



Rhode Island Coastal Adventure Trails

Coastal Birding Trail

Commonly Seen Species

All of the refuges of the Coastal Birding Trail have special species you may encounter. However, there are many northeast bird species that occur anywhere and everywhere in this region. Among the species you will almost certainly see, most of the year, even if you only stop at a couple of refuges are the **Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, White-breasted Nuthatch, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Northern Cardinal, Brown-headed Cowbird** and **American Goldfinch**. Coastal area regulars include **Herring, Great Black-backed** and **Ring-billed Gulls, Sanderlings, Mallards** and **American Black Ducks, Pie-billed Grebes, Belted Kingfishers** and **Great Blue Herons**.

Winter brings the wide spread appearance of **Golden-crowned** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglets, White-throated Sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos** and along the coast, **Common Loons, Horned Grebes, Red-breasted Mergansers, Common Golden-eyes, Ruddy Ducks** and **all three Scoters**. In spring and summer **Common Terns, Great and Snowy Egrets, Green Herons, Ospreys, Greater Yellowlegs, Dowitchers, Least** and **Semipalmated Sandpipers** and **Semipalmated Plovers** are easy to find near the water, while in the woods and fields **Eastern Phoebes, Eastern Kingbirds, Tree** and **Barn Swallows, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Yellow Warblers, Common Yellowthroats, American Redstarts, Chipping and Song Sparrows, Common Grackles** and **Red-winged Blackbirds** are abundant.

In descriptions of the Coastal Birding Trail refuges, you will learn a little about each place and how to find it. The descriptions highlight the species special to each refuge, but the commonly seen species will likely be seen there as well.



1 Quonochontaug Breachway – Charlestown, RI

(Best Birding: Spring, Summer & Fall)

Directions: Follow Rt.1 to West Beach Rd. in Charlestown. Take West Beach Rd. to its terminus at a dirt road that provides access to the state operated Quonochontaug Breachway Boating and Fishing Area. It's best to park at the far end of the dirt road near the boat launch and explore from there.

Unless you live here, you probably can't pronounce Quonochontaug so everyone calls it Quonnie. After you've parked, look toward Quonnie Pond. The breachway that connects the pond to the ocean is on your left and one of the best salt marshes anywhere will be to your right.

If you walk back along the entry road or the path that is cut through the bushes beside the road, you will be in good song bird habitat. **Song Sparrows, Yellow Warblers, Yellowthroats, Yellow-rumps** and **Red-winged Blackbirds** will be highly visible. Along the rocky sides of the breachway, for much of the summer, you will see **Green Herons** fishing. **Black-crowned Night Herons** are sometimes seen in spring. **Common Loons, Horned Grebes, Red-breasted Mergansers** and **Cormorants** are often seen swimming in the breachway in winter. Several varieties of gulls and terns wheel over head. **Least Terns** are regular visitors.

Walking out to the point that juts into the pond will give you a more open look at **Laughing, Ring-billed & Greater Black-backed Gulls** as well as **Common, Forster's and Roseate Terns**. At low tide the pond shore may yield **Sanderlings, several kinds of "peeps", Greater Yellow-legs, Ruddy Turnstones** and the threatened **Piping Plover**.

Journeying into the salt marsh by foot, canoe or kayak will uncover **Great Blue Herons** and **Great and Snowy Egrets. Tri-colored** and **Black-crowned Night Herons** are often seen during migration. **Glossy Ibis, Black-bellied Plovers, Willets, Dunlins** and **Dowitchers** are common on the mud flats all summer and **Marsh Wrens, Sharp-tailed** and **Seaside Sparrows** are not uncommon in the reeds and grasses. **Barn, Tree** and **Cliff Swallows** swarm overhead. Look for **Ospreys** and **Northern Harriers** hunting over the marsh. Both **Bitterns** and **Soras** are here but hard to find

Birding at low tide generates the best results at the Quonnie Breachway so pick up a tide chart at one of the tourist centers and consult it before scheduling your visit. You don't have to get your feet wet here but you'll probably see more if you do a little wading.



