

*Birds of the*



*Swan River*

NATIONAL WILDLIFE  
REFUGE

*Montana*

Welcome to

**SWAN RIVER  
NATIONAL WILDLIFE  
REFUGE**

The 1,568-acre Swan River National Wildlife Refuge is located 38 miles southeast of Kalispell, Montana. The variety of habitats including grassland, marsh, and wooded river bottom support elk, deer, moose, grizzly and black bear, beaver, river otter, muskrat, and at least 171 species of birds.

The Refuge provides nesting habitat for the endangered bald eagle, great blue herons, black terns, 23 species of waterfowl, and a variety of raptors and songbirds. A canoe trip through the Refuge on the Swan River provides excellent birding throughout the spring, summer, and fall. Canada geese, whistling swan, mallard and goldeneye winter in the open waters of the Swan River and the canals and creeks which cross the Refuge.

The following birds have been observed on the Refuge since its establishment in 1974. Very special thanks must go to Ellie Jones and other Audubon Society members who have contributed much time to the completion of this pamphlet. The Swan River NWR was adopted by the Flathead Chapter of the National Audubon Society in 1981 under the Society's Adopt-A-Refuge Program.

**EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS:**

**Seasons:**

- S— March-May
- S— June-August
- F— September-November
- W— December-February

Birds nesting on the Refuge are preceded by a •.

Symbols indicating seasonal abundance of each species are as follows:

- c—common                    should see in suitable habitat
- u—uncommon                might see in suitable habitat
- o—occasional                seen only a few times during a season
- r—rare                        seen at intervals of 2 to 5 years

The following bird list is in accordance with the 5th A.O.U. Check-List as amended. New names are used in all cases.

	S	S	F	W
<b>LOONS</b>				
—• Common Loon .....	c	c	u	
<b>GREBES</b>				
—• Red-necked Grebe .....	c	c	c	
—• Horned Grebe .....	c	c	c	
—• Eared Grebe .....	c	c	c	o
— Western Grebe .....	u	c		
—• Pied-billed Grebe .....	c	c		
<b>CORMORANTS</b>				
— Double-crested Cormorant .....	o			
<b>HERONS AND BITTERNS</b>				
—• Great Blue Heron .....	c	c	c	c
—• American Bittern .....	u	u	o	
<b>SWANS, GEESE, DUCKS</b>				
— Whistling Swan .....	u	r	c	u
—• Canada Goose .....	c	c	c	c
— Snow Goose .....	o		o	r
— Ross' Goose .....	r		r	
—• Mallard .....	c	c	c	c
—• Gadwall .....	c	c	u	
—• Pintail .....	c	u	c	o
—• Green-winged Teal .....	u	u	u	r
—• Blue-winged Teal .....	c	c	c	
—• Cinnamon Teal .....	c	c	u	
—• American Wigeon .....	c	c	c	

	S	S	F	W
— • Northern Shoveler	u	o	u	
— • Wood Duck	c	c	u	
— • Redhead	u	u	u	o
— • Ring-necked Duck	u	u	u	o
— Canvasback	u	o	u	o
— Lesser Scaup	o	o	o	
— • Common Goldeneye	c	c	c	c
— • Barrow's Goldeneye	c	u	u	o
— Bufflehead	c	u	u	o
— White-winged Scoter	r			
— Harlequin Duck	r			
— • Ruddy Duck	u	o		
— • Hooded Merganser	u	u		
— • Common Merganser	c	c	c	u
— Red-breasted Merganser	r			
<b>EAGLES, HAWKS, AND FALCONS</b>				
— Goshawk	u		u	u
— Sharp-shinned Hawk	u	u	u	u
— • Red-tailed Hawk	u	u	u	
— Swainson's Hawk	u			
— Rough-legged Hawk				c
— Golden Eagle				c
— • Bald Eagle	c	c	c	c
— • Marsh Hawk	u	c		
— Osprey		c		
— Prairie Falcon	o	o	o	
— Merlin	o	r	o	
— • American Kestrel	o	c	o	
<b>GROUSE, PHEASANTS</b>				
— Blue Grouse	o	o	o	o
— • Ruffed Grouse	c	c	c	c
— Ring-necked Pheasant	o	o	o	o
<b>RAILS</b>				
— • Sora	u	c		
— • American Coot	c	c	c	
<b>PLOVERS</b>				
— • Killdeer	c	c	c	
<b>SHOREBIRDS, GULLS, TERNS</b>				
— • Common Snipe	c	c	o	u
— • Spotted Sandpiper	c	c	u	
— Solitary Sandpiper	o	r		
— Greater Yellowlegs	o	o		
— Lesser Yellowlegs	o	u		
— Least Sandpiper	o	u		
— Long-billed Dowitcher	u	u		
— Marbled Godwit	o			
— American Avocet	o			
— Black-necked Stilt	o			
— • Wilson's Phalarope	u	u		
— California Gull	o	u	u	
— Ring-billed Gull	o	c	u	
— Forster's Tern	o	o	o	
— • Black Tern	c	c	u	

