

# TORONTO ISLANDS BIRDING AND SITE GUIDE



WOOD DUCK



COOPER'S HAWK



BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER



CONNECTICUT WARBLER

**NORM MURR**

JANUARY 1, 2020



WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW

## CONTENTS

Acknowledgements, introduction, general information and directions to The Islands ferry docks -----	Page 1
Ferry fares and schedules and food and drink information -----	Page 2
Toronto Islands washrooms and water fountain locations and general notes -----	Page 3
Section 1 - Ward's Island - Ferry dock / Withrow St. to the Eastern Gap -----	Page 4
Section 2 - Ward's Island - Withrow St. to the Algonquin bridge -----	Page 7
Section 3 - Algonquin Island -----	Page 9
Section 4 - Ward's Island - Algonquin bridge to the Snake Island bridge area -----	Page 11
Section 5 - Snake Island -----	Page 14
Section 6 - Snug Harbour Islands -----	Page 16
Section 7 - Ward's Island - Snug Harbour Islands bridge area to Centre Island - includes The Trap area ----	Page 17
Section 8 - Centre Island - Aerial Cars ( Sky Ride ) to the Wildlife Sanctuary and Gibraltar Point -----	Page 19
Section 9 - The Wildlife Sanctuary -----	Page 20
Section 10 - Gibraltar Point - The Lighthouse Pond, The Lighthouse area and the Trout Pond -----	Page 22
Section 11 - Gibraltar Point - The dunes / beach path to the north side of the Trout Pond -----	Page 25
Section 12 - Hanlan's Point - North side of the Trout Pond -----	Page 26
Section 13 - Hanlan's Point - The dunes/beach path - The trail to north side of the Trout Pond (See at the end of Section 11) to the tennis courts south of the airfield -----	Page 28
Section 14 - Hanlan's Point - North end of the tennis courts to the south end of the airfield fence -----	Page 30
Section 15 - Hanlan's Point - South end of the airfield fence including the Sparrow Patch -----	Page 32
Section 16 - Hanlan's Point - West side of the airfield fence -----	Page 34
Section 17 - Hanlan's point - Beach area west of the airfield fence -----	Page 36
Section 18 - Hanlan's Point - South end of airfield fence - The Sparrow Patch to the east side of the fence ---	Page 37
Section 19 - Hanlan's Point - East side of airfield fence - south east corner to just south of the ferry dock ----	Page 38
Section 20 - Hanlan's Point - Ferry dock area -----	Page 39
Section 21 - Hanlan's Point – Along the lagoon south of the ferry dock -----	Page 40
List of some nesting and resident birds -----	Page 41
List of where you may find some of the birds on the Islands -----	Page 41
List of mammals, snakes, turtles and amphibians that may be found on the Islands -----	Page 44
Some butterflies seen on The Islands - <i>Note about some wintering waterfowl</i> -----	Page 45
Checklist of birds of The Islands – <i>A separate copy of the Checklist is available – See Page 3</i> -----	Page 46
Early arrival date of some of the migrating birds - Spring and Fall -----	Page 47

## **ACKNOWLEDEMENTS**

**This guide would not be possible without the valuable editing, suggestions and critiquing the 2012 copy of this Guide by my late friend Andrew Jano and this 2020 copy by friends Ian Cannell, Bob Tyler and Jenny Bull.**

In the 1990's the Island birding was made more enjoyable because of the good company of Alfred Adamo, Craig McLaughlan, Larry Morse, Naish McHugh and Stan Bajurny and several other birders who joined us on occasion.

In the last few years I have birded along with Ian Cannell, Margaret Liubavicius, Alfred Adamo, Bob Tyler, Jenny Bull, Peter McParland, Bill Smith and Gunnar Bessel and a few other birders who joined us off and on.

## **TORONTO ISLANDS BIRDING AND SITE GUIDE**

**January 1, 2020**

### **INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Toronto Islands are a group of small islands located just off shore from the Toronto city centre providing shelter for Toronto Harbour. The Islands are connected to the mainland by several ferry services and they contain a small residential community on the east end, various recreational facilities and the Billy Bishop Airport on the west end.

The Islands are comprised of a variety of habitats from woodland and shrub-land to meadow and sand dunes, ponds, lagoons and an extensive shore line. There is a good mix of deciduous and evergreen vegetation. For the birds arriving from the south in the spring the Islands are the first green space in the extensively built-up waterfront and in the fall they offer a resting and feeding place for the birds before they start the crossing of the lake on their way south.

This guide is concerned mainly with the spring and fall migration periods – March 15<sup>th</sup> to June 10<sup>th</sup> and August 15<sup>th</sup> to November 15<sup>th</sup>.

*Note: -The birds seen and mentioned in the following pages are the result and summary of regular visits and observations over 40 years. One should not expect to see all or many of the birds during a given day, in fact you may not see some of them at all.*

I usually go over to Ward's Island early in the morning but you can go at a time that you feel comfortable going. My times in March are the 8:00 a.m. ferry, in April the 7:30 a.m. ferry and in May/June the 6:30 or 7:00 a.m. ferry. From Aug. 15<sup>th</sup> to Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> I go over to Ward's at 7:00 a.m. and then switch to the 7:30 a.m. ferry and many times in October I go over to Hanlan's Point first.

After Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> when the sparrows start to arrive, I often take the first ferry to Hanlan's Point as that end of the Islands (Hanlan's Point) is one of the best areas for sparrows, wrens and Orange-crowned Warblers.

### **DIRECTIONS TO THE TORONTO ISLAND FERRY DOCKS**

From Union Station, walk south on Bay Street (on the east side of the station) for about 1 km to the ferry docks at the foot of Bay Street at Queen's Quay and you are there. The entrance to the ferry docks (well signed) is on the west side of the Westin Harbour Castle Hotel.

From the Union Station you may transfer to the #6 or the #6A Bay St. TTC bus on Bay Street (transfer or fare) just outside of the east entrance (southwest corner of Bay Street) to the GO Station. They both go down Bay Street to Queen's Quay. GO passengers arriving by train or bus must pay a fare to use the TTC bus or streetcar.

There is a street car that goes from inside the TTC's Union Subway Station (Yonge Line side) to Queen's Quay (no transfer required for subway users) for those that prefer not to walk to or from Union Subway Station and there is an elevator at the Queens Quay Street Car stop for those that do not want to climb up or down the long stairs.

For those who choose to go down to the docks on Sunday before the subway opens you can catch the #97B Yonge St. Blue Night bus (Steeles Ave. to Queens Quay). This bus will let you off right across the street on Bay St. only steps from the ferry docks entrance "but no ferries" until 8:00 am.

You may also want to visit the TTC web page <http://www.ttc.ca/> for trip planning assistance.

From the Gardiner Expressway or Lakeshore Blvd. exit at Bay Street and drive south to Queen's Quay, there are very few parking lots nearby, but one is located just a block north of the ferry.

## **TORONTO ISLAND - FERRY FARES AND DAILY SCHEDULES**

Web Site - <http://www.toronto.ca/parks/island/ferry-schedule.htm>

Ferry Ticket Prices <https://www.toronto.ca/explore-enjoy/parks-gardens-beaches/toronto-island-park/>

To Ward's Island the first boat to Ward's Island is at 6:30 am and the second one is at 7:00 am Monday to Friday. This is my preferred starting point in the Spring.

On Saturdays and Holidays the first boat to Ward's Island is at 6:35 am and the second boat is at 7:15 am.

On Sundays the first boat to Ward's Island is 8:00 am.

To Hanlan's Point the first boat is at 6:30 am between the Easter Holiday weekend and approx. Oct. 23rd and the second boat is at 7:00 am Monday to Friday.

On Saturday, Sunday and Holidays during the same period the first boat to Hanlan's Point is at 8:15 am and the second boat is at 9:15 am.

*Note: - If you are birding here between April 15th and the Victoria Day long weekend or after Approx. Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> the last ferry from Hanlan's Point is at 6:15 p.m. and you will have to walk back to Centre Island if you miss it. After Thanksgiving Day to April 15th of the following year there is no ferry service to Hanlan's Point or Centre Island either, so if you bird from Ward's Island to Hanlan's Point at that time of the year you will have to walk back to Ward's Island to catch the ferry.*

## **TORONTO ISLANDS – FOOD AND DRINKS**

Food and beverages on the Islands are very expensive, e.g. soft drinks \$3.25 plus. You are better buying your lunch and beverages on the mainland or best of all bringing your own lunch and drink from home.

There are coffee shops, etc. upstairs in the building at 10 Bay St. on the northwest corner of Bay St. and Queens Quay at 10 Bay St. which is across from the ferry docks (opens before 6:30 am on week days only).

A new Second Cup Coffee Shop has opened in the southeast area of Bay St. and Lakeshore Blvd and opens at 7 am - 7 days a week.

Just a little east on Queen's Quay (less than a block) there is the "Kitchen Table" and they are open at 6 am, 7 days a week. Besides coffee you may also buy food and beverages at the Kitchen Table if you forgot to bring a lunch.

There is now a small café ( Island Café - <http://www.islandcafeto.com/home> and <https://www.yelp.com/biz/island-cafe-toronto>) on Ward's Island and it is open daily from May to September, but check their web site above. It is straight out from the Ward's island ferry dock (about 200 yards/180 meters) and hard to miss and the prices are much lower than the ones run by the parks dept. Opening and closing times vary with the season as well as the day of the week.

