

**Annotated Checklist of
BIRDS OF THE SUPERIOR NATIONAL FOREST
Compiled by Janet C. Green, 2006**

KEY TO THE CHECKLIST

List of species:

Regular – Expected to occur every year (225 species)

Casual – Not expected to occur every year but will occur irregularly (45 species)

Season Status

Migrant – Occurs as a migrant in spring and/or fall. Timing of migration varies by species group. Overall, spring migration can occur from late March (eagles) through early June (some warblers) and fall migration from mid-July (shorebirds) through December (finches). The bulk of the passerine (songbirds) spring migration is from mid-April through late May and the fall migration from mid-August through September.

Winter – Occurs during the winter season: December, January, February

Summer – Occurs during the breeding season that for passerines is June and July.

Some species may start the breeding season as early as April. Many summer resident species are also migrants since their breeding ranges extend far north of Minnesota.

Note: Although a species may occur in all seasons, very few are truly permanent residents, meaning occurring in the same territory year round. The list includes both grouse species, pigeon, great horned and barred owl, downy, hairy and pileated woodpecker, gray and blue jay, raven, both chickadees, red-breasted nuthatch, house finch and house sparrow. Goshawk and other owls may also be permanent residents.

General Breeding Habitat:

The terms used are general and just descriptive; no habitat scheme is utilized. The national forest is a mosaic of many different habitat types. It is heavily forested with about 90% of the land in natural vegetation, either forest, shrubland (including cutover), or bog/marsh/fen. About 9% of the national forest is water and only 1% is developed (fields and towns which include the cities of Ely, Hoyt Lakes and Grand Marais).

The forest is principally made up of 8 species of conifer trees and 11 of deciduous (hardwood) trees plus 12 tall shrubs and minor trees. The trees commonly occur in mixtures of 2 to 6 species per stand and stand patches vary in size and gradations across the landscape. The resulting forest is very diverse in composition, age and patch pattern which provides many diverse niches for breeding species.

The dominant upland forest types are aspen/birch/spruce/fir (59%), red and white pine (8%), jack pine (8%) and northern hardwoods (3%); the lowland forest types are black spruce/tamarack (17%), cedar (3%) and lowland hardwoods (1%).

Breeding Abundance (163 species):

The abundance categories are based on monitoring across the whole forest and represent relative population numbers for this large area rather than the ease of finding or seeing species. The national forest is fortunate to have two sources of monitoring data:

- North American Breeding Bird Survey (<http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov>). There are five routes completely in the forest plus four partly; two routes have been run continuously since the early 1970s. The five routes are Lockport, Sawbill Landing, Crane Lake, Sawbill Camp, and Jordan; the partial routes are Hovland, Hart Lake, Babbitt, and Glendale.
- Breeding Bird Monitoring in Great Lakes National Forests (<http://www.nrri.umn.edu/mnbirds>).

For the Superior National Forest this program includes 15 years (1991-2005) of point count data on 164 stands stratified randomly across the forested land (excluding lakes, fens, marshes).

For this checklist the data from these two programs was combined into five abundance categories:

Abundant (8 species); **Common** (25 species); **Uncommon** (35 species); **Rare** (36 species); and **Very Rare** (59 species). The abundant and common classes together make up about 90% of the total record of individuals. Some species are rare because of lack of habitat; other because they are at the edge of their range. The accuracy of this scheme is best for passerines that breed in forested habitats.

