

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge
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www.fws.gov/northeast/missisquoi

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<http://www.fws.gov>

October 2016



Missisquoi

*National Wildlife
Refuge*

Birds



Wood duck drake
Kraig Ledoux

Welcome



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

Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge is one of more than 560 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a federal agency. The NWRS is a network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

Established in 1943, Missisquoi is on the eastern shore of lake Champlain near the Canadian border in northwestern Vermont. The refuge headquarters is five miles west of Swanton on Tabor Road 1/4 mile off of Route 78. Several diverse habitats make up the 6,760 acre refuge. The flood plain, sloughs and marshes of the Missisquoi River delta provide major nesting grounds for migratory waterfowl. Beds of wild rice (often called "duck candy"), stands of arrowhead, bulrush and wild celery along with frogs and fish provide plentiful sources of food. In addition to 5,000 acres of natural marsh, the refuge includes 1,200 acres of managed wetlands formed by three diked impoundments. These pools offer additional sources of food, cover and nesting habitat for waterfowl. The refuge provides habitat for over 200 species of birds.

Upland forested areas contain a mixture of hardwood species including white and red oak, white ash, white pine, American beech, hickory and butternut. By far, the majority of forested communities on the refuge are comprised of flood tolerant species such as swamp white oak, silver and red maple, cottonwood, and green ash. The refuge also maintains areas of early successional hardwoods such as alders, birch and poplar for migratory song birds and American woodcock.

Shad island, at the mouth of the river delta, is home to one of the largest great blue heron rookeries in Vermont. The refuge provides nesting habitat for all of Vermont's nesting black terns. Artificial nesting box structures distributed in suitable habitats throughout the refuge supplement natural tree cavities and augment productivity of cavity nesting species such as wood ducks, goldeneye and hooded mergansers. Other species such as Northern flying squirrels, screech owls and pileated woodpeckers occasionally use the nesting boxes as well. Initial success with constructed nesting platforms and tripods allowed osprey numbers to increase on the refuge which now are common and find abundant natural habitat on refuge lands.

This checklist includes more than 200 species of birds and is based on observations by refuge personnel and visiting ornithologists. If you should find an unlisted species, please let us know at refuge headquarters. We appreciate your help in updating our records.

Five trails totaling 7.5 miles access a variety of refuge habitats and provide good opportunities for bird observation. Insect repellent may be useful during the warmer months.

Most of the refuge is accessible only by boat. Public boat ramps on the refuge are located at Louie's Landing and Mac's Bend. Visitors are advised to consult the general refuge brochure for the boat ramp access and trail locations. Birders, whether on foot or in boats, need to observe refuge signs and cooperate with efforts to minimize disturbances to all wildlife while birding.

The bird checklist was designed to be informative and simple to use. The list is arranged in the order established by the American Ornithological Union. Symbols which appear in this checklist represent the following:

Seasonal appearance

Sp	Spring	March – May
S	Summer	June – August
F	Fall	September – November
W	Winter	December – February

Seasonal abundance

a	abundant	a common species which is very numerous
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 the season
r	rare	seen at intervals of 2 to 5 years

- Birds known or suspected to have nested on the refuge or known to nest locally.
Italics indicate Federally threatened/endangered species.

Swans, Geese and Ducks

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

Gallinaceous Birds

___ •Ruffed Grouse _____	u	u	u	u
___ •Wild Turkey _____	u	u	u	u

Grebes

___ •Pied-billed Grebe _____	u	c	u	
___ Horned Grebe _____	o	o	o	
___ Red-necked Grebe _____	o		o	

Pigeons and Doves

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

Cuckoos and Anis

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

Nightjars

___ Common Nighthawk _____	o	o	r	
___ Eastern Whip-poor-will _____	r	r	r	

Swifts

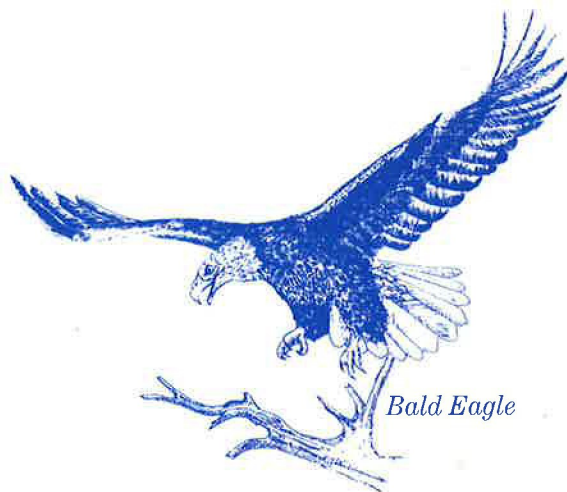
___ •Chimney Swift _____	o	o	o	
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Hummingbirds

