

Checklist of birds on Nebraska farms

This checklist is based largely on observations of birds made, with permission, on Nebraska farms since the mid-1990s, as part of research conducted through the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, School of Natural Resources. Most studies were in the eastern and central parts of the state although some were on farms across western Nebraska. We are grateful to the dedicated students who conducted bird surveys and to the many farm families and landowners who graciously allowed access to their farms and who also provided helpful project inputs and guidance.

Climate, vegetation, and land patterns in Nebraska gradually change from east to west and north to south and bird populations change accordingly. Bird species to expect on farms also vary depending on location and habitat available on the farm. Because each bird study had a specific focus, some unique habitats were not surveyed so you may discover additional bird species on Nebraska farms and help improve this list. This list was compiled by Ron Johnson, UNL Professor Emeritus.

Habitat codes where birds are likely to be seen on farms:

B = Around buildings

F = Flying – aerial foragers, typically fly over a variety of habitats foraging for foods such as insects or rodents.

G = Grassland such as CRP or prairie grass, pastures, meadows, hayfields

O = Open areas such as pastures, lawns, crop fields, or rangelands

S = Shrubby areas with a mix of shrubs, grasses, and weeds (e.g., odd areas, herbaceous fencerows or grassy strips with scattered shrubs or small trees).

T = Trees, woody habitats, and adjacent field edges (e.g., windbreaks, tree rows, shrubby areas, wooded areas along streams). * = more likely along wooded stream corridors.

W = Wet areas such as streams, ponds, wetlands and adjacent vegetation

Season abbreviations provide a general guide to times of year that birds are present:

Sp = March-May, Su = June-August, F = September-November, W = December-February.

Common name	Habitat	Season
DUCKS and GEESE		
___ Canada Goose	W	Sp Su F W
___ Wood Duck	W	Sp Su F -
___ Mallard	W	Sp Su F W
___ Blue-winged Teal	W	Sp Su F -
___ Northern Pintail	W	Sp Su F W
___ Ruddy Duck	W	Sp Su F -
PHEASANTS, QUAIL, and TURKEY		
___ Northern Bobwhite	S, G, T	Sp Su F W
___ Ring-necked Pheasant	S, G, T	Sp Su F W
___ Wild Turkey	T*, S	Sp Su F W

CORMORANTS

___ Double-crested Cormorant	W	Sp	-	F	-
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HERONS

___ Great Blue Heron	W	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Cattle Egret	O, G, W	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Green Heron	W	Sp	-	F	-
___ White-faced Ibis	W	Sp	-	F	-

VULTURES

___ Turkey Vulture	F	Sp	Su	F	-
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HAWKS

___ Northern Harrier	F, G, W	Sp	Su	F	W
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk	T	Sp	-	F	W
___ Coopers Hawk	T	Sp	Su	F	W
___ Swainson's Hawk	F, G, O	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Red-tailed hawk	F, T, O	Sp	Su	F	W

SHOREBIRDS

___ American Avocet	W	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Killdeer	O	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Spotted Sandpiper	W	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Solitary Sandpiper	W	Sp	-	F	-
___ Willet	W	Sp	-	F	-
___ Upland Sandpiper	G	Sp	Su	-	-
___ Long-billed Curlew	W	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Least Sandpiper	W	Sp	-	F	-
___ Least Tern	W	Sp	-	F	-

PIGEONS & DOVES

___ Rock Pigeon	B, O	Sp	Su	F	W
___ Eurasian Collared-Dove	B, O	Sp	Su	F	?
___ Mourning Dove	T, O	Sp	Su	F	W

CUCKOOS

___ Yellow-billed Cuckoo	T	Sp	Su	-	-
___ Black-billed Cuckoo	T	Sp	Su	-	-

OWLS

___ Great-horned Owl	T	Sp	Su	F	W
___ Burrowing Owl	G	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Barred Owl	T	Sp	Su	F	W
___ Long-eared Owl	T	-	-	F	W

NIGHTJARS

___ Common nighthawk	F, G	Sp Su F -
___ Chuck-will's-widow	T*	Sp Su - -

SWIFTS

___ Chimney Swift	F	Sp Su F -
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HUMMINGBIRDS

___ Ruby-throated Hummingbird	T	Sp Su F -
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KINGFISHERS

___ Belted Kingfisher	W	Sp Su F -
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WOODPECKERS

___ Red-headed Woodpecker	T	Sp Su F -
___ Red-bellied Woodpecker	T	Sp Su F W
___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	T	Sp - F -
___ Downy Woodpecker	T	Sp Su F W
___ Hairy Woodpecker	T	Sp Su F W
___ Northern Flicker	T, O	Sp Su F W

FALCONS

___ American Kestrel	O, T	Sp Su F W
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TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

___ Olive-sided Flycatcher	T	Sp - F -
___ Eastern Wood-Pewee	T	Sp Su F -
___ Willow Flycatcher	T*, W	Sp Su F -
___ Least Flycatcher	T, S	Sp - F -
___ Eastern Phoebe	T*, B	Sp Su F -
___ Say's Phoebe	O, B	Sp Su F -
___ Great-crested Flycatcher	T	Sp Su F -
___ Western Kingbird	O, T, S	Sp Su - -
___ Eastern Kingbird	O, T, S	Sp Su - -

SHRIKES

___ Loggerhead Shrike	S, O	Sp Su F -
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VIREOS

___ Bell's Vireo	S, T*	Sp Su - -
___ Warbling Vireo	T*	Sp Su F -
___ Philadelphia Vireo	T	Sp - F -
___ Red-eyed Vireo	T*	Sp Su F -

