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WILDLIFE

PEA ISLAND National Wildlife Refuge

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General

Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, located in Dare County, North Carolina, is one of over 400 national wildlife refuges nationwide administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Though each refuge was established to provide habitat for certain primary species, each is managed to provide for a diversity of wildlife and opportunities for public enjoyment of these natural resources. Wildlife observation is a popular pastime for millions of people each year. This publication is designed to help refuge visitors observe and identify the wildlife of Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge.

Established in 1938 as a wintering sanctuary for waterfowl, Pea Island contains 5,915 acres of coastal barrier island and 25,700 acres of Proclamation Boundary Waters in the Pamlico Sound. Management of the refuge provides diverse habitat types including beach, dunes, salt marsh, fresh and brackish water ponds and salt flats.

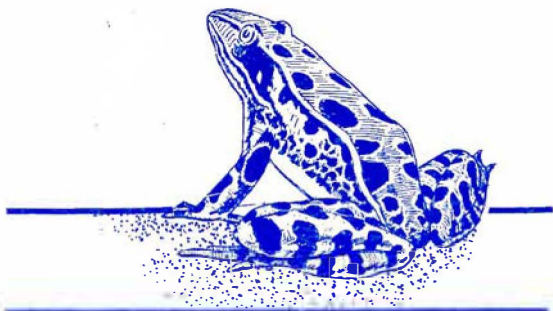
In observing the wildlife populations here, remember the dynamic nature of a barrier island. Over the years inlets open and close. The ocean overwashed intermittently during frequent winter storms. Sometimes all surface water is salty. Animal populations here generally have more limiting factors than other places. On an island the mere existence of a species may depend solely on its ability to swim or fly. Survival largely relates to its ability to tolerate the harsh salt environment. Is it any wonder that our richest diversity of wildlife is among the avian populations and our least diverse, the amphibians, who would dehydrate in salt water? Ponder these environmental factors as you observe refuge wildlife.

Wildlife observation can be very enjoyable. Field guides and binoculars might make the experience more rewarding. We encourage visitors to report any rare or unusual sightings to the refuge headquarters.

• General Information

Amphibians

Toads, frogs and salamanders belong to the class Amphibia, derived from the Greek “amphibious” meaning “living a double life”. Most members are aquatic and breath with gills as larvae; adults usually have lungs. Even adults, however, have thin, wet skin and must live in moist surroundings. Freshwater ponds, bogs and damp forest floors are ideal spots for amphibians. Such environments do not exist on this refuge. Few amphibians survive the salty environment of Pea Island; none thrive there.



	Common Name	Status*
—	Fowler's Toad	D
—	Green Treefrog	D
—	Squirrel Treefrog	D
—	Bullfrog	E
—	Southern Leopard Frog	D

* Documented - actual observations on the refuge are recorded.

Expected - species exist north and/or south of Pea Island; however, no documented observations on the refuge have been recorded.

• Amphibians

Reptiles

Many reptiles are as at home in water as they are on land. All are covered with scales or plates. Besides protecting these animals from injury and disease, this adaptation is an effective means of preventing water loss. Consequently, many reptiles live and thrive in the salty refuge environment.

Reptiles are also cold-blooded and utilize their surroundings to adjust their body temperatures. Basking in the sun is a class habit during cold weather; burrowing or staying submerged in water helps reptiles avoid extreme heat. On Pea Island you are most likely to observe reptiles on cool, sunny days.

Common Name

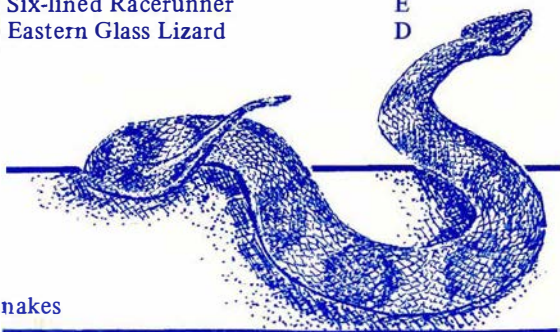
Status*

Turtles

— Common Snapping Turtle	D
— Eastern Mud Turtle	D
— Diamondback Terrapin	D
— Yellowbelly Slider	D
— Loggerhead	D
— Atlantic Green Turtle	D
— Atlantic Hawksbill	D
— Atlantic Ridley	D
— Leatherback	D

