

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Sacramento

*National Wildlife
Refuge Complex*

Watchable Wildlife



Like small islands in a sea of agriculture, the five refuges of the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Complex provide a lifeline to birds and other wildlife

in the great Central Valley of California. These valued wetland areas are among the most intensively managed wildlife refuges in the United States.

Introduction

Raptors feed on waterfowl, rodents and small birds.



Red-tail hawk

© Gary Kramer

Geese begin arriving at the refuges in September.



Greater White-fronted Goose

Steven R. Emmons

The five national wildlife refuges of the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Complex—Sacramento, Delevan, Colusa, Sutter, and Sacramento River—cover some 35,000 acres of grassland, seasonal and permanent wetlands, and riparian habitats. They are located 50 to 90 miles north of the city of Sacramento, California.

These refuges represent a small portion of the vast grasslands, seasonal marshes, and permanent wetlands that once existed in the Sacramento Valley. Millions of migratory waterfowl and other water birds wintered here with deer, elk, pronghorn, and grizzly bear.

Today most of the wetlands are gone, having been drained and reclaimed for agriculture and urban development. Gone, too, are the grizzly bear and large herds of pronghorn, and elk. However, some of the most spectacular concentrations of waterfowl on the continent can still be seen on these refuges.

Many of the ducks wintering in the Sacramento Valley come from Alaska and the prairie pothole region of North America. Most of the geese migrate from Alaska and the Canadian arctic. Ducks begin arriving during August and are joined by geese in September and October. Waterfowl numbers on the refuges may exceed two million by December after the wetland areas of the Klamath Basin and other areas to the north become frozen. Pintails, mallards, wigeon, shovelers, snow, Ross's, and white-fronted geese are most commonly seen during these months, but the careful observer can find many others. Waterfowl numbers gradually decline in February and March as they return to their northern breeding grounds.



USFWS

Although the refuges are managed mainly for waterfowl, they support a diversity of wildlife. A mouthful of feathers indicates what this coyote is having for dinner.

Although managed mainly for migratory waterfowl, the refuges are also attractive to other wildlife. The marshes, with readily available fish, frogs, and invertebrates, support grebes, white pelicans, egrets, herons, and bitterns. Shorebirds probe the mud and shallow water for crustaceans, snails, worms, and other invertebrates. Raptors find an abundance of waterfowl, rodents, or small birds on which to feed. The largest variety of songbirds feed and nest in the mixed forests bordering waterways and creeks. Deer and jackrabbits graze in the grasslands and on the edges of wetlands.

This wildlife checklist contains over 300 species of birds and a diversity of animals which have been recorded on the refuges since 1937.

Refuge

The location key is used when a species is more likely to be observed on a particular refuge or refuges:

- (SR) Sacramento River NWR
- (S) Sutter NWR

Habitat (H)

- r Riparian, wooded areas along waterways
- u Uplands, grasslands and roadsides
- w Wetlands, marshes and ponds

Abundance

- abundant, a common species which is very numerous
- common, certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat
- uncommon, present, but not certain to be seen
- occasional, seen only a few times during the season
- rare, known to be present but not every year
- * birds known to nest locally
- / State or Federal Threatened/Endangered Species

Birds of Sacramento NWR Complex

Common Name	H	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Loons													
Common Loon	w												
Grebes													
*Pied-billed Grebe	w												
Horned Grebe	w												
*Eared Grebe	w												
*Western Grebe	w												
*Clark's Grebe	w												
Pelicans													
American White Pelican	w												
Cormorants													
*Double-crested Cormorant	w												
Bitterns, Herons and Egrets													
*American Bittern	w												
*Least Bittern	w												
*Great Blue Heron	w												
*Great Egret	w												
*Snowy Egret	w												
*Cattle Egret	w												
*Green Heron	w												
*Black-crowned Night-Heron	w												
Ibises and Spoonbills													
*White-faced Ibis	w												
New World Vultures													
*Turkey Vulture	u												

Common Name	H	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Waterfowl													
Greater White-fronted Goose													
Pacific Tule	w												
Snow Goose	w												
Ross's Goose	w												
Canada Goose													
*Western Cackling Aleutian Lesser/Taverner's	u,w												
Tundra Swan (SR)	w												
Trumpeter Swan (SR)	w												
*Wood Duck	r,w												
*Gadwall	w												
Eurasian Wigeon	w												
American Wigeon	w												
*Mallard	w												
*Blue-winged Teal	w												
*Cinnamon Teal	w												
*Northern Shoveler	w												
*Northern Pintail	w												
Green-winged Teal	w												
Canvasback	w												
*Redhead	w												
Ring-necked Duck	w												
Greater Scaup	w												
Lesser Scaup	w												
Bufflehead	w												
Common Goldeneye	w												
Hooded Merganser	w												
*Common Merganser	w												
*Ruddy Duck	w												

Osprey, Kites, Hawks and Eagles

*Osprey (SR)	r												
*White-tailed Kite	u												
Bald Eagle	u												
*Northern Harrier	u,w												
Sharp-shinned Hawk	r												
Cooper's Hawk	r												
*Red-shouldered Hawk	r												
*Swainson's Hawk	u												



