

BIRDS of the OUTER BANKS

Over 400 species of birds have been sighted within Cape Hatteras National Seashore and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. This impressive number is due to several factors, which include: the rich diversity of habitats; the fact that the ocean off the Banks is biologically rich, in part because of the mixing of subtropical waters from the south with the temperate waters from the mid-Atlantic; and the limited extent of land, which tends to concentrate vagrants. In spite of its rich potential, the Banks is actually underbirded. In fact, sometimes a visiting birder discovers a species that has never been recorded in this area before.

The area covered by this list includes all of Cape Hatteras National Seashore, from Nags Head south to Ocracoke village, to include Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. Also included is the Fort Raleigh National Historic Site on Roanoke Island. Note that the bar-graph statuses provided in this list are based on the sites where species are easiest to find. For instance, the statuses given for most waterfowl species are based on their abundances at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. Some resident landbird species that are easy to find at Fort Raleigh National Historic Site are much harder to find further south on the Banks, e.g. Brown-headed Nuthatch.

WHEN and WHERE

Birding is always exciting on the Outer Banks though the greatest variety of species occurs during spring and fall migrations. For those seeking out migratory shorebirds, the various inlet tidal flats, the ponds at Pea Island and Bodie Island, and the salt pond at Cape Hatteras Point offer the greatest concentrations. However, the ponds at Pea Island and Bodie Island offer the greatest variety, and typically the best chance of seeing one of the rarer species.

Landbird migration in fall can be excellent, but typically only after strong cold fronts. The best areas to look for these migrants is along the dikes at Pea Island; the northern tip of Pea Island, near the Oregon Inlet bridge; and at Fort Raleigh, especially in and around the Elizabethan Gardens and along the section of the hiking trail that ends at Croatan Sound.

In winter, ocean-watching is generally best from Cape Hatteras northward. Occasionally in winter, especially in severe weather, Cape Hatteras Point may be almost blanketed with gulls, providing the opportunity to see several of the rarer species. Often in late May, impressive numbers of pelagic birds—storm-petrels, shearwaters, jaegers—may be seen in northward migration passing just off the tip of Cape Hatteras Point.

Even if you visit the Outer Banks during a slower period, don't forget that exciting birds can turn up any time.

ABUNDANCE DESIGNATIONS

- COMMON:** Certain to be found in proper habitat
FAIRLY COMMON: Will usually be found
UNCOMMON: Present, but will often be missed
OCCASIONAL: May require several visits to find
 * **RARE:** Not recorded every year
VERY RARE TO ACCIDENTAL: Found less often than five times a decade. See separate list at end of checklist

GEESE & DUCKS

- Snow Goose
- "Blue" Snow Goose
- Ross's Goose
- Brant
- Canada Goose
- Mute Swan
- Tundra Swan
- Wood Duck
- Blue-winged Teal
- Northern Shoveler
- Gadwall
- Eurasian Wigeon
- American Wigeon
- Mallard
- American Black Duck
- Northern Pintail
- Green-winged Teal
- "Common" Green-winged Teal
- Canvasback
- Redhead
- Ring-necked Duck
- Greater Scaup
- Lesser Scaup
- King Eider
- Common Eider
- Harlequin Duck
- Surf Scoter
- White-winged Scoter
- Black Scoter
- Long-tailed Duck
- Bufflehead
- Common Goldeneye
- Hooded Merganser
- Common Merganser
- Red-breasted Merganser
- Ruddy Duck

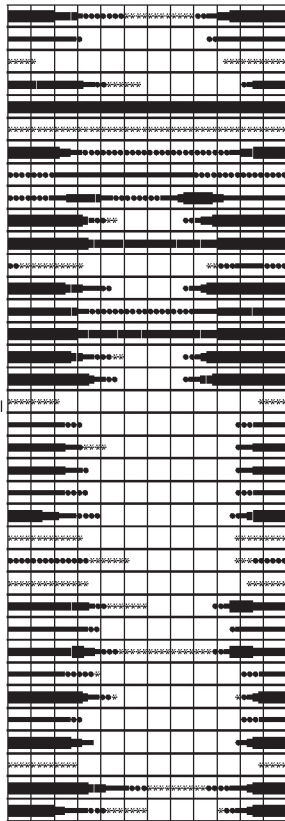
GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

- Northern Bobwhite

GREBES

- Pied-billed Grebe
- Horned Grebe
- Red-necked Grebe
- Eared Grebe
- Western Grebe

