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# The Birds of Bannack



Montana Fish, Wildlife  
and Parks  
Bannack State Park  
Dillon, Montana



*Montana Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks*



## BIRDING AT BANNACK STATE PARK

Welcome to Bannack State Park. Thousands of people visit Bannack each year to take a step back in time. This area is rich in history, being the scene of Montana's first major gold strike and also the first territorial capital. There is another side of Bannack though that is often overlooked. This is a wonderful place to go birding. There are many species that live in this area, and several of them can often be seen in town or along the banks of the Grasshopper Creek which flows through the valley. Take this brochure, along with a bird book and binoculars if you have them. With a little patience, you will be sure to see some of the local residents who silently make their way through town, and we're not talking about the ghosts!

### VIEWING TIPS

1. Fade into the woodwork as much as possible. Walk softly and avoid making noise. Use the vegetation and landscape to help conceal yourself. Avoid casting a shadow and remove jewelry or other objects that might glint in the sunlight.
2. Do not interfere with the birds. Don't take young birds from their nests. Never feed the birds as this could cause a dependence on humans and lead them to losing their natural fear of campers and cars. Be patient with the birds, allowing them to land or fly on their own accord.
3. Give the birds plenty of breathing room. Use binoculars or, zoom lenses to get close-up. Stay back from nests so that the eggs or young are not placed in unnecessary danger.
4. Using binoculars can give you the sensation of being next to the bird, while at the same time giving the bird a sense of security. First, find the bird with your unaided eyes. Then bring the binoculars just under your eyes and sight the bird over the tops of the eyepieces. Slowly bring the binoculars to your eyes and begin your observation.
5. Use your senses to gain the most from your bird watching experience. Use your smell, taste, touch, hearing and sight to gain the most from birding.

Focus on a small area and to taking in a bigger picture. Instead of turning your head, use peripheral vision. Look for out of place shapes on branches and buildings. Also watch out for out of place motions. Don't look just in front of you, watch below and above. Cup your hands around your ears to help amplify natural sounds. Pay attention to your instincts and be aware of what you're not hearing. Birds may go silent when they sense an intruder in their environment.

6. Be relaxed and as unassuming as possible. Move slowly and steadily. Don't advance directly towards the birds. Don't stare, as a steady gaze may be interpreted as a threat.

7. Imagine how the birds you are seeking act. Consult books about their behaviors and patterns. Be aware of the time of day and weather conditions. Try to understand where they are likely to be gathering and feeding.

8. When using a camera, use at least a 400 mm lens. Have the sun at your back, preferably in the afternoon. Try to feature the birds in their natural surroundings, not a full-frame profile.

The following information was taken from P.D. Skars *Montana Bird Distribution* Fourth Edition, January 1992. This material was provided by FWP as a guideline for creating a bird list. Definitions are as follows:

n	Rare sightings, number indicates number seen and the date.
TES	Threatened, endangered or sensitive species.
SI	Species that are poorly known or have unique breeding habits or additional information is required.
I	Is non-native to North America or native to North America and transplanted to Montana.
B	Direct evidence of breeding.
b	Indirect/circumstantial evidence of breeding.
t	Observed non or no evidence of breeding.
—	Absent, no observation submitted.
W	Over wintering, regular sighting.

W	Over wintering, not yet documented but observed at least once between Dec. 15 and Feb. 15.
---	Absent, no verified winter records.
*	Most common seen birds in Bannack area.

