

Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
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September 2010



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Prime Hook

National Wildlife Refuge

Birds

Introduction



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

Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge, which was established in 1963, is located in Sussex County in southeastern Delaware. Comprised of over 10,000 acres, this refuge is a mosaic of forest, coastal marsh, tidal stream and freshwater creek habitats flowing to the Delaware Bay.

Situated along the southwestern shore of the Delaware Bay, the refuge is at the heart of key staging areas for migrating, breeding, and wintering habitats for waterfowl, shorebirds, waterbirds, and land birds along the Atlantic Flyway and Western Hemisphere. In fact, the refuge was designated a significant site for shorebirds within the Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network in 1986, a Ramsar Wetland Site of International Importance in 1992, and an Important Bird Area of the Delaware Bay in 2000.

Birding opportunities for waterfowl are best during March and November. Shorebirds, wading birds, and songbirds are most abundant during May, August, and September. Raptors can best be viewed during their migration from September through November.

The refuge is open to the public on approved trails from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset. To protect wildlife and their

habitat and to provide the best opportunities for wildlife observation and photography, disturbing, injuring, or damaging plants and animals on the refuge is prohibited. This includes flushing birds and other wildlife or using electronic calls (or called "taping") to lure birds closer for observation or photography. Please remember to take only memories and photographs and leave only footprints.

This brochure lists 296 species of birds that have been identified on or seen from the refuge, and in accordance with the seventh American Ornithologists Union Checklist. Although not listed, numerous accidentals have also been seen.

Most birds are migratory; therefore, their seasonal occurrence is coded as follows:

Season

Sp	spring	March – May
S	summer	June – August
F	fall	September – November
W	winter	December – February

- Birds known to nest on or near the refuge
Italics indicate threatened/endangered species

Relative Abundance

Relative abundance indicates how frequently you might see a bird in its favored habitat.

- | | | |
|---|------------|--|
| a | abundant | a species which is very numerous |
| c | common | likely to be seen or heard in suitable habitat |
| u | uncommon | present, but not certain to be seen |
| o | occasional | seen only a few times during a season |
| r | rare | may be present but not every year |

SWANS, GEESE and DUCKS

	Sp	S	F	W
___ Greater White-fronted Goose ___	r		r	r
___ Snow Goose ___	a	r	a	a
___ Ross's Goose ___	o		u	u
___ Brant ___	o		o	o
___ Cackling Goose ___	o		u	u
___ • Canada Goose ___	a	c	a	a
___ • Mute Swan ___	u	u	u	o
___ Tundra Swan ___	u		c	c
___ • Wood Duck ___	c	c	c	u
___ • Gadwall ___	c	c	c	c
___ Eurasian Wigeon ___	r			r



Wood duck drake

	Sp	S	F	W
___ American Wigeon _____	c		c	c
• American Black Duck _____	c	a	a	
• Mallard _____	a	c	a	a
Blue-winged Teal _____	u	o	u	r
Northern Shoveler _____	c	o	c	c
Northern Pintail _____	a	o	a	a
Green-winged Teal _____	a	o	a	a
Canvasback _____			r	o
Redhead _____	r		r	o
Ring-necked Duck _____	u		u	u
Greater Scaup _____	u		u	u
Lesser Scaup _____	u		u	u
Surf Scoter _____	u	o	c	c
White-winged Scoter _____		r	o	o
Black Scoter _____	u	r	u	u
Long-tailed Duck _____	o		o	u
Bufflehead _____	c		c	c
Common Goldeneye _____	o		o	u
• Hooded Merganser _____	c	r	c	c
Common Merganser _____	u			u
Red-breasted Merganser _____	c		u	u
Ruddy Duck _____	u	o	c	u