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DOVES

- Rock Pigeon
- Eurasian Collared-Dove
- White-winged Dove
- Mourning Dove

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CUCKOOS

- Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- Black-billed Cuckoo



NIGHTJARS

- Common Nighthawk
- Chuck-will's-widow



SWIFTS

- Chimney Swift



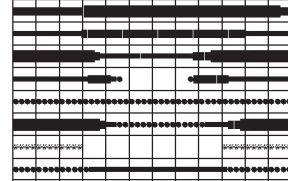
HUMMINGBIRDS

- Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- Rufous Hummingbird



RAILS & ALLIES

- Clapper Rail
- King Rail
- Virginia Rail
- Sora
- Common Gallinule
- American Coot
- Yellow Rail
- Black Rail



CRANES

- Sandhill Crane



AVOCETS & STILTS

- Black-necked Stilt
- American Avocet



OYSTERCATCHERS

- American Oystercatcher



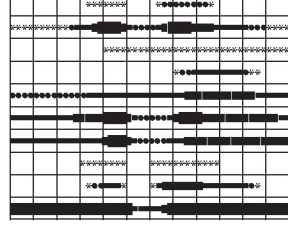
PLOVERS

- Black-bellied Plover
- American Golden-Plover
- Killdeer
- Semipalmated Plover
- Piping Plover
- Wilson's Plover



SANDPIPERS

- Upland Sandpiper
- Whimbrel
- Long-billed Curlew
- Hudsonian Godwit
- Marbled Godwit
- Ruddy Turnstone
- Red Knot
- Ruff
- Stilt Sandpiper
- Sanderling

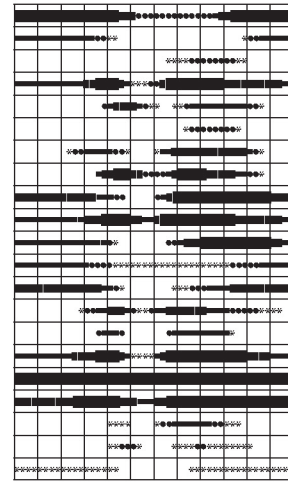


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SANDPIPERS (CON'T)

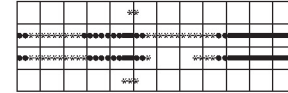
- Dunlin
- Purple Sandpiper
- Baird's Sandpiper
- Least Sandpiper
- White-rumped Sandpiper
- Buff-breasted Sandpiper
- Pectoral Sandpiper
- Semipalmated Sandpiper
- Western Sandpiper
- Short-billed Dowitcher
- Long-billed Dowitcher
- American Woodcock
- Wilson's Snipe
- Spotted Sandpiper
- Solitary Sandpiper
- Lesser Yellowlegs
- Willet
- Greater Yellowlegs
- Wilson's Phalarope
- Red-necked Phalarope
- Red Phalarope

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JAEGERS

- South Polar Skua
- Pomarine Jaeger
- Parasitic Jaeger
- Long-tailed Jaeger



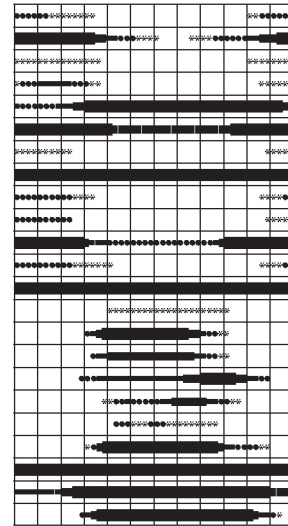
ALCIDS

- Dovekie
- Razorbill



GULLS & TERNS

- Black-legged Kittiwake
- Bonaparte's Gull
- Black-headed Gull
- Little Gull
- Laughing Gull
- Ring-billed Gull
- California Gull
- Herring Gull
- Iceland Gull
- "Thayer's" Iceland Gull
- Lesser Black-backed Gull
- Glaucous Gull
- Great Black-backed Gull
- Sooty Tern
- Least Tern
- Gull-billed Tern
- Caspian Tern
- Black Tern
- Roseate Tern
- Common Tern
- Forster's Tern
- Royal Tern
- Sandwich Tern



SKIMMERS

- Black Skimmer

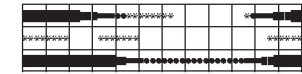


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LOONS

- Red-throated Loon
- Pacific Loon
- Common Loon

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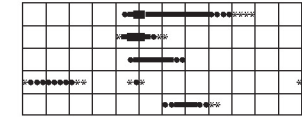
STORM-PETRELS

