

Birds of the Upper Mississippi River

Follow the Great River Road to Great Birding!

Imagine how the bird habitat and bird life along the Mississippi River must change as the river changes from a small stream running through the pine forests of northern Minnesota, then through what was once tall-grass prairie and oak savanna of central Minnesota. Then it changes again as it cuts through the blufflands of southern Minnesota, northeast Iowa, southwest Wisconsin and northwest Illinois. Finally, the river habitat and bird life reflects the big, wide river of southern Illinois and Missouri, where the Missouri and Illinois rivers join in.

You can now take a self-guided birding tour on the northernmost reaches of what is likely one of America's longest birding trails. The "Great River Birding Trail" parallels both sides of the Mississippi River from the headwaters, down 1,366 miles to the confluence with the Ohio River at Cairo, Illinois. The trail is named after the already well known federally-designated scenic drive called the Great River Road that goes from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico.

The Upper Mississippi River: A Globally Important Bird Area and Migratory "Flyway" for Birds

The mighty Mississippi flows though the heart of our nation. It draws millions of visitors each year from all over the world, who come to experience the mystery and magnificence of this old river valley, rich in history, culture, habitat, and recreation. But they aren't the only visitors passing through – 40% of all North American waterfowl use the river as a migratory flyway, and 326 bird species (35% or about 1/3 of all species in North America) use the river corridor as a globally important flyway in their spring and fall migrations.

The Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge stretches southward for 261 miles along the Mississippi River from just above Wabasha, Minnesota, nearly to Rock Island, Illinois. This refuge and the entire Upper Mississippi River offer fabulous opportunities for birding among extensive marshlands, wooded bottom lands, open water, sand prairie, and wooded bluffs.

The river environment serves as a migration corridor not only for waterfowl, but also for numerous other birds such as raptors, shorebirds, and neo-tropical migratory songbirds. In the spring and summer, the river provides important nesting habitat for many species. Even in the coldest months, the area serves as a wintering ground for northern bird populations, in addition to year-round residents.

Success Stories

Conservation and reintroduction efforts have benefited several bird species in the Upper Mississippi River. The Bald Eagle is one of the greatest success stories in the recovery of an endangered species. While a few hundred eagles used to winter along the Mississippi River, there are now thousands. Peregrine Falcons, once extirpated from their entire eastern range the U.S., have been successfully reintroduced and now nest on cliffs, towers, and bridges along the river. They were recently removed from the endangered species list, but are still endangered in Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Red-shouldered Hawks nest in large tracts of mature or medium-aged, floodplain forests along the Mississippi River. Their diet varies but includes frogs, crayfish, salamanders, snakes, small mammals, and birds. They are listed as endangered in Iowa and Illinois, and a species of concern or threatened in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Red-shoulders are still uncommon in many parts of the Upper Mississippi River, but research has indicated relatively stable populations between McGregor, IA and Cassville, WI, and on the Illinois side from East Dubuque to Savanna, IL.

Species of Concern

Neo-tropical migrants such as the Cerulean Warbler and the Prothonotary Warbler breed along the Upper Mississippi River while wintering in more suitable climates such as Central America and the northern rim of South America. Populations for both of these warblers have been in decline, but are still common along the Upper Mississippi. Red-headed Woodpeckers bore nest cavities in dead trees, fence posts, or utility poles in open woods, savannas, farmlands, and bottomlands. They feed on acorns, nuts, and berries, storing them in caches they defend vigorously. This widespread and common woodpecker's numbers have declined in the past decade due to loss of woodlands and competition with the European Starling. The Upper Mississippi River area is an important refuge for these and other bird species of concern.

Connecting People to the Mississippi River

The Great River Birding Trail was developed to help educate citizens about the ecological significance of the Upper Mississippi River as an important flyway for birds and to encourage citizens to explore the Upper Mississippi River region through a form of hands-on, low-impact, and non-consumptive recreation. The Great River Birding Trail is a project of the Audubon - Upper Mississippi River Campaign. To learn more about the Audubon - Upper Mississippi River Campaign and the Great River Birding Trail, go www.audubon.org/campaign/umr.

