

Checklist of Birds of the Niobrara Valley Including adjacent Sandhills & Valentine National Wildlife Refuge

Compiled by Paul A. Johnsgard

Abundance Abbreviations:

A: Abundant

C: Common

U: Uncommon

O: Occasional

R: Rare

Vagrant

Seasonal Abbreviations:

PR: Permanent Resident

SR: Summer Resident

SV: Summer Visitant (breeding unproven)

M: Migrant

WM: Wintering Migrant

Anatidae – Swans, Geese, Ducks

Greater white-fronted goose. CM, Mar. – April; Oct. – Nov.

Snow goose. CM. Mar. – April; Oct. – Dec.

Ross's goose. OM, Mar. – April; Oct. – Dec.

Cackling goose. CM?.

Canada goose. CPR

Trumpeter swan. UPR.

Tundra swan. RM, Mar.; Nov.

Wood duck. CSR, late Mar. – late Oct.

Gadwall. CSR, late Mar. – late Nov.

Eurasian wigeon. RM

American wigeon. CSR, mid-Mar. – late Sept.

American black duck. RM.

Mallard CSR, OWM

Blue-winged teal. CSR, early April – mid-Oct.

Cinnamon teal. USR April – Oct. , west.

Northern shoveler. CSR, Mar. – Nov.

Northern pintail. CSR, Mar. – Dec.

Green-winged teal. CM, OSR, mid-Mar. – early Nov.

Canvasback. USR, mid-Mar. – mid-Nov.

Redhead. USR, mid-Mar. – mid-Nov.

Ring-necked duck. CM, late Mar. – mid-Oct.

Greater scaup. UWM, late Oct. – April

Lesser scaup. CM,, mid-Mar. – mid-Oct.

Surf scoter. OM, late April – late May; Oct. – Dec.

White-winged scoter. RM, , Oct. – Dec.

Black scoter. RM, Mar. – May,; Sept. – Dec.

Long-tailed duck. RM, Feb. – April; Oct. – Dec.
Bufflehead. CM, mid-Mar. – late April; mid-Oct. – late Nov.
Common goldeneye. CM, early Mar. – April; Nov. – Dec.
Barrow's goldeneye. RM.
Hooded merganser. UM, late Mar. – late Nov
Red-breasted merganser. UM, late Mar. – late April; Nov.
Common merganser. CM, Mar. – April; mid-Nov. – mid-Dec.,
Ruddy duck. *Oxyura* CSR, early April – mid-Nov.

Phasianidae - Partridges, Grouse, Turkeys

Gray partridge. RPR
Ring-necked pheasant. CPR
Greater prairie-chicken. UPR
Sharp-tailed grouse. CPR
Wild turkey. CPR

Odontophoridae – New World Quail

Northern bobwhite. UPR

Gaviidae - Loons

Pacific loon. RM, April – May; Oct. – Nov.
Common loon. CM, Mar. – May; late Oct. – early Nov.

Podicipedidae - Grebes

Pied-billed grebe. CSR, early April – early Nov.
Horned grebe. UM, mid-April – early May; Oct. – mid-Nov.
Red-necked grebe. RM, April; Oct.–Nov.
Eared grebe. USR, mid-April – mid-Oct.
Western grebe. UCR, early May – early Oct.
Clark's grebe. RSR, early May – early Oct.

Pelecanidae – Pelicans

American white pelican. CSV, April – Oct.

Phalacrocoracidae – Cormorants

Double-crested cormorant. CSR, mid-April – late Sept.

Ardeidae – Bitterns; Herons

American bittern. CSR, early May – early Oct.
Least bittern RSR, mid-May – mid-Aug.
Great blue heron CSR, early April – mid-Oct.
Great egret. RSR, late April – early Sept.
Snowy egret. OSR, early May – mid-Aug.
Little blue heron. OSR, early May – mid-Aug.
Cattle egret. RSR, early May – late Aug.
Green heron. CSR, late April – mid-Sept.
Black-crowned night-heron. CSR, late April – early Sept
Yellow-crowned night-heron. RSR. early May – early Sept.

