

Florida Keys

National Wildlife Refuges Bird List



Welcome to the Florida Keys National Wildlife Refuges. There are three Refuges in the lower Florida Keys: Key West, Great White Heron and National Key Deer National Wildlife Refuges. These refuges are part of a subtropical ecoregion and provide habitat for many species of birds, some of which are unique to the Florida Keys and south Florida. Combined, the refuges total approximately 23,000 acres of land. However, the open water within the boundaries of Key West and Great White Heron Refuges, covers an area of about 400,000 acres. All of the refuges were established to protect wildlife and their habitat. Key West National Wildlife Refuge and Great White Heron Refuge were established in 1908 and 1938 respectively, to protect herons and egrets from plume hunters. National Key Deer Refuge was established in 1957 to protect the endangered Key Deer and other wildlife.

The best times for birding are during the spring and fall migration. Some of the more unique birds that can be seen are great white herons, antillean nighthawk, gray kingbird, black-whiskered vireo, white-crowned pigeon and the elusive mangrove cuckoo. Together, these three Refuges protect habitat for 285 species of birds.

Key West and Great White Heron Refuges are composed of many small islands locally known as the Backcountry. Key West National Wildlife Refuge lies west of Key West. Great White Heron National Wildlife Refuge encompasses many of the Keys north of U.S. Highway 1 from Key West to just west of Marathon. These two Refuges are accessible only by boat. National Key Deer Refuge and surrounding non-refuge lands also afford the best opportunities for birding. Respect private property - if the property is privately owned you must obtain permission to enter. It is recommended that you lock your car and lock your valuables in the trunk or take them with you when you leave it.

Directions (north, south, east, and west) are given relative to compass headings, not to directions on US 1.

Bahia Honda State Park (MM 37.5): An entrance fee is required. Continue through the gate, go right, and then park in the lot on the left. Walk the beach for shorebirds, gulls, and terns. Go to the parking area on the right - warblers may be seen in trees near the old store. Other birds can be found along the beach at the east end and along the road past the camping area.

East end of West Summerland Key (MM 34.9): just west of the Bahia Honda Bridge, turn north and follow to the "Donut" (a manmade cove). This is a good area for shorebirds, terns, and gulls. Snowy plovers have been seen here.

Big Pine Key (MM 32.9): just after entering onto the Key, turn south onto Long Beach Drive and stop along the road at any convenient spot. Ovenbirds, warblers, waterthrushes, siskins, buntings, and orioles may be present during migration and in winter.

Big Pine Key (MM 30.2): turn north at the traffic light and then an immediate left onto Key Deer Blvd. (the Refuge office is in the shopping center on the right). Short-tailed hawk and turkey vultures may be observed soaring overhead. At the Blue Hole, 2.5 miles north on Key Deer Blvd., pied-billed grebes and green-backed herons may be present. The masked duck and least grebe also have been seen here so it is worth a visit. Opposite the Blue Hole, travel onto Big Pine St. and then left onto Koehn Blvd. Shorebirds may be present at the mud flats near the end of the road and at the boat ramp.

To go to No Name Key, go east on Watson Blvd., left at the stop sign, and follow Watson Blvd. over the large bridge to No Name Key. Yellow headed blackbird, dark-eyed junco, cave swallow, and Swainsons warbler have been found here. The end of the road is also a good location for mangrove cuckoo and black-whiskered vireo.

Before leaving Big Pine a good spot to look for antillean nighthawks is in the vicinity of the west end of Watson Blvd and along Narcissus Ave. Antilleans are frequently present late in the day during spring and summer.

**Florida Keys
National Wildlife Refuges**
179 Key Deer Blvd.
Big Pine Key Plaza
Big Pine Key, Florida 33043
305/872 0774
<http://southeast.fws.gov>
nationalkeydeer@fws.gov

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1 800/344 WILD

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Summerland Key (MM 25): Take the first left after the bridge and a salt pond is on your right. Ibis and egrets can be found here. Take a right onto Margaret St and then the next left. A fresh water pond is on the left. Ducks, least bittern, sora rail, and white-crowned pigeon are found here. Moorhens nest here.