BIRDS OF THE SUPERIOR NATIONAL FOREST

Notes	REGULAR SPECIES (225) (Expected to occur every year)	Seasonal Status			General breeding habitat	Breeding abundance (163 sp.)
		Migrant	Winter	Summer		
	Ducks, Geese, Swans					
	Snow Goose	X				
	Cackling Goose	X				
	Canada Goose	X		X	lake	rare
	Tundra Swan	X				
	Wood Duck	X		X	pond	very rare
	Gadwall	X				
	American Wigeon	X				
	American Black Duck	X		X	lake; pond	rare
	Mallard	X	X	X	lake; pond	uncommon
	Blue-winged Teal	X		X	pond	very rare
	Northern Shoveler	X				
	Northern Pintail	X				
	Green-winged Teal	X		X	pond	very rare
	Canvasback	X				
	Redhead	X				
	Ring-necked Duck	X		X	lake	uncommon
	Greater Scaup	X				
	Lesser Scaup	X				
	Harlequin Duck	X	X			
	Surf Scoter	X				
	White-winged Scoter	X				
	Black Scoter	X				
	Long-tailed Duck	X	X			
	Bufflehead	X	X			
	Common Goldeneye	X	X	X	lake	uncommon
	Hooded Merganser	X		X	lake; pond	rare
	Common Merganser	X	X	X	lake; river	uncommon
	Red-breasted Merganser	X	X	X	lake	very rare
	Partridge, Grouse, Turkey					
	Ruffed Grouse	X	X	X	mixed forest	uncommon
	Spruce Grouse	X	X	X	forest; bog	very rare
	Loons					
	Common Loon	X		X	lake	uncommon
	Grebes					
	Pied-billed Grebe	X		X	pond	very rare
	Horned Grebe	X	X			
	Red-necked Grebe	X				
	Pelicans					
	American White Pelican	X				
	Cormorants					
	Double-crested Cormorant	X		X	island; Lk Superior	very rare
	Herons & Bitterns					
	American Bittern	X		X	marsh	rare
	Great Blue Heron	X		X	pond	rare
	New World Vultures					
	Turkey Vulture	X		X	mixed forest	uncommon

BIRDS OF THE SUPERIOR NATIONAL FOREST

Notes		Migrant	Winter	Summer	Habitat	Abundance
	Hawks & Eagles					
	Osprey	X		X	lake; swamp	rare
	Bald Eagle	X	X	X	lake; big pines	rare
	Northern Harrier	X		X	marsh	very rare
	Sharp-shinned Hawk	X		X	mixed forest	uncommon
	Cooper's Hawk	X		X	mixed forest	very rare
	Northern Goshawk	X		X	mixed forest	very rare
	Broad-winged Hawk	X		X	mixed forest	uncommon
	Red-tailed Hawk	X	X	X	forest edge	rare
	Rough-legged Hawk	X	X			
	Golden Eagle	X				
	Falcons					
	American Kestrel	X		X	forest edge	rare
	Merlin	X		X	mixed forest	rare
	Peregrine Falcon	X		X	cliff	very rare
	Rails, Gallinules, Coots					
	Virginia Rail	X		X	marsh	very rare
	Sora	X		X	marsh	very rare
	American Coot	X				
	Cranes					
	Sandhill Crane	X		X	fen; bog	very rare
	Plovers					
	Black-bellied Plover	X				
	American Golden-Plover	X				
	Semipalmated Plover	X				
	Killdeer	X		X	field; gravel pit	very rare
	Sandpipers & Phalaropes					
	Greater Yellowlegs	X				
	Lesser Yellowlegs	X				
	Solitary Sandpiper	X		X	pond	very rare
	Spotted Sandpiper	X		X	stream; lake	uncommon
	Upland Sandpiper	X				
	Whimbrel	X				
	Ruddy Turnstone	X				
	Sanderling	X				
	Semipalmated Sandpiper	X				
	Least Sandpiper	X				
	White-rumped Sandpiper	X				
	Baird's Sandpiper	X				
	Pectoral Sandpiper	X				
	Dunlin	X				
	Wilson's Snipe	X		X	marsh	uncommon
	American Woodcock	X		X	mixed forest	rare
	Wilson's Phalarope	X		X	marsh	very rare
	Gulls					
	Bonaparte's Gull	X				
	Ring-billed Gull	X		X	island	very rare
	Herring Gull	X	X	X	island	uncommon
	Thayer's Gull	X	X			
	Glaucous Gull	X	X			

