

American Birds

SUMMER

GUIDE

July-October 1993

It's hot outside, and the birds are quiet. But the most ardent birders are still out in the field. Some folks beat the heat by heading for places like Alaska, or visiting high altitudes in the Rockies. Others stick close to home, where they study summer breeders and early fall migrants. Persistence is the name of the game this time of year, and patience does have its rewards. One reminder—wherever you bird, be sure to take water!

Recommended location guides and further references are included at the end of each site.

1. CAPE BRETON HIGHLANDS NATIONAL PARK

Nova Scotia

Along the spectacular western coastline of this park, watch for Bald Eagles, Black Guillemots, Great Cormorants, and others. Shorebirds stop over during late summer and fall. The coniferous forest may produce Northern Goshawk, Boreal Chickadee, Pine Grosbeak, and crossbills. Also see: *Birding Nova Scotia*, Charles R. K. Allen & Phyllis R. Dobson, rev. 1984; *Birding in Atlantic Canada: Nova Scotia*, Roger Burrows, publ. 1988.

2. MONT-TREMBLANT PROVINCIAL PARK

Quebec

A haven for northern forest birds, Mont-Tremblant is an excellent place to seek Spruce Grouse in late summer. Other resident species

include Black-backed Woodpeckers and Gray Jays. Many warblers nest here, and may be seen in roving flocks in late summer before they start southward. Also see: *Bird-finding Guide to Canada*, J. Cam Finlay, publ. 1984.

3. MONHEGAN ISLAND

Maine

Reached by boat from Port Clyde, this is one of the best places in Maine to see south-bound migrants in late summer and early fall. Especially after northwest winds, the island may be hopping with warblers, buntings, sparrows, orioles, cuckoos, and others, while Merlins and Peregrines patrol overhead. Also see: *A Birder's Guide to the Coast of Maine*, Elizabeth Cary Pierson & Jan Erik Pierson, publ. 1981; *Enjoying Maine Birds*, Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr., ed., publ. 1985.

4. HAMMONASSETT BEACH STATE PARK

Connecticut

Although it can be too crowded on summer weekends, the park is an excellent place to study early fall migrants. South-bound land birds often concentrate here, and are easily viewed in trees near the coast. By mid-fall, loons and sea ducks are present just offshore. Also see: *Connecticut Birds*, Joseph D. Zeranski & Thomas R. Baptist, publ. 1990.

5. IROQUOIS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

New York

This refuge, along with the adjacent Oak Orchard and Tonawanda areas, provides a great combination of habitats. The ponds, marshes, and swampy woods support ducks, herons, and rails, while the nearby upland fields and forests add to the variety of nesting and migrant birds. Also see: *Where to Find Birds in New York State: Top 500 Sites*, Susan Roney Drennan, publ. 1981.

6. CHINCOTEAGUE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Virginia

A famous shorebirding site, Chincoteague teems with interesting species in late summer and early fall. Watch for specialties such as Buff-breasted Sandpipers, or rarities like the Bar-tailed Godwit. Raptor migration can bring Peregrine Falcons and Merlins. Also see: *Finding Birds in the National Capital Area*, Claudia Wilds, rev. 1992; *Virginia Birding Site Guide*, Ruth Beck & Dick Peake, eds., publ. 1985.

7. CUMBERLAND ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE

Georgia

A forested island accessible only by boat or ferry, Cumberland is summer home to seabirds and passerines like

Hooded Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat. As fall arrives, look for Common and Red-throated loons, pelicans, and Northern Gannets. Also see: *A Birder's Guide to Georgia*, 3rd edition, Terry Chesser, ed., rev. 1988.

8. GRAND LAKE ST. MARYS

Ohio

Ohio's largest inland lake, this old barge-canal reservoir is no deeper than seven feet. The lake's southwest corner has concentrations of herons. Other summer residents include Bobolinks, Savannah and Grasshopper sparrows, Eastern Screech-Owls, and Great Horned Owls. Fall migrants include Canada and Snow geese (including blue-morph Snows). Also see: *The Birds of Ohio*, Bruce G. Peterjohn, publ. 1989.

9. PACE POINT

Tennessee

Within the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge, at the confluence of the Tennessee and Big Sandy rivers, this has been one of the best places in the state for water-bird records. Even when no rarities are around, birding in late summer is likely to produce an interesting variety of shorebirds and others. Also see: *Bird-finding in Tennessee*, Michael Lee Bierly, publ. 1980.

