White-winged Crossbill - Infrequent winter visitor. Feeds on seeds of coniferous trees. Irruptive.

Common Redpoll - Infrequent winter visitor. Feeders, birches, and alders. Irruptive.

Hoary Redpoll - Recent records in Lancaster, and Montgomery Counties, PA both in 1994.

Pine Siskin* - Irregular winter visitor. Woodlands with birches, conifers, Sweet Gum or Tulip Poplar trees. Feeders, and brushy fields. Irruptive.

American Goldfinch - Throughout area in brushy fields, and woodland edges. Feeders.

Evening Grosbeak - Irregular winter visitors. Feeders and mixed woodlands.
Numbers declining.

House Sparrow - Near all types of human habitations and buildings.
Species List
The order and names of the species in this checklist follows that of the American Ornithologists’ Union Check-list of North American Birds, 7th Edition, including the 42nd (2000) and 43rd (2002) Supplements. All species in this checklist have been accepted in the DVOC area by the relevant state rarities committee.

Abundance Key
The species’ abundance reflects the observer’s probability of locating the specific bird in the appropriate habitat, as described in the text, at the appropriate time and location. For example, Wilson’s Storm-petrel is abundant during the summer as a pelagic species, out of sight of land, while being much less common close to shore. Similarly, Lincoln’s Sparrow may be more common in the fall than is suggested by the graph, but they appear to be rather local in their distribution and are easily overlooked. Therefore, this publication tries to present what the advanced intermediate birder might expect to find. Each classification is defined in the graphs, except for accidental, which means less than five records and casual which is more than five records and less than one percent chance of finding the bird.

Breeding
Breeding dates are noted in the graphs by brackets.

Breeding records are noted in the Habitat Graphs
B - Regular breeder
b - Irregular Breeder

Area Sensitive Species
Signified by an asterisk (*) next to the species name. Many species of birds are typically found in extensive areas of their preferred habitat, rather than in small fragmented segments of the same habitat. Barren agricultural fields over 200 acres in size are ideal Vesper Sparrow and Horned Lark habitats, yet these species are rare in the same habitat fragmented into five acre blocks. This designation refers to breeding birds, not their migratory or wintering habitats.

The editor welcomes comments and/or corrections.
E-mail Rick Mellon at rmellon@voicenet.com

Snow Bunting - Open fields, particularly manured fields, lake shores, coastal dunes, and rocky coasts. Often with Horned Larks.
Northern Cardinal - Feeders, woodlands, thickets, and edges.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak - Deciduous woodlands. Rare breeder in Philadelphia, PA area.
Black-headed Grosbeak - Usually seen at feeders in winter.
Lazuli Bunting - One record: Chester County, PA 1975.
Indigo Bunting - Woodland edges and scruffy areas.
Painted Bunting - Recent records frequently at feeders in winter.
Dickcissel - Recent increases as migrant. Mostly at feeders in winter or herbaceous fields in summer.
Bobolink - Grassy fields and meadows in spring and summer. Scarce breeder on coastal plain. Can be abundant in coastal marshes in fall migration.
Red-winged Blackbird - Throughout area, mainly marshes but has started to use open fields due to expansion of range. Millions winter on coastal plain and tidal marshes south of the Commodore Barry Bridge. Sporadic northward in winter.
Eastern Meadowlark - Grassy fields, pastures, and manured fields. Reduced numbers in winter northward. Declining due to habitat loss.
Western Meadowlark - Prefers short grass.
### Red-throated Loon
- Ocean, bays, large lakes, and rivers. An uncommon migrant and winter visitor inland. Thousands gather at the mouth of Delaware Bay in early April. Freeze limited.

### Pacific Loon
- Ocean, bays, and large lakes. One inland record at Green Lane Reservoir, PA 1996

### Common Loon
- Ocean, bays, large lakes, and rivers. Seen in great numbers at inland hawk watch sites during migration. Freeze limited.

### Pied-billed Grebe
- Localized scarce breeder in non-tidal, deep water, emergent marshes, and ponds. Non-breeding inhabitant of ponds, lakes, rivers, and marshes. Freeze limited.