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Pigeons & Doves					
Rock Pigeon	X	X	X	town	very rare
Mourning Dove	X		X	town	very rare
Cuckoos					
Black-billed Cuckoo	X		X	mixed forest	rare
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	X		X	hardwood forest	very rare
Owls					
Great Horned Owl	X	X	X	forest edge	very rare
Snowy Owl	X	X			
Northern Hawk-Owl	X	X	X	bog; forest	very rare
Barred Owl	X	X	X	mixed forest	rare
Great Gray Owl	X	X	X	bog; forest	very rare
Long-eared Owl	X		X	mixed forest	very rare
Short-eared Owl	X				
Boreal Owl	X	X	X	forest; bog	very rare
Northern Saw-whet Owl	X	X	X	mixed forest	rare
Nighthawks & Nightjars					
Common Nighthawk	X		X	ledge; town	rare
Whip-poor-will	X		X	mixed forest	very rare
Swifts					
Chimney Swift	X		X	town; forest	very rare
Hummingbirds					
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	X		X	forest edge	rare
Kingfishers					
Belted Kingfisher	X		X	stream; bank	uncommon
Woodpeckers					
Red-headed Woodpecker	X		X	open forest; burn	very rare
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	X		X	mixed forest	uncommon
Downy Woodpecker	X	X	X	mixed forest	uncommon
Hairy Woodpecker	X	X	X	mixed forest	uncommon
American Three-toed Woodpecker	X	X	X	dying forest	very rare
Black-backed Woodpecker	X	X	X	dying forest	very rare
Northern Flicker	X		X	forest edge	common
Pileated Woodpecker	X	X	X	mixed forest	uncommon
Tyrant Flycatchers					
Olive-sided Flycatcher	X		X	open forest; burn	rare
Eastern Wood-Pewee	X		X	mixed forest	uncommon
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	X		X	conifer forest	common
Alder Flycatcher	X		X	shrub; wetland	common
Least Flycatcher	X		X	hardwood forest	common
Eastern Phoebe	X		X	forest edge	rare
Great Crested Flycatcher	X		X	mixed forest	rare
Eastern Kingbird	X		X	field; pond	rare
Shrikes					
Northern Shrike	X	X			
Vireos					
Yellow-throated Vireo	X		X	hardwood forest	very rare
Blue-headed Vireo	X		X	conifer forest	uncommon
Warbling Vireo	X		X	hardwood forest	very rare
Philadelphia Vireo	X		X	hardwood forest	very rare
Red-eyed Vireo	X		X	mixed forest	abundant

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Jays & Crows					
Gray Jay	X	X	X	forest; bog	uncommon
Blue Jay	X	X	X	forest; town	common
American Crow	X	X	X	field; town	uncommon
Common Raven	X	X	X	forest; cliff	uncommon
Larks					
Horned Lark	X				
Swallows					
Purple Martin	X		X	lakeshore	very rare
Tree Swallow	X		X	pond; lakeshore	rare
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	X		X	bank; lakeshore	very rare
Bank Swallow	X		X	bank; gravel pit	very rare
Cliff Swallow	X		X	building	very rare
Barn Swallow	X		X	cliff; building	rare
Chickadees & Titmouse					
Black-capped Chickadee	X	X	X	mixed forest	common
Boreal Chickadee	X	X	X	conifer forest;bog	very rare
Nuthatches					
Red-breasted Nuthatch	X	X	X	mixed forest	common
White-breasted Nuthatch	X	X	X	hardwood forest	very rare
Creepers					
Brown Creeper	X		X	mixed forest	uncommon
Wrens					
House Wren	X		X	forest edge	rare
Winter Wren	X		X	mixed forest	common
Sedge Wren	X		X	field; fen	rare
Marsh Wren	X		X	marsh	very rare
Kinglets					
Golden-crowned Kinglet	X		X	mixed forest	common
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	X		X	conifer forest; bog	uncommon
Thrushes					
Eastern Bluebird	X		X	field; forest burn	very rare
Townsend's Solitaire	X	X			
Veery	X		X	mixed forest	abundant
Gray-cheeked Thrush	X				
Swainson's Thrush	X		X	mixed forest	common
Hermit Thrush	X		X	mixed forest	common
Wood Thrush	X		X	hardwood forest	very rare
American Robin	X	X	X	forest; town	abundant
Varied Thrush	X				
Mockingbirds & Thrashers					
Gray Catbird	X		X	forest edge	rare
Brown Thrasher	X		X	forest edge	very rare
Starlings					
European Starling	X	X	X	field; town	rare
Pipits					
American Pipit	X				
Waxwings					
Bohemian Waxwing	X	X			
Cedar Waxwing	X	X	X	forest edge	common

