

Big Branch Marsh

National Wildlife Refuge Bird List





This blue goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become a symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge was established in October 1994 and is one of over 560 National Wildlife Refuges. The refuge is located along the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, approximately 35 miles from New Orleans in Saint Tammany Parish, Louisiana. The purpose of the refuge is to protect a stretch of remaining natural shoreline of Lake Ponchartrain and to provide habitat for a diversity of wildlife species, with special emphases on migratory birds and endangered species.

The refuge is comprised of over 18,000 acres of coastal marsh, pine flatwoods, cypress brakes and hardwood forests.

Many woodland birds are year-round residents of the pine flat woods, including the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker. Many Red-cockaded Woodpeckers can be observed on or near the Boy Scout Road trail and overlook marked on the map. Spring and fall migrations bring many species of neotropical migrants through the refuge. A neotropical migrant is a bird that spends the summer in its breeding range in North America but migrates to Central or South America, or the Caribbean for its nonbreeding range in winter. More than 200 species are considered neotropical migrants. Many warblers, hummingbirds, shorebirds, songbirds and some hawks are neotropical migratory birds.

The refuge supports over 5,000 wintering waterfowl, including Mallards, Gadwall and Northern Pintails. At any time of year a wide variety of birds including shorebirds, wading birds, raptors, waterfowl, and songbirds can be sighted here. Brown pelicans and bald eagles are year-round residents of southeast Louisiana and are commonly seen at Big Branch Marsh.

Opportunities for bird watching on the refuge are plentiful, with over five miles of walking trails at Boy Scout Road, the Lemieux Road Educational Site, and almost four miles of more primitive trails near Paquet Road, Sapsucker Road, and at the end of Lucille Road. Big Branch Marsh maintains two public boat launches (one motorized, one non-motorized) at Lake Road and at the end of Sapsucker Road.

Birders interested in visiting the refuge should consult The American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics.

The following bird list contains 261 species, representing observations on and adjacent to Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge. Sightings of unlisted species should be reported to:

This list conforms to the nomenclature and arrangement established by the American Ornithologists' Union (1998). Symbols used in this brochure represent the following:

Sp Spring (March-May)
 Su Summer (June-August)
 F Fall (September-November)
 W Winter (December-February)
 C Common (certain to be seen in suitable habitat)
 U Uncommon (present but not certain to be seen)
 O Occasional (seen only a few times during a season)
 R Rare (seen at intervals of 2 to 5 years)

Four primary habitats common where birds are expected to be found on the refuge are identified as follows:

F Forest
 A Aerial Flyover
 W Open Water
 M Marsh

Species of special concern*
 Non-native/exotic species ^

Ducks Geese and Swans (Anatidae)

	Sp	Su	F	W	Habitat
___ American Wigeon	U		U	C	W
___ Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	O	O	O	O	W
___ Blue-winged Teal	C	R	C	C	W
___ Bufflehead	U		O	C	W
___ Canada Goose	R	R	R	R	M
___ Canvasback	R		R	R	W
___ Common Goldeneye				O	W
___ Gadwall	U		U	C	W
___ Greater Scaup				R	W
___ Greater White-fronted Goose	O		O	O	W
___ Green-winged Teal	O		U	U	W
___ Hooded Merganser*	O	R	O	U	F
___ Lesser Scaup	U		U	C	W
___ Mallard	U		U	U	W
___ Mottled Duck	C	C	C	C	W
___ Muscovy Duck	U	U	U	U	W
___ Northern Pintail	U		U	C	W
___ Northern Shoveler	O		O	U	W
___ Red-breasted Merganser	O		O	U	W
___ Redhead				O	W
___ Ring-necked Duck	R	R	R		W
___ Ruddy Duck	R		R	R	W
___ Snow Goose	U		U	U	W
___ Wood Duck	C	C	C	C	F

New World Quail (Odontophoridae)

___ Northern Bobwhite C C C C F

Turkeys (Phasianidae)

___ Wild Turkey R R R R F

Loons (Gaviidae)