Threskiornithidae – Ibises; Spoonbills

White-faced ibis. RSR, April – Oct.

Cathartidae – American Vultures

Turkey vulture. CSR, mid-April – late Sept.

Accipitridae – Kites, Hawks, Eagles, Allies

Osprey. UM, late April – early May.; mid-Sept. – mid-Oct.
Bald eagle. UWM, RSR
Northern harrier. USR mid-Mar. – early Dec.
Sharp-shinned hawk. CWM, RPR
Cooper's hawk. UM, mid-Sept. – late April, RPR
Northern goshawk. RWM, Sept. – late April.
Red-shouldered hawk. RV
Broad-winged hawk. RM, late April – mid-May; mid-Sept. – Oct.
Swainson's hawk. CSR, mid-April – late Sept.
Red-tailed hawk. CPR
Ferruginous hawk. UPR
Rough-legged hawk. CWM, early Nov. – late Mar.
Golden eagle. UPR

Falconidae – Falcons

American kestrel. CSR, OPR
Merlin. UWM, Oct. – Mar.; RSR
Prairie falcon. UPR
Peregrine falcon. OM, mid-Sept. – late Mar.

Rallidae - Rails, Gallinules, Coots

Virginia rail. USR, early May – mid-Sept.
Sora. CSR, early May – late Sept.
Common moorhen OSR, mid-May – late Aug.
American coot. CSR, late Mar. – early Nov.

Gruidae – Cranes

Sandhill crane. CM, early Mar. – mid-April; early Oct. – early Nov.
Whooping crane. RM, late Mar. – early May; mid-Sept. – early Nov.

Charadriidae - Plovers

Black-bellied plover. CM, May; late Aug. – early Oct.
American golden-plover. CM, May; late Sept. – mid-Oct.
Snowy plover. RM, April – May; Aug. – Sept.
Semipalmated plover. CM, May; mid-Aug. – mid-Sept
Piping plover. OM RSR, east, mid-May – mid-Sept.
Killdeer. CSR, mid-Mar. – mid-Oct.

Recurvirostridae – Stilts; Avocets

American avocet. USR, late April – early Sept.

Scolopacidae – Sandpipers; Phalaropes

Greater yellowlegs. CM, mid-April – May; mid-Aug. – Oct.
Lesser yellowlegs. CM, mid-April – mid-May; mid-Aug. – early Oct.
Solitary sandpiper. CM, early – mid-May; early Aug. – early Sept.
Willet. *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*. USR, late April – late Aug.
Spotted sandpiper. CSR, early May – early Sept.
Upland sandpiper. CSR, early May – late Aug.
Whimbrel. RM, April – mid-May.
Long-billed curlew. CSR, mid-April – mid-Aug.
Hudsonian godwit. RM, late April – mid-May.
Marbled godwit. UM; RSR, late April – mid Sept.

Ruddy turnstone. RM, April-May.
Red knot. RM, May; Sept.
Sanderling. RM, early – mid-May; late Aug. – early Oct.
Semipalmated sandpiper. CM, late April – mid-May; Aug. – Sept.
Western sandpiper. CM, early – mid-May; mid-Aug. – early Sept.
Least sandpiper. CM, May; early Aug. – mid-Sept.
White-rumped sandpiper. CM, late April – mid-May; Aug,
Baird's sandpiper. CM, mid-April – mid-May; mid-Aug. – early Oct.
Pectoral sandpiper. CM, late April – mid-May; Sept.-Oct.
Dunlin. RM, May; Sept.
Stilt s; piper. CM, early – mid-May. mid-Aug. – mid-Sept.
Buff-breasted sandpiper. RM, May; Sept.
Short-billed dowitcher. RM, May; Aug.-Sept.
Long-billed dowitcher. CM, early – mid-May; Aug. – Oct.
Wilson's snipe. USR, mid-April – mid-Nov.
American woodcock. USR, mid-April – mid-Oct.
Wilson's phalarope. USR, early May – early Sept.
Red-necked phalarope. UM, May; mid-Aug. – late Sept.