Sugarloaf Key (MM 17): Turn south at traffic light and drive slowly to the end of the road. Hawks, harriers, woodpeckers can be seen along here. There is the possibility of ducks on the pond on the right and pine siskin, indigo bunting, and grosbeak in the pine trees after crossing the bridge.

How to use your checklist

The checklist is arranged in the order established by the *American Ornithologist's Union Checklist of North American Birds*, 7th edition, 1984, with supplements. This list reviewed by Philip Hughes and Chuck Hunter, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Recommended birding areas were provided by Marge Brown with the assistance of Wayne Hoffman, W. B. Robertson, and refuge staff.

If you should find an unlisted species, please let us know at the Refuge Visitor Center, in the Big Pine Key Plaza, Key Deer Blvd., Big Pine Key, FL 33043, or you can call us at 305/872 0774. We appreciate your help in updating our records.

Ethics of Bird Watching

Birders on the refuge are expected to adhere to the Code of Birding Ethics set forth by the American Birding Association to promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

- Do not disturb nesting birds. This could lead to exposing eggs and young to extreme temperatures and predation.
- Likewise do not disturb wintering, resting, and feeding birds. They need their energy reserves to withstand the stresses of harsh weather, migration, and hunting for food.
- Possession of migratory birds, their feathers, nests or eggs is against the law. Use of tape recordings to attract birds is permitted on Refuge lands. However, birders are required to limit the use to attracting the bird and not prolonging the bird's presence.
- Do not litter! Many birds die when they become entangled in fishing lines, 6-pack rings and other trash.
- Injured birds may be reported to the refuge at 305/872 0774.

Key To Symbols

Seasonal appearance

Sp-Spring: March, April, and May

S-Summer: June, July, and August

F -Fall: September, October, and November

W -Winter: December, January, and February

Seasonal abundance

c-common (commonly observed in proper habitat).

u-uncommon (uncommonly observed in proper habitat).

r-rare (rarely observed).

o-occasional (observed fewer than ten times). Please report all sightings. Confirmed breeding in checklist area.

*****-nests here

Support the protection of important bird habitat

Stay on roads, trails and paths. Cutting through vegetation damages vegetation and puts you at risk of injury from uneven terrain and rattlesnakes.

Do not enter closed areas on the refuge. Areas are closed to protect wildlife resources and visitors from hazardous areas..

This publication funded by the Friends and Volunteers of Refuges.



Loons

___ Red-throated Loon
___ Common Loon

SP	S	F	W
o		o	o
u		u	u

Grebes

___ Least Grebe
___ Pied-billed Grebe *
___ Horned Grebe

		o	
u	u	u	u
o			o

Shearwaters and Petrels

___ Greater Shearwater
___ Sooty Shearwater
___ Audubon's Shearwater
___ Wilson's Storm-Petrel
___ Band-rumped Storm-Petrel

	o		
o			o
	o		o
	o		
		o	

Tropicbirds

___ White-tailed Tropicbird

o			
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Boobies and Gannets

___ Masked Booby
___ Brown Booby
___ Northern Gannet

o		o	o
r	r	r	r
r	r	r	u

Pelicans

___ American White Pelican
___ Brown Pelican *

	r	r	r
c	c	c	c

Darters and Cormorants

___ Double-crested Cormorant *
___ Anhinga

c	c	c	c
u	r	u	u

Frigatebirds

___ Magnificent Frigatebird

c	c	c	c
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Bitterns, Herons, Egrets and Their Allies

___ American Bittern
___ Least Bittern *
___ Great Blue Heron *
___ Great Egret *
___ Snowy Egret *
___ Little Blue Heron *
___ Tricolored Heron *
___ Reddish Egret *
___ Cattle Egret

o			
r	r	r	r
c	c	c	c
c	c	c	c
u	u	u	u
u	u	u	u
c	u	c	u
c	c	c	c
c	c	c	c

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	SP	S	F	W
___ Green Heron *	c	c	c	c
___ Black-crowned Night-Heron	r		r	r
___ Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *	c	c	c	c