IBA's Take Flight: Identifying and Conserving Essential Habitat for Birds

Important Bird Areas, or IBAs, are defined as sites that provide essential habitat for one or more species of birds that are a high priority within a state, such as birds that are threatened, endangered, or have been in population decline. The IBA Program helps birds by setting science-based priorities for habitat conservation and promoting positive action to safeguard vital bird habitats. In 1995, Audubon launched an IBA initiative in the United States, working to establish IBA programs in all 50 states. IBAs include sites for breeding, wintering, and/or migrating birds, and are selected using standardized, science-based criteria. You can help identify and conserve Important Bird Areas in your state or region. For more information on the Audubon IBA Program, go to: www.audubon.org/bird/iba/. This site includes the addresses of state IBA coordinators as well as information about many other Audubon bird conservation projects.

Birds of the Upper Mississippi River Refuge Checklist

Provided below is a checklist highlighting the 302 species of birds that can be found within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge. It is not a comprehensive checklist for the entire Upper Mississippi River. Be sure to bring a birding book along for reference, or contact the state Department of Natural Resources or state Ornithological Union for a more specific birding list to the region you are visiting. Season, abundance and nesting status for each bird's suitable habitat along the Mississippi River corridor are coded as follows:

Season:

Spring – March through May
Summer – June through August
Fall – September through November
Winter – December through February

Abundance and Nesting Status:

