

# The Birds of Central Park



## The Birds of Central Park

This checklist includes the 200 species of wild birds regularly seen in the Park since 1886. Eighty-one rare or historical species are listed separately at the end.

Typography is used to indicate status. **Bold** denotes birds that are more commonly seen or heard in the appropriate habitat and season, whether they are present **YEAR-ROUND** or are **Annual Migrants**. (Many migrants are common for only a few weeks each year.) **Bold** can reflect either abundance (House Sparrow) or conspicuousness (Mute Swan). *Infrequent* species are seen only every few years.

For example:

|                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>BLUE JAY</b>         | Year-round; more common     |
| AMERICAN KESTREL        | Year-round; less common     |
| <b>Baltimore Oriole</b> | Annual migrant; more common |
| Hooded Warbler          | Annual migrant; less common |
| <i>Marsh Wren</i>       | Infrequent                  |

Unless otherwise noted, migrants are seen in the Park while on their way to breeding or wintering grounds. For some species, spring migration begins as early as February; for others, fall migration begins in July. Many owls, ducks, and sparrows occur primarily in winter. *Flyovers* are rarely found in the Park itself.

The species order follows that of the 7th edition of the American Ornithologists' Union Check list (1998).

|   |                                                      |
|---|------------------------------------------------------|
| ✓ | <b>LOONS, GREBES, CORMORANTS</b>                     |
|   | Red-throated Loon <i>Flyover</i>                     |
|   | Common Loon <i>Mainly flyover</i>                    |
|   | Pied-billed Grebe                                    |
|   | <b>Double-crested Cormorant</b> <i>Occ. winters</i>  |
|   | <b>BITTERNS, HERONS, IBISES</b>                      |
|   | <i>American Bittern</i>                              |
|   | <b>GREAT BLUE HERON</b>                              |
|   | <b>Great Egret</b>                                   |
|   | Snowy Egret                                          |
|   | Green Heron <i>Has nested</i>                        |
|   | <b>Black-crowned Night-Heron</b> <i>Oft. winters</i> |
|   | <b>VULTURES</b>                                      |
|   | <i>Black Vulture</i> <i>Flyover</i>                  |
|   | Turkey Vulture <i>Flyover</i>                        |
|   | <b>WATERFOWL</b>                                     |
|   | Snow Goose <i>Mainly flyover</i>                     |
|   | <b>CANADA GOOSE</b>                                  |
|   | Brant <i>Mainly flyover</i>                          |
|   | <b>MUTE SWAN</b> <i>Nests</i>                        |
|   | Wood Duck <i>A few winter</i>                        |
|   | Gadwall                                              |
|   | <i>American Wigeon</i>                               |
|   | <b>American Black Duck</b> <i>Winters</i>            |
|   | <b>MALLARD</b> <i>Nests</i>                          |
|   | <b>Northern Shoveler</b>                             |
|   | <i>Northern Pintail</i>                              |
|   | Green-winged Teal                                    |
|   | Canvasback                                           |
|   | Ring-necked Duck                                     |