### Horned Grebe
- Ocean, bays, large lakes, and rivers. Primarily a migrant inland. Freeze limited.

### Red-necked Grebe
- Ocean, bays, large lakes, and rivers. Primarily a migrant inland. Irruptive. Freeze limited.

### Eared Grebe
- Ocean, bays, large lakes, and rivers. Primarily a migrant inland. Freeze limited.

### Western Grebe
- Ocean and bays.

### Yellow-nosed Albatross
- Pelagic.

### Black-browed Albatross
- Pelagic.

### Northern Fulmar
- Pelagic. Cold water species.

### Kermadec Petrel
- One record: Hawk Mountain, PA 1959.

### Black-capped Petrel
- Pelagic. Warm water species.

### Fea’s Petrel
- Pelagic. Warm water species. One record: 1999

### Cory’s Shearwater
- Pelagic. Warm water species.

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**Chances of seeing on a trip during the proper season, in the proper habitat.**

Refer to Page 4 for a complete explanation of all keys.

**Excellent** 99%  **Good** 99-50%  **Fair** 50-10%  **Poor** 10-1%  **Casual**  **Accidental**

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Green-tailed Towhee - Winter visitor.

Spotted Towhee - Several New Jersey records.

Eastern Towhee - Low understory and scrub at wood edges.


Bachman’s Sparrow - One record: Atsion, NJ 1957.


Chipping Sparrow - Woodland edges and clearings. Much rarer northward in winter.

Clay-colored Sparrow - Scrubby fields and feeders. Increasingly reported.

Field Sparrow - Brushy fields, edges, and power line cuts.

Vesper Sparrow - Field edges and power line cuts. Few sites remain in south. Needs extensive open fields. Much more common breeder in Lehigh River Valley.

Lark Sparrow - Brushy fields, edges, and fields.


Lark Bunting - Accidental.

Savannah Sparrow - Open fields with low grass. More common northward in breeding season and more common southward in winter.


Double-crested Cormorant – Ocean and large bodies of water. Migrates in huge flocks in April and October.

Great Cormorant – Ocean and large bodies of water. Coastal plain, primarily on Delaware River from Tacony Palmyra Bridge to Trenton, NJ.

Anhinga – Most records of soaring birds. Beware of soaring Double-crested Cormorants.

Magnificent Frigatebird – Coastal. All records from shore.

American Bittern – Nests in fresh water marshes. Winters in small numbers in salt marshes.

Least Bittern – Nests in fresh and brackish marshes. Likes Giant Reedgrass (Phragmites australis).

Great Blue Heron – Marshes, ponds, lakes, rivers, and streams. Increasing, although uncommon nester in widely scattered colonies - chiefly inland.

Freeze limited.

Great Egret – Coastal, wandering inland (common) in late summer. Marshes and shallow water. Nests north on Delaware River to Petty Island, Camden, NJ. Freeze limited.


Snowy Egret – Coastal, wandering inland (uncommon) in late summer. Marshes and shallow water. Freeze limited.

Yellow-throated Warbler - Early migrant. Nests in sycamores by rivers. Locally common in south; expanding range northwards.

Pine Warbler - Pine and pine/oak woodlands, occasionally pine plantations. Uncommon in migration away from breeding grounds.

Kirtland’s Warbler – One record: Berks County, PA 1996.

Prairie Warbler - Brushy areas and fields of second growth. Powerline cuts.

Palm Warbler - Thickets, woodland edges, weeds, and open ground—often high in trees in spring.

Bay-breasted Warbler - Woodlands, oaks.

Blackpoll Warbler - Woodlands. One of the last spring migrants.

Cerulean Warbler - Mature deciduous woodlands. Likes sycamore trees near streams and rivers. Very local breeder. White Clay Creek State Park, DE, Delaware River Valley above Yardley, PA, and Marshalls Creek, PA north. Rare in migration.

American Redstart - Deciduous woods. Erratic breeder south of the moutains.

Prothonotary Warbler - Wet woods with standing water. Cavity nester, often over water. Rare migrant away from breeding grounds. Breeds on the periphery of the pine barrens, but generally absent in the center of the pine barrens.

Worm-eating Warbler - Thick woods. Nests on banks and hillsides. Very local breeder on coastal plain of New Jersey.

Swainson’s Warbler - Low in wet woods in south; recent records from Cape May, NJ.

Ovenbird - Woodlands. Often seen low or on the ground. Deer impacted.
**Fulvous Whistling-Duck** – Marshes and impoundments. Few records in the last 20 years.