2 Burlingame State Park/Kimball Wildlife Refuge – Charlestown, RI (Best Birding: Spring & Summer)

Directions: From Rt.1 Southbound take the exit for the Burlingame State Park Picnic Area (not the Campground). You will be on Prosser Trail. Take a left at the Picnic Area sign and go to the parking lot. In summer there is a \$2 charge for a table. If you want to avoid the fee, take a left before you reach the fee booth and go along the back of the parking lot on Sanctuary Rd. If you skip the picnic area, skip to the directions below.

The Picnic Area is often visited by woodpeckers including **Downey** and **Hairy** and the **Yellow-shafted, Northern Flicker**. In some years a **Red-headed Woodpecker** resides here. Also check the bushes around the picnic area for a variety of sparrows and other song birds.

Leave this parking lot at the opposite end from the fee booth and drive straight ahead on Sanctuary Rd. Sanctuary Rd leads to the Kimball Wildlife Refuge parking area which is about a mile from the picnic area. Park beyond the Kimball Nature Center on your left.

Audubon's Kimball Refuge and the adjacent Burlingame Campgrounds are two of the most reliable places to see migrating warblers and vireos in coastal RI. The best birding is along the shore of Watchaug Pond. To get there walk back along the entry road a few steps and take the path into the woods on your left. After a short walk you will reach the Memorial Garden on your right. Check the garden thoroughly for **Yellow-throated** and **Red-eyed Vireos**, **Carolina** and **House Wrens**, **Eastern Towhees**, **Dark-eyed Juncos**, **Yellowthroats** and **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers**.

Leave the Memorial Garden at the northwest corner and take any one of several paths to the main trail along the pond. Go right along this trail and watch for migrants in May. Kimball is the best place to see **Red-bellied Woodpeckers**. There is often one in this area so listen for its loud squawk. Return along the trail until you reach some log steps. Go up the steps and take the trail to your right.

In these mixed woods you may see **Wood Thrush**, **Veery**, **Eastern Towhee** and **American Redstart** in summer. Watch the trees for a **Coopers Hawk**. At the end of this path you are in Burlingame State Park. Go right on the maintenance road to a small beach. Check the bushes around the beach for various song birds, raptors and an occasional shorebird. Go back up the road and take the trail on your right just before the road bends left.

This is prime warbler and vireo migration territory. **Red-eyed** and **Blue-headed Vireos** are often here. **American Redstarts**, **Common Yellowthroats**, **Ovenbirds**, **Yellow**, **Black-throated Green**, **Yellow-rumped** and **Black & White Warblers** are here in spring and summer. During migration up to 15 warbler species can appear here including **Blackburnian**, **Blue-winged**, **Blackpoll**, **Palm**, **Northern Parula**, **Magnolia** and **Black-Throated Blue**. Again, listen for **Red-bellied Woodpeckers** and watch the bushes for **Towhees** and **Veerys**. **Swainson's Thrush** has also been seen here.

The path ends at a Burlingame camping areas. It is heavily used June through August but is a rewarding birding area the rest of the year. In spring it is a good spot for **Eastern Kingbirds** and **Baltimore Orioles**. In some years, in late spring, **White-winged Crossbills** visit the tall spruces in the area. **Phoebes** and **Pine Warblers** compete with **Chipping Sparrows** in those same spruces. Scan the pond from the canoe ramp. In winter, this is one of the best places in RI to see **Common Mergansers**. Wander the campgrounds then leave it on the macadam road at the southwest corner.

Go left at the STOP sign and walk past the playground and campground store. This area can yield good sparrows, including the **Fox Sparrow**, plus both **Kinglets** and the **Brown Creeper**. Beyond the store, take the road to the left and look for birds in the bushes that skirt another campground. Follow the road or wander the campground until you reach campsite 640. In winter **Eastern Bluebirds** sometimes populate the open camp sites. Behind site 640 is a short, tangled trail that crosses back to Kimball Refuge. This little trail has turned up some unusual sightings including **Hairy Woodpeckers** and **American Woodcocks**. **Golden-crowned Kinglets** are usually here in winter. Go left at the end of this trail and you will be headed back toward the Memorial Garden and the parking lot.

Before you leave, check around the parking lot for birds, particularly in Spring. **Northern Parulas**, **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**, **Phoebes** and **Pine Warblers** are regulars here and **Broad-winged Hawks** nested here at least once in the past five years.