There is also another café ( Riviera Café - <https://www.islandriviera.com/> ) west of the Ward's Island ferry dock and west of the Island Café at the bridge to Algonquin Island that serves full meals, snacks and beer, wine, etc. You can check their open times etc. on their web site.

There are large maps of the Islands at both the Island side ferry docks and the City side ferry docks. A small brochure is now available at the ticket booth and in the schedule containers just inside the gate.

*Note: - If you are interested in some of Island outings that have been posted on the web in the past you can check at [http://ontbirds.ca/pipermail/birdalert\\_ontbirds.ca/](http://ontbirds.ca/pipermail/birdalert_ontbirds.ca/)*

## WASHROOMS AND WATER FOUNTAINS

There are washrooms and drinking fountains on The Islands as well as on the city side at the ferry docks and following are the locations of some of the washrooms and drinking fountains on the Islands.

### Washrooms / Toilets

One washroom straight out from the Ward's Island ferry docks (about 500 yards/450 meters) and another one on the west side of the island fire station. The next one is beside the paved path between the boardwalk and Snug Harbour. There are two on Centre Island, one beside the pier on the south side of the island and one between the north end of the flower gardens and the New Island School. On Gibraltar Point there is one at the southwest tip beside the lake. Hanlan's Point has two more between the Trout Pond and the ferry docks, one is beside the tennis courts and the other one is alongside the lagoon halfway between the tennis courts and the docks.

### Water Fountains

There is a water fountain at the Ward's Island ferry dock, another on the east side of the fire station on Ward's Island, just east of the bridge onto Snake Island and another one just south of The Trap on Ward's Island. Snake Island has a water fountain just after you cross the bridge. On Centre Island there is another fountain beside the washroom at the pier, one just north of the pier in the flower gardens and another one on the west side of the washroom west of the flower gardens. You will find one at the south end of the filtration plant alongside the road to the east of the old Island school. Hanlan's Point has five between the Trout Pond and the ferry docks" one alongside the road just west of the Trout Pond, the next one between the Trout Pond and the tennis courts, two north of the tennis courts and the fifth beside the ferry dock washroom. *Note: - All outdoor water fountains are usually turned off by mid-October until at least mid-April.*

There are no washrooms or water fountains on Algonquin Island, the Snug Harbour Islands or in The Sanctuary.

### Notes - In MY Opinion

1 - The Toronto Islands in my opinion are one of the best if not the best birding location in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) though they remain one of the most under birded areas. The Island Unofficial Checklist of Birds stand at 349 species as of November 24, 2019. For a separate PDF copy of the checklist contact [normurr@sympatico.ca](mailto:normurr@sympatico.ca)

2 - Over the years my fellow birders and I have found the Islands probably the best location in the GTA to find Sedge Wren, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Orange-crowned Warbler, Connecticut Warbler and Nelson's Sparrow during migration.

3 - The fall migration is by far the best time to find all five of the above species but the spring migration period is a very close second. The first three of the four being the most likely to be found in spring but the Nelson's Sparrow much less so in spring.

4 - In the fall most species are usually found by sight but in Spring you will find that the warblers are not shy about singing as they forage, so you should familiarize yourself with their calls and songs. The Olive-sided Flycatcher only calls once in a while and the Nelson's Sparrow has never been heard on the Islands by me.

5 - Just a little heads up for those that are not comfortable birding with wet or cold feet. The Islands are probably 80% grass and brush covered and after a rain or a heavy dew it is hard not to spend most of the day with wet socks and feet unless you are fortunate enough to be wearing good waterproof foot wear. This is not a problem during the warmer days of May / June and August / September but can be very uncomfortable during the cooler days.

6 - It is possible to walk and bird only on the paved roads or the boardwalk but most of the best birding areas are away from the paved area. However on cool sunny north wind days the boardwalk can be a birdy place.

7 - Due to possible flooding caused by high water levels in Lake Ontario, many of the areas in this guide will not be accessible at times and the Islands may be closed to the public except for residents and city employees.

**NOTE: - No part of this guide may be reproduced, changed or distributed in any form without the prior permission of the author - Norman C. Murr, 303-48 Laverock Ave., Richmond Hill, Ontario, L4C 4J5 except for personal use.**

[normurr@sympatico.ca](mailto:normurr@sympatico.ca)



Ward's Island - East End - Ferry Dock area to the Eastern Gap

**SECTION 1 - WARD'S ISLAND - FERRY DOCK / WITHROW ST. TO THE EASTERN GAP**

After exiting the ferry at the Ward's Island dock, walk and bird straight ahead along or beside Withrow St. about 150 yards (135m) south from the dock to the first east/west paved path (Channel Ave.) and bird the bushes and tall Willow, Maple and Linden trees here. Check the trees and bushes carefully for flycatchers, kinglets, warblers, gnatcatcher, vireos, Baltimore and Orchard Oriole, Scarlet Tanager, Summer Tanager (uncommon), Gray Catbird (in bushes), Eastern Towhee and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Bald Eagle and Forster's Tern were seen over the ferry dock area in the past.

You may be distracted by the many House Sparrows in this area so be sure to check them carefully as that bird you may think is a House Sparrow may not be. Check the lawn just south of here for Chipping Sparrow and be sure to look overhead for swallows, swifts, and migrating loons, raptors, Robins, bluebirds, blackbirds, etc.

When you have finished birding the above area, walk a few steps east to the bushes and trees at Channel Ave. and Fifth St. Stand back and watch for more of the same bird species as above as well as thrushes and sparrows. Northern Waterthrush, White-throated, White-crowned, Lincoln's and Fox Sparrows and Eastern Towhee may be found here and an Ovenbird sometimes skulks in the interior. Three good sightings that we added in this area since 2012 were Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Connecticut Warbler and Summer Tanager.

Be sure to pay attention to the tall Eastern Cottonwood tree rising above and behind these bushes for woodpeckers, Baltimore Oriole, Orchard Oriole, warblers and vireos. Black-capped Chickadees, both Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets are usually present along with American Goldfinch and at times a House Finch or two as they nest in the area.



Ward's Island  
Northeast corner at Channel Avenue and 5th Street.

Walk around to the north, or Channel Ave. / Fifth St. side of the bushes and check the trees and shrubs at the cross streets. Both this area and the preceding one usually have some woodpeckers - Downy Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Northern Flicker. After satisfying yourself that you have seen everything here (you usually haven't) walk south about 100 yards (90m) to the washrooms at Lakeshore Ave. and Fifth St.

In May of 2011 a Cerulean Warbler and a Prairie Warbler (both uncommon) were found in this area near the washroom.

I usually walk along Lakeshore Ave. to the Eastern Gap as this area can be very birdy even though the sun may be almost in your eyes. The pavement may have many thrushes and sparrows on it and in the bushes and trees you may spot many flycatchers and warblers as well as thrushes, Scarlet Tanager, vireos and orioles. This is also a good place to find nesting Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and check the trees near the Gap for roosting Black-crowned Night-Herons. I have found Northern Saw-whet Owl, a Wild Turkey (uncommon) and White-eyed Vireo (uncommon) here. Carolina, Winter and House Wrens may be found or heard along this street and there is usually a Gray Catbird or three along here, as well as Northern Cardinals, Downy Woodpecker and Northern Flicker. Also found along here were Tufted Titmouse (rare) both Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoos, Whip-poor-Will, Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Mourning and Connecticut Warbler (three in the fall of 2011) and Yellow-breasted Chat (uncommon).



Ward's Island - Lakeshore Avenue.  
Looking east between 5th St. and the Eastern Gap.

A couple of new birds that we found along here were a Prairie Warbler in 2019 and a Western Tanager (rare) in 2015,

Another choice of birding from here and also before you get to the above area, especially during a fallout, is to bird among the houses as all of the streets are tree lined and have many ornamental shrubs and bushes as well as flower gardens. Watch and listen for many of the aforementioned birds as well as Ruby-throated Hummingbirds at the flowers and flowering bushes. Two new birds that we added among the houses in the Spring of 2019 were Hooded Warbler and Summer Tanager.

*Note: - When birding amid the houses both on Ward's and Algonquin Islands be sure to respect the privacy of the residents when looking towards their homes and try not to block the narrow streets when the residents are walking or cycling by. Most if not all of the residents are friendly and may stop and chat as they are used to birders now.*

If you haven't noticed yet you soon will – there are some pet cats roaming the streets here as well as (at times) an off-leash dog or two. All are friendly though it may bother you to see some of the cats hunting ground birds. The off-leash bylaws do not seem to be enforced on The Islands, even though The Islands are designated a park and signs are posted about leashing your dog. The city bylaw about the cats is also ignored both by some residents and the parks department.

Enjoy the cats and dogs as they are part of this area as well as Algonquin Island. You should not encounter cats anywhere else on the Islands but you will certainly see a few off-leash dogs.

At the east end of Lakeshore Ave., you will come to the Eastern Gap where ships enter Toronto Harbour. Along the edge of the concrete you may encounter many of the previously mentioned birds. Walk south towards the lake (the land mass you see across the bay off the south end of the Eastern Gap is the Leslie St. Spit (Tommy Thompson Park) until you reach one of several paths on the right that enter the ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area) and also Ward's Meadow.



Ward's Island - Looking north along the edge of the Eastern Gap - Ward's Meadow & ESA is left of the photo.

In Spring of 2019 a beautiful male Prothonotary Warbler was found by Marc Lichtenberg at the far east end of Lakeshore Ave. in the flooded area beside the Eastern Gap, well heard and well seen.