A – abundant
C – common
U – uncommon
R – rare
* – Nests on the refuge

Common Name	Sp	Su	F	W	Common Name	Sp	Su	F	W	Common Name	Sp	Su	F	W
Common Loon	u			u	Herring Gull					Blackpoll Warbler				c
Horned Grebe	u			u	Glaucous Gull	r	u		c	Cerulean Warbler*		u		c
Pied-billed Grebe*	u	c	c		Caspian Tern		u		r	Black-and-white Warbler				c
Red-necked Grebe	r			r	Common Tern		u		u	American Redstart*		a		c
American White Pelican		c	u	c	Forster's Tern*		c		u	Prothonotary Warbler*		c		c
Double-crested Cormorant*		c	c	c	Black Tern*		c		u	Ovenbird*		c		u
American Bittern*		u		u	Rock Dove*		c	c	c	Northern Waterthrush		c		u
Least Bittern*		u		u	Mourning Dove*		c	c	u	Louisiana Waterthrush		u		u
Great Blue Heron*		a	a		Black-billed Cuckoo*		u		c	Kentucky Warbler		r		r
Great Egret*		a	c	a	Yellow-billed Cuckoo*		c		u	Connecticut Warbler		r		r
Snowy Egret		r		r	Eastern Screech-Owl*		u		u	Mourning Warbler		r		u
Little Blue Heron		u		u	Great Horned Owl*		c		c	Common Yellowthroat*		a		a
Cattle Egret		u		u	Snowy Owl		r		r	Hooded Warbler		u		r
Green Heron*		c	c	c	Barred Owl*		c	c	c	Wilson's Warbler		r		u
Black-crowned Night-Heron*		u		u	Long-eared Owl*		u		u	Canada Warbler		r		u
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron*		u		u	Short-eared Owl		u		u	Yellow-breasted Chat*		r		r
Tundra Swan		a		a	Northern Saw-whet Owl*		u		u	Scarlet Tanager*		c		u
Trumpeter Swan		r		u	Common Nighthawk*		c		u	Northern Cardinal*		a		c
Mute Swan		r		r	Whip-poor-will*		u		u	Rose-breasted Grosbeak*		c		c
Greater White-fronted Goose		r		r	Chimney Swift*		c		u	Indigo Bunting*		c		c
Snow Goose		u		u	Ruby-throated Hummingbird*		u		u	Dickcissel*		c		c
Canada Goose*		a	c		Belted Kingfisher*		c		u	Eastern Towhee*		u		r
Wood Duck*		a	c	a	Red-headed Woodpecker*		u		u	American Tree Sparrow		u		a
Green-winged Teal		c	r	c	Red-bellied Woodpecker*		c	c	c	Chipping Sparrow*		a		c
American Black Duck*		c	u	c	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker*		c	c	r	Clay-colored Sparrow		u		u
Mallard*		a	c	a	Downy Woodpecker*		c	c	c	Field Sparrow*		u		c
Northern Pintail		c	r	c	Hairy Woodpecker*		c	c	c	Vesper Sparrow*		u		u
Blue-winged Teal*		a	c	a	Northern Flicker*		c	c	u	Lark Sparrow*		u		u
Northern Shoveler		c		u	Pileated Woodpecker*		u		u	Savannah Sparrow*		u		u
Gadwall		c	u	a	Olive-sided Flycatcher		r		u	Grasshopper Sparrow*		c		u
American Wigeon		a	u	a	Eastern Wood Pewee*		c		c	Henslow's Sparrow*		r		r
Canvasback		a		a	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher		r		r	Le Conte's Sparrow		r		r
Redhead		c	r	c	Acadian Flycatcher*		r		r	Fox Sparrow		c		c
Ring-necked Duck		a	r	a	Alder Flycatcher		r		r	Song Sparrow*		a		a
Greater Scaup		u		u	Willow Flycatcher*		u		u	Lincoln's Sparrow		u		u
Lesser Scaup		a	r	a	Least Flycatcher*		c		c	Swamp Sparrow*		c		c
Oldsquaw		r		o	Eastern Phoebe*		c		u	White-throated Sparrow		c		c
Black Scoter				r	Great Crested Flycatcher*		c		a	White-crowned Sparrow		u		u
White-winged Scoter		r		u	Eastern Kingbird*		c		u	Harris Sparrow		u		u
Common Goldeneye		a		a	Horned Lark*		r		u	Dark-eyed Junco		a		a
Bufflehead		a		r	Purple Martin*		u		u	Lapland Longspur		r		r
Hooded Merganser*		c	c	r	Tree Swallow*		a		a	Snow Bunting				u
Common Merganser		r		r	Northern Rough-winged Swallow*		c		u	Bobolink*		u		u
Red-breasted Merganser		c		u	Bank Swallow*		c		u	Red-winged Blackbird*		a		a
Ruddy Duck		c	r	c	Cliff Swallow*		u		r	Eastern Meadowlark*		c		c
Turkey Vulture		c	c	r	Barn Swallow*		c		c	Western Meadowlark*		r		r
Osprey*		u		u	Blue Jay*		a		a	Yellow-headed Blackbird*		u		u
Bald Eagle*		c	c	a	American Crow*		a		a	Rusty Blackbird		c		c
Northern Harrier*		u		u	Black-capped Chickadee*		c		c	Brewer's Blackbird*		u		u
Sharp-shinned Hawk		c	u	a	Tufted Titmouse*		u		u	Common Grackle*		a		a
Coepe's Hawk*		u		u	Red-breasted Nuthatch		u		u	Brown-headed Cowbird*		a		a
Northern Goshawk		r		r	White-breasted Nuthatch*		c		c	Orchard Oriole*		u		u
Red-shouldered Hawk*		u		u	Brown creeper*		c		u	Baltimore Oriole*		c		a
Broad-winged Hawk*		c		a	Carolina Wren*		r		r	Pine Grosbeak				r
Swainson's Hawk				r	Bewick's Wren		r		r	Purple Finch		u		u
Red-tailed Hawk*		c		c	House Wren*		a		a	House Finch*		c		c
Rough-legged Hawk		u		u	Winter Wren*		u		u	Red Crossbill		r		r
Golden Eagle		r		u	Sedge Wren*		u		u	White-winged Crossbill		r		r
American Kestrel*		c	c	u	Marsh Wren*		c		c	Common Redpoll		u		r
Merlin		u		u	Golden-crowned Kinglet		u		r	Hoary Redpoll				r
Peregrine Falcon		u		u	Ruby-crowned Kinglet		c		c	Pine Siskin		u		u
Gray Partridge*		u		u	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher*		c		u	American Goldfinch*		a		a
Ring-necked Pheasant*		u		u	Eastern Bluebird*		c		c	Evening Grosbeak				r
Ruffed Grouse*		c	c	c	Veery*		u		r	House Sparrow*		a		a
Wild Turkey*		u		u	Gray-cheeked Thrush		c		u					
Northern Bobwhite*		u		u	Swainson's Thrush		u		u					
King Rail*		r		r	Hermit Thrush		u		u					
Virginia Rail*		c	c	c	Wood Thrush*		u		u					
Sora		c	c	u	American Robin*		a		a					
Common Moorhen*		u		u	Gray Catbird*		c		c					
American Coot*		a		a	Northern Mockingbird		r		r					
Sandhill Crane*		u		u	Brown Thrasher*		c		c					
Black-bellied Plover		u		u	American Pipit		r		r					
Am. Golden-Plover		u		u	Bohemian Waxwing				r					
Semipalmated Plover		u		u	Cedar Waxwing*		c		c					
Killdeer*		c	c	c	Northern Shrike		u		u					
American Avocet		r		r	Loggerhead Shrike*		r		r					
Greater Yellowlegs		u		u	European Starling*		a		a					
Lesser Yellowlegs		c	c	c	White-eyed Vireo		r		r					
Solitary Sandpiper		u		u	Bell's Vireo*		r		r					
Willet		r		r	Blue-headed Vireo		u		u					
Spotted Sandpiper*		c	c	c	Yellow-throated Vireo*		u		u					
Upland Sandpiper*		r		r	Warbling Vireo*		a		a					
Hudsonian Godwit		r			Philadelphia Vireo		u		u					
Marbled Godwit		r			Red-eyed Vireo*		a		a					
Ruddy Turnstone		u		r	Blue-winged Warbler*		u		u					
Sanderling		u		u	Golden-winged Warbler		u		u					
Semipalmated Sandpiper		c	c	c	Tennessee Warbler		c		c					
Least Sandpiper		c	c	c	Orange-crowned Warbler		r		u					
White-rumped Sandpiper		u		u	Nashville Warbler		c		c					
Baird's Sandpiper		u		u	Northern Parula		r		u					
Pectoral Sandpiper		c	c	c	Yellow Warbler*		a		a					
Dunlin		u		u	Yellow-throated Warbler*		r		r					
Silt Sandpiper		u		u	Chestnut-sided Warbler		c		u					
Short-billed Dowitcher		u		u	Magnolia Warbler		u		u					
Long-billed Dowitcher		u		r	Cape May Warbler		u		u					
Common Snipe		c	u	c	Black-throated Blue Warbler		r		r					
American Woodcock*		u		u	Yellow-rumped Warbler		a		a					
Wilson's Phalarope		u		r	Black-throated Green Warbler		u		u					
Red-necked Phalarope		r		r	Blackburnian Warbler		c		c					
Franklin's Gull		u		u	Pine Warbler		r		u					
Bonaparte's Gull		u		u	Palm Warbler		c		c					
Ring-billed Gull		c	c	c	Bay-breasted Warbler		r							