- Wilson's Storm-Petrel
- Leach's Storm-Petrel



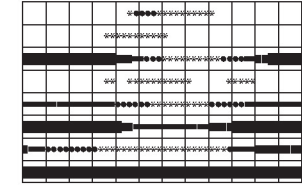
SHEARWATERS

- Cory's Shearwater
- Sooty Shearwater
- Great Shearwater
- Manx Shearwater
- Audubon's Shearwater



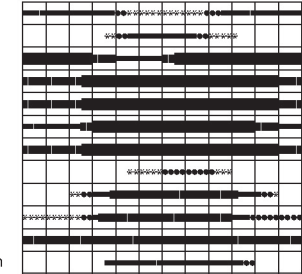
PELICANS & ALLIES

- Magnificent Frigatebird
- Brown Booby
- Northern Gannet
- Anhinga
- Great Cormorant
- Double-crested Cormorant
- American White Pelican
- Brown Pelican



BITTERNS & HERONS

- American Bittern
- Least Bittern
- Great Blue Heron
- Great Egret
- Snowy Egret
- Little Blue Heron
- Tricolored Heron
- Reddish Egret
- Cattle Egret
- Green Heron
- Black-crowned Night-Heron
- Yellow-crowned Night-Heron



IBISES

- White Ibis
- Glossy Ibis



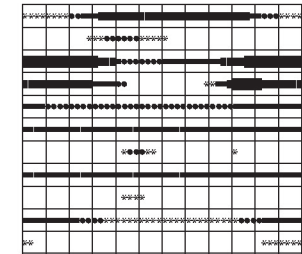
VULTURES

- Black Vulture
- Turkey Vulture



HAWKS & EAGLES

- Osprey
- Swallow-tailed Kite
- Northern Harrier
- Sharp-shinned Hawk
- Cooper's Hawk
- Bald Eagle
- Mississippi Kite
- Red-shouldered Hawk
- Broad-winged Hawk
- Red-tailed Hawk
- Rough-legged Hawk

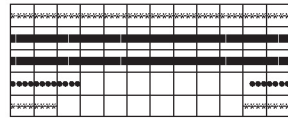


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OWLS

- Barn Owl
- Eastern Screech-Owl
- Great Horned Owl
- Short-eared Owl
- Northern Saw-whet Owl

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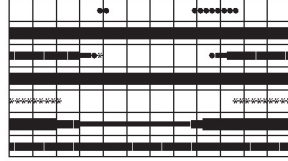
KINGFISHERS

- Belted Kingfisher



WOODPECKERS

- Red-headed Woodpecker
- Red-bellied Woodpecker
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
- Downy Woodpecker
- Hairy Woodpecker
- Northern Flicker
- Pileated Woodpecker



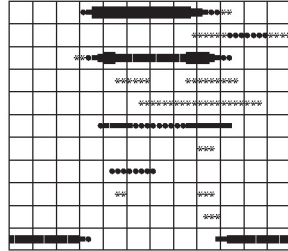
FALCONS

- American Kestrel
- Merlin
- Peregrine Falcon



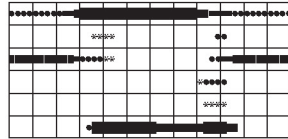
FLYCATCHERS

- Great Crested Flycatcher
- Western Kingbird
- Eastern Kingbird
- Gray Kingbird
- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
- Eastern Wood-Pewee
- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
- Acadian Flycatcher
- Alder/Willow Flycatcher
- Least Flycatcher
- Eastern Phoebe



VIREOS

- White-eyed Vireo
- Yellow-throated Vireo
- Blue-headed Vireo
- Philadelphia Vireo
- Warbling Vireo
- Red-eyed Vireo



JAYS & CROWS

- Blue Jay
- American Crow
- Fish Crow



CHICKADEES & TITMICE

- Carolina Chickadee
- Tufted Titmouse



LARKS

- Horned Lark

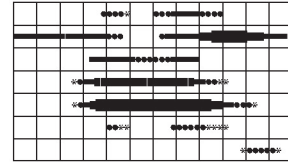


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SWALLOWS

- ___ Bank Swallow
- ___ Tree Swallow
- ___ N. Rough-winged Swallow
- ___ Purple Martin
- ___ Barn Swallow
- ___ Cliff Swallow
- ___ Cave Swallow