Ibises and Spoonbills

___ White Ibis *	c	c	c	c
___ Glossy Ibis	o	o	o	o
___ Roseate Spoonbill	u	u	r	r

Storks

___ Wood Stork			o	o
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Flamingos

___ Greater Flamingo	o		o	o
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Ducks, Geese, Swans

___ Fulvous Whistling-Duck	o		o	o
___ Canada Goose				o
___ Snow Goose			o	o
___ Wood Duck			o	
___ Green-winged Teal	r		r	r
___ White-cheeked Pintail	o			o
___ Northern Pintail	u		u	u
___ Blue-winged Teal	c		c	c
___ Northern Shoveler	u		u	u
___ Gadwall				o
___ American Wigeon	c		c	c
___ Ring-necked Duck	u		u	u
___ Lesser Scaup	u		u	u
___ Longtailed duck			o	
___ Black Scoter			o	o
___ Hooded Merganser				o
___ Common Merganser			o	o
___ Red-breasted Merganser	u	r	c	c
___ Masked Duck	o			

Vultures

___ Black Vulture		o	o	o
___ Turkey Vulture *	c	c	c	c

Osprey, Kites, Eagles, and Harriers

___ Osprey *	c	c	c	c
___ Swallow-tailed Kite	r	r	r	r
___ Mississippi Kite			o	o
___ Bald Eagle *	u	u	u	u
___ Northern Harrier	u		u	u
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk	c		c	c
___ Cooper's Hawk	u		u	u
___ Red-Shouldered Hawk *	u	u	u	u
___ Broad-winged Hawk	c		c	c
___ Short-tailed Hawk	r		c	u
___ Swainson's Hawk	r		c	r
___ Red-tailed Hawk	r		r	r
___ Zone-tailed Hawk			o	o

Falcons

___ American Kestrel	c		c	c
___ Merlin	u		c	u
___ Peregrine Falcon	u		c	u

Rails, Gallinules, Coots

___ Black Rail	u	u	u	u
___ Clapper Rail *	u	u	u	u
___ Virginia Rail	o		o	o
___ Sora Rail	r		r	r

	SP	S	F	W
___ Purple Gallinule *	r	r	r	r
___ Common Moorhen *	u	u	u	u
___ American Coot *	c	r	c	c

Limpkins

___ Limpkin	r	r	r	r
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Plovers

___ Black-bellied Plover	c	u	c	c
___ Lesser Golden-Plover	r		r	r
___ Snowy Plover	o			o
___ Wilson's Plover *	c	c	c	c
___ Semipalmated Plover	c		c	c
___ Piping Plover	r		r	r
___ Killdeer *	u	r	u	u
___ Mountain Plover				o

Oystercatchers

___ American Oystercatcher	o		o	
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Stilts and Avocets

___ Black-necked Stilt *	u	u	u	
___ American Avocet	o		o	o

Sandpipers and Phalaropes

___ Greater Yellowlegs	u		u	u
___ Lesser Yellowlegs	u		u	u
___ Solitary Sandpiper	u		r	
___ Willet *	c		c	c
___ Spotted Sandpiper	u		u	u
___ Upland Sandpiper	r		r	
___ Whimbrel	r		r	c
___ Ruddy Turnstone	c	u	c	c
___ Red Knot	u	r	u	r
___ Sanderling	c	r	c	c
___ Semipalmated Sandpiper	r	r	r	r
___ Western Sandpiper	c	r	c	c
___ Least Sandpiper	c	r	c	c
___ White-rumped Sandpiper	u			
___ Pectoral Sandpiper	r	r	r	
___ Purple Sandpiper				r
___ Dunlin	u		c	u
___ Stilt Sandpiper	r		r	r
___ Short-billed Dowitcher	c	u	c	c
___ Common Snipe			r	r
___ Wilson's Phalarope	o		o	o
___ Red-necked Phalarope		o		

Jaegers, Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers

___ Pomarine Jaeger	o		o	o
___ Parasitic Jaeger	o		o	o
___ Laughing Gull *	c	c	c	c
___ Bonaparte's Gull	r		r	r
___ Ringed-billed Gull	c	r	c	c
___ Herring Gull	u	r	c	c
___ Lesser Black-backed Gull			r	r
___ Great Black-backed Gull	r		r	r
___ Black-legged Kittiwake				o
___ (specimen)				
___ Gull billed Tern	o			
___ Caspian Tern	u		u	c
___ Royal Tern	c	c	c	c
___ Roseate Tern*		u		
___ Sandwich Tern *	u		u	u