Along the way you may see and hear Caspian Terns as they fly past, and in the Gap, you may spot a Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Common and Caspian Tern and you can't miss the many Ring-billed Gulls, Long-tailed Ducks and Double-crested Cormorants. Viewing birds along here is sometimes good as you will have the sun almost at your back in the morning and birds may come out onto the concrete to search for food. I have found Louisiana Waterthrush (uncommon) and Summer Tanager (uncommon) along here. On April 3rd and April 8th, 2008 we found over 250 Bohemian Waxwings (rarely) here as well and on May 9th, 2011 a Fish Crow (accidental at that time but uncommon now) was seen here and watched and listened to for 25 minutes before it flew east over the Gap and in 2017 we found a Snowy Owl here.



Part of the Ward's Island ESA just west of the Eastern Gap

If you birded along the Eastern Gap area you will find a path or two going off the concrete into Ward's Meadow and the ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area). You can also enter this area along a path beside the washrooms at the south end of Fifth St.

This is one of the best birding areas on the east end of the Islands and along with the preceding areas, you could spend hours here. Sometimes, depending on migration, you may also find it rather quiet but there is usually something to see.

As usual keep an eye on the sky, but that can be hard to do as this is a great area for wrens, flycatchers, thrushes, vireos, warblers, Scarlet Tanager, sparrows and Brown Thrasher. Be sure to carefully check out the Red Osier Dogwood here as many birds feed in these thick bushes and may take patience to see. And again, be sure to keep an eye on the sky as since 2012 we have added Greater White-fronted, Snow and Cackling Geese overhead as well as Tundra Swans.

Found here over the years were American Bittern, Great Egret, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Northern Saw-whet (uncommon now), Eastern Screech (rare on The Islands), Great Horned Owl, Long-eared Owl, both Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoo, Whip-poor-will (uncommon), Tufted Titmouse (rare), Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Yellow-throated, Blue-headed and White-eyed (uncommon) Vireo, Mourning, Orange-crowned and Connecticut Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat (uncommon), Fox and Nelson's Sparrow (uncommon), Indigo Bunting and Orchard Oriole. May 2014 was a great year to bird this area as Bell's Vireo and a Kirtland's Warbler were found here and well seen in the area beside The Gap.

Almost all of the expected flycatchers, warblers, vireos, and thrushes can occur at times as well as Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark, if you are lucky enough to be there on a good day. Some of the nesting birds here are Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, House and Carolina Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Gray Catbird, Northern Cardinal, Brown Thrasher, Song Sparrow and Baltimore Oriole. In the spring, watch for a Raccoon in the trees and Virginia Opossum any time.

Be aware that that is an area that during the warmer days can have what seems to be a carpet of red ants (European Fire Ant) underfoot and they may also be in the grass and on benches, bushes, tree trunks and tree leaves. The sting is not pleasant to say the least. Spraying sock tops and pant cuffs with insect repellent can help to keep them from climbing under your clothing, maybe. These ants occur throughout the Islands.



Ward's Island - Looking north towards Lakeshore Ave.  
This is part of the Ward's Island ESA.

When birding this area you may want to walk around the trails more than once. Be sure to check the beach area as at quiet times it may have shorebirds. I have found Red Knot (uncommon) here twice and offshore there may be a Horned Grebe, and on the beach here in 2019 among the usual Ring-billed Gulls we found 2 Glaucous, 2 Iceland and a Lesser Black-backed Gull.



The willow trees here can be very good. In the Fall there may be large numbers of Northern Flicker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Ruby and Golden-crowned Kinglets, Hermit and Swainson's Thrush, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Baltimore Oriole.

Mixed in among the birds in the above area you may find Brown Creeper, Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatch, flycatchers, Scarlet Tanager, Chipping, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco. Check the tennis court fence for Eastern Phoebe and Eastern Kingbird and along the base of the fence you may find some of the above sparrows as well as Lincoln's Sparrow.

Cross over Willow Ave towards The Boardwalk to bird the thick bushes here. This area is really an extension of the previous area but with the addition of an allotment garden and more spruce and larch. A White-eyed Vireo (uncommon) was found here in 2010. It gives a better view of the sky to watch for hawks and swallows. In the spring of 2018 a vocal pair of Fish Crows were seen sitting together in a tree in this area.

Be sure to check the large lilac bushes near the houses and check the trees for House and Purple Finches, and Orchard Orioles and the allotment garden for the occasional Carolina, House and Winter Wren as well as Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Indigo Bunting, Orange-crowned Warbler, Lincoln's and Fox Sparrow. Eastern Towhee can be reliable between here and the bridge to Algonquin Island. Check the grass and under bushes for all the thrushes, Ovenbird, Mourning Warbler and Northern Waterthrush. Black-billed Cuckoo has been found in this area several times.

Woodpeckers such as Downy, Hairy and Red-bellied (uncommon) should be watched and listened for here. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker can also be common here as you walk to the Algonquin Bridge area and Golden-winged Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat (both uncommon) have been seen here.



Ward's Island - Looking south across Willow Ave.  
The tennis courts are off to the left of the photo.  
The Sunshine Seniors Centre can be seen at the right centre of the photo.



Ward's Island - Looking west across Lenore Ave.  
The boardwalk is to the left of the photo.  
The Sunshine Seniors Centre and their allotment gardens are beyond the trees.



Ward's Island - Looking north from Willow Ave.  
The tennis courts are just to the right of the photo.  
Cibola Ave. and the lagoon are in the background

### **SECTION 3 - ALGONQUIN ISLAND**

*Note:- If you have decided not to bird Algonquin Island then proceed to Section 4 on Page 11*

On Algonquin Island The same respect for the privacy of residents applies here as well. Again, try not to block the narrow streets. There is also a Day Care Centre on the island (west of the north end of Wyandot Ave.), so be aware and act accordingly.

This is a well-treed island and birds may be found anywhere, you may want to spend some time here to walk the streets. A male Hooded Warbler (uncommon) was found along Omaha Ave. in the spring of 2011. There are many more evergreens on this island. Both nuthatches, Pine Siskin, House Finch. Purple Finch, White-winged Crossbill (uncommon), Tufted Titmouse (uncommon) and both cuckoos have been seen and one year in the 80's a male Yellow-headed Blackbird (rare) was found here. As you cross the bridge watch for an Eastern Phoebe or two as well as Barn Swallow as both species nest under the bridge and after mid-August you may spot several species of swallows on the bridge railings or the wires beside the bridge and one day a Forster's Tern flew past over the bridge..

On the north side of Algonquin Island in March, April and late October scan the Toronto Harbour for waterfowl including grebes, Mute and Trumpeter Swans. Canada Goose, Gadwall, Black Duck, Mallard, White-winged Scoter, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, all three mergansers, Ruddy Duck, Gulls including Bonaparte's and Caspian and Common Tern. There are park benches here to take a rest or a snack break.

My favorite areas are along Wyandot Ave. and the Algonquin Meadow at the west end of the island. Wyandot Ave. is a narrow street bordered by cottonwoods, thick bushes and grass on one side and evergreens, hedges, lawns and gardens on the other side. This is another area of many House Sparrows, friendly cats and also friendly, curious residents. Take some time to talk with them, the residents and the cats. The area on the west side of the Avenue is an ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area).

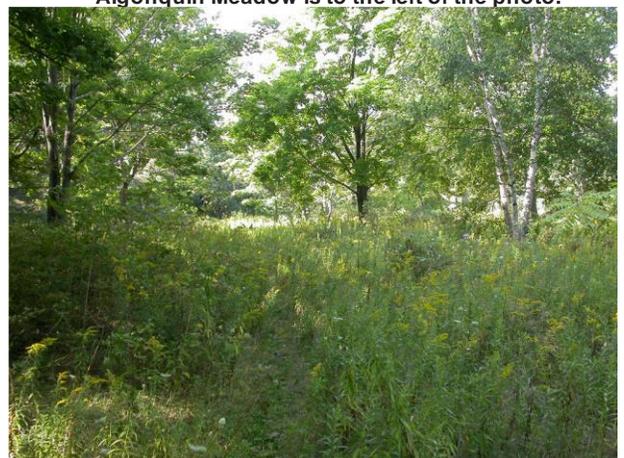
The tall trees can be good for the occasional B-b and Y-b Cuckoo, regular (in season) are Scarlet Tanager, warblers and vireos and in the gardens Ovenbird and all six thrush species. Watch and listen for Mourning Warbler as this is a good place for them, both sides of the street, especially in the spring. Some days there are many flycatchers along here as well as most of the expected warblers and occasionally Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Orange-crowned, Pine, Prairie and Northern Parula Warbler. It is good habitat for migrating Mourning and Connecticut Warblers. Eastern Towhee, Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglet can be seen and heard at times as they can be very common along here. Baltimore and Orchard Oriole nest here as do Warbling Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, House and Carolina Wren and of course Black-capped Chickadee. It is always a good idea to walk this street two or three times when there are lots of birds and if time permits do walk some of the other streets as well.

Algonquin Meadow along with Wyandot Ave. are two of the areas that are not birded too often as they are off the beaten path between Ward's Island and Hanlan's Point but they can be very good in migration, sometimes better than some of the preceding areas.

You can access Algonquin Meadow from either end of Wyandot Ave. but try to avoid the Day Care Centre at the Algonquin Island Community Centre at the north end. This should not be a problem as the trail runs past it. The trail circles the outside of this end of the island (closed during high water years) with a side trail cutting through the Algonquin Meadow and there are benches here for a rest or a lunch break.