American Birding Association Code of Ethics

- Birders must always act in ways that do not endanger the welfare of birds or other wildlife.**
 - Observe and photograph birds without knowingly disturbing them in any significant way.
 - Avoid chasing or repeatedly flushing birds.
 - Use recordings and similar methods of attracting birds sparingly.
 - Keep an appropriate distance from nest and nesting colonies.
 - Refrain from handling birds or eggs unless engaged in recognized research activities.
- Birders should do their best to not cause harm to the natural environment.**
 - Whenever possible, stay on existing roads, trails, and pathways to avoid disturbing fragile habitat. Leave all habitat as found.
- Birders must always respect the right of others.**
 - Respect the privacy and property of others by observing "No Trespassing" signs and by asking permission to enter private or posted lands.
 - Observe all laws and the rules and regulations which govern public use of birding areas.
 - Practice common courtesy in contacts with others.
 - Always behave in a manner that will enhance the image of the birding community in the eyes of the public.



Audubon

Wisconsin Department of Tourism
www.travelwisconsin.com 1-800-432-TRIP (8747)

Designed and produced by Romance Valley Graphics
email: rvg@rmv.net

Printed by La Crosse Graphics Inc., La Crosse WI
www.lacrossgraphics.com

Map illustration by Riverwise

The printing of the Great River Birding Trail map series was funded in part by the McKnight Foundation and the Federal Highway Administration



