

Beach & Beyond Birding Worcester County - Maryland



Thanks to our ecological diversity, Worcester County hosts a spectacular variety of birds, both resident and migratory -- over 350 species have been recorded.

From our Atlantic coastline across the Pocomoke Forest and down our scenic Pocomoke River, we are home to pelicans and pewees, kingbirds and cuckoos, herons, harriers, and eagles.

The nature of the county, with its coastal habitat and temperate climate, puts Worcester in the northernmost breeding range of several southern birds; although not found every year, there are recent breeding records of the Gull-billed Tern, Wilson's Plover, Brown Pelican, and Swainson's Warbler.

The southernmost winter sightings of the Common and King Eider, Harlequin Duck, Purple Sandpiper, and Great Cormorant, often occur at the rock jetties of the Ocean City Inlet.

If you're looking for the Yellow-throated Warbler, Blue Grosbeak, or Brown-headed Nuthatch... Boat-tailed Grackles, Horned Larks, or Peregrine Falcons... a Willet, or Chuck-will's Widow-- your best chances in Maryland are here in Worcester County.

Birding in Worcester County is a chance to experience the unspoiled wilderness which attracts, sustains and protects so much natural life. Within a radius of just a few miles exist the unique-- yet easily accessible--worlds of a barrier island, a cypress swamp, centuries-old forest, tidal wetlands, and secluded fields.

Stop anywhere along the road and you'll be able to observe an abundance of birds which inhabit the immediate vicinity. State and national parks in the county offer camping, nature trails and guided tours, inviting you to share the beauty of our native landscape.

The following pages are simple maps lists of the birds you might see here and how often they are usually seen in this area.

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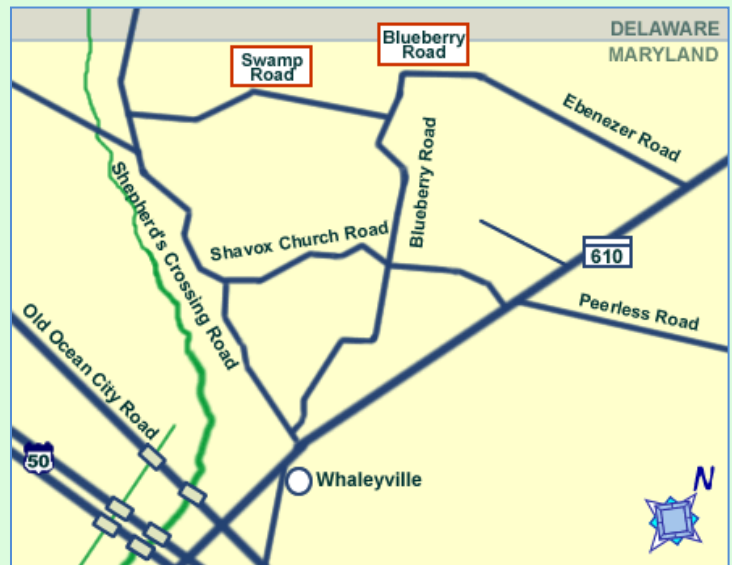
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Prime Birding Spots

Wildlands Conservation Area

Swamp Road and Blueberry Road in Northern Worcester County provide an opportunity to look for unusual Warblers in the spring. Swainson's Warbler has bred sporadically in this area during the last 10 years. The swamp itself, which is impenetrable and dangerous due to quicksand, supports all bottomland birds and acts as a "trap" for birds migrating north in spring.



West Ocean City & Griffin Ponds

A fantastic variety of waterfowl congregate here. Look for Canvasbacks in winter, Black-crowned Night Herons year-round. During fall and spring migrations, eight to ten species of puddle ducks can be seen; the Fulvous Whistling Duck and the Anhinga have been sighted in recent years. These ponds also attract the Pied-billed Grebe and many herons and egrets.



Birding On Assateague Island

The 30-mile stretch of beach, scrub, salt marsh and mud flats (extending into Virginia) is the refuge of the brown Pelican (at the northern tip of their breeding range), uncommon oystercatchers, ubiquitous gulls and the endangered Piping Plover. An unspoiled wilderness and a major migratory stop-over, Assateague offers new bird watching discoveries throughout the year.

Birders should be warned, that mosquitoes and biting flies can make for uncomfortable conditions, especially in the summer, and that poison ivy is pervasive. The Assateague Island National Seashore maintains camping facilities year-round, marked nature trails, and conducts guided tours during the summer months.