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KINGLETS

- ___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- ___ Golden-crowned Kinglet



WAXWINGS

- ___ Cedar Waxwing



NUTHATCHES

- ___ Red-breasted Nuthatch
- ___ Brown-headed Nuthatch



CREEPERS

- ___ Brown Creeper



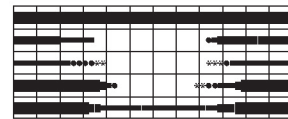
GNATCATCHERS

- ___ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher



WRENS

- ___ Carolina Wren
- ___ House Wren
- ___ Winter Wren
- ___ Sedge Wren
- ___ Marsh Wren



MIMICS

- ___ Gray Catbird
- ___ Brown Thrasher
- ___ Northern Mockingbird



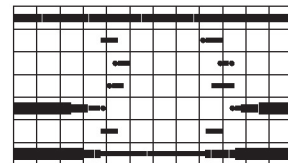
STARLINGS

- ___ European Starling



THRUSHES & ALLIES

- ___ Eastern Bluebird
- ___ Veery
- ___ Gray-cheeked Thrush
- ___ Swainson's Thrush
- ___ Hermit Thrush
- ___ Wood Thrush
- ___ American Robin



OLD WORLD SPARROWS

- ___ House Sparrow



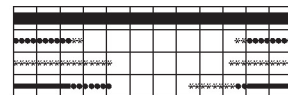
PIPITS

- ___ American Pipit



FINCHES

- ___ House Finch
- ___ Purple Finch
- ___ Pine Siskin
- ___ American Goldfinch



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LONGSPURS & SNOW BUNTING

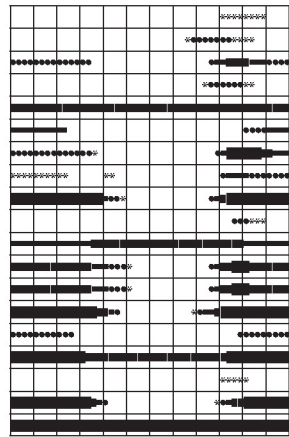
- ___ Lapland Longspur
- ___ Snow Bunting

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SPARROWS & ALLIES

- ___ Grasshopper Sparrow
- ___ Lark Sparrow
- ___ Chipping Sparrow
- ___ Clay-colored Sparrow
- ___ Field Sparrow
- ___ Fox Sparrow
- ___ Dark-eyed Junco
- ___ White-crowned Sparrow
- ___ White-throated Sparrow
- ___ Vesper Sparrow
- ___ Seaside Sparrow
- ___ Nelson's Sparrow
- ___ Saltmarsh Sparrow
- ___ Savannah Sparrow
- ___ "Ipswich" Savannah Sparrow
- ___ Song Sparrow
- ___ Lincoln's Sparrow
- ___ Swamp Sparrow
- ___ Eastern Towhee



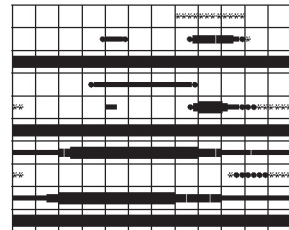
CHATS

- ___ Yellow-breasted Chat



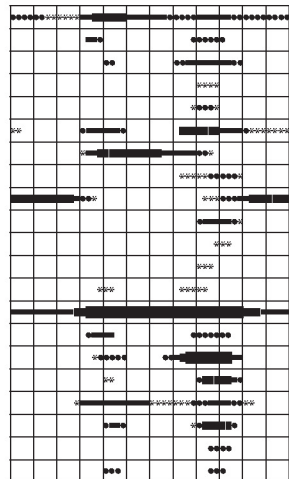
BLACKBIRDS & ORIOLES

- ___ Yellow-headed Blackbird
- ___ Bobolink
- ___ Eastern Meadowlark
- ___ Orchard Oriole
- ___ Baltimore Oriole
- ___ Red-winged Blackbird
- ___ Brown-headed Cowbird
- ___ Rusty Blackbird
- ___ Common Grackle
- ___ Boat-tailed Grackle



WARBLERS

- ___ Ovenbird
- ___ Worm-eating Warbler
- ___ Northern Waterthrush
- ___ Golden-winged Warbler
- ___ Blue-winged Warbler
- ___ Black-and-white Warbler
- ___ Prothonotary Warbler
- ___ Tennessee Warbler
- ___ Orange-crowned Warbler
- ___ Nashville Warbler
- ___ Connecticut Warbler
- ___ Mourning Warbler
- ___ Kentucky Warbler
- ___ Common Yellowthroat
- ___ Hooded Warbler
- ___ American Redstart
- ___ Cape May Warbler
- ___ Northern Parula
- ___ Magnolia Warbler
- ___ Bay-breasted Warbler
- ___ Blackburnian Warbler