Northern Pintails
©Gary Kramer

Common Name	H	J	F	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Swifts											
Black Swift	u										
Vaux's Swift	u										
White-throated Swift	u										
Hummingbirds											
*Black-chinned Hummingbird	r										
*Anna's Hummingbird	r										
Rufous Hummingbird	r										
Allen's Hummingbird	r										
Kingfishers											
*Belted Kingfisher	w,r										
Woodpeckers											
Lewis's Woodpecker	r										
*Acorn Woodpecker (SR)	r										
Red-breasted Sapsucker	r										
*Nuttall's Woodpecker	r										
*Downy Woodpecker	r										
Hairy Woodpecker	r										
*Northern Flicker	r										
Tyrant Flycatchers											
*Western Wood-Pewee	r										
✓Willow Flycatcher (SR,S)	r										
Dusky Flycatcher (SR)	r										
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	r										
*Black Phoebe	r										
Say's Phoebe	r										
*Ash-throated Flycatcher	r										
*Western Kingbird	r										
Shrikes											
Northern Shrike	u										
*Loggerhead Shrike	u										
Vireos											
Cassin's Vireo	r										
✓Hutton's Vireo (SR,S)	r										
Warbling Vireo	r										
Crows, Jays and Magpies											
*Western Scrub-Jay	r										
*Yellow-billed Magpie	r										

Common Name	H	J	F	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
*American Crow	u										
*Common Raven	u										
Larks											
*Horned Lark	u										
Swallows											
Purple Martin	w										
*Tree Swallow	r,w										
Violet-green Swallow	r,w										
*Northern Rough-winged Swallow (SR)	r,w										
*Bank Swallow (SR)	r,w										
*Cliff Swallow	r,w										
*Barn Swallow	w										
Titmice and Chickadees											
*Oak Titmouse	r										
Bushtits											
*Bushtit	r										
Nuthatches											
Red-breasted Nuthatch	r										
*White-breasted Nuthatch (SR)	r										
Creepers											
Brown Creeper	r										
Wrens											
*Bewick's Wren	r										
*House Wren	r										
Winter Wren	r										
*Marsh Wren	w										

Marsh Wren
Steven R. Emmons



Common Name	H	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Kinglets													
Golden-crowned Kinglet	r	.....								.....
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	r	██████								██████			
Old World Warblers													
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	r		.....									
Thrushes													
*Western Bluebird (SR)	r,u	.....								.....
Mountain Bluebird	r,u	.....								.....
Swainson's Thrush	r		.....									
Hermit Thrush	r	██████								██████			
*American Robin	r	████████████████████								████████████████████			
Varied Thrush	r	.....								.....
Wrentit (SR)	r	.....								.....
Mimic Thrushes													
*Northern Mockingbird	r	████████████████████								████████████████████			
Starlings													
*European Starling	r	████████████████████								████████████████████			
Wagtails and Pipits													
American Pipit	u,w	██████								██████			
Waxwings													
Bohemian Waxwing	r	.....								.....
Cedar Waxwing	r	████████████████████								████████████████████			
Wood Warblers													
Orange-crowned Warbler	r	.....								.....
Nashville Warbler	r		.....									
Yellow Warbler	r		████							.....		
Yellow-rumped Warbler	r	██████								██████			
Black-throated Gray Warbler	r		.....							.....
Townsend's Warbler	r		.....							.....
Hermit Warbler	r		.....							.....
MacGillivray's Warbler	r		.....							.....
*Common Yellowthroat	w	████████████████████								████████████████████			
Wilson's Warbler	r		████							.....		
*Yellow-breasted Chat	r		.....							.....
Tanagers													
Western Tanager	r		████							.....		

Common Name	H	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Sparrows and Towhees													
*Spotted Towhee	r	.....								.....
*California Towhee	r	████████████████████								████████████████████			
Chipping Sparrow	r	.....								.....
Vesper Sparrow	u									.....		
*Lark Sparrow	u	.....								.....
Savannah Sparrow	u	████████████████████								████████████████████			
*Grasshopper Sparrow (SR)	u		.....							.....
Fox Sparrow	r	.....								.....
*Song Sparrow	r,w	████████████████████								████████████████████			
Lincoln's Sparrow	r	██████	.....							██████		
White-throated Sparrow	r	.....								.....
White-crowned Sparrow	r	██████								██████			
Golden-crowned Sparrow	r	██████								.....	██████	
Dark-eyed Junco	r	██████								██████			
Cardinals, Grosbeaks and Allies													
*Black-headed Grosbeak	r									████████████████			
*Blue Grosbeak	r									████████████████			
*Lazuli Bunting	r		.....							.....
Blackbirds and Orioles													
*Red-winged Blackbird	w	████████████████████								████████████████████			
*Tricolored Blackbird	u,w	████████████████████								████████████████████			
*Western Meadowlark	u	████████████████████								████████████████████			
*Yellow-headed Blackbird	w	.....	████████████████							.....	
*Brewer's Blackbird	u	████████████████████								████████████████████			
*Brown-headed Cowbird	u	████████████████████								████████████████████			
*Great-tailed Grackle	w	████████████████████								████████████████████			
*Bullock's Oriole	r									████████████████			
Finches													
Purple Finch (SR)	r	.....								.....
*House Finch	r	████████████████████								████████████████████			
Pine Siskin	r	.....								.....
*Lesser Goldfinch	r	████████████████████								████████████████████			
Lawrence's Goldfinch (SR)	r		.....							.....
*American Goldfinch	r	██████	██████							██████	██████		
Evening Grosbeak	r	.....								.....
Old World Sparrows													
*House Sparrow	r	████████████████████								████████████████████			

