

Birds of Valley Forge National Historical Park

Valley Forge National Historical Park encompasses 3,500 acres of land including forest, riparian, wetland, meadow, and aquatic habitats. The diversity of habitats provides many opportunities for bird watching. The park serves as a refuge for many bird species, particularly grassland birds. Historically, over 227 species of birds have been observed within the park; this 2016 checklist is intended to reflect their present status. Some of the best areas to encounter birds are on Mount Joy, along Valley Creek and the Schuylkill River, and in meadows through-out the park.

This checklist was developed based on published and on-line records, including the on-line eBird resource maintained by the Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology, the Pennsylvania Bird Atlas maintained by Pennsylvania State University, and field observations by park staff, members of the Valley Forge Audubon Society, West Chester Bird Club, and volunteers over the past 40 years. The checklist describes the season these species are most likely to be detected and how plentiful they are in each season.

Space is provided in the left hand column for you to keep track of the species you identify during your visit.

For additional information or to report a bird species not found on the checklist please contact our staff at:
VAFO_Resource_Management@nps.gov

Checklist Key

Seasonal Status

Sp = Spring - residents and migrants

S = Summer - mainly breeding residents

F = Fall - residents and migrants

W=Winter - mainly residents

Relative Abundance

A = Abundant: may be seen or heard daily in suitable habitat and season, and counted in relatively large numbers

C = Common: may be seen or heard daily in suitable habitat and season, but not in large numbers

U = Uncommon: likely to be seen or heard monthly in suitable habitat and season; may be locally common

R = Rare: present in suitable habitat, but usually seen or heard only a few times during the indicated season

O = Occasional: occurs in the park at least once every few years during the indicated season, but not necessarily every year

ER = Extremely Rare (listed at end of each bird group): species for which Relative Abundance rating in Valley Forge Park does not exceed Occasional in any one season. These may most often be encountered during spring or fall migrations.

Special Notes

* Population reproduces in the park

Irruptive species: species that, when present (generally every 2-4 years in winter), may occur in relatively large numbers.

	Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
WATER FOWL					
	Mute Swan	O		O	R
	Snow Goose				R
	Canada Goose *	C	C	C	A
	Wood Duck *	C	U	U	R
	American Black Duck			R	C
	Mallard *	C	C	C	C
	Green-winged Teal	R			R
	Redhead				R
	Ring-necked Duck				U
	Lesser Scaup				R
	Bufflehead	C		O	A
	Common Goldeneye				U
	Hooded Merganser	R		O	U
	Common Merganser *	U	U	U	C
ER	Greater White-fronted Goose	Tundra Swan			
	White-winged Scoter	Gadwall			
	American Wigeon	Blue-winged Teal			
	Northern Pintail	Canvasback			
	Greater Scaup	Red-breasted Merganser			
	Ruddy Duck				
UPLAND FOWL					
ER	Wild Turkey	Ruffed Grouse			
	Ring-necked Pheasant	Northern Bob White			
LOONS – GREBES – CORMORANTS					
	Pied-billed Grebe	O	O	O	U
	Double-crested Cormorant	U	U	U	U
ER	Common Loon	Horned Grebe			
	Red-necked Grebe				
HERONS					
	Great Blue Heron	U	C	C	R
	Green Heron	U	U		
ER	American Bittern	Great Egret			
	Snowy Egret	Little Blue Heron			
	Black-crowned Night Heron	Yellow-crowned Night Heron			
VULTURES					
	Black Vulture *	C	C	C	C
	Turkey Vulture *	C	C	C	C
OWLS					
	Eastern Screech Owl *	U	U	U	U
	Great Horned Owl *	R	R	R	R
ER	Long-eared Owl	Short-eared Owl			
	Barred Owl				

	Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
HAWKS – FALCONS					
	Osprey	R	O	R	
	Bald Eagle	R	R	R	U
	Northern Harrier	R	O	R	U
	Sharp-shinned Hawk	R	O	R	R
	Coopers Hawk *	U	U	U	U
	Red-shouldered Hawk	O	O	O	U
	Broad-winged Hawk	U	O	U	
	Red-tailed Hawk *	C	C	C	C
	American Kestrel *	U	U	U	R
	Peregrine Falcon	O		O	R
ER	Rough-legged Hawk	Merlin			
COOTS					
ER	American Coot				
PLOVERS – SANDPIPERS					
	Killdeer	R	O		R
	Spotted Sandpiper	C	R		
	Wilson's Snipe	R			
ER	Solitary Sandpiper	Least Sandpiper			
	Woodcock				
GULLS					
	Ring-billed Gull			U	C
	Herring Gull			O	R
	Great Black-backed Gull				R
ER	Lesser Black-backed Gull				
PIGEONS and DOVES					
	Rock Pigeon *	C	C	C	C
	Mourning Dove *	C	C	C	C
CUCKOOS					
	Yellow-billed Cuckoo *	U	U	O	
ER	Black-billed Cuckoo				
GOATSUCKERS - SWIFTS – HUMMINGBIRDS					
	Common Nighthawk	R	R		
	Chimney Swift *	C	A	R	
	Ruby-throated Hummingbird *	U	U	O	
KINGFISHERS					
	Belted Kingfisher *	C	C	C	C
WOODPECKERS					
	Red-bellied Woodpecker *	C	C	C	C
	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	O		O	U
	Downy Woodpecker *	C	C	C	C
	Hairy Woodpecker *	C	C	C	C
	Northern Flicker *	C	C	C	C