

BIRDS OF NEW YORK CITY

Discover some of the over 300 species to be found in the five boroughs



NEW YORK CITY AUDUBON



Upland Birds. Park forests are good places to see these species of the woods and scrublands, such as the American woodcock and tree swallow, and songbirds, including over 20 species of warbler. Above: blackburnian warbler.



Shorebirds. Birds of the City's shores and wetlands include the American oystercatcher, white-rumped sandpiper, and the endangered piping plover (above).



Wading Birds. These majestic birds, which feed in marshes throughout the City and nest on islands in the harbor, include the snowy egret (above), glossy ibis, and yellow-crowned night-heron.



Waterfowl. In winter, ducks, such as the long-tailed duck (above), and geese congregate by the thousands in ponds and harbor inlets. You can also see diving birds such as grebes and loons.



Grassland Birds. Among the City's most threatened species, these birds that specialize in grassy habitat include the savannah sparrow (above), bobolink, and American kestrel.



Seabirds. Gulls, terns, and related birds like the double-crested cormorant and black skimmer (above) are the seabirds most commonly seen in the harbor. Birds of the open ocean, such as the northern gannet, are also frequently spotted.



Marsh Birds. These secretive inhabitants of marshes, including the American bittern, clapper rail, saltmarsh sparrow, and Nelson's sparrow (above) are the hardest to spot.



Raptors. Birds of prey, such as hawks and owls, are especially abundant flying overhead during fall migration and also can be seen year round. Peregrine falcons and osprey nest in the harbor, while red-tailed hawks (above) nest in City parks and even on building ledges.



NYC AUDUBON
MAP & GUIDE TO
BIRDING
BY SUBWAY



7 TOP SUBWAY BIRDING STOPS

1. CENTRAL PARK, MANHATTAN

C B 72nd St.

Manhattan's 843-acre centerpiece is a magnet for spring and fall migrants seeking a place to rest and build reserves for the next leg of their journey, making it one of the best places for birding in the United States. If you are lucky enough to bird here when shifting weather patterns have caused a migrant "fall-out," the density of songbirds can be simply spectacular.

WHERE TO GO: Enter at 72nd Street to Strawberry Fields, where songbirds can be seen during spring and fall migration. Then pick up the path along The Lake. Circle the lake either north, paralleling West Drive to Oak Bridge, or south via Bow Bridge, to The Ramble.

BIRDS TO SEE: Upland birds, grassland birds, wading birds, waterfowl, and raptors.

2. BRYANT PARK, MANHATTAN

B D F M 42nd St.-Bryant Park

A postage stamp compared to the City's other great parks, this midtown park is an oasis for migrating birds among Manhattan's skyscrapers.

WHERE TO GO: The herbaceous borders and the southeast corner.

BIRDS TO SEE: Upland birds.

3. STATEN ISLAND FERRY

4 5 Bowling Green **1** South Ferry, **SIR** St. George

The ferry is a great vantage point for viewing birds in New York Harbor.

WHERE TO GO: It's a short walk from the Manhattan stops to Whitehall Ferry Terminal at 4 South Street, where you can board the ferry for free. A round trip is about one hour. The ferry is a five-minute walk to the Staten Island Railway, which can take you on all-day adventures, with a fair amount of walking, to top birding spots in the City's greenest borough, such as Great Kills Park, Wolfe's Pond Park, and Conference House Park.

BIRDS TO SEE: Seabirds, waterfowl, and wading birds.

4. PROSPECT PARK, BROOKLYN

Q B S Prospect Park

With 526 acres of woods, meadowlands, and a manmade waterway flowing into a large lake, Prospect Park is Brooklyn's major refuge for birds. On a peak day during spring migration, nearly 100 species have been spotted.

WHERE TO GO: Enter at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue. Cross the park drive. With the Audubon Center at the Boathouse to your left, follow the path north across Binnin Bridge, then left along the Lullwater. Passing under Terrace Bridge, continue west to the Peninsula, then down to the tip, a great spot for viewing wintering waterfowl.

BIRDS TO SEE: Upland birds, grassland birds, wading birds, and waterfowl.

5. JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE, QUEENS

A Broad Channel

Part of Gateway National Recreation Area, the refuge covers 9,000 acres of open bay, salt marsh, mudflats, ponds, and upland fields and woods. With over 300 species recorded, it offers some of the best birding in North America.

WHERE TO GO: Head west on Noel Road to Cross Bay Boulevard, then walk north about one mile (or take the Q53 bus) to the Visitor Center. A short trail to the east goes through the North and South Gardens, where you can see songbirds in the spring and fall. Across the boulevard, follow the trail north to Big John's Pond for close-ups of wading birds from the viewing blind. Continue around East Pond to see shorebirds in May and mid-July to August.

BIRDS TO SEE: Shorebirds, waterfowl, wading birds, seabirds, marsh birds, upland birds, grassland birds, and raptors.

