

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Kootenai

*National Wildlife
Refuge*

Watchable Wildlife



Introduction

The Refuge

Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge is located in Idaho's Panhandle approximately 20 miles south of the Canadian border. The refuge was established in June 24, 1964, by the MBCC, primarily to create a resting area for migrating waterfowl.

Wildland Diversity Attracts Many Animals

The small 2,774 acre refuge encompasses a wide variety of habitat types. Wetlands, meadows, riparian forests and cultivated agricultural fields (for producing wildlife food crops) are interspersed in the valley bottom adjacent to the Kootenai River. Wetlands include open-water ponds, seasonal cattail-bulrush marshes, tree-lined ponds and rushing creeks. The western portion of the refuge ascends the foothills of the Selkirk Mountains which consists of dense coniferous forest.

Wildlife species in this leaflet are grouped into five categories: birds, fish, amphibians, reptiles and mammals. Approximately 300 species of vertebrate animals normally occur on the refuge, indicating the richness and diversity of this environment.

Tips to Help You Enjoy Wildlife

Early morning and in the evening are generally the best times for observing wildlife, although there is always something exciting to see at other times of the day too. Many field guides are available at most book stores which describe an animal's habitat to help you learn where to look for particular species. This leaflet shows the seasons a bird is likely to be present, as well as other wildlife you may encounter during your visit. A good pair of binoculars or a spotting scope will help you observe wildlife from a distance without disturbing them. There are many wonderful opportunities for wildlife photography at the refuge as well.

A copy of the refuge regulations can be found in the main refuge and hunting and fishing brochures (available at refuge headquarters and brochure boxes).

Good Luck! Whether you are a seasoned observer or just beginning, we wish you many pleasant and memorable experiences from your visit.

Seasons on the Refuge

Spring

Mid-March most ponds are ice free, the mallard and pintail migration is at its peak, and Canada geese are beginning to nest. In late March, trillium begins blooming as the snow recedes; coinciding with the mountain bluebird migration.

Early April - osprey arrive and the bald eagles initiate their nesting.

Mid-April - sounds of spring are in the air, with ruffed grouse “drumming” and snipe “winnowing.”

Late April - geese are hatching and hummingbirds have arrived. May through June - numerous wildflowers including paintbrush, lupine, tiger lily, subalpine mariposa lily, bear grass, orange honeysuckle, chokecherry, elderberry, thimbleberry, mountain ash and Oregon grape are in full bloom. Ducklings begin to hatch and moose may be seen on occasion.

Summer

June - duck broods are prominent and painted turtles are venturing from the water's edge to find favorable nesting sites nearby. Mid-June through mid-July are generally the best times to observe moose on the refuge. In July, eagle nestlings are stretching their wings and goslings are starting to take first flight. Syringa (the Idaho State Flower) and pearly everlasting are blooming and fireweed, a favorite of the hummingbirds, is also on full display. August begins the migration of waterfowl and shorebirds.

Fall

September - osprey and shorebirds depart early, while late in the month goose migration reaches its peak.

October - signals a change as kestrels leave for warmer climates and rough-legged hawks and more bald eagles arrive for the winter. At mid-month tundra swans stop briefly to restore their energy. November - ducks, comprised mostly of mallards, peak at 25,000-35,000 early in the month.

By late November most ponds freeze over and bald eagles concentrate their foraging efforts on dense flocks of waterfowl congregated on the last of the open water.

Winter

In December, waterfowl move to the ice-free Kootenai River but still feed in refuge grain fields. Elk and deer move down from the snow covered Selkirk mountains and also feed on refuge crops to survive the next few stressful months. Late in February, tundra swans arrive while goldeneyes and mergansers begin courtship displays.

Seasons

SP - Spring, March through May

S - Summer, June through August

F - Fall, September through
November

W - Winter, December through
February

Seasonal Abundance Codes

a = abundant - large numbers,
easily seen

c = common - easily seen, but not in
large numbers

u = uncommon - small numbers, not
always seen

o = occasional - seen only a few
times during a season

r = rare - only a few records

* = birds known to nest within
Boundary County

● = endangered species

+ = threatened species

The following list contains 223 bird species you can expect to see and the most likely time of year they occur on the refuge. In addition, another nine accidentals are of extremely rare occurrence.

Accidentals

These additional nine species are out of their normal range, but have been recorded locally by one or a few sightings.