Laridae – Gulls. Terns

Franklin's gull. CM, mid-April – mid-May; early Sept. – mid-Oct.
Bonaparte's gull. RM, April-May; Sept.-Oct.
Ring-billed gull. CSV , RWM
California gull. RV
Herring gull. USV. OWM
Lesser black-backed gull. RV
Caspian tern. RV, early May – mid-Sept.
Common tern. UM, May; Sept.
Forster's tern. USR, late April – mid-Sept.
Least tern. USR, late May – mid-Aug.
Black tern. USR, mid-May – early Sept.

Columbidae – Pigeons, Doves

Rock pigeon. CPR
Mourning dove. CSR late Mar. – early Nov.

Cuculidae – Cuckoos; Anis

Black-billed cuckoo. OSR, late May – late Aug.
Yellow-billed cuckoo. CSR, late May – mid-Sept.

Tytonidae – Barn Owls

Barn owl. RPR

Strigidae – Typical Owls

Eastern screech-owl. CPR
Great horned owl CPR
Snowy owl. RWM, Nov. – April.
Burrowing owl RSR, late April – mid-Sept.
Barred owl. RPR
Great gray owl. RWM
Long-eared owl. RPR

Short-eared owl. UR

Caprimulgidae – Goatsuckers

Common nighthawk. CSR, late May – mid-Sept.

Common poorwill. USR, early May – early Sept.

Whip-poor-will. USR, early May – early Sept.

Apodidae - Swifts

Chimney swift. USR, late April – early Oct.

White-throated swift. USR, mid-May – late Aug.

Trochilidae – Hummingbirds

Ruby-throated hummingbird. UM; RSR, mid-May – mid-Sept

Broad-tailed hummingbird. RM Aug.-Sept.

Rufous hummingbird. RM, Aug.

Alcedinidae - Kingfishers

Belted kingfisher. USR, mid-Mar. – mid-Nov.

Picidae – Woodpeckers

Red-headed woodpecker. CSR, May – mid-Sept.

Red-bellied woodpecker. UPR

Downy woodpecker. CPR.

Hairy woodpecker. CPR.

Northern flicker. CPR.

Tyrannidae – Tyrant flycatchers

Olive-sided flycatcher. UM, mid-May – late May; Sept.

Western wood-pewee. USR, late May – early Sept.

Eastern wood-pewee. USR, mid-May – mid-Sept.

Yellow-bellied flycatcher. OM, May; Sept.

Acadian flycatcher. RM, May; Aug.

Alder flycatcher. RM.

Willow flycatcher. CSR, mid-May – early Sept.

Least flycatcher. CM, early – mid-May; Sept.

Eastern phoebe. CSR, mid-April – late Sept.

Say's phoebe. USR, mid-April – mid-Sept.

Great crested flycatcher. USR., late April – early Sept. ,

Cassin's kingbird. USR, early May – mid-Sept.

Western kingbird. CSR, early May – early Sept.

Eastern kingbird. CSR, early May – early Sept.

Scissor-tailed flycatcher. OM; RSR, early May – mid-Sept.

Laniidae - Shrikes

Northern shrike. UWM, early Nov. – mid-Mar.

Loggerhead shrike. CSR, mid-April – mid-Sept.

Vireonidae - Vireos

Bell's vireo. CSR, mid-May – early Sept.

Blue-headed vireo. OM, early – mid-May; mid-Sept. – early Oct.

Yellow-throated vireo. OM, early May – early Sept.

Warbling vireo. CSR., early May – early Sept.

Philadelphia vireo. RM, mid-May – late May; late Aug. – Sept.

Red-eyed vireo. USR, mid-May – early Sept.

Corvidae – Jays, Magpies; Crows

Blue jay. CPR.