6. PELHAM BAY PARK, BRONX

6 Pelham Bay Park

The most accessible part is the Southern Zone, across Eastchester Bay from the rest of the park. Much of the park, the City's largest, remains relatively wild, with woods, meadows, marsh, and shoreline.

WHERE TO GO: Cross the walkway over I-95 and turn left into the park at the bottom of the ramp. Just inside the park is the Pelham Bay Nature Center. Walk southeast past the Aileen B. Ryan Recreational Complex to Huntington Woods to see songbirds during spring and fall migration. Closer to the water, marsh birds nest in an area of wet shrubland and meadow. Along the waterfront, the southern end of the stone wall makes a great blind for close-up views of wintering waterfowl.

BIRDS TO SEE: Upland birds, grassland birds, raptors, waterfowl, wading birds, shorebirds, marsh birds, and seabirds

7. VAN CORTLANDT PARK, BRONX

1 Van Cortlandt Park-242nd St.

Over half of the park's 1,146 acres offer good bird habitat, from deciduous forests, scrublands, and meadow to wetlands, brooks, and a manmade lake. The Southwest Zone, easiest to reach by subway, has prime birding north of Van Cortlandt Lake, around Tibbetts Brook and its wetlands.

WHERE TO GO: Enter at West 242nd Street and follow the path north of the Stadium toward the Golf House (open during the warm months, with restrooms). Take Putnam Trail north, then follow the John Kieran Nature Trail along Van Cortlandt Lake to Tibbetts Brook. Cross and go north through freshwater wetlands, then take the first path on the left across the wooden footbridge and loop back to the eastern edge of the Parade Ground.

BIRDS TO SEE: Upland birds, grassland birds, wading birds, and waterfowl.

For more detailed information, go to www.nycaudubon.org/go-birding



NEW YORK CITY IS FOR THE BIRDS

From Central Park to Jamaica Bay, New York City boasts some of the very best birding in the United States. Over 300 species have been recorded in the five boroughs.

The City owes its rich birdlife to a lucky confluence of location and habitat. Situated at a pivotal point in the Atlantic Flyway, it is a major migratory stopover. Also, many species breed in the five boroughs.

Birds that migrate through or nest in New York City—as well as those that spend the winter or live here year round—find food and safety in parks, natural areas, and the remaining natural shorelines and islands around the harbor.

Many of these prime birding spots are just a subway ride away. You can even see birds from elevated trains. This guide will get you started birding on the MTA.



BIRDING BY THE CLOCK

Early morning and late afternoon to dusk are the best times to look for songbirds, particularly in spring when the birds are actively singing. Larger birds such as shorebirds, wading birds, and raptors are often active throughout the day.

BIRD SAFELY!

Bird with a friend. Many birding spots in City parks are lightly visited. Even in the busiest places,

such as Central Park, it is best to bird with at least one other person.

Watch for speeding cyclists. When walking along multi-use trails, be alert for cyclists. Don't stop on bicycle paths to look at birds.

Avoid poison ivy and prepare for insects. Long pants are recommended. In the summer, expect mosquitos near ponds, marshes, and sheltered areas.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- NYC Audubon's online guide to birding in New York City: www.nycaudubon.org/go-birding
- *The New York City Audubon Society Guide to Finding Birds in the Metropolitan Area*, by Marcia T. Fowle and Paul Kerlinger
- *Field Guide to the Natural World of New York City*, by Leslie Day

BEST BIRDING BETS BY THE SEASON



WINTER

Waterfowl at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Pelham Bay Park, Staten Island Ferry, and the lakes in Prospect, Central, and Van Cortlandt Parks. Waterbirds such as ducks, geese, loons, and sandpipers on NYC Audubon's Winter Ecocruises with NY Water Taxi (www.nywatertaxi.com for details).



SPRING

Migrating songbirds in Central Park, Prospect Park, Van Cortlandt Park and other City parks. Migrating shorebirds and songbirds at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge.



SUMMER

Migrating shorebirds at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. Nesting wading birds on NYC Audubon Summer Ecocruises with NY Water Taxi (www.nywatertaxi.com for details). Fledgling red-tailed hawks and peregrine falcons throughout the City.



FALL

Migrating songbirds and hawks in Central Park, Prospect Park, Van Cortlandt Park, and other City parks. Migrating songbirds at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge.

NEW YORK CITY BIRDS NEED YOUR HELP

Hundreds of bird species are at risk.

In New York City and nationwide, birds face multiple threats: ongoing habitat loss, a warming climate, and collisions with glass that kill 90,000 birds a year in the City alone. A third of the more than 300 species that spend all or part of the year in New York City are species of conservation concern.

The City's last wild places are a lifeline for birds.

New York City is a major stopover on the Atlantic Flyway. To survive, migrating birds—and species that live here year round—need the forests, grasslands, wetlands, and natural shorelines that remain throughout the five boroughs.

Join NYC Audubon in protecting birds. The only citywide organization dedicated to birds and their habitat, we monitor bird populations, restore natural areas, bring the joy of nature to New Yorkers, and lead the effort to protect the City's last wild places. Find out what you can do at www.nycaudubon.org.

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