**Algonquin Island - Wyandot Avenue  
Looking north towards Toronto Harbour.  
Algonquin Meadow is to the left of the photo.**



**Algonquin Island  
Looking west along Wyandot Ave.  
Algonquin Meadow is beyond the trees.**

From this trail you have a back view of the cottonwoods and bushes that border Wyandot Ave. and at times a better look at the warblers and vireos. All the thrushes can be found in and around the thick cover here and the Scarlet Tanagers like the tall trees. There are lots of Baltimore Orioles here and the occasional Orchard Oriole may be seen as well as Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Great Crested, Yellow-bellied, Willow, Alder, Least and Olive-sided Flycatcher (check the tips of tall dead branches for the Olive-sided) and Black-billed Cuckoo. Warbling Vireo nests here and you should see Red-eyed Vireo and the occasional Yellow-throated Vireo. Check the warblers carefully as there may be a Connecticut or a Mourning Warbler in the underbrush and most certainly you will see or hear a Common Yellowthroat, Wilson's or a Canada Warbler – they seem to like this area during migration.

In the grassy areas look for Eastern Kingbird, Cedar Waxwing, many Yellow Warblers, along with Orange-crowned Warbler, Indigo Bunting, Eastern Towhee, Vesper, Field and Chipping Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Bobolink and the occasional Eastern Bluebird. Northern Flicker can be found in big numbers on some days as they feed on the red ants and look for Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy and Hairy Woodpecker in the trees.

There is a clear view of the sky here so watch for migrating Tundra Swans, raptors such as Bald Eagle, Goshawk, Broad-winged Hawk and Peregrine Falcon, all 6 Swallow species, Cedar Waxwing, Chimney Swift, Blue Jay, Crows and Blackbirds and overhead you may spot a Wood Duck or two, Belted Kingfisher, Great Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron or a Great Egret.

Other birds to watch and listen for are Red-headed (rare now) and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Acadian Flycatcher (rare), Raven, Mockingbird (uncommon), and Summer Tanager (uncommon).

An adult male Yellow-headed Blackbird (very rare here) was seen on Algonquin Island for two days in May of 2019 and 3 Yellow-throated Vireos were found together along Dacotah Ave. This blackbird or another bird was seen a few days before at a feeder behind the Centre Island School.



**Algonquin Island - Algonquin Meadow  
Looking north towards The Harbour.  
Wyandot Ave. is to the right of the photo.**

*Note: - There have been reports of ticks in the Algonquin Meadow. I have only seen one in the last 5 years but beware and be sure to check yourself when you return home. Better safe than sorry.*



**Algonquin Island - Algonquin Meadow  
Looking north towards Toronto Harbour.  
The harbour is beyond the trees.  
Wyandot Ave. is to the right of the photo.**

---

## **SECTION 4 - WARD'S ISLAND - ALGONQUIN BRIDGE TO THE SNAKE ISLAND BRIDGE AREA**

If you have decided not to bird Algonquin Island or even if you have already birded there you may either walk straight ahead from the Algonquin bridge to the boardwalk or into the woods just west of the Riviera Café and west of the large house (Shaw House Seniors Co-op) the last house you will see from here to the Hanlan's Point Ferry Dock.

The boardwalk gives you a good view of the lake and on and over the lake from here we have found Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe (uncommon), Mute, Tundra (overhead) and Trumpeter Swans, White-fronted (overhead), Canada and Cackling Geese, Black, Surf and White-winged Scoter, the latter being the most likely, Hooded, Common and Red-breasted Merganser, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead and at times good numbers of Common Loon plus Common and Caspian Tern and of course hundreds of Ring-billed Gulls as well as Iceland, Glaucous and Great Black-backed Gulls and many, many Double-crested Cormorants.

Walk along the boardwalk checking the trees and bushes for many of the birds mentioned above. At times you may see House and Winter Wren, Northern Waterthrush, Black-capped Chickadee, a few warblers, and a few flycatchers right on the actual boardwalk or the concrete wall catching gnats. Even American Pipits have been seen on the wall.

As you walk along here in the morning the light on sunny days is great and the birding can be very good in the bushes and trees, especially on days with a northerly wind. Watch for Mink on the rocks beside the boardwalk.

If you do not want to walk the whole length of the boardwalk you can exit it at the fire station or further along opposite Snake Island and the enclosed swimming pool.

The area between the bridge onto Algonquin Island and the Island fire station (between the boardwalk and Cibola Ave.) is a short walk through grass, goldenrod and Sweet Clover with maples, pine and spruce trees between the tall cottonwoods and thick bushes. The bushes on the lake side hide the old foundations of the cottages and break wall that used to be here until the 1950's.

When you first enter this area, watch for American Woodcock and Mourning Warbler. A Connecticut Warbler was found here in the Spring of 2019 and there always seem to be a few sparrows. Check the bushes on both sides for Fox Sparrow and Eastern Towhee but especially the boardwalk or lake side.

In season this walk to the fire station could produce many flycatchers including Yellow-bellied, Least and Great Crested Flycatcher. Eastern Phoebe and Eastern Wood-Pewee can be common at all levels. Warblers and vireos are also common at times but may be hard to see in the thick evergreens and bushes. Both kinglets like this area as do many sparrows and thrushes in migration and Baltimore Oriole nests in the tall trees.

The west end of this area near the fire station has over the years produced several Connecticut and Orange-crowned Warblers. Be careful when identifying the Connecticut Warbler as most often in the fall they are with or near Nashville Warblers and that can be confusing if you only get a glimpse of them in the tangles of grass, goldenrod and Sweet Clover, especially when juveniles of both species are present. Along here we have found Black-billed Cuckoo, Prairie and Cerulean Warbler.



Ward's Island - Looking west between the Shaw House and the Island Fire Station. Between the boardwalk and Cibola Avenue.

This area is also good for Red-bellied (uncommon), Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Brown Creeper, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Northern Cardinal, Gray Catbird and Brown Thrasher. Black-capped Chickadees and both kinglets also like this area as even on windy days it may be calm here because the bushes and trees create a good wind break no matter what the wind direction is, sheltering many gnats for them to feed on. At least two Cerulean Warblers (uncommon) have been spotted here in the last couple of years.

Look closely at the thrushes as all of the species have at times been spotted in this area. In migration the trees can host many Cedar Waxwings and I have found flocks of Common Redpoll, American Goldfinch and Pine Siskin here as they stop and rest. You may also hear a Belted Kingfisher as it flies up and down the lagoon beside Cibola Ave.

After leaving this area, stop at the fire station if you want to take a washroom or snack break. Just before reaching the fire station there is a water fountain (beside Cibola Ave.) and at the fire station there are washrooms (clean and tidy), a soft drink machine (sometimes) and picnic tables on the west side of the building at times.

Do Not Enter the Station proper unless invited.

If you choose to take a break here keep an eye out as overhead you may spot a migrating raptor or a Great Egret. As migration progresses there can be many swallows and Chimney Swifts overhead as well. Check the grassy areas as you sit there and you may spot a thrush or two and maybe a Brown Thrasher. In the bushes on the boardwalk side you may see or hear chickadees, Least or Willow Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Gray Catbird, Northern Cardinal, Eastern Towhee or both kinglets. In the trees you usually can see and hear Baltimore Oriole and American Robin and at the right time of the season Eastern Kingbird, Least and Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe and Eastern Wood-Pewee. Common Grackle, Red-winged Blackbird and American Goldfinch are often in the trees or on the grass. Listen for the Belted Kingfisher as it fishes or flies past over the lagoon and there are now (Fall of 2019) several bird feeders behind the fire station and at times a Fireman or Paramedic or two relaxing.

In the lagoon in front of the fire station look for Ruddy Duck (uncommon), Long-tailed Duck, Redhead, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Gadwall, Red-breasted and Hooded Merganser, Pied-billed and Horned Grebe and the usual Mute Swan, Canada Goose and Mallard. A Great Blue Heron and sometimes a Great Egret may be seen flying past.

After you have had your break at or walked past the fire station between the boardwalk and Cibola Ave. you will be walking on manicured grass flanked by thick bushes and medium to tall willows and cottonwoods with some pines along the way and some more pines and some dead larch as you near the paved walkway between the boardwalk and the Snake Island bridge area. *Note: - The Larch were killed by the recent flooding.*

This area is the start of and part of the Frisbee Golf Course so be aware and be ready to duck. There usually is no conflict between birders and golfers as we step aside for each other, but listen for a fore or heads up call. In May and September there is a Frisbee Golf Tournament so there may be many golfers passing through.

At the west end of this area is an enclosed swimming pool and the path to Snake Island and in August you will encounter many children after 9:30 a.m. as they enjoy a Kiwanis Summer Day Camp. The day camp ends just before the Labour Day weekend.



Ward's Island - Looking west halfway between the Island Fire Station and the Snake Island bridge. Between the boardwalk and Cibola Avenue.

There are a couple of paths along here that go out to the boardwalk if you want to check the lake or get out of the wind.

*Note: This section covers the area close to the boardwalk but the area along Cibola Ave. and between Cibola Ave. and the lagoon should be checked as well if time permits.*

The lagoon may have any of the waterfowl mentioned above plus Green-winged Teal, Common Merganser as well as the occasional Pied-billed or Horned Grebe.