Published by the Audubon
Upper Mississippi River Campaign © 2003



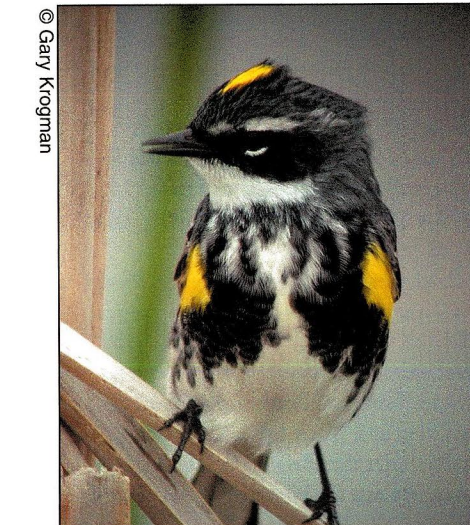
Cerulean Warbler



Bald Eagle



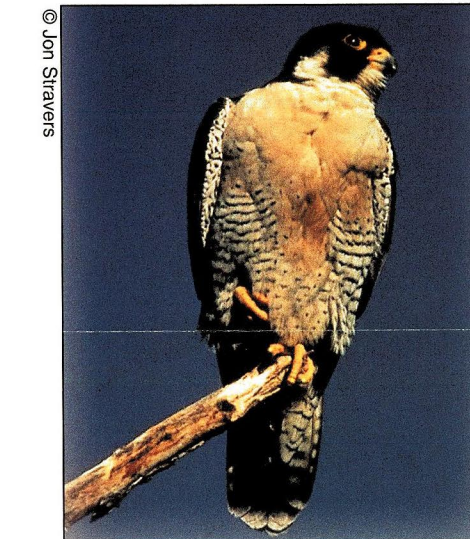
Red-tailed Hawk



Yellow-rumped Warbler



Vesper Sparrow



Peregrine Falcon



Trumpeter Swans

Great River Birding Trail

Red Wing, Minn., Map — from Cottage Grove, Minn., to Kellogg, Minn. (River Mile 823 to 755)

1. Spring Lake Park Preserve

Where: Take Hwy. 42 west from Hastings and turn north on Idell Ave. to enter the park.
Birds: Trails along the steep cliffs of Schaart's Bluff offer great views of the river and soaring hawks, Turkey Vultures and Bald Eagles. Watch for nesting passerines in the forest understory.
Note: Beautiful views of spring flowers and rich deciduous woods. Great for spring ephemerals and warblers. Spring Lake Preserve Archery Range is also a great place for owls and woodland birds.

2. Carpenter Nature Center / St. Croix & Mississippi Confluence

Where: Located just north of the St. Croix & Mississippi confluence. From St. Paul take Hwy. 61 southeast to Hwy. 10. Go 2 miles on Hwy. 10 and turn left onto Cty. Rd. 21. Entrance is 1.5 miles on the right.
Birds: There are a variety of habitats, ranging from heavily wooded ravines to prairie and oak savanna. Great area to spot migrating raptors, waterfowl, warblers, vireos, sparrows and thrushes. Watch for prairie species and harriers. Look and listen for owls. Bird banding is a weekly activity at the center.
Note: The Carpenter Nature Center is a nature preserve and environmental education facility. There are trails and public programs available. Wheelchair-accessible trails.

3. Hastings Scientific and Natural Area

Where: South on Hwy. 61 from Hastings, turn left onto 10th St. This will become Hwy. 54 as you head out of town. Turn right onto Cty. Rd. 91. A small parking lot is located 1 mile up the road. Watch for the Hastings Scientific and Natural Area sign.
Birds: Warblers, hawks, owls, woodpeckers, herons and Bald Eagles.
Note: There are no trails leading into this area, but it is public land. So get out and explore! On the right side of the road is remnant maple and basswood forest. On the left side of the road is floodplain forest. Excellent spots for undisturbed bird watching and for spring ephemeral flowers, amphibians and reptiles.

4. Vermillion River Bottoms - Gores Pool Wildlife Mgmt. Area

Where: From Red Wing, drive north on Hwy. 61, turn right onto Hwy. 18. Follow Hwy. 18 to Hwy. 54. From Hastings, turn left on 10th St. This will become Hwy. 54.
Birds: Wintering eagles, warblers in migration, herons, woodpeckers and owls. For excellent viewing of eagles in winter, follow the road to Lock & Dam 3.
Note: This is a very scenic side trip away from the Great River Road that offers access to the Hastings Scientific and Natural Area on the north end of Hwy. 54, before rejoining Hwy. 61.

5. Colville Park

Where: Located just south of Red Wing on Hwy. 61. Watch on Hwy. 61 for sign for this park.
Birds: Excellent viewing of large congregations of Bald Eagles during winter. In spring and fall look for Mallards, Common Mergansers, Common Goldeneyes, Great Blue Heron, gulls and woodpeckers.

6. Frontenac State Park

Where: From Hwy. 61 south of Red Wing, turn east onto Cty. Rd. 2. You can continue on this road after visiting the park to return to Hwy. 61 below the park entrance.
Birds: Migrating raptors, Turkey Vultures and Tundra Swans. Excellent for migrating warblers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Hermit Thrushes, Scarlet Tanagers and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers. Watch and listen for owls and Wild Turkeys.
Note: Frontenac State Park has complete bird lists for the park. There are also several hiking trails. Be sure to purchase a day pass or a seasonal Minnesota State Park pass.

