

Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge
1661 West JPG Niblo Road
Madison, IN 47250
812/273 0783

TTY users may reach Big Oaks through
the Federal Information Relay System at
1-800/877 8339

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/bigoaks>

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
www.fws.gov



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Big Oaks

National Wildlife Refuge

Bird Checklist



Blue Grosbeak,
©Ron Austing

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“I came to Big Oaks to see the Henslow’s Sparrow and add it to my life list. I knew it was here because Big Oaks is a Globally Important Bird Area, since so many Henslow’s nest here.”



**Welcome to Big Oaks
National Wildlife Refuge!**

Established in 2000, Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge is approximately 50,000 acres of diverse habitat. There are over 6,000 acres of wetlands, large blocks of forest habitat and vast grasslands. Each of these unique areas is ideal habitat for a variety of birds. For example, cerulean warblers may be found nesting in the tops of the tallest trees; Henslow's sparrows will be seen singing in the grasslands and wood ducks are often spotted paddling in the ponded areas of the wetlands.



Yellow-throated Warbler;
©Ron Austing

With over 120 species of birds nesting at Big Oaks and 200+ species of birds migrating through the refuge, the opportunity to see a number of birds is great. In addition to bird watching on public use days, the refuge offers birding during several organized trips and participates in the National Audubon Society's annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Golden eagles, bald eagles, short-eared owls, and LeConte's sparrows have been highlights of previous counts. Birding groups are encouraged to schedule tours with the refuge office to enjoy specialized visits to different habitats available on the refuge during migration or the summer breeding period.



Northern Parula,
©Ron Austing

A breeding bird survey is conducted on the refuge periodically to sample overall bird diversity. A total of 107 point counts are proportionately distributed among major habitat types along routes of travel on the refuge. The road-side survey was chosen because of the prevalence of closed areas (no access areas) throughout the refuge. These routes are the basis for long-term monitoring of bird populations on Big Oaks NWR. The refuge has also monitored over 1,200 bird nests of 41 species during extensive research on grassland and forest bird breeding ecology. Several of the species observed



Scarlet Tanager;
©Ron Austing



Hooded Merganser;
©Ron Austing

are listed as a species of special management concern for the Fish and Wildlife Service. These included the red-headed woodpecker, northern flicker, acadian flycatcher, wood thrush, blue-winged warbler, prairie warbler, cerulean warbler, Kentucky warbler, field sparrow, grasshopper sparrow, Henslow's sparrow, eastern meadowlark, and orchard oriole.

Species names and order are in accordance with the most recent American Ornithologists Union Checklist as amended.

Tools for Birding

For your convenience, binoculars and bird field guides are available for check out at the refuge office.



Great Blue Heron,
©Ron Austing

This list was compiled with the help of the refuge staff and members of the Big Oaks Conservation Society. Big Oaks offers special thanks to George Terlinden for overseeing the grant for the printing of the brochure, the purchase of the binoculars and field guides, and his persistence and expertise in creating this list.

Seasons

SpSpring March-May
SSummer June-August
FFall..... September - November
WWinter December - February

Relative Abundance

a... abundantvery numerous
c ... commonlikely 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 ... raremay be present, but not every year
***** ... Indicates birds known to nest, or have nested, on the
 refuge

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Swans, Geese, & Ducks				
_ Snow Goose.....			r	
_ Ross's Goose.....			r	
_ *Canada Goose..... c	c	c	c	
_ Mute Swan.....			r	r
_ Trumpeter Swan.....			r	
_ Tundra Swan..... r			r	r
_ *Wood Duck..... a	a	a	c	
_ Gadwall..... u			u	r
_ American Wigeon..... u			u	o
_ American Black Duck..... u			u	o
_ *Mallard..... c	u	c	c	
_ *Blue-winged Teal..... c	u	c	o	
_ Northern Shoveler..... u			u	o
_ Northern Pintail..... o			o	r
_ Green-winged Teal..... u			c	u
_ Ring-necked Duck..... c			c	u
_ Greater Scaup..... o			o	u
_ Lesser Scaup..... o			o	u
_ Long-tailed Duck.....				r
_ Bufflehead..... u			u	u
_ Common Goldeneye..... o			o	o
_ *Hooded Merganser..... u	o	c	o	
_ Common Merganser..... o			o	o
_ Red-breasted Merganser..... o			o	
_ Ruddy Duck..... u			u	o

