

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Cape Romain

*National Wildlife  
Refuge Bird List*



*Welcome to the Cape Romain  
National Wildlife Refuge.*

*Established in 1932 as a refuge for  
migratory birds, Cape Romain  
includes 36, 287 acres of salt  
marsh and pristine barrier islands  
comprised of sandy beaches,  
maritime forests, and fresh and  
brackish water impoundments.*

*The Refuge also encompasses  
30,000 acres of State-owned bays,  
rivers and creeks that are managed  
under a lease agreement with the  
State of South Carolina. Cape  
Romain NWR provides these  
fascinating and diverse habitats  
for a great variety and number  
of birds throughout the year. The  
refuge fulfills its primary purpose  
of benefitting seabirds, waterfowl  
and shorebirds during migration  
and through the winter season, and  
offers forage, cover, nesting and  
roosting areas for birds of prey,  
wading birds, and neotropical and  
resident songbirds. Cape Romain  
NWR is designated as a Western  
Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve  
Network Site of International  
Importance and is one of only four  
sites on the Atlantic Coast of the  
United States and Canada.*

*photo: USFWS*

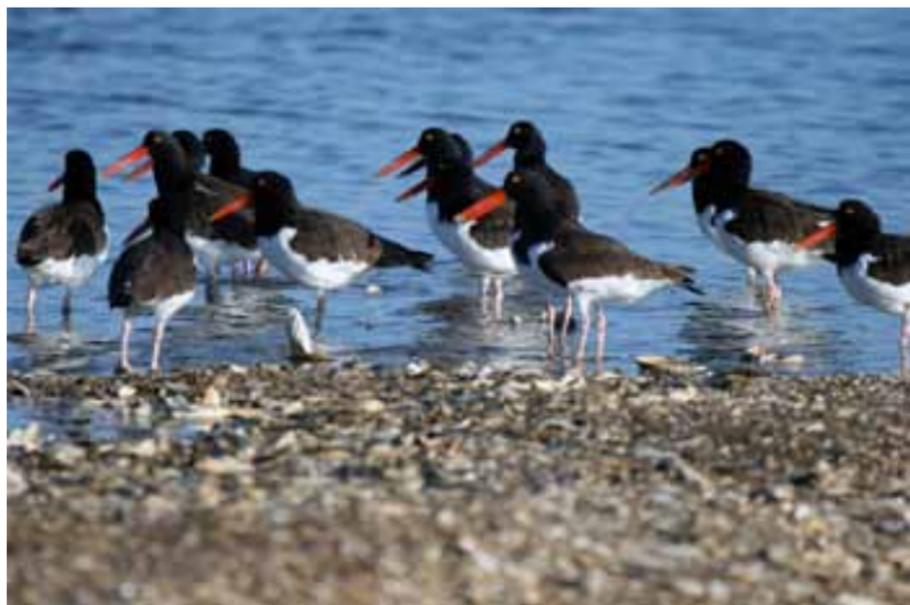
*Royal Terns*

*Cape Romain  
National  
Wildlife  
Refuge*



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

Cape Romain NWR is crucial to the survival of species listed as endangered, threatened or of special concern. The endangered Wood Stork can be seen foraging for small fish and tadpoles in the impoundments and roosting in tall trees close by, while the Bald Eagle hunts for fish in the creeks and open waterways. The refuge oyster reefs provide valuable foraging ground for the American Oystercatcher, supporting the largest overwintering population of American Oystercatchers on the East Coast. The oystercatcher is a species of "high concern" under the US Shorebird Conservation Plan. For the threatened Piping Plover, the refuge provides critical beach habitat to rest and feed during the non-breeding season.



*photo: Felicia Sanders*

*American  
Oystercatcher*

Designated an Important Bird Area by the American Bird Conservancy, Cape Romain Refuge furnishes important habitat for nesting seabirds, shorebirds and colorful neotropical migrants. Refuge beaches provide nesting sites for such species as the Black Skimmer, Wilson's Plover, and the threatened Least Tern. The Painted Bunting,



*Painted Bunting*

Parula Warbler, Summer Tanager and other migratory songbirds use the forested areas as breeding habitat during the summer months.



*Blue-winged Teal*

Bulls Island, at 5496 acres, is the largest of the four refuge barrier islands and the most visited. With intricate tidal creeks, several shallow fresh and brackish water ponds, lower and upper level salt marshes, sandy beach, and dense wooded forest of live oak, pine and palmetto, Bulls Island has long been known as a haven for wildlife.