___ Common Loon O O U W

	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Su</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Habitat</i>
Grebes (Podicipedae)					
___ Eared Grebe	R		R	R	W
___ Horned Grebe	O		R	O	W
___ Pied-billed Grebe	C	R	C	C	W
Pelicans (Pelicanidae)					
___ American White Pelican	C		C	C	W
___ Brown Pelican*	C	C	C	C	W
Cormorants (Phalacrocoracidae)					
___ Double-crested Cormorant	C	C	C	C	W
Darters (Anhinga)					
___ Anhinga	O	O	O	O	W
Frigatebirds (Fregatidae)					
___ Magnificent Frigatebird		R			A
Bitterns, Herons, and allies (Ardeidae)					
___ American Bittern*	R		R	R	M
___ Black-crowned Night-Heron	O	U	R	R	M
___ Cattle Egret ^	U	U	U	U	F
___ Great Blue Heron	C	C	C	C	M
___ Great Egret	C	C	C	C	M
___ Green Heron	R	C	R	R	M
___ Least Bittern*	O	U	O		M
___ Little Blue Heron	U	C	U	U	M
___ Reddish Egret*	R	R	R	R	M
___ Snowy Egret	C	C	C	C	M
___ Tricolored Heron	U	C	U	U	M
___ Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	O	C	O		M
Ibises and Spoonbills (Threskiornithidae)					
___ Glossy Ibis*	U	U	U	U	M
___ Roseate Spoonbill*		R	R		M
___ White Ibis	C	C	C	C	M
___ White-faced Ibis	U	U	U	U	M
New World Vultures (Cathartidae)					
___ Black Vulture	C	C	C	C	A
___ Turkey Vulture	C	C	C	C	A
Hawks, Kites, Eagles, and Allies (Accipitridae)					
___ Bald Eagle*	U	R	U	U	A
___ Broad-winged Hawk	U	U	U		F
___ Cooper's Hawk*	U	U	U	U	F
___ Mississippi Kite	C	C	U		A
___ Northern Harrier	C		C	C	F
___ Osprey*	U	U	U	U	M
___ Red-shouldered Hawk	C	C	C	C	F
___ Red-tailed Hawk	C	C	C	C	F
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk	U	U	U		F
___ Swallow-tailed Kite*	U	U			A

	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Su</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Habitat</i>
Falcons (Falconidae)					
___ American Kestrel*	C		C	C	F
___ Merlin	U		U	U	F
___ Peregrine Falcon*			R	R	F
Rails, Gallinules, and Coots (Rallidae)					
___ American Coot	C	C	C	C	M
___ Black Rail*				R	M
___ Clapper Rail	U	U	U	U	M
___ Common Moorhen	C	C	C	C	M
___ King Rail	U	U	U	U	M
___ Purple Gallinule	R	R			M
___ Sora	O		U	U	M
___ Virginia Rail	U		U	U	M
___ Yellow Rail*				R	M
Plovers (Charadriidae)					
___ Black-bellied Plover	O		O	R	M
___ Killdeer	C	C	C	C	F
___ Semipalmated Plover	O		O	R	M
___ Wilson's Plover**		R			M
Stilts (Recurvirostridae)					
___ Black-necked Stilt	C	C	C	U	M
Sandpipers, Phalaropes, and Allies (Scolopacidae)					
___ American Woodcock*	O		O	O	F
___ Dunlin	U		U	U	M
___ Greater Yellowlegs	C		U	U	M
___ Least Sandpiper	U		U	U	M
___ Lesser Yellowlegs	U		U	U	M
___ Long-billed Dowitcher	O		O	R	M
___ Pectoral Sandpiper	O		O		M
___ Red Knot*	R		R		M
___ Ruddy Turnstone	R		R	R	M
___ Sanderling	R		O	O	M
___ Semipalmated Sandpiper*	O		O		M
___ Short-billed Dowitcher	O		O	R	M
___ Solitary Sandpiper*	O		O		M
___ Spotted Sandpiper	U		U	U	M
___ Stilt Sandpiper	R		R		M
___ Western Sandpiper	U		U	U	M
___ Willet	R		R		M
___ Wilson's Snipe	U		U	C	M
Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers (Laridae)					
___ Bonaparte's Gull	O		O	U	A
___ Herring Gull	U	R	U	U	A
___ Laughing Gull	C	C	C	C	A
___ Ring-billed Gull	U	R	U	C	A
___ Black Tern	R		R		A
___ Caspian Tern*	U	U	U	U	A

	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Su</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Habitat</i>
___ Common Tern	R		R	R	A
___ Forster's Tern	C	C	C	C	A
___ Gull-billed Tern*	R	R	R	R	A
___ Least Tern*	O	C	O		A
___ Royal Tern	U	C	C	C	A
___ Sandwich Tern	R	R	R	R	A
___ Black Skimmer*	R	R	R	R	A