Grouse, Quail, & Turkey

_ *Northern Bobwhite..... c	c	c	c	
_ Ring-necked Pheasant..... r	r	r	r	
_ *Ruffed Grouse..... u	u	u	u	
_ *Wild Turkey..... c	c	c	c	

Loons

_ Common Loon..... o	r	o	o	
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Grebes

_ *Pied-billed Grebe..... c	u	c	o	
_ Horned Grebe..... o			o	

Cormorants

_ Double-crested Cormorant..... c	o	c	r	
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Northern Harrier,
©Ron Austing

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Bitterns & Herons				
_ American Bittern..... o			o	
_ Least Bittern..... o			o	
_ *Great Blue Heron..... c	c	c	c	u
_ Great Egret..... u	o	u		
_ Snowy Egret..... r	r	r		
_ Little Blue Heron..... r	r	r		
_ Cattle Egret..... r			r	
_ *Green Heron..... c	c	u		
_ Black-crowned Night-Heron..... r	r	r		
_ *Yellow-crowned Night-Heron..... u	u	u		

Vultures, Hawks, & Falcons

_ *Black Vulture..... c	c	c	o	
_ *Turkey Vulture..... c	c	c	o	
_ Osprey..... u		u		
_ Bald Eagle..... o	o	o	o	
_ *Northern Harrier..... u	r	c	c	
_ *Sharp-shinned Hawk..... u	u	u	u	
_ *Cooper's Hawk..... u	u	u	u	
_ Northern Goshawk..... r		r	r	
_ *Red-shouldered Hawk..... c	c	c	c	
_ Broad-winged Hawk..... o	r	o		
_ *Red-tailed Hawk..... c	c	c	c	
_ Rough-legged Hawk.....				u
_ Golden Eagle..... o		o	o	
_ *American Kestrel..... c	c	c	c	
_ Merlin..... o		o	r	
_ Peregrine Falcon..... o	o	o		

Rails & Coots

_ Yellow Rail..... r			r	
_ Black Rail..... r	r	r		
_ *King Rail..... r	r	r		
_ Virginia Rail..... u			u	
_ *Sora..... u	u	u		
_ American Coot..... u	o	u		

Cranes

_ Sandhill Crane..... r		r	r	
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Plovers & Sandpipers

_ *Killdeer..... c	c	c	o	
_ Spotted Sandpiper..... u	o	u		
_ Solitary Sandpiper..... u		u		
_ Greater Yellowlegs..... u		u		
_ Lesser Yellowlegs..... u		u		
_ Marbled Godwit..... r		r		
_ Dunlin..... r		r		
_ Common Snipe..... u		u		
_ *American Woodcock..... c	u	u	o	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Gulls & Terns				
_Ring-billed Gull.....				r
Pigeons & Doves				
_*Rock Pigeon	o	o	o	
_*Mourning Dove.....	c	c	c	
Cuckoos				
_*Yellow-billed Cuckoo	u	c	c	
_*Black-billed Cuckoo	u	u	u	
Owls				
_Barn Owl.....	r	r	r	r
_*Eastern Screech-Owl.....	c	c	c	c
_*Great Horned Owl.....	c	c	c	c
_*Barred Owl.....	c	c	c	c
_Long-eared Owl.....	o			o
_*Short-eared Owl	o	r	r	o
_Northern Saw-whet Owl.....	r		u	o
Goatsuckers				
_*Common Nighthawk	u	o	u	
_*Chuck-will's-widow.....	r	r		
_*Whip-poor-will	u	c	u	
Swifts				
_*Chimney Swift	c	c	c	
Hummingbirds				
_*Ruby-throated Hummingbird.....	c	c	c	
Kingfishers				
_*Belted Kingfisher	c	c	c	u
Woodpeckers				
_*Red-headed Woodpecker.....	c	c	c	c
_*Red-bellied Woodpecker.....	c	c	c	c
_Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.....	u		u	u
_*Downy Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
_*Hairy Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
_*Northern Flicker.....	c	c	c	c
_*Pileated Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
Flycatchers				
_Olive-sided Flycatcher.....	r		r	
_*Eastern Wood-Pewee.....	c	c	c	
_Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	u		u	
_*Acadian Flycatcher	c	c	c	
_Alder Flycatcher	r			
_*Willow Flycatcher	u	c	u	
_Least Flycatcher	u	r	u	
_*Eastern Phoebe.....	c	c	c	



