

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 bluffs 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 though – 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		c	u	c	u				
Horned Grebe			u	u	Glaucous Gull		r		r					
Pied-billed Grebe*		c	c	c	Caspian Tern		u	u	u					
Red-necked Grebe		r		r	Common Tern		u	u	u					
American White Pelican		c	u	c	Forster's Tern*		c	u	u					
Double-crested Cormorant*		c	c	c	Black Tern*		c	u	u					
American Bittern*		u	u	u	Rock Dove*		c	c	c	c				
Least Bittern*		u	u	u	Mourning Dove*		c	c	c	u				
Great Blue Heron*		a	a	a	Black-billed Cuckoo*		u	c	c					
Great Egret*		a	c	a	Yellow-billed Cuckoo*		c	c	u					
Snowy Egret		r		r	Eastern Screech-Owl*		u	u	u	u				
Little Blue Heron		u			Great Horned Owl*		c	c	c	c				
Green Heron*		c	c	c	Snowy Owl		r		r					
Black-crowned Night-Heron*		u	u	r	Barred Owl*		c	c	c	c				
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron*		u	r	u	Long-eared Owl*		u	r	u	u				
Tundra Swan		a		a	Short-eared Owl		u	u	u	u				
Trumpeter Swan		r	r	r	Northern Saw-whet Owl*		u	u	u	u				
Mute Swan		r	r	r	Common Nighthawk*		c	u	u					
Greater White-fronted Goose		r		r	Whip-poor-will*		u	u	u					
Snow Goose		u	u		Chimney Swift*		c	c	u					
Canada Goose*		a	c	a	Rudy-throated Hummingbird*		u	c	u					
Wood Duck*		a	c	a	Belted Kingfisher*		c	c	u	u				
Green-winged Teal		c	r	c	Red-headed Woodpecker*		u	u	u	u				
American Black Duck*		c	u	c	Red-bellied Woodpecker*		c	c	c	c				
Mallard*		a	c	a	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker*		c	c	c	c				
Northern Pintail		c	r	c	Downy Woodpecker*		c	c	c	c				
Blue-winged Teal*		a	c	a	Hairy Woodpecker*		c	c	c	c				
Northern Shoveler		c	u	c	Northern Flicker*		c	c	c	u				
Gadwall		c	u	a	Pileated Woodpecker*		u	u	u	u				
American Wigeon		a	u	a	Olive-sided Flycatcher		r	u	u					
Canvasback		a	r	a	Eastern Wood Pewee*		c	c	c					
Redhead		c	r	c	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher		r	r	r					
Ring-necked Duck		a	r	a	Acadian Flycatcher*		r	r	r					
Greater Scaup		u	u		Alder Flycatcher		r	r						
Lesser Scaup		a	r	a	Willow Flycatcher*		u	u	u					
Oldsquaw		r		o	Least Flycatcher*		c	c	c					
Black Scoter		c	u	c	Eastern Phoebe*		c	u	c					
White-winged Scoter		r		u	Great Crested Flycatcher*		c	a	u					
Common Goldeneye		a	u	c	Eastern Kingbird*		c	c	u					
Bufflehead		c	a	c	Horned Lark*		r	r	r	u				
Hooded Merganser*		c	c	c	Purple Martin*		u	u	u					
Common Merganser		r		r	Tree Swallow*		a	a	c					
Red-breasted Merganser		c	u	u	Northern Rough-winged Swallow*		c	c	u					
Ruddy Duck		c	r	c	Bank Swallow*		c	u	u					
Turkey Vulture		c	u	c	Cliff Swallow*		u	r	u					
Osprey*		c	u	c	Barn Swallow*		c	c	c					
Bald Eagle*		c	c	a	Blue Jay*		a	a	a	c				
Northern Harrier*		u	u	u	American Crow*		a	a	a	c				
Sharp-shinned Hawk		c	u	u	Black-capped Chickadee*		c	c	c	c				
