

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Kootenai

*National Wildlife
Refuge*

Watchable Wildlife



Introduction

The Refuge

Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge is located in Idaho's Panhandle approximately 20 miles south of the Canadian border. The refuge was established in 1965, primarily to create a resting area for migrating waterfowl.

Wildland Diversity Attracts Many Animals

The small 2,774 acre refuge encompasses a wide variety of habitat types. Wetlands, meadows, riparian forests and cultivated agricultural fields (for producing wildlife food crops) are interspersed in the valley bottom adjacent to the Kootenai River. Wetlands include open-water ponds, seasonal cattail-bulrush marshes, tree-lined ponds and rushing creeks. The western portion of the refuge ascends the foothills of the Selkirk Mountains which consists of dense coniferous forest.

Wildlife species in this leaflet are grouped into five categories: birds, fish, amphibians, reptiles and mammals. Approximately 300 species of vertebrate animals normally occur on the refuge, indicating the richness and diversity of this environment.

Tips to Help you Enjoy Wildlife

Early morning and in the evening are generally the best times for observing wildlife, although there is always something exciting to see at other times of the day too. Many field guides are available at most book stores which describe an animal's habitat to help you learn where to look for particular species. This leaflet shows the seasons a bird is likely to be present, as well as other wildlife you may encounter during your visit. A good pair of binoculars or a spotting scope will help you observe wildlife from a distance without disturbing them. There are many wonderful opportunities for wildlife photography at the refuge as well.

A copy of the refuge regulations can be found in the main refuge and hunting and fishing brochures (available at refuge headquarters and brochure boxes).

Kootenai NWR Bird List Key

Good Luck! Whether you are a seasoned observer or just beginning, we wish you many pleasant and memorable experiences from your visit.

Seasons on the Refuge

Spring

Mid-March most ponds are ice free, the mallard and pintail migration is at its peak, and Canada geese are beginning to nest. In late March, trillium begins blooming as the snow recedes; coinciding with the mountain blue bird migration. Early April - osprey arrive and the bald eagles initiate their nesting. Mid-April - sounds of spring are in the air, with ruffed grouse "drumming" and snipe "winnowing." Late April - geese are hatching and hummingbirds have arrived. May through June - numerous wildflowers including paintbrush, lupine, tiger lily, subalpine mariposa lily, bear grass, orange honeysuckle, chokecherry, elderberry, thimbleberry, mountain ash and Oregon grape are in full bloom. Ducklings begin to hatch and moose may be seen on occasion.

Summer

June - duck broods are prominent and painted turtles are venturing from the water's edge to find favorable nesting sites nearby. Mid-June through mid-July are generally the best times to observe moose on the refuge. In July, eagle nestlings are stretching their wings and goslings are starting to take first flight. Syringa (the Idaho State Flower) and pearly everlasting are blooming and fireweed, a favorite of the hummingbirds, is also on full display. August begins the migration of waterfowl and shorebirds.

Fall

September - osprey and shorebirds depart early, while late in the month goose migration reaches its peak. October - signals a change as kestrels leave for warmer climates and bald eagles and rough-legged hawks arrive for the winter. At mid-month tundra swans stop briefly to restore their energy. November - ducks, comprised mostly of mallards, peak at 25,000-35,000 early in month.

Winter By late November most ponds freeze over and bald eagles concentrate their foraging efforts on dense flocks of waterfowl congregated on the last of the open water.

Winter In December, waterfowl move to the ice-free Kootenai River but still feed in refuge grain fields. Elk and deer move down from the snow covered Selkirk mountains and also feed on refuge crops to survive the next few stressful months. Late in February, tundra swans arrive while goldeneyes and mergansers begin courtship displays.

Seasons SP - Spring, April through May
 S - Summer, June through August
 F - Fall, September through October
 W - Winter, November through March

Seasonal Abundance Codes

- a = abundant - a species which is very numerous
- c = 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
- * = birds known to nest locally
- = endangered species
- + = threatened species

Accidentals The following list contains 223 bird species you can expect to see and the most likely time of year they occur on the refuge. In addition, another ten accidentals are of extremely rare occurrence.

Accidentals These additional ten species are out of their normal range, but have been recorded locally by several sightings.