Pileated Woodpecker,
©Ron Austing

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
__*Great Crested Flycatcher	c		c	
__*Eastern Kingbird	c		c	
Shrikes				
__*Loggerhead Shrike	r		r	
__Northern Shrike				r
Vireos				
__*White-eyed Vireo.....	c		c	
__*Bell's Vireo	r			
__*Yellow-throated Vireo	c		c	
__Blue-headed Vireo.....				o
__*Warbling Vireo.....	c		c	
__Philadelphia Vireo.....				u
__*Red-eyed Vireo	c		c	
Crows & Jays				
__*Blue Jay	a		a	a
__*American Crow.....	a		a	a
Larks				
__*Horned Lark.....	u		u	u
Swallows				
__*Purple Martin	c		c	
__*Tree Swallow	c		c	
__Northern Rough-winged Swallow ...	u		u	
__*Bank Swallow.....	o		o	
__Cliff Swallow	r		r	
__*Barn Swallow	c		c	
Chickadees & Titmice				
__*Carolina Chickadee	a		a	a
__Black-capped Chickadee				r
__*Tufted Titmouse	a		a	a
Nuthatches				
__Red-breasted Nuthatch.....				u
__*White-breasted Nuthatch	c		c	c
Creepers				
__Brown Creeper				u
Wrens				
__*Carolina Wren.....	c		c	c
__*House Wren.....	c		u	r
__Winter Wren.....				r
__*Sedge Wren	u		u	
__Marsh Wren				r

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Kinglets & Gnatcatchers				
__Golden-crowned Kinglet.....	u		c	c
__Ruby-crowned Kinglet.....	u		u	r
__*Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	c		c	
Thrushes				
__*Eastern Bluebird.....	c		c	c
__Veery				u
__Gray-cheeked Thrush				u
__Swainson's Thrush				c
__Hermit Thrush				c
__*Wood Thrush.....	c		c	
__*American Robin.....	a		a	a
Mockingbirds & Thrashers				
__*Gray Catbird	c		c	
__*Northern Mockingbird	c		c	u
__*Brown Thrasher	c		c	r
Starlings, Pipits & Waxwings				
__*European Starling.....	c		c	c
__American Pipit.....				o
__*Cedar Waxwing.....	c		c	c
Wood Warblers				
__*Blue-winged Warbler	c		c	
__Golden-winged Warbler.....	r			r
__Tennessee Warbler				c
__Orange-crowned Warbler.....				o
__Nashville Warbler.....				c
__*Northern Parula	c		c	
__*Yellow Warbler.....	u		u	
__Chestnut-sided Warbler	r			c
__Magnolia Warbler.....				c
__Cape May Warbler				u
__Black-throated Blue Warbler.....				u
__Yellow-rumped Warbler.....				c
__Black-throated Green Warbler	c		r	c
__Blackburnian Warbler	u			u
__*Yellow-throated Warbler	c		c	u
__*Pine Warbler				u
__*Prairie Warbler.....	c		c	u
__Palm Warbler				c
__Bay-breasted Warbler				c
__Blackpoll Warbler.....				c
__*Cerulean Warbler	c		c	u
__*Black-and-white Warbler	c		r	c
__*American Redstart.....	c		r	u
__*Prothonotary Warbler	u		u	u
__Worm-eating Warbler	o		o	o
__Ovenbird	c		c	c
__Northern Waterthrush	r			r

