observations by expert birders.

- A Abundant. Large numbers should be seen without difficulty during the season.
- C Common. Present and expected to be seen in preferred habitat.
- U Uncommon. Present during the season but not certain to be seen on every visit.
- O Occasional. Probably present in very small numbers or very few locations, often with only one or two sightings per season.
- R Rare. Has occurred on or near the refuge but not expected. Includes "accidentals."



<b>Waterfowl</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Cackling Goose	U		O	U
Canada Goose	A	C	A	A
Greater White-fronted Goose	U		R	R
Ross's Goose	R		U	R
Snow Goose	U		U	C
Trumpeter Swan	U		O	U
Tundra Swan	U		O	U
Wood Duck	U	U	O	
Blue-winged Teal	O	U	R	
Cinnamon Teal	U	U	R	
Green-winged Teal	C	U	C	C
Northern Shoveler	C	U	C	U
Gadwall	C	U	U	U
American Wigeon	C	O	A	C
Eurasian Wigeon	R		R	R
Mallard	A	C	A	A
Northern Pintail	C	U	A	C
Canvasback	U	R	O	U
Redhead	U	U	U	O
Ring-necked Duck	C	O	U	U
Greater Scaup	O		R	R
Lesser Scaup	C	O	U	U
Bufflehead	C	O	C	C
Barrow's Goldeneye	O		R	R
Common Goldeneye	U		U	C
Common Merganser	U	O	U	C
Hooded Merganser	O	R	O	U
Red-breasted Merganser	R		R	R
Ruddy Duck	U	U	O	O

<b>Loons</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Common Loon	U	R	O	
<b>Grebes</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Clark's Grebe	U	U	O	
Eared Grebe	U	O	O	
Horned Grebe	U	O	O	
Pied-billed Grebe	U	U	C	U
Red-necked Grebe	O	O	O	
Western Grebe	U	U	O	
<b>Cormorants &amp; Pelicans</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
American White Pelican	U	C	U	
Double-crested Cormorant	C	C	U	O
<b>Wading Birds</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
American Bittern	U	U	O	
Black-crowned Night-Heron	U	U	O	
Great Blue Heron	C	C	C	U
Great Egret	U	C	U	
Snowy Egret	R	R		
White-faced Ibis	O	R		
<b>Coots, Rails &amp; Cranes</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
American Coot	A	C	A	U
Sora	U	O	O	
Virginia Rail	U	U	U	O
Lesser Sandhill Crane	A		C	
Greater Sandhill Crane	R		R	

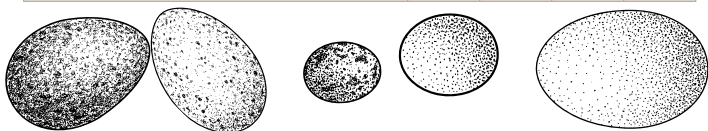


<b>Shorebirds</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Black-bellied Plover	R		R	
Semi-palmated Plover	R	U	R	
Killdeer	C	C	C	R
Black-necked Stilt	C	U		
American Avocet	U	U		
Greater Yellowlegs	U	U	U	
Lesser Yellowlegs	U	U	O	
Baird's Sandpiper		U	O	
Least Sandpiper	O	U	O	
Pectoral Sandpiper	R	O	R	
Semi-palmated Sandpiper		O	O	
Solitary Sandpiper	R	O	R	
Spotted Sandpiper	U	C	O	
Stilt Sandpiper		R	R	
Western Sandpiper	O	U	R	
Long-billed Curlew	O	O		
Dunlin	U		O	O
Long-billed Dowitcher	O		O	
Short-billed Dowitcher	R		R	
Red-necked Phalarope	O	U	O	
Wilson's Phalarope	O	U	O	
Wilson's Snipe	U	O	U	R
<b>Gulls</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Bonaparte's Gull	R	O	R	
California Gull	U	C	O	R
Franklin's Gull	R	R	R	
Glaucous-winged Gull	O		R	R
Herring Gull	O	R	R	O
Ring-billed Gull	C	C	C	U
Sabine's Gull			R	