GAVIIFORMES/Gaviidae	45. _____ Rough-legged Hawk (t,W)
1. _____ Common Loon (TES,t)	46. _____ Golden Eagle (B,W*)
PODICIPEDIFORMES/Podicipedidae	47. _____ /Falconidae
2. _____ Pied-billed Grebe (t)	48. _____ American Kestrel (B*)
3. _____ Horned Grebe (t)	49. _____ Merlin (b,w)
4. _____ Eared Grebe (b)	50. _____ Peregrine Falcon (TES,t,W)
5. _____ Western Grebe (b)	51. _____ Prairie Falcon (B,W)
PELECANIFORMES/Pelecanidae	52. _____ GALLIFORMES/Pastinidae
6. _____ American White Pelican (TES,t)	53. _____ Gray Partridge (t,B,W)
Phalacrocoracidae	54. _____ Ring-necked Pheasant (t,B,W)
7. _____ Double-crested Cormorant (SI,B)	55. _____ Spruce Grouse (B)
CICONIIFORMES/Ardeidae	56. _____ Blue Grouse (B)
8. _____ American Bittern (b)	57. _____ Ruffed Grouse (B,W)
9. _____ Great Blue Heron (SI,B,W*)	58. _____ Sage Grouse (B)
10. _____ Cattle Egret (t,n=13 6/29/88)	59. _____ Sharp-tailed Grouse (b)
Threskionithidae	60. _____ Wild Turkey (introduced,b)
11. _____ White-faced Ibis (TES,t)	61. _____ GRUIFORMES/Rallidae
ANSERIFORMES/Anatidae	62. _____ Virginia Rail (B,W)
12. _____ Tundra Swan (t)	63. _____ Sora (B)
13. _____ Trumpeter Swan (TES,t)	64. _____ American Coot (B)
14. _____ Snow Goose (t)	65. _____ Gruidae
15. _____ Canada Goose (B,W*)	66. _____ Sandhill Crane (B*)
16. _____ Wood Duck (B)	67. _____ CHIRADIIFORMES/Charadriidae
17. _____ Green-winged Teal (B)	68. _____ Killdeer (B,W*)
18. _____ Mallard (B,W*)	69. _____ Mountain Plover (TES,t)
19. _____ Northern Pintail (t,W)	70. _____ /Fecurivrosidae
20. _____ Blue-winged Teal (B)	71. _____ American Avocet (t)
21. _____ Cinnamon Teal (b)	72. _____ Lesser Yellowlegs (t)
22. _____ Northern Shoveler (t)	73. _____ Solitary Sandpiper (t)
23. _____ Gadwall (t)	74. _____ Willer (t)
24. _____ American Wigeon (t)	75. _____ Spotted Sandpiper (B*)
25. _____ Canvasback (t)	76. _____ Long-billed Curlew (B)
26. _____ Redhead (t)	77. _____ Least Sandpiper (t)
27. _____ Lesser Scaup (t)	78. _____ Long-billed Dowitcher (t)
28. _____ Common Goldeneye (t,W)	79. _____ Common Snipe (B,W)
29. _____ Barrow's Goldeneye (t)	80. _____ Wilson's Phalarope (B)
30. _____ Bufflehead (t)	81. _____ Red-necked Phalarope (t)
31. _____ Hooded Merganser (B)	82. _____ /Laridae
32. _____ Common Merganser (B)	83. _____ Franklin's Gull (SI,t)
33. _____ Red-breasted Merganser (t)	84. _____ Bonaparte's Gull
34. _____ Ruddy Duck (t)	85. _____ (QUADC,t)
FALCONIFORMES/Cathartidae	86. _____ Ring-billed Gull (SI,t)
35. _____ Turkey Vulture (b)	87. _____ California Gull (SI,t)
/Accipitridae	88. _____ Black Tern (t)
36. _____ Osprey (B)	89. _____ Black Tern (t)
37. _____ Bald Eagle (TES,b,BW*)	90. _____ COLUMBIFORMES/Columbidae
38. _____ Northern Harrier (B,W)	91. _____ Rock Dove (t,B,W,*)
39. _____ Sharp-shinned Hawk (t,W)	92. _____ Mourning Dove (B,*)
40. _____ Cooper's Hawk (b)	93. _____ Cuculiformes/Cuculidae
41. _____ Northern Goshawk (TES,B,W)	94. _____ Black-billed Cuckoo (b)
42. _____ Swainson's Hawk (B)	95. _____ STRIGIFORMES/Tyrionidae
43. _____ Red-tailed Hawk (B,W*)	96. _____ Barn Owl (t,n=10)
44. _____ Ferruginous Hawk (TES,B)	97. _____ Strigidae
	98. _____ Great Horned Owl (B,W)
	99. _____ Northern Pygmy-Owl (b,W)
	100. _____ Burrowing Owl (TES,t)