*photos: Danny Bales*



*Wilson's Plover*

This bird list includes 293 species of birds which have been recorded on the refuge, principally on Bulls Island, and is based on observations by refuge personnel and ornithologists. Another 26 species considered accidental, extirpated or extinct are listed separately. If you see a bird not listed, please report your sighting to the refuge manager at [caperomain@fws.gov](mailto:caperomain@fws.gov) or by calling 843/928 3264.

*Seasonal  
Appearance*

Spring (Sp).....March-May  
Summer (S).....June-August  
Fall (F).....September-November  
Winter (W).....December-February

*Seasonal  
Abundance*

- (A) Abundant common species – 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 a season
- (R) Rare – seen at intervals of 2 to 5 years

\* - nest on the refuge, or did so in recent years

**Listed Separately:**

Accidental – extremely rare; birds completely outside of their normal range

Extirpated – birds no longer found within the refuge and adjacent areas

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
<b>Waterfowl</b>				
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	--	--	--	R
Fulvous Whistling-Duck	--	--	--	R
Greater White-fronted Goose	--	--	--	R
Snow Goose	--	--	R	R
Brant	--	--	--	R
Canada Goose	R	O	O	
Tundra Swan	R	--	C	C
Wood Duck*	C	C	C	C
Gadwall*	C	O	C	C
Eurasian Wigeon	--	--	--	R
American Wigeon	C	--	A	A
American Black Duck	U	--	U	U
Mallard	C	--	C	C
Mottled Duck*	U	C	U	U
Blue-winged Teal*	C	U	C	C
Cinnamon Teal	--	--	--	R
Northern Shoveler	C	--	C	C
Northern Pintail	C	--	C	C
Green-winged Teal	C	--	C	C
Canvasback	C	--	C	C
Redhead	O	--	U	C
Ring-necked Duck	C	--	C	C
Greater Scaup	O	--	U	U
Lesser Scaup	C	--	C	A
Harlequin Duck	--	--	R	R
Surf Scoter	O	--	U	U
White-winged Scoter	U	--	--	U
Black Scoter	U	--	C	C
Long-tailed Duck	--	--	U	U
Bufflehead	C	--	C	A
Common Goldeneye	--	--	U	U
Hooded MerganserC	--	C	C	--
Common Merganser	--	--	R	R
Red-breasted Merganser	C	R	C	C
Ruddy Duck	O	R	C	C
<b>New World Quail</b>				
Northern Bobwhite*	U	U	U	U
<b>Turkeys</b>				
Wild Turkey*	U	U	U	U
<b>Loons &amp; Grebes</b>				
Red-throated Loon	R	--	R	U
Common Loon	O	R	C	C
Pied-billed Grebe*	C	C	A	A
Horned Grebe	U	--	U	C
Red-necked Grebe	--	--	--	R

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
<b>Storks</b>				
Wood Stork	C	C	C	C
<b>Gannets, Cormorants &amp; Darters</b>				
Northern Gannet	--	--	U	U
Double-crested Cormorant	A	C	A	A
Great Cormorant	--	--	R	R
Anhinga	U	U	O	R
<b>Pelicans</b>				
American White Pelican	U	--	U	U
Brown Pelican*	A	A	C	C
<b>Bitterns, Herons, Ibis &amp; Spoonbills</b>				
American Bittern	U	--	U	U
Least Bittern*	U	C	U	R
Great Blue Heron*	C	C	C	C
Great Egret*	C	C	C	C
Snowy Egret*	C	C	C	C
Little Blue Heron*	C	C	C	C
Tricolored Heron*	C	C	C	C
Reddish Egret*	O	U	U	O
Cattle Egret*	C	C	R	R
Green Heron*	C	C	U	U
Black-crowned Night-Heron*	C	C	C	C
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	U	C	O	U
White Ibis	C	C	C	O
Glossy Ibis*	U	C	O	U
Roseate Spoonbill	--	O	O	--
<b>Hawk, Kites, Eagles &amp; Allies</b>				
Black Vulture*	C	C	C	C
Turkey Vulture*	C	C	C	C
Osprey *	C	C	C	U
Swallow-tailed Kite	O	U	R	--
Mississippi Kite	U	U	R	--
Bald Eagle*	U	U	C	C
Northern Harrier	C	--	C	C
Sharp-shinned Hawk	C	O	C	C
Cooper's Hawk*	O	O	O	O
Red-shouldered Hawk*	U	U	U	U
Broad-winged Hawk	R	--	R--	--
Red-tailed Hawk*	U	U	C	C
Golden Eagle	--	--	--	R
<b>Falcons</b>				
American Kestrel	U	R	C	C
Merlin	U	--	U	U
Peregrine Falcon	U	--	C	C

