

BIRDS of the OUTER BANKS

Nearly 400 species of birds have been sighted within Cape Hatteras National Seashore. This impressive number is due to several factors, which include: the rich diversity of habitats; the fact that the ocean off the Banks is biologically rich, in part because of the mixing of subtropical waters from the south with the temperate waters from the mid-Atlantic; and the limited extent of land, which tends to concentrate vagrants. In spite of its rich potential, the Banks is actually underbirded. In fact, sometimes a visiting birder discovers a species that has never been recorded in this area before.

The area covered by this list includes all of Cape Hatteras National Seashore, from Nags Head south to Ocracoke village, to include Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. Also included is the Fort Raleigh National Historic Site on Roanoke Island. Note that the bar-graph statuses provided in this list are based on the sites where species are easiest to find. For instance, the statuses given for most waterfowl species are based on their abundances at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. Some resident landbird species that are easy to find at Fort Raleigh National Historic Site are much harder to find further south on the Banks, e.g. Brown-headed Nuthatch.

WHEN and WHERE

Birding is always exciting on the Outer Banks though the greatest variety of species occurs during spring and fall migrations. For those seeking out migratory shorebirds, the various inlet tidal flats, the ponds at Pea Island and Bodie Island, and the salt pond at Cape Hatteras Point offer the greatest concentrations. However, the ponds at Pea Island and Bodie Island offer the greatest variety, and typically the best chance of seeing one of the rarer species.

Landbird migration in fall can be excellent, but typically only after strong cold fronts. The best areas to look for these migrants is along the dikes at Pea Island; the northern tip of Pea Island, near the Oregon Inlet bridge; and at Fort Raleigh, especially in and around the Elizabethan Gardens and along the section of the hiking trail that ends at Croatan Sound.

In winter, ocean-watching is generally best from Cape Hatteras northward. Occasionally in winter, especially in severe weather, Cape Hatteras Point may be almost blanketed with gulls, providing the opportunity to see several of the rarer species. Often in late May, impressive numbers of pelagic birds—storm-petrels, shearwaters, jaegers—may be seen in northward migration passing just off the tip of Cape Hatteras Point.

Even if you visit the Outer Banks during a slower period, don't forget that exciting birds can turn up any time.

ABUNDANCE DESIGNATIONS

- COMMON: Certain to be found in proper habitat
- FAIRLY COMMON: Will usually be found
- UNCOMMON: Present, but will often be missed
- OCCASIONAL: May require several visits to find
- * RARE: Not recorded every year
- VERY RARE TO ACCIDENTAL: Found less often than five times a decade. See separate list at end of checklist

GEESE & DUCKS

- Snow Goose (Light Morph)
- "Blue Goose"
- Ross's Goose
- Brant
- Canada Goose
- Mute Swan
- Tundra Swan
- Wood Duck
- Gadwall
- Eurasian Wigeon
- American Wigeon
- American Black Duck
- Mallard
- Blue-winged Teal
- Northern Shoveler
- Northern Pintail
- Green-winged Teal
- "Common Teal"
- Canvasback
- Redhead
- Ring-necked Duck
- Greater Scaup
- Lesser Scaup
- King Eider
- Common Eider
- Harlequin Duck
- Surf Scoter
- White-winged Scoter
- Black Scoter
- Long-tailed Duck
- Bufflehead
- Common Goldeneye
- Hooded Merganser
- Common Merganser
- Red-breasted Merganser
- Ruddy Duck

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

- Northern Bobwhite

LOONS

- Red-throated Loon
- Common Loon

GREBES

- Pied-billed Grebe
- Horned Grebe
- Red-necked Grebe
- Eared Grebe

SHEARWATERS

- Cory's Shearwater
- Great Shearwater
- Sooty Shearwater
- Manx Shearwater
- Audubon's Shearwater

STORM-PETRELS

- Wilson's Storm-Petrel
- Leach's Storm-Petrel

PELICANS & ALLIES

- Magnificent Frigatebird
- Northern Gannet
- Double-crested Cormorant
- Great Cormorant
- American White Pelican
- Brown Pelican

