# **Annotated Checklist**

# **100 Summer Species**

Complete checklists are available from most state parks and National Park Service visitor centers. This checklist includes the 100 most likely to-be-observed species as determined by the breeding bird survey conducted by the National Park Service between St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin, and Stillwater, Minnesota, in early summer. Selected specialty birds are also listed.

# **Abundance Key**

C	Common	U	Uncommon
O	Occasional	R	Rare

<sup>\*</sup>Specialty species (see text on reverse side)

Species CORMORANT, HERONS, EGRETS	Abundance			
Double-crested Cormorant	R*			
Great Blue Heron	С			
Great Egret	U			
Green Heron	С			
WATERFOWL				
Trumpeter Swan	R*			
Canada Goose	С			
Wood Duck	С			
Mallard	С			
Hooded Merganser	U			
RAPTORS				
Turkey Vulture	С			
Osprey	U			
Bald Eagle	С			
Red-shouldered Hawk	С			
Broad-winged Hawk	U			
Red-tailed Hawk	С			
American Kestrel	С			
GALLINACEOUS BIRDS, SHOREBIRDS, GULLS				
Ring-necked Pheasant	U			
Wild Turkey	C			
Killdeer	С			
Spotted Sandpiper	С			
Ring-billed Gull	С			
DOVES, CUCKOOS, OWLS, KINGFISHER, SWIFT				
Rock Dove	С			

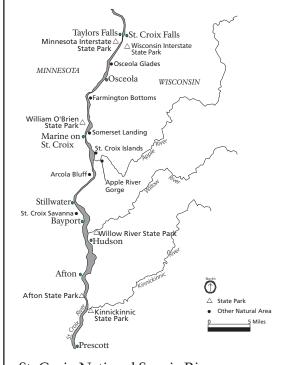
Species Al	bundance	Species	Abundance
Mourning Dove	С	WAXWING, STARLING, VIREOS, WARBLE	ERS
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	U	Cedar Waxwing	C
Black-billed Cuckoo	U	European Starling	C
Great Horned Owl	С	Yellow-throated Vireo	C
Barred Owl	С	Warbling Vireo	С
Belted Kingfisher	С	Red-eyed Vireo	С
Chimney Swift	С	Blue-winged Warbler	R*
WOODPECKERS & HUMMINGBIRD		Nashville Warbler	R*
Red-headed Woodpecker	O	Yellow Warbler	С
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	U	Pine Warbler	U
Red-bellied Woodpecker	C	Cerulean Warbler	O
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	O	Black-and-white Warbler	U
Downy Woodpecker	C	American Redstart	С
Hairy Woodpecker	С	Hooded Warbler	R*
Northern Flicker	С	Prothonotary Warbler	С
Pileated Woodpecker	C	Ovenbird	С
FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS		Louisiana Waterthrush	U
Eastern Wood Pewee	С	Kentucky Warbler	R*
Least Flycatcher	С	Common Yellowthroat	С
Eastern Phoebe	С	TANAGERS, GROSBEAKS, SPARROWS, ET	C.
Great Crested Flycatcher	С	Scarlet Tanager	С
Eastern Kingbird	С	Northern Cardinal	C
Purple Martin	U	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	С
Tree Swallow	С	Indigo Bunting	C
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	w C	Eastern Towhee	O
Bank Swallow	C*	Chipping Sparrow	С
Cliff Swallow	С	Clay-colored Sparrow	С
Barn Swallow	С	Field Sparrow	C C C
JAYS, CROWS, TITMICE, NUTHATCHES		Vesper Sparrow	C
Blue Jay	C	Savannah Sparrow	C
American Crow	C	Song Sparrow	С
Black-capped Chickadee	C	Swamp Sparrow	С
White-breasted Nuthatch	С	BLACKBIRDS, FINCHES	
WREN, GNATCATCHER, THRUSHES, THRA	SHERS	Red-winged Blackbird	C
House Wren	C	Eastern Meadowlark	U
Winter Wren	R*	Common Grackle	C
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	C	Brown-headed Cowbird	C
Eastern Bluebird	U	Baltimore Oriole	C
Veery	U	American Goldfinch	С
Wood Thrush	U	Purple Finch	O
American Robin	C	House Finch	C
Gray Catbird	C	House Sparrow	С
Brown Thrasher	U		
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St. Croix National Scenic Riverway



A Birder's Guide to the St. Croix River: Taylors Falls to Prescott

Birding guldes typically focus on the rare, the unusual or unique, the spectacular, the hard-to-find, or charismatic type birds. This guide is no different, but also focuses on the common species most likely to be observed.



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## Wisconsin:

### **Wisconsin Interstate State Park**

Habitat contains moist woods and bedrock glades.

Best Bets: The entrance area, Silver Brook and Skyline Trails. Check out Centennial Glades State Natural Area, Interstate Lowland Forest, and Dalles of the St. Croix Natural Area.