YEAR-ROUND • Annual Migrant • *Infrequent*

**Common** / Less Common



| ✓                        | <b>WATERFOWL....</b>          |                                 |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                          | Lesser Scaup                  |                                 |
|                          | <b>Bufflehead</b>             | <i>Winters</i>                  |
|                          | Hooded Merganser              |                                 |
|                          | <i>Common Merganser</i>       |                                 |
|                          | <i>Red-breasted Merganser</i> |                                 |
|                          | <b>Ruddy Duck</b>             | <i>Winters</i>                  |
| <b>BIRDS OF PREY</b>     |                               |                                 |
|                          | Osprey                        | <i>Flyover</i>                  |
|                          | Bald Eagle                    | <i>Flyover</i>                  |
|                          | Northern Harrier (Marsh Hawk) | <i>Flyover</i>                  |
|                          | <b>Sharp-shinned Hawk</b>     | <i>Flyover; oft. in Park</i>    |
|                          | <b>Cooper's Hawk</b>          | <i>Flyover; occ. winters</i>    |
|                          | <i>Northern Goshawk</i>       | <i>Flyover; infreq. in Park</i> |
|                          | Red-shouldered Hawk           | <i>Flyover; infreq. in Park</i> |
|                          | Broad-winged Hawk             | <i>Flyover</i>                  |
|                          | <b>RED-TAILED HAWK</b>        | <i>Nests on Fifth Ave.</i>      |
|                          | <i>Rough-legged Hawk</i>      | <i>Flyover</i>                  |
|                          | <i>Golden Eagle</i>           | <i>Flyover</i>                  |
|                          | AMERICAN KESTREL              | <i>Nests in NYC</i>             |
|                          | Merlin                        |                                 |
|                          | PEREGRINE FALCON              | <i>Nests in NYC</i>             |
| <b>PHEASANTS</b>         |                               |                                 |
|                          | RING-NECKED PHEASANT          | <i>Has nested</i>               |
| <b>GALLINULES, COOTS</b> |                               |                                 |
|                          | <i>Common Moorhen</i>         |                                 |
|                          | <b>American Coot</b>          | <i>Oft. winters</i>             |
| <b>SHOREBIRDS</b>        |                               |                                 |
|                          | Killdeer                      | <i>Has nested</i>               |
|                          | <i>Greater Yellowlegs</i>     |                                 |

YEAR-ROUND • Annual Migrant • *Infrequent*  
**Common** / Less Common

| ✓                                        | <b>SHOREBIRDS...</b>               |                             |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                                          | Solitary Sandpiper                 |                             |
|                                          | Spotted Sandpiper                  |                             |
|                                          | Least Sandpiper                    |                             |
|                                          | <i>Common Snipe</i>                |                             |
|                                          | American Woodcock                  |                             |
| <b>GULLS</b>                             |                                    |                             |
|                                          | Laughing Gull                      | <i>Daily summer visitor</i> |
|                                          | <b>RING-BILLED GULL</b>            |                             |
|                                          | <b>HERRING GULL</b>                |                             |
|                                          | <i>Iceland Gull</i>                |                             |
|                                          | <b>GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL</b>     |                             |
| <b>DOVES, CUCKOOS</b>                    |                                    |                             |
|                                          | <b>ROCK DOVE</b> ( <i>pigeon</i> ) | <i>Nests</i>                |
|                                          | <b>MOURNING DOVE</b>               | <i>Nests</i>                |
|                                          | Black-billed Cuckoo                |                             |
|                                          | Yellow-billed Cuckoo               |                             |
| <b>OWLS</b>                              |                                    |                             |
|                                          | EASTERN SCREECH-OWL                | <i>Reintroduced in 1998</i> |
|                                          | <i>Great Horned Owl</i>            |                             |
|                                          | Long-eared Owl                     | <i>Oft. winters</i>         |
|                                          | Northern Saw-whet Owl              |                             |
| <b>GOATSUCKERS</b>                       |                                    |                             |
|                                          | Common Nighthawk                   |                             |
|                                          | <i>Chuck-will's-widow</i>          |                             |
|                                          | Whip-poor-will                     |                             |
| <b>SWIFTS, HUMMINGBIRDS, KINGFISHERS</b> |                                    |                             |
|                                          | <b>Chimney Swift</b>               | <i>Daily summer flyover</i> |
|                                          | Ruby-throated Hummingbird          |                             |