Ocean City - Downtown & Offshore

Inlet

During the winter, the inlet and rock jetties attract a variety of diving ducks, eiders and shorebirds, including Purple Sandpipers and Ruddy Turnstones; also various gulls such as Little Gull, Bonaparte's Gull and occasional white winged gulls.

4th Street Mud Flats

4th Street on the bayside in Ocean City overlooks mud flats which are a popular stop-over for many waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls and other waterbirds. The parking lot and boardwalk along the water make it a great vantage point for observing the birds. Look for American Oystercatchers in numbers and a large colony of Black Skimmers, as well as Common and Least Terns.



Three Crossings

Massey's Crossing, Purnell Crossing & Whiton Crossing are great spots to put in a canoe along the Pocomoke River which provides some of the best woodland birding areas in the area.



Pocomoke River & Pocomoke Cypress Swamp

The Pocomoke River meanders through one of the northernmost cypress swamps in the country. More than 27 species of mammals, 29 species of reptiles, 14 species of amphibians, and 172 species of birds have been seen in the wetlands that border the Pocomoke.

Wooded campsites and boat rentals are available at Pocomoke River State Park, and boat cruises leave from Snow Hill during the warm seasons. Nature lovers can follow the boardwalk trails through the cypress swamps at the Nassawango Creek Nature Preserve or the Pocomoke City Nature and Exercise Trail. The river presents a challenge to both novice and expert fishermen looking for perch, gar, sunfish, pickerel, catfish, crappie, bluegill, herring, bass and croakers.



Georges Island Landing, Taylor's Landing & Public Landing

These three sites offer parking and access to the western shoreline of Chincoteague Bay. Inland, great flocks of Snow Geese settle in the open fields.



Bird Species

Blackbirds & Finches

Bird	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (Jun-Jul)	Fall (Aug-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)	Legend
Bobolink	o		u		Abundant - A species which is very numerous Common - Certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat Uncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen Occasional - Seen only a few time during a season Rare - Seen at intervals of 2 or more years * Nesting has occurred in the county within the past 5 years.
Red-winged Blackbird*	a	a	a	a	
Eastern Meadowlark*	c	c	c	c	
Yellow-headed Blackbird	r		r	r	
Rusty Blackbird			r	o	
Boat-tailed Grackle*	c	c	c	c	
Common Grackle*	a	a	a	a	
Brown-headed Cowbird*	c	c	c	u	
Orchard Oriole*	c	c	o		
Northern Oriole	o	o	o		
Purple Finch	r		o	r	
House Finch*	c	c	c	c	
Red Crossbill				r	
Pine Siskin	o		o	o	
American Goldfinch*	c	c	c	c	
Evening Grosbeak	r			r	
House Sparrow*	a	a	a	a	

Gannet, Pelicans & Cormorants

Bird	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (Jun-Jul)	Fall (Aug-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)
Northern Gannet	u		u	c
Brown Pelican*	u	c	u	
Great Cormorant	r		r	r
Double-crested Cormorant	c	u	a	c

Doves, Cuckoos, Owls, Swifts & Hummingbirds

Bird	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (Jun-Jul)	Fall (Aug-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)	Legend
Rock Dove*	c	c	c	c	Abundant - A species which is very numerous Common - Certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat Uncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen Occasional - Seen only a few time during a season Rare - Seen at intervals of 2 or more years * Nesting has occurred in the county within the past 5 years.
Mourning Dove*	c	c	c	c	
Black-billed Cuckoo*	o	r	o		
Yellow-billed Cuckoo*	c	c	c		
Barn Owl*	o	o	o	o	
Eastern Screech-Owl*	c	c	c	c	
Great Horned Owl*	c	c	c	c	
Long-eared Owl				r	
Short-eared Owl			o	o	
Northern Saw-whet Owl				o	
Common Nighthawk*	u	r	u		
Whip-poor-will*	u	c			
Chuck-will's-widow*	c	c			
Chimney Swift*	c	c	c		
Ruby-throated Hummingbird*	u	c	u		
Belted Kingfisher*	u	r	c	u	

