

Kentucky Ornithological Society

Checklist of Kentucky Birds

The official checklist of Kentucky birds includes 364 species (not counting extinct species). Birds included on the official Kentucky list have been documented by (a) specimen, (b) photograph or video, or (c) observation by multiple observers. An additional 14 species are on Kentucky's hypothetical list.

KEY for the official checklist:

- I = introduced species (exotic)
 - X = extinct
 - EXT = extirpated (still occurs elsewhere but no longer found in Kentucky)
 - Birds in **bold font** either breed or used to breed in Kentucky:
 - **A** = accidental (records of breeding in Kentucky, but species does not breed in Kentucky on a regular basis)
 - **H** = historical (does not currently breed in Kentucky, but breeding has been documented in the past)
 - **X** or **EXT** = extinct or extirpated
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Anseriformes

Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*)

Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens*)

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*)

Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*)

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)

Brant (*Branta bernicla*)

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) - I

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) - EXT

Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*)

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)

American Wigeon (*Anas americana*)

American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*)

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*)

Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)

Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)

Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*) - A

Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*)

Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*)

Redhead (*Aythya americana*)

Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*)

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)

Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*)

Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*) - A

King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*)

Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*)
Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*)
White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*)
Black Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)
Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*)
Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*)
Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)
Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*)
Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*)
Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)
Masked Duck (*Nomonyx dominicus*)
Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)

Galliformes

Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*)
Greater Prairie-Chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido*) - EXT
Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*)
Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*)

Gaviiformes

Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*)
Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*)
Common Loon (*Gavia immer*)
Yellow-billed Loon (*Gavia adamsii*)

Podicipediformes

Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*)
Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*)
Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*)
Eared Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*)
Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

Procellariiformes

Black-capped Petrel (*Pterodroma hasitata*)
Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma castro*)

Pelecaniformes

Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*)
American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*)
Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) (added to state list on 11/20/98)
Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) - H
Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) - H

Ciconiiformes

American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) - H
Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*)
Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)
Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*)
Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*)
Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*)
Reddish Egret (*Egretta rufescens*)
Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)
Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*)
Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*)

White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*)

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*)

Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*)

Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*)

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*)

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)

Falconiformes

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) - H

White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*)

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*)

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)

Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*)

Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)

Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)

Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*)

Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*)

Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*)

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)

Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*)

Gruiformes

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*)

King Rail (*Rallus elegans*)

Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*)

Sora (*Porzana carolina*)

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinica*)

Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)

American Coot (*Fulica americana*) - H

Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*)

Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*) - EXT

Charadriiformes

Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

American Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*)

Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*)

Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*)

Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*)

Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*)

American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*)

Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*)

Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*)

Solitary Sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*)

Willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*)

Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*)

Upland Sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*) - H

Whimbrel (*Numerius phaeopus*)

Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*)

Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*)
 Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)
 Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*)
 Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)
 Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*)
 Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*)
 Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*)
 White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*)
 Baird's Sandpiper (*Calidris bairdii*)
 Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*)
 Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)
 Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*)
 Stilt Sandpiper (*Calidris himantopus*)
 Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis*)
 Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*)
 Short-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus griseus*)
 Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*)
 Wilson's Snipe (*Gallinago delicata*) [name changed from Common Snipe in 2002]
American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*)
 Wilson's Phalarope (*Phalaropus tricolor*)
 Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*)
 Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*)
 Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)
 Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) [added to state list August 2004]
 Laughing Gull (*Larus atricilla*)
 Franklin's Gull (*Larus pipixcan*)
 Little Gull (*Larus minutus*)
 Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*)
 Bonaparte's Gull (*Larus philadelphia*)
 Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*)
 California Gull (*Larus californicus*)
 Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)
 Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*)
 Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucooides*)
 Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)
 Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*)
 Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*)
 Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*)
 Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*)
 Gull-billed Tern (*Sterna nilotica*)
 Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*)
 Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)
 Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*)
Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*)
 Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*) (added to state list on 10/4/02)
Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*) - H
 Long-billed Murrelet (*Brachyramphus perdix*) (added to state list on 10/29/02)

Columbiformes

Rock Dove (*Columba livia*) - I
 Band-tailed Pigeon (*Columba fasciata*)
Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) - I
Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)
Passenger Pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*) - X
 White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*)

Inca Dove (*Columbina inca*)
Common Ground-Dove (*Columbina passerina*)

Psittaciformes

Carolina Parakeet (*Conuropsis carolinensis*) - X

Cuculiformes

Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*)

Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*)

Groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*)

Strigiformes

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

Eastern Screech-Owl (*Otus asio*)

Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*)

Snowy Owl (*Nyctea scandiaca*)

Barred Owl (*Strix varia*)

Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*)

Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)

Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*)

Caprimulgiformes

Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*)

Chuck-will's-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*)

Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*)

Apodiformes

Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*)

Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*) (added to state list 8/25/99)

Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*)

Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*) (added to state list 12/98)

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*)

Coraciiformes

Belted Kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*)

Piciformes

Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*)

Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*)

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*)

Downy Woodpecker (*Picoides pubescens*)

Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*)

Red-cockaded Woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*) - EXT

Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*)

Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*)

Ivory-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*) - X

Passeriformes

Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*)

Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*)

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*)

Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*)

Alder Flycatcher (*Empidonax alnorum*)

Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*)

Least Flycatcher (*Empidonax minimus*)
Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*)
Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*)
Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*)
Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*)
Great Crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*)
Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*)
Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*)
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*)
Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)
Northern Shrike (*Lanius excubitor*) (added to state list - 11/04)
White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*)
Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*)
Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*)
Blue-headed Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*)
Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*)
Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*)
Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*)
Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*)
American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
Fish Crow (*Corvus ossifragus*)
Common Raven (*Corvus corax*)
Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*)

Purple Martin (*Progne subis*)
Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*)
Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)
Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*)
Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)
Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*)

Carolina Chickadee (*Poecile carolinensis*)
Black-capped Chickadee (*Poecile atricapilla*)
Tufted Titmouse (*Baeolophus bicolor*)
Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*)
White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*)
Brown-headed Nuthatch (*Sitta pusilla*)
Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana*)
Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*)
Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*)
Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*)
House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*)
Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)
Sedge Wren (*Cistothorus platensis*)
Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*)
Golden-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa*)
Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*)
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*)
Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*)
Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*)
Veery (*Catharus fuscescens*)
Gray-cheeked Thrush (*Catharus minimus*)
Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*)
Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*)
Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*)

American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*)
Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*)
Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*)
Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*)
Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*)
European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) - I
American Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*)
Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*)

Bachman's Warbler (*Vermivora bachmanii*) - X
Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora pinus*)
Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*)
Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*)
Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*)
Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*)
Northern Parula (*Parula americana*)
Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*)
Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Dendroica pensylvanica*)
Magnolia Warbler (*Dendroica magnolia*)
Cape May Warbler (*Dendroica tigrina*)
Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Dendroica caerulescens*)
Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*)
Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*)
Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*)
Blackburnian Warbler (*Dendroica fusca*)
Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*)
Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*)
Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*)
Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum*)
Bay-breasted Warbler (*Dendroica castanea*)
Blackpoll Warbler (*Dendroica striata*)
Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*)
Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*)
American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*)
Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*)
Worm-eating Warbler (*Helmitheros vermivorus*)
Swainson's Warbler (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*)
Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*)
Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*)
Louisiana Waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*)
Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosus*)
Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*)
Mourning Warbler (*Oporornis philadelphia*)
Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*)
Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*)
Canada Warbler (*Wilsonia canadensis*)

Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*)
Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*)
Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*)

Green-tailed Towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*)
Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*)
Eastern Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*)
Bachman's Sparrow (*Aimophila aestivalis*)

American Tree Sparrow (*Spizella arborea*)
Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*)
Clay-colored Sparrow (*Spizella pallida*)
Field Sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*)
Vesper Sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*) - H
Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*)
Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*)
Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*)
Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowii*)
Le Conte's Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*)
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus nelsoni*)
Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*)
Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)
Lincoln's Sparrow (*Melospiza lincolni*)
Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana*)
White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*)
Harris's Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*)
White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*)

Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*)
Lapland Longspur (*Calcarius lapponicus*)
Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*)
Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*)
Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*)
Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*)
Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*)
Blue Grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*)
Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*)
Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*)
Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*)
Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*)
Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)
Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*)
Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*) - A
Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)
Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*)
Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*)
Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*)
Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*)
Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*)
Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*) (added to state list - 2/05)
Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*)

Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*)
House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) - I
Red Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*)
White-winged Crossbill (*Loxia leucoptera*)
Common Redpoll (*Carduelis flammea*)
Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*) - A
Lesser Goldfinch (*Carduelis psaltria*)
American Goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*)
Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*)

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) - I
Eurasian Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*) - I

Hypothetical List

Birds included in this list have been reported in Kentucky, but they are single observer sight records and/or records for which there is some doubt as to (a) origin, (b) location of the sighting, or (c) validity.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*)
Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*)
Mottled Duck (*Anas fulvigula*)
Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)
Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*)
Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*)
Eskimo Curlew (*Numenius borealis*)
Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*)
Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*)
Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus savana*)
Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*)
Kirtland's Warbler (*Dendroica kirtlandii*)
Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*)
Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*)

Checklist last updated on: 3/3/05