

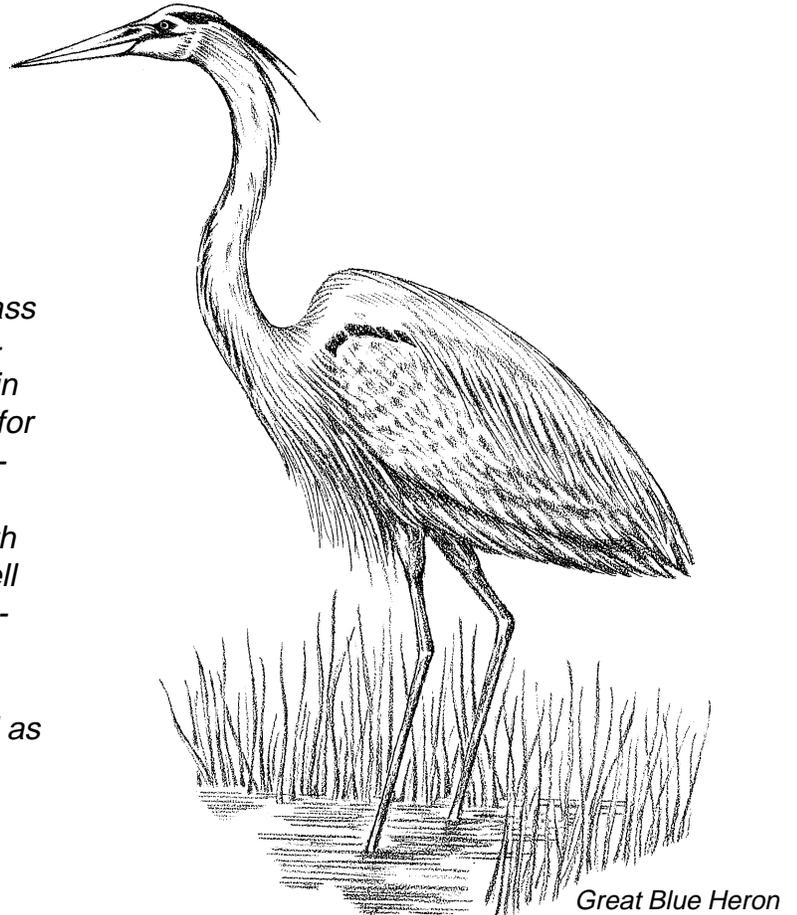
Grand Teton

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Memorial Parkway

National Park
P.O. Drawer 170
Moose, Wyoming 83012
307 739-3300

Bird-Finding Guide

Grand Teton National Park and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Memorial Parkway encompass a range of habitats, from alpine meadows to sagebrush flats, from lodgepole pine forests to mountain streams. Birds use habitats that meet their needs for food, water, shelter and nest sites. Some birds frequent only one habitat type while others occupy a variety of habitats. This guide will acquaint you with some habitat types of the park and parkway as well as specific locations to look for birds. Use it in conjunction with the park map and the various bird identification books available at any of our visitor centers. Please report any sightings of birds listed as rare or accidental on the bird checklist.



Great Blue Heron

Habitat Types

Lodgepole Pine Forests

Lodgepole pine grows in dense forests covering much of the valley and the lower slopes of the mountains. Expect olive-sided flycatchers, yellow-rumped warblers, ruby-crowned kinglets, mountain chickadees, white-crowned and chipping sparrows and dark-eyed juncos (especially in developed areas within lodgepole forests such as Colter Bay).

Aspens

Aspens occur chiefly in pure stands, often on hillsides. Many of the aspen stands in the park and parkway have rotting trunks that attract numerous woodpeckers. Saw-whet owls, house wrens, mountain and black-capped chickadees, tree swallows and violet-green swallows nest in old woodpecker cavities.

Sagebrush Flats

Sagebrush covers most of the valley called Jackson Hole. Despite the hot dry

conditions existing where sagebrush grows, some species flourish. Look for sage grouse, vesper sparrows, Brewer's sparrows and sage thrashers.

Alpine

Above 10,000 feet, severe conditions limit vegetation to low-growing forms. Birds that nest above treeline migrate south or to lower elevations for winter. Watch for golden eagles, Clark's nutcrackers, rosy finches, white-crowned sparrows and water pipits.

Aquatic and Riparian

Numerous rivers, creeks, lakes and ponds provide habitats where Canada geese and other waterfowl nest and osprey and bald eagles hunt for fish. Common snipe, white-crowned and Lincoln sparrows, yellow and MacGillivray's warblers and common yellowthroats nest and forage in adjacent wet meadows. American dippers search for insects in fast-moving streams.

Bird-Watching Etiquette

Enjoy birds but be a responsible birder.

✓ Nesting birds of all species are easily disturbed. *If an adult on a nest flies off at your approach or circles you or screams in alarm, you are too close to the nest.* Unattended nestlings readily succumb to predation or exposure to heat, cold and wet weather.

✓ Good birding areas often attract other wildlife. Maintain a safe distance (300 feet) from large animals such as moose, bears and bison. Do not position yourself between a female and her offspring.

Birding Hot Spots

Grand View Point.

Old growth Douglas firs support Williamson's sapsuckers, red-naped sapsuckers and other woodpeckers. Common songbirds include mountain chickadees, red-breasted nuthatches, dark-eyed juncos, western tanagers and Townsend's solitaires. Blue grouse and ruffed grouse nest here. At the summit, look up for red-tailed hawks, white pelicans and other soaring birds.