Lizards

— Five Lined Skink	E
— Ground Skink	E
— Six-lined Racerunner	E
— Eastern Glass Lizard	D



Snakes

— Racer	D
— Corn Snake	D
— Rat Snake	E
— Eastern Hognose	D
— Eastern Kingsnake	E
— Carolina Salt Marsh Snake	D
— Rough Green Snake	E
— Brown Snake	D
— Eastern Ribbon Snake	E
— Eastern Garter Snake	E
— Eastern Cottonmouth (poisonous)	E

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Mammals

Mammals are often secretive and wary of humans, so you're not apt to see many of these individuals on a casual visit to the refuge. Try looking for animal signs: tracks, trails, scats, the remains of dinner, or their homes. Field guides that describe these signs are available in most book stores and are quite helpful in identifying mammals.

This checklist is divided into characteristic categories for your convenience. Notice that many typical mammalian species are absent here. As the barrier islands connect and disconnect and as the environment changes through the years, the species makeup will also change. What predictions can you make about these changes?



Order	Common Name	Status*
MARSUPIALIA: (Pouched Mammals)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Opossum	D
INSECTIVORA: (Shrews and Moles)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Southeastern Shrew	D
<input type="checkbox"/>	Least Shrew	E
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eastern Mole	E
CHIROPTERA: (Bats)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Silver-haired Bat	D
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eastern Pipistrelle	E
<input type="checkbox"/>	Red Bat	E
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hoary Bat	E
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evening Bat	E
LAGOMORPHA: (Rabbits)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eastern Cottontail	D
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marsh Rabbit	D
RODENTIA: (Rodents)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rice Rat	D
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eastern Harvest Mouse	E
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hispid Cotton Rat	E
<input type="checkbox"/>	Meadow Vole	D
<input type="checkbox"/>	Muskrat	D
<input type="checkbox"/>	Norway Rat	D
<input type="checkbox"/>	House Mouse	D
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nutria	D
CARNIVORA: (Meat Eating Mammals)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gray Fox	E
<input type="checkbox"/>	Raccoon	D
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mink	D
<input type="checkbox"/>	River Otter	D

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Birds

The diversity and abundance of birdlife on Pea Island explains its reputation of being a "birder's paradise". The refuge is an important wintering ground for tundra swans, snow geese, Canada geese and over 25 species of ducks. Many other interesting species can be found here during the winter months and the spring and fall migrations. During the summer months several species of herons, egrets and terns along with American avocets, willets, black-necked stilts and a few species of ducks nest on the refuge. Oceanic species can be expected during most any season offshore but are most common from late summer through the fall into late winter. Following storms many unusual species for this area have been observed.

This bird list is in accordance with the sixth A.O.U. Check-List. New names are used with the former name in parenthesis.

The seasonal occurrence and abundance of these avian species are coded as follows:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| a - abundant | a common species that is numerous. |
| c - common | probable to be seen in suitable habitat. |
| u - uncommon | usually present, but not certain to be seen. |
| o - occasional | seen only a few times during a season. |
| r - rare | seen at intervals of 2 to 5 years. |

Note: Accidental species (seen 1-3 times at Pea Island) are included but are listed as having no relative abundance.

- S - March-May
- S - June-August
- F - September-November
- W - December-February
- * - nests locally
- + - seasonal abundance refers to frequency offshore. Birds are occasionally observed on refuge, especially after a storm and/or strong winds.