Great Egret

Cattle Egret

Long-tailed Duck

White-faced Ibis

Black-necked Stilt

Surf Scoter

White-winged

Scoter

Upland Sandpiper

Band-tailed

Pigeon

Birds of Kootenai NWR

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Loons				
Common Loon	o		u	
Grebes				
*Pied-billed Grebe	c	c	u	
Horned Grebe	u	r	u	
Red-necked Grebe	o	o	o	
Eared Grebe	u	o	u	
Western Grebe	u	r	u	
Pelicans				
American White Pelican	o	o		
Cormorants				
*Double-crested Cormorant	o	o	o	
Bitterns, Herons and Egrets				
*American Bittern	u	u	o	
*Great Blue Heron	c	c	c	u
New World Vultures				
Turkey Vulture	u	u	o	
Swans, Geese and Ducks				
Greater White-fronted Goose	u		u	
Snow Goose	o		o	
Ross' Goose	r		r	
*Canada Goose	a	c	a	c
Tundra Swan	c		u	
Trumpeter Swan	u		u	
*Wood Duck	c	c	u	
*Mallard	a	a	a	a
*Gadwall	c	c	c	o
*Northern Pintail	a	u	a	o
*American Wigeon	a	c	a	o
Eurasian Wigeon	o			
*Blue-winged Teal	c	c	o	
*Cinnamon Teal	c	c	o	
*Northern Shoveler	c	u	u	
*Green-winged Teal	c	u	a	o
Canvasback	o		o	
*Redhead	c	c	u	
*Ring-necked Duck	c	c	c	
Greater Scaup	r		r	
Lesser Scaup	o	o	o	

Swans, Geese and Ducks *continued next page*

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Swans, Geese and Ducks <i>continued</i>				
*Harlequin Duck	r	r	r	
*Common Goldeneye	c	c	c	u
Barrow's Goldeneye	u		o	u
*Bufflehead	c	u	c	o
*Hooded Merganser	c	c	c	o
*Common Merganser	u		u	
Red-breasted Merganser	r		r	
*Ruddy Duck	c	c	u	
Osprey, Kites, Hawks and Eagles				
*Osprey	u	c	o	
+ *Bald Eagle	c	c	c	c
*Northern Harrier	c	c	u	u
*Sharp-shinned Hawk	o	u	o	o
*Cooper's Hawk	o	u	o	o
*Northern Goshawk	r	r	r	o
Ferruginous Hawk		u		
Swainson's Hawk	r	o	r	
*Red-tailed Hawk	c	c	u	u
Rough-legged Hawk	c		c	c
*Golden Eagle	o	o	o	o
Falcons and Caracaras				
*American Kestrel	c	c	c	u
*Merlin	r	o	r	
*Peregrine Falcon	r	r	r	
Prairie Falcon	r	r	r	
Gallinaceous Birds				
*Ring-necked Pheasant	u	u	u	u
*Ruffed Grouse	c	c	c	c
*Spruce Grouse		r		
*Dusky Grouse	o	o	o	
*Wild Turkey	o	o	o	o
California Quail	r	r	r	r
Rails				
*Virginia Rail	o	o		
*Sora	u	u	o	
*American Coot	a	a	a	o
Cranes				
Sandhill Crane	o		o	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Plovers				
Black-bellied Plover			o	
Semipalmated Plover	r		o	
*Killdeer	c	c	c	
Stilts and Avocets				
American Avocet	r	r		
Sandpipers , Phalaropes and Snipe				
Greater Yellowlegs	u	o	u	
Lesser Yellowlegs	u	o	u	
Solitary Sandpiper	o	o	u	
*Spotted Sandpiper	u	c	u	
Long-billed Curlew	r			
Marbled Godwit			r	
Sanderling		o	r	
Semipalmated Sandpiper		o	u	
Western Sandpiper		o	u	
Least Sandpiper	u	o	u	
Baird's Sandpiper		o	u	
Pectoral Sandpiper		o	u	
Stilt Sandpiper			r	
Short-billed Dowitcher		r	r	
Long-billed Dowitcher	u	u	c	
*Wilson's Snipe	c	c	c	
Wilson's Phalarope	u	r	o	
Red-necked Phalarope	o		u	
Skuas, Jaegers, Gulls and Terns				
Franklin's Gull	o	r	o	
Bonaparte's Gull	o		o	
Ring-billed Gull	u	u	u	o
California Gull	u	u	u	o
Herring Gull	r		r	
Caspian Tern	r	r	r	
Common Tern			r	
Forster's Tern	o	o		
*Black Tern	u	c		
Pigeons and Doves				
*Rock Dove	o	o	o	o
*Mourning Dove	u	c	u	o
*Eurasian Collared Dove	r	r	r	r