88. Great Gray Owl (TES, D)  
89. Long-eared Owl (B)  
90. Short-eared Owl (I)  
CAPRIMULGIFORMES/Caprimulgidae  
91. Common Nighthawk (\*)  
APODIFORMES/Apodidae  
92. White-throated Swift (b)  
/Trochilidae  
93. Calliope Hummingbird (b)  
94. Rufous Hummingbird (B)  
CORACIIFORMES/Alcedinidae  
95. Belted Kingfisher (B, W, \*)  
PICIFORMES/Picidae  
96. Lewis's Woodpecker (b)  
97. Red-napped Sapsucker (B)  
98. Williamson's Sapsucker (B)  
99. Downy Woodpecker (B, W, \*)  
100. Hairy Woodpecker (B, W, \*)  
101. Three-toed Woodpecker (b, \*)  
102. Black-backed Woodpecker (b)  
103. Northern Flicker (B, W, \*)  
PASSERIFORMES/Tyrannidae  
104. Olive-sided Flycatcher (I, \*)  
105. Western Wood-Pewee (B)  
106. Willow Flycatcher (b)  
107. Hammond's Flycatcher (b)  
108. Dusky Flycatcher (B)  
109. Say's Phoebe (B, \*)  
110. Western Kingbird (b)  
111. Eastern Kingbird (B)  
/Alaudidae  
112. Horned Lark (B, W)  
/Hirundinidae  
113. Purple Martin (I, =1B)  
114. Tree Swallow (B)  
115. Violet-green Swallow (B, \*)  
116. Northern Rough-winged Swallow (B)  
117. Bank Swallow (B)  
118. Cliff Swallow (B, \*)  
119. Barn Swallow (B, \*)  
/Corvidae  
120. Gray Jay (B)  
121. Steller's Jay (b, W)  
122. Blue Jay (I, W)  
123. Pinyon Jay (I, W)  
124. Clark's Nutcracker (B, W, \*)  
125. Black-billed Magpie (B, W, \*)  
126. American Crow (B, W, \*)  
127. Common Raven (B, W, \*)  
/Paridae  
128. Black-capped Chickadee (B, W, \*)  
129. Mountain Chickadee (B, W)  
/Sittidae  
130. Red-breasted Nuthatch (b, W)  
131. White-breasted Nuthatch (B)  
132. Pygmy Nuthatch (I, W)  
/Certhiidae  
133. Brown Creeper (I, W)  
/Troglodytidae  
134. Rock Wren (B)  
135. House Wren (B, \*)
136. Winter Wren (I)  
137. Marsh Wren (B)  
/Cinclidae  
138. American Dipper (B, W)  
/Muscipidae  
139. Golden-crowned Kinglet (b)  
140. Ruby-crowned Kinglet (B)  
141. Mountain Bluebird (B, \*)  
142. Townsend's Solitaire (b, W)  
143. Veery (b)  
144. Swainson's Thrush (b)  
145. Hermit Thrush (b)  
146. American Robin (B, W, \*)  
/Mniotidae  
147. Gray Catbird (B)  
148. Sage Thrasher (b)  
/Mniotiltidae  
149. American Pipit (B)  
/Bombycillidae  
150. Bohemian Waxwing (I, W)  
151. Cedar Waxwing (B, W)  
/Laniidae  
152. Northern Shrike (I, W)  
153. Loggerhead Shrike (TES b, w)  
/Sturnidae  
154. European Starling (\*, B, W)  
/Icteonidae  
155. Warbling Vireo (B)  
156. Red-eyed Vireo (b)  
/Emberizidae  
157. Orange-crowned Warbler (b)  
158. Yellow Warbler  
159. Yellow-rumped Warbler (SI, B)  
160. Townsend's Warbler (I)  
161. American Redstart (b)  
162. Northern Waterthrush (b)  
163. MacGillivray's Warbler (B)  
164. Common Yellowthroat (B)  
165. Wilson's Warbler (B)  
166. Yellow-breasted Chat (B)  
167. Western Tanager (B, \*)  
168. Rose-breasted Grosbeak (I)  
169. Black-headed Grosbeak (b)  
170. Lazuli Bunting (B)  
171. Green-tailed Towhee (b)  
172. Rufous-sided Towhee (b)  
173. American Tree Sparrow (I, W)  
174. Chipping Sparrow (B)  
175. Clay-colored Sparrow (b)  
176. Brewer's Sparrow (b)  
177. Vesper Sparrow (B)  
178. Lark Sparrow (b)  
179. Lark Bunting (I)  
180. Savannah Sparrow (B)  
181. Fox Sparrow (b)  
182. Song Sparrow (B, W)  
183. Lincoln's Sparrow (B)  
184. White-throated Sparrow (I)  
185. White-crowned Sparrow (B)

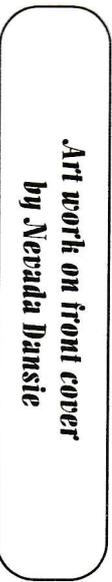
186. Harris Sparrow (I, W)  
187. Dark-eyed Junco (SI, B, W)  
188. McCown's Longspur (b)  
189. Chestnut-collared Longspur (b)  
190. Snow Bunting (I, W)  
191. Bobolink (B)  
192. Red-winged Blackbird (B, \*)  
193. Western Meadowlark (B, W)  
194. Yellow-headed Blackbird (b)  
195. Brewer's Blackbird (B, \*)  
196. Common Grackle (B)  
197. Brown-headed Cowbird (B, \*)  
198. Northern Oriole (SI, B)  
199. Rosy Finch (SI, I, W)  
200. Pine Grosbeak (I, W)  
201. Cassin's Finch (B, \*)  
202. House Finch (b)  
203. Red Crossbill (I)  
204. White-winged Crossbill (I)  
205. Common Redpoll (I, W)  
206. Pine Siskin (B, W)  
207. American Goldfinch (B, W)  
208. Evening Grosbeak (B, W)  
/Passeridae  
209. House Sparrow (I, B, W)  
210. \_\_\_\_\_  
211. \_\_\_\_\_  
212. \_\_\_\_\_  
213. \_\_\_\_\_  
214. \_\_\_\_\_

A Bird Watchers pack is available for your use while you are visiting the park. Just ask the attendant in the Visitors Center for details. In the backpack you will find a pair of binoculars, P. D. Skarr's book, *Montana Bird Distribution and The Audubon Societies Field Guide To North American Birds for the Western Region*. A small deposit is required when checking out the backpack and will be returned when you return the backpack to the Visitor Center.

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**For More Information, Call or Write:**  
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*This brochure is a joint project of  
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