Across the lagoon here is Algonquin Island and the eastern end of Snake Island. Check the shore line for Northern Waterthrush both on Ward's Island and the islands across the lagoon.

As you start out and especially if the area has not been disturbed watch for thrushes including Eastern Bluebird and Northern Flickers on the grass and sometimes a Brown Thrasher and Eastern Meadowlark and maybe a Red-bellied Woodpecker (uncommon) in the trees. On several occasions we have spotted Mink in this area.

During the proper time of the season sparrows can be plentiful. Look for Fox, Savannah, Chipping, White-throated, White-crowned, Song, Swamp and Lincoln's Sparrow, Eastern Towhee and many Dark-eyed Juncos.

Warblers can be plentiful or scarce along this area. Check the bushes and trees for Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Orange-crowned, Connecticut, Mourning, Blackburnian, Cerulean (uncommon), Prairie (uncommon), Pine (especially in April), Northern Parula, Bay-breasted, Cape May and Blackpoll Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Redstart, Ovenbird and most of the other more common warblers. Vireos are also to be watched for. Yellow-throated, Blue-headed, Philadelphia and Red-eyed Vireo have been seen here, and Warbling Vireo nests here.

Other birds that may be seen are both nuthatches, both kinglets, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (nests here), Brown Creeper, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (sometimes in big numbers), Downy and Hairy Woodpecker, both nest here, Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoo, Baltimore Oriole, Gray Catbird (nests here), Carolina, Winter and House Wren, Indigo Bunting, Scarlet Tanager and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

Flycatchers can at times be well represented along here. Watch and listen for Great-crested, Yellow-bellied, Acadian (rare), Willow, Alder, and Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Wood-Pewee, and Eastern Kingbird.

Like some other places on the Islands this area has plenty of open sky above you so watch for raptors, herons and Great Egret along with all six swallow species, Common Nighthawk (uncommon) and Chimney Swift as they pass in migration or just circling overhead. In the fall Blue Jays pass in the thousands, here and all through the Islands.

The area shown in the photo on the right below is looking west just before you reach the enclosed swimming pool and there is a thick stand of willows, alders, Manitoba Maples and on the left (not shown) some ornamental pine trees and there are also some grape vines and where not mown the grasses, etc. can be quite thick.

A lot of the preceding birds can be found here and it is a good place to check for Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Flycatchers and Carolina Wren also seem to like this area as do Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (nests here) and of course the usual Black-capped Chickadee. Mockingbird, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin and sometimes Rusty Blackbirds can be seen here. Don't forget to check the trees and bushes beside the boardwalk. In September 2019 we found a male Townsend's Warbler in the area near the boardwalk beside the path to Snake Island.

In some places you are able to see the ground beneath the bushes and here you should watch for thrushes, Fox Sparrow, Northern Waterthrush, Ovenbird, Mourning and Connecticut Warbler as they feed on the ground under these bushes or low tree branches.

Just beyond or west of the enclosed swimming pool is the bridge over to Snake Island.



Ward's Island - Looking west between the Island Fire Station and the Snake Island Bridge. (Between The Boardwalk and Cibola Avenue)



Ward's Island - Looking west just east of the enclosed Swimming Pool. The Tamarack Trees shown here have been killed by the recent flooding. The boardwalk is to the left of the photo.



The above photo is the area between the enclosed swimming pool and the Snake Island bridge to The Trap.

Note: - If you do not intend to bird Snake Island then proceed to Section 6 on Page 16.

### **SECTION 5 - SNAKE ISLAND – Another ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area)**

After 9:30 a.m. in August until the Labour Day weekend on Ward's Island around and beside the enclosed swimming pool there are small children attending a children's Kiwanis Summer Day Camp. You may also encounter them on Snake Island or passing under the bridge in canoes. The usual rules of respect for the rights of other users apply.

As you cross over the bridge onto Snake Island check the lagoon for waterfowl such as Horned and Pied-billed Grebe, Hooded Merganser, Long-tailed and Wood Duck, Common Goldeneye and Bufflehead. Eastern Phoebe nested under this bridge once but the increased boat traffic seemed to have discouraged them the last few years.

This is another area that can be feast or famine but when it is good it is very good. The island is a great place to find all of the flycatchers like Olive-sided, Yellow-bellied, Least, Willow, Alder (uncommon), Acadian (rare), Least and Great Crested, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe and Eastern Kingbird.

Northern Cardinal, Gray Catbird, Carolina Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Warbling Vireo, Song Sparrow, Common Grackle and Yellow Warbler all nest on this island and a pair of Cooper's Hawks nested here in 2008 and 2009.

Most if not all if the common warblers have been seen on Snake Island and sometimes in large numbers.



Snake Island - Looking north from the bridge. The Toronto Harbour is beyond the trees.

Watch and listen for Pine, Canada, Wilson's, Connecticut, Mourning and Orange-crowned Warbler, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, and Northern Waterthrush. In the past I have found Yellow-breasted Chat (uncommon) and in May of 1990 and again in 1993 I found a singing Worm-eating Warbler (rare) at the northwest side of the island. You should also have no problem finding both kinglets and Black-capped Chickadee and check the trees for Brown Creeper and the occasional Orchard Oriole and of course Baltimore Oriole.

Keep an eye overhead for migrating raptors. In August of 2009 a Black Vulture (rare) was seen low overhead. Also overhead at times you may see Great Egret, Common and Caspian Tern, any or all of the six swallow species, Chimney Swift, Northern Flicker and Belted Kingfisher and in the pines and spruces watch for both nuthatches.

On the north side of the Snake Island you could find Savannah, Chipping and Vesper Sparrow. Song, White-throated, White-crowned, Lincoln's and Swamp Sparrow may also be present. Look and listen for Fox Sparrow and Eastern Towhee in the bushes throughout this island. At times you could flush a roosting Common Nighthawk (uncommon) resting on the sand. This looks like it should be a great place for Owls but over the many years I have only found one Northern Saw-whet Owl (uncommon) and one Long-eared Owl (uncommon). Both of them were seen in 2008. Another uncommon sighting was a Pileated Woodpecker also in 2008 and in 2019 two Solitary Sandpipers spent a few days in the flooded area just off the north end of the bridge.

On May 9th, 2011 I received a reliable report of a female Chuck-will's-Widow (very rare indeed) being flushed from the heavy bushes, a long overdue bird on The Islands.

Be sure to check the Harbour on the north side for Pied-billed, Eared (rare), Red-necked and Horned Grebe as well as Canvasback, Redhead, Long-tailed Duck, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, all 3 mergansers, both Lesser and Greater Scaup, Ring-necked Duck, White-winged Scoter and the occasional Ruddy Duck. Double-crested Cormorant, Canada Goose and Mallard are almost always present here. Check the shore for Spotted Sandpiper and Northern Waterthrush. Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoo may also be found on Snake Island especially in spring.

From the SW side of Snake Island you can get a good view of the Lagoon between Snake Island and O'Connor and S Chippewa Islands\* to look for Killdeer, Solitary Sandpiper, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron and Northern Waterthrush and if the water is low you can walk on the dried area and get a good view of Snug Harbour off O'Connor Island as well,

\* (See Snug Harbour Islands Map - Page 17 in Section 6).

You will have a great view here into the Internal Lagoon between O'Connor and S Chippewa Islands and the bushes and trees above these Islands. In the lagoon look for Mute Swan, Gadwall, Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser and Black-crowned Night-Heron and Turtles as well.

Check the tips of the dead or live trees on O'Connor and S Chippewa Islands as this is a very good place to see Olive-sided Flycatchers. Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Willow and Great Crested Flycatchers. Eastern Kingbird may be seen or heard in the willows and cottonwoods. Northern Flicker and Baltimore Oriole also like to pose on the tips of the trees there. You may also spot Northern Cardinal, Yellow Warbler and Cedar Waxwing in the bushes across the lagoon and the occasional Northern Waterthrush or Green Heron on the narrow S Chippewa Island beach.



Snug Harbour Islands - The Internal Lagoon between O'Connor and S Chippewa Islands viewed from the SW side of Snake Island.

Note:- Arrows point to the snags often used by Olive-sided Flycatchers.

See Snug Harbour Islands Map in Section 6 - Snug Harbour Islands

---

After crossing back onto Ward's Island from Snake Island turn right and walk the short distance along the lagoon to the Snug Harbour Islands Bridge at Chippewa Ave.

This area along the lagoon between the bridges can be very productive. Be sure to check the bushes along the lagoon and the lagoon itself. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher nests in this area and many warblers may be in the willow trees and thrushes and sparrows on the grass.

Look across the lagoon and check S Chippewa Island for birds in the trees and bushes as you walk along. Olive-sided and Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird and Tree Swallow can often be seen from Ward's Island at the tips of the dead branches on S Chippewa Island and Green Heron, Solitary Sandpiper and Northern Waterthrush have been seen on the narrow beach if the water is not too high in the lagoon.

Look for Black-crowned Night-Heron that sometimes roost in the willows along the lagoon (both sides) and Belted Kingfishers may be seen over or perched beside the lagoon and one year we spotted a Northern Goshawk bathing in the shallow water beside S Chippewa Island.

*Note: - If you do not intend to bird the Snug Harbour Islands then proceed to Section 7 on Page 17.*

---

## **SECTION 6 - SNUG HARBOUR ISLANDS ( [See Snug Harbour Islands Map on Page 17](#) )**

The Snug Harbour Islands (S Chippewa Islands is the only accessible part) is an overgrown small area that has some very dense bushes and an almost complete overhead canopy surrounded on all 4 sides by lagoons and is accessed via a small stone bridge at Chippewa Ave. just west of Snake Island.