**Greater White-fronted Goose** – Lakes, ponds, and fields. Usually with Canada Geese and sometimes Snow Geese.

**Snow Goose** – Salt marshes, impoundments, and agricultural fields, especially near tidal marshes. Seen migrating over inland sites, with occasional individuals found at a variety of sites. Large flocks at Forsythe NWR, NJ from fall to early winter. Delaware Bay flocks overwinter. Much more common on Delaware Bay coastal plain. Freeze limited. Increasing.


**Canada Goose** – Rapidly expanding residential population nesting on lakes, ponds, and marshes. Freeze limited.

**Brant** – Salt marshes, bays, and impoundments and adjacent agricultural fields. Occasionally inland in fall migration.

**Barnacle Goose** – Lakes, ponds, fields, frequently with Canada Geese or Snow Geese. There is a continuing debate concerning whether individuals of this species are escapes or wild birds.

**Mute Swan** – Locally common. Forsythe NWR, NJ, Penn Manor, PA, Mannington Marsh, NJ. Lakes, ponds, and impoundments.

**Tundra Swan** – Large lakes, rivers, coastal impoundments, and fields. Most common in the pine barrens. Hundreds winter in cranberry reservoirs. Freeze limited.

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**Wood Thrush** - Forests and woodlots.

**Fieldfare** - One record: Bombay Hook NWR, DE 1969

**American Robin** – In winter, rare in mountains, common in southern part of range. Numbers vary with the severity of winter and the food supply.

**Varied Thrush** - Feeders and crab apple trees.

**Gray Catbird** - Thickets. Primarily coastal in winter.

**Northern Mockingbird** - Non-forested habitats with shrubs and trees.


**Brown Thrasher** - Thickets and woodland edges, declining. Primarily coastal in winter.

**European Starling** - Throughout area.

**American Pipit** - Plowed or short grass fields and mudflats.

**Bohemian Waxwing** - Wooded edges near fruit trees.

**Cedar Waxwing** - Wooded edges, cedars, and near fruiting trees.

**Blue-winged Warbler** - Second growth woods, power line cuts, and thickets.

**Golden-winged Warbler** - Low scrubby cut over areas with small trees. Rare spring migrant. Hybrids with Blue-winged Warbler are regular in breeding areas and migration.

**Tennessee Warbler** - Woodlands, high in oak trees. Often resorts to weeds in fall.
## Delaware Valley Birds

### Tidal Pine Barrens

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**Tufted Duck** – Bays, lakes, and rivers. Freeze limited.

**Greater Scaup** – Primarily coastal. Bays, lakes, and rivers. Localized flocks sometimes in the thousands. Freeze limited

**Lesser Scaup** – Coastal. Inlets and jetties.

**King Eider** – Coastal. Inlets and jetties.

**Common Eider** – Coastal. Inlets and jetties.

**Harlequin Duck** – Coastal. Inlets and jetties.

**Surf Scoter** – Often seen flying in long loose flocks low over the ocean. Inland mainly during migration. Spectacular fall migrations of all three scoters have been recorded from the sea watch at Avalon, NJ.

**White-winged Scoter** – Often seen flying in long loose flocks low over the ocean. Inland mainly during migration.

**Black Scoter** – Often seen flying in long loose flocks low over the ocean. Inland mainly in migration.

**Long-tailed Duck** – Coastal. Ocean, back bays, and inlets. Inland mainly during migration.

**Bufflehead** – Ocean, bays, rivers, and lakes. Freeze limited.

**Common Goldeneye** – Bays, rivers, and lakes. Freeze limited

**Barrow’s Goldeneye** – Bays and rivers

**Hooded Merganser** – Prefers fresh water marshes, lakes, and rivers. Freeze limited. Increasing breeder in Pocono Mountains, PA.

**Common Merganser** – Fresh water lakes and rivers. Nests commonly along large rivers and streams in the mountains. Rapidly spreading south along major rivers. Freeze limited. Casual in summer away from breeding areas.

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### Coastal Plain

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**Cave Swallow** - Accidental from south, nearly all records from Cape May, NJ.

**Barn Swallow** - Nests in buildings and bridges throughout the region.

**Carolina Chickadee** - Breeds south of the Black-capped Chickadee line. Hybrids occur in the contact zone.

**Black-capped Chickadee** - Breeds north of a fluctuating line from central Lancaster County, PA to Raritan Bay, NJ. Moves south in winter during invasion years.

**Boreal Chickadee** - Few recent records.

**Tufted Titmouse** - Forests, woodlands, and feeders.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch** - Erratic breeder, migrant and winter visitor. Prefers conifers, feeders.