### **Ridgeview Trail**

The trail is located just north of Osceola. Habitat contains forested bluffs and bedrock glades.

Best Bets: Chisago Loop and the Fish Hatchery
Trail to the river. The bedrock glades are a recent state natural area.

## **Standing Cedars/Farmington Bottoms**

This site is located just south of Osceola. Habitat contains forested bluffs and high quality riparian forest.

Best Bets: Good access at 55th Avenue and on 280th Street just north of 10th Avenue.

## **Somerset Landing**

Riparian forest is found here.

Best Bet: Winter wren, hooded warblers, and barred owls have been found along the road, 1/4-mile north of this landing.

#### St. Croix Islands Wildlife Area

Habitat contains upland grasslands, riparian bottomlands, and open wetlands.

**Best Bet**: Access is off Rice Lake Road, 4 miles NW of Somerset. Hike here to the river access.

#### **Willow River State Park**

Look for prairie and dry, moist, and riparian forests. Look for blue-winged and cerulean warblers.

**Best Bets:** Trout Brook, Little Falls, and Hidden Pond Trails.

#### **Kinnickinnic State Park**

Habitat contains upland prairires and steep river valley/moist forest.

Best Bets: Hike the prairie trails and follow the Kinnickinnic River through its narrow valley. Particularly productive for unusual species such as Henslow's sparrow, orchard oriole, winter wren, Nashville and Kentucky warblers, and other species typically found farther north or south.

# Minnesota:

#### **Minnesota Interstate State Park**

Habitat contains moist forest and bedrock. **Best Bets:** Pothole and Railroad Trails.

#### William O'Brien State Park

Habitat contains prairies, wetlands, forest, and high quality riparian forest.

Best Bets: Lower Campground/Lake Alice Loop Trail and Upper Campground/Pioneer Group Camp Loop Trail.

#### **Arcola Bluff Trail**

Habitat contains forested bluffs and ravines. **Best Bet:** Walk the main trail from Rivard Road to foot of the railroad bridge, great views from the trail at the south end of the restored prairie. No facilities are available at this site. Do not block the gate.

# **Boomsite Wayside**

Habitat contains cliffs and riparian bottomlands. **Best Bet:** Take the stairway down to the river where bank swallows and prothonotary warblers may be found.

#### **Afton State Park**

Habitat contains prairies, moist, dry, and riparian forests.

Best Bets: Take the River Trail north and circle around the backpacking campground.

# Where to go by Canoe or Kayak

Excellent birding exists along the cliffs, narrow channels, and backwaters of the river. Look for Louisana waterthrush, prothonotary warblers, and red-shouldered hawks. Good finds may include cerulean warblers and winter wrens.

### St. Croix Falls to Osceola

Be sure to check out Close Slough south of St. Croix Falls. Look for trumpeter swans in Peaslee Lake. Swans have also nested just downstream on the Minnesota side of the river in the backwater above the State Highway 243 bridge. Close Slough is shallow at times and dragging your canoe over sandbars can be expected.

#### Osceola to William O'Brien State Park

Bald eagles nest in this stretch and the river's largest great blue heron rookery is found here. The back channels offer close looks at warblers and other birds. Louisana waterthrushes can be found in narrow ravines leading into the first channel below Osceola Landing. In recent years, opreys have nested on the Swing Bridge. The back channel just below and across from Log House Landing offers riparian habitats and lots of smaller birds plus red-shouldered hawks.

#### William O'Brien State Park to Stillwater

More bald eagles nest on this stretch of the river than any other. Double-crested cormorants can be found in the Apple River delta. Great blue herons have several rookeries here though only the one at Stillwater has been consistent over the past decade. This is the best area for cerulean warblers. Prothonotary warblers are common in the forested islands below the Apple River. Search cliffs for mixed colonies of bank and cliff swallows.



# Where to go by Boat

#### **Stillwater to Prescott**

The best birding may be between Stillwater and north to the Soo Line railroad bridge.

A great blue heron rookery is located on an island at the northern edge of Stillwater. Bald eagles are known to nest across from Stillwater, near



Bayport, just south of Hudson, and at Afton State Park. Please keep your distance to avoid disturbing herons and eagles during nesting season. Stop at Kinnickinnick State Park, Afton State Park and St. Croix Bluffs Regional County Park for more birding opportunities.

# Seasonality

#### Fall

Watch for kettles of migrating hawks along the bluffs on warm sunny days with north winds.

#### Winter

Trumpeter swans congregate in large numbers on the river at Hudson. Bald eagles are present near open water year-round and are most easily found in the Dalles area at Interstate State Park or near Prescott and the Mississippi River.

## Spring

The most spectacular birding is during ice breakup when eagles are migrating in large numbers. This can also be a good time to sees flocks of waterfowl during migration. The north-south alignment of the river is a natural migration corridow for most other migrants, especially the woodland species.