BITTERNS & HERONS

- American Bittern
- Least Bittern
- Great Blue Heron
- Great Egret
- Snowy Egret
- Little Blue Heron
- Tricolored Heron
- Reddish Egret
- Cattle Egret
- Green Heron
- Black-crowned Night-Heron
- Yellow-crowned Night-Heron

IBISES

- White Ibis
- Glossy Ibis

VULTURES

- Turkey Vulture

HAWKS & EAGLES

- Osprey
- Swallow-tailed Kite
- Mississippi Kite
- Bald Eagle
- Northern Harrier
- Sharp-shinned Hawk
- Cooper's Hawk
- Red-shouldered Hawk
- Broad-winged Hawk
- Red-tailed Hawk
- Rough-legged Hawk

FALCONS

- American Kestrel
- Merlin
- Peregrine Falcon

RAILS & ALLIES

- Yellow Rail
- Black Rail
- Clapper Rail
- King Rail
- Virginia Rail
- Sora
- Common Moorhen
- American Coot

PLOVERS

- Black-bellied Plover
- American Golden-Plover
- Wilson's Plover
- Semipalmated Plover
- Piping Plover
- Killdeer

OYSTERCATCHERS

- American Oystercatcher

AVOCETS & STILTS

- Black-necked Stilt
- American Avocet

SANDPIPERS

- Spotted Sandpiper
- Solitary Sandpiper
- Greater Yellowlegs
- Willet
- Lesser Yellowlegs
- Upland Sandpiper
- Whimbrel
- Long-billed Curlew
- Hudsonian Godwit
- Marbled Godwit
- Ruddy Turnstone
- Red Knot
- Sanderling
- Semipalmated Sandpiper
- Western Sandpiper
- Least Sandpiper
- White-rumped Sandpiper
- Baird's Sandpiper
- Pectoral Sandpiper
- Purple Sandpiper
- Dunlin
- Curlew Sandpiper
- Stilt Sandpiper
- Buff-breasted Sandpiper

SANDPIPERS (cont'd.)

- Ruff
- Short-billed Dowitcher
- Long-billed Dowitcher
- Wilson's Snipe
- American Woodcock
- Wilson's Phalarope
- Red-necked Phalarope
- Red Phalarope

GULLS & TERNS

- Black-legged Kittiwake
- Bonaparte's Gull
- Black-headed Gull
- Little Gull
- Laughing Gull
- Ring-billed Gull
- California Gull
- Herring Gull
- Thayer's Gull
- Iceland Gull
- Lesser Black-backed Gull
- Glaucous Gull
- Great Black-backed Gull
- Sooty Tern
- Least Tern
- Gull-billed Tern
- Caspian Tern
- Black Tern
- Roseate Tern
- Common Tern
- Forster's Tern
- Royal Tern
- Sandwich Tern

SKIMMERS

- Black Skimmer

JAEGERS

- South Polar Skua
- Pomarine Jaeger
- Parasitic Jaeger
- Long-tailed Jaeger

ALCIDS

- Dovekie
- Razorbill

DOVES

- Rock Pigeon
- Eurasian Collared-Dove
- White-winged Dove
- Mourning Dove

CUCKOOS

- Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- Black-billed Cuckoo

OWLS

- Barn Owl
- Eastern Screech-Owl
- Great Horned Owl
- Short-eared Owl
- Northern Saw-whet Owl

NIGHTJARS

- Common Nighthawk
- Chuck-will's-widow
- Eastern Whip-poor-will

SWIFTS

- Chimney Swift

HUMMINGBIRDS

- Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- Rufous Hummingbird

KINGFISHER

- Belted Kingfisher

WOODPECKERS

- Red-headed Woodpecker
- Red-bellied Woodpecker
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
- Downy Woodpecker
- Hairy Woodpecker
- Northern Flicker
- Pileated Woodpecker

FLYCATCHERS

- Eastern Wood-Pewee
- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
- Acadian Flycatcher
- Alder/ Willow Flycatcher
- Least Flycatcher
- Eastern Phoebe
- Great Crested Flycatcher
- Western Kingbird
- Eastern Kingbird
- Gray Kingbird
- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher

VIREOS

- White-eyed Vireo
- Yellow-throated Vireo
- Blue-headed Vireo
- Warbling Vireo
- Philadelphia Vireo
- Red-eyed Vireo