Accidentals

American Black Duck	Long-tailed Duck
American Golden-Plover	Magnolia Warbler
American Tree Sparrow	Mew Gull
Baikal Teal	Mountain Chickadee
Baird's Sandpiper	Mountain Plover
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	Mute Swan
Black-legged Kittiwake	Northern Parula
Black Rail	Northern Pygmy-Owl
Brant	Northern Waterthrush
Brewer's Sparrow	Olive-sided Flycatcher
Calliope Hummingbird	Ovenbird
Cassin's Finch	Palm Warbler
Chestnut-collared Longspur	Phainopepla
Chestnut-sided Warbler	Prothonotary Warbler
Clark's Nutcracker	Red-breasted Merganser
Dusky Flycatcher	Red Crossbill
Emperor Goose	Red Knot
Falcated Duck	Red-necked Grebe
Franklin's Gull	Red Phalarope
Fulvous Whistling-Duck	Red-throated Loon
Gray Flycatcher	Rock Wren
Greater Roadrunner	Ruddy Turnstone
Glaucous Gull	Ruff
Glaucous-winged Gull	Sabine's Gull
Glossy Ibis	Sage Sparrow
Hammond's Flycatcher	Sage Thrasher
Harlequin Duck	Sanderling
Harris' Sparrow	Semipalmated Sandpiper
Hooded Oriole	Snow Bunting
Indigo Bunting	Snowy Owl
Jack Snipe	Snowy Plover
Little Blue Heron	Summer Tanager
	Surf Scoter
	Swamp Sparrow
	Thayer's Gull
	White-winged Scoter
	Yellow Rail

Ruddy Turnstone

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Other Wildlife of Sacramento NWR Complex



Common Kingsnake/©Gary Kramer

Reptiles

Alligator Lizard	Inland Silverside (SR)
Common Garter Snake	Largemouth Bass
Common Kingsnake	Mosquitofish
Giant Garter Snake	Pacific Lamprey (SR)
Gopher Snake	Prickly Sculpin (SR)
Red-eared Slider (SR)	Pumpkinseed (SR)
Western Fence Lizard	Rainbow Trout (SR)
Western Pond Turtle	Red Shiner
Western Rattlesnake (SR)	Redear Sunfish
Western Yellow-bellied Racer (SR)	Riffle Sculpin (SR)
	River Lamprey (SR)
	Sacramento Blackfish
	Sacramento Pikeminnow
	Sacramento Splittail (SR)
	Sacramento Sucker
	Smallmouth Bass
	Speckled Dace (SR)
	Steelhead (SR)
	Striped Bass
	Threadfin Shad
	Three-spined Stickleback (SR)
	Tule Perch
	Warmouth
	Western Minnow (SR)
	White Catfish
	White Crappie
	White Sturgeon (SR)
	Yellow Bullhead

Amphibians

American Bullfrog	
Pacific Tree Frog	

Fishes

American Shad	
Bigscale Logperch (SR)	
Black Bullhead	
Black Crappie	
Bluegill	
Brown Bullhead	
California Roach (SR)	
Channel Catfish	
Chinook Salmon (King) (SR)	
Common Carp	
Golden Shiner	
Goldfish	
Green Sturgeon (SR)	
Green Sunfish	
Hardhead (SR)	
Hitch (SR)	

Visit:

www.sacramentoriverportal.org
for a complete fish species list.

Mammals

Beaver
Big Free-tailed Bat
Black Rat
Black-tailed Deer
Black-tailed Jackrabbit
Bobcat (SR)
Botta Pocket Gopher
California Gray Squirrel
California Ground Squirrel
California Myotis
California Vole
Coyote
Deer Mouse
Desert Cottontail
Gray Fox
Hoary Bat
House Mouse
Mexican Free-tailed Bat
Mink
Muskrat
Norway Rat
Virginia Opossum
Pallid Bat
Porcupine (SR)



Striped Skunk/N. B. Scheffer

Raccoon
Red Bat
Red Fox
Ringtail
River Otter
Striped Skunk
Vagrant Shrew
Western Harvest Mouse
Western Spotted Skunk
Black Bear (SR)
Mountain Lion (SR)

Numerous small mammals like these Black-tailed Jackrabbits can be seen on the refuges.

Steven R. Emmons



Raccoons
©David Goeke



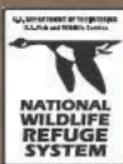
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Snow geese/©Gary Kramer

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