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	SP	S	F	W
___ Common Tern	u		u	u
___ Forster's Tern	u		c	c
___ Least Tern *	u	c	c	
___ Bridled Tern	r	r	r	
___ Sooty Tern	r	r	r	
___ Black Tern	r	r		
___ Brown Noddy	o	o		
___ Black Skimmer				u

Alcids

___ Dovekie				o
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Pigeons and Doves

___ Rock Dove *	c	c	c	c
___ White-crowned Pigeon *	u	c	u	u
___ Eurasian collared Dove *	c	c	c	c
___ White-winged Dove *	u	u	u	u
___ Mourning Dove *	c	c	c	c
___ Common Ground-Dove *	u	u	u	u
___ Inca Dove (nested 1963-80, Key West, probably extirpated)				
___ Ruddy Quail-Dove (1 captured, Key West)	o			
___ Key West Quail Dove			o	

Cuckoos and Anis

___ Blacked-billed Cuckoo	r		r	
___ Yellow-billed Cuckoo *	u	u	u	
___ Mangrove Cuckoo *	u	u	r	r
___ Smooth-billed Ani	r	r	r	r

Owls

___ Eastern Screech Owl	o			
___ Burrowing Owl	o		o	o
___ Barred Owl		o		
___ Long-eared Owl			o	
___ Short-eared Owl	r	u	r	r

Barn Owls

___ Barn owls	r	r	r	r
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Goatsuckers

___ Common Nighthawk *	c	c	c	
___ Antillean Nighthawk *	c	c	c	
___ Chuck-will's Widow	u	u	u	r
___ Whip-poor-will	r			r

Swifts

___ Chimney Swift	r		u	
___ Antillean Palm Swift		o		

Hummingbirds

Black-chinned Hummingbird	o			
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	u	r	u	u

Kingfishers

___ Belted Kingfisher	c	u	c	c
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Woodpeckers

___ Red-bellied Woodpecker *	c	c	c	c
___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	u		u	u
___ Northern Flicker			o	o

Tyrant Flycatchers

___ Olive-sided Flycatcher				o
___ Eastern Wood-Pewee	r	u	u	

	SP	S	F	W
___ Eastern Phoebe	r	r	r	r
___ LaSagra's Flycatcher		o	o	
___ Brown-crested Flycatcher	o			o
___ Loggerhead Kingbird	o			
___ Western Kingbird	u		u	u
___ Eastern Kingbird	c	c	c	
___ Gray Kingbird *	c	c	c	u
___ Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	u		u	u

Swallows

___ Purple Martin	c	c	c	
___ Cuban Martin	o			
___ Southern Martin		o		
___ Tree Swallow	c		c	u
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow	r		r	r
___ Bahama Swallow	o	o		o
___ Bank Swallow	r		r	r
___ Cave Swallow	o			
___ Barn Swallow	c	c	c	r
___ Cliff Swallow				o

Jays and Crows

___ Blue Jay	o	o		
___ American Crow	o	o	o	o
___ Fish Crow	r		r	r

Wrens

___ Carolina Wren			o	
___ House Wren	r		r	r

Old World Warblers

___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet				o
___ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	c	u	c	c
___ Veery	r			

Thrushes

___ Gray-checked Thrush	r		r	
___ Swainson's Thrush	r		u	
___ Hermit Thrush				o
___ Wood Thrush	r		r	
___ American Robin	r		r	r

Mockingbirds & Thrashers

___ Gray Catbird	c		c	c
___ Northern Mockingbird *	c	c	c	c
___ Bahama Mockingbird	o	o	o	
___ Brown Thrasher *	u	u	u	u

Pipits

___ American Pipit	o			o
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Waxwings

___ Cedar Waxwing	c		c	c
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Shrikes

___ Loggerhead Shrike				r
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Starling & Allies

___ European Starling *	u	u	u	u
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Vireos

___ White-eyed Vireo *	c	c	c	c
___ Bell's Vireo			o	
___ Blue-headed Vireo	u		r	r
___ Philadelphia Vireo	o		o	
___ Yellow-throated Vireo	u		u	u

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	SP	S	F	W
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-eyed Vireo	c		c	
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-whiskered Vireo *	c	c	r	
<input type="checkbox"/> Thick-billed Vireo			o	u