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Typical Owls				
Western Screech-Owl	r	r	r	r
*Great Horned Owl	c	c	c	c
Snowy Owl				r
Northern Hawk Owl			r	r
*Northern Pygmy-Owl	o	o	o	o
*Barred Owl			r	r
Long-eared Owl	r			r
Short-eared Owl	o		o	r
*Northern Saw-whet Owl	o	o	o	o
Nightjars				
*Common Nighthawk		c	o	
Swifts				
*Black Swift	u	u		
*Vaux's Swift	c	c	u	
Hummingbirds				
*Black-chinned Hummingbird	c	c		
*Calliope Hummingbird	c	c		
*Rufous Hummingbird	a	a		
Kingfishers				
*Belted Kingfisher	u	u	u	o
Woodpeckers				
Lewis' Woodpecker	r	r	r	
*Red-naped Sapsucker	u	c	o	
*Downy Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
*Hairy Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
*Three-toed Woodpecker	r	r	r	r
*Black-backed Woodpecker	r	r	r	r
*Northern Flicker	a	a	c	c
*Pileated Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
Tyrant Flycatchers				
Olive-sided Flycatcher	o	r	r	
*Western Wood-Pewee	c	c	r	
*Willow Flycatcher	o	c		
*Least Flycatcher	u	u	u	
*Hammond's Flycatcher	u	o	u	
*Dusky Flycatcher	c	u		
Western Flycatcher sp.	r	o		
Say's Phoebe	r	r		

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Western Kingbird		o	o	
*Eastern Kingbird	c	a	o	
Shrikes				
Loggerhead Shrike		r	r	
Northern Shrike	u		o	u
Vireos				
*Cassin's Vireo	o	u	r	
*Warbling Vireo	o	u	r	
*Red-eyed Vireo	u	c	o	
Crows, Jays and Magpies				
*Gray Jay	r		o	o
*Steller's Jay	c	u	c	c
*Clark's Nutcracker	c	r	u	c
*Black-billed Magpie	u	u	u	u
*American Crow	a	c	c	a
*Common Raven	c	c	c	a
Larks				
Horned Lark	r	r	r	
Swallows				
*Tree Swallow	c	a	o	
*Violet-green Swallow	c	c	o	
*Northern Rough-winged Swallow		c	c	r
*Bank Swallow	u	c	r	
*Cliff Swallow	c	a	o	
*Barn Swallow	c	a	u	
Titmice and Chickadees				
*Black-capped Chickadee	a	a	a	a
*Mountain Chickadee	o	r	o	o
*Chestnut-backed Chickadee	u	u	u	u
*Boreal Chickadee			r	r
Nuthatches				
*Red-breasted Nuthatch	c	o	u	u
Creepers				
*Brown Creeper	o	o	o	o
Wrens				
*House Wren		o		
*Pacific Wren	u	o	o	
*Marsh Wren	c	c	o	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Dippers				
*American Dipper	u	u	u	o
Kinglets				
*Golden-crowned Kinglet	c	u	c	o
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	u	r	u	o
Thrushes				
*Western Bluebird	r			
*Mountain Bluebird	u	o	o	
*Townsend's Solitaire	u	u	o	
*Veery	u	c		
*Swainson's Thrush	u	c	u	
*Hermit Thrush	o	r	o	
*American Robin	c	a	a	u
*Varied Thrush	c	r	u	r
Mimic Thrushes				
*Gray Catbird	o	c	o	
Starlings				
*European Starling	a	a	a	u
Wagtails and Pipits				
*American Pipit	u	r	u	
Waxwings				
Bohemian Waxwing	u		u	o
*Cedar Waxwing	o	c	u	
Wood Warblers				
Orange-crowned Warbler	o	r	u	
Nashville Warbler	c	u	o	
*Yellow Warbler	c	c	u	
*Yellow-rumped Warbler	c	u	c	
*Townsend's Warbler	o	o	r	
*American Redstart	u	c	o	
*Northern Waterthrush	o	o	r	
*MacGillivray's Warbler	u	c	u	
*Common Yellowthroat	c	a	c	
Wilson's Warbler		o	o	
Yellow-breasted Chat		r		
Tanagers				
*Western Tanager	u	u	o	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Sparrows and Towhees				
*Spotted Towhee	c	u	o	o
American Tree Sparrow	u		u	u
*Chipping Sparrow	c	c	u	
Brewer's Sparrow	r		r	
*Vesper Sparrow	o	o	o	
*Savannah Sparrow	a	c	a	
Grasshopper Sparrow	r	r	r	
*Fox Sparrow	r		r	
*Song Sparrow	a	a	c	u
Lincoln's Sparrow	o	r	u	
*White-crowned Sparrow	u	r	c	
Golden-crowned Sparrow	r		r	
*Dark-eyed Junco	c	u	c	o
Lapland Longspur				r
Snow Bunting				u
Cardinals, Grosbeaks and Allies				
*Black-headed Grosbeak	o	c	r	
*Lazuli Bunting	o	u	o	
Blackbirds and Orioles				
Bobolink	r	o		
*Red-winged Blackbird	a	a	a	u
*Western Meadowlark	c	c	u	r
*Yellow-headed Blackbird	c	a	u	r
*Brewer's Blackbird	r	o	r	
*Brown-headed Cowbird	o	u	o	
*Bullock's Oriole	u	u		
Finches				
Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch	o		o	
*Pine Grosbeak	r		r	o
*Cassin's Finch	u	u	o	o
*House Finch	u	u	u	u
*Red Crossbill	c	u	u	u
*White-winged Crossbill	r	r	r	r
Common Redpoll			o	o
*Pine Siskin	a	u	c	u
*American Goldfinch	u	c	u	u
*Evening Grosbeak	u	r	u	u
Old World Sparrows				
*House Sparrow	o	o	o	o