- American White Pelican
- Double-crested Cormorant
- Great Egret
- Cattle Egret
- Harlequin Duck
- Oldsquaw
- White-faced Ibis
- Black-necked Stilt
- Upland Sandpiper
- Band-tailed Pigeon

Birds of Kootenai NWR

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Loons				
Common Loon	o		u	
Grebes				
*Pied-billed Grebe	c	c	u	
Horned Grebe	u	r	u	
*Red-necked Grebe	c	c	u	
Eared Grebe	u	o	u	
Western Grebe	u	r	u	
Bitterns, Herons and Egrets				
*American Bittern	u	u	o	
*Great Blue Heron	c	c	c	u
New World Vultures				
Turkey Vulture	u	u		
Swans, Geese and Ducks				
Greater White-fronted Goose	u		u	
Snow Goose	o		o	
Ross' Goose	r		r	
*Canada Goose	a	c	a	u
Tundra Swan	c		u	
Trumpeter Swan	u		u	
*Wood Duck	c	c	u	
Eurasian Wigeon	o			
*American Wigeon	a	c	a	o
*Mallard	a	a	a	a
*Blue-winged Teal	c	c	o	
*Cinnamon Teal	c	c	o	
*Northern Shoveler	c	o	u	
*Northern Pintail	a	u	a	o
*Green-winged Teal	c	u	a	o
Canvasback	u		u	
*Redhead	c	c	u	
*Ring-necked Duck	c	c	c	
Greater Scaup	o		o	
Lesser Scaup	u	u	u	
Surf Scoter		o		
White-winged Scoter			o	
Bufflehead	c	o	c	
*Common Goldeneye	c	c	c	u
Barrow's Goldeneye	u		o	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Swans, Geese and Ducks, <i>continued</i>				
Gadwall	c	o	u	
*Hooded Merganser	u	o	u	
Common Merganser	u		u	
Red-breasted Merganser	r			
*Ruddy Duck	c	c	u	
Osprey, Kites, Hawks and Eagles				
*Osprey	u	c	o	
+ *Bald Eagle	c	u	c	c
*Northern Harrier	c	c	u	u
Sharp-shinned Hawk	o	o	u	o
*Cooper's Hawk	u	o	u	o
Northern Goshawk	r	r	r	o
Ferruginous Hawk		u		
Swainson's Hawk	r		r	
*Red-tailed Hawk	c	c	u	o
Rough-legged Hawk	c		c	c
Golden Eagle	u	o	o	
Falcons and Caracaras				
*American Kestrel	c	c	c	o
Merlin	r	r	r	
Peregrine Falcon	r	r	r	r
Prairie Falcon	r	r	r	
Gallinaceous Birds				
*Ring-necked Pheasant	r	r	r	r
*Ruffed Grouse	c	c	c	c
Spruce Grouse		r		
Blue Grouse	o	o	o	
*Wild Turkey	o	o	o	o
California Quail	r	r	r	r
Rails				
*Virginia Rail	o	o		
*Sora	u	u	o	
*American Coot	a	a	a	o
Cranes				
Sandhill Crane	r		o	
Plovers				
Black-bellied Plover			o	
Semipalmated Plover	r		o	
*Killdeer	c	c	c	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Stilts and Avocets				
American Avocet	r	r		
Sandpipers , Phalaropes and Snipe				
Greater Yellowlegs	u	o	u	
Lesser Yellowlegs	u	o	c	
Solitary Sandpiper		o	u	
*Spotted Sandpiper	u	c	u	
Long-billed Curlew	r			
Marbled Godwit				r
Sanderling		o	r	
Semipalmated Sandpiper		o	u	
Western Sandpiper		o	u	
Least Sandpiper	u	o	u	
Baird's Sandpiper		o	u	
Pectoral Sandpiper		o	u	
Stilt Sandpiper				r
Short-billed Dowitcher		r	r	
Long-billed Dowitcher	u	u	c	
*Common Snipe	c	c	c	
Wilson's Phalarope	u	r	o	
Red-necked Phalarope	o		u	
Skuas, Jaegers, Gulls and Terns				
Franklin's Gull	o	r	o	
Bonaparte's Gull	o		o	
Ring-billed Gull	u	u	u	
California Gull	u	u	u	
Herring Gull	r		r	
Caspian Tern	r	r	r	
Common Tern				o
Forster's Tern	o		o	
*Black Tern	u	c		
Pigeons and Doves				
Rock Dove	r	r	r	r
*Mourning Dove	u	c	u	o
Typical Owls				
Western Screech-Owl	r	r	r	r
*Great Horned Owl	c	c	c	c
Snowy Owl				r
Northern Hawk Owl			r	r
Typical Owls, <i>continued next page</i>				