S S F W

—	Red-throated Loon	c	c	a	
—	Common Loon	c	r	c	c
—	Pied-billed Grebe	c	o	c	a
—	Horned Grebe	c		u	a
—	Red-necked Grebe				r
—	Eared Grebe				
—	Western Grebe				
—	+Northern Fulmar	a	o	a	c
—	+Cory's Shearwater	u	u	u	
—	+Greater Shearwater		c	c	
—	+Sooty Shearwater		u	r	
—	+Audubon's Shearwater		a	a	
—	+Wilson's Storm-Petrel	r	a	a	
—	White-faced Storm-Petrel				
—	+Leach's Storm-Petrel	r	r	r	
—	White-tailed Tropicbird				
—	Northern Gannet	c	r	c	a
—	American White Pelican				
—	Brown Pelican	c	c	c	u
—	Great Cormorant				o
—	Double-crested Cormorant	a	r	c	c
—	Anhinga				
—	Magnificent Frigatebird				
—	American Bittern	c	o	c	c
—	*Least Bittern	u	u	o	
—	Great Blue Heron	u	u	u	u
—	Great Blue Heron (White Morph)				
—	Great Egret (Common)	c	c	c	c
—	*Snowy Egret	c	c	c	u
—	*Little Blue Heron	c	c	c	u
—	*Tri-colored Heron (Louisiana)	c	c	c	u
—	Reddish Egret				
—	*Cattle Egret	u	c	c	r
—	*Green-backed Heron (Green Heron)	u	u	u	o
—	*Black-crowned Night Heron	c	c	c	u
—	*Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	r	u	u	r
—	*White Ibis		o	o	r
—	*Glossy Ibis	c	c	c	r
—	Wood Stork				
—	Greater Flamingo				

• Birds

	S	S	F	W
_____ Fulvous Whistling Duck (Fulvous Tree Duck)	r		r	u
_____ Tundra Swan (Whistling Swan)	c	r	c	c
_____ Greater White-fronted Goose	r			r
_____ Snow Goose	a	r	a	a
_____ Ross' Goose				r
_____ Brant			r	r
_____ Barnacle Goose			r	r
_____ Canada Goose	a	r	a	a
_____ Wood Duck	r		r	r
_____ *Green-winged Teal	a	r	a	a
_____ *American Black Duck	a	u	a	a
_____ *Mallard	u	o	u	u
_____ Northern Pintail	c		a	a
_____ *Blue-winged Teal	a	o	a	r
_____ Northern Shoveler	c		c	c
_____ *Gadwall	c	c	c	u
_____ Eurasian Wigeon (European Wigeon)				r
_____ American Wigeon	c		c	a
_____ Canvasback	u		u	c
_____ Redhead	u		c	c
_____ Ring-necked Duck	c		c	c
_____ Greater Scaup	c	r	u	c
_____ Lesser Scaup	c		u	c
_____ Common Eider				r
_____ King Eider				
_____ Oldsquaw	u		r	u
_____ Black Scoter (Common)	c		u	c
_____ Surf Scoter	c		u	a
_____ White-winged Scoter	u		u	u
_____ Common Goldeneye	r		r	o
_____ Bufflehead	c	r	c	c
_____ Hooded Merganser	u		u	c
_____ Common Merganser	u		u	u
_____ Red-breasted Merganser	a	r	c	a
_____ Ruddy Duck	c	r	c	c
_____ Black Vulture	r	r	r	r
_____ Turkey Vulture	r	r	r	r
_____ *Osprey	u	u	c	
_____ American Swallow-tailed Kite				
_____ Bald Eagle	r	r	r	r
_____ Northern Harrier (Marsh Hawk)	c		c	c
_____ Sharp-shinned Hawk	o		a	u
_____ Cooper's Hawk	r		r	r
_____ Red-shouldered Hawk			r	r
_____ Swainson's Hawk				
_____ Red-tailed Hawk	r		r	r
_____ Rough-legged Hawk				
_____ Golden Eagle				
_____ American Kestrel (Sparrow Hawk)	c		a	a
_____ Merlin (Pigeon Hawk)	u		c	u
_____ Peregrine Falcon	u		c	u
_____ *Ring-necked Pheasant	c	c	c	c