**White-breasted Nuthatch** - Forests, woodlands, and feeders. Prefers deciduous trees.


**Brown Creeper** - Mature woodlands, usually conifer. Sporadic nester in south, mostly pine barrens swamps.


**Carolina Wren** - Reaching northern limit in our region, which appears to be weather related. Population grows rapidly until a severe winter decimates the population and the cycle starts again. Forests, woodlots, and feeders.


**House Wren** - Towns, gardens, woodlots, and forests.

**Winter Wren** - Secretive winter visitor to shrubby and second growth areas often near water.
Broad-winged Hawk – Breeder in extensive woodlands. Large kettles of migrants pass through eastern Pennsylvania heading southwest between the 15th and the 20th of September. Coastal migration occurs later with mostly immature birds.

Swainson’s Hawk – Most records of migrants from mountain ridges and Cape May, NJ.


Rough-legged Hawk – Late fall mountain ridge migrant and winterer in extensive agricultural lands and coastal marshes. Casual elsewhere.

Golden Eagle – Late fall mountain ridge migrant primarily on northwest winds and occasional winter resident along the coast and major rivers. Casual elsewhere.

Eurasian Kestrel – One record: Cape May Point, NJ 1972.


Merlin – Primarily a coastal migrant, with Cape May, NJ recording over 500 in one day during fall migration. Large numbers recorded at Cape Henlopen, DE in spring.

Gyrfalcon – Very rare late fall migrant on mountain ridges and winter visitor along the coast.

Peregrine Falcon – Nests on bridges along the lower Delaware River, on a skyscraper in Philadelphia, PA and at Forsythe NWR, NJ. Common coastal migrant and uncommon winter visitor.
American Coot – Large lakes and impoundments. Freeze limited. Rare nester in deep water marshes.

Sandhill Crane – Agricultural fields and marshes. Increasing migrant. One nesting record, paired with an escaped Common Crane in Cumberland County, NJ.

Northern Lapwing – Sod farms, barren fields, and mud flats.

Black-bellied Plover – Mudflats, marshes, beaches, sod farms, and dirt fields.

American Golden-Plover – Primarily mud flats in spring; sod farms, and barren fields in fall.


Snowy Plover – One record: near Hawk Mountain, PA 1886.

Wilson’s Plover – Barrier beaches and mud and sand flats. Few modern records.

Semipalmated Plover – Mudflats and flooded fields.

Piping Plover – Barrier beaches.

Killdeer – Sod farms, barren fields, lawns, parking lots, and mudflats. Freeze limited in north.

American Oystercatcher – Mudflats, sandbars, salt marshes, jetties, and bay shores especially at mussel beds.

Black-necked Stilt – Salt marshes, mudflats, and impoundments. Primarily in the Bombay Hook NWR / Little Creek WMA, DE area, with spring wanderers anywhere along the tidal Delaware River to Philadelphia.
### Delaware Valley Ornithological Club

**Delaware Valley Birds**

#### Tidal Pine Barrens

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#### Mountain

**Chances of seeing on a trip during the proper season, in the proper habitat.**

Refer to Page 4 for a complete explanation of all keys.

- **Excellent:** 99%
- **Good:** 99-50%
- **Fair:** 50-10%
- **Poor:** 10-1%
- **Casual:**
- **Accidental:**

### Species Descriptions

**Ruddy Turnstone** – Rock piles, jetties, and beaches.

**Red Knot** – Beaches, impoundments, mudflats, and marshes. Large concentrations on shores of lower Delaware Bay in May.

**Sanderling** – Beaches. Rarely inland on sandy lake shores, and river sand bars.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper** – Impoundments, mudflats, marshes, and flooded fields.

**Western Sandpiper** – Impoundments, mudflats, marshes, and flooded fields. Spring records require documentation.

**Red-necked Stint** – Impoundments, mudflats, and marshes. Best time to locate is mid-May and late July, when adults are still brightly colored.

**Little Stint** – Impoundments, mudflats, marshes, and flooded fields. Best time to locate is mid-May and late July, when adults are still brightly colored. Beware of juvenile Least Sandpipers in late July and August.

**Least Sandpiper** – Impoundments, mudflats, marshes, and flooded fields. More common in fresh water than other peeps and usually on drier areas.