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

• Wild Turkey _____	c	u	u	o
• Northern Bobwhite _____	u	c	u	u

LOONS

___ Red-throated Loon _____	u		c	c
___ Common Loon _____	u		u	o

GREBES

___ Pied-billed Grebe _____	u	o	u	o
___ Horned Grebe _____	u		u	o

PETRELS

___ Wilson's Storm-petrel _____		u		
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GANNETS

___ Northern Gannet _____	c		c	o
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PELICANS

___ Brown Pelican _____	c			
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CORMORANTS

___ Double-crested Cormorant _____	c	c	c	u
___ Great Cormorant _____	o		o	o

BITTERNs, HERONS, EGRETS

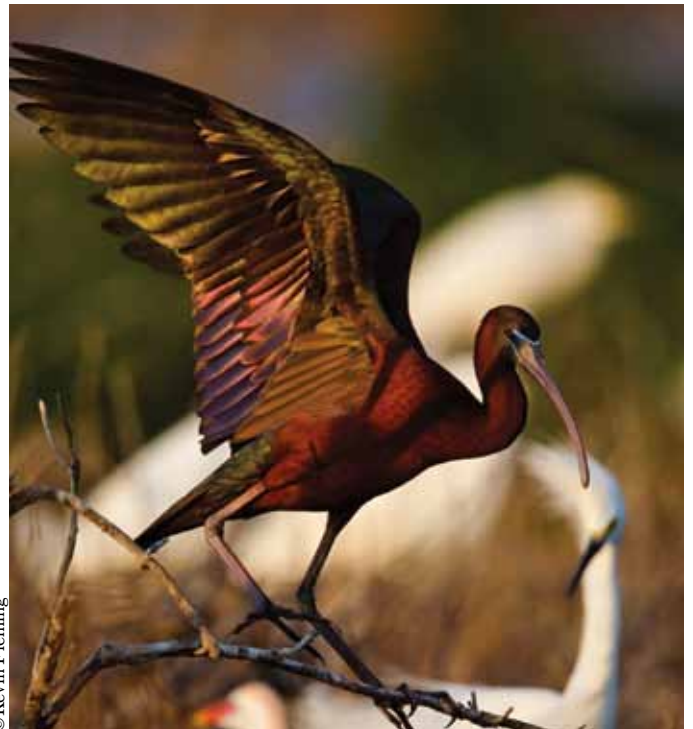
___ American Bittern _____	o	r	u	u
• Least Bittern _____	u	u		
• Great Blue Heron _____	c	c	c	c
___ Great Egret _____	c	a	a	o
___ Snowy Egret _____	c	a	a	r
___ Little Blue Heron _____	u	c	u	
___ Tricolored Heron _____	o	u	o	
___ Cattle Egret _____	o	o	o	
• Green Heron _____	c	c	c	
___ Black-crowned Night-Heron _____	u	u	u	o
___ Yellow-crowned Night-Heron _____	o	o	o	

IBISES

___ White Ibis _____	r	r		
___ Glossy Ibis _____	c	a	u	
___ White-faced Ibis _____	r			

VULTURES

___ • Black Vulture _____	c	c	c	c
___ • Turkey Vulture _____	a	c	a	a



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Glossy ibis

	Sp	S	F	W
OSPREY, HAWKS and EAGLES				
___ • Osprey _____	c	c	c	r
___ • Bald Eagle _____	c	c	c	c
___ Northern Harrier _____	c	o	c	c
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk _____	u	r	c	u
___ • Cooper's Hawk _____	u	o	u	u
___ • Red-shouldered Hawk _____	o	o	o	o
___ Broad-winged Hawk _____	r			
___ • Red-tailed Hawk _____	c	c	c	c
___ Rough-legged Hawk _____				o
___ Golden Eagle _____	r		r	r

FALCONS

___ • American Kestrel _____	c	u	c	u
___ Merlin _____	o		u	o
___ Peregrine Falcon _____	o		u	o

RAILS

___ • Black Rail _____	r	r		
___ • Clapper Rail _____	c	c	c	u
___ • King Rail _____	o	u	o	o
___ • Virginia Rail _____	u	u	u	u
___ Sora _____	o	o	o	
___ • Common Moorhen _____	o	o	o	
___ American Coot _____	u	r	u	o

PLOVERS

___ Black-bellied Plover _____	c	c	c	u
___ American Golden-plover _____	o	o	u	
___ Semipalmated Plover _____	c	c	c	r
___ <i>Piping Plover</i> _____	r	r		
___ • Killdeer _____	u	u	u	o

SANDPIPERS

___ • Spotted Sandpiper _____	u	u	u	
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OYSTERCATCHERS

___ • American Oystercatcher _____	o	o	r	
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STILTS and AVOCETS

___ • Black-necked Stilt _____	c	c	o	
___ American Avocet _____	o	u	o	

SANDPIPERS and PHALAROPES

___ Spotted Sandpiper _____	u	u	u	
___ Solitary Sandpiper _____	u	u	o	
___ Greater Yellowlegs _____	c	c	c	o
___ • Willet _____	c	c	u	



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Piping plovers

	Sp	S	F	W
___ Lesser Yellowlegs _____	c	c	c	o
___ Upland Sandpiper _____			o	
___ Whimbrel _____	o	o	o	
___ Hudsonian Godwit _____		r	r	
___ Marbled Godwit _____	r	r		
___ Ruddy Turnstone _____	c	c	c	u
___ Red Knot _____	u	o	o	
___ Sanderling _____	c	u	c	c
___ Semipalmated Sandpiper _____	a	a	a	
___ Western Sandpiper _____		u	u	o
___ Least Sandpiper _____	a	a	a	r
___ White-rumped Sandpiper _____	u	u	u	
___ Baird's Sandpiper _____		o	o	
___ Pectoral Sandpiper _____	o	c	c	
___ Dunlin _____	a	o	a	c
___ Stilt Sandpiper _____	o	c	c	
___ Buff-breasted Sandpiper _____		o	o	
___ Ruff _____	r	r		
___ Short-billed Dowitcher _____	a	a	c	
___ Long-billed Dowitcher _____	o	o	c	o
___ Wilson's Snipe _____	c	r	u	u
___ • American Woodcock _____	u	r	u	u
___ Wilson's Phalarope _____	o	o	o	
___ Red-necked Phalarope _____	o	o	o	
___ Red Phalarope _____	r			