Cooper's Hawk*		u	u	c	Tufted Titmouse*		u	u	u	u				
Northern Goshawk		u		r	Red-breasted Nuthatch		u	u	u					
Red-shouldered Hawk*		u	u	r	White-breasted Nuthatch*		c	c	c	c				
Broad-winged Hawk		c	u	a	Brown creeper*		c	u	u	u				
Swallows Hawk		c	c	a	Carolina Wren*		r	r	r					
Red-tailed Hawk*		c	c	a	Benicks Wren		r							
Rough-legged Hawk		r	u	u	House Wren*		a	a	c					
Golden Eagle		r	u	r	Winter Wren*		u	u	u	r				
American Kestrel*		c	c	c	Sedge Wren*		u	u	u					
Merlin		u	u		Marsh Wren*		c	c	c					
Peregrine Falcon		u	u	u	Golden-crowned Kinglet		u	u	u	r				
Gray Partridge*		u	u	u	Ruby-crowned Kinglet		c	c	c					
Ring-necked Pheasant*		u	u	u	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher*		c	c	u					
Ruffed Grouse*		c	c	c	Eastern Bluebird*		c	c	c	r				
Wild Turkey*		u	u	u	Vireo*		u	r	u					
Northern Bobwhite*		u	u	u	Gray-cheeked Thrush		u	u	u					
King Rail*		r	r		Swinson's Thrush		u	u						
Virginia Rail*		c	c	c	Hermist Thrush		u	u						
Sora*		c	c	u	Wood Thrush*		c	u	u					
Common Moorhen*		u	u	u	American Robin*		a	a	a	u				
American Coot*		a	r	a	Gray Catbird*		c	c	c					
Sandhill Crane*		u	u	u	Northern Mockingbird		r	u	r					
Black-bellied Plover		u	u		Brown Thrasher*		c	c	c					
Am. Golden-Plover		u	u		American Pipit		r	r						
Semipalmated Plover		u	u		Bohemian Waxwing		u	u	u					
Killdeer*		c	c	c	Cedar Waxwing*		c	c	c	u				
American Avocet		r	r	r	Northern Shrike		u	u	u	u				
Greater Yellowlegs		r	u	u	Loggerhead Shrike*		r	r	r					
Lesser Yellowlegs		c	c	c	European Starling*		a	a	a	c				
Solitary Sandpiper		u	u	u	White-eyed Vireo		r	r						
Willet		r	r	r	Bell's Vireo*		r	r						
Spotted Sandpiper*		c	c	c	Blue-headed Vireo		u	u	u					
Upland Sandpiper*		r	r		Yellow-throated Vireo*		u	u	u					
Hudsonian Godwit		r			Warbling Vireo*		a	a	a					
Marbled Godwit		r			Philadelphia Vireo		a	a	a					
Ruddy Turnstone		u	u	w	Red-eyed Vireo*		a	a	a					
Sanderling		u	u		Blue-winged Warbler*		u	u						
Semipalmated Sandpiper		c	c	c	Golden-winged Warbler		u	u	u					
Least Sandpiper		c	c	c	Tennessee Warbler		c	u						
White-rumped Sandpiper		u	u	u	Orange-crowned Warbler		r	c						
Baird's Sandpiper		u	u	u	Nashville Warbler		c	u						
Pectoral Sandpiper		c	c	c	Northern Parula		r							
Dunlin		u	u	u	Yellow Warbler*		a	a	u					
Silt Sandpiper		u	u	u	Yellow-throated Warbler*		r	r						
Short-billed Dowitcher		u	u	u	Chestnut-sided Warbler		c	u						
Long-billed Dowitcher		u	u	r	Magnolia Warbler		u	u						
Common Snipe		c	u	c	Cape May Warbler		u	u						
American Woodcock*		u	u	u	Black-throated Blue Warbler		r	r						
Wilson's Phalarope		u	u	r	Yellow-rumped Warbler		a	a						
Red-necked Phalarope		r		r	Black-throated Green Warbler		u	u						
Franklin's Gull		u	u		Blackburnian Warbler		c	u						
Bonaparte's Gull		u	u		Pine Warbler		r	u						
Ring-billed Gull		c	c	c	Palm Warbler		c	u						
					Bay-breasted Warbler		r							