*Note: - This bridge is halfway (about 1 ½ km) between the Ward's and Centre Island ferry docks.*

After crossing the bridge onto S Chippewa Island, you will see a brown electrical enclosure (box) on your right. This is the start of a faint path into the interior of S Chippewa Island. If you do not want to enter here, walk along the paved path (Chippewa Ave. to the end (at the locked gate). A path on your right along the Internal Lagoon may also take you into the interior if the path still exists.

This is also one of the mosquito-rich areas and be careful of red ants as well. You may find that if Snake Island is lacking in migrant birds the Snug Harbour Islands may be the same, but sometimes it can be very good. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Willow Flycatcher, House Wren, Carolina Wren, Yellow Warbler, Baltimore and Orchard Oriole and the occasional Song Sparrow nest here. In the trees you may find a few roosting Black-crowned Night-Herons.

If you luck into a good day then vireos, warblers, thrushes and sparrows can keep you busy although unless they are in the tall trees you will have a hard time seeing some of them among the fallen branches and thick bushes, etc.



Snug Harbour Islands  
The Internal Lagoon between O'Connor and S Chippewa Islands  
Seen from S Chippewa Island inside the Snug Harbour Islands.



Snug Harbour Islands - The Internal Lagoon between  
O'Connor Island and South Chippewa Island.  
Seen from Chippewa Avenue with O'Connor Island  
on the left of the photo.

Over the years Northern Waterthrush, Louisiana Waterthrush (uncommon), Mourning, Connecticut and Hooded Warbler (uncommon) have been found here. Watch also for Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Scarlet Tanager in the trees.

There always (in migration) seem to be Winter Wren and both kinglets here and this is a good place to find flycatchers, check the snags high above for Olive-sided Flycatcher and Eastern Wood-Pewee.

In April 2009 as we walked across the bridge back onto Ward's Island, we spotted three Sandhill Cranes (uncommon) overhead.



SNUG HARBOUR AND SNUG HARBOUR ISLANDS

## **SECTION 7 - WARD'S ISLAND - SNUG HARBOUR ISLANDS BRIDGE TO CENTRE ISLAND**

After leaving Snug Harbour Islands turn right and walk west towards “The Trap” (a heavily wooded area that was surrounded by manicured lawns and small bushes). Many birds are attracted to this area between the Snug Harbour Islands bridge and Centre Island and between Cibola Ave. and the walkway alongside the lagoon. Take your time as this stretch of Ward’s Island can be very productive and could hold a few surprises. Be sure to check the bushes along the lagoon just after you leave or pass the Snug Harbour Islands Bridge as wrens, warblers and sparrows often hide in these bushes. A Sedge Wren was found here in October 2010.

This area is part of the Frisbee Golf Course so be aware of flying objects.

The vegetation consists of islands of bushes, some pine trees, tall cottonwoods and willows, Manitoba Maples, chestnut, a few dead larch and some tall spruce trees. The larches were all killed by the flooding and several other trees for some reason were cut down and most Ash Trees were removed.



Ward's Island - Looking west between the Snug Harbour bridge and The Trap. Cibola Ave. is on the left and the lagoon is on the right.

Blue-gray Gnatcatchers nest in this area and it is usually not hard to find American Goldfinch, House Finch, Warbling (nests here) and Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow Warbler (nests here), Song Sparrow and of course Black-capped Chickadee.

Watch for Downy and Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and at times many Northern Flickers, both nuthatches, Brown Creeper, Philadelphia and Yellow-throated Vireo, Brown Thrasher, Gray Catbird, Winter, House and Carolina Wren, Northern Cardinal, Northern Mockingbird (uncommon), both kinglets (high counts at times), Olive-sided (on tips of dead branches), Willow, Yellow-bellied, Alder (uncommon), Least and Great-crested Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Wood-Pewee and Eastern Kingbird, and all the thrushes and you may spot a beautiful Scarlet Tanager.

Both cuckoos have been seen along this stretch and Baltimore Oriole is usually present from May to September. Check the sparrows for Fox, Lincoln’s, Swamp, Chipping, White-crowned and of course Song and White-throated Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco. Eastern Towhee may be seen or heard in the bushes and many warbler species may be seen.

Look for Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Mourning, Connecticut, Canada and Wilson's and N. Parula Warbler. Check the lagoon alongside this area for the occasional Horned Grebe, Wood Duck and Hooded Merganser. Mute Swan, Canada Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead and Common Goldeneye may also be present.

The area in and around "The Trap" besides many of the above birds that you hopefully spotted as you approached, has produced American Woodcock, Common Snipe, Red-headed and Red-bellied Woodpecker (both uncommon), Acadian Flycatcher (rare) and Hooded Warbler (uncommon).

"The Trap" over the years has been good for both Mourning and Connecticut Warblers though both are elusive and hard to find, especially in the fall. If you know their songs you may be lucky enough to hear one in the spring. Carolina Wren and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher sometimes nest in "The Trap" and Winter Wren occurs during migration. House Wren may be found as they nest here. Fox Sparrows and thrushes like the thick understory and many warbler species shelter and feed in the trees and bushes. In the spring of 2019 a male Kentucky Warbler was found here. You can get into the center of "The Trap" and just stand and watch the birds as they feed. In the 1990's a Harris' Sparrow was found on the south side of "The Trap". American Woodcock sometimes can be found here and if you check the tall cottonwood trees you may spot a sleeping Raccoon. Mink is often seen around the outside of "The Trap".



Ward's Island - Inside The Trap

The area that we call "The Trap" has been greatly damaged around the outside edges as the Frisbee people have been cutting back the bushes, small trees, low branches of larger trees and grasses to better the Frisbee Golf Course for themselves at the cost of much of the wildlife habitat. The west side of "The Trap" is now wide open and to some extent the south and east side are also open. You can now see straight through from one side to the other side and I feel that many of the more secretive birds will no longer be as common as in previous years and many of the plants may suffer because of the exposure to the direct sunlight now able to penetrate the interior. Only time will tell if it can rebound with new growth.



Ward's Island - Looking southeast in the Aerial Cars (Sky Ride) area. The Trap is to the left and Centre Island starts just beyond the trees and the Sky Ride.

I do recommend that you circle the outside of "The Trap" at least once and preferably twice when many birds appear to be present during the migration period. The east and west sides of "the Trap" can be very productive (especially for flycatchers including the Olive-sided on occasion) even when there are few birds inside "The Trap" where Connecticut and Prairie Warbler has been seen (both uncommon) and on the east side we found two Louisiana Waterthrush together one spring.

During some of our circling of "The Trap" we have found all of the thrushes, many sparrow species, White-eyed (uncommon), Yellow-throated and Philadelphia Vireo, Northern Parula, Hooded (uncommon), Mourning, Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warbler and in the spring of 2019 a Yellow-throated Warbler was found.

On the west side of "The Trap" between "The Trap" and the Aerial cars (Sky Ride) is an area of tall willow trees and some thick bushes. These tall trees can have many flycatchers, vireos, and warblers at times and the bushes are a good place for thrushes, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Wilson's and Canada Warbler. Over the years I have found several Connecticut Warblers under and in these bushes. Some of these bushes have also been cut back by the Frisbee people, but now seemed to be rebounding.

Also on the west side of "The Trap" at and around the Aerial cars (Sky Ride) fence there can be a good number of species present. This is a good place to find flycatchers, wrens, thrushes, warblers, vireos, and sparrows and in the tall willows here although hard on the neck you can usually find more warblers, vireos and flycatchers and on the trunks may be a Brown Creeper or two. So be prepared to spend some time here as well before proceeding onto Centre Island.

For the purpose of this guide the Aerial car turnaround area ends Ward's Island. This may not be historically or geographically correct but for this guide and my records it is the dividing line between Ward's Island and Centre Island.

*Note: - If you choose not to continue on to Gibraltar and Hanlan's Points then stay to the right and proceed along the paved path beside the lagoon and on past the boat rental building and dock to the bridge over to Centreville or Island Park and the Centre Island ferry dock.*

*If you plan to continue on to Gibraltar and Hanlan's Points proceed to Section 8.*



**Centre Island - From the Sky Ride to the Filtration Plant on Gibraltar Point**

## **SECTION 8 - CENTRE ISLAND – SKY RIDE TO WILDLIFE SANCTUARY AND GIBRALTAR POINT**

From "The Trap" / Sky Ride turnaround area you may choose one of two routes to Gibraltar Point.

The walk across Centre Island on the lake side can be relatively bird free most times but at least your eyes can get a rest but be sure to check the lake.

As you approach the snack bar (expensive), washrooms and the pier on the south side of Centre Island, watch for the Cliff Swallows that can often be seen overhead. This species nests under the pier and House Finches nest in this area.

If you choose to check the lake for waterfowl and gulls and if the area isn't disturbed by boats you may spot a Horned Grebe or a Common Loon. Caspian and Common Tern can usually be seen flying past over the lake and swallows are usually present including Barn Cliff and Tree Swallows.

If this is the route you chose, walk straight west towards Gibraltar Point and proceed to Section 10 on Page 21 but before choosing either of the two routes you should check the area of goldenrod, Queen Anne's Lace and brush at the very start of Centre Island for Nashville, Magnolia, Palm and Orange-crowned Warbler, Common Yellowthroat and sparrows and a walk alongside the concrete wall beside the lake may contain a few birds.