	S	S	F	W
<b>DOVES</b>				
— Mourning dove	o	o	o	
<b>OWLS</b>				
— Screech Owl	r	o	r	
— • Great Horned Owl	u	o	u	u
— Pygmy Owl				o
— Barred Owl	o	o	u	
<b>GOATSUCKERS, SWIFTS, HUMMINGBIRDS</b>				
— Common Nighthawk	u	c		
— Vaux's Swift	o	u	o	
— White-throated Swift	o	r		
— • Rufous Hummingbird	u	u		
— • Calliope Hummingbird	u	u	u	
— • Black-chinned Hummingbird	r	u	u	
<b>KINGFISHERS, WOODPECKERS</b>				
— Belted Kingfisher	o	o	o	o
— • Common Flicker	u	c	c	u
— Pileated Woodpecker	u	u	o	o
— Lewis's Woodpecker	o	o		
— Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	u	u	u	
— • Hairy Woodpecker	u	u	u	r
— • Downy Woodpecker	u	u	u	r
<b>FLYCATCHERS</b>				
— • Eastern Kingbird	o	u	o	
— • Western Kingbird	o	c	u	
— • Willow Flycatcher	c	c		
— Hammond's Flycatcher	u	u		
— Dusky Flycatcher	o	u		
— Western Flycatcher	o	u		
— Western Wood Pewee	u	u		
<b>LARKS, SWALLOWS</b>				
— Horned Lark	o	o	r	r
— • Violet-green Swallow	c	c		
— • Tree Swallow	c	c		
— • Rough-winged Swallow	c	c		
— • Barn Swallow	u	c		
— • Cliff Swallow	u	u		
<b>JAYS, MAGPIES, CROWS</b>				
— Gray Jay	o	o	r	u
— Steller's Jay	r	r	o	r
— • Black-billed Magpie	c	u	u	u
— • Common Raven	c	c	c	u
— • Common Crow	c	u	u	u
— Clark's Nutcracker	r		o	o
<b>CHICKADEES, NUTHATCHES, CREEPERS</b>				
— • Black-capped Chickadee	c	c	c	c
— Mountain Chickadee	u	o	u	u
— • Chestnut-backed Chickadee	o	o	u	u
— • White-breasted Nuthatch	u	u	u	u
— • Red-breasted Nuthatch	u	u	u	u
— • Brown Creeper	u	u	o	o

	S	S	F	W
<b>DIPPERS</b>				
— Dipper .....	o	o	u	u
<b>WRENS</b>				
— Winter Wren .....	o	o	o	o
— • Long-billed Marsh Wren .....	u	c	c	o
<b>MOCKINGBIRDS</b>				
— • Gray Catbird .....	u	u	c	
<b>THRUSHES, BLUEBIRDS</b>				
— • American Robin .....	u	c	c	u
— • Varied Thrush .....	c	c	u	r
— • Swainson's Thrush .....	u	u	u	
— Veery .....	o	u	o	
— Mountain Bluebird .....	c	u	o	
— Townsend's Solitaire .....	o		o	
<b>KINGLETS, PIPITS</b>				
— Golden-crowned Kinglet .....	u	u	u	u
— Ruby-crowned Kinglet .....	u	u	u	u
— Water Pipit .....	u		o	o
<b>WAXWINGS, SHRIKES, STARLINGS</b>				
— Bohemian Waxwing .....	u			c
— Cedar Waxwing .....	u	u	u	u
— Northern Shrike .....	u		u	u
— • Starling .....	c	c	u	
<b>VIREOS, WOOD WARBLERS, WEAVER FINCHES</b>				
— • Red-eyed Vireo .....	u	u		
— • Warbling Vireo .....	o	u		
— Orange-crowned Warbler .....	u	u	u	
— Nashville Warbler .....	u	u	u	
— • Yellow Warbler .....	c	c	u	
— • Yellow-rumped Warbler .....	c	c	u	
— Townsend's Warbler .....	o	c	u	
— Northern Waterthrush .....	o	c	u	
— MacGillivray's Warbler .....	o	u	u	
— Common Yellowthroat .....	u	u	u	
— Wilson's Warbler .....	o	u	o	
— American Redstart .....	o	u	u	
— House Sparrow .....	o	o		
<b>BLACKBIRDS AND ORIOLES</b>				
— Bobolink .....	u	u		
— Western Meadowlark .....	u	u	u	
— • Yellow-headed Blackbird .....	c	c	u	
— • Red-winged Blackbird .....	c	c	u	
— Brewer's Blackbird .....	u	c		
— • Brown-headed Cowbird .....	u	c		
<b>TANAGERS</b>				
— Western Tanager .....	o	o		
<b>GROSBEAKS, SPARROWS, AND FINCHES</b>				
— • Black-headed Grosbeak .....	u	u		
— Lazuli Bunting .....	o	u		
— • Evening Grosbeak .....	u	u	u	u
— Cassin's Finch .....	o	u	o	o

	S	S	F	W
— House Finch .....	o			
— Gray-crowned Rosy Finch .....	o			
— Common Redpoll .....				u
— • Pine Siskin .....	c	c	c	u
— American Goldfinch .....	o	o	u	o
— • Red Crossbill .....	u	u	u	u
— White-winged Crossbill .....				o
— Rufous-sided Towhee .....	u	o	o	
— • Savannah Sparrow .....	u	u	u	
— Grasshopper Sparrow .....	u	o	u	
— Vesper Sparrow .....	u	c	u	
— Lark Sparrow .....	o			
— Dark-eyed Junco .....	c	c	c	c
— Tree Sparrow .....				o
— • Chipping Sparrow .....	o	u	u	
— Harris' Sparrow .....				u
— White-crowned Sparrow .....	u	u	o	o
— Fox Sparrow .....	o	o	o	
— • Song Sparrow .....	c	c	u	u
— Snow Bunting .....				u

**PLEASE NOTE:**

We would appreciate your help if you observe birds that are listed as rare to the Swan River National Wildlife Refuge or if you notice unusual concentrations or activities of birds on the Refuge. Please report the following information by letter or telephone to the Refuge Manager:

Your name, address \_\_\_\_\_

date, weather, exact location \_\_\_\_\_

species, number of birds \_\_\_\_\_

distinguishing features and/or \_\_\_\_\_

activities \_\_\_\_\_