JAYS & CROWS

- Blue Jay
- American Crow
- Fish Crow

LARKS

- Horned Lark

SWALLOWS

- Purple Martin
- Tree Swallow
- N. Rough-winged Swallow
- Bank Swallow
- Cliff Swallow
- Cave Swallow
- Barn Swallow

TITMICE

- Carolina Chickadee
- Tufted Titmouse

NUTHATCHES

- Red-breasted Nuthatch
- Brown-headed Nuthatch

CREEPERS

- Brown Creeper

WRENS

- Carolina Wren
- House Wren
- Winter Wren
- Sedge Wren
- Marsh Wren

THRUSHES & ALLIES

- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
- Golden-crowned Kinglet
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- Eastern Bluebird
- Veery
- Gray-cheeked Thrush
- Swainson's Thrush
- Hermit Thrush
- Wood Thrush
- American Robin

MIMICS

- Gray Catbird
- Northern Mockingbird
- Brown Thrasher

STARLINGS

- European Starling

PIPITS

- American Pipit

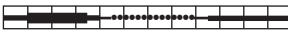
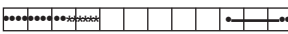
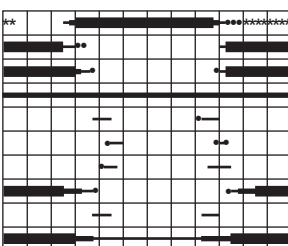
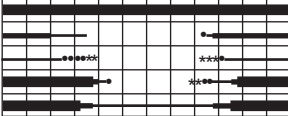
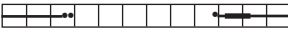
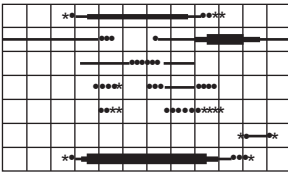
WAXWINGS

- Cedar Waxwing

LONGSPUR
& SNOW BUNTING

- Lapland Longspur
- Snow Bunting

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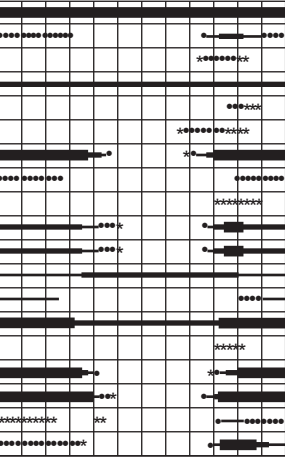
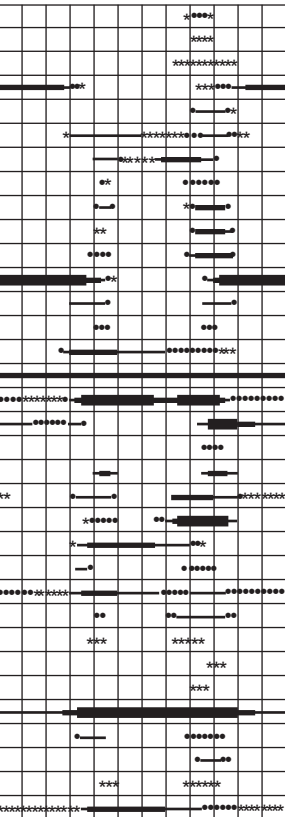
WARBLERS

- Blue-winged Warbler
- Golden-winged Warbler
- Tennessee Warbler
- Orange-crowned Warbler
- Nashville Warbler
- Northern Parula
- Yellow Warbler
- Chestnut-sided Warbler
- Magnolia Warbler
- Cape May Warbler
- Black-throated Blue Warbler
- Yellow-rumped Warbler
- Black-throated Green Warbler
- Blackburnian Warbler
- Yellow-throated Warbler
- Pine Warbler
- Prairie Warbler
- Palm Warbler
- Bay-breasted Warbler
- Blackpoll Warbler
- Black-and-white Warbler
- American Redstart
- Prothonotary Warbler
- Worm-eating Warbler
- Ovenbird
- Northern Waterthrush
- Kentucky Warbler
- Connecticut Warbler
- Mourning Warbler
- Common Yellowthroat
- Hooded Warbler
- Wilson's Warbler
- Canada Warbler
- Yellow-breasted Chat