Larks, Swallows, Jays & Crows

Bird	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (Jun-Jul)	Fall (Aug-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)
Horned Lark*	c	c	c	c
Purple Martin*	c	u	u	
Tree Swallow*	a	c	a	o
Northern Rough-winged Swallow*		o	u	
Bank Swallow	r	r	r	
Cliff Swallow	r			r
Barn Swallow*	a	a	a	
Blue Jay*	c	c	c	c
American Crow*	a	a	a	a
Fish Crow*	c	c	c	c

Vultures, Hawks & Falcons

Bird	Spring (Mar- May)	Summer (Jun- Jul)	Fall (Aug- Nov)	Winter (Dec- Feb)	Legend
Black Vulture	u	u	u	u	Abundant - A species which is very numerous Common - Certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat Uncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen Occasional - Seen only a few time during a season Rare - Seen at intervals of 2 or more years * Nesting has occurred in the county within the past 5 years.
Turkey Vulture	a	a	a	a	
Osprey*	c	c	c		
Bald Eagle*	u	u	u	u	
Northern Harrier*	c	r	c	c	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	u		c	c	
Cooper's Hawk*	r	r	u	r	
Red-shouldered Hawk*	u	u	u	u	
Broad-winged Hawk*	r	r	r		
Rough-legged Hawk*				r	
Golden Eagle			r		
American Kestrel*	c	r	c	c	
Merlin	o		u	o	
Peregrine Falcon*	u	u	c	u	

Loons & Grebes

Bird	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (Jun-Jul)	Fall (Aug-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)
Red-throated Loon	u		u	c
Common Loon	c	r	c	c
Pied-billed Grebe	c	u	c	c
Horned Grebe	c		c	c
Red-necked Grebe	r		r	r

Titmice, Nuthatches & Wrens

Bird	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (Jun-Jul)	Fall (Aug-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)	Legend
Carolina Chickadee*	c	c	c	c	Abundant - A species which is very numerous Common - Certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat Uncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen Occasional - Seen only a few time during a season Rare - Seen at intervals of 2 or more years * Nesting has occurred in the county within the past 5 years.
Tufted Titmouse*	c	c	c	c	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	o		o	o	
White-breasted Nuthatch*	u	u	u	u	
Brown-headed Nuthatch*	u	u	u	u	
Brown Creeper*	u	u	u	u	
Carolina Wren*	c	c	c	c	
House Wren*	c	c	c	r	
Winter Wren	u		c	u	
Sedge Wren			r		
Marsh Wren*	u	u	u	o	

Bitterns, Herons & Ibises

Bird	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (Jun-Jul)	Fall (Aug-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)
American Bittern	r		r	r
Least Bittern*	r	r	r	
Great Blue Heron	c	u	c	c
Great Egret*	c	a	c	u
Snowy Egret*	c	a	a	o
Little Blue Heron*	c	c	c	o
Tricolored Heron*	u	c	c	
Cattle Egret*	u	c	c	
Green-backed Heron*	u	u	u	
Black-crowned Night-Heron*	u	c	u	u
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron*	o	o	o	
White Ibis		r	r	
Glossy Ibis*	c	a	c	r

Shearwaters & Storm Petrels

Bird	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (Jun-Jul)	Fall (Aug-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)	Legend
Northern Fulmar				r	Abundant - A species which is very numerous Common - Certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat Uncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen Occasional - Seen only a few time during a season Rare - Seen at intervals of 2 or more years * Nesting has occurred in the county within the past 5 years.
Cory's Shearwater		r	c		
Greater Shearwater	r	c			
Sooty Shearwater	r				
Manx Shearwater		r			
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	r	c			
Leach's Storm-Petrel		u			

Quails, Rails & Coot

Bird	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (Jun-Jul)	Fall (Aug-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)
Northern Bobwhite*	c	c	c	c
Black Rail*	r	r	r	
Clapper Rail*	c	c	c	u
King Rail*	u	r	u	o
Virginia Rail*	u	u	u	u
Sora	r		r	r
Common Moorhen*	r	r	o	
American Coot	u	r	c	u

Waxwings, Shrikes & Starling

Bird	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (Jun-Jul)	Fall (Aug-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)
Water Pipit	o		o	o
Cedar Waxwing*	u	o	c	u
Loggerhead Shrike	r		r	r
European Starling*	a	a	a	a