___ •Ruby-throated Hummingbird _____	o	c	o	
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Rails

___ •Virginia Rail _____	o	c	c	
___ •Sora _____	o	o	o	
___ •Common Gallinule _____	c	c	o	
___ American Coot _____	o	r	c	



Bald Eagle

Peregrine Falcon



Cranes

___ Sandhill Crane _____

Sp	S	F	W
r	r		

Plovers

___ Black-bellied Plover _____
 ___ Semipalmated Plover _____
 ___ •Killdeer _____

		o	
o		o	
c	c	c	

Sandpipers and Phalaropes

___ Greater Yellowlegs _____
 ___ Lesser Yellowlegs _____
 ___ Solitary Sandpiper _____
 ___ •Spotted Sandpiper _____
 ___ Hudsonian Godwit _____
 ___ Ruddy Turnstone _____
 ___ Sanderling _____
 ___ Semipalmated Sandpiper _____
 ___ Least Sandpiper _____
 ___ White-rumped Sandpiper _____
 ___ Pectoral Sandpiper _____
 ___ Dunlin _____
 ___ Stilt Sandpiper _____
 ___ Short-billed Dowitcher _____
 ___ Long-billed Dowitcher _____
 ___ •Wilson's Snipe _____
 ___ •American Woodcock _____

c		c	
o		o	
o		o	
o	c	o	
		r	r
		r	
		o	
		o	
		o	
		o	
		r	r
		r	
		o	
e	c	c	
e	c	c	

Skuas, Jaegers, Gulls and Terns

___ Bonaparte's Gull _____
 ___ Ring-billed Gull _____
 ___ Herring Gull _____
 ___ Great Black-backed Gull _____
 ___ Caspian Tern _____
 ___ •Black Tern _____
 ___ Common Tern _____

r	r	o	
e	c	c	o
u	u	u	
u	u	u	o
	u		
e	e		
c	o	c	

Loons

___ Common Loon _____

o	o	o	
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Cormorants

___ •Double-crested Cormorant _____

Sp	S	F	W
c	c	c	

Bitterns, Herons and Egrets

___ •American Bittern _____
 ___ •Least Bittern _____
 ___ •Great Blue Heron _____
 ___ •Great Egret _____
 ___ •Green Heron _____
 ___ Black-crowned Night Heron _____

c	c	o	
r	u		
c	c	c	r
o	o	o	
u	c	o	
o	c	o	

New World Vultures

___ Turkey Vulture _____

u	c	u	
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Osprey, Kites, Hawks and Eagles

___ •Osprey _____
 ___ •Bald Eagle _____
 ___ •Northern Harrier _____
 ___ Sharp-shinned Hawk _____
 ___ Cooper's Hawk _____
 ___ Northern Goshawk _____
 ___ •Red-shouldered Hawk _____
 ___ Broad-winged Hawk _____
 ___ •Red-tailed Hawk _____
 ___ Rough-legged Hawk _____

c	c	c	
c	c	c	
c	c	c	
o	o	o	
o	o	o	
r	r	r	r
o	o	o	
r		r	
c	c	c	o
u	r	o	o

Typical Owls

___ •Eastern Screech-Owl _____
 ___ •Great Horned Owl _____
 ___ Snowy Owl _____
 ___ Northern Hawk Owl _____
 ___ •Barred Owl _____
 ___ Short-eared Owl _____
 ___ Northern Saw-whet Owl _____

o	o	o	o
c	c	c	u
r	r	r	
r	r	r	
u	u	u	u
o	o	o	
o	o	o	o

Kingfisher

___ •Belted Kingfisher _____

u	c	c	
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Woodpeckers

___ •Red-headed Woodpecker _____
 ___ •Yellow-bellied Sapsucker _____
 ___ •Downy Woodpecker _____
 ___ •Hairy Woodpecker _____
 ___ •Northern Flicker _____
 ___ •Pileated Woodpecker _____

	r		
c	c	o	
e	e	e	c
e	c	c	c
e	e	o	
u	u	u	u

Falcons and Carcaras

___ •American Kestrel _____
 ___ Merlin _____
 ___ Peregrine Falcon _____

c	c	o	
r	r	r	
o	r	o	r



Olive-sided Flycatcher

Tyrant Flycatchers

_____ Olive-sided Flycatcher _____	o	u	o	
_____ • Eastern Wood-Pewee _____	c	c	c	
_____ • Alder Flycatcher _____	c	c	o	
_____ • Willow Flycatcher _____	u	u	o	
_____ • Least Flycatcher _____	c	c	o	
_____ • Eastern Phoebe _____	c	c	c	
_____ • Great Crested Flycatcher _____	c	c	o	
_____ • Eastern Kingbird _____	c	c	c	