American Birding Association Code of Ethics

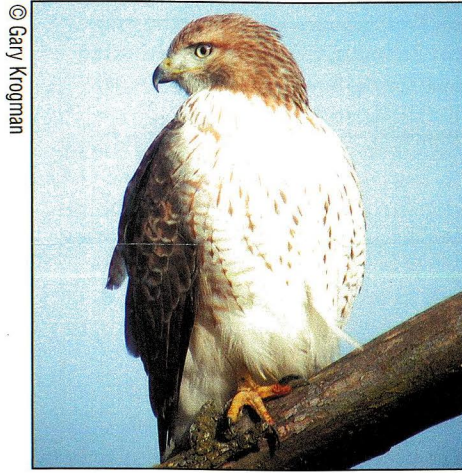
- Birders must always act in ways that do not endanger the welfare of birds or other wildlife.**
 - Observe and photograph birds without knowingly disturbing them in any significant way.
 - Avoid chasing or repeatedly flushing birds.
 - Use recordings and similar methods of attracting birds sparingly.
 - 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.



Cerulean Warbler



Bald Eagle



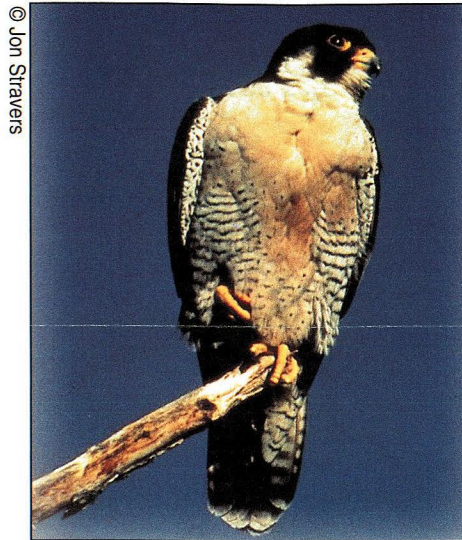
Red-tailed Hawk



Yellow-rumped Warbler



Vesper Sparrow



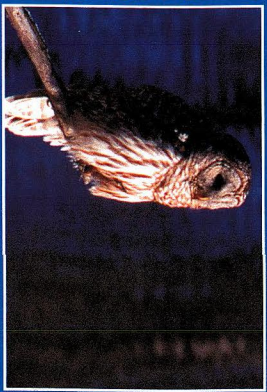
Peregrine Falcon



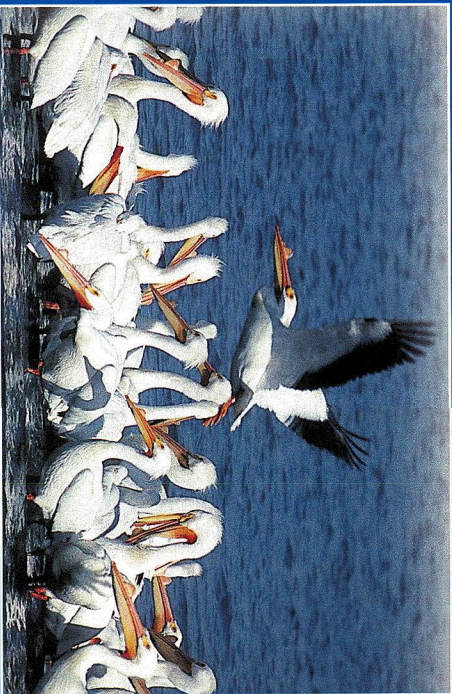
Trumpeter Swans



Follow the Great River Road to Great Birding Along the Upper Mississippi River



Barred Owl



American White Pelicans



Eastern Bluebird

Map Section 6 of 15
Minn./Wisc.
La Crosse, WI Area
Kellogg, MN to New Albin, IA

Audubon
Great River Birding Trail



For Questions about the Great River Birding Trail or to order additional maps:
Audubon - Upper Mississippi River Campaign
1707 Main Street, Suite 105
La Crosse, WI 54601
Phone: (608) 784-2992
Email: bkoop@audubon.org

For More Information on Wildlife Tourism, Travel and Recreation Along the Upper Mississippi River:
National Mississippi River Parkway Commission
www.mississippi-river.com
(763) 212-2560
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
[www.dnr.state.mn](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us)

Great River Birding Trail

La Crosse, Wis., Map — from Kellogg, Minn., to New Albin, Iowa (River Mile 755 to 674)

1. Kellogg-Weaver Dunes Scientific & Natural Area

Where: This SNA consists of both a northern and southern tract. From Kellogg, take Cty. Rd. 84 south. The northern tract has a sign and limited parking off of CR 84, 4.3 miles south of Kellogg. The southern tract has a parking area at the end of Township Rd. 141, which intersects with CR 84, 5.5 miles south of Kellogg. The southern end of CR 84 intersects with Hwy. 61 two miles north of Weaver.