There are several more trails in Kimball Wildlife Refuge which is situated on a glacial moraine. The birds seem to gravitate toward the pond but walking the other trails is pleasant because of the unusual terrain.

Kimball also runs many nature and bird programs during the year so check the kiosk by the Nature Center to learn what's happening during your visit to the Coastal Birding Trail.



3 Ninigret National Wildlife Refuge/Ninigret Park - Charlestown, RI

(Best Birding: Spring & Fall)

Directions: Ninigret NWR has two sections, east and west. The west refuge parking area is easily reached from the northbound lanes of Rt. 1 in Charlestown. Watch for the large signs on the highway. The directions to the east area are farther on in this discussion. In the west parking area, walk to the kiosk by the parking lot to get your bearings.

Ninigret NWR is unique among national wildlife refuges because it was a Naval Air Station during World War II. A few years ago the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service began to remove the old runways but their imprints are still obvious as you walk the refuge. The runways are being replaced with native grasses in an effort to bring grassland species back to the area. Wetlands are also being constructed and recovered here.

Start your loop through the west refuge by taking the trail to the right of the kiosk. In the woods, look for locally common birds such as the **Northern Cardinal** and **Eastern Towhee**. As the trail bends to the left, smaller birds will emerge including **Yellow Warblers**, **Redstarts**, **Blue-winged Warblers** and **Red-eyed Vireos**. On your right is Foster Cove. When you reach the bench facing the pond, stop and check the water for ducks. This is a good place to see **Buffleheads** in winter. Watch for **Belted Kingfishers** along the shoreline

Continue along the trail looking for **Black & White Warblers**, **Yellowthroats** and **White-eyed Vireos** in summer and **White-throated Sparrows** in winter. **White-crowned Sparrows** have been seen in this area during migration. **Gray Catbirds** are very common on this part of the refuge. When you reach the runway, search the edges for birds including the **Eastern Phoebe**.

Cross the runway to reach an area frequented by sparrows and finches. **Fox Sparrows** are often seen here. The path goes between two small ponds where **Redstarts**, **Red-winged Blackbirds** and **Yellow-rumps** are regular visitors. Spring migration brings a variety of warblers to these ponds. The trail takes a sharp left after the ponds and goes back toward the runway. As you approach the runway the habitat becomes grassland and on evenings in the spring **American Woodcocks** do their mating rituals here. During the winter **Eastern Bluebirds** are usually perched in the low bushes along the runway.

Go right along the path that follows the runway. Look for **Willow Flycatchers**, **Phoebes** and **Yellow-rumps** in the fields and woods on your left. When you reach the next runway turn left and follow the path back to the parking lot. In summer there are usually **Prairie Warblers** and **Killdeers** along this runway. Glance overhead for **Red-tailed** and **Sharp-shinned Hawks** and **American Kestrels**.

When you leave the west parking lot go right onto Rt.1 and, almost immediately, right again to Rt.1A. Go past the Charlestown Tourist Center and look for the gates to Ninigret Park on the right. Go into the park and follow the small signs the point the way to the wildlife refuge. You will pass the Frosty Drew Nature Center and Observatory before you reach the refuge parking lot.

If you look from the parking lot toward the ocean, you will see the refuge kiosk. At that kiosk, turn left and follow a short loop that borders Ninigret Pond. On the inside of the path are varied coastal habitats including a small pond and marsh. This is good habitat for the common coastal species of the region. Looking out over Ninigret at any time of year will produce a variety of waterfowl on or over the water. Continue along the loop to return to the kiosk.

Pass the kiosk and head along the road leading through heavy thickets to an observation platform at Grassy Point. In spring and summer this is prime territory for **Yellow Warblers** and **Common Yellow-throats**. The platform is a good viewpoint for many ducks and cormorants. Herons and egrets can often be seen in the marsh on the far shore of the pond. Returning to the parking lot, watch for **Ospreys**. They nest here from early April to September.

As you leave the refuge parking lot you re-enter Ninigret Park. Take the first right and go to the Senior Center. The area around it is honey-combed with old roads and paths and the surrounding thickets and woods harbor a lot of birds. This can be a fine place to see a variety of sparrows including **Field**, **Savannah**, **Lincoln's**, **Clay-colored** and **White-crowned** as well as other ground feeders such as the **Hermit Thrush**.