Yellow Rail				
Black Rail	T	r	r	r
*Clapper Rail	c	c	c	c
*King Rail.	c	c	c	c
Virginia Rail	u	o	u	u
Sora.	c	u	a	u
*Purple Gallinule	r	r		
*Common Moorhen	u	u	u	r
American Coot	a	r	a	a
Black-bellied Plover	a	u	a	c
Lesser Golden Plover	r		o	r
*Wilson's Plover	u	o	u	u
Semipalmated Plover	c	u	c	u
*Piping Plover.	u	u	u	u
*Killdeer.	u	u	u	u
*American Oystercatcher	c	u	u	r
*Black-necked Stilt.	u	c	c	
*American Avocet	u	u	u	r
Greater Yellowlegs	a	c	a	c
Lesser Yellowlegs	a	c	a	u
Solitary Sandpiper	u	o	u	o
*Willet	c	c	c	u
Spotted Sandpiper	c	u	c	o
Upland Sandpiper (Plover).	o	o	o	
Whimbrel.	c	r	c	o
Long-billed Curlew				u
Hudsonian Godwit	r	r	u	
Bar-tailed Godwit				
Marbled Godwit.	o	u	c	u
Ruddy Turnstone	a	u	a	u
Red Knot (Knot)	c	u	c	u
Sanderling	a	c	a	a
Semipalmated Sandpiper.	a	c	a	u
Western Sandpiper	c	u	a	c
Least Sandpiper	a	c	a	u
White-rumped Sandpiper.	o	r	c	
Baird's Sandpiper		u	u	
Pectoral Sandpiper	u		c	r
Purple Sandpiper				
Dunlin	a	u	a	c
Curlew Sandpiper				
Buff-breasted Sandpiper				r
Ruff				
Short-billed Dowitcher	c	c	a	u
Long-billed Dowitcher	u	r	c	u
Common Snipe	a	r	c	a
American Woodcock			r	r
Wilson's Phalarope	r		u	
+Red-necked Phalarope (Northern)	c		c	
+Red Phalarope.	c		c	r
+Pomerine Jaeger.	u	u	c	r
+Parasitic Jaeger	r	u	u	
+Long-tailed Jaeger.	u		u	
*Laughing Gull	a	a	a	u

	S	S	F	W
Little Gull				
Common Black-headed Gull				
Bonaparte's Gull	c		u	c
Ring-billed Gull	a	c	a	a
*Herring Gull	a	c	a	a
Iceland Gull				
Lesser Black-backed Gull				u
Glaucous Gull	r			r
*Great Black-backed Gull	c	c	c	a
+Black-legged Kittiwake		r	u	c
*Gull-billed Tern	c	c	u	
*Caspian Tern	u	u	c	o
*Royal Tern	c	c	c	u
*Sandwich Tern	c	c	c	
Roseate Tern	r	r	r	
*Common Tern	c	c	c	r
Forster's Tern	a	c	r	a
*Least Tern	c	c	c	
+Bridled Tern		c	u	
Black Tern	u	c	a	
*Black Skimmer	c	c	c	u
Dovekie	r		r	r
Thick-billed Murre				
Razorbill				r
White-winged Dove				
*Mourning Dove	u	u	u	u
Black-billed Cuckoo	r		r	
*Yellow-billed Cuckoo	u	u	c	
*Common Barn Owl	o	o	o	o
Snowy Owl				
Short-eared Owl	o		u	u
Northern Saw-whet Owl				
*Common Nighthawk	o	o	o	
Chuck-will's Widow	r	r	r	
Chimney Swift	o	o	o	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	o	u	u	
Belted Kingfisher	u	u	c	c
Redheaded Woodpecker			o	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	u		c	u
*Downy Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
Hairy Woodpecker	r		r	r
*Northern Flicker (Common, yellowshafted)	u	u	a	c
Olive-sided Flycatcher			r	
Eastern Wood Pewee	u	u	u	
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher			r	
Acadian Flycatcher			r	
Eastern Phoebe	u		u	u
*Great Crested Flycatcher	u	u	u	
Western Kingbird			u	
Eastern Kingbird	c	c	c	
Gray Kingbird				

