

The Porter County

Birding Guide

INDIANA 
The Casual Coast





Rose-breasted Grosbeak



Baltimore Oriole



Morning Dove

BIRD

Welcome to the Casual Coast, along the southern shore of Lake Michigan. Home to the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, the Indiana Dunes State Park and the most diversified flora and fauna in the Midwest, the dunes are complemented by several nearby inland nature preserves. Together, they provide a unique haven for birds and birders that will make your stay on the Casual Coast both enjoyable and memorable.

BEVERLY S

BIRDING SITES

PORTER BEACH HAWK WATCH

Formerly known as the Johnson Beach hawk watch, this stabilized dune allows prime viewing of several hawk flights, especially in the spring.

WEST BEACH & LONG LAKE

Following the West Beach trails which take you by the beach, an interdunal pond, and wooded dune, one may discover a Hairy Woodpecker or two and perhaps a Common Yellowthroat. Long Lake may grace one with the presence of Least Bitterns, warblers and scores of waterfowl. A parking fee is required in the summer.

INDIANA DUNES STATE PARK

Indiana Dunes State Park encompasses a variety of habitats: climax forest, savannah, marram grass covered dunes, blowouts, beaches and marshes. Several trails run through these areas, providing opportunities to view and hear field sparrows, flycatchers, thrushes, warblers, hawks, owls and more. Optimal observation areas would include the forest and the marsh-wood boundary along with trails 2 and 10. Trail 9 allows for eye level bird watching because of its higher elevation. Wilson Shelter also attracts several birds during spring migration. Entrance fee.

PORT OF INDIANA

During winter one can best observe the Horned Larks, Lapland Longspurs, Snow Buntings, Common Mergansers and bay ducks from the public access area of the Port of Indiana. On windy days, birds fly almost directly over the public access area.

SUNSET HILL FARM

COUNTY PARK

Porter County's ongoing commitment to ecological restoration, this former 235-acre dairy farm is filled with woods, meadows, and three ponds. Part-time naturalists are available during three seasons of the year to offer a wide range of opportunities including: natural science projects on ponds, trees, birds, wildflowers or fields. With over ten miles of trails, bird watchers, nature photographers, or woods walk observers can enjoy endless outdoor opportunities. Birds commonly seen at Sunset Hill Farm include: field sparrows, flycatchers, thrushes, warblers, hawks, owls, ducks, geese and more.

BIRDING SITES

TALTREE ARBORETUM & GARDENS

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Taltree Arboretum & Gardens offers the birder a wide variety of habitats to explore. Prairie, Savanna, Woods, Wooded Edges, Swamp, Pond and open Wetland can all be easily observed at this 300+acre site. With over 4 miles of trail, Taltree is a special place to bird. For more information on special birding opportunities visit them at www.taltree.org. Entrance fee. (Closed Mondays)

Photo by: David Oberst



ROGERS LAKEWOOD PARK

J

A 122-acre facility of the Valparaiso Park Department, it is home to hiking trails, a beach, fishing, boating, and swimming. Birds commonly seen at Rogers-Lakewood Park include: native waterfowl such as Canada geese and mallard ducks, herons, hawks, and common songbirds. Daily entry fees are collected from Memorial Day through Labor Day and are charged by the carload.

JASPER-PULASKI FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA

K

The Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area has long been the sight of the annual migration of Sandhill Cranes. View this awesome spectacle during the fall to see thousands of these birds as they rest from their journey and feed. Springtime also brings the cranes, but in a lesser amount. Don't forget the binoculars or a scope! During the spring and summer, the area boasts ducks, geese, and egrets that are viewable from the observation trail. Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area is also a public hunting area. Please check in at the headquarters to obtain information about the affected areas before setting out.