Christian Pond

Several species of waterfowl nest here. Look for ruddy ducks, ring-necked ducks, American wigeon and American coots. Trumpeter swans occasionally nest on the pond. **Because human presence interferes with the swans' nesting effort, remain on the trail on the west side of the pond, at least 300 feet from the edge of the pond, and obey all posted closures.**

Willow Flats

Extensive willow thickets merge with wet grassy meadows. Small creeks and beaver ponds provide riparian and aquatic habitats. Look for cinnamon teal, green-winged teal and American wigeon in ponds and creeks. Sandhill cranes, northern harriers, American bitterns, common snipes and soras nest here. Calliope hummingbirds feed on scarlet gilia growing near Jackson Lake Lodge. Red-naped sapsuckers and other woodpeckers abound. Frequently seen songbirds include willow flycatchers, cliff swallows, yellow warblers, MacGillivray's warblers, common yellowthroats, Wilson's warblers, fox sparrows, white-crowned sparrows, pine siskins and yellow-headed blackbirds. Lazuli buntings and green-tailed towhees use the drier hillsides adjacent to Willow Flats.

Oxbow Bend

A slow-moving, cut-off meander of the Snake River, Oxbow Bend supports lush underwater plant growth and abundant fish, food for aquatic birds. Great blue herons and osprey nest here. White pelicans, double-crested cormorants, common mergansers and bald eagles fish in the shallow water. Because of Oxbow Bend's proximity to Willow Flats, the birdlife is quite similar.

Two Ocean Lake

Western grebes, trumpeter swans, common mergansers and occasional common loons summer on the lake. Western tanagers, pine grosbeaks,

Cassin's finches and other songbirds abound in the open coniferous forests and aspen stands surrounding the lake.

Cascade Canyon.

Glaciers gouged out Cascade Canyon thousands of years ago. Today Cascade Creek carries melted snow through conifer forests and meadows of wildflowers, while the Teton peaks tower above. American dippers frequent Cascade Creek near Hidden Falls. Western tanagers, ruby-crowned kinglets and yellow-rumped warblers nest near the trail. Also look for golden eagles, Steller's jays, gray jays, golden-crowned kinglets, dark-eyed juncos and occasional Townsend's warblers. Secretive harlequin ducks sometimes nest along the creek.

Taggart Lake Trail

In 1985 a lightning-caused forest fire burned most of the trees on the glacial moraine surrounding Taggart Lake. Insects feeding on the decaying trees attract woodpeckers. Look for black-backed and three-toed woodpeckers. Abundant insects also attract mountain bluebirds, tree swallows, olive-sided and dusky flycatchers, western wood-pewees and yellow-rumped warblers. Calliope hummingbirds frequently perch in willows near the base of the moraine.

Antelope Flats – Kelly Road.

Large hayfields attract raptors that search the fields for abundant small rodents. Look for American kestrels, prairie falcons, red-tailed hawks, Swainson's hawks and northern harriers. Check fence posts for western meadowlarks, western and eastern kingbirds and mountain bluebirds. Scan irrigated pastures for long-billed curlews and savannah sparrows.

Menor's Ferry at Moose

Follow the self-guiding trail to homesteader cabins along the Snake River. Bird life abounds due to riparian habitat. Violet-green, tree, cliff and barn swallows scoop insects out of the air as western wood-pewees, dusky flycatchers and mountain bluebirds hawk for flying insects. Yellow warblers glean insects from cottonwood trees and willow and silver-berry shrubs lining the Snake River. Calliope, broad-tailed and rufous hummingbirds seek nectar from wildflowers. Kingfishers, common mergansers, ospreys and bald eagles catch fish in the river.

Phelps Lake Overlook

The trail to the overlook traverses a lateral

glacial moraine where mixed conifers and aspens grow. Because the trail follows a small creek, expect abundant birdlife. Look for western tanagers, MacGillivray's warblers, northern flickers, Lazuli buntings, ruby-crowned kinglets and green-tailed towhees. Listen for the sweet songs of hermit and Swainson's thrushes. Calliope and broad-tailed hummingbirds feed on scarlet gilia below the overlook.

Blacktail Ponds Overlook

This overlook is just north of Moose Junction and is situated at the transition of three different plant communities: Sagebrush flats, the coniferous forest of Blacktail Butte, and the willow and cottonwood lined wetlands of the Snake River flood plane. Looking down on the wetlands from the overlook gives you a great vantage point to observe waterfowl such as American wigeons, blue-winged teal, mallards, and goldeneyes. Up to six species of swallows can also be seen at eye level as they skillfully fly through the air catching insects. Raptors such as bald eagles and osprey can be seen in the high cottonwoods. Strewn through out the willows, yellow warblers, song sparrows and willow flycatchers among others can be seen and heard. An occasional green-tailed towhee flutters through the sagebrush near the overlook and evening grosbeaks visit from the forest.

Partners in Flight

Migratory Bird Conservation Program

Most of the birds found in the park and parkway are migratory, spending only 3-6 months here each year. Migratory birds are protected while they nest in national parks, but may lose safe nesting sites on other lands due to human activities. Migratory birds also face numerous perils on their long journeys to and from wintering grounds. Human-caused habitat changes fragment forests and remove safe feeding and roosting areas in migration corridors. Birds that migrate to the tropics may lose their winter range due to deforestation.

Birdwatchers and scientists alike have become concerned about the future of migratory birds. Show your concern by enjoying birds in your backyard and in your travels! Assist scientists to measure bird population changes by participating in bird counts and surveys, such as Christmas Bird Counts, the North American Migration Count, and Breeding Bird Surveys. Find out about the Partners in Flight program in your home state. You can use your interest and knowledge of birds to help assure their future!