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
—*Louisiana Waterthrush.....	u	u	u	
—*Kentucky Warbler.....	c	c	c	
—Connecticut Warbler.....	o	o	o	
—Mourning Warbler.....	o	o	o	
—*Common Yellowthroat.....	c	c	c	
—*Hooded Warbler.....	o	o	o	
—Wilson’s Warbler.....	u		u	
—Canada Warbler.....	o		o	
—*Yellow-breasted Chat.....	c	c	c	

Sparrows

—*Eastern Towhee.....	c	c	c	c
—American Tree Sparrow.....	c		c	c
—*Chipping Sparrow.....	c	c	c	
—Clay-colored Sparrow.....	r		r	
—*Field Sparrow.....	c	c	c	u
—Vesper Sparrow.....	u	o	u	o
—Lark Sparrow.....	r	r	r	
—*Savannah Sparrow.....	c	o	c	r
—*Grasshopper Sparrow.....	u	u	o	
—*Henslow’s Sparrow.....	c	c	u	
—Le Conte’s Sparrow.....	r		r	r
—Fox Sparrow.....	c		c	c
—*Song Sparrow.....	c	c	c	c
—Lincoln’s Sparrow.....	u		u	r
—Swamp Sparrow.....	c		c	c
—White-throated Sparrow.....	c		c	c
—White-crowned Sparrow.....	c		c	c
—Dark-eyed Junco.....	c		c	c
—Lapland Longspur.....				r
—Snow Bunting.....				r

Tanagers

—*Summer Tanager.....	c	c	u	
—*Scarlet Tanager.....	c	c	u	

Cardinals & Grosbeaks

—*Northern Cardinal.....	a	a	a	a
—Rose-breasted Grosbeak.....	c	o	c	
—*Blue Grosbeak.....	c	c	u	
—*Indigo Bunting.....	a	a	a	
—*Dickcissel.....	o	o	o	

Blackbirds & Orioles

—Bobolink.....	o	r	r	
—*Red-winged Blackbird.....	a	a	a	u
—*Eastern Meadowlark.....	a	a	a	u
—Rusty Blackbird.....	o		o	o
—Brewer’s Blackbird.....	r		r	
—*Common Grackle.....	a	a	a	u
—*Brown-headed Cowbird.....	a	a	c	u
—*Orchard Oriole.....	c	c	c	
—*Baltimore Oriole.....	c	c	c	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Finches				
—Purple Finch.....	u		u	u
—*House Finch.....	u	u	u	u
—White-winged Crossbill.....				r
—Common Redpoll.....				r
—Pine Siskin.....				r
—*American Goldfinch.....	c	c	c	c
—Evening Grosbeak.....	r			r

Old World Sparrows

—*House Sparrow.....	u	u	u	u
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Extremely Rare or Incidentals

White Ibis	Varied Thrush
Glossy Ibis	Swainson’s Warbler
Mississippi Kite	Bachman’s Sparrow
Whooping Crane	Nelson’s Sparrow
Willet	Red Crossbill



Kentucky Warbler; ©Ron Austing

Please Report Unusual Sightings

If you see an unlisted or rare species, please send a detailed e-mail, including sighting notes, to: bigoaks@fws.gov, or bring your field notes into the refuge office.

If you found an injured bird, or other wildlife, please contact the Big Oaks NWR office at (812) 273-0783.



Barred Owl, ©Ron Austing

Sighting Notes

Date: _____

Time: _____

Observers: _____

Weather: _____

Species: _____

Area/Habitat: _____

Field Marks: _____

Comments: _____