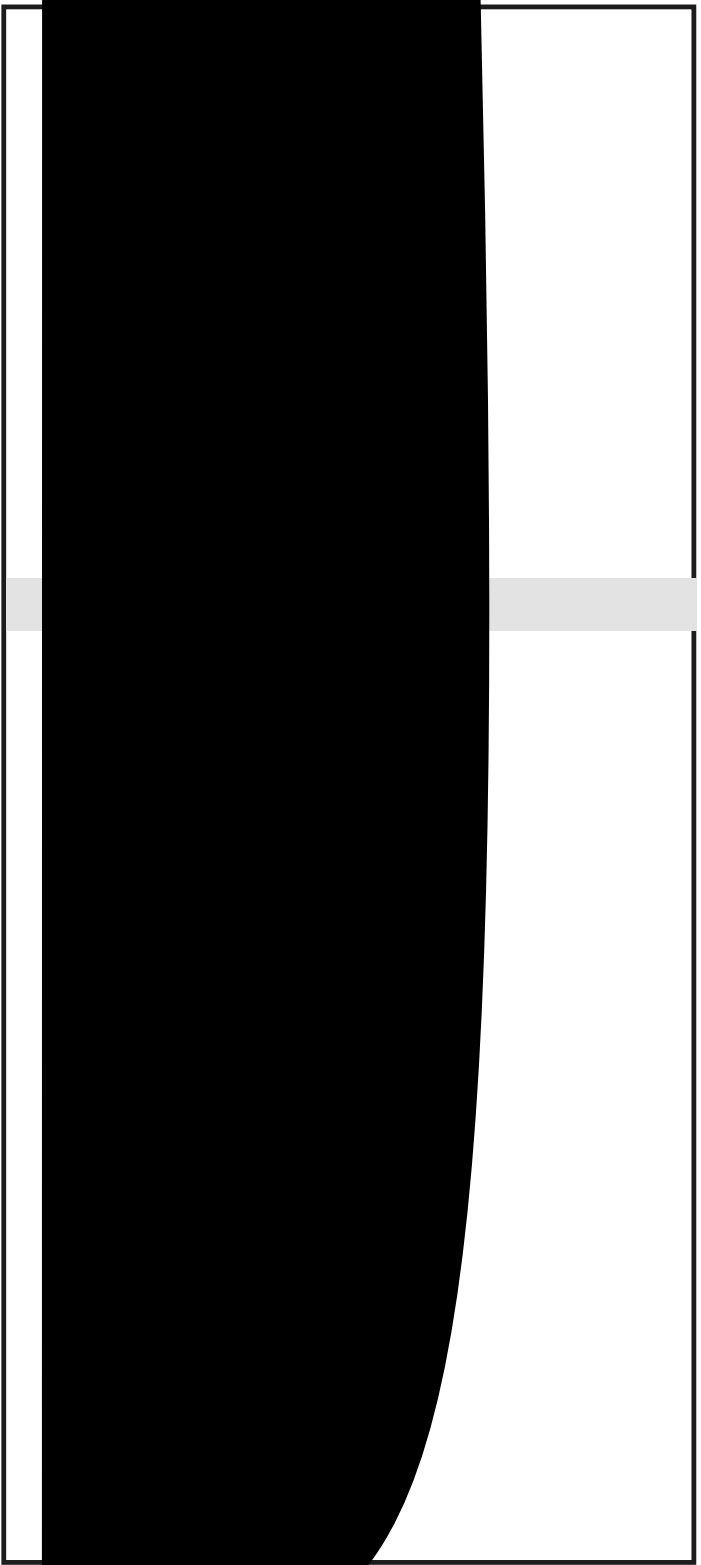
HERON ROOKERY

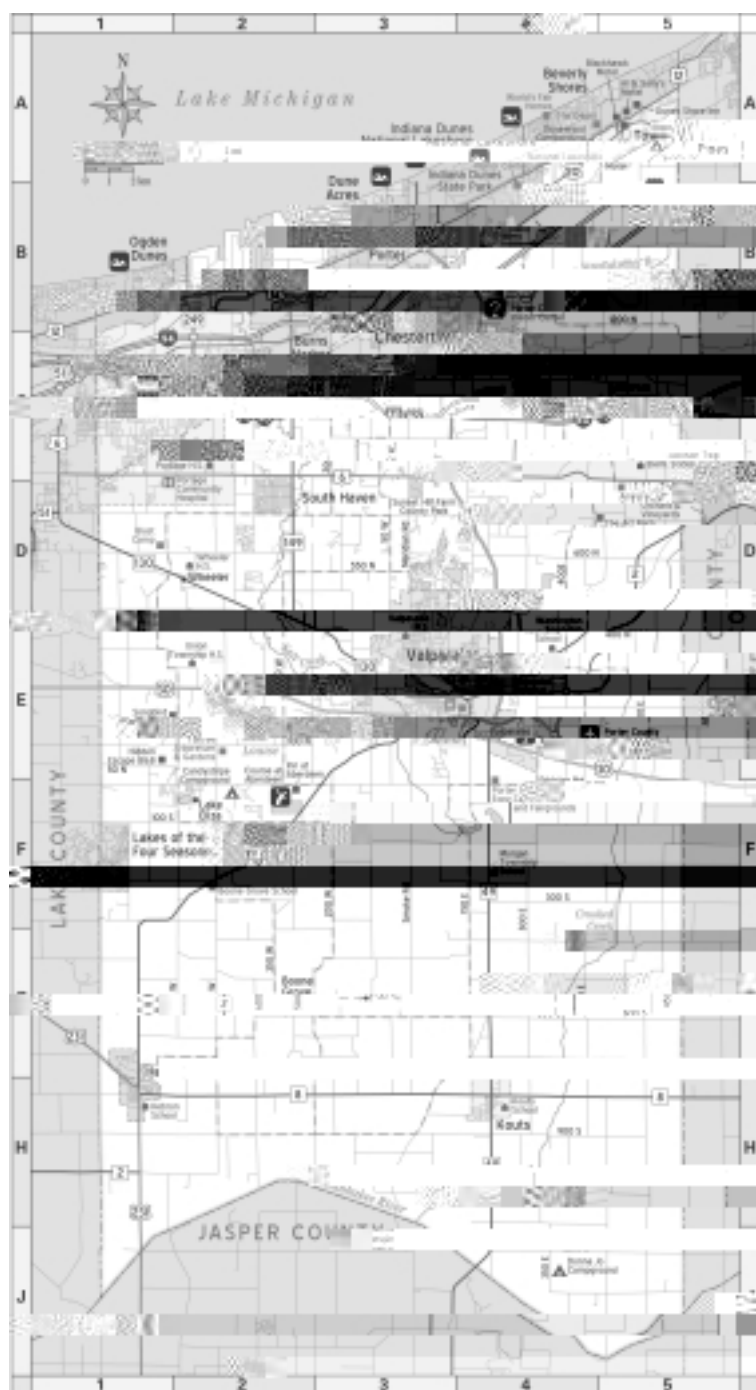
L

Observe the Great Blue Heron in the spring and summer at this mature woodland located along the Little Calumet River. Migrant warblers are present in the spring along the channel among other species.

Photo by: National Lakeshore







Porter County
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PORTER COUNTY BIRDERS CHECKLIST

SEASONAL ABUNDANCE CODES:

A = ABUNDANT: *Often observed and widespread throughout county*

C = COMMON: *Frequent in appropriate habitat*

U = UNCOMMON: *Infrequent in appropriate habitat*

R = RARE: *Unlikely, but possible in county*

HABITAT TYPES & LOCATIONS

L-LAKE; B-BEACH: *Lake Michigan and its beachfront including: Beverly Shores, Indiana Dunes State Park, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore*

D-DUNES: *Indiana Dunes State Park, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore*

F-FIELDS: *Cultivated and roadside fields, open areas and prairies such as those found at Taltree Arboretum & Gardens, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Sunset Hill Farm County Park and Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve*

FL-FLIGHT: *Observed in flight*

M-MARSH: *Areas regularly inundated by shallow water for much of the year: Interdunal marshes are found along Lake Michigan at Beverly Shores, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore & Indiana Dunes State Park. Marshes are also found along county rivers, the most notable being the Kankakee River at the southern border of the county and at Kankakee Fish & Wildlife Area in neighboring Starke County*

P-PONDS: *Permanent bodies of water that include small lakes, ponds and wetlands: Long Lake, Taltree Arboretum & Gardens, Rogers Lakewood Park, Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve, Sunset Hill Farm County Park and Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore*

S-SWAMPS: *Wetlands that are poorly drained with trees growing throughout. There are numerous types of swamps in the county and they can be found at: Indiana Dunes State Park, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Beverly Shores (along Beverly Drive), Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve, Taltree Arboretum & Gardens and the Kankakee River Floodplain*

W-WOODS: *Beverly Shores, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Sunset Hill Farm County Park, Taltree Arboretum & Gardens, Indiana Dunes State Park, Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve*

WE-WOODED EDGES: *Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve, Taltree Arboretum & Gardens, Sunset Hill Farm County Park, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, and Indiana Dunes State Park*

U-URBAN: *Urban areas throughout the county*



PORTER COUNTY BIRDERS CHECKLIST

Bird	SP	S	F	W	Habitat
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Loon & Grebes

! Common Loon	C	R	C	R	L
!					