Shrikes

_____ Northern Shrike _____	u	r	u	u
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Vireos

_____ Yellow-throated Vireo _____	o	c	o	
_____ • Blue-headed Vireo _____	u	u	u	
_____ • Warbling Vireo _____	o	c	o	
_____ Philadelphia Vireo _____	o	o	r	
_____ • Red-eyed Vireo _____	c	c	o	

Crows, Jays and Magpies

_____ • Blue Jay _____	c	c	c	o
_____ • American Crow _____	c	c	c	o
_____ • Raven _____	o	o	o	o

Larks

_____ Horned Lark _____	o	o	o	o
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Swallows

_____ Purple Martin _____	o	c	o	
_____ • Tree Swallow _____	c	a	c	
_____ Northern Rough-winged Swallow _____	u	u	u	

_____ • Bank Swallow _____	c	c	o	
_____ Cliff Swallow _____	o	o		
_____ • Barn Swallow _____	c	c	o	

Titmice and Chickadees

_____ • Black-capped Chickadee _____	a	c	c	a
_____ Boreal Chickadee _____			r	r
_____ Tufted Titmouse _____	u	u	u	

Nuthatches

_____ Red-breasted Nuthatch _____	r	r	r	r
_____ • White-breasted Nuthatch _____	c	c	c	c

Creepers

_____ • Brown Creeper _____	c	u	c	c
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Wrens

_____ • House Wren _____	o	u	u	
_____ Winter Wren _____	r	r	r	
_____ • Marsh Wren _____	o	c	o	

Kinglets

_____ Golden-crowned Kinglet _____	o	r	o	
_____ Ruby-crowned Kinglet _____	u	r	u	r

Old World Warblers

_____ • Blue-gray Gnatcatcher _____	u	c		
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Thrushes

_____ Eastern Bluebird _____	r	r	r	
_____ • Veery _____	c	c	o	
_____ Swainson's Thrush _____	r	r		
_____ • Hermit Thrush _____	c	c	c	
_____ • Wood Thrush _____	c	c	u	
_____ • American Robin _____	c	c	c	

Mimic Thrushes

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

Starlings

_____ • European Starling _____	a	c	a	c
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Wagtails and Pipits

_____ American Pipit _____	u	o	u	
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Waxwings

_____ Bohemian Waxwing _____				r
_____ • Cedar Waxwing _____	o	c	c	

Sp	S	F	W
c	c	o	
o	o		
c	c	o	
a	c	c	a
		r	r
u	u	u	
r	r	r	r
c	c	c	c
c	u	c	c
o	u	u	
r	r	r	
o	c	o	
o	r	o	
u	r	u	r
u	c		
r	r	r	
c	c	o	
r	r		
c	c	c	
c	c	u	
c	c	c	
c	c	o	
r	r		
o	o	o	
a	c	a	c
u	o	u	
o	c	c	
			r
o	c	c	

American Goldfinch



Old World Sparrows

___ •House Sparrow _____

Finches

___ Pine Grosbeak _____
 ___ Purple Finch _____
 ___ •House Finch _____
 ___ White-winged Crossbill _____
 ___ Common Redpoll _____
 ___ Pine Siskin _____
 ___ •American Goldfinch _____
 ___ Evening Grosbeak _____

Sparrows and Towhees

___ Eastern Towhee _____
 ___ American Tree Sparrow _____
 ___ •Chipping Sparrow _____
 ___ Clay Colored Sparrow _____
 ___ •Field Sparrow _____
 ___ Vesper Sparrow _____
 ___ •Savannah Sparrow _____
 ___ Grasshopper Sparrow _____
 ___ Fox Sparrow _____
 ___ •Song Sparrow _____
 ___ Lincoln's Sparrow _____
 ___ •Swamp Sparrow _____
 ___ •White-throated Sparrow _____
 ___ White-crowned Sparrow _____
 ___ Dark-eyed Junco _____

Sp	S	F	W
c	c	c	c
		r	r
o	o	o	o
u	c	u	u
o	r	o	
			r
r	r	r	
c	c	c	o
c	o	o	c
r	r		
c	r	o	c
c	c	c	
r	r		
o		o	o
c	c	c	
c	c	o	
o	o	o	o
c	r	o	c