Other Wildlife

The remaining vertebrate species are animals which also utilize the refuge but are perhaps a little more challenging to observe due to their general preferences in habitat types and behavior. The list includes 22 species of fishes, 7 species of amphibians, 6 species of reptiles and 51 species of mammals. These animals are always a welcome addition to any field trip and certainly add to the excitement and experience of visiting Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge.

Fishes

Sturgeons

- White Sturgeon

Trout, Char and Whitefish

Kokanee

Mountain Whitefish

Cutthroat Trout

Rainbow Trout

Brook Trout

+ Bull Trout

Minnows and Suckers

Lake Chub

Peamouth

Northern Squawfish

Longnose Dace

Redside Shiner

Longnose Sucker

Largescale Sucker

Catfishes and Cods

Brown Bullhead

Ling (Burbot)

Live-Bearing Fishes

Mosquitofish

Sunfishes and Perches

Pumpkinseed

Largemouth Bass

Yellow Perch

Sculpins

Slimy Sculpin

Torrent Sculpin

Amphibians

Salamanders

Tiger-Salamander
(*Blotched subspecies*)
Long-toed Salamander
(*Northern subspecies*)

Toads and Frogs

Western Toad (*Boreal subspecies*)
Pacific Treefrog
Wood Frog
Columbia Spotted Frog
Northern Leopard Frog

Reptiles

Turtles

Northern Painted Turtle

Skinks and Lizards

Western Skink
Northern Alligator Lizard

Snakes

Rubber Boa
(*Rocky Mountain subspecies*)
Common Garter Snake
(*Valley Garter Snake subspecies*)
Western Terrestrial Garter Snake
(*Wandering Garter Snake subspecies*)

Mammals

Shrews

Masked Shrew
Vagrant Shrew
Water Shrew

Bats

Little Brown Bat
Yuma Bat
Western Long-eared Bat
Western Small-footed Bat
Fringed Bat
Long-legged Bat
Canyon Bat
California Bat
Silver-haired Bat
Big Brown Bat
Hoary Bat
Townsend's Big-eared Bat

Hares and Rabbits

Snowshoe Hare

Chipmunks and Squirrels

Yellow Pine Chipmunk
Red-tailed Chipmunk
Yellow-bellied Marmot
Columbian Ground Squirrel

Chipmunks and Squirrels *continued next page*

Mammals
continued

Chipmunks and Squirrels *continued*

Red Squirrel
Northern Flying Squirrel

Pocket Gophers
Northern Pocket Gopher

Beavers
Beaver

New World Rats and Mice
Common Deer Mouse
Bushy-tailed Wood Rat
Gapper's Red-backed Mouse
Common Meadow Mouse
Richardson's Water Vole
Muskrat

Old World Rats and Mice
House Mouse

Jumping Mice
Western Jumping Mouse

New World Porcupines
Porcupine

Canines
Coyote Wolf

Bears
Black Bear Grizzly Bear

Raccoons
Raccoon

Weasels
Marten
Short-tailed Weasel
Long-tailed Weasel
Mink
Badger
Striped Skunk
River Otter

Cats
Mountain Lion Bobcat

Hoofed Mammals
Elk
Mule Deer
White-tailed Deer
Moose

Notes

Date

Number of Species

Time Afield

Observers

Weather

Remarks

Please report any unusual sightings to the refuge manager.

Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge
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Telephone: 208/267 3888
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<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/kootenai/>

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
<http://www.fws.gov>

Refuge Information
1 800/344 WILD

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Cow moose with twin calves.
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