How Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary Helps Birds

Our sanctuary was previously an ornithological field station. We continue that legacy by actively working to protect birds. With the help of many devoted volunteers, we maintain bird habitat, monitor bird populations, and advocate for bird conservation.

To protect coastal waterbirds on the Outer Cape, we use symbolic fencing, predator exclosures, and electric fencing. Populations of Piping Plovers and Least Terns have increased significantly since these protection efforts began in the 1990s, and American Oystercatchers have recently begun nesting on the sanctuary.

We manage two coastal heathlands for rare plants and birds. Of the twenty endangered plants and animals found on the property, half are heathland residents. Several rare and declining Massachusetts breeding birds nest in these habitats, including American Kestrels, Northern Bobwhites, and Northern Harriers. Our ongoing heathland restoration efforts include cutting, mowing, and prescribed burning.

We erected many Osprey poles on the Mid and Outer Cape, and our Cape Cod Osprey Project uses volunteers to map and monitor nests all across Cape Cod. The project has revealed many more nests than anyone had known for this little studied Osprey population, while involving many people in local citizen science research.

We conduct an annual breeding bird census, state waterfowl surveys, and summer/fall shorebird counts at the sanctuary.

We organize a spring hawk watch at Pilgrim Heights in Truro. We count migrants from March to the end of May.

How you can help.

Turn your checklists into data and contribute to Mass Audubon’s knowledge and understanding of Massachusetts’ birdlife and the birds of our wildlife sanctuaries. Keep a list of birds on your walk and log on to www.massaudubon.org/ebird to submit your observations. Your sightings will be stored in a database that Mass Audubon scientists can use to track birds on our sanctuaries.

Help us collect important data by participating in Mass Audubon bird monitoring programs including the Oriole Project, the Whip-poor-will Survey, the second statewide Breeding Bird Atlas, or our sanctuary breeding bird surveys. You can also get involved in the annual Christmas Bird Count or our annual Bird-a-thon. For more information, visit our website: www.massaudubon.org.
# Bird Checklist for Wellfleet Bay

- Snow Goose
- Brant
- Canada Goose
- Wood Duck
- American Wigeon
- American Black Duck
- Mallard
- Blue-winged Teal
- Northern Pintail
- Green-winged Teal
- Common Eider
- Northern Harrier
- Northern Goshawk
- Sharp-shinned Hawk
- Peregrine Falcon
- Red-tailed Hawk
- Rough-legged Hawk
- American Kestrel
- Merlin
- Red-shouldered Hawk
- Peregrine Falcon
- House Wren
- Cliff Swallow
- Chimney Swift
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- Belted Kingfisher
- Red-bellied Woodpecker
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
- Downy Woodpecker
- Hairy Woodpecker
- Northern Flicker
- Olive-sided Flycatcher
- Eastern Wood-Pewee
- Least Flycatcher
- Eastern Phoebe
- Great Crested Flycatcher
- Eastern Kingbird
- White-eyed Vireo
- Blue-headed Vireo
- Warbling Vireo
- Philadelphia Vireo
- Red-eyed Vireo
- Blue Jay
- American Crow
- Fish Crow
- Horned Lark
- Tree Swallow
- Northern Rough-winged Swallow
- Bank Swallow
- Barn Swallow
- Black-capped Chickadee
- Tufted Titmouse
- Red-breasted Nuthatch
- White-breasted Nuthatch
- Brown Creeper
- Carolina Wren
- House Wren
- Winter Wren
- Marsh Wren
- Golden-crowned Kinglet
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- Blue-capped Cuckoo
- Eastern Bluebird
- Veery
- Gray-cheeked Thrush
- Swainson’s Thrush
- Hermit Thrush
- Wood Thrush
- American Robin
- Gray Catbird
- Northern Mockingbird
- Brown Thrasher
- European Starling
- American Pipit
- Cedar Waxwing
- Bohemian Waxwing
- Blue-winged Warbler
- Tennessee Warbler
- Orange-crowned Warbler
- Nashville Warbler
- Northern Parula
- Yellow Warbler
- Chestnut-sided Warbler
- Magnolia Warbler
- Cape May Warbler
- Black-throated Blue Warbler
- Yellow-rumped Warbler
- Black-throated Green Warbler
- Blackburnian Warbler
- Pine Warbler
- Prairie Warbler
- Palm Warbler
- Wilson’s Warbler
- Wilson’s Tern
- Parasitic Jaeger
- Razorbill
- Rock Pigeon
- Mourning Dove
- Black-billed Cuckoo
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- Eastern Scrub-Owl
- Great Horned Owl
- Snowy Owl
- Short-eared Owl
- Northern Saw-wet Owl
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