Plovers & Sandpipers

Bird	Spring (Mar- May)	Summer (Jun- Jul)	Fall (Aug- Nov)	Winter (Dec- Feb)	Legend
Black-bellied Plover	c	c	c	u	Abundant - A species which is very numerous
Lesser Golden-Plover	r		u	r	
Wilson's Plover			r	r	Common - Certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat
Semipalmated Plover	a	a	c	r	Uncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen
Piping Plover*	u	u	u		Occasional - Seen only a few time during a season
Killdeer*	c	c	c	c	Rare - Seen at intervals of 2 or more years * Nesting has occurred in the county within the past 5 years.
American Oystercatcher*	c	c	c	c	
American Avocet			r		
Greater Yellowlegs	u	c	c	u	
Solitary Sandpiper	o	o	o		
Willet*	c	a	u	r	
Spotted Sandpiper	c	u	u	r	
Upland Sandpiper	r	r	r		
Whimbrel	c	c	u	r	
Hudsonian Godwit			o		
Marbled Godwit			o	r	
Ruddy Turnstone	a	c	c	c	
Red Knot	c	c	u	r	
Sanderling	a	a	c	u	
Semipalmated Sanderling	a	a	c		
Western Sandpiper	r	c	c	o	
Least Sandpiper	a	c	c	o	
White-rumped Sandpiper	c	u	u		
Pectoral Sandpiper	r	c	c	r	
Purple Sandpiper	c		c	c	
Dunlin	a	o	a	a	
Curlew Sandpiper	r	r	r		
Stilt Sandpiper	r		r		
Buff-breasted Sandpiper			r		

Plovers & Sandpipers continued...

Bird	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (Jun-Jul)	Fall (Aug-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)	Legend
Ruff				r	A bundant - A species which is very numerous
Short-billed Dowitcher	a	a	c	o	C ommon - Certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat
Long-billed Dowitcher			r		U ncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen
Common Snipe	u	r	u	u	O ccasional - Seen only a few time during a season
American Woodcock*	u	u	u	u	R are - Seen at intervals of 2 or more years * Nesting has occurred in the county within the past 5 years.
Wilson's Phalarope	r		r		
Red-necked Phalarope	r		r		

Kinglets, Thrushes & Thrashers

Bird	Spring (Mar-May)	Summer (Jun-Jul)	Fall (Aug-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)
Golden-crowned Kinglet	c		c	c
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	c		c	c
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher*	c	c	c	
Eastern Bluebird*	c	c	c	c
Veery	r		u	
Gray-cheeked Thrush	o		u	
Swainson's Thrush	o		u	
Hermit Thrush	u		c	c
Wood Thrush*	u	c	u	
American Robin*	a	a	a	a
Gray Catbird*	c	c	c	u
Northern Mockingbird*	c	c	c	c
Brown Thrasher*	c	c	c	u

Tanagers & Sparrows

Bird	Spring (Mar- May)	Summer (Jun- Jul)	Fall (Aug- Nov)	Winter (Dec- Feb)	Legend
Summer Tanager*	c	c	r		Abundant - A species which is very numerous
Scarlet Tanager*	c	c	u		
Northern Cardinal	c	c	c	c	Common - Certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	u		u		Uncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen
Blue Grosbeak*	c	c	o		Occasional - Seen only a few time during a season
Indigo Bunting*	c	c	u		Rare - Seen at intervals of 2 or more years
Dickcissel			r	r	* Nesting has occurred in the county within the past 5 years.
Rufous-sided Towhee*	c	c	c	c	
American Tree Sparrow				r	
Chipping Sparrow*	c	c	c	r	
Clay-colored Sparrow			r	r	
Field Sparrow*	c	c	c	c	
Vesper Sparrow	r		r	r	
Lark Sparrow			r		
Savannah Sparrow	c	u	c	c	
Grasshopper Sparrow	u	u	r		
Sharp-tailed Sparrow*	o	u	u	u	
Seaside Sparrow*	c	c	c	o	
Fox Sparrow	u		u	u	
Song Sparrow*	c	c	c	c	
Lincoln's Sparrow	r		r		
Swamp Sparrow	c		c	c	
White-throated Sparrow	c		c	a	
White-crowned Sparrow	r		o	o	
Dark-eyed Junco	u		c	c	
Lapland Longspur				o	
Snow Bunting	o		u	u	