**White-rumped Sandpiper** – Impoundments, mudflats, marshes, and flooded fields.

**Baird’s Sandpiper** – Impoundments, mudflats, marshes, flooded fields, and sod farms. Generally on driest portions of the habitat.

**Pectoral Sandpiper** – Impoundments, mudflats, marshes, flooded, and plowed fields and sod farms.


**Purple Sandpiper** – Rock jetties and sea walls.

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**Atlantic Puffin** – Pelagic. Accidental inshore, bays, and inlets.

**Rock Dove** – Cities, towns, farms, and open country.

**Eurasian Collared-Dove** - Casual. Slowly increasing from the south.

**White-winged Dove** – Most sightings from coastal locations.

**Mourning Dove** – Ubiquitous.

**Common Ground-Dove** – Several 19th century records. Two recent records: Bucks County, PA 1974 and near Pickering Beach, DE 1979/80.

**Black-billed Cuckoo** – Forest breeder, primarily in the northern half of our area. Population size related to availability of caterpillars.

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo** – Forest breeder, primarily in the southern half of our area. Population size related to availability of caterpillars.


**Barn Owl** – Nests in old buildings, unused silos, on bridges, and in holes in trees near large salt marshes, fallow and hay fields. Moves out of the northern portion of range during winter. Winter roosts in cedars along Delaware Bayshore. Declining

**Eastern Screech-Owl** – Small wood lots and towns.

**Great Horned Owl** – Forests, wood lots, suburbs, and city parks.

**Snowy Owl** – Airports, buildings, large agricultural fields, and extensive barrier island beaches and dunes. Irruptive.

**Northern Hawk Owl** – Three old records: near Philadelphia, PA 1866, Berks County, PA 1887, and New Brunswick, NJ 1926.
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**Chances of seeing on a trip during the proper season, in the proper habitat.**

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Refer to Page 4 for a complete explanation of all keys.

**South Polar Skua** – Pelagic. Warm water species.

**Pomarine Jaeger** – Pelagic, with occasional sightings from shore.

**Parasitic Jaeger** – Pelagic. Most frequently seen jaeger from shore.

**Laughing Gull** – Pelagic, very rare close to the coast.

**Franklin's Gull** – Lakes, rivers, bays, fields, and landfills. Most common at Penn Manor in Bucks County, PA.

**Little Gull** – Ocean, inlets, bays, marshes, rivers, and lakes. Often with Bonaparte's Gull.

**Black-headed Gull** – Ocean, inlets, bays, rivers, and lakes. Sewage ponds

**Bonaparte's Gull** – Ocean, inlets, bays, rivers, and lakes.


**Mew Gull** – Lakes, rivers, bays, and landfills. Found with Ring-billed Gulls.

**Ring-billed Gull** – Lakes, rivers, bays, fields, landfills, and McDonald's.


**Herring Gull** – Coasts, lakes, rivers, bays, and landfills.

**Thayer's Gull** – Casual. Several have over wintered at Florence, NJ in recent years.

**Iceland Gull** – Lakes, rivers, bays, and landfills.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** – Lakes, rivers, bays, fields, and landfills. Increasing. The landfills near Penn Manor in Bucks County, PA have been one of the best areas in North America to locate this species. Best viewed from Florence, NJ.

**Glaucous Gull** – Coasts, lakes, rivers, bays, and landfills.

**Great Black-backed Gull** – Coasts, lakes, rivers, bays, and landfills. Becoming more common on inland lakes. Increasing rapidly.

**Sabine's Gull** – Pelagic, rarely sighted from shore.

**Black-legged Kittiwake** – Pelagic, rarely sighted from shore.


**Ivory Gull** – Pelagic. Two New Jersey records.

**Gull-billed Tern** – Local, primarily in coastal and Delaware Bay salt marshes during breeding season. Possible occasional breeder in Delaware. Regular summer visitor to cranberry reservoirs in pine barrens.

**Caspian Tern** – Lakes, rivers, marshes, and bays.

**Royal Tern** – Inshore waters, inlets, salt marshes, and bays. Inland records are storm related.

**Sandwich Tern** – Beaches, inshore waters.

**Roseate Tern** – Inshore waters, inlets, salt marshes, and bays.

**Common Tern** – Inshore waters, inlets, and bays. Occasionally on salt marshes, rivers, and lakes.

**Arctic Tern** – Pelagic, casual elsewhere. Recent records at Beltsville Lake, PA and Cape Henlopen, DE.