<b>Terns</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Black Tern	O	O	R	
Caspian Tern	U	C	O	
Common Tern			R	
Forster's Tern	U	U	R	
<b>Eagles, Hawks &amp; Falcons</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Osprey	U	U	O	
Northern Harrier	C	U	U	U
Bald Eagle	U	O	O	U
Golden Eagle	O	R	R	O
American Goshawk			R	R
Cooper's Hawk	O	R	O	O
Ferruginous Hawk	O	R	R	
Red-tailed Hawk	C	C	C	C
Rough-legged Hawk	O		R	O
Sharp-shinned Hawk	O	R	O	O
Swainson's Hawk	U	U		
American Kestrel	C	U	C	C
Gyr Falcon	R		R	R
Merlin	U		O	O
Peregrine Falcon	U	O	O	R
Prairie Falcon	U	U	U	O
<b>Owls</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
American Barn Owl	O	O	R	R
Burrowing Owl	R	R	R	
Great Horned Owl	U	U	O	U
Long-eared Owl	R	R	R	R
Northern Saw-whet Owl				U
Short-eared Owl	O	O	R	R
Western Screech Owl	R		R	U

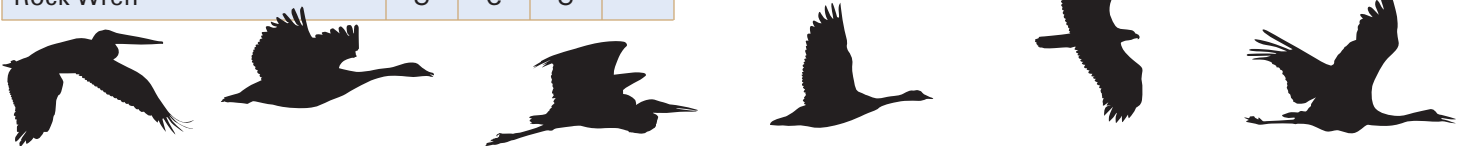
<b>Vultures</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Turkey Vulture	O	O	R	
<b>Gallinaceous Birds</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
California Quail	C	C	C	U
Chukar	U	U	O	R
Gray Partridge	O	O	O	R
Ring-necked Pheasant	C	U	U	U
<b>Pigeons &amp; Doves</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Eurasian Collared Dove	U	U	U	U
Mourning Dove	C	C	C	U
Rock Dove	U	U	U	U
<b>Goatsuckers</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Common Nighthawk	U	U	U	
Common Poorwill	R	R		
<b>Swifts</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Vaux's Swift	O	U		
White-throated Swift	U	U		
<b>Hummingbirds</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Anna's Hummingbird	U		U	
Black-chinned Hummingbird	O	O		
Calliope Hummingbird	R		R	
Rufous Hummingbird	R		U	
<b>Kingfishers</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Belted Kingfisher	U	O	U	O

<b>Woodpeckers</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Downy Woodpecker	U	O	O	U
Lewis's Woodpecker	O	R	O	
Northern Flicker	C	U	A	C
<b>Flycatchers</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Ash-throated Flycatcher	R	R	R	
Dusky Flycatcher	O	R	R	
Gray Flycatcher	O	R	R	
Hammond's Flycatcher	R	R	R	
Least Flycatcher	R		R	
Olive-sided Flycatcher	U	R	U	
Willow Flycatcher	O	U	R	
Say's Phoebe	U	U	U	
Western Wood-Pewee	O	U	R	
Eastern Kingbird	O	C		
Western Kingbird	U	U		
<b>Shrikes</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Loggerhead Shrike	U	O	U	R
Northern Shrike	O		U	U
<b>Vireos</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Cassin's Vireo	R		R	
Red-eyed Vireo	R		R	
Warbling Vireo	O	O	O	



<b>Crows, Jays &amp; Magpies</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
American Crow	U	U	U	U
Black-billed Magpie	C	C	C	C
Clark's Nutcracker			U	
Common Raven	C	U	C	C
Steller's Jay	U		U	
<b>Larks</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Horned Lark	C	C	U	U
<b>Swallows</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Bank Swallow	U	C	R	
Barn Swallow	C	A	U	
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	C	A		
Tree Swallow	U	U		
Violet-green Swallow	U	U	R	
<b>Chickadees, Creepers, Nuthatches</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Black-capped Chickadee	R	R	R	R
Mountain Chickadee			U	U
Brown Creeper	R		R	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	R		R	
<b>Wrens</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Bewick's Wren	U	U	U	O
Canyon Wren	U	U	U	O
House Wren	O	U	R	
Marsh Wren	C	C	U	U
Pacific Wren	R		R	
Rock Wren	U	C	U	

<b>Dippers</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
American Dipper				R
<b>Kinglets</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Golden-crowned Kinglet	U		O	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	C		C	
<b>Thrushes</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
American Robin	A	C	A	U
Townsend's Solitaire	O		R	
Hermit Thrush	O		O	
Swainson's Thrush	R		R	
Varied Thrush	O		R	R
Mountain Bluebird	O	R	O	
Western Bluebird	O	O	R	
<b>Mockingbirds &amp; Thrashers</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Gray Catbird	O	U	O	
Northern Mockingbird	R	R		
Sage Thrasher	U	U	O	
<b>Pipits</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
American Pipit	O		O	
<b>Starlings</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
European Starling	A	A	A	A
<b>Waxwings</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Cedar Waxwing	O	O	O	O