If you are early in your tour of the Rhode Island Coastal Birding Trail, a stop at the Charlestown Tourist Information Center for maps and other information will enhance your visit



4 Trustum Pond National Wildlife Refuge - South Kingstown, RI

(Best Birding: All Year)

Directions: From northbound Rt. 1 Take the Moonstone Beach Rd. Exit in S. Kingstown. Follow it about 1 mile to the intersection with Matunuck Schoolhouse Rd. Turn right and look for the entrance to Trustum Pond NWR visitor parking lot about a mile in on the left. There is a visitor's check station adjacent to the lot where you can get information about this and other RI refuges and events. Pick up a refuge bird check list at the station. This is the inland part of the refuge. Directions to the barrier beach section follow this description.

Trustum Pond is one of the two or three best birding spots in RI and one of New England's best. More than 300 species are seen here every year. The habitats include fresh water and saltwater ponds, swamps and marshes, native grasslands and coastal woodlands. Trustum Pond is heavily used by neo-tropical migrants in April and May and by large flocks of wintering waterfowl in the fall and winter. There are plenty of eastern birds here year round.

Take the entrance trail through a woodland, past the kiosk with a large map of the refuge. In the woods, in spring look for **Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-rump, Yellow, Blue-winged and Black & White Warblers** as well as **White-eyed Vireos**. You will shortly reach a trail junction. Turn left. There is grassland on your right and woods on your left. The woods hold many varieties of warblers and sparrows along with **Cedar Waxwings, Eastern Towhees** and occasionally a **Bobwhite** and **Ring-necked Pheasant**. The grasslands are home to **Tree Swallows, Eastern Meadowlarks** and **Bobolinks** in summer.

Continue along this path to reach the Farm Pond. Here you will find early migrants such as **Savannah Sparrow, Orchard Oriole** and **Green Heron**. **Eastern Kingbirds** frequent the pond in summer. Watch for **American Kestrels** and **Osprey** overhead. There is an observation platform and a small dock at the pond. They are good places to look for some large **Snapping Turtles** among the water lily pads. Please do not feed the turtles. A rough trail circles the Farm Pond and **Orange-crowned Warblers** and **Grasshopper Sparrows** have been reported on the back side of the pond in recent years.

When you leave Farm Pond you will pass through a woodland. At the next trail junction bear left and up a grassy slope onto an old farm road. **Swamp Sparrows, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** and **Willow Flycatchers** are sometimes mixed with warblers on this path. When you reach a clearing, with an old pump, watch for **Baltimore Orioles** in spring. Ahead on the left is a bench and the first view of Trustum Pond. In this cove, almost anytime, are **Pie-billed Grebes, Black Ducks, Wood Ducks, Belted Kingfishers, Tree and Barn Swallows** and **Northern Harriers**. Just ahead is an observation platform from which to see a wide array of wintering waterfowl including **Ruddy Ducks, Canvasbacks, Northern Pintails, Common Goldeneyes, American and Eurasian Widgeons, Hooded and Red-breasted Mergansers, Green-winged Teals, both Scaups, Horned Grebes** and **Coots**.

Walk to the end of the spit that juts into the pond for more ducks. To your right is another cove where a **Wilson's Snipe, Greater Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpipers** and **Marsh Wrens** are sometimes seen. Across from this point is an island that hosts nesting **Ospreys** from April into September. Watch to the east for **Northern Harriers** cruising over the fields. This is a very busy bird area, but if wintering ducks aren't around, don't worry. They will show up on the other side of the pond. We will get there shortly.

Return the way you came to the trail junction at the foot of the grassy slope and bear left. This trail leads through a red maple swamp. When you emerge you will be in what is often a warbler hot spot. Along this trail look for more of the warblers already mentioned as well as **Brown Thrashers** and, in winter, **Eastern Bluebirds**. Continue along this trail through shrub habitat and coastal woodlands. In the woods, **Hermit Thrushes, Ring-necked Pheasants** and **Barred Owls** have occasionally been seen. It is a good area for **Ruby-crowned** and **Golden-crowned Kinglets** in fall. When you reach the next trail junction, bear left to reach Trustum Pond again.