If you choose the lagoon side then the lagoons should be checked (especially near the Island church and the Island school) for Cormorant, Horned and Pied-billed Grebe, Mute Swan, Trumpeter Swan (uncommon), Canada Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Redhead, Canvasback, American Wigeon, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Northern Shoveler, Wood Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded, Red-breasted and Common Merganser and the occasional White-winged Scoter. Best times are early March and after October 15th.

After checking the lagoons near the church keep an eye on the sky for Barn Swallows as they nest on the boat rental building and a little further on Cliff Swallows nest under the bridge to the Centre Island ferry docks.

In the fall and at times in the spring the willows between the flower gardens and the Island school (on the lagoon side) can be very good for flycatchers, warblers (especially Yellow-rumped) as well as many Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos and the grass may have a good number of thrushes and sparrows. The Island School has/had a Purple Martin house on its roof and a feeder (hard to see when the bushes have leaves) on the lagoon side of the building near the entrance to the Sanctuary.

There are washrooms and a water fountain between the flower gardens and the Island School.

The area beside the school now has dense bushes both on the north, east and south sides of the school. During the school week stay on the paved path beside the lagoon (the teachers here can be very touchy about anyone wandering too close to the school and the children) but on the weekends these bushes and trees should be thoroughly checked. There is a pond here (Turtle Pond) under reconstruction at this time and it attracts Yellow Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Common Yellowthroat, Song and Swamp Sparrows at times. In April of 2013 we found a male Say's Phoebe in front of the school.



Centre Island - The lagoon behind the north side of the new Island School. The school is on the left and The Sanctuary is across the lagoon.



Centre Island - Looking west towards the new Island School. The school is behind the trees in the left centre of the photo and the lagoons are just to the right.

*Note: - During fall migration when there is a northerly wind (northwest is best) I often sit on one of the benches (in the flower garden area) that face north and observe the many (at times) raptors flying west low overhead. One year when sitting there I observed part of the hundreds of Black-capped Chickadees moving west through the bushes and trees on the Islands, quite a sight.*

---

## **SECTION 9 - THE WILDLIFE SANCTUARY**

At present the Sanctuary is Off Limits to everyone. There are large NO TRESPASSING signs on the entrance gate and fence and if you are spotted trying to enter you will be asked to leave.

In the past this was a must area to bird with many uncommon birds among the Passerines and was good for waterfowl. It was a prime place for birding groups to visit. At one time it was also a very reliable place to find Long-eared and Northern Saw-whet Owls and the occasional Great Horned Owl. One year a Boreal Owl was found at the back of the Sanctuary, a rarer find back then before the development of the Leslie Street Spit. Common Nighthawk (uncommon) could also be seen overhead and many times one could flush a Whip-poor-Will (uncommon) or American Woodcock while walking the trails. It was also a great place to find Fox Sparrow in migration along with several flycatcher and woodpecker species and both Marsh and Sedge Wren (uncommon) have been recorded. There also used to be a bird feeding area that the school kept supplied with seed.

In and around the ponds in the back part of the Sanctuary you may find Great Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, American Bittern, American Coot, and many waterfowl species during migration. And one year a Least Bittern (a rare visitor) was found.

Some of the birds that nested there in the past were Wood Duck, Cooper's Hawk, Yellow-breasted Chat (uncommon), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Warbling Vireo, Carolina and House Wren, Brown Thrasher, Baltimore Oriole and Eastern Towhee and of course Chickadee and Song Sparrow. Some probably still nest there.

In the last few years the Sanctuary has gone downhill since the new school was built and the No Trespassing signs were posted. The feeder was only occasionally filled after that, the foot bridge is falling over and the trails are overgrown. There has also been a slow but steady expansion of the maintenance (junk) yard area. From a small foot print the maintenance yard now takes up a large portion of the back of the Sanctuary with the corresponding increase of truck and park vehicle traffic.

Even before the NO TRESPASSING signs were posted we more often than not bypassed the Sanctuary.



**Gibraltar Point - From the Filtration Plant to the north side of the Trout Pond and part of Hanlan's Point between the north side of the Trout Pond and the Tennis Courts south of the airfield fence.**

**AREA X - See text on Page 25**

## **SECTION 10 - GIBRALTAR POINT - THE LIGHTHOUSE POND, LIGHTHOUSE AREA AND THE TROUT POND**

After crossing Center Island (by which ever route you take) to the southeast corner of the Filtration Plant fence you are on Gibraltar Point. Along the south side of the fence on Lakeshore Ave. you may find Northern Flicker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, House Finch, Eastern Bluebird, a few warblers, vireos, thrushes and sparrows. Check the fence for Eastern Phoebe and Eastern Kingbird and across the road look for Caspian and Common Terns over and off the beach and listen for Killdeer on the beach.

Song, Swamp, Chipping, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows and the occasional Orange-crowned Warbler may be in the grasses across the road (south side) opposite here and some of these same sparrows may be found along the Filtration Plant fence as well.

Occasionally Red-tailed Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, American Kestrel, Merlin and Peregrine Falcon can be seen perched on the towers behind (to the north of) the fence.

Just west of the Filtration Plant is Lighthouse Pond, across the road is Artscape Gibraltar Point and School Woods.

The Lighthouse Pond is best in the spring when the lagoons are still mostly ice-covered. In mid-March, the Lighthouse Pond has some open water near the road and at the entrance between the Lighthouse Pond and the Trout Pond. Waterfowl that may be found here are Mute Swan, Canada Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Black Duck, Redhead, Canvasback, Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, both Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Ruddy Duck (uncommon), Hooded and Common Merganser, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye and Pied-billed Grebe.

The nice thing about this pond is that you get to see the birds relatively close up if you approach carefully.

The School Woods (west of the old Island school – (now Artscape Gibraltar Point) consist of mostly mature cottonwoods with an understory of dogwood with a few spruce, pine and cedars mixed in and it is sometimes very wet underfoot. There is an overgrown trail that runs from just south of the Radio Tower on the west side of the school to the southwest corner of the woods.

This wood lot was once a very good place to find Northern Saw-whet Owl, American Woodcock and Whip-poor-Will in migration but for the last ten years or so it has not been very productive.

You may still want to check the woods out if you feel that there are a significant number of birds elsewhere on the Islands or around the Lighthouse during the day you are there. Otherwise it is another one of those areas bypassed more often than not.

You should check the outside edge of the woods on the west side where the willows and dogwoods may hold a fair number of birds even if the interior does not. You can check this area after checking the Lighthouse and Trout Pond areas as the Lighthouse path starts & ends just to the north of these woods.



Gibraltar Point - Filtration Plant front lawn.  
Looking west towards The Lighthouse.  
Lakeshore Avenue is to the left of the photo.



Gibraltar Point - The Lighthouse Pond.  
Looking north towards The Sanctuary.  
The Lighthouse and the Trout Pond are off to the left.



Gibraltar Point - The School Woods looking east on the west side of the woods. Lakeshore Ave. is to the left and the lake and a path are to the right.

The path to and past the Lighthouse is just past (west of) the fence around the Filtration Plant. It is a wide grass-covered path flanked by thick dogwood, some spruce, cedar and pine trees, willows and tall cottonwoods.

Sometimes you have to be quick with your binoculars along here to spot the birds on the path before they fly into those thick Red-osier, mostly never to be seen again. A slow walk here is recommended as some of the birds feeding in the grass may include both Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglet, Wood, Swainson's, Hermit and Gray-cheeked Thrush, Veery, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Carolina, Winter and House Wren, Fox and Lincoln's Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, and some of the more common sparrows. Baltimore Oriole and Warbling Vireo nest in the taller trees, Willow Flycatcher and Yellow Warblers nest in the bushes.



Gibraltar Point - The Lighthouse area. Looking west along the path beside and behind The Lighthouse. The Trout Pond is further along this path.

Look for Blue-headed, Red-eyed and White-eyed (rare) Vireo, both White-breasted and Red-breasted Nuthatch, both kinglets, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Scarlet and Summer Tanager (rare) and the usual Black-capped Chickadee. Warblers are sometimes well represented along this path. In bushes and trees, you may hear a singing Mourning Warbler or Northern Waterthrush in the spring. Watch and listen for Orange-crowned and Connecticut Warbler, N Parula and Ovenbird. Flycatchers also like this area with all the regular flycatchers present at times as well as Eastern Kingbird. Way back in 1993 a very, very rare Variegated Flycatcher (accidental) spent the month of October around the Lighthouse and was seen by many. At the time this was only the second North American record of this bird from South America.

Like any place a rarity could show up at any time though probably not as rare as the Variegated Flycatcher but on May 17, 1996 a beautiful male Western Tanager (rare) was found along here and in November of 2010 White-winged Crossbills (uncommon) were observed. In September of 2012 a Le Conte's Sparrow (rare) was found along the path.

As on most of the Islands watch overhead here for migrating raptors because Gibraltar Point is the western most part of the Islands, where most raptors (and other birds) may circle before turning north away from the lake towards Hanlan's Point.

This used to be another of the good places to find Northern Saw-whet Owl, but the area has matured and they do not seem to stop here anymore. The Leslie Street Spit is the preferred stopping place now, even though the owls are being greatly disturbed over there. This has resulted in many fewer sightings on The Spit now in my opinion.