Pigeons and Doves (Columbidae)

___ Common Ground-Dove*	R	R	R	R	F
___ Eurasian Collared-Dove ^	U	C	U	U	F
___ Mourning Dove	C	C	C	C	F
___ Rock Pigeon ^	U	U	U	U	F
___ White-winged Dove			O	O	F

Cuckoos (Cuculidae)

___ Black-billed Cuckoo	R	R	R		F
___ Yellow-billed Cuckoo	U	U	U		F

Typical Owls (Strigidae)

___ Barred Owl	C	C	C	C	F
___ Eastern Screech-Owl	U	U	U	U	F
___ Great Horned Owl	C	C	C	C	F

Barn Owls (Tytonidae)

___ Barn Owl	U	U	U	U	F
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Goatsuckers (Caprimulgidae)

___ Chuck-will's-widow*	U	U	U		F
___ Common Nighthawk	O	U	O		F

Swifts (Apodidae)

___ Chimney Swift	C	C	C		A
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Hummingbirds (Trochilidae)

___ Ruby-throated Hummingbird	C	C	C		F
___ Rufous Hummingbird				R	F

Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)

___ Belted Kingfisher	C	C	C	C	W
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Woodpeckers (Picidae)

___ Downy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	F
___ Hairy Woodpecker	U	U	U	U	F
___ Northern Flicker	C	C	C	C	F
___ Pileated Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	F
___ Red-bellied Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	F
___ Red-cockaded Woodpecker*	U	U	U	U	F
___ Red-headed Woodpecker*	U	U	U	U	F
___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	U		C	C	F

Tyrant Flycatchers (Tyrannidae)

___ Acadian Flycatcher	U	U	U		F
___ Alder Flycatcher			O		F
___ Eastern Kingbird	C	C	C		F
___ Eastern Phoebe	C		C	C	F
___ Eastern Wood-Pewee	C	C	C		F
___ Great Crested Flycatcher	C	C	U		F

	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Su</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Habitat</i>
___ Least Flycatcher			O		F
___ Olive-sided Flycatcher*			R		F

Shrikes (Laniidae)

___ Loggerhead Shrike*	C	C	C	C	F
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Vireos (Vireonidae)

___ Blue-headed Vireo	U		U	C	F
___ Philadelphia Vireo	R		U		F
___ Red-eyed Vireo	C	C	C		F
___ White-eyed Vireo	C	C	C	C	F
___ Yellow-throated Vireo	C	C	C		F

Jays and Crows (Corvidae)

___ American Crow	C	C	C	C	F
___ Blue Jay	C	C	C	C	F
___ Fish Crow	C	C	C	C	W

Larks (Alaudidae)

___ Horned Lark				R	F
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Swallows (Hirundinidae)

___ Bank Swallow	U		U		A
___ Barn Swallow	C	C	C		A
___ Cliff Swallow	O		O		A
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow	U	U	U		A
___ Purple Martin	C	C	U		A
___ Tree Swallow	C		C	C	A

Chickadees and Titmice (Paridae)

___ Carolina Chickadee	C	C	C	C	F
___ Tufted Titmouse	C	C	C	C	F

Nuthatches (Sittidae)

___ Brown-headed Nuthatch*	C	C	C	C	F
___ Red-breasted Nuthatch			R	R	F

Creepers (Certhiidae)

___ Brown Creeper	U		U	U	F
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Wrens (Troglodytidae)

___ Carolina Wren	C	C	C	C	F
___ House Wren	U		U	C	F
___ Marsh Wren	C		C	C	M
___ Sedge Wren*	U		U	U	M
___ Winter Wren	O		O	R	

Kinglets (Regulidae)

___ Golden-crowned Kinglet	U		U	U	F
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet	C		C	C	F

Gnatcatchers (Sylviidae)

