

Valentine National Wildlife Refuge

Valentine, Nebraska

Valentine National Wildlife Refuge, located 25 miles south of the town of Valentine, Nebraska, is 71,516 acres in size and was established in 1935 as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife. Numerous wetlands, lakes, wet meadows, and large expanses of native prairie attract a wide variety of resident and migratory birds.

May, September, and October offer good opportunities for observing a large variety of migratory birds. Spring migrants, including waterfowl and warblers, are most numerous in May. Early fall migrants, including shorebirds and sparrows, are most abundant in September. Peak waterfowl numbers occur in late October.

Following are five recommended areas to observe birds on the Refuge.

1. Prairie Chicken and Sharp-tailed Grouse. Viewing blinds for their spectacular dances on the booming grounds are provided in April and early May. The remainder of the year, the birds can be found by roaming the vast grasslands of the Refuge. Try searching the hills near North Marsh Lakes.
2. East Twin Lake. This is a great area to view shorebirds during spring and summer. Easy access to the area allows for convenient birding.
3. North Marsh Lake. This area is an excellent location to view grebes during the summer. Eared, western, pied-billed, and maybe even horned grebes, can be seen.
4. Hackberry and Pelican Lakes. Opportunities to view ducks and geese, especially during the peak of spring and fall migration, can be found here. Watch for pintail, mallard, ruddy, canvasback, and many more. Take a walk up to the old fire tower on the west end of Hackberry Lake for a view of the Sandhills and a look at grassland sparrows.
5. Duck Lake. Go directly west of the boat launch to find an oasis for songbirds. Watch for warblers, blue and black-headed grosbeaks, Lazuli buntings, eastern bluebirds, and many more.

The following list contains 270 species that have been sighted on the Refuge.

Species known to nest on the Refuge are marked with an "*".

The relative abundance of each species at each season is coded as follows:

Sp - March-May

S - June-August

F - September-November

W - December-February

a - abundant: common species, very abundant
 c - common: likely 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

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----|---|---|---|
| LOONS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Common Loon | r | r | r | - |
| GREBES | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Horned Grebe | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Eared Grebe* | u | c | u | - |
| ___ Western Grebe* | u | c | u | - |
| ___ Clark's Grebe* | r | r | r | - |
| ___ Pied-billed Grebe* | u | c | u | - |
| PELICANS, CORMORANTS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ American White Pelican | c | a | c | - |
| ___ Brown Pelican | - | r | - | - |
| ___ Double-crested Cormorant* | u | a | c | - |
| WADING BIRDS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Least Bittern* | - | o | - | - |
| ___ American Bittern* | u | c | u | - |
| ___ Black-crowned Night-Heron* | u | c | - | - |
| ___ Green Heron | - | r | - | - |
| ___ Little Blue Heron | - | r | - | - |
| ___ Cattle Egret* | u | o | - | - |
| ___ Snowy Egret | o | o | - | - |
| ___ Great Egret | - | o | - | - |
| ___ Great Blue Heron | u | c | c | - |
| IBIS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ White-faced Ibis* | - | u | - | - |
| SWANS, GEESE, DUCKS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Tundra Swan (Whistling Swan) | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Trumpeter Swan* | o | o | r | r |
| ___ Canada Goose* | c | c | c | o |
| ___ Greater White-fronted Goose | o | - | o | - |
| ___ Snow Goose | o | - | o | - |
| ___ Mallard* | a | a | a | o |
| ___ American Black Duck | o | r | r | - |
| ___ Gadwall* | a | c | a | - |
| ___ Northern Pintail* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Green-winged Teal* | c | u | c | - |

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|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| ___ Blue-winged Teal* | a | a | a | - |
| ___ Cinnamon Teal | o | r | - | - |
| ___ Eurasian Wigeon | r | - | r | - |
| ___ American Wigeon* | c | u | c | - |
| ___ Northern Shoveler* | a | c | a | - |
| ___ Wood Duck* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Redhead* | c | u | c | - |
| ___ Ring-necked Duck | u | r | u | - |
| ___ Canvasback* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Greater Scaup | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Lesser Scaup | c | - | c | - |
| ___ Common Goldeneye | o | - | - | u |
| ___ Barrow's Goldeneye | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Bufflehead | c | - | c | o |
| ___ Harlequin Duck | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Ruddy Duck* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Hooded Merganser | o | - | o | - |
| ___ Common Merganser | c | - | c | o |
| ___ Red-breasted Merganser | r | - | r | - |