7. Hok-Si-La City Park

Where: The park is just north of Lake City on the east side of Hwy. 61, on the shore of Lake Pepin.
Birds: One of the very best spots to watch for migrating warblers. Watch for Cape May, Magnolia, Bay-breasted, Chestnut-sided and Nashville warblers.

8. Reads Landing

Where: North of Wabasha, turn right off of Hwy. 61.
Birds: Excellent viewing of Bald Eagles in winter. Wintering Rough-legged Hawks may also be present. Watch for other hawks, owls, Common Mergansers and Goldeneyes.

9. The National Eagle Center and Wabasha Eagle Observation Deck

Where: From Hwy. 61, turn onto Hwy. 60. Follow Hwy. 60 straight into the heart of Wabasha (Pembroke Ave.). The Eagle Observation Deck is at the terminus of Pembroke Ave. The National Eagle Center is located at 152 Main St.
Birds: Up-close viewing of non-releasable eagles at the National Eagle Center. The observation deck provides excellent viewing of Bald Eagles from November to March.
Note: Volunteers staff the observation deck weekends November to March from 1-3 p.m., providing visitors with eagle education, spotting scopes and binoculars.

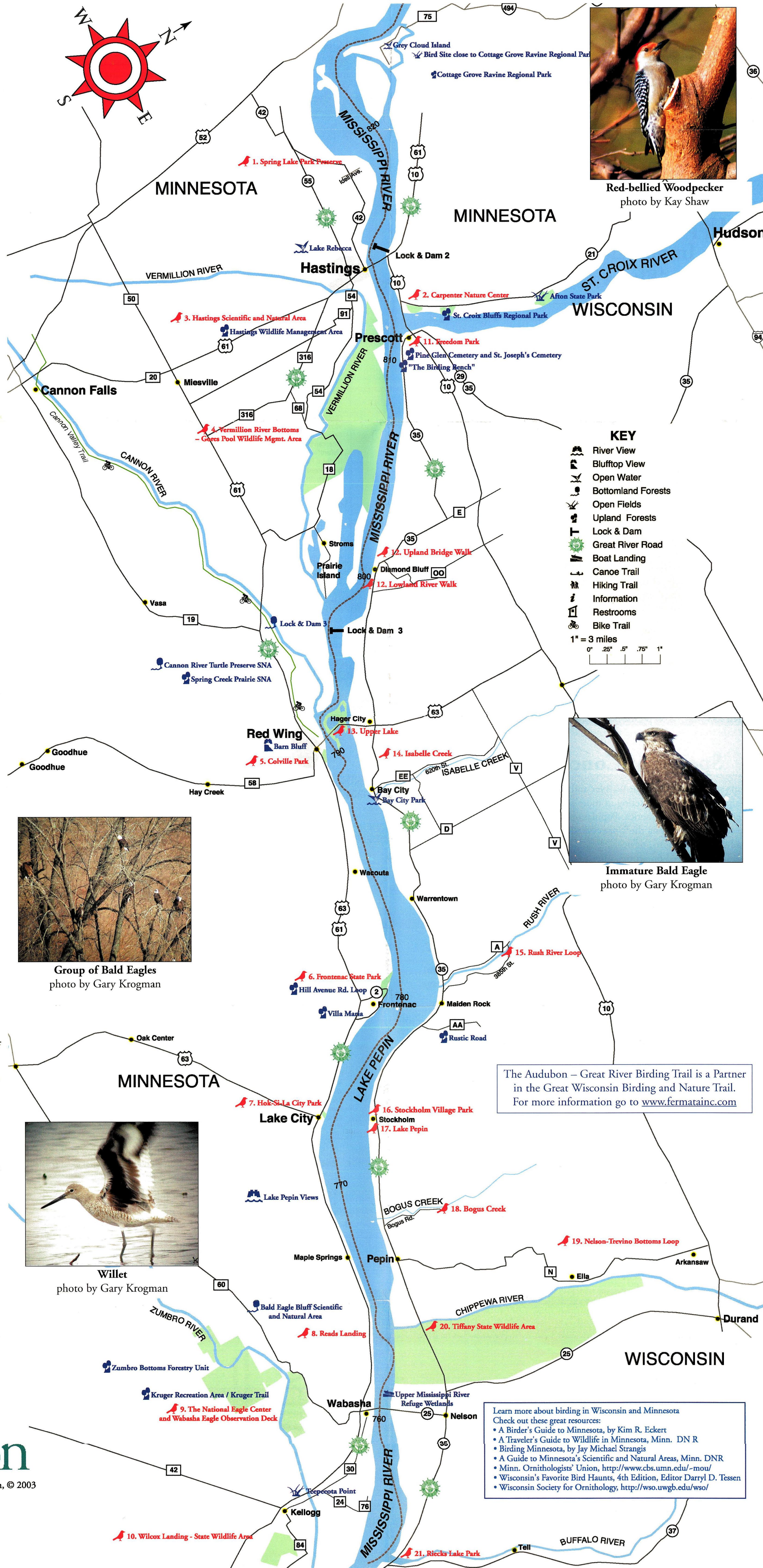
10. Wilcox Landing - State Wildlife Area