YEAR-ROUND • Annual Migrant • *Infrequent*  
**Common** / Less Common

| ✓                  | <b>WOODPECKERS</b>                              |                            |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
|                    | Red-headed Woodpecker                           | <i>Oft. winters</i>        |
|                    | <b>RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER</b>                   | <i>Nests</i>               |
|                    | Yellow-bellied Sapsucker                        | <i>Occ. winters</i>        |
|                    | <b>DOWNY WOODPECKER</b>                         | <i>Nests</i>               |
|                    | Hairy Woodpecker                                | <i>Occ. winters</i>        |
|                    | <b>Northern</b> (Yellow-shafted) <b>Flicker</b> | <i>Nests; occ. winters</i> |
| <b>FLYCATCHERS</b> |                                                 |                            |
|                    | Olive-sided Flycatcher                          |                            |
|                    | <b>Eastern Wood Pewee</b>                       |                            |
|                    | Yellow-bellied Flycatcher                       |                            |
|                    | Acadian Flycatcher                              |                            |
|                    | Alder Flycatcher                                |                            |
|                    | Willow Flycatcher                               |                            |
|                    | Least Flycatcher                                |                            |
|                    | <b>Eastern Phoebe</b>                           |                            |
|                    | <b>Great Crested Flycatcher</b>                 |                            |
|                    | <b>Eastern Kingbird</b>                         | <i>Nests</i>               |
| <b>VIREOS</b>      |                                                 |                            |
|                    | White-eyed Vireo                                |                            |
|                    | Yellow-throated Vireo                           | <i>Has nested</i>          |
|                    | <b>Blue-headed</b> (Solitary) <b>Vireo</b>      |                            |
|                    | Warbling Vireo                                  | <i>Occ. nests</i>          |
|                    | Philadelphia Vireo                              | <i>Mostly fall</i>         |
|                    | <b>Red-eyed Vireo</b>                           | <i>Occ. nests</i>          |
| <b>JAYS, CROWS</b> |                                                 |                            |
|                    | <b>BLUE JAY</b>                                 | <i>Nests</i>               |
|                    | <b>AMERICAN CROW</b>                            | <i>Nests</i>               |
|                    | Fish Crow                                       | <i>Has nested</i>          |

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| ✓                    | SWALLOWS                             |                     |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
|                      | Tree Swallow                         |                     |
|                      | <b>Northern Rough-winged Swallow</b> |                     |
|                      | <i>Bank Swallow</i>                  |                     |
|                      | <i>Cliff Swallow</i>                 |                     |
|                      | <b>Barn Swallow</b>                  |                     |
| CHICKADEES, TITMICE  |                                      |                     |
|                      | Black-capped Chickadee               | <i>Has nested</i>   |
|                      | <b>Tufted Titmouse</b>               | <i>Nests</i>        |
| NUTHATCHES, CREEPERS |                                      |                     |
|                      | Red-breasted Nuthatch                | <i>Occ. winters</i> |
|                      | <b>White-breasted Nuthatch</b>       | <i>Winters</i>      |
|                      | Brown Creeper                        | <i>Occ. winters</i> |
| WRENS                |                                      |                     |
|                      | Carolina Wren                        | <i>Occ. winters</i> |
|                      | <b>House Wren</b>                    | <i>Nests</i>        |
|                      | <b>Winter Wren</b>                   | <i>Occ. winters</i> |
|                      | <i>Marsh Wren</i>                    |                     |
| THRUSHES             |                                      |                     |
|                      | Eastern Bluebird                     |                     |
|                      | <b>Veery</b>                         |                     |
|                      | Gray-cheeked Thrush                  |                     |
|                      | Bicknell's Thrush                    |                     |
|                      | <b>Swainson's Thrush</b>             |                     |
|                      | <b>Hermit Thrush</b>                 | <i>Occ. winters</i> |
|                      | Wood Thrush                          | <i>Has nested</i>   |

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| ✓                   | THRUSHES...                                    |                                 |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                     | <b>American Robin</b>                          | <i>Nests; a few winter</i>      |
| MIMIC THRUSHES      |                                                |                                 |
|                     | <b>Gray Catbird</b>                            | <i>Nests; infreq. winters</i>   |
|                     | NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD                           | <i>Nests</i>                    |
|                     | Brown Thrasher                                 | <i>Has nested; occ. winters</i> |
| STARLINGS, WAXWINGS |                                                |                                 |
|                     | <b>EUROPEAN STARLING</b>                       | <i>Nests</i>                    |
|                     | <b>Cedar Waxwing</b>                           | <i>Occ. nests</i>               |
| WOOD-WARBLERS       |                                                |                                 |
|                     | Blue-winged Warbler                            |                                 |
|                     | Golden-winged Warbler                          |                                 |
|                     | <i>Lawrence's Warbler (BW &amp; GW hybrid)</i> |                                 |
|                     | <i>Brewster's Warbler (BW &amp; GW hybrid)</i> |                                 |
|                     | Tennessee Warbler                              |                                 |
|                     | Orange-crowned Warbler                         |                                 |
|                     | Nashville Warbler                              |                                 |
|                     | <b>Northern Parula</b>                         |                                 |
|                     | <b>Yellow Warbler</b>                          |                                 |
|                     | <b>Chestnut-sided Warbler</b>                  |                                 |
|                     | <b>Magnolia Warbler</b>                        |                                 |
|                     | Cape May Warbler                               |                                 |
|                     | <b>Black-throated Blue Warbler</b>             |                                 |
|                     | <b>Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler</b>          |                                 |
|                     | <b>Black-throated Green Warbler</b>            |                                 |
|                     | Blackburnian Warbler                           |                                 |
|                     | <i>Yellow-throated Warbler</i>                 | <i>Mostly spring</i>            |
|                     | Pine Warbler                                   |                                 |
|                     | Prairie Warbler                                |                                 |