Snowbuntings

___ Snow bunting _____

Wood Warblers

___ •Ovenbird _____
 ___ Louisiana Waterthrush _____
 ___ •Northern Waterthrush _____
 ___ Black-and-white Warbler _____
 ___ Tennessee Warbler _____
 ___ Orange-crowned Warbler _____
 ___ •Nashville Warbler _____
 ___ Mourning Warbler _____
 ___ •Common Yellowthroat _____
 ___ •American Redstart _____
 ___ Cape May Warbler _____
 ___ Northern Parula _____
 ___ Magnolia Warbler _____
 ___ Bay-breasted Warbler _____
 ___ Blackburnian Warbler _____
 ___ •Yellow Warbler _____
 ___ •Chestnut-sided Warbler _____
 ___ Blackpoll Warbler _____
 ___ Black-throated Blue Warbler _____
 ___ Palm Warbler _____
 ___ Pine Warbler _____
 ___ Yellow-rumped Warbler _____
 ___ Black-throated Green Warbler _____
 ___ Canada Warbler _____

Cardinals, Grosbeaks and Allies

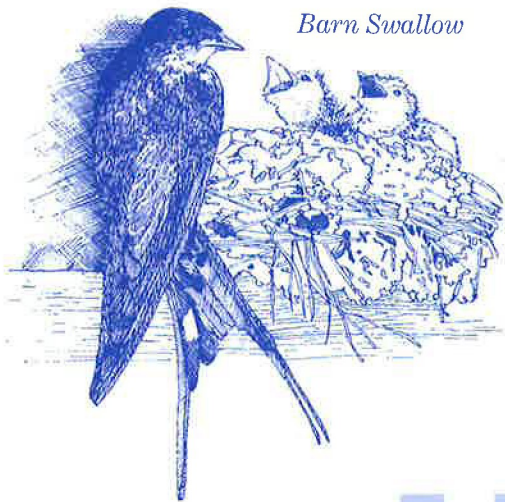
___ Scarlet Tanager _____
 ___ •Northern Cardinal _____
 ___ •Rose-breasted Grosbeak _____
 ___ Indigo Bunting _____

Sp	S	F	W
			o
o	o		
o	u		
o	c	o	
u	u	u	
r	r	r	
		r	
o	o	o	
r			
c	c	c	
c	c	c	
o	o		
o		r	
r	r	r	
r	r	r	
r	r	r	
c	c	o	
o	o		
u		u	
o	o	o	
o		o	
r		r	
o	r	o	
u	r	u	
o	o	o	
r	r	r	
u	u	u	c
c	c	o	
o	o	o	



Northern Cardinal

Barn Swallow



Blackbirds and Orioles

- _____ •Bobolink _____
- _____ •Red-winged Blackbird _____
- _____ •Eastern Meadowlark _____
- _____ Rusty Blackbird _____
- _____ •Common Grackle _____
- _____ •Brown-headed Cowbird _____
- _____ Orchard Oriole _____
- _____ •Baltimore Oriole _____

Sp	S	F	W
c	a	o	
a	a	c	
c	c	o	
u	u	u	
c	c	o	
c	c	c	
	r		
c	c		

Baltimore Oriole



Birding Ethics

The membership of the American Birding Association believes that all birders have an obligation at all times to protect wildlife, the natural environment, and the rights of others and asks that all birders adhere to the following guidelines of good birding behavior.

I. Birders must always act in ways that do not endanger the welfare of birds or other wildlife.

In keeping with this principle, we will:

- Observe and photograph birds without knowingly disturbing them in any significant way.
- Avoid chasing or repeatedly flushing birds.
- Keep an appropriate distance from nests and nesting colonies so as not to disturb the birds or expose them to danger.
- Disturb wintering wildlife as little as possible, particularly during critical feeding and resting periods. They need all their energy reserves to withstand the stresses of harsh winter and migration.

II. Birders must always act in ways that do not harm the natural environment.

In keeping with this principle, we will:

- Stay on existing roads, trails and pathways whenever possible to avoid trampling.
- Leave all habitat as it was found. Many birds die when they become entangled in discarded fishing lines, 6 pack rings and other trash, or when they mistake garbage for food.

III. Birders must always respect the rights of others.

In keeping with this principle, we will:

- Respect the privacy and property of others by observing “No Trespassing” signs.
- Observe all laws and the rules and regulations that govern public use of birding areas.
- Always behave in a manner that will enhance the image of the birding community in the eyes of the public.

IV. Birders in groups should assume special responsibilities.

As group members, we shall:

- Take special care to alleviate the problems and disturbances that are multiplied when more people are present.
- Act in consideration of the group’s interest, as well as our own.
- Support by our actions the responsibility of the group leader(s) for the conduct of the group.

As group leaders, we will:

- Assume responsibility for the conduct of the group.
- Learn and inform the group of any special rules, regulations or conduct applicable to the area or habitat being visited.
- Limit groups to a size that does not threaten the environment or the peace and tranquility of others.
- Teach others birding ethics by our words and example.



Great Blue Heron

Sighting Notes

Date

Time

Weather

No. of species

Route of area

Observers

Remarks