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher				
Horned Lark	r		r	r
Purple Martin	u	u	c	
Tree Swallow	c	u	a	u
Northern Rough-winged Swallow (Rough winged).	r		r	
Bank Swallow	o		u	
Cliff Swallow			r	
*Barn Swallow	a	a	a	
Blue Jay	r	r	r	
American Crow (Common)	u	u	u	u
*Fish Crow	c	c	c	c
*Carolina Chickadee	u	u	u	u
Red-breasted Nuthatch	c		c	
White-breasted Nuthatch	r		r	
Brown Creeper	o		c	u
*Carolina Wren	c	c	c	c
House Wren	u		c	u
Winter Wren	o		u	o
Sedge Wren (Short-billed Marsh Wren)	c		c	c
*Marsh Wren (Long-billed Marsh Wren)	c	c	c	c
Golden-crowned Kinglet	u		c	u
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	c		c	c
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	o		u	
Veery	u		u	
Gray-cheeked Thrush	o		u	
Swainson's Thrush	o		c	
Hermit Thrush	o		c	o
Wood Thrush			r	
American Robin	u	u	c	c
*Gray Catbird (Catbird)	a	a	a	c
*Northern Mockingbird (Mockingbird)	u	u	u	u
*Brown Thrasher	u	u	u	u
Water Pipit	u		u	u
Sprague's Pipit				
Cedar Waxwing	u		u	c
Loggerhead Shrike			r	r
*European Starling (Starling)	c	c	c	a
*White-eyed Vireo	u	c	c	
Philadelphia Vireo			o	
*Red-eyed Vireo	u	u	u	
Blue-winged Warbler				
Tennessee Warbler	r		u	
Orange-crowned Warbler	u		u	c
Nashville Warbler			u	
Northern Parula (Parula Warbler)	c		c	
*Yellow Warbler	u	c	c	
Chestnut-sided Warbler			r	
Magnolia Warbler			c	
Cape May Warbler			c	
Black-throated Blue Warbler	u		c	
Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle)	a		a	a
Black-throated Green Warbler			u	
Blackburnian Warbler			r	
Yellow-throated Warbler			r	
Pine Warbler			u	
*Prairie Warbler	u	a	a	

Palm Warbler	c		a	c
Bay-breasted Warbler			r	
Blackpoll Warbler	c		c	
Black-and-white Warbler	u		c	
American Redstart	c		a	
Prothonotary Warbler	o		o	
Ovenbird	r		r	
Northern Waterthrush	o		c	
Louisiana Waterthrush	u		u	
Connecticut Warbler			r	
*Common Yellowthroat	c	c	a	u
Hooded Warbler			r	
Wilson's Warbler			r	
Canada Warbler			r	
*Yellow-breasted Chat	o	o	u	o
Summer Tanager	o		r	
Scarlet Tanager			r	
*Northern Cardinal (Cardinal)	c	c	c	c
Rose-breasted Grosbeak			u	
Blue Grosbeak			u	
Indigo Bunting	o		u	
Dickcissel			u	
*Rufous-sided Towhee	a	a	a	a
American Tree Sparrow (Tree Sparrow)			r	r
Chipping Sparrow	o		c	o
Clay-colored Sparrow			u	
*Field Sparrow	u	u	c	u
Vesper Sparrow			c	u
Lark Sparrow		u	c	u
Lark Bunting				
Savannah Sparrow (Ipswich)	a		a	a
Grasshopper Sparrow			u	o
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	a		a	a
*Seaside Sparrow	a	c	a	a
Fox Sparrow	o		u	o
*Song Sparrow	a	a	a	a
Lincoln's Sparrow			u	
Swamp Sparrow	o		a	a
White-throated Sparrow	u		a	u
White-crowned Sparrow			c	o
Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored)	u		u	u
Lapland Longspur				
Snow Bunting	o		o	o
Bobolink	c		c	
*Red-winged Blackbird	a	a	a	a
*Eastern Meadowlark	c	c	c	a
Western Meadowlark				
Rusty Blackbird			r	
*Boattailed Grackle	a	a	a	a
*Common Grackle	r	r	r	r
Brown-headed Cowbird	c		c	c
*Orchard Oriole	u	u		
Northern Oriole (Baltimore)			a	
Purple Finch			u	u
Common Redpoll				
Pine Siskin			u	u
American Goldfinch	u		c	u
Evening Grosbeak			r	
*House Sparrow	u	u	u	u