RAPTORS

| | Sp | S | F | W |
|-----------------------------------|----|---|---|---|
| ___ Turkey Vulture | o | o | o | - |
| ___ Northern Goshawk | - | - | - | r |
| ___ Sharp-shinned Hawk | o | - | o | u |
| ___ Cooper's Hawk | o | r | o | u |
| ___ Red-tailed Hawk* | u | o | u | u |
| ___ Red-shouldered Hawk | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Broad-winged Hawk | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Swainson's Hawk* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Rough-legged Hawk | u | - | u | c |
| ___ Ferruginous Hawk | o | r | o | r |
| ___ Northern Harrier (Marsh Hawk) | u | c | c | u |
| ___ Golden Eagle | u | - | u | u |
| ___ Bald Eagle | u | - | u | u |
| ___ Osprey | o | - | o | - |
| ___ Gyrfalcon | - | - | - | r |
| ___ Prairie Falcon | o | - | o | u |
| ___ Peregrine Falcon | r | - | r | r |
| ___ Merlin | o | - | o | o |
| ___ American Kestrel* | u | u | u | o |

GAME BIRDS

| | Sp | S | F | W |
|------------------------------|----|---|---|---|
| ___ Greater Prairie-Chicken* | c | c | c | c |
| ___ Sharp-tailed Grouse* | c | c | c | c |
| ___ Northern Bobwhite* | r | r | r | r |
| ___ Ring-necked Pheasant* | c | c | c | c |

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|--------------------|---|---|---|---|
| ___ Gray Partridge | r | r | r | r |
| ___ Wild Turkey* | c | c | c | u |

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| CRANES | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Whooping Crane | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Sandhill Crane | c | - | c | - |

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| RAILS, COOTS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Virginia Rail* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Sora* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Yellow Rail | r | - | - | - |
| ___ Black Rail | r | r | - | - |
| ___ Common Moorhen* | r | r | r | - |
| ___ American Coot* | a | a | a | - |

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| SHOREBIRDS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Semipalmated Plover | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Piping Plover | o | - | o | - |
| ___ Killdeer* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Black-bellied Plover | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Common Snipe* | u | u | u | r |
| ___ Long-billed Curlew* | o | u | o | - |
| ___ Upland Sandpiper* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Spotted Sandpiper | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Solitary Sandpiper | o | - | o | - |
| ___ Willet* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Greater Yellowlegs | u | o | u | - |
| ___ Lesser Yellowlegs | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Red Knot | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Pectoral Sandpiper | u | - | u | - |
| ___ White-rumped Sandpiper | u | - | u | - |
| ___ Baird's Sandpiper | c | - | u | - |
| ___ Least Sandpiper | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Dunlin | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Short-billed Dowitcher | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Long-billed Dowitcher | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Ruddy Turnstone | o | o | - | - |
| ___ Stilt Sandpiper | o | - | o | - |
| ___ Semipalmated Sandpiper | u | - | u | - |
| ___ Western Sandpiper | u | - | u | - |
| ___ Marbled Godwit | u | - | r | - |
| ___ Hudsonian Godwit | r | r | - | - |
| ___ Sanderling | r | - | r | - |
| ___ American Avocet* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Wilson's Phalarope* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Red-necked Phalarope | r | - | r | - |