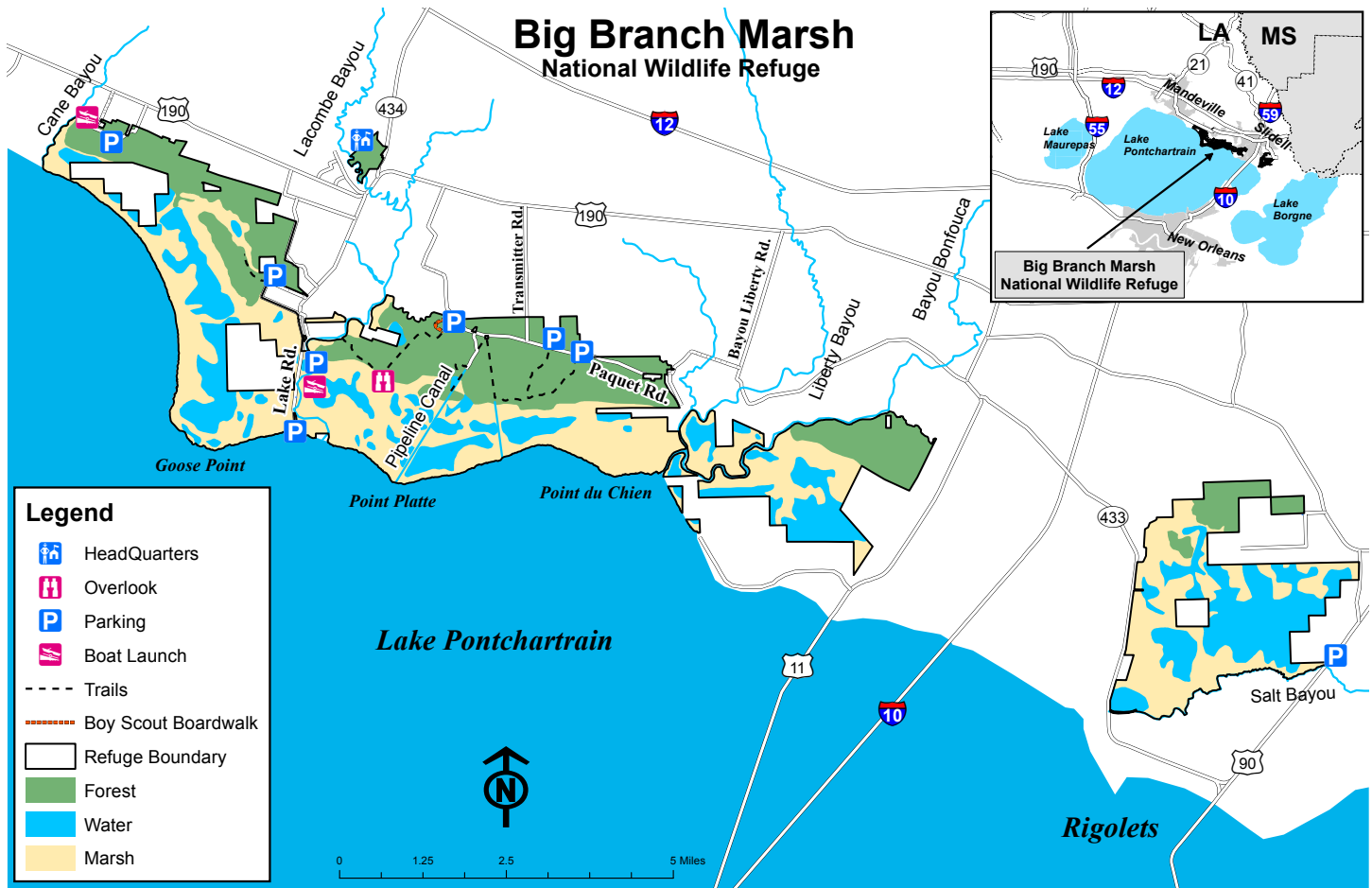
___ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	C	C	C	C	F
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Thrushes (Turdidae)