Where: Located between Kellogg and Wabasha, turn off of Hwy. 61 above Kellogg to Cty. Rd. 30. Go north past Cty. Rd. 24 intersection. Turn right at the 2nd Cty. Rd. intersection. Sign for wildlife area is on the left. If coming from Wabasha on Cty. Rd. 30, turn left at the first Cty. Rd. 24 intersection and proceed as above.
Birds: Almost all duck species, Tundra Swans, many shorebirds, Woodcocks, Bald Eagles, Prothonotary Warblers, Lark Sparrows, Grasshopper Sparrows and Red-shouldered Hawks.
Note: Particularly good sightings during spring flooding. Drive carefully in May and June to avoid the rare Blanding's Turtles crossing Hwy. 84.

11. Freedom Park

Where: Located along Hwy. 35 at the south end of Prescott. Watch for park sign on the west side of the road.
Birds: Exceptional viewing area high above the river. This is an excellent place to watch fall migrations of hawks and migratory waterfowl.
Note: Freedom Park has a good view of the confluence of the St. Croix and the Mississippi. Future plans for the park include a year-round environmental education center.

**Audubon**
Published by the Upper Mississippi River Campaign, © 2003



12. Upland Bridge Walk & Lowland River Walk

Where: Start at the junction of Hwy. 35 and CTH 00, then go north on 35 for .75 mile up the hill to where a road intersects from the left. Take this left turn and proceed .5 mile to the bridge over a dry run. Park here and look for birds. For the lowland walk, drive back to Hwy. 35 and turn right. Proceed .25 mile to a paved road on the right, then over the tracks to a "T" intersection. Watch for birds all along this road. Avoid trespass where fences or gates are found.
Birds: The upland walk is excellent for migrant songbirds and warblers, especially the Northern Waterthrush. Watch for gnatcatchers, thrushes, vireos, orioles, and tanagers. The lowland river walk is a great spot for year round birding, boasting almost all northern nesting songbirds in spring. Along the wooded sloughs, watch for Pileated Woodpeckers, Wood Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, Red-shouldered Hawks, American Bittern, Green Heron, Great Horned and Barred Owls. Great for Bald Eagles in winter.
Note: Keep an eye on the bluffs above Diamond Bluff for migrating raptors riding warm air thermals.

13. Upper Lake

Where: Go south out of Hager City on Hwy. 63 for 2 miles. The lake is to the east, before the bridge to Red Wing. Park along the highway to scan the lake. Be careful of traffic.
Birds: In spring watch for Canvasbacks, Tundra Swans, Common Mergansers, Ruddy Ducks, Black-crowned Night-herons and Green Herons. Excellent for gulls, Caspian, Forster's, and Common Terns. In fall watch for huge numbers of Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets. Excellent variety of shorebirds on the mudflats, such as Willets, stilts, plovers, dowitchers and sandpipers.
Note: This is one of the best places in Pierce County to observe migrant water birds in spring and fall. It is one of the first lakes to thaw out in the spring.

14. Isabelle Creek

Where: From Hwy. 35 in Bay City, follow Cty. Rd. EE north for 2 miles. When EE turns east, follow Creek Rd. north as it parallels Isabelle Creek north for 4 miles to Cty. Rd. V. If you would like to return to Hwy. 35 via a loop, follow V west to Hwy. 63 south (north of Bay City) or follow V east to follow Cty. Rd. D south (south of Bay City).
Birds: This is an excellent area to watch for warblers, vireos, thrushes, and raptors during spring and fall migrations. During nesting season, watch for Willow Flycatchers, Wood Thrushes, Yellow-throated Vireos, Baltimore Orioles and Golden-winged, Blue-winged and Cerulean Warblers.

