

Welcome to the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve and the *Living Wetlands Interpretive Nature Trail*. The 28.82 acre Preserve was gifted to the Whitefish Lake Institute by the Dan Averill family in 2009, as part of the Viking Creek Development package. Our goal in making the trail available to the public is to share the history, science, and beauty of the wetland, and to provide a glimpse into the lives of the wildlife with which we share this habitat. This wetland is an integral part of the Whitefish Lake Watershed which is nestled within the larger Flathead Lake Watershed.

Flathead Audubon Society volunteers helped identify the bird species that are described in this guide. The Flathead Audubon Society is a local chapter of the National Audubon Society. For more information go to Flathead Audubon's website at flatheadaudubon.org. We are grateful to Flathead Audubon for their efforts in conservation and education throughout the Flathead .

What to expect in and around the Flathead Lake Watershed

Spring *Migrating flocks stop in the Flathead & summer residents return.*

The Flathead Valley lies in a migration corridor. Large flocks of waterfowl pass through in March, April and May. The first songbirds arrive in late February and March – blackbirds, robins, varied thrushes, kestrels, and tree and violet-green swallows show up in middle to late March. Osprey arrive early April, and begin building nests in May. Most insect eaters arrive in May or early June – warblers, vireos, nighthawks, and flycatchers.

Summer *Newly hatched young appear. Southerly migration begins in late summer.*

Look for waterfowl broods along rivers and lakeshores. Flocks of swallows and blackbirds begin staging in late June for southern flight. Southbound shorebirds start showing up in July. Calliope and rufous hummingbirds begin to move south in late July and August.

Fall *Summer birds are leaving, winter birds are arriving.*

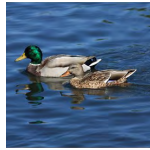
Most songbirds, kestrels, morning doves and osprey fly south by mid-September. Waterfowl return from the north and form flocks in pothole lakes and rivers. Rough-legged hawks and northern shrikes return from their northern breeding areas in November and December.

Winter *Many bird species over-winter in the Flathead area.*

Feeders attract a variety of birds, including chickadees, nuthatches, evening grosbeaks, woodpeckers and jays. Winter finches, waterfowl, bald eagles and rough-legged hawks are usually present in good numbers. Bohemian waxwings fly about in large flocks, looking for winter berries.

Birds Identified in the Wetland

These birds species have been identified by sight, song or sound in the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve:



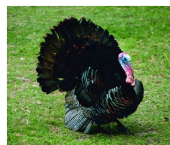
Mallard



Red-tailed Hawk



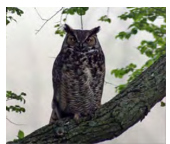
Ruffed Grouse



Wild Turkey



Killdeer



Great-horned Owl



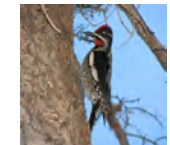
Vaux's Swift



Violet-green Swallow



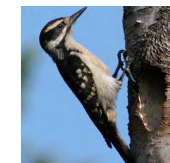
Tree Swallow



Red-naped Sapsucker



Downy Woodpecker



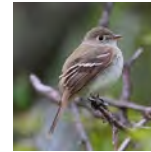
Hairy Woodpecker



Pileated Woodpecker



Northern Flicker



Least Flycatcher



Red-eyed Vireo



Warbling Vireo



Blue Jay



Black-billed Magpie



American Crow



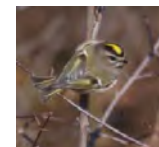
Common Raven



Black-capped Chickadee



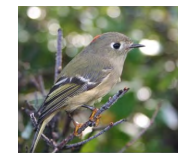
Mountain Chickadee



Golden-crowned Kinglet



Red-breasted Nuthatch



Ruby-crowned Kinglet



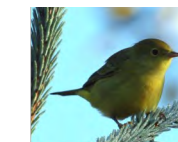
Belted Kingfisher



Swainson's Thrush



Gray Catbird



Yellow Warbler



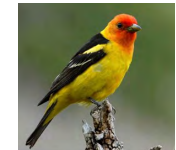
Yellow-rumped Warbler



Northern Waterthrush



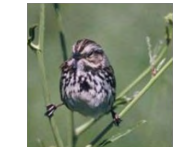
Wilson's Warbler



Western Tanager



Black-headed Grosbeak



Song Sparrow

These bird species are *somewhat likely* to be seen or heard within the wetland:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Wood Duck | Steller's Jay |
| Cooper's Hawk | Veery |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk | Varied Thrush |
| Northern Goshawk | House Wren |
| Bald Eagle | Orange-crowned Warbler |
| Osprey | Nashville Warbler |
| Merlin | Townsend's Warbler |
| Northern Pygmy Owl | American Redstart |
| Barred Owl | MacGillivray's Warbler |
| Rufous Hummingbird | Common Yellowthroat |
| Calliope Hummingbird | Dark-eyed Junco |
| Willow Flycatcher | Pine Siskin |
| Wood Peewee | House Finch |
| Brown Creeper | White-winged Crossbill |
| Winter Wren | |

These bird species are found in the surrounding area and *may* be seen or heard nearby:

- Common Loon
- Canada Goose
- Great blue Heron
- Common Snipe
- Ring-billed Gull
- Ring-necked Pheasant
- Mountain Bluebird
- Townsend's Solitaire
- Starling
- Bohemian Waxwing
- Cedar Waxwing
- Bobolink
- Western Meadowlark
- Brown-headed Cowbird
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Brewer's Blackbird
- Evening Grosbeak
- Pine Grosbeak
- Chipping Sparrow
- Red Crossbill



Special thanks to Kate Ehrenberg for her assistance on this project.

Wetland Birding Checklist

Identified Bird	Date	Visual/Sound
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Bird Guide

for
The Living Wetlands
Interpretive Nature Trail



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