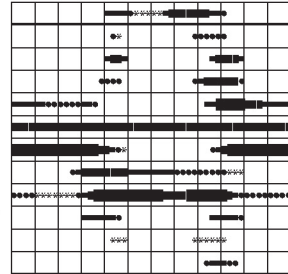


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WARBLERS (CON'T)

- ___ Yellow Warbler
- ___ Chestnut-sided Warbler
- ___ Blackpoll Warbler
- ___ Black-throated Blue Warbler
- ___ Palm Warbler
- ___ Pine Warbler
- ___ Yellow-rumped Warbler
- ___ Yellow-throated Warbler
- ___ Prairie Warbler
- ___ Black-throated Green Warbler
- ___ Canada Warbler
- ___ Wilson's Warbler

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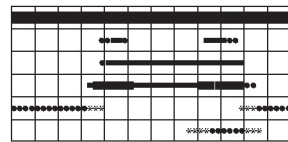
TANAGERS

- ___ Summer Tanager
- ___ Scarlet Tanager



CARDINALS & ALLIES

- ___ Northern Cardinal
- ___ Rose-breasted Grosbeak
- ___ Blue Grosbeak
- ___ Indigo Bunting
- ___ Painted Bunting
- ___ Dickcissel



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FIELD NOTES

VERY RARE / ACCIDENTAL SPECIES

- Black-bellied Whistling-Duck
- Fulvous Whistling-Duck
- Greater White-fronted Goose
- Cackling Goose
- Garganey
- Cinnamon Teal
- White-cheeked Pintail
- Ring-necked Pheasant
- Clark's Grebe
- Common Ground-Dove
- Antillean Nighthawk
- Eastern Whip-poor-will
- Common Swift
- Anna's Hummingbird
- Purple Gallinule
- Pacific Golden-Plover
- Common Ringed Plover
- Snowy Plover
- "Eurasian" Whimbrel
- Bar-tailed Godwit
- Black-tailed Godwit
- Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
- Curlew Sandpiper
- Little Stint
- Spotted Redshank
- Great Skua
- Common Murre
- Thick-billed Murre
- Atlantic Puffin
- Sabine's Gull
- Franklin's Gull
- Heermann's Gull
- Common Gull
- Bridled Tern
- White-winged Tern
- Arctic Tern
- "Cayenne" Tern
- White-tailed Tropicbird
- Red-billed Tropicbird
- Yellow-nosed Albatross
- White-faced Storm-Petrel
- Band-rumped Storm-Petrel
- Northern Fulmar
- Black-capped Petrel
- Wood Stork
- Masked Booby
- "Great White Heron"
- White-faced Ibis
- Roseate Spoonbill
- Golden Eagle
- Northern Goshawk
- Swainson's Hawk
- Snowy Owl
- Burrowing Owl
- Long-eared Owl
- Crested Caracara
- Ash-throated Flycatcher
- Tropical Kingbird
- Fork-tailed Flycatcher
- Olive-sided Flycatcher
- Say's Phoebe
- Vermilion Flycatcher
- Black-whiskered Vireo
- Loggerhead Shrike
- Northern Shrike
- Common Raven
- White-breasted Nuthatch
- Bewick's Wren
- Sage Thrasher
- Northern Wheatear
- Sprague's Pipit
- Evening Grosbeak
- Common Redpoll
- Red Crossbill
- White-winged Crossbill
- Chestnut-collared Longspur
- Thick-billed Longspur
- Lark Bunting
- American Tree Sparrow
- Harris's Sparrow
- LeConte's Sparrow
- Western Meadowlark
- Shiny Cowbird
- Brewer's Blackbird
- Louisiana Waterthrush
- Swainson's Warbler
- Cerulean Warbler
- Black-throated Gray Warbler
- Townsend's Warbler
- Painted Redstart
- Western Tanager

Date: _____

Observers: _____

Location: _____

Please report unusual sightings at the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center or at the Hatteras Island Ranger Station.

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Please Visit Our Websites At:
Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge
<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/pea-island/>

Cape Hatteras National Seashore
<http://www.nps.gov/caha>