Black-billed magpie. CPR

American crow. CPR

Alaudidae – Larks

Horned lark. CPR.

Hirundinidae – Swallows

Purple martin. RSR, mid-April – late Aug.

Tree swallow. USR, late April – mid-Sept.

Northern rough-winged swallow. CSR, late April – early Sept.

Bank swallow. CSR, early May – early Sept.

Barn swallow. CSR, late April – late Sept.

Cliff swallow. CSR, late April – early Sept. .

Paridae – Titmice

Black-capped chickadee. CPR.

Tufted titmouse. RV

Sittidae – Nuthatches

Red-breasted nuthatch. CM, early Oct. – early April; OPR

White-breasted nuthatch. CPR.

Pygmy nuthatch. UPR

Certhiidae – Creepers

Brown creeper. UPR.

Cinclidae – Dippers

American dipper. RM

Troglodytidae – Wrens

Rock wren. USR, early May – late Oct.

Bewick's wren RV

House wren. CSR, late April – late Sept.

Winter wren. RWM, mid-Oct. – mid-April.

Sedge wren. USR, early May – late Sept.

Marsh wren. USR, early May – early Oct.

Regulidae – Kinglets

Golden-crowned kinglet. CWM, mid-Oct. – mid-April.

Ruby-crowned kinglet. CM, April – mid-May; Sept. – Oct.

Turdidae – Thrushes, Allies

Eastern bluebird. USR, late Mar. – early Nov.

Mountain bluebird. USR, April – Oct.

Townsend's solitaire. CWM, Sept. – Mar.

Veery. UM, May; Sept.

Gray-cheeked thrush. CM, May; Sept.

Swainson's thrush. CM, May; Sept.

Hermit thrush. UM, May; Sept.

Wood thrush. CM, USR, mid-May – mid-Sept.

American robin. CSR, late February – mid-Dec.

Mimidae – Mockingbirds, Thrashers

Gray catbird. Rare – USR, mid-May – late Sept.

Northern mockingbird. RSR, early May – mid-Sept.
Sage thrasher., mid-April – mid-Sept.
Brown thrasher. CSR, late April – late Sept.

Sturnidae – Starlings

European starling. APR

Motacillidae – Pipits

American pipit. CM, April; Oct.
Sprague's pipit. RM, April; Sept. – Oct.

Bombacillidae – Waxwings

Bohemian waxwing. RWM late Nov. – late Feb.
Cedar waxwing. USR, late Feb. – early Oct.

Parulidae – Wood warblers

Blue-winged warbler. RM, May; Aug.-Sept.
Tennessee warbler. CM, early – late May; Sept. – Oct.
Orange-crowned warbler. CM, late April – mid-May; Sept. – Oct.
Nashville warbler. CM, early – mid-May; mid-Sept. – Oct.
Northern parula. RM, May; Sept.
Yellow warbler. CSR, early May – early Sept.
Magnolia warbler. CM, May; early Sept. – early Oct.
Chestnut-sided Warbler. CM, May; early – late Sept.
Black-throated blue warbler. Casual migrant, May; Sept.
Yellow-rumped warbler. CSR, late April – late Oct.
Black-throated green-warbler. RM, May; mid-Sept. – early Oct.
Blackburnian warbler. UM, May; early Sept. – early Oct.
Pine warbler. Casual migrant, May; Sept.
Palm warbler. UM, May; Sept.
Bay-breasted warbler. UM, May; Sept.
Blackpoll warbler. UM, May; Sept.
Cerulean warbler. RM, May; Sept.
Black-and-white warbler. USR, early May – mid-Sept.
American redstart. USR, early May – early-Sept.
Ovenbird USR, mid-May – mid-Sept.
Northern waterthrush. RM, May; Sept.
Connecticut warbler. RM, May; Sept.
Mourning warbler. UM, May; early Sept. – early Oct.
MacGillivray's warbler. OM, May; Sept.
Common yellowthroat. CSR, early May – mid-Sept.
Hooded warbler. RM, May; Aug.–Sept.
Wilson's warbler. CM, May; Sept.
Canada warbler. UM May; Sept.
Yellow-breasted chat. CSR, mid-May – early Sept.