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Typical Owls, <i>continued</i>				
*Northern Pygmy-Owl	o	o	o	o
Barred Owl			r	r
Long-eared Owl	r			r
Short-eared Owl	r		r	r
*Northern Saw-whet Owl	o	o	o	o
Nightjars				
Common Nighthawk		c	o	
Swifts				
Black Swift	u	u		
*Vaux's Swift	c	c	u	
Hummingbirds				
*Black-chinned Hummingbird	u	u		
*Calliope Hummingbird	c	c		
*Rufous Hummingbird	a	a		
Kingfishers				
*Belted Kingfisher	u	u	u	o
Woodpeckers				
Lewis' Woodpecker	r	r	o	
*Red-naped Sapsucker	u	c	o	
*Downy Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
*Hairy Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
Three-toed Woodpecker	r	r	r	r
*Black-backed Woodpecker	o	o	o	o
*Northern Flicker	a	a	c	u
*Pileated Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
Tyrant Flycatchers				
Olive-striped Flycatcher	o	r	r	
*Western Wood-Pewee	c	c	r	
*Willow Flycatcher	o	c		
*Least Flycatcher	u	u	u	
*Hammond's Flycatcher	u	o	u	
*Dusky Flycatcher	c	u		
Cordilleran Flycatcher	r	o		
Say's Phoebe	r	r		
Western Kingbird		o	o	
*Eastern Kingbird	c	a	o	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Shrikes				
Loggerhead Shrike		r	r	
Northern Shrike	u		o	u
Vireos				
*Solitary Vireo	o	u	r	
*Warbling Vireo	o	u	r	
*Red-eyed Vireo	u	c	o	
Crows, Jays and Magpies				
Gray Jay	r		o	o
*Steller's Jay	c	u	c	c
Clark's Nutcracker	c	r	u	c
Black-billed Magpie	o	o	o	o
*American Crow	a	c	c	a
*Common Raven	c	c	c	a
Larks				
Horned Lark	r	r	r	
Swallows				
*Tree Swallow	c	a	o	
*Violet-green Swallow	c	c	o	
*Northern Rough-winged Swallow		c	c	r
*Bank Swallow	u	c	r	
*Cliff Swallow	c	a	o	
*Barn Swallow	c	a	u	
Titmice and Chickadees				
*Black-capped Chickadee	a	a	a	a
Mountain Chickadee	o	r	o	o
*Chestnut-backed Chickadee	u	u	r	r
Boreal Chickadee			r	r
Nuthatches				
*Red-breasted Nuthatch	c	o	u	u
Creepers				
*Brown Creeper	o	o	o	o
Wrens				
Rock Wren		r		
House Wren		r		
*Winter Wren	u	o	o	
*Marsh Wren	c	c	o	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Dippers				
*American Dipper	u	c	c	o
Kinglets				
*Golden-crowned Kinglet	c	u	c	o
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	u	r	u	o
Thrushes				
Western Bluebird	r			
*Mountain Bluebird	u	o	o	
Townsend's Solitaire	u	u	o	
*Veery	u	c		
*Swainson's Thrush	u	c	u	
Hermit Thrush	o	r	o	
*American Robin	c	a	a	u
*Varied Thrush	c	r	u	r
Mimic Thrushes				
*Gray Catbird	o	c	o	
Starlings				
*European Starling	a	a	a	u
Wagtails and Pipits				
American Pipit	u	r	u	
Waxwings				
Bohemian Waxwing	u		u	o
*Cedar Waxwing	o	c	u	
Wood Warblers				
Orange-crowned Warbler	o	r	u	
Nashville Warbler	c	u	o	
*Yellow Warbler	c	c	u	
*Yellow-rumped Warbler	c	u	c	
Townsend's Warbler	o	o	r	
*American Redstart	u	c	o	
Northern Waterthrush	o	o	r	
*MacGillivray's Warbler	u	c	u	
*Common Yellowthroat	c	a	c	
Wilson's Warbler		o	o	
Yellow-breasted Chat		r		
Tanagers				
*Western Tanager	o	u	o	