Birds: Sandhill Cranes, flycatchers, Eastern Kingbirds, swallows, Eastern Bluebirds, Bell's Vireos, Red-eyed Vireos, warblers, Yellow Warblers, American Redstarts, Dickcissels, Bobolinks, Eastern Meadowlarks, Orchard Orioles, Lark Sparrows and Grasshopper Sparrows.

Note: Watch for the rare Blanding's Turtle, which uses this habitat. A side road leads to a public water access.

2. Weaver Bottoms

Where: Located 7 miles south of Kellogg, below the town of Weaver and north of Lock & Dam 5. There is a public parking lot, boat landing and kiosk at Weaver where you can scout for birds. To get a view from up high, drive roughly 2 miles south of Weaver on Hwy. 61. Just before the cemetery, turn right and take a second right that goes up the hill to a good observation point. You can also view the area from the roadside along Hwy. 61 below Weaver.

Birds: Almost all duck species, Bald Eagles, American White Pelicans, Double-crested Cormorants, Tundra Swans, gulls, Forster's Terns and Black Terns. In late fall, this is a major staging area for Tundra Swans.

3. Whitewater State Park and Whitewater Wildlife Management Area Loop

Where: At Weaver, follow Hwy. 74 to Whitewater State Park. Follow Hwy. 74 to St. Charles and turn left on Hwy. 14 to return to Winona.

Birds: Geese, ducks and other waterfowl, nesting Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, Bald Eagles and Golden Eagles in winter, Wild Turkeys, Barn Swallows, Turkey Vultures, Ospreys, Ruffed Grouse, Whip-poor-wills, Pileated Woodpeckers, Wood Thrushes and the Louisiana Water-thrush. Great variety of warblers during migration (including the Blue-winged Warbler). **Note:** A wonderful side trip from the Great River Road. There is an excellent interpretive center with displays at Whitewater State Park, as well as camping and cabins. Great place to watch birdfeeders from indoors in winter. Easily accessible. Most of Hwy. 74 is unpaved, but in good condition and well maintained all year.

4. Prairie Island

Where: Follow Huff St. to the river, where it curves sharply to the left and becomes Riverview Drive. Continue 1.5 miles and turn right on Prairie Island Rd. Follow to park entrance on the left.

Birds: Thrushes, warblers, Great Horned Owls, Barred Owls, woodpeckers, nuthatches, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and vireos.

Note: The road leading into Prairie Island Park has fantastic views of bottomland forest and marshlands. Thousands of ducks use the area above the spillway.

5. Aghaming Park

Where: From Winona, cross the Hwy. 54 bridge to Wisconsin. Turn right directly after bridge onto Latsch Island. Follow the left fork at the "Y". Park in front of the old concrete wagon bridge and walk across to Aghaming Park.

Birds: Excellent for spring warblers, Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets, Prothonotary Warblers, Cerulean Warblers, geese, ducks, rails, Bald Eagles, Red-shouldered Hawks, Ospreys, cuckoos, woodpeckers, flycatchers and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers.

Note: This park is undeveloped and accessible only on foot or by boat from the Minnesota side, although the park is in Wisconsin. Bottomland forest habitat. Duck hunting in fall.

6. Great River Bluffs State Park

Where: Follow signs off of I-90/Hwy. 61.

Birds: Wild Turkeys, Whip-poor-wills, Henslow's Sparrows, Bell's Vireos, Blue-winged Warblers. Watch for nesting Peregrine Falcons on the cliffs.

Note: Goat prairie habitat, high wooded bluffs and great views of the Mississippi River Valley and Driftless Area.

7. Mound Prairie Marsh Scientific & Natural Area

Where: From Hokah, take Hwy. 16 west about 4 miles. Park on gravel forest road on the north side of the highway.

Birds: Sandhill Cranes, Common Moorhen, Least Bittern and Yellow-headed Blackbirds.

Note: This SNA contains goat prairies, oak forests and steep rocky ravines of ancient stream beds. The Root River flows by on its way to the Mississippi. Spectacular views from climbing the SNA prairie.

8. Shepherd's Marsh

Where: In La Crescent, take the old highway (Main St.) along the east side of Highways 14/61. Turn east at the car wash on Main Street. Cross the tracks and drive to the marsh.

Birds: Waterfowl, marsh birds, Common Yellowthroats, swallows and Belted Kingfishers.

