BIRDS OF NEW YORK CITY
Discover some of the over 300 species to be found in the five boroughs

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.

Grassland Birds.

Marine Birds.

Seabirds.

Wading Birds.

Waterfowl.

Shorebirds.

Marsh Birds.

Raptors.

Upland Birds.

By The Season

Spring

Summer

Fall

Winter

Best Birding Bets

From Central Park to Jamaica Bay, New York City offers 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 the confluence of the Atlantic and Hudson rivers, the City is a major stopover point for birds migrating between the northern and southern hemispheres. In addition, the City's diverse range of habitats provides a home for a variety of bird species, from the Arctic to the tropics.

Birding in New York City can be enjoyed year-round, but certain species are most commonly seen during specific seasons. For example, migratory birds that pass through the City in spring and fall are often the most easily observed. Winter is also a great time to bird in New York City, as many birds seek shelter in the City's parks and urban areas.

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 habitat. Established birding hotspots include Central Park, Prospect Park, Van Cortlandt Park, and Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. For more information, see the guide to Finding Birds in the Metropolitan Area by Fowle and Kerlinger.

For More Information

www.nycaudubon.org/go-birding

Guide to Finding Birds in the Metropolitan Area

Fowle and Kerlinger

Date: 12/06/2008

Photography: © Francois Portmann, LILIBIRDS

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 afternoons 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 step on bicycle paths to look at birds.

Avoid poison ivy and prepare for insects. Wear light-colored clothing, and long pants are recommended. In the summer, expect mosquito 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 Marcus T. Fowler and Paul Kerlinger
• Fold Guide to the Natural World of New York City, by Leslie Day

BIRDS OF NEW YORK CITY

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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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.

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, greese, loons, and sandpipers on NYC Audubon’s Winter Ecocruises with NY Water Taxi (www.nywatertaxi.com for details). Fledgling red-tailed hawks and peregrine falcons throughout the City.

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 shorebirds at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge.

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