15. Rush River Loop

Where: Just north of Maiden Rock, turn onto Cty. Rd. A (designated Scenic Rd.). Follow A and turn right at 385th St. (bridge over Rush R.). This will return straight to Hwy. 35 above Maiden Rock. You can extend this loop by driving up to Hwy. 10, or even further to Martell.
Birds: This is one of the best places for birdwatching in Pierce County. Check the Rush River and wetlands area for American Woodcocks, Wood Ducks and warblers such as the Common Yellowthroat. In woodland areas, watch and listen for Wood Thrushes, Ovenbirds, Scarlet Tanagers, Prothonotary and Blue-winged Warblers, Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoos. Scan the area below the wetlands under the Hwy 35 bridge for waterfowl, and also keep an eye out for Pileated Woodpeckers, Red-shouldered, Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks and owls.

16. Stockholm Village Park

Where: Located off of Hwy 35 in Stockholm. The road to the park is well-marked.
Birds: During spring and fall migration, this is a great place to watch for shorebirds, ducks, terns, gulls and grebes. In fall there are large rafts of Lesser Scaups, Canvasbacks, and Common and Red-breasted Mergansers. Keep an eye on the bluffs for migrating raptors, such as Rough-legged Hawks, Bald Eagles, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Peregrines and Merlins.

17. Lake Pepin

Where: Travel Hwy 35 from Pepin to Maiden Rock. The highway is squeezed in a narrow corridor between the bluffs and the Mississippi.
Birds: This drive offers spectacular views of Lake Pepin. In winter, watch for incredible numbers of Bald Eagles along the bluffs. In November, watch for Common Mergansers by the tens of thousands on Lake Pepin. Spring, summer and fall offer chances to see Canvasbacks, Common Goldeneyes, Red-tailed Hawks, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Bluffs.
Note: The beach next to the Pepin marina offers a good view of the lake. There is also an observation deck and parking area at the north end of Pepin. Watch for other turn-offs and viewing areas while travelling north to Maiden Rock. Just prior to Maiden Rock, watch for Cty. Rd. AA and a sign for the Rustic Rd. This is a fantastic backroad for birding.

18. Bogus Creek

Where: In Pepin, drive northwest on Hwy. 35 for 3 miles. Turn north onto Bogus Road and follow it along Bogus Creek for 3 miles.
Birds: Check the forests and creek area for Wood Thrushes, Louisiana Waterthrushes, Tufted Titmouse, Acadian Flycatchers, warblers, woodpeckers, gnatcatchers and hawks.

19. Nelson-Trevino Bottoms Loop

Where: This loop takes you up the Chippewa R. 20 miles to Durand and back to the Mississippi at Pepin. North of Nelson on Hwy. 35, turn north on Hwy. 25 to Durand. In downtown Durand, take Hwy. 10 west to Cty. Rd. N. Go south on N through Arkansas and Ella. This will bring you back to Hwy. 35 at Pepin.
Birds: Bald Eagles, Wild Turkeys, Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos, Eastern Wood Pewees, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Cedar Waxwings, Yellow-throated Vireos, Eastern Bluebirds, Blue-winged Warblers, Ovenbirds, Kentucky Warblers and Red-shouldered Hawks.

20. Tiffany State Wildlife Area/Chippewa River

Where: Located off of Hwy. 35. Parking areas and trails located just east of the Chippewa R. bridge. Watch for the abandoned railroad bed trail off of Hwy. 35 that runs from the Mississippi north to Durand. This provides excellent birding through the woodland river bottoms.
Birds: Watch for woodland raptors such as owls and Cooper's Hawk. This is a great place to watch for migrating warblers, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and other woodland songbirds, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Pileated and Red-bellied Woodpeckers. Listen for Wild Turkeys in the spring.

21. Riecks Lake Park

Where: Two miles north of Alma on Hwy. 35.
Birds: This is the best spot on the Mississippi to get up-close views of Tundra Swans in the fall. Spring and fall are the best viewing times for American Black Ducks, Northern Pintails, Green-winged Teals, Blue-winged Teals, Great Blue Herons, Sandhill Cranes, Wood Ducks, Northern Harriers, Pileated Woodpeckers and Red-bellied Woodpeckers.
Note: This area is an estuary of the Buffalo R. In late fall and early winter, "Swan Watch" volunteers provide interpretation during weekends on the viewing decks.
Just south of Rieck's Lake, take a drive up Hwy. 37 along the Buffalo River and explore side roads along the way. This has been a reliable area to see wintering Golden Eagles.