



# Birding in the Interior

Interior of Alaska is a major destination and thoroughfare for hundreds of different species of birds. Bird sightings are exponentially greater during the spring and fall months, as thousands of birds make their annual migration to and from their nesting grounds.

## **Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge**

Located on the edge of the city of Fairbanks, Creamer's Field is a refuge that hosts thousands of migrating birds. At the refuge, which is managed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the non-profit organization Friends of Creamer's Field, you will find a visitors center and nature trails that lead through the fields, wetlands, and boreal forest habitats. Among the attractions at the refuge is the Alaska Bird Observatory, a private non-profit organization which operates a seasonal banding station.

**Birds:** Sandhill Cranes, geese, shorebirds and waterfowl during migration, songbirds in season and raptors.

## **University of Alaska Fairbanks Campus**

There are three main bird-viewing areas on the UAF campus. The agricultural fields on the southwest side of campus provide a stopover site for migrating waterfowl, such as Canada Geese, Sandhill Cranes, and shorebirds. At UAF's West Ridge ski trail system, you may walk through boreal forest and wetlands and have the chance of seeing songbirds and resident birds. Smith Lake, located on the eastern edge of campus, is home to waterfowl such as trumpeter swans and mallards.

**Birds:** A medley of waterfowl, shorebirds, and songbirds will be nesting in the area. Look for Hammond's Flycatcher, Townsend's and Yellow-rumped warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Lesser Yellowlegs and thrushes.

## **Fairbanks International Airport Ponds:**

A variety of ponds, dikes, and mudflats provide excellent habitat for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. The front ponds are most accessible, but the gravel roads behind the airport, on University Ave. South or Old Airport Way lead to additional birding areas.

**Birds:** Waterfowl, shorebirds, and passerines; sometimes thrushes and warblers in adjoining woods; gulls and terns on the south-east side by the river. Sometimes newly hatched ducklings can be seen.



Black-capped Chickadee

## **Bonanza Creek Experimental Forest**

About 17 miles west of UAF at milepost 339.9 on the Parks Highway you'll find this forest. The turnoff is the road on the left after you pass the viewpoint with the monument honoring George A. Parks. The gravel road descends through a mature white spruce forest and beginning at about 2 miles, through a past burned area. The Forest is within the Tanana Valley State Forest, a unit managed by the Division of Forestry, State of Alaska.

**Birds:** Swainson's and Varied Thrush, Townsend's Warbler, Boreal Chickadee, Common Redpoll, Dark-eyed Junco, Three-toed and Black-backed woodpecker, Boreal Owl, and the Great-Horned Owl.

### Chena Lakes Recreation Area

Located about 17 miles outside of Fairbanks, this 2,000 acre park includes a large lake, a nature trail, and parallels parts of the Chena River. It is operated by the Fairbanks North Star Borough.

**Birds:** Migratory waterfowl and shorebirds.

### Chena River State Recreation Area

This recreation area runs from approximately mile 26 to mile 51 of Chena Hot Springs Road. The road is lined with aspen, birch, spruce forest, and dotted with various ponds and lakes and is highlighted by the Chena River and its tributaries. It is operated by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

**Birds:** Water Pipit, Bald Eagles Kingfishers Barrow's and Common Goldeneyes, swallows, hawks, grouse, chickadees, woodpeckers, thrushes, warblers, and Hawk Owls.

### Steese Highway

Twelvemile Summit and Eagle Summit (at milepost 85-86 and milepost 103-109 on the Steese Highway) are good places to experience alpine tundra as well as find alpine specialists like Northern Wheatear, Surfbird, and Willow and Rock Ptarmigans. The weather can be very unpredictable. The trails and facilities are maintained by the Bureau of Land Management.

**Birds:** Woodpeckers, Lapland Longspur, ptarmigan, grouse, Lesser Golden-Plover, Long-tailed Jaeger, Merlins, Northern Shrike, and Hawk Owl.



Sandhill Crane

### Incoming flight times for Interior Birds:

<b>March</b>			Savannah Sparrow
18	Snow Bunting		White-crowned Sparrow
25	Golden Eagle		
<b>April</b>		2	Solitary Sandpiper
8	Bald Eagle		Hermit Thrush
12	Rough-legged Hawk	3	Golden-crowned Sparrow
13	Common Goldeneye		Lincoln's Sparrow
14	Lapland Longspur		Horned Grebe
15	Canada Goose	4	American Golden Plover
	Northern Pintail		Red-Necked Grebe
	Red-tailed Hawk	6	Semipalmated Plover
	Northern Harrier		Orange-crowned Warbler
17	Mallard	7	Ring-necked Duck
	American Kestrel		Pectoral Sandpiper
	Short-eared Owl	8	Least Sandpiper
19	Trumpeter Swan		Belted Kingfisher
	Herring Gull		Lesser Scaup
20	Greater White-fronted Goose	9	Common Loon
	American Robin	10	Pacific Loon
22	American Wigeon		Long-billed Dowitcher
	Sandhill Crane		Arctic Tern
23	Northern Shoveler		Townsend's Warbler
	Ruby-crowned Kinglet		Wilson's Warbler
	American Tree Sparrow		Say's Phoebe
24	Snow Goose	11	Cliff Swallow
	Green-winged Teal		Surf Scotewr
	Mew Gull	12	Whimbrel
25	Redhead		Swainson's Thrush
	Canvasback		Northern Waterthrush
	American Pipit		Upland Sandpiper
	Yellow-rumped Warbler	13	Yellow Warbler
26	Barrow's Goldeneye		Blackpoll Warbler
27	Varied Thrush		White-winged Scoter
28	Rusty Blackbird	14	Oldsquaw
	Fox Sparrow	15	Gray-cheeked Thrush
29	Sharp-shinned Hawk		Wandering Tattler
	Violet-green Swallow	16	Long-tailed Jaeger
	Tree-Swallow		Western Wood-pewee
30	Red-breasted Merganser		Olive-sided Flycatcher
	Lesser Yellowlegs		Spotted Sandpiper
<b>May</b>		17	Bank Swallow
1	Common Snipe	19	Black-bellied Plover
	Bonaparte's Gull	20	Stilt Sandpiper
	Northern Flicker	23	Alder Flycatcher
	Hammond's Flycatcher	25	

### For More Information

**Arctic Audubon Society's Birding Hotline:**

(907) 451-9213

**Creamer's Field Visitor Center:**

(907) 452-5162

**Look on this site for specific bird types:**

<http://www.alaskabird.org/>