9. Reno Bottoms Dike

Where: Entrance and parking located just north of Reno on the east side of Hwy. 26. Drive or walk down to the access. Walk the long dike that extends into the east river bottom.

Birds: Look for wading birds, waterfowl, woodpeckers and warblers.

10. Reno State Recreation Area and Reno Bluff Overlook

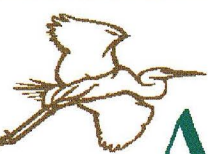
Where: From Reno, turn west off of Hwy. 26 on the gravel road and follow signs for Reno Recreation Area. About 0.3 miles pass entrance on left for primitive campground and continue about one mile. Watch for gate and trail on right, and park in the small parking lot. Follow trail up for about 0.3 miles, follow to the right when trail forks. Take the trail to old quarry and hold along rim. Panoramic views of river.

Birds: This is one of the best hawk-watching sites in Minnesota south of Duluth. In late September to late October watch for Cooper's, Broad-wings, Northern Harriers, Red-tails, Peregrines, Goshawks, Kestrels, Red-shoulders, Merlins and Turkey Vultures. In the bluff edge trees watch for warblers, vireos, gnatcatchers and kinglets. Also watch for Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Orchard Orioles, Yellow and Black-billed Cuckoos, Eastern Towhees, Wood Thrushes, Scarlet Tanagers, Wild Turkeys, owls and woodpeckers. In fall look for migrating Monarch butterflies.

11. Millstone Landing

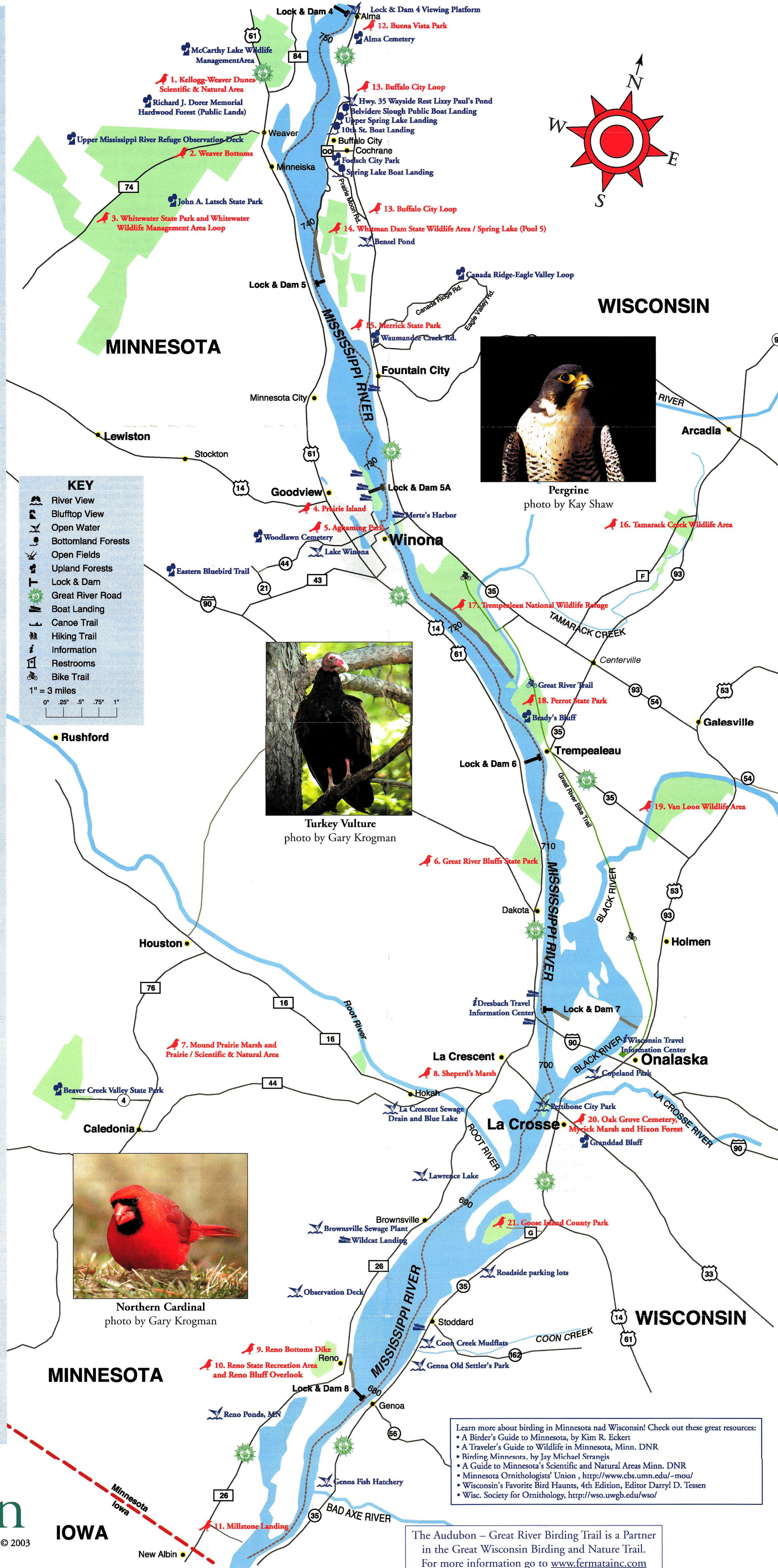
Where: Hwy. 26, 3 miles north of New Albin.