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| GULLS, TERNS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Herring Gull | o | - | - | - |
| ___ California Gull | u | - | u | - |
| ___ Ring-billed Gull | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Franklin's Gull | o | o | o | - |
| ___ Bonaparte's Gull | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Forster's Tern* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Common Tern | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Least Tern | r | r | r | - |
| ___ Caspian Tern | r | - | - | - |
| ___ Black Tern* | a | a | - | - |
| DOVES | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Mourning Dove* | c | c | c | - |
| CUCKOOS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Yellow-billed Cuckoo* | u | u | - | - |
| ___ Black-billed Cuckoo* | o | o | - | - |
| OWLS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Eastern Screech-Owl* | u | u | u | u |
| ___ Great Horned Owl* | c | c | c | c |
| ___ Snowy Owl | - | - | - | r |
| ___ Burrowing Owl* | o | o | - | - |
| ___ Barred Owl | r | - | r | r |
| ___ Long-eared Owl | r | r | r | - |
| ___ Short-eared Owl* | u | u | u | u |
| ___ Northern Saw-whet Owl* | o | o | o | - |
| NIGHTJARS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Common Poorwill | r | r | - | - |
| ___ Common Nighthawk* | u | u | - | - |
| SWIFTS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Chimney Swift | o | o | o | - |
| HUMMINGBIRDS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Ruby-throated Hummingbird | r | - | r | - |
| KINGFISHERS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Belted Kingfisher* | u | u | u | u |
| FLICKERS, WOODPECKERS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Northern Flicker* | c | c | c | c |
| ___ Red-bellied Woodpecker | r | - | - | - |

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|---|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| ___ Red-headed Woodpecker* | u | o | - | - |
| ___ Lewis' Woodpecker | - | - | r | - |
| ___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Hairy Woodpecker* | u | - | u | u |
| ___ Downy Woodpecker* | u | u | u | u |
| TYRANT FLYCATCHERS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Eastern Kingbird* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Western Kingbird* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Great Crested Flycatcher* | u | u | - | - |
| ___ Western Wood-Pewee | o | - | - | - |
| ___ Eastern Phoebe | r | - | - | - |
| ___ Say's Phoebe | r | o | - | - |
| ___ Cordillaran Flycatcher | r | - | - | - |
| ___ Willow Flycatcher | o | o | o | - |
| ___ Least Flycatcher | r | - | - | - |
| LARKS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Horned Lark* | u | u | u | u |
| SWALLOWS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Tree Swallow* | u | o | o | - |
| ___ Bank Swallow | o | o | o | - |
| ___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Barn Swallow* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Cliff Swallow | o | - | o | - |
| JAYS, MAGPIES, CROWS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Blue Jay* | u | u | o | o |
| ___ Black-billed Magpie* | o | o | o | o |
| ___ American Crow* | o | o | o | o |
| CHICKADEES, NUTHATCHES, CREEPERS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Black-capped Chickadee* | u | u | u | u |
| ___ White-breasted Nuthatch | r | - | o | o |
| ___ Red-breasted Nuthatch | r | - | o | o |
| ___ Pygmy Nuthatch | - | - | - | r |
| ___ Brown Creeper | r | - | o | o |
| WRENS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ House Wren* | o | o | o | - |
| ___ Winter Wren | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Marsh Wren* | c | c | - | - |
| ___ Sedge Wren | r | r | r | - |
| MOCKINGBIRDS, THRASHERS | Sp | S | F | W |

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| ___ Northern Mockingbird | o | r | o | - |
| ___ Gray Catbird* | o | o | o | - |
| ___ Brown Thrasher* | u | u | u | - |

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| THRUSHES | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ American Robin* | c | c | c | u |
| ___ Wood Thrush | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Hermit Thrush | u | - | u | - |
| ___ Swainson's Thrush | o | - | - | - |
| ___ Gray-cheeked Thrush | o | - | - | - |
| ___ Veery | o | - | - | - |
| ___ Eastern Bluebird* | r | r | r | - |
| ___ Mountain Bluebird | o | o | o | - |
| ___ Townsend's Solitaire | r | - | o | u |

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|----------------------------|----|---|---|---|
| KINGLETS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Golden-crowned Kinglet | r | - | r | o |
| ___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet | r | - | r | o |

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| PIPITS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ American Pipit (Water Pipit) | o | - | o | - |

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| WAXWINGS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Bohemian Waxwing | u | - | r | - |
| ___ Cedar Waxwing | o | u | o | - |

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|------------------------|----|---|---|---|
| SHRIKES | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Northern Shrike | u | - | u | u |
| ___ Loggerhead Shrike* | u | u | u | u |

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| STARLINGS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ European Starling* | o | o | o | o |