Vireos & Wood Warblers

Bird	Spring (Mar- May)	Summer (Jun- Jul)	Fall (Aug- Nov)	Winter (Dec- Feb)	Legend
White-eyed Vireo*	c	c	c		Abundant - A species which is very numerous Common - Certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat Uncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen Occasional - Seen only a few time during a season Rare - Seen at intervals of 2 or more years * Nesting has occurred in the county within the past 5 years.
Solitary Vireo	r		u		
Yellow-throated Vireo*	r	u			
Warbling Vireo			r		
Philadelphia Vireo*	r		r		
Red-eyed Vireo	c	c	c		
Blue-winged Warbler	u	r	u		
Golden-winged Warbler	r		r		
Tennessee Warbler			r		
Orange-crowned Warbler			r	r	
Nashville Warbler			r		
Northern Parula*	c	u	o		
Yellow Warbler*	c	c	r		
Chestnut-sided Warbler	r		r		
Magnolia Warbler	r		c		
Cape May Warbler	r		u		
Black-throated Blue Warbler	o		c		
Yellow-rumped Warbler	a		a	a	
Black-throated Green Warbler*	r	r	r		
Blackburnian Warbler	r		u		
Yellow-throated Warbler*	c	c	u		
Pine Warbler*	a	a	a	u	
Prairie Warbler*	c	c	c		
Palm Warbler	o		a	o	
Bay-breasted Warbler	r		r		
Blackpoll Warbler	u		u		
Cerulean Warbler	r		r		
Black-and-white Warbler*	u	u	c		
American Redstart	u	c	a		

Vireos & Wood Warblers continued...

Bird	Spring (Mar- May)	Summer (Jun- Jul)	Fall (Aug- Nov)	Winter (Dec- Feb)	Legend
Prothonotary Warbler	c	a			Abundant - A species which is very numerous
Worm-eating Warbler*	c	c	r		Common - Certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat
Swainson's Warbler*	r	r			Uncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen
Ovenbird	c	a	c		Occasional - Seen only a few time during a season
Northern Waterthrush	r		o		Rare - Seen at intervals of 2 or more years
Louisiana Waterthrush*	u	u	r		* Nesting has occurred in the county within the past 5 years.
Kentucky Warbler*	u	u	r		
Connecticut Warbler			r		
Mourning Warbler			r		
Common Yellowthroat*	a	a	a	u	
Hooded Warbler	c	c	u		
Wilson's Warbler			o		
Canada Warbler	r	r	r		
Yellow-crested Chat*	u	c	o	r	

Woodpeckers & Flycatchers

Bird	Spring (Mar- May)	Summer (Jun- Jul)	Fall (Aug- Nov)	<i>Winter (Dec- Feb)	Legend
Red-headed Woodpecker*	o	o	o	o	A bundant - A species which is very numerous
Red-bellied Woodpecker*	c	c	c	c	C ommon - Certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat
Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker	o		o	u	U ncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen
Downy Woodpecker*	c	c	c	c	O ccasional - Seen only a few time during a season
Hairy Woodpecker*	c	c	c	c	R are - Seen at intervals of 2 or more years
Pileated Woodpecker	u	u	u	u	* Nesting has occurred in the county within the past 5 years.
Northern Flicker*	c	c	a	c	
Olive-sided Flycatcher	r		r		
Eastern Wood-Pewee*	c	c	c		
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher			u		
Acadian Flycatcher*	c	c	c		
Willow Flycatcher		r			
Least Flycatcher	r			r	
Eastern Phoebe*	u	u	c	o	
Great Crested Flycatcher*	c	c	c		
Western Kingbird			r		
Eastern Kingbird*	a	a	c		

Titmice, Nuthatches & Wrens

Bird	Spring (Mar- May)	Summer (Jun- Jul)	Fall (Aug- Nov)	Winter (Dec- Feb)	Legend
Carolina Chickadee*	c	c	c	c	Abundant - A species which is very numerous Common - Certain to be seen or heard in suitable habitat Uncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen Occasional - Seen only a few time during a season Rare - Seen at intervals of 2 or more years * Nesting has occurred in the county within the past 5 years.
Tufted Titmouse*	c	c	c	c	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	o		o	o	
White-breasted Nuthatch*	u	u	u	u	
Brown-headed Nuthatch*	u	u	u	u	
Brown Creeper*	u	u	u	u	
Carolina Wren*	c	c	c	c	
House Wren*	c	c	c	r	
Winter Wren	u		c	u	
Sedge Wren			r		
Marsh Wren*	u	u	u	o	