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
<b>Rails &amp; Allies</b>				
Yellow Rail	--	--	--	R
Black Rail*	--	R	--	--
Clapper Rail*	A	A	A	A
King Rail*	O	U	O	O
Virginia Rail	O	--	U	U
Sora	O	--	U	U
Purple Gallinule	R	R	R	
Common Moorhen*	C	A	C	C
American Coot	C	U	A	A
<b>Plovers</b>				
Black-bellied Plover	C	O	C	C
American Golden-Plover	R	--	R	--
Wilson's Plover*	C	C	O	R
Semipalmated Plover	C	C	C	C
Piping Plover	O	--	O	U
Killdeer*	U	U	C	C
<b>Oystercatchers, Stilts &amp; Avocets</b>				
American Oystercatcher*	C	C	C	C
Black-necked Stilt*	U	C	--	--
American Avocet	R	--	R	--
<b>Sandpipers</b>				
Spotted Sandpiper	U	--	U	O
Solitary Sandpiper	O	O	O	--
Greater Yellowlegs	U	--	C	C
Willet*	A	A	C	C
Lesser Yellowlegs	U	--	C	U
Upland Sandpiper	R	--	R	--
Wimbrel	U	U	U	R
Long-billed Curlew	U	U	U	
Marbled Godwit	U	--	U	U
Ruddy Turnstone	C	U	C	C
Red Knot	U	--	U	U
Sanderling	A	U	A	A
Semipalmated Sandpiper	C	O	C	--
Western Sandpiper	C	O	C	C
Least Sandpiper	C	U	C	C
White-rumped Sandpiper	U	--	O	--
Pectoral Sandpiper	U	O	U	R
Dunlin	A	O	C	A
Stilt Sandpiper	R	--	R	--
Ruff	R	--	--	--
Short-billed Dowitcher	C	C	C	C
Long-billed Dowitcher	--	--	--	O
Wilson's Snipe	U	--	C	C
American Woodcock*	O	R	O	O
Wilson's Phalarope	--	--	U	--
Red-necked Phalarope	R	--	R	R

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
<b>Gulls &amp; Terns</b>				
Bonaparte's Gull	U	--	U	U
Laughing Gull*	A	A	C	U
Ring-billed Gull	C	O	C	U
Herring Gull	C	O	C	A
Lesser Black-backed Gull	U	--	U	U
Great Black-backed Gull	C	--	C	C
Sooty Tern*	R	R	R	--
Least Tern*	C	C	O	--
Gull-billed Tern*	C	C	C	R
Caspian Tern*	U	U	U	U
Black Tern	C	U	C	--
Common Tern*	O	U	U	R
Forster's Tern*	C	C	C	C
Royal Tern*	A	A	C	U
Sandwich Tern*	C	C	C	--
<b>Skimmers</b>				
Black Skimmer*	A	A	C	U
<b>Jaegers</b>				
Parasitic Jaeger	--	--	R	R
<b>Pigeons &amp; Doves</b>				
Rock Pigeon	O	O	O	O
Mourning Dove*	C	C	C	C
Common Ground-Dove*	U	C	O	O
<b>Cuckoos</b>				
Yellow-billed Cuckoo*	C	C	U	--
Black-billed Cuckoo	O	--	R	--
<b>Owls</b>				
Barn Owl*	U	U	U	U
Eastern Screech-Owl*	C	C	C	C
Great Horned Owl*	C	C	C	C
Barred Owl*	U	U	U	U
Long-eared Owl	--	--	--	R
Short-eared Owl	--	--	--	U
<b>Nightjars &amp; Swifts</b>				
Common Nighthawk*	C	C	U	--
Chuck-will's-widow*	C	C	O	--
Eastern Whip-poor-will	O	--	O	O
Chimney Swift*	C	C	A	--
<b>Hummingbirds</b>				
Ruby-throated Hummingbird*	C	C	C	O
<b>Kingfishers</b>				
Belted Kingfisher*	C	U	C	C