10. SHORELINE PARK, GULF BREEZE

Florida

Located on a peninsula in Pensacola Bay, this city park is a last-chance oak forest for migrants headed across the Gulf from July through October. An Ash-throated Flycatcher was sighted one fall. Sanderlings are common along the narrow shoreline; occasionally, Willets and Great Blue Herons. Also see: *Birder's Guide to Florida* (Lane Series), James A. Lane & Harold R. Holt, rev. 1989; *Florida's Birds*; A



Handbook and Reference, Herbert W. Kale II & David S. Maehr, publ. 1990.

11. AGASSIZ NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Minnesota

Once the bed of a glacial lake, Agassiz covers 100 square miles of soggy prairie and aspen forest. Waterfowl love it—migration draws more than 100,000 ducks, 30,000 geese, and 2000 Sandhill Cranes. A Whooping Crane was sighted two years ago, and Bald Eagle visits have increased. Look in late summer for Le Conte's Sparrows, Sharp-tailed and Ruffed grouse, and Chestnut-sided and Blackburnian warblers. Also see: *A Birder's Guide to Minnesota*, Kim R. Eckert, rev. 1983.

12. WESTON BEND STATE PARK
Missouri

This upland hardwood forest

along the Missouri attracts migrating warblers in unusual variety, including Palm, Nashville, and Blackburnian. Hooded and Ceruleans summer in the cottonwood-sycamore bottoms. Dowitchers and Wilson's Phalaropes pass through in late summer. Also see: *Birds of Missouri*, Mark B. Robbins & David A. Easterla, publ. 1992; *A Guide to Bird Finding in Kansas and Western Missouri*, John L. Zimmerman & Sebastian T. Patri, publ. 1988.

13. VALENTINE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Nebraska

Dotted with 10,000 acres of prairie potholes, lakes, and marshes, Valentine is summer home to waders, terns, grebes, and ducks. American White Pelicans commute here from South Dakota. In fall, lucky birders may glimpse Short-eared Owls

hunting in the hills and meadows. Greater Prairie-Chickens are here year-round. Marsh and upland migrants arrive by the thousands in fall. Also see: *Guide to the National Wildlife Refuges*, Laura & William Riley, 1993.

14. BOLIVAR FLATS
Texas

One of the best sites in Texas for shorebirds, gulls, and terns, the tip of Bolivar Flats is now off-limits to vehicles, making it an even better haven for birds. Birders on foot will find fabulous concentrations in late summer, with Reddish Egrets, Wilson's Plovers, American Oystercatchers, Sandwich Terns, and more. Also see: *Birder's Guide to the Texas Coast* (Lane Series), Harold R. Holt, rev. 1993; *Birder's Guide to Texas*, Edward A. Kutac, rev. 1989.

15. JASPER NATIONAL PARK
Alberta

One of North America's most spectacular mountain parks, Jasper is also a great birding area in summer. Cliff and Violet-green swallows and Common Ravens are everywhere. Rough-legged Hawks and Peregrine Falcons sometimes appear. Other summer birds include Pine Siskins, American Pipits, and Swainson's Thrushes. Bohemian Waxwings arrive in autumn. Also see: *Birding Jasper National Park*, Kevin Van Tighem, publ. 1988.

16. RED ROCK LAKES NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Montana

Opened as a last-stand refuge for the Trumpeter Swan, Red Rock Lakes also has a colony of Franklin's, California, and Ring-billed gulls. Peregrine Falcons nest in cliffs, and six juvenile Bald

Eagles congregated at Tucks Butte this summer. One Whooping Crane accompanied Sandhills again this year—they'll probably depart in October. Trumpeter numbers are down; the refuge stopped winter feeding, and many migrants failed to return. Also see: *Birds of West-Central Montana*, Richard L. Hutto, ed., publ. 1986.

17. MEDICINE BOW MOUNTAINS
Wyoming

This range west of Laramie, less crowded than the parks in Colorado, offers a fine assortment of western montane birds. Look for long-spurs on the Laramie Plains, hike up from Snowy Range Pass to seek Rosy Finches, or explore the forests between for Townsend's Solitaires, Cassin's Finches, and others. Also see: *Wyoming Birds*, Jane L. Dorn & Robert D. Dorn, publ. 1990; *A Birder's Guide to Wyoming*, Oliver K. Scott, publ. 1993.

18. FORT SUMNER
New Mexico

Lake Sumner on the Pecos River helps give this area a variety of birding habitat. Look for Greater Roadrunners and Burrowing Owls on the plain, and woodland owls along the river. Irrigated fields near town attract Dickcissels, Blue Jays, and Northern Bobwhites. Also see: *New Mexico Bird-finding Guide*, edited by Dale A. Zimmerman, Marian A. Zimmerman, & John N. Durrie, publ. 1992.