Thraupidae – Tanagers

Scarlet tanager. USR, mid-May – Sept.
Western tanager. USR, mid-May – late Aug.

Emberizidae – Towhees, Sparrows, Longspurs

Green-tailed towhee. RM, May; Sept.

Eastern towhee. USR, late April – mid-Oct.
Spotted towhee. USR, late April – mid-Oct.
Cassin's sparrow. RSR
American tree sparrow. CWM, late Oct. – early April.
Chipping sparrow. CSR, late April – early Oct.
Clay-colored sparrow. CM, May; mid-Sept. – early Oct.
Brewer's sparrow. OSR
Field sparrow. CSR, mid-April – early Oct
Vesper sparrow. USR, mid-April – early Oct.
Lark sparrow. CSR, early May – early Sept.
Lark bunting. CSR, early May – late Aug.
Savannah sparrow. CM; RSR?, late April – mid-Sept.
Baird's sparrow. RM, April-May; late Sept. – mid-Oct.
Grasshopper sparrow. CSR, early May – early Sept.
Le Conte's sparrow. RM, late April – early May; Sept. – Oct.
Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrow. RM, May; Oct.
Fox sparrow. UM, late Mar. – mid-April; mid-Oct. – mid-Nov.
Song sparrow. CSR, early April – late Dec.
Lincoln's sparrow. UM, late April – mid-May; Sept. – Oct.
Swamp sparrow. USR, late April – late Oct.
White-throated sparrow. CWM, early Oct. – mid-May.
Harris's sparrow. CWM, early Oct. – mid-May.
White-crowned sparrow. CWM, early Oct. – mid-May.
Dark-eyed junco. CWM early Oct. – late Mar., OPR
McCown's longspur. USR, early April – early Oct.
Lapland longspur. CWM, mid-Nov. – late Feb.
Chestnut-collared longspur. USR, mid-April – early Oct.
Snow bunting. OWM, mid-Nov. – mid-Feb.

Cardinalidae – Cardinals, Grosbeaks, Allies

Northern cardinal CPR.
Rose-breasted grosbeak. CSR, early May – mid-Sept.
Black-headed grosbeak. CSR, mid-May – late Aug.
Blue grosbeak. CSR, mid May – late Aug.
Lazuli bunting. USR, mid-May – late Aug.
Indigo bunting. USR, mid-May – late Aug.
Dickcissel. CSR, mid-May – late Aug.

Icteridae – Meadowlarks, Blackbirds, Orioles, Allies

Bobolink. CSR, mid-May – mid-Aug.
Red-winged blackbird. CSR, early Mar. – late Nov.
Eastern meadowlark. USR, early April – mid-Oct.
Western meadowlark. CSR, early Mar. – late Oct.
Yellow-headed blackbird. CSR, April – mid-Sept.
Rusty blackbird. UM, late Mar. – mid-April; Nov. – Dec.
Brewer's blackbird. USR, mid-April – early Nov.
Common grackle. CSR, late Mar. – late Oct.
Brown-headed cowbird. CSR, mid-April – early Oct.

Orchard oriole. CSR, mid-May – late Aug.
Baltimore oriole. CSR, early May – early Sept.
Bullock's oriole. CSR, early May – early Sept.

Fringillidae – Finches

Gray-crowned rosy-finch. RWM, Oct. – Feb.
Cassin's finch. UWM, Oct. – mid-April.
House finch. CPR
Common redpoll. OWM, late Nov. – mid-Mar.
Pine siskin. UWM, mid-Oct. – mid-May
American goldfinch. CPR.
Evening grosbeak. OWM, early Nov. – late April
Purple finch. UWM, late Oct. – late April

Passeridae – Old World sparrows

House sparrow. CPR