PORTER COUNTY BIRDERS CHECKLIST

Bird	Seasons				Habitat
	SP	S	F	W	
! Red-tailed Hawk	C	C	C	C	F,WE
! Rough-legged Hawk	U	U	U	U	F,M
Osprey & Falcons					
! Osprey*	U	R	U	R	L
! American Kestrel	C	C	C	C	F
! Peregrine Falcon*	U	U	U	U	FL
Quail, Pheasant, Turkey					
! Northern Bobwhite	U	U	U	U	F,WE
! Ring-necked Pheasant	U	U	U	U	F
! Wild Turkey	U	U	U	U	F,W
Rails & Coots					
! Virginia Rail*	U	U	U	U	M
! Sora Rail	C	U	U		M
! Common Moorhen	R	R	R		M
! American Coot	A	A	A	U	M,P,L
Crane					
! Sandhill Crane (Jasper-Pulaski Site)	C	U	C	U	F,M
Plovers					
! Black-bellied Plover	U	R	U		B,P
! American Golden Plover	C	R	U		B,P
! Semipalmated Plover	U	R	U		B,P
! Piping Plover*	R	R			B
! Killdeer	A	A	C	R	M,D,F
Sandpipers & other Shorebirds					
! GreaterYellowlegs	U	R	R		M,P
! Lesser Yellowlegs	U	U	U		M,P
! Solitary Sandpiper	C	U	U		M
! Spotted Sandpiper	C	C	U		M,S
! Semipalmated Sandpiper	U	R	C		B,P
! Least Sandpiper	U	U	U		B,P
! Pectoral Sandpiper	C	R	U		M,P
! Baird's Sandpiper		R	U		B
! Ruddy Turnstone	U	R	U		B
! Sanderling	R	C	C		B
! Dunlin	U	R	U		B,P
! Red Knot	R		R		B
! Purple Sandpiper	R		R		B
! Short-billed Dowitcher	R	R	R		P
! Red Phalarope			U		L,B
! Common Snipe	U	R	U	R	M,P
! American Woodcock	C	C	C	R	S,W
Jaegers					
! Parasitic Jaeger			U		L,B
! Pomarine Jaeger			R		L,B
Gulls					
! Little Gull	R	R	U	R	L
! Bonaparte's Gull	C	R	C	U	L,B
! Laughing Gull	U	R	R	R	L
! Ring-billed Gull	A	C	A	C	L,B



PORTER COUNTY BIRDERS CHECKLIST

Seasons

Bird	SP	S	F	W	Habitat
! Herring Gull	A	U	A	A	L,B
! Thayer's Gull	R		R	U	L,B
! Iceland Gull	U		R	R	L
! Glaucous Gull	R		R	U	L,B
! Great Black-backed Gull	U	R	R	U	L
! Sabine's Gull		U	R		L
! Black-legged Kittiwake	R	R	U	R	L
Terns					
! Caspian Tern	C	U	R	R	L,B
! Common Tern	C	R	U		L,B
! Forster's Tern	U	R	U		L,B
! Black Tern*	R	U	R		M,B
Doves					
! Rock Dove	C	C	C	C	U
! Mourning Dove	A	A	A	A	F,W
Cuckoos					
! Black-billed Cuckoo	U	U	U		WE
! Yellow-billed Cuckoo	U	U	U		WE
Owls					
! Short-eared Owl	R	R	R	U	F,M
! Great Horned Owl	C	C	C	C	W
! Snowy Owl			R	R	B
! Barred Owl	C	C	C	C	S
! Northern Saw-whet Owl	R			R	W
! Eastern Screech Owl	C	C	C	C	W
Goatsuckers					
! Common Nighthawk	C	A	C		WE,F
! Whip-poor-will	C	U	U		W
Swifts					
! Chimney Swift	A	A	A		U
Hummingbirds					
! Ruby-throated Hummingbird	C	C	C		F,WE
Kingfishers					
! Belted Kingfisher	C	C	C	R	M,P
Woodpeckers					
! Red-headed Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	W
! Red-bellied Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	W
! Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	C	R	U	R	W
! Downy Woodpecker	C	C	C	C	W,WE
! Hairy Woodpecker	U	U	U	U	W
! Northern Flicker	C	C	C	U	W
! Pileated Woodpecker	U	U	U	U	W