Watch on both sides of the trail for the ducks previously mentioned. To the right, in the reeds, **Great Blue Herons** and **Black-crowned Night Herons** are sometimes wading. Stop at the handicapped observation platform and scan the pond for waterfowl. During migration, **Snow Geese** are regular visitors to Trustum Pond. **Barnacle, White-faced,** and **Ross' Goose** have also been seen recently on the far shore during migration. Look also for **Least, Common, Forsters** and **Roseate Terns** and a variety of Gulls. **Northern Harriers** (all year), **Ospreys** (spring & summer) and **Rough-legged Hawks** (winter) are often seen over the fields on the far shore of the pond. Continue along the path to the large observation platform at Osprey Point and look again for waterfowl and raptors. An **Osprey** nest is visible on the small island east of the platform and you will get a good view of the barrier beach backdune in front of you. Look across to the breachway in the dunes (closed most of the year). **Snow Geese** often congregate here during migration and waders such as **Dunlins, Greater Yellow-legs** and **Dowitchers** sometimes strut along the pond shore. A trip to this beach and dune area is the next stop.

The return trip from Osprey Point to the parking lot is a little less than a mile.

To reach the Moonstone Beach section of Trustom Pond NWR, leave the parking lot and go right on Matunuck Schoolhouse Rd. to the first STOP. Turn right on Moonstone Beach Rd. and proceed to the end where there is a turn-around. In June, July and August, this part of the road is a parking area open only to residents of S. Kingstown. However, it is available for parking at other times of the year and in early morning and evening in summer.

As you walk the road toward the beach, Mud Pond is on your right. An **American Bittern** has been here in recent years. The best place to check out the pond is from the top of the dunes. Look for **Northern Harriers, Coopers Hawks** and **Red-tailed Hawks** over the fields behind the pond. **Snowy Owls** have been scene in the dunes in some winters.

From April to early September, Moonstone Beach is a protected breeding site for **Piping Plovers** and **Least Terns**. Please stay outside the well defined breeding area when the rope barriers are up. You will still be able to see the birds by walking the beach along the waterline. From October to March you can walk anywhere on the beach.

You may want to walk west along the beach until you reach the break in the dunes that is the site of the Trustom Breachway. It gives you a much better view of sand flats on the ocean side of the pond than you get from the main refuge. As mentioned previously, **Dunlins, Dowitchers, Greater Yellowlegs** and other waders are often here as are **Snow Geese** in migration.

The ocean is full of wintering waterfowl. **Common** and **Red-throated Loons, Horned Grebes, all three Scoters** and **Common Eiders** are regular visitors. A **King Eider** has visited Moonstone occasionally in recent winters. After winter storms, look also for **Northern Gannets** skydiving and **Razorbills** zipping by low over the ocean.

When you get back to your car, during migration, take a short walk up Moonstone Beach Rd. The shrubs along the roadside often yield a migrating warbler or two.



5 Charlestown Breachway – Charlestown, RI

(Best Birding: All Year)

Directions: From Rt.1 northbound take the Downtown Charlestown exit (look for Tim Horton's Restaurant beyond the ramp). Go to the end of the service road and turn left onto Post Rd. (Rt.1A). Take Post Rd. to first intersection and turn right on Narrow Ln. Go to the end of Narrow Ln. and turn left on Matunuck Schoolhouse Rd. Take the first right on Charlestown Beach Rd. Drive about 1 mile across the bridge connecting Ninigret Pond and Green Hill Pond. Continue to follow the road as it takes a sharp right turn and approaches the breachway entrance and parking area. During the summer months a small fee per car is charged to enter the parking lot. As you enter, the breachway channel that connects the Atlantic Ocean and Ninigret Pond is in front of you, the mud flats and marshes are beyond a large RV parking area on your right and the ocean is beyond the dunes on you left. Park in the area designated for day use vehicles.

Important: The Charlestown Breachway mud flats are a very productive birding area, particularly during shore bird migration. However, some of the **best birding requires wading across channels that can only be forded safely at low tide. It can be dangerous so consult a tide chart before birding the flats and try to bird with someone familiar with the best places to cross the channels.** The alternative is paddling to the mud flats. Kayaks can be rented at The Kayak Centre on Charlestown Beach Rd. by the Ninigret-Green Hill Pond bridge.