GULLS and TERNS

___ Laughing Gull _____	a	a	a	
___ Black-headed Gull _____				r
___ Bonaparte's Gull _____	u	r	o	o
___ Ring-billed Gull _____	a	u	a	c

	Sp	S	F	W
___ Herring Gull _____	c	c	c	c
___ Iceland Gull _____	r			r
___ Lesser Black-backed Gull _____	u	o	o	o
___ Glaucous Gull _____	r			r
___ Great Black-backed Gull _____	c	c	c	c
•Least Tern _____	u	c	u	
___ Gull-billed Tern _____	r	o	r	
___ Caspian Tern _____	u	u	u	
___ Black Tern _____	o	o	o	
___ Common Tern _____	o	o	o	
•Forster's Tern _____	a	a	a	r
___ Royal Tern _____	o	u	u	
___ Sandwich Tern _____		r		
___ Black Skimmer _____	u	c	o	
___ Parasitic Jaeger _____			o	

DOVES

___ •Rock Pigeon _____	u	u	u	u
___ •Mourning Dove _____	c	c	c	c

CUCKOOS

___ •Yellow-billed Cuckoo _____	u	u	u	
___ •Black-billed Cuckoo _____	o	o	o	

OWLS

___ •Barn Owl _____	o	o	o	o
___ •Eastern Screech-Owl _____	c	c	c	c
___ •Great Horned Owl _____	c	c	c	c
___ Snowy Owl _____				r
___ •Barred Owl _____	u	u	u	u



Barred owl

	Sp	S	F	W
___ Long-eared Owl _____	o			o
___ Short-eared Owl _____	o		o	o
___ Northern Saw-whet Owl _____	o		o	o

NIGHTJARS

___ Common Nighthawk _____	o	o	o	
___ •Chuck-will's-widow _____	c	c		
___ •Whip-poor-will _____	c	c		

SWIFTS

___ •Chimney Swift _____	u	u	u	
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HUMMINGBIRDS

___ •Ruby-throated Hummingbird _____	c	c	u	
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KINGFISHERS

___ Belted Kingfisher _____	u	o	u	u
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WOODPECKERS

___ Red-headed Woodpecker _____	r		r	r
___ •Red-bellied Woodpecker _____	c	c	c	c
___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker _____	u		u	o
___ •Downy Woodpecker _____	c	c	c	c
___ •Hairy Woodpecker _____	u	u	u	u
___ •Northern Flicker _____	c	c	c	c
___ •Pileated Woodpecker _____	u	u	u	u

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

___ Olive-sided Flycatcher _____	r	r		
___ •Eastern Wood-Pewee _____	c	c	c	
___ Yellow-bellied Flycatcher _____		r	r	
___ •Acadian Flycatcher _____	c	c	o	
___ Alder Flycatcher _____	r		r	
___ •Willow Flycatcher _____	u	u	u	
___ Least Flycatcher _____	o	u	o	
___ •Eastern Phoebe _____	c	u	c	o
___ •Great Crested Flycatcher _____	c	c	c	
___ •Eastern Kingbird _____	c	c	c	

SHRIKES

___ Northern Shrike _____	r			r
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VIREOS

___ •White-eyed Vireo _____	c	c	c	
___ •Yellow-throated Vireo _____	o	o	o	
___ Blue-headed Vireo _____	u		u	
___ Philadelphia Vireo _____				o
___ •Red-eyed Vireo _____	c	c	c	



Pileated woodpecker

CROWS and JAYS

	Sp	S	F	W
___ •Blue Jay _____	c	c	c	c
___ •American Crow _____	c	c	c	c
___ •Fish Crow _____	c	c	u	o

LARKS

___ •Horned Lark _____	u	u	u	u
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SWALLOWS

___ •Purple Martin _____	a	a	u	
___ •Tree Swallow _____	a	a	a	r
___ •N. Rough-winged Swallow _____	o	u	o	
___ Bank Swallow _____	o	c	u	
___ Cliff Swallow _____	r	r		
___ Cave Swallow _____			r	
___ •Barn Swallow _____	a	a	c	