Common Name	Sp	S	F	W
Sparrows and Towhees				
*Rufous-sided Towhee	c	u	o	
American Tree Sparrow	u		u	u
*Chipping Sparrow	c	c	u	
Brewer's Sparrow	r		r	
Vesper Sparrow	o	r	o	
*Savannah Sparrow	a	c	a	
Grasshopper Sparrow	r	r	r	
Fox Sparrow	r		r	
*Song Sparrow	a	a	c	u
Lincoln's Sparrow	o	r	u	
White-crowned Sparrow	u	r	c	
Golden-crowned Sparrow	r		r	
*Dark-eyed Junco	c	u	c	o
Lapland Longspur				r
Snow Bunting				u
Cardinals, Grosbeaks and Allies				
*Black-headed Grosbeak	o	c	r	
*Lazuli Bunting	o	u	o	
Blackbirds and Orioles				
Bobolink	r	o		
*Red-winged Blackbird	a	a	a	u
*Western Meadowlark	c	c	u	r
*Yellow-headed Blackbird	c	a	u	r
Brewer's Blackbird	r	o	r	
*Brown-headed Cowbird	o	u	o	
*Northern Oriole	u	o		
Finches				
Rosy-Finch	o			u
Pine Grosbeak	r		r	o
Purple Finch	o	r	o	r
Cassin's Finch	u	u	o	o
House Finch	r	r	r	r
Red Crossbill	c	u	u	u
White-winged Crossbill	r			r
Common Redpoll			o	o
Pine Siskin	a	u	c	u
*American Goldfinch	u	c	u	
Evening Grosbeak	u	r	u	u
Old World Sparrows				
House Sparrow	o	o	o	o

Other Wildlife

The remaining vertebrate species are animals which also utilize the refuge but are perhaps a little more challenging to observe due to their general preferences in habitat types and behavior. The list includes 22 species of fishes, 7 species of amphibians, 6 species of reptiles and 45 species of mammals. These animals are always a welcome addition to any field trip and certainly add to the excitement and experience of visiting Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge.

Fishes

Sturgeons

- White Sturgeon

Trout, Char and Whitefish

- Kokanee
- Mountain Whitefish
- Cutthroat Trout
- Rainbow Trout
- Brook Trout
- + Bull Trout (*Dolly Varden*)

Minnows and Suckers

- Lake Chub
- Peamouth
- Northern Squawfish
- Longnose Dace
- Redside Shiner
- Longnose Sucker
- Largescale Sucker

Catfishes and Cods

- Brown Bullhead
- Ling (Burbot)

Live-Bearing Fishes

- Mosquitofish

Sunfishes and Perches

- Pumpkinseed
- Largemouth Bass
- Yellow Perch

Sculpins

- Slimy Sculpin
- Torrent Sculpin

Amphibians

Salamanders

- Tiger-Salamander
(*Blotched subspecies*)
- Long-toed Salamander
(*Northern subspecies*)

Toads and Frogs

- Western Toad (*Boreal subspecies*)
- Pacific Treefrog
- Wood Frog
- Spotted Frog
- Leopard Frog

Reptiles

Turtles

- Northern Painted Turtle

Skinks and Lizards

- Western Skink
- Northern Alligator Lizard

Snakes

- Rubber Boa
(*Rocky Mountain subspecies*)
- Common Garter Snake
(*Valley Garter Snake subspecies*)
- Western Terrestrial Garter Snake
(*Wandering Garter Snake subspecies*)

Mammals

Shrews

- Masked Shrew
- Vagrant Shrew
- Water Shrew

Bats

- Little Brown Bat
- Yuma Brown Bat
- Long-eared Brown Bat
- California Brown Bat
- Silver-haired Bat
- Big Brown Bat
- Hoary Bat
- Townsend's Big-eared Bat

Hares and Rabbits

- Snowshoe Hare

Chipmunks and Squirrels

- Yellow Pine Chipmunk
- Red-tailed Chipmunk
- Yellow-bellied Marmot
- Columbian Ground Squirrel
- Red Squirrel
- Northern Flying Squirrel

Mammals
continued

Pocket Gophers
Northern Pocket Gopher

Beavers
Beaver

New World Rats and Mice
Common Deer Mouse
Bushy-tailed Wood Rat
Gapper's Red-backed Mouse
Common Meadow Mouse
Richardson's Water Vole
Muskrat

Old World Rats and Mice
House Mouse

Jumping Mice
Western Jumping Mouse

New World Porcupines
Porcupine

Canines
Coyote

Bears
Black Bear

Raccoons
Raccoon

Weasels
Marten
Short-tailed Weasel
Long-tailed Weasel
Mink
Badger
Striped Skunk
River Otter

Cats
Mountain Lion
Bobcat

Hoofed Mammals
Elk
Mule Deer
White-tailed Deer
Moose

Notes

Date

Number of Species

Time Afield

Observers

Weather

Remarks

Please report any unusual sightings to the refuge manager.