<b>Tanagers &amp; Warblers</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Western Tanager	O	R	R	
Yellow-breasted Chat	O	U		
Common Yellowthroat	U	C	U	
MacGillivray's Warbler	O		R	
Nashville Warbler	O	R	O	
Orange-crowned Warbler	O	R	O	
Townsend's Warbler	R		R	
Wilson's Warbler	U	U	R	
Yellow Warbler	U	U	O	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	C	R	A	O
<b>Blackbirds &amp; Orioles</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
Brewer's Blackbird	C	C	U	O
Red-winged Blackbird	A	A	C	C
Tri-colored Blackbird	U	U	R	
Yellow-headed Blackbird	C	C	U	R
Brown-headed Cowbird	U	U	R	
Western Meadowlark	A	A	U	O
Bullock's Oriole	U	C		
<b>Finches</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
American Goldfinch	C	C	U	O
House Finch	U	U	C	C
Common Redpoll				R
Pine Siskin	O	R	O	R
<b>Old World Sparrows</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
House Sparrow	C	U	U	O

<b>Sparrows</b>	<b>Spr</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Win</b>
American Tree Sparrow	O		O	O
Brewer's Sparrow	U	U	R	
Chipping Sparrow	O	O	O	
Fox Sparrow	O		O	R
Golden-crowned Sparrow	O		O	O
Grasshopper Sparrow	O	O		
Lark Sparrow	O	U		
Lincoln's Sparrow	U		U	
Sagebrush Sparrow	O	O		
Savannah Sparrow	C	U	U	
Song Sparrow	C	C	C	C
Vesper Sparrow	U	U		
White-crowned Sparrow	A	R	A	A
White-throated Sparrow	R		R	
Spotted Towhee	U	O	O	R
Dark-eyed Junco	C	R	A	A
Lapland Longspur	R		R	R
Black-headed Grosbeak	O	U		
Lazuli Bunting	O	U		

The species listed on the next pages are “accidental” sightings. Some of these species have been sighted on the refuge (e.g., indigo bunting). Other species have been sighted immediately adjacent to or near the refuge (e.g., ruddy turnstone); in fact, some of these species are fairly common nearby (e.g., blue jay). Other species are historical sightings (e.g., sage grouse were once common but haven't been seen in a very long time). Should you spot one of these birds, consider yourself fortunate—and please let us know about the sighting! Our email address is [cwash@fws.gov](mailto:cwash@fws.gov), and we'd love to hear about your experience.

Of course, other “birders” would also love to hear about a rare bird, so please consider posting your sighting to eBird or iNaturalist.



Accidentals, Historic & Nearby	Spr	Sum	Fall	Win
American Golden Plover			O	
American Redstart	R			
Arctic Tern			O	
Black Phoebe	O			
Black-and-white Warbler	O		O	
Black-legged Kittiwake				R
Black-throated Sparrow	O	O	O	
Blackpoll Warbler			R	
Blue Jay	R		R	R
Bohemian Waxwing				R
Brant	O		O	
Bushtit	R	R	R	R
Cassin's Finch	R			R
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	R	R		
Chestnut-sided Warbler			O	
Glaucous Gull	R			R
Gray-crowned Rosy Finch	R		R	R
Greater Sage Grouse	R	R	R	R
Green Heron			R	
Harris's Sparrow	R		R	R
Hudsonian Godwit			R	
Iceland Gull				R
Indigo Bunting		R		
Long-tailed Duck			R	R
Long-tailed Jaeger	O			

Accidentals, Historic & Nearby	Spr	Sum	Fall	Win
Marbled Godwit			O	
Pacific Golden Plover			O	
Parasitic Jaeger	O		O	
Purple Finch				R
Purple Martin	R			
Red Knot	R			
Red Phalarope			R	
Red-naped Sapsucker			R	
Red-throated Loon			O	O
Ruddy Turnstone			R	
Sanderling		R	R	
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper			R	
Short-billed Gull			O	O
Snow Bunting			R	R
Snowy Owl				R
Surf Scoter			R	
Swamp Sparrow	R			R
Tennessee Warbler	O		O	
Tufted Duck	R			R
Western Cattle Egret	R			R
Western Flycatcher		R	O	
Whimbrel	R		R	
White-breasted Nuthatch	R			
White-winged Scoter			R	
Willet	R			