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| ✓        | WOOD-WARBLERS...                     |                      |
|----------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
|          | <b>Palm Warbler</b>                  |                      |
|          | Bay-breasted Warbler                 |                      |
|          | <b>Blackpoll Warbler</b>             |                      |
|          | Cerulean Warbler                     | <i>Mostly spring</i> |
|          | <b>Black-and-white Warbler</b>       |                      |
|          | <b>American Redstart</b>             |                      |
|          | <i>Prothonotary Warbler</i>          | <i>Mostly spring</i> |
|          | Worm-eating Warbler                  |                      |
|          | <b>Ovenbird</b>                      |                      |
|          | <b>Northern Waterthrush</b>          |                      |
|          | Louisiana Waterthrush                |                      |
|          | <i>Kentucky Warbler</i>              | <i>Mostly spring</i> |
|          | <i>Connecticut Warbler</i>           | <i>Mostly fall</i>   |
|          | Mourning Warbler                     |                      |
|          | <b>Common Yellowthroat</b>           |                      |
|          | Hooded Warbler                       |                      |
|          | Wilson's Warbler                     |                      |
|          | <b>Canada Warbler</b>                |                      |
|          | Yellow-breasted Chat                 |                      |
| TANAGERS |                                      |                      |
|          | Summer Tanager                       | <i>Mostly spring</i> |
|          | <b>Scarlet Tanager</b>               |                      |
| SPARROWS |                                      |                      |
|          | <b>Eastern (Rufous-sided) Towhee</b> | <i>Occ. winters</i>  |
|          | American Tree Sparrow                | <i>Mostly winter</i> |
|          | <b>Chipping Sparrow</b>              |                      |
|          | Field Sparrow                        |                      |
|          | <i>Vesper Sparrow</i>                |                      |
|          | Savannah Sparrow                     |                      |

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| ✓                           | SPARROWS...                   |                            |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
|                             | Fox Sparrow                   | <i>Of. winters</i>         |
|                             | <b>Song Sparrow</b>           | <i>Nests; a few winter</i> |
|                             | Lincoln's Sparrow             |                            |
|                             | Swamp Sparrow                 | <i>Occ. winters</i>        |
|                             | <b>White-throated Sparrow</b> | <i>Winters</i>             |
|                             | White-crowned Sparrow         |                            |
|                             | <b>Dark-eyed Junco</b>        | <i>Occ. winters</i>        |
|                             | <b>NORTHERN CARDINAL</b>      | <i>Nests</i>               |
|                             | Rose-breasted Grosbeak        |                            |
|                             | <i>Blue Grosbeak</i>          |                            |
|                             | Indigo Bunting                |                            |
| BLACKBIRDS                  |                               |                            |
|                             | <i>Bobolink</i>               |                            |
|                             | <b>Red-winged Blackbird</b>   | <i>Nests; occ. winters</i> |
|                             | <i>Eastern Meadowlark</i>     |                            |
|                             | Rusty Blackbird               |                            |
|                             | <b>Common Grackle</b>         | <i>Nests</i>               |
|                             | Brown-headed Cowbird          | <i>Occ. winters</i>        |
|                             | Orchard Oriole                | <i>Mostly spring</i>       |
|                             | <b>Baltimore Oriole</b>       | <i>Nests</i>               |
| FINCHES, OLD-WORLD SPARROWS |                               |                            |
|                             | Purple Finch                  |                            |
|                             | <b>HOUSE FINCH</b>            | <i>Nests</i>               |
|                             | <i>Common Redpoll</i>         |                            |
|                             | <i>Pine Siskin</i>            |                            |
|                             | <b>American Goldfinch</b>     | <i>Winters</i>             |
|                             | <i>Evening Grosbeak</i>       |                            |
|                             | <b>HOUSE SPARROW</b>          | <i>Nests</i>               |
|                             |                               |                            |