TITMICE and CHICKADEES

___ •Carolina Chickadee _____	c	c	c	c
___ •Tufted Titmouse _____	c	c	c	c

NUTHATCHES

___ Red-breasted Nuthatch _____	o		o	u
___ White-breasted Nuthatch _____	r		r	r
___ Brown-headed Nuthatch _____	o	o	o	o

CREEPERS

___ Brown Creeper _____	u		u	u
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WRENS

___ •Carolina Wren _____	c	c	c	c
___ •House Wren _____	c	c	c	r
___ Winter Wren _____	u		u	u
___ Sedge Wren _____	r	r	r	o
___ •Marsh Wren _____	c	c	c	o

KINGLETS

___ Golden-crowned Kinglet _____	c		c	u
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet _____	c		c	o
___ •Blue-gray Gnatcatcher _____	c	c	u	

THRUSHES

___ •Eastern Bluebird _____	c	c	c	u
___ Veery _____	u		u	
___ Gray-cheeked Thrush _____	o		o	
___ Bicknell's Thrush _____	r		r	
___ Swainson's Thrush _____	u		u	
___ Hermit Thrush _____	u		c	u
___ •Wood Thrush _____	c	c	u	
___ •American Robin _____	a	a	a	c

MIMIC THRUSHES

___ •Gray Catbird _____	c	c	c	o
___ •Northern Mockingbird _____	c	c	c	c
___ •Brown Thrasher _____	c	c	c	o

STARLINGS

___ •European Starling _____	a	a	a	a
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PIPIT

___ American Pipit _____	u		u	u
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Sp S F W

	Sp	S	F	W
WAXWINGS				
___ • Cedar Waxwing _____	c	u	u	u
WOOD WARBLERS				
___ Blue-winged Warbler _____	o	o	o	
___ Golden-winged Warbler _____			r	
___ Tennessee Warbler _____	o		o	
___ Orange-crowned Warbler _____			r	r
___ Nashville Warbler _____	o		o	
___ Northern Parula _____	u	o	u	
___ • Yellow Warbler _____	c	c	u	
___ Chestnut-sided Warbler _____	o	r	u	
___ Magnolia Warbler _____	u	r	u	
___ Cape May Warbler _____	r		r	
___ Black-throated Blue Warbler _____	u		u	
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler _____	a		a	c
___ Black-throated Green Warbler _____	u		u	
___ Blackburnian Warbler _____	o		o	
___ • Yellow-throated Warbler _____	u	u	o	
___ • Pine Warbler _____	c	c	c	r
___ • Prairie Warbler _____	u	o	u	
___ Palm Warbler _____	u		u	
___ Bay-breasted Warbler _____	o		o	
___ Blackpoll Warbler _____	c		u	
___ Cerulean Warbler _____	r		r	
___ Black-and-white Warbler _____	u	u	c	
___ American Redstart _____	c	o	c	
___ • Prothonotary Warbler _____	c	u	u	
___ • Worm-eating Warbler _____	o		o	
___ • Ovenbird _____	c	c	u	
___ Northern Waterthrush _____	c		u	
___ Louisiana Waterthrush _____	o	r		
___ Kentucky Warbler _____	r			
___ Connecticut Warbler _____			r	
___ Mourning Warbler _____	r		r	
___ • Common Yellowthroat _____	a	c	c	o
___ Hooded Warbler _____	o		r	
___ Wilson's Warbler _____	o		o	
___ Canada Warbler _____	o	o	o	
___ • Yellow-breasted Chat _____	u	u	u	r
TANAGERS				
___ • Summer Tanager _____	u	u	r	
___ • Scarlet Tanager _____	c	c	u	



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Prairie warbler

	Sp	S	F	W
SPARROWS and TOWHEES				
___ • Eastern Towhee _____	c	c	c	u
___ American Tree Sparrow _____	o		o	
___ • Chipping Sparrow _____	c	c	c	o
___ Clay-colored Sparrow _____	r		o	r
___ • Field Sparrow _____	c	c	c	c
___ • Vesper Sparrow _____	r	r	r	
___ Lark Sparrow _____				r
___ Savannah Sparrow _____	c		c	u
___ • Grasshopper Sparrow _____	u	u	r	r
___ Le Conte's Sparrow _____	r			r
___ Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow _____	u		u	o
___ • Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow _____	u	u	u	o
___ • Seaside Sparrow _____	a	a	c	o
___ Fox Sparrow _____	u		u	u
___ • Song Sparrow _____	c	c	c	c
___ Lincoln's Sparrow _____	r		o	
___ • Swamp Sparrow _____	c	c	c	c
___ White-throated Sparrow _____	a		a	a
___ White-crowned Sparrow _____	u		u	u
___ Dark-eyed Junco _____	c		c	c
___ Lapland Longspur _____			r	r
___ Snow Bunting _____	r		o	o