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
<b>Woodpeckers</b>				
Red-headed Woodpecker*	U	U	O	O
Red-bellied Woodpecker*	C	C	C	C
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	O	--	O	U
Downy Woodpecker*	C	C	C	C
Hairy Woodpecker*	U	U	U	U
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	R	R	R	R
Northern Flicker*	C	C	C	C
Pileated Woodpecker*	C	C	C	C
<b>Flycatchers</b>				
Eastern Wood-Peevee*	U	C	U	--
Acadian Flycatcher	C	U	U	--
Eastern Phoebe	U	--	C	C
Great Crested Flycatcher*	C	C	U	--
Western Kingbird	--	--	--	R
Eastern Kingbird*	C	C	U	--
Gray Kingbird	O	O	O	--
<b>Shrikes</b>				
Loggerhead Shrike*	C	C	O	O
<b>Vireos</b>				
White-eyed Vireo*	U	U	U	O
Yellow-throated Vireo*	O	O	O	--
Blue-headed Vireo	O	--	O	U
Red-eyed Vireo*	C	A	C	--
<b>Jays &amp; Crows</b>				
Blue Jay*	C	C	C	C
American Crow*	C	C	C	C
Fish Crow*	C	C	C	C
<b>Swallows</b>				
Purple Martin*	C	C	C	--
Tree Swallow	C	O	C	C
Northern Rough-winged Swallow*	C	C	U	--
Bank Swallow	U	--	U	--
Cliff Swallow*	U	R	U	--
Cave Swallow	--	--	--	R
Barn Swallow*	A	A	C	R
<b>Chickadees &amp; Titmice</b>				
Carolina Chickadee*	C	C	C	C
Tufted Titmouse	C	C	C	C
<b>Nuthatches</b>				
Red-breasted Nuthatch	R	--	--	R
White-breasted Nuthatch*	U	U	U	U
Brown-headed Nuthatch*	C	C	C	C
<b>Creepers</b>				
Brown Creeper	O	--	O	O

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
<b>Wrens</b>				
Carolina Wren*	C	C	C	C
House Wren	U	--	U	U
Winter Wren	O	--	O	O
Sedge Wren	U	--	U	U
Marsh Wren*	C	A	C	C
<b>Gnatcatchers &amp; Kinglets</b>				
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	C	C	C	U
Golden-crowned Kinglet	O	--	U	U
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	U	--	A	A
<b>Thrushes</b>				
Eastern Bluebird*	U	U	U	U
Veery	U	--	U	--
Gray-cheeked Thrush	U	--	U	--
Swainson's Thrush	U	--	U	--
Hermit Thrush	U	--	U	C
Wood Thrush*	U	U	U	--
American Robin	U	--	C	U
<b>Mockingbirds &amp; Thrashers</b>				
Gray Catbird*	U	O	C	C
Northern Mockingbird*	C	C	C	C
Brown Thrasher*	C	C	C	C
<b>Starlings</b>				
European Starling*	U	O	U	U
<b>Pipits</b>				
American Pipit	O	--	U	U
<b>Waxwings</b>				
Cedar Waxwing	C	--	C	C
<b>Longspurs</b>				
Lapland Longspur	--	--	--	R
Snow Bunting	--	--	--	R
<b>Warblers</b>				
Blue-winged Warbler	R	--	R	--
Golden-winged Warbler	R	--	R	--
Tennessee Warbler	R	--	R	--
Orange-crowned Warbler	O	--	O	O
Nashville Warbler	R	--	R	--
Northern Parula*	C	C	U	--
Yellow Warbler	U	--	U	--
Chestnut-sided Warbler	O	--	O	--
Magnolia Warbler	U	--	U	--
Cape May Warbler	U	--	U	--
Black-throated Blue Warbler	U	--	U	--
Yellow-rumped Warble	U	--	A	A
Black-throated Green Warbler	O	--	U	--

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
Blackburnian Warbler	O	--	O	--
Yellow-throated Warbler*	C	C	C	U
Pine Warbler*	C	C	C	C
Prairie Warbler*	U	U	U	O
Palm Warbler	U	--	C	U
Bay-breasted Warbler	R	R	--	--
Blackpoll Warbler	O	--	O	--
Black-and-white Warbler	U	--	U	U
American Redstart	C	O	C	--
Prothonotary Warbler	U	U	O	--
Worm-eating Warbler	U	--	U	--
Swainson's Warbler	O	--	O	--
Ovenbird	C	--	C	--
Northern Waterthrush	U	--	U	--
Louisiana Waterthrush	R	R	--	--
Kentucky Warbler*	--	U	O	--
Common Yellowthroat*	C	C	C	C
Hooded Warbler*	C	C	O	--
Wilson's Warbler	R	--	R	--
Canada Warbler	R	--	R	--
Yellow-breasted Chat*	U	O	O	O