YEAR-ROUND • Annual Migrant • *Infrequent*  
**Common** / Less Common

### RARE (seen fewer than ten times since 1970)

|                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Horned Grebe                    | Glaucous Gull                  |
| Red-necked Grebe                | Caspian Tern                   |
| Anhinga                         | Common Tern                    |
| Least Bittern                   | Forster's Tern                 |
| Little Blue Heron               | Black Skimmer                  |
| Tricolored Heron                | Barn Owl                       |
| Cattle Egret ( <i>Flyover</i> ) | Barred Owl                     |
| Yellow-crowned Night-Heron      | Short-eared Owl                |
| Glossy Ibis                     | Western Kingbird               |
| Eurasian Wigeon                 | Northern Shrike                |
| Blue-winged Teal                | Bell's Vireo                   |
| Redhead                         | Horned Lark                    |
| Tufted Duck                     | Purple Martin                  |
| Common Eider                    | Boreal Chickadee               |
| Surf Scoter                     | Northern Wheatear              |
| White-winged Scoter             | American Pipit                 |
| Long-tailed Duck (Oldsquaw)     | Swainson's Warbler             |
| Common Goldeneye                | Western Tanager                |
| Mississippi Kite                | Clay-colored Sparrow           |
| Wild Turkey                     | Lark Sparrow                   |
| Virginia Rail                   | Grasshopper Sparrow            |
| Sora                            | Henslow's Sparrow              |
| Black-bellied Plover            | LeConte's Sparrow              |
| Semipalmated Plover             | Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow |
| Lesser Yellowlegs               | Upland Sandpiper               |
| Upland Sandpiper                | Whimbrel ( <i>Flyover</i> )    |
| Whimbrel ( <i>Flyover</i> )     | Semipalmated Sandpiper         |
| Semipalmated Sandpiper          | White-rumped Sandpiper         |
| White-rumped Sandpiper          | Pectoral Sandpiper             |
| Pectoral Sandpiper              | Red Phalarope                  |
| Red Phalarope                   | Black-headed Gull              |
| Black-headed Gull               | Bonaparte's Gull               |
| Bonaparte's Gull                | Lesser Black-backed Gull       |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull        |                                |
|                                 | Black-backed Woodpecker        |
|                                 | Loggerhead Shrike              |
|                                 | Bewick's Wren                  |
|                                 | Sedge Wren                     |
|                                 | Black-throated Gray Warbler    |
|                                 | Townsend's Warbler             |

### HISTORICAL (not seen since 1970)

|                   |                             |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ruffed Grouse     | Black-backed Woodpecker     |
| Northern Bobwhite | Loggerhead Shrike           |
| Clapper Rail      | Bewick's Wren               |
| Purple Gallinule  | Sedge Wren                  |
| Western Sandpiper | Black-throated Gray Warbler |
| Snowy Owl         | Townsend's Warbler          |

# Help Protect Birds and Their Habitat

When observing birds, stay on paved paths and Park drives. Trampling damages fragile vegetation.

Observe birds from a comfortable distance. If a bird seems agitated by your presence, move farther away.

Don't approach or try to rescue a fallen nestling. The parents are usually nearby and will continue to care for it.

Please pick up litter and dispose of it properly. Birds can get entangled in discarded fishing line, six-pack loops, and plastic bags.

Central Park Conservancy is a private, not-for-profit organization founded in 1980 that manages Central Park under a contract with the City of New York/Parks & Recreation. The Conservancy invites all Central Park visitors to become partners in taking care of the Park to ensure that it remains a beautiful place for leisure, recreation, and the appreciation of nature.

For more information about the Conservancy, please call 212-310-6600 or visit our website at [www.centralparknyc.org](http://www.centralparknyc.org).

To take a tour or to learn more about the Urban Park Rangers, please call 212-360-2774.

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