JAYS & CROWS

___ Blue Jay	T	Sp Su F W
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___ American Crow	T	Sp Su F W
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LARKS

___ Horned Lark	O	Sp Su F W
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SWALLOWS

___ Purple Martin	F	Sp Su F -
___ Tree Swallow	F	Sp Su F -
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow	F	Sp Su F -
___ Cliff Swallow	F	Sp Su F -
___ Barn Swallow	F	Sp Su F -

TITMICE & CHICKADEES

___ Black-capped Chickadee	T	Sp Su F W
___ Tufted Titmouse	T*	Sp Su F W

NUTHATCHES

___ Red-breasted Nuthatch	T	- - F W
___ White-breasted Nuthatch	T	Sp Su F W

CREEPERS

___ Brown Creeper	T	- Su F W
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WRENS

___ House Wren	T	Sp Su F -
___ Sedge Wren	W, G	Sp Su F -
___ Marsh Wren	W	Sp Su F
___ Carolina Wren	T	Sp Su F W

KINGLETS & GNATCATCHERS

___ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	T*	Sp Su F -
___ Golden-crowned Kinglet	T	- - F W
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet	T	Sp - F -

THRUSHES

___ Eastern Bluebird	T, O	Sp Su F -
___ Gray-cheeked Thrush	T*	Sp - F -
___ Swainson's Thrush	T*	Sp - F -
___ Hermit Thrush	T*	Sp - F -
___ Wood Thrush	T*	Sp Su F -
___ American Robin	T, O	Sp Su F W

MIMIC THRUSHES

___ Gray Catbird	T, S	Sp Su F -
___ Brown Thrasher	T, S	Sp Su F -
___ Northern Mockingbird	T, S	Sp Su F -

STARLINGS

___ European Starling	T, B	Sp Su F W
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WAXWINGS

___ Cedar Waxwing	T	Sp Su F W
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SNOW BUNTING & LONGSPURS

___ Snow Bunting	O	- - - W
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WOOD WARBLERS

___ Northern Waterthrush	T*	Sp - F -
___ Black and White Warbler	T*	Sp - F -
___ Tennessee Warbler	T	Sp - F -
___ Orange-crowned Warbler	T*, S	Sp - F -
___ Nashville Warbler	T	Sp - F -
___ Mourning Warbler	T, S	Sp - F -
___ Common Yellowthroat	W, T*	Sp Su F -
___ American Redstart	T*	Sp - F -
___ Magnolia Warbler	T	Sp - F -
___ Yellow Warbler	T*, W	Sp Su F -
___ Blackpoll Warbler	T*	Sp - - -
___ Palm Warbler	S, T*	Sp - F -
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler	T*	Sp - F -
___ Wilson's Warbler	S	Sp - F -
___ Yellow-breasted Chat	T*, S	Sp Su F -

NATIVE SPARROWS, TOWHEES, JUNCOS

___ Spotted Towhee	T, S	Sp Su F -
___ Eastern Towhee	T, S	Sp Su F -
___ American Tree Sparrow	T, S	- - F W
___ Chipping Sparrow	T	Sp Su F -
___ Clay-colored Sparrow	T, S	Sp - F -
___ Field Sparrow	T, S	Sp Su F -
___ Vesper Sparrow	S, O	Sp Su F -
___ Lark Sparrow	G, O, T	Sp Su F -
___ Savannah Sparrow	G, O	Sp - F -
___ Grasshopper Sparrow	G	Sp Su F -
___ Le Conte's Sparrow	G, W	Sp - F -
___ Fox Sparrow	T	Sp - F -
___ Song Sparrow	S, T*	Sp Su F W
___ Lincoln's Sparrow	S, T*	Sp - F -
___ Swamp Sparrow	W	Sp Su F -
___ White-throated Sparrow	T, S	Sp - F -
___ Harris' Sparrow	T, S	Sp - F W
___ White-crowned Sparrow	T, S	Sp - F -

___ Dark-eyed Junco	T, S	Sp	-	F	W
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CARDINALS & ALLIES

___ Northern Cardinal	T	Sp	Su	F	W
___ Rose-breasted Grosbeak	T	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Blue Grosbeak	T, S	Sp	Su	-	-
___ Indigo Bunting	T	Sp	Su	-	-
___ Dickcissel	G, S	Sp	Su	-	-

BLACKBIRDS & ORIOLES

___ Bobolink	G	Sp	Su	-	-
___ Red-winged Blackbird	G, W, T	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Eastern Meadowlark	G	Sp	Su	F	W
___ Western Meadowlark	G	Sp	Su	F	W
___ Yellow-headed Blackbird	W	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Rusty Blackbird	T*	-	-	F	W
___ Brewer's Blackbird	O, S	Sp	-	F	-
___ Common Grackle	T, S	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Brown-headed Cowbird	S, T	Sp	Su	F	-
___ Orchard Oriole	T	Sp	Su	-	-
___ Baltimore Oriole	T	Sp	Su	-	-

FINCHES

___ House Finch	B, T	Sp	Su	F	W
___ Pine Siskin	S, T	Sp	-	F	W
___ American Goldfinch	S, T, O	Sp	Su	F	W

OLD WORLD SPARROWS (INTRODUCED)

___ House Sparrow	B, T	Sp	Su	F	W
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