### **Sparrows**

Eastern Towhee*	C	C	C	C
Bachman's Sparrow	O	R	R	O
Chipping Sparrow*	O	O	C	U
Clay-colored Sparrow	--	--	R	--
Field Sparrow*	O	O	O	U
Vesper Sparrow	O	--	U	U
Lark Sparrow	--	--	R	--
Savannah Sparrow	O	--	A	A
"Ipswich" Savanna Sparrow	--	--	--	O
Grasshopper Sparrow	--	--	--	R
LeConte's Sparrow	--	--	--	R
Nelson's Sparrow	O	--	C	C
Saltmarsh Sparrow	O	--	C	C
Seaside Sparrow*	U	U	C	C
Fox Sparrow	--	--	O	O
Song Sparrow	U	--	C	C
Lincoln's Sparrow	--	--	--	R
Swamp Sparrow	C	--	A	A
White-throated Sparrow	C	--	C	A
White-crowned Sparrow	--	--	--	R
Dark-eyed Junco	--	--	A	A

### **Cardinals & Allies**

Summer Tanager*	C	C	C	--
Scarlet Tanager	R	--	R	--
Northern Cardinal*	C	C	C	C
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	R	--	R	--
Blue Grosbeak	C	U	U	--
Indigo Bunting*	C	U	U	--
Painted Bunting*	C	C	U	--

	<i>SP</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>
<b>Blackbirds</b>				
Bobolink	C	--	C	--
Red-winged Blackbird*	C	C	A	C
Eastern Meadowlark*	O	O	C	C
Common Grackle*	C	C	C	C
Boat-tailed Grackle*	A	A	A	A
Brown-headed Cowbird*	U	U	U	U
Orchard Oriole*	C	O	O	--
Baltimore Oriole	O	--	O	O
<b>Cardueline Finches</b>				
Purple Finch	O	--	--	O
House Finch	U	U	U	U
Pine Siskin	O	--	--	O
American Goldfinch	U	--	O	U
Evening Grosbeak	--	--	--	R
<b>Old World Sparrows</b>				
House Sparrow*	U	U	U	U

**This list is of accidentals, extirpated and extinct species known from the refuge.**

Mute Swan, Common Eider, Great Shearwater, Sooty Shearwater, Brown Booby, White-tailed Kite,

Swainson's Hawk, Purple Gallinule, Sandhill Crane, Whooping Crane, Eskimo Curlew, Red Phalarope,

Glaucous Gull, Brown Noddy, Roseate Tern, Pomarine Jaeger, Razorbill, Say's Phoebe, Snowy Owl,

Fork-tailed Flycatchers, Bachman's Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, American Tree Sparrow,

Lark Bunting, Brewer's Blackbird, Common Redpoll

**Birding Ethics**

Observe birds without disturbing them. Avoid chasing or repeatedly flushing birds. Electronic call devices should be used sparingly even when they are permitted.

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 of their energy reserves to withstand the stresses of harsh weather and migration.

photo: Danny Bates



*Marbled Godwit*

photo: Danny Bates



*American Black Duck*

photo: Steve Hillebrand



*Black Skimmer*

Leave habitat as it was found. Many birds die when they become entangled in fishing lines, 6-pack rings and other trash, or when they mistake garbage for food.

### **Acknowledgments**

Bird Listing revised by Dr. Dennis Forsythe with additional data from the late Robin Carter, Sarah Dawsey, US Fish and Wildlife Service and Nathan Dias, Cape Romain Bird Observatory.

Taxonomy and arrangement follow: American Ornithologists' Union. 2010. Fifty-first supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union *Check-list of North American Birds*. Auk 127:726-744.

### **Sighting Notes**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Time** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Weather** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**No. of species** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Route or area** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Observers** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Remarks** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cape Romain  
National Wildlife Refuge  
5801 Highway 17 North  
Awendaw, South Carolina 29429  
843/928 3264  
<http://caperomain.fws.gov>**

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
1 800/344 WILD**

**July 2011**



*cover photo: Danny Bales, Snowy Egret*