As you walk along the path you will come to a bench and a view north over the Trout Pond. The pond is best from mid-March to late April and again from mid-September to late October when there are usually migrant waterfowl present though Mute Swan, Mallard, Gadwall, D-c Cormorant and a few male Canvasbacks usually seem to be there.

Some of the migrant waterfowl using the pond could include Pied-billed and Horned Grebe, N. Shoveler, Ring-necked, Wood, Ruddy (uncommon) and Long-tailed Duck, Redhead, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded and Common Merganser. Double-crested Cormorants drop in often as does Ring-billed and Herring Gull.

Check the north shore of the pond as you sit or stand here for Great Egret, Great Blue and Black-crowned Night-Heron. A Cattle and a Snowy Egret (both rare) were seen here years ago.

There is a Common Tern raft in the centre of the pond that during nesting season can have up to 50 terns on and over the raft (for some reason the terns did not nest here in 2010). Caspian Tern and Belted Kingfisher often visit the pond.

Tree Swallow (nesting nearby) and Barn Swallow frequent the pond and an occasional Northern Rough-winged Swallow appears during migration and in fact over the season you should see all six swallow species over the pond.

From the bench you have a nice view overhead for spotting raptors as they migrate east or west depending on the season. American Kestrel, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks are the most common, but check for Northern Harrier, Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks and the occasional Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Merlin and Peregrine Falcon.

Around the edges of the pond look for both kinglets, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Common Yellowthroat and Yellow Warbler, Great Crested, Willow and Least Flycatcher, Red-winged and Rusty Blackbird, Winter and House Wrens. Marsh and Sedge Wren (uncommon) have been seen along the pond edge.

From the bench area you can see some dead trees sticking up high over the north side of the pond. Quite often in late August and early September you may see an Olive-sided Flycatcher perched and hunting from these trees. If you have a problem identifying the birds on the tips of these trees you can check them a little later on if you bird the north side of the pond.



Gibraltar Point - The Trout Pond.  
Looking north towards Hanlan's Point.  
The Tern Raft is visible in the centre of the photo.  
*Note:- Snags used by flycatchers, etc. (arrows).*

*Notes: The area under, on and around the bench usually has a full complement of red ants so be aware when sitting or standing there. They love to climb up under your pant legs and the bites are very annoying to say the least.*

*Due to the flooding in the last 2 years all of the areas on the south and west side of the ponds and the path and road past and beside the lighthouse were under water and the area was closed off between Centre Island and Hanlan's Point. So be aware that if the lake again rises as it did in 2017 & 2019, then this area may again be closed. Forecasts for 2020 are not good.*

When you are done checking the Trout Pond and the surrounding area, walk west towards the lake. This is another area that can be feast or famine but you should at least find Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Warbling Vireo, Yellow Warbler and Baltimore Oriole.



Gibraltar Point - West of the Trout Pond.  
The Dunes Path and the lake are off to the left and the Trout Pond is off to the right of the photo.

This area also may have Great Crested, Least, and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Wood-Pewee and Eastern Kingbird, Carolina, Winter and House Wren, Brown Creeper, both nuthatches, both kinglets, Warbling, Red-eyed, Philadelphia, Yellow-throated and White-eyed (uncommon) Vireo, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Fox Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow and Eastern Towhee in the bushes and trees. Summer Tanager (rare) has been seen here at least twice over the years.

On the grass, if you are lucky, you may see Eastern Bluebird, Gray-cheeked, Swainson's, Wood and Hermit Thrush, Veery, several sparrow species that included Grasshopper, Northern Flickers, and in the air, many Chimney Swifts, Barn and Tree Swallows.

In the past this was a reliable place to see Red-headed Woodpecker (rarely now), but now you may have to be satisfied with an occasional one or an uncommon Red-bellied Woodpecker. Warblers are sometimes well represented here in the bushes and trees. Watch for Orange-crowned, Mourning, Magnolia, Nashville, Northern Parula, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Cape May, Blackpoll and Bay-breasted Warbler, American Redstart, Northern Waterthrush, Common Yellowthroat and Ovenbird. The bushes and understory here have grown over the years so Connecticut Warbler should be watched and listened for, even though it would be hard to see.

***Note - The tall dead or near dead trees shown in the 2 photos on this page have been cut down taking away some Olive-sided Flycatcher perches as well as some vines.***



Gibraltar Point - West of the Trout Pond.  
Looking north -The Dunes Path and the lake are to the left of the photo and the Trout Pond is to the right of the photo. These dead trees (if still there) are popular with flycatchers and woodpeckers.

Raptors on some days in the fall can be numerous as they reach the lake and circle. Watch for Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, Red-shouldered and Rough-legged Hawk (uncommon), Northern Harrier, Northern Goshawk, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, American Kestrel, Turkey Vulture and Bald Eagle and if you are lucky a Golden Eagle.

The lake can be viewed from a couple of places, one being the tip behind the washroom building. You can usually find Long-tailed Ducks and Red-breasted Mergansers in March and April and again after the middle of September here.

The best times off here for loons, gulls and all 3 scoters is late October to late March. The lake can also be viewed opposite the start of the dunes path.

After checking the lake for Red-throated and Common Loon, Horned and Red-necked Grebe, White-winged Scoter, Red-breasted and Common Merganser and other waterfowl turn north to take the short walk up the dunes trail/path to opposite the north end of the Trout Pond.



Gibraltar Point - Start of the Dunes Path.  
Looking north - The lake is to the left of the photo.

**Area X Note:- Gibraltar Point Erosion Project**

<https://trca.ca/conservation/green-infrastructure/gibraltar-point-erosion-control-project/>

- An Inshore Reef is under construction in **AREA X** (See map above the start of Section 10) to try and stop the erosion of the Southwest and West sides of the tip and areas north of the tip.

---

## **SECTION 11 - GIBRALTAR POINT - THE DUNE PATH TO NORTH SIDE OF THE TROUT POND**

This part of the dune trail/path has been a good place to spot Eastern Bluebird over the years as they encounter the lake before moving on. It is also a very good place for seeing all the regular flycatchers at times and if lucky you may find a stalled flock of Scarlet Tanagers or Rose-breasted Grosbeaks.

It can be thin for warblers but watch and listen for Orange-crowned, Mourning, Blackpoll, Blackburnian, Black-and-white, Magnolia, Nashville and Yellow-rumped Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler being the most common along here. Thrushes are not too well represented on this stretch but woodpeckers, Winter Wrens, Brown Thrasher and Black-billed Cuckoo may be found. Brown Creepers, both kinglets and Black-capped Chickadee can be here in good numbers.

During fall raptor migration (northwest or north wind) many Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, Merlin and American Kestrel may be seen overhead here and if you are lucky an occasional Bald Eagle, Osprey, Northern Goshawk, Rough-legged and Red-shouldered Hawk and Peregrine Falcon (Turkey Vultures and Broad-winged Hawks are not seen very often over the Islands but sightings seem to be increasing).



Gibraltar Point - The Dunes Path.  
Looking north opposite north side of the Trout Pond.  
The lake is to the left and the Trout Pond is to the right.

You could be there the day that many hundreds (to thousands) of Blue Jays, American Robins, Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles and hundreds of House Finches, American Goldfinches, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Brown-headed Cowbirds and Rusty Blackbirds pass overhead as well as many Eastern Bluebirds. All of these birds are usually heading north up Hanlan's Point avoiding crossing the lake here and after passing on up the Hanlan's Point shoreline they turn west and continue on their way but you will notice that the Blue Jays and Blackbirds sometimes do cross the lake towards the Humber Bay Park area as do some of the Ospreys, Northern Harriers and falcons.

Northern Flicker, Eastern Kingbird, Brown Creeper, Black-capped Chickadee and both kinglets as well as not a few Yellow-rumped Warblers pause here to rest and feed on some days.

Keep in mind that you are approaching the Clothing Optional Beach and you may encounter a nude person or persons laying near or wandering along the Dunes Path even though this is not allowed, but it happens, a lot now.

When you reach a dirt path opposite the north side of the Trout Pond (just north of the water fountain) head across the paved roads to the area on the north side of the Trout Pond or continue up the beach trail/path if time is important.

*Note: - Some of the paths along this section have disappeared into Lake Ontario due to erosion. – See the note at the end of Page 25 about this and the remedies in progress to stop the erosion.*

*Note: - If you do not plan on birding the north side of the Trout Pond or are running short of time or would rather stay on the dunes path then proceed to Section 13 on Page 28*

---

## **SECTION 12 - HANLAN'S POINT - NORTH SIDE OF THE TROUT POND**

The north side of the Trout Pond is another of those under-birded areas like Algonquin Island that can be very good at times and really should not be bypassed unless you feel there are not many birds on the islands or you are running out of time.

As you start into this area north of the Trout Pond along the wide grassy path you may encounter Eastern Bluebirds, flycatchers, thrushes, vireos and warblers right away and Black-capped Chickadee, American Goldfinches, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Warbling Vireo and Yellow Warbler almost for sure.

Some of the birds to look for here are Red-headed (rare), Red-bellied (uncommon), Downy and Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Northern Flicker (reliable here), both Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Olive-sided (check the tips of the tall trees), Yellow-bellied, Least and Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe and Eastern Kingbird, both Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Winter and Carolina Wren. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher nests here.

Thrushes, vireos, warblers and other birds observed here include Veery, Wood, Swainson's, Hermit and Gray-cheeked Thrush, Eastern Bluebird, Gray Catbird (nest here), Brown Thrasher, White-