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| VIREOS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Bell's Vireo* | o | o | o | - |
| ___ Red-eyed Vireo* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Warbling Vireo* | u | u | u | - |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|---|---|---|
| WARBLERS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Black-and-white Warbler | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Prothonotary Warbler | r | - | - | - |
| ___ Blue-winged Warbler | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Golden-winged Warbler | r | - | - | - |
| ___ Tennessee Warbler | r | - | - | - |
| ___ Orange-crowned Warbler | o | - | o | - |
| ___ Nashville Warbler | o | - | o | - |

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| ___ Yellow Warbler* | u | u | - | - |
| ___ Yellow-rumped Warbler | c | - | c | - |
| ___ Black-throated Gray Warbler | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Blackburnian Warbler | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Bay-breasted Warbler | r | - | - | - |
| ___ Blackpoll Warbler | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Palm Warbler | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Ovenbird* | r | r | r | - |
| ___ Northern Waterthrush | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Macgillivray's Warbler | r | - | - | - |
| ___ Common Yellowthroat* | u | c | o | - |
| ___ Yellow-breasted Chat* | u | u | o | - |
| ___ Mourning Warbler | r | - | - | - |
| ___ Wilson's Warbler | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Canada Warbler | r | - | - | - |
| ___ American Redstart* | o | o | o | - |

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| WEAVER FINCHES | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ House Sparrow* | r | r | r | r |

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| MEADOWLARKS, BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Bobolink* | u | u | - | - |
| ___ Eastern Meadowlark* | c | c | c | o |
| ___ Western Meadowlark* | c | c | c | o |
| ___ Yellow-headed Blackbird* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Red-winged Blackbird* | a | a | a | o |
| ___ Orchard Oriole* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Northern Oriole* | o | u | o | - |
| ___ Brewer's Blackbird* | o | o | o | - |
| ___ Common Grackle* | c | c | c | - |
| ___ Brown-headed Cowbird* | u | u | u | - |

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|---------------------|----|---|---|---|
| TANAGERS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Scarlet Tanager | r | - | - | - |
| ___ Western Tanager | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Summer Tanager | r | - | - | - |

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| GROSBEAKS, FINCHES, SPARROWS, BUNTINGS | Sp | S | F | W |
| ___ Northern Cardinal | u | u | o | o |
| ___ Rose-breasted Grosbeak | o | - | - | - |
| ___ Black-headed Grosbeak | o | - | - | - |
| ___ Blue Grosbeak | r | - | - | - |
| ___ Indigo Bunting | o | - | o | - |
| ___ Lazuli Bunting | o | o | o | - |
| ___ Evening Grosbeak | r | - | - | r |
| ___ Dickcissel* | u | u | - | - |

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|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| ___ Purple Finch | - | - | - | o |
| ___ House Finch | - | - | - | o |
| ___ Common Redpoll | o | - | o | o |
| ___ Pine Siskin | u | - | u | - |
| ___ American Goldfinch* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Red Crossbill | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Rufous-sided Towhee* | u | u | - | - |
| ___ Lark Bunting* | u | u | - | - |
| ___ Savannah Sparrow | o | o | o | - |
| ___ Grasshopper Sparrow* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Baird's Sparrow | o | r | o | - |
| ___ Henslow's Sparrow | u | - | - | - |
| ___ Le Conte's Sparrow | o | - | o | - |
| ___ Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Vesper Sparrow* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Lark Sparrow* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Dark-eyed Junco | c | - | c | c |
| ___ American Tree Sparrow | c | - | c | c |
| ___ Chipping Sparrow* | u | u | u | - |
| ___ Clay-colored Sparrow* | o | - | o | r |
| ___ Field Sparrow* | o | o | o | r |
| ___ Harris' Sparrow | u | - | u | - |
| ___ White-crowned Sparrow | u | - | u | - |
| ___ White-throated Sparrow | u | - | u | - |
| ___ Fox Sparrow | o | - | o | - |
| ___ Lincoln's Sparrow | r | - | r | - |
| ___ Swamp Sparrow | r | r | r | - |
| ___ Song Sparrow* | o | o | o | o |
| ___ McCown's Longspur | o | - | o | o |
| ___ Lapland Longspur | o | - | o | o |
| ___ Chestnut-collared Longspur* | o | o | o | o |

For further information contact:

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