PORTER COUNTY BIRDERS CHECKLIST

Seasons

Bird	SP	S	F	W	Habitat
Flycatchers					
! Olive-sided Flycatcher	U	R	U		S
! Eastern Wood Pewee	C	C	C		W
! Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	U	R	R		W
! Acadian Flycatcher	C	C	R		W
! Alder Flycatcher	U	U	U		M
! Willow Flycatcher	C	U	R		M
! Least Flycatcher	C	R	C		W,WE
! Eastern Phoebe	C	C	U		F,W,WE
! Great-crested Flycatcher	C	C	U		W
! Eastern Kingbird	C	C	U		F,M
Larks					
! Horned Lark	C	U	U		F
Swallows					
! Purple Martin	C	C	C		F,P
! Tree Swallow	C	A	C		F,M
! Rough-winged Swallow	U	U	U		F,M
! Bank Swallow	C	C	C		B,D
! Cliff Swallow	R	R	R		F
! Barn Swallow	C	A	C		F
Jays & Crows					
! Blue Jay	A	A	A	A	W,WE
! American Crow	A	A	A	A	ALL
Titmice					
! Black-capped Chickadee	C	C	C	C	W
! Tufted Titmouse	C	C	C	C	W
Nuthatches					
! Red-breasted Nuthatch	U	R	U	U	W
! White-breasted Nuthatch	C	C	C	C	W
Creepers					
! Brown Creeper	C	R	C	U	W
Wrens					
! Carolina Wren	U	U	U	U	WE,U
! House Wren	C	C	C		WE,U
! Winter Wren	U	R	U	R	W
! Marsh Wren*	U	U	U		M
! Sedge Wren*	U	R	R		F,M
Old World Warblers, Thrushes & Allies					
! Golden-crowned Kinglet	C	R	C	R	W
! Ruby-crowned Kinglet	C	R	C	R	W
! Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	C	U	R		W
! Eastern Bluebird	C	C	C	U	F,WE
! Veery	U	U	U		W
! Gray-cheeked Thrush	U		U		W

* State endangered



PORTER COUNTY BIRDERS CHECKLIST

U

W

SW

!	Swainson's Thrush	U		C		W
!	Hermit Thrush	C		C	R	W
!	Wood Thrush	U	U	U	R	W
!	American Robin	A	A	A	U	F,W
Thrashers						
!	Gray Catbird	C	C	C		WE
!	Northern Mockingbird	U	U	U	R	F,WE
!	Brown Thrasher	C	C	C	R	WE
Waxwings						
!	Cedar Waxwing	C	U	C	U	W,M
Starlings						
!	European Starling	A	A	A	A	ALL
Vireos						
!	White-eyed Vireo	U	R	U		W
!	Solitary Vireo	U	R	U		W
!	Yellow-throated Vireo	C	U	U		W
!	Warbling Vireo	C	C	U		WE,P
!	Philadelphia Vireo	U	R	U		W
!	Red-eyed Vireo	C	C	C		W
Warblers						
!	Blue-winged Warbler		UU	U		W
!						

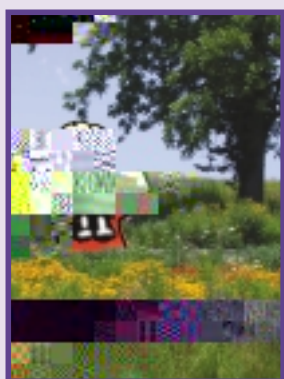
PORTER COUNTY BIRDERS CHECKLIST

!	Common Yellowthroat	C	C	C		M
!	Hooded Warbler	U	R	R		S
!						

The Porter County Convention, Recreation & Visitors Commission (PCCRVC) would like to give special thanks to David Oberst, Director of Education and Naturalist at Taltree Arboretum & Gardens, and Taltree board member, Laurie Eberhardt, Ph.D., for their help in creating this guide. The PCCRVC is truly grateful for their help.

TALTREE ARBORETUM & GARDENS:

"A SPECIAL



There's still more...

to see and do at the Casual Coast. There are several more