SPARROWS & ALLIES

- Eastern Towhee
- Chipping Sparrow
- Clay-colored Sparrow
- Field Sparrow
- Vesper Sparrow
- Lark Sparrow
- Savannah Sparrow
- "Ipswich Sparrow"
- Grasshopper Sparrow
- Nelson's Sparrow
- Saltmarsh Sparrow
- Seaside Sparrow
- Fox Sparrow
- Song Sparrow
- Lincoln's Sparrow
- Swamp Sparrow
- White-throated Sparrow
- White-crowned Sparrow
- Dark-eyed Junco

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TANAGERS

- Summer Tanager
- Scarlet Tanager

CARDINALS & ALLIES

- Northern Cardinal
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak
- Blue Grosbeak
- Indigo Bunting
- Painted Bunting
- Dickcissel

BLACKBIRDS & ORIOLES

- Bobolink
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Eastern Meadowlark
- Yellow-headed Blackbird
- Rusty Blackbird
- Common Grackle
- Boat-tailed Grackle
- Brown-headed Cowbird
- Orchard Oriole
- Baltimore Oriole

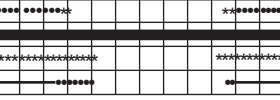
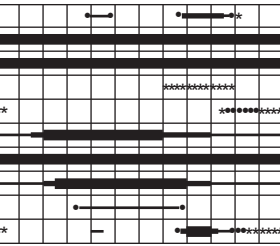
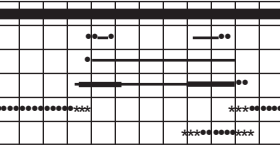
FINCHES

- Purple Finch
- House Finch
- Pine Siskin
- American Goldfinch

OLD WORLD SPARROWS

- House Sparrow

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VERY RARE /ACCIDENTAL SPECIES

Fulvous Whistling-Duck

Greater White-fronted Goose

Cackling Goose

Cinnamon Teal

Garganey

Ring-necked Pheasant

Pacific Loon

Western Grebe

Clark's Grebe

Yellow-nosed Albatross

Northern Fulmar

Black-capped Petrel

White-faced Storm-Petrel

Band-rumped Storm-Petrel

White-tailed Tropicbird

Red-billed Tropicbird

Wood Stork

Masked Booby

Brown Booby

Anhinga

"Great White Heron"

White-faced Ibis

Roseate Spoonbill

Black Vulture

Northern Goshawk

Swainson's Hawk

Golden Eagle

Purple Gallinule

Sandhill Crane

Snowy Plover

Spotted Redshank

"Eurasian Whimbrel"

Black-tailed Godwit

Bar-tailed Godwit

Little Stint

Sabine's Gull

Franklin's Gull

Common (Mew) Gull

Yellow-legged Gull

Bridled Tern

White-winged Tern

Arctic Tern

"Cayenne Tern"

Great Skua

Common Murre

Thick-billed Murre

Common Ground-Dove

Snowy Owl

Burrowing Owl

Antillean Nighthawk

Olive-sided Flycatcher

Say's Phoebe

Vermilion Flycatcher

Ash-throated Flycatcher

Tropical Kingbird

Fork-tailed Flycatcher

Loggerhead Shrike

Northern Shrike

White-breasted Nuthatch

Bewick's Wren

Northern Wheatear

Sage Thrasher

Sprague's Pipit

Black-throated Gray Warbler

Townsend's Warbler

Cerulean Warbler

Swainson's Warbler

Louisiana Waterthrush

American Tree Sparrow

Lark Bunting

Leconte's Sparrow

Harris's Sparrow

Western Tanager

Western Meadowlark

Brewer's Blackbird

Shiny Cowbird

Red Crossbill

White-winged Crossbill

Common Redpoll

Evening Grosbeak

Date: _____

Observers: _____

Location: _____

Please report unusual sightings at the
Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center
or at the Hatteras Island Ranger Station.

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Please Visit Our Websites At:
Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge
<http://peaisland.fws.gov>

Cape Hatteras National Seashore
<http://www.nps.gov/caha>