In winter, the best birding is from the breachway jetty as it extends into the ocean. The rocky edges of the jetty are often home to **Purple Sandpipers**. On the ocean **Common** and **Red-throated Loons** and **Horned Grebes** are common as well as **Surf, Black** and **White-winged Scoters, Common Eiders** and **Red-breasted Mergansers. King Eiders** and **Razorbills** also appear here on occasion so look closely at large rafts of ducks. After storms **Northern Gannets** can sometimes be seen wheeling and diving.

In spring summer and fall, the marshes and flats of Ninigret are a shorebird magnet. In a recent eight week survey, conducted during September and October, 46 species of shorebirds and waterfowl were seen in Ninigret's tidal marshes. In addition to the many common species of shorebird found here, **Piping** and **Black-bellied Plovers, Western, White-rumped, and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, Red Knots, Ruddy Turnstones, Dunlins, Willets, Marbled Godwits, American Avocets** and **Black-necked Stilts** are seen here in migration. Add to this the chance to see most of the heron and egret species including **both Night Herons, Tri-colored Herons** and immature **Little Blue Herons**.

Gulls and terns are always plentiful. Look for **Roseate, Forsters, Black** and **Least Terns** and **Bonaparte** and **Laughing Gulls**. The **Black Skimmer** is another fairly regular visitor during migration. Raptors are at home on the mud flats, too. **Ospreys** and **Northern Harriers** are common and **Coopers Hawks** and **Merlins** enjoy hunting in the marshes. If you see something at the Charlestown Breachway that seems to be out of its range don't be surprised. Take another look. You might catch an **Oystercatcher**.



6 Burlingame Management Area – Charlestown, RI

(Best Birding: Spring & Summer)

Directions: Take Rt 1 south to Rt. 216. Turn right and follow Rt. 216 north about 1.5 miles to Buckeye Brook Rd. Go right and follow Buckeye Brook Rd. through a sharp left turn and across Buckeye Brook. After you cross the brook and start uphill, watch for a small parking lot on the left. The west trail head is in the parking lot. The east trail head is across the road.

CAUTION: The area on the west side of Buckeye Brook Rd. is a state management area where hunting is permitted from October 1 through the last weekend in February. If you plan to bird in that period, you must wear a safety orange hat or vest. The area to the east of the parking lot is in a state park and hunting is not permitted.

The trail heading east is a good one for a late morning walk if you want to include a picnic lunch. The first few minutes of the walk are through woods that have a good supply of song birds including the **Eastern Towhee, Great Crested Flycatcher, and Gray Catbird**. During migration there are several varieties of warblers to look for including **Black & White, Balckburnian, Yellow-rump, Yellowthroat, Ovenbird and American Redstart**. **Red-eyed and White-eyed Vireos, Veerys and House Wrens** are likely in the area as well. Continue along this path until you come to a dirt fire road. Up the fire road, to your left is perhaps the best place to see **Chestnut-sided Warblers** on the Coastal Birding Trail. Return to the trail and continue east to a small brook. Because of the large, flat shelf rocks along the brook, this is a great spot for lunch. After you have enjoyed a brookside rest, return to the parking lot.

The best birding is along the dirt road going west from the parking area. In the first 100 yards, in the pines, look for **Black-throated Green and Pine Warblers** along with **Great-crested Flycatchers**. Further on, in mixed woods, watch for **Ovenbirds and Redstarts** in season. Shortly you reach a Y intersection. The area around this intersection is good for warblers including **Blue-winged and Black & White**. Take the trail to the left and watch for more flycatchers and vireos, **Canada Warblers and Scarlet Tanagers**. **Wood Thrushes and Veerys** also frequent this part of the trail and a **Ruffed Grouse** is sometimes seen in the vicinity.

Look for a stream and dam on your right. The **Hooded Warbler** is seen on occasion near the brook and **Golden-crowned Kinglets** are in the pines in winter. In a few steps, you will come to a trail on your right. The first 50 yards of this trail are frequented by **Worm-eating Warblers** in most summers. Go further along this trail a look for **Hermit Thrushes** in the woods. At the end of the trail, turn right on a dirt road. Walk to a large pond behind a dike on your left. In summer, **Eastern Kingbirds** perch around the pond. **Wood Ducks** also use the pond in most seasons. Continuing past the pond, keep an eye out for **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** as you head back to the Y intersection and then to the parking lot. This loop has such diverse habitats that many birds not listed here may turn up. .