19. RUBY LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Nevada

As many as 300 pairs of White-faced Ibis are only one facet of Ruby Lake. In fall, Trumpeter Swans forage in the marsh. Other summer shorebirds include American Avocets, Black-necked Stilts, and Wilson's Phalaropes.

Tundra Swans arrive in the fall, but alight so briefly that sightings are prized. Also see: *Guide to the National Wildlife Refuges*, Laura & William Riley, 1993.

20. SIERRA VISTA
Arizona

Few towns are so well situated for great late summer birding. Sierra Vista is convenient to riparian groves along the San Pedro, famous birding canyons like Ramsey and Carr, and the varied habitats of Fort Huachuca. Everything from Botteri's Sparrow to Elegant Trogon to Buff-breasted Flycatcher can be found within ten miles. Also see: *Birder's Guide to Southeastern Arizona* (Lane Series), Harold R. Holt, rev. 1989; *Birds in Southeastern Arizona*, William A. Davis & Stephen M. Russell, rev. 1990.

21. NOME AREA
Alaska

Summer birding at Nome is great almost 24 hours a day. Roads out of town give access to tundra and coast with an exciting mix of Arctic and Siberian birds: Bar-tailed Godwit, Long-tailed Jaeger, Aleutian Tern, Yellow Wagtail, White Wagtail, Arctic Warbler, and many others. Also see: *Guide to the Birds of Alaska*, Robert H. Armstrong, rev. 1990.

22. POINT ROBERTS
Washington

Lying just inside Washington, Point Roberts is most easily reached from Vancouver, British Columbia. Among the waterbirds just offshore in late summer are Heermann's Gulls. Wooded areas of the point produce land birds like Hutton's Vireo and California Quail. Also see: *Guide to bird-finding in Washington*, Terrence R. Wahl & Dennis R. Paulson, rev. 1991.



INVALUABLE TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Rare bird alert telephone services can help vacationing birders check special sightings. Taped messages list recent sightings of rare or unusual birds and provide detailed directions to the site—although coverage and information vary. Use this listing when visiting the places on our Summer birding map.

Alaska (907) 338-2473	Maine (207) 781-2332	Ohio Dayton (513) 277-6446
Alberta Calgary (403) 237-8821	Downeast, central (207) 288-2829	Toledo (419) 875-6889
Arizona Tucson (602) 798-1005	Minnesota (612) 827-3161	Oregon (503) 292-0661
California Sacramento (916) 481-0118	Missouri Kansas City (913) 342-2473	Quebec Montreal (514) 355-6549
San Diego (619) 479-3400	Montana (406) 626-2473	Tennessee (615) 356-7636
Connecticut (203) 254-3665	Nebraska (402) 292-5325	Texas Coastal (512) 364-3634
Florida (813) 984-4444	Nevada (702) 649-1516	Virginia (804) 929-1736
Georgia (404) 509-0204	New Mexico (505) 662-2101	(301) 652-1088
	New York Rochester (716) 461-9593	Washington (206) 526-8266
	Nova Scotia (902) 852-2428	Wyoming (307) 265-2473

23. CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK
Oregon

Most people visit this park just to see the deep blue lake, but the birding in the surrounding forest can be rewarding. Clark's Nutcracker is one attraction; so are Gray Jay and the harder-to-find Rosy Finch. Also see: *The Birder's Guide to Oregon*, Joseph E. Evanich, Jr., publ. 1990.; *Birding Oregon*, Fred. L. Ramsey, publ. 1981.

24. YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK
California

Yosemite may be too popular in mid-summer; but for those who don't mind crowds, the birding is excellent. Look for Canadian zone forest birds, high meadow and mountain dwellers, and breeding raptors. Specialties include Great Gray Owl,

Northern Goshawk, and the Black-backed Woodpecker. See also: *Birds of Yosemite and the East Slope*, David Gaines, publ. 1988; *Birder's Guide to Northern California*, LoLo Westrich & Jim Westrich, publ. 1991.

25. TIJUANA SLOUGH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
California

One of the best surviving salt marshes in southern California. Clapper Rails are resident. Concentrations of wading birds often include Little Blue Herons; Least and Elegant terns and Snowy Plovers summer here. Also see: *Birder's Guide to Southern California* (Lane Series), Harold R. Holt, rev. 1990; *Where Birders Go in Southern California*, Henry E. Childs, Jr., publ. 1990.