___ American Robin	U		U	C	F
___ Eastern Bluebird	C	C	C	C	F
___ Gray-cheeked Thrush	U		U		F

	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Su</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Habitat</i>
___ Hermit Thrush	U		U	U	F
___ Swainson's Thrush	U		U		F
___ Veery	O		O		F
___ Wood Thrush*	C	C	C		F
Mockingbirds and Thrashers (Mimidae)					
___ Brown Thrasher	C	C	C	C	S
___ Gray Catbird	U		C	C	S
___ Northern Mockingbird	C	C	C	C	F
Starlings (Sturnidae)					
___ European Starling ^	C	C	C	C	F
Pipits (Motacillidae)					
___ American Pipit	O		O	U	F
Waxwings (Bombycillidae)					
___ Cedar Waxwing	C		U	C	F
Wood-Warblers (Parulidae)					
___ American Redstart*	U	U	U		F
___ Bay-breasted Warbler	O		O		F
___ Black-and-white Warbler	O		O		F
___ Blackburnian Warbler	O		O		F
___ Black-throated Blue Warbler	R		R		F
___ Black-throated Green Warbler	U		U		F
___ Blue-winged Warbler*	U		U		F
___ Canada Warbler*	R		O		F
___ Cerulean Warbler*	R		R		F
___ Chestnut-sided Warbler	R		R		F
___ Common Yellowthroat	C	C	C	C	F
___ Golden-winged Warbler*	R		R		F
___ Hooded Warbler	U	U	U		F
___ Kentucky Warbler*	U	U	U		F
___ Louisiana Waterthrush*	R		R		F
___ Magnolia Warbler	U		U		F
___ Nashville Warbler	U		U		F
___ Northern Parula	C	C	C		F
___ Northern Waterthrush	O		U		F
___ Orange-crowned Warbler	U		U	C	F
___ Ovenbird	U		U		F
___ Palm Warbler	U		C	C	F
___ Pine Warbler	C	C	C	C	F
___ Prairie Warbler*	R		R		F
___ Prothonotary Warbler*	C	C	U		F
___ Swainson's Warbler*	O	U	O		F
___ Tennessee Warbler	U		U		F
___ Wilson's Warbler	O		O	R	F
___ Worm-eating Warbler*	O	R	O		F
___ Yellow Warbler	O		U		F
___ Yellow-breasted Chat	U	C	U		F
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler	C		C	C	F
___ Yellow-throated Warbler	O	O	O	R	F

	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Su</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Habitat</i>
Tanagers (Thraupidae)					
___ Scarlet Tanager	R		R		F
___ Summer Tanager	U	U	U		F
Emberizids (Emberizidae)					
___ Bachman's Sparrow*	U	U	U	U	F
___ Chipping Sparrow	U		U	C	F
___ Dark-eyed Junco	U		U	C	F
___ Eastern Towhee	C	C	C	C	F
___ Field Sparrow	O		O	U	F
___ Fox Sparrow				R	F
___ Grasshopper Sparrow*	O		O	U	F
___ Henslow's Sparrow*	O		O	O	F
___ Lark Sparrow*	O		O	U	F
___ Le Conte's Sparrow*	O		O	U	F
___ Lincoln's Sparrow	U		C	C	F
___ Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow*	O		O	U	M
___ Savannah Sparrow	C		C	C	M
___ Seaside Sparrow*	U	U	U	U	M
___ Song Sparrow	U		U	C	M
___ Swamp Sparrow	C		C	C	M
___ Vesper Sparrow	O		O	U	F
___ White-crowned Sparrow	O		O	U	F
___ White-throated Sparrow	U		U	C	F
Cardinals, Saltators, and Allies (Cardinalidae)					
___ Blue Grosbeak	U		U		F
___ Dickcissel*	R	R	R		F
___ Indigo Bunting	U	C	U		F
___ Northern Cardinal	C	C	C	C	F
___ Painted Bunting*	O	U	O		F
___ Rose-breasted Grosbeak	U		U		F
Blackbirds (Icteridae)					
___ Baltimore Oriole	U		U		F
___ Boat-tailed Grackle	C	C	C	C	M
___ Brewer's Blackbird				R	F
___ Bronzed Cowbird		U			F
___ Brown-headed Cowbird	C	C	C	C	F
___ Common Grackle	C	C	C	C	F
___ Eastern Meadowlark	C	C	C	C	F
___ Orchard Oriole*	U	U	O		F
___ Red-winged Blackbird	C	C	C	C	M
___ Rusty Blackbird*	O		O	U	M
Frigilline and Cardueline Finches and Allies (Fringillidae)					
___ American Goldfinch	U		U	C	F
___ House Finch ^	U	U	U	U	F
___ Pine Siskin				R	F
___ Purple Finch	O		O	O	F
Old World Sparrows (Passeridae)					
___ House Sparrow ^	U	U	U	U	F



Reporting Your Sightings On eBird

This online checklist program provides birders and U.S. Fish and Wildlife staff with updated birding reports. The database maximizes the utility and accessibility of bird observations made each year by both recreational and professional bird watchers. The program is one of the largest and fastest growing biodiversity data resources in existence. The reports on eBird serve as a vital foundation for better understanding bird distribution. The program resources are free to access and are used by a global community of educators, land managers, ornithologists, and conservation biologists.



Responsible birders should abide by the American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics. More information can be found at <http://www.aba.org>

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.
2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.
3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.
4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

**Big Branch Marsh
National Wildlife Refuge**

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD**

March 22, 2013