7 Carolina Management Area – Richmond, RI

Directions: Take Rt.1 northbound to the Rt. 2 intersection. Go north on Rt.2 to Rt.112. Continue north on Rt.112 through the intersection with Rt.91 in the village of Carolina. After crossing a river, take the next left on Pine Hill Rd. About 1 mile in on your left is a small parking area for the first of two trails that lead into the Carolina Management Area. The second entrance is about ¼ mile farther along Pine Hill Rd.

CAUTION: This is a state management area where hunting is permitted from October 1 through the last weekend in February. If you plan to bird in that period, you must wear a safety orange hat or vest.

This trail begins in a pine forest. Listen and look for **Black-throated Green Warblers, Pine Warblers** and **Ovenbirds** in the area. As the woods become mixed you may find **Black & White Warblers, Eastern Towhees** and **Scarlet Tanagers**. As the trail heads downhill toward the Pawcatuck River, birds that enjoy riverside habitat occur. Among them are **Willow Flycatchers, Eastern Phoebes, Eastern Wood Pewees** and **Great-crested Flycatchers**. The trail eventually comes to an old stone bridge. Beyond it is private land but a brief rest on the bridge will often yield good birds that come to drink there.

Return to the parking lot and walk or drive west on Pine Hill Rd. to the other Carolina entrance. In front of the hunters' check station is a large area of open fields. Bird from the hill or walk down into the corn rows. Watch overhead for **Red-Tailed Hawks** and **American Kestrels**. The fields should yield good looks at many of the common field birds of the region. To the left of the fields a trail leads into the woods. Again pine woods are the first habitat so the birds previously mentioned are found here. In addition, **Worm-eating Warblers** and a **Red-shouldered Hawk** are sometimes seen along the trail.

As the trail emerges from the woods, the fields on each side of the road contain several species of sparrows along with **Barn Swallows** and **Red-eyed Vireos**. From here on is the best place to see **Indigo Buntings** on the Coastal Birding Trail. In June and July it is worth the walk.



Other Birding Spots

In addition to the primary refuges of the Coastal Birding Trail, there are some smaller areas that can be pocket hotspots at various times of year. Most don't take long to check out and can be very rewarding if you are there at the right time.

Firehouse Pond – Charlestown, RI This small pond next to the firehouse at the intersection of Rt. 1A and Matunuck Schoolhouse Rd. in Charlestown is a Mecca for ducks in early winter before it freezes over. Among the ducks here regularly are **Northern Pintail, Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, American Widgeon** and **Northern Shoveler**.

Quonochontaug Beaches – Charlestown, RI Most of the ocean beaches between the Quonnie Breachway and the Charlestown Breachway are not open to the public between Memorial Day and Labor Day. The rest of the year they are accessible to birders and fishermen. There are access paths with small parking areas for these beaches on West Beach Rd near the Quonnie Breachway, at the end of Surfside Ave., the end of Highland Ave. and the end of East Beach Rd. in Quonochontaug. Wintering waterfowl gather off these beaches, often in large rafts, from Thanksgiving into March. Among the visitors are **Common** and **Red-throated Loons, Horned** and **Red-necked Grebes, Northern Gannets, Brants, Common Eiders, Black, Surf** and **White-winged Scoters** and **Razorbills**. Occasionally, **King Eiders** and **Dovkies** will make an appearance.

Burlingame State Park Campgrounds – Charlestown, RI This is a good spot for winter woodland birds. Exit from the southbound lanes of Rt. 1 on to Old Post Rd. at the Burlingame Campgrounds sign. Take the second right on Klondike Rd. and go right at the campground entrance road. Walk along the macadam road and look for **Dark-eyed Juncos, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Brown Creepers, Golden-crowned Kinglets** and **White-breasted** and **Red-breasted Nuthatches**. In the open camping areas, watch for **Eastern Bluebirds, Catbirds** and **Eastern Towhees**.

The folks at the Charlestown Chamber of Commerce Tourist Center and the new U.S Fish & Wildlife Service Kettle Pond Visitors Center can help you with maps and directions for these and all the other resources of the Rhode Island Coastal Adventure Trails. **Enjoy your stay! It's easy to hike, bike and bird in coastal Rhode Island.**