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Wood-Warblers					
Golden-winged Warbler	X		X	wetland shrub	rare
Tennessee Warbler	X		X	bog; forest shrub	uncommon
Orange-crowned Warbler	X				
Nashville Warbler	X		X	forest shrub; bog	abundant
Northern Parula	X		X	conifer forest	common
Yellow Warbler	X		X	lakeshore; town	rare
Chestnut-sided Warbler	X		X	forest shrub	abundant
Magnolia Warbler	X		X	conifer forest	common
Cape May Warbler	X		X	conifer forest	uncommon
Black-throated Blue Warbler	X		X	hardwood forest	rare
Yellow-rumped Warbler	X		X	mixed forest	common
Black-throated Green Warbler	X		X	mixed forest	common
Blackburnian Warbler	X		X	conifer forest	common
Pine Warbler	X		X	pine forest	uncommon
Palm Warbler	X		X	bog; forest shrub	rare
Bay-breasted Warbler	X		X	mixed forest	very rare
Blackpoll Warbler	X				
Black-and-white Warbler	X		X	mixed forest	common
American Redstart	X		X	mixed forest	common
Ovenbird	X		X	mixed forest	abundant
Northern Waterthrush	X		X	swamp; lakeshore	uncommon
Connecticut Warbler	X		X	forest bog	uncommon
Mourning Warbler	X		X	forest edge	abundant
Common Yellowthroat	X		X	shrub; wetland	common
Wilson's Warbler	X		X	shrub; wetland	very rare
Canada Warbler	X		X	hardwood forest	common
Tanagers					
Scarlet Tanager	X		X	hardwood forest	uncommon
Towhees, Sparrows, Longspurs					
Eastern Towhee	X		X	forest edge	very rare
American Tree Sparrow	X	X			
Chipping Sparrow	X		X	forest; town	common
Clay-colored Sparrow	X		X	shrubby field	rare
Vesper Sparrow	X		X	field	very rare
Savannah Sparrow	X		X	field	very rare
Le Conte's Sparrow	X		X	field; fen	very rare
Fox Sparrow	X				
Song Sparrow	X		X	shrub; town	common
Lincoln's Sparrow	X		X	bog; forest shrub	uncommon
Swamp Sparrow	X		X	swamp; fen shrub	common
White-throated Sparrow	X		X	mixed forest	abundant
Harris's Sparrow	X				
White-crowned Sparrow	X				
Dark-eyed Junco	X	X	X	conifer forest	rare
Lapland Longspur	X				
Snow Bunting	X	X			
Cardinals & Grosbeaks					
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	X		X	mixed forest	common
Indigo Bunting	X		X	forest edge	rare

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	Blackbirds & Orioles					
	Bobolink	X		X	field	very rare
	Red-winged Blackbird	X		X	wetland; pond	uncommon
	Eastern Meadowlark	X		X	field	very rare
	Western Meadowlark	X				
	Rusty Blackbird	X		X	wetland; pond	very rare
	Brewer's Blackbird	X		X	field	very rare
	Common Grackle	X		X	wetland edge; town	rare
	Brown-headed Cowbird	X		X	farm; field	rare
	Baltimore Oriole	X		X	forest; town	very rare
	Finches					
	Pine Grosbeak	X	X			
	Purple Finch	X	X	X	mixed forest	uncommon
	House Finch	X	X	X	town	very rare
	Red Crossbill	X	X	X	conifer forest	very rare
	White-winged Crossbill	X	X	X	conifer forest	very rare
	Common Redpoll	X	X			
	Hoary Redpoll	X	X			
	Pine Siskin	X	X	X	conifer forest	rare
	American Goldfinch	X	X	X	forest shrub	uncommon
	Evening Grosbeak	X	X	X	conifer forest	uncommon
	Old World Sparrows					
	House Sparrow	X	X	X	town; farm	very rare

CASUAL SPECIES				45 species	
(Not expected to occur every year, but will occur irregularly)					
	Greater White-fronted Goose			Iceland Gull	Lk Superior
	Trumpeter Swan			Great Black-backed Gull	Lk Superior
	King Eider	Lake Superior		Black-legged Kittiwake	Lk Superior
	Barrow's Goldeneye	Lake Superior		Caspian Tern	
	Ruddy Duck			Common Tern	
	Sharp-tailed Grouse			Black Tern	
	Red-throated Loon	Lake Superior		Red-bellied Woodpecker	
	Pacific Loon	Lake Superior		Western Kingbird	
	Eared Grebe			Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	
	Western Grebe			Loggerhead Shrike	
	Cattle Egret			Clark's Nutcracker	
	Green Heron			Black-billed Magpie	
	Black-crowned Night Heron			Mountain Bluebird	
	Red-shouldered Hawk			Northern Mockingbird	
	Gyrfalcon			Summer Tanager	
	Yellow Rail			Field Sparrow	
	Willet			Lark Sparrow	
	Hudsonian Godwit			Grasshopper Sparrow	
	Marbled Godwit			Northern Cardinal	
	Red Knot			Yellow-headed Blackbird	
	Stilt Sandpiper				
	Buff-breasted Sandpiper				
	Short-billed Dowitcher				
	Long-billed Dowitcher				