Birds: Watch for warblers in spring and woodland raptors.



Audubon

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12. Buena Vista Park

Where: In Alma, turn off of Hwy. 35 onto Cty. Rd. E. Follow signs for the park.

Birds: One of the best public raptor migration viewing areas in Wisconsin. Watch for Turkey Vultures, Red-tailed Hawks, Peregrine Falcons and Broad-winged Hawks (Aug.-Sept.). In fall, watch for Merlins, American Kestrels, Sharp-shinned Hawks and Coopers Hawks. Open water below Lock & Dam 4 makes this a great spot to watch Bald Eagles fish in winter. Also watch for Scarlet Tanagers, Wood Thrushes, Hairy Woodpeckers and Ruffed Grouse.

13. Buffalo City Loop

Where: From the south, turn left onto Prairie Moon Rd. 5 miles north of Fountain City. From the north, turn right on Cty. Rd. OO north of Cochrane at the sign. Buffalo City is rich in excellent birding areas, which are noted in blue on the map. **Birds:** River backwaters and marshes offer an extensive diversity of diving ducks and dabblers, three species of loons, rails, herons, Great Egrets, Sandhill Cranes, Ospreys and White Pelicans. In woodland and field habitats, watch for hawks, migrating warblers, cuckoos, vireos, gnatcatchers, thrushes and orioles.

14. Whitman Dam State Wildlife Area / Spring Lake

Where: Exit Hwy. 35 on Cty. Rd. O near Cochrane, then travel south on OO to the parking lot at the east end of the Whitman Dam Dike. Park here and walk the dike to look for birds.

Birds: Warbling Vireos, Prothonotary Warblers, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, American Redstarts, Common Yellowthroats, Hooded Mergansers and Tundra Swans. Look for Pileated Woodpeckers and Red-shouldered Hawks.

Note: Great place to walk through bottomland forest without getting your feet wet or trampling fragile vegetation. This road is not plowed in winter, but is accessible with skis or snowshoes. The 2-mile hike on the dike to Lock & Dam 5 during spring migration in May might be good for warblers, and in early November for waterfowl. (4-mile roundtrip walk)

15. Merrick State Park

Where: Three miles north of Fountain City on Hwy. 35.

Birds: In summer, watch for Great-Crested Flycatchers, Common Yellowthroats, Yellow-billed Cuckoos and Prothonotary Warblers. Look and listen for Barred Owls, Northern Saw Whet Owls, Eastern Screech Owls and the Great Horned Owl. Resident Cerulean Warblers recorded here. The pine trees to the left of the bridge as you enter the park are home to hundreds of Turkey Vultures in March and April. Best viewing time is at dusk.

16. Tamarack Creek Wildlife Area

Where: Drive west from Centerville on Hwy. 35/54 to Cty. Rd. F. Drive 7.5 miles north on F to the parking lot for the wildlife area. To return to Hwy. 35/54, head south on Hwy. 93 to Centerville. Or reverse this route, starting on Hwy. 93.

Birds: In this tamarack bog habitat watch for hawks, owls, warblers, vireos, thrushes, flycatchers, sparrows, Northern Harriers, Sandhill Cranes, Willow Flycatchers, Eastern Kingbirds, Sedge Wrens, Marsh Wrens, Eastern Bluebirds, American Redstarts, Indigo Buntings, Swamp Sparrows and Eastern Meadowlarks.

17. Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge

Where: Drive 3.25 miles west on Hwy. 35/54 from Centerville. Turn south at the sign for the refuge and follow 1 mile to the entrance.

Birds: Diverse habitat in this refuge attracts a wonderful diversity of bird species. Chances are good to see more than 29 warbler species and 100 bird species at the height of migration. In prairie and woodland habitat watch for Grasshopper, Lark, Savannah, and Field Sparrows, cuckoos, Sandhill Cranes, Dickcissels, Bobolinks, Northern Shrike, Pileated Woodpeckers, American Woodcocks, Northern Harriers, hawks, accipiters and owls. In open water and slough areas watch for Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Tundra Swans, White Pelicans, Forster's Terns, Sora and Virginia Rails and cormorants, as well as mergansers and dabblers in spring and fall.

Note: Don't miss the 4-mile Wildlife Drive, Keip's Island, Nature Trail to Pine Creek Dike, interpretation center and observation deck. Maps of the refuge are available at the headquarters and kiosks.

18. Perrot State Park

Where: Access from the south via Hwy. 93 through the village of Trempealeau. In Trempealeau, follow signs for the park. You can follow South Prairie Rd. from the park to get to Trempealeau Wildlife Refuge.

Birds: Excellent birding during spring and fall migrations. Along the river and backwaters, watch for Bald Eagles and Tundra Swans, waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls and terns. In the upland forests watch for Pileated Woodpeckers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Scarlet Tanagers, Black-billed Cuckoos, American Redstarts, Ovenbirds, Wood Thrushes, migrating warblers, vireos, flycatchers, woodpeckers, hawks and owls.

Note: Ancient Indian burial mounds and petroglyphs are preserved throughout the park.

19. Van Loon Wildlife Area

Where: On Hwy. 35/54, watch for sign and parking at the bridge, which crosses the Black River. Also accessible by driving east on Hwy. 35 from the town of Trempealeau for about 3-4 miles.

Birds: Red-shouldered Hawks, Baltimore Orioles and Redstarts. **Note:** Borders the Black River with mixed hardwood forest and marshlands.

20. Oak Grove Cemetery, Myrick Marsh and Hixon Forest

Where: Oak Grove Cemetery is on La Crosse St. or Hwy. 16 north of U.W. La Crosse. Bordering the cemetery to the north and east is Myrick Marsh. Hixon Forest can be reached from Hwy. 16 by turning east at the north end of the railroad overpass on Bluff Pass, or by trail from Myrick Park.

Birds: At Oak Grove watch for warblers and thrushes. While hiking through Myrick Marsh watch for Great Egrets, Green-backed Herons, a wide variety of waterfowl, Common Moorhens, terns, rails and wrens. Hixon Forest is great for woodpeckers, warblers and migrants in spring and fall.

Note: These sites are known as the best birding spots within La Crosse. Myrick Marsh has an elevated foot path through the marsh called the "RABBIT" Trail (River and Bluffs Bicentennial Intracity Trail). This trail branches off and you can follow it into Hixon Forest or Riverside Park on the Mississippi River. Hixon Nature Center offers Sunday afternoon programs.

21. Goose Island County Park

Where: Located 2 miles south of the junction of Hwys. 35 & 14/61.

Birds: Watch for migrant warblers in early May, waterfowl and Bald Eagles in fall and winter. Look for an active Cliff Swallow nesting colony at the entrance bridge (May-July).

Note: Watch for Upper Mississippi River Refuge walking trails when driving the entrance road into the park. Hunting is permitted in certain areas.

Learn more about birding in Minnesota and Wisconsin! Check out these great resources:

- A Birder's Guide to Minnesota, by Kim R. Eckert
- A Traveler's Guide to Wildlife in Minnesota, Minn. DNR
- Birding Minnesota, by Jay Michael Sranjig
- A Guide to Minnesota's Scientific and Natural Areas Minn. DNR
- Minnesota Ornithologists' Union, <http://www.cbs.umn.edu/~mou/>
- Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts, 4th Edition, Editor Darryl D. Tessen
- Wisc. Society for Ornithology, <http://wso.uwgb.edu/wso/>

The Audubon – Great River Birding Trail is a Partner in the Great Wisconsin Birding and Nature Trail. For more information go to www.fermatainc.com