Wood Warblers

<input type="checkbox"/> Blue-winged Warbler	r		r	r
<input type="checkbox"/> Golden-winged Warbler	o		o	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tennessee Warbler	u		u	r
<input type="checkbox"/> Orange-crowned Warbler	u	r	u	
<input type="checkbox"/> Nashville Warbler	o		o	
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Parula Warbler	c		c	c
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow Warbler Cuban subspecies *	u	u	u	u
<input type="checkbox"/> Chestnut-sided Warbler	r		r	
<input type="checkbox"/> Magnolia Warbler	u		u	r
<input type="checkbox"/> Cape May Warbler	u		u	u
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-throated Blue Warbler	c		c	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-rumped Warbler	c		c	c
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-throated Green Warbler	u		c	u
<input type="checkbox"/> Blackburnian Warbler	u		u	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-throated Warbler	c		c	c
<input type="checkbox"/> Pine Warbler	o		o	o
<input type="checkbox"/> Prairie Warbler *	c	c	c	c
<input type="checkbox"/> Palm Warbler	c		c	c
<input type="checkbox"/> Bay-breasted Warbler	r		r	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blackpoll Warbler	c		r	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cerulean Warbler	r		r	
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-and-white Warbler	c		c	c
<input type="checkbox"/> American Redstart	c		c	u
<input type="checkbox"/> Prothonotary Warbler	u		u	
<input type="checkbox"/> Worm-eating Warbler	u		u	r
<input type="checkbox"/> Swainson's Warbler	u		u	o
<input type="checkbox"/> Ovenbird	c		c	u
<input type="checkbox"/> Norther Waterthrush	c		c	u
<input type="checkbox"/> Louisiana Waterthrush	r		r	
<input type="checkbox"/> Kentucky Warbler	u		u	
<input type="checkbox"/> Connecticut Warbler	r		r	
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Yellowthroat	c		c	c
<input type="checkbox"/> Hooded Warbler	u		u	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wilson's Warbler	r		r	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-breasted Chat				o

Tanagers

<input type="checkbox"/> Summer Tanager	u	u	r	
<input type="checkbox"/> Scarlet Tanager	u		u	

Cardinals and Buntings

<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Cardinal	c	c	c	c
<input type="checkbox"/> Rose-breasted Grosbeak	u		u	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue Grosbeak	u		u	
<input type="checkbox"/> Indigo Bunting	u		c	r
<input type="checkbox"/> Painted Bunting	u		u	u
<input type="checkbox"/> Dickcissel	r		r	r

Sparrows

<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Towhee				o
<input type="checkbox"/> Chipping Sparrow			o	o
<input type="checkbox"/> Clay colored Sparrow			o	o
<input type="checkbox"/> Vesper Sparrow	o			o
<input type="checkbox"/> Lark Sparrow			o	o
<input type="checkbox"/> Savannah Sparrow	u		u	u
<input type="checkbox"/> Grasshopper Sparrow	r		r	r
<input type="checkbox"/> LeConte's Sparrow				o
<input type="checkbox"/> Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow				o

	SP	S	F	W
<input type="checkbox"/> Swamp Sparrow			r	r
<input type="checkbox"/> White-crowned Sparrow				o
<input type="checkbox"/> Dark-eyed Junco	o			o

Blackbirds and Orioles

<input type="checkbox"/> Bobolink	u			u
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-winged Blackbird *	c	c	c	c
<input type="checkbox"/> Tawny-shouldered Blackbird				o
<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-headed Blackbird			o	o
<input type="checkbox"/> Brewer's Blackbird			o	
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Grackle *	c	c	r	r
<input type="checkbox"/> Shiny Cowbird	u			
<input type="checkbox"/> Brown-headed Cowbird		o	o	o
<input type="checkbox"/> Orchard Oriole	c		c	
<input type="checkbox"/> Baltimore Oriole	c		c	u

Finches

<input type="checkbox"/> Pine Siskin (irruptive)	r		r	r
<input type="checkbox"/> American Goldfinch			c	u

Old World Sparrows

<input type="checkbox"/> House Sparrow*	u	u	u	u
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Sighting Notes

Date: _____

Time: _____

To: _____

Weather: _____

No. of Species: _____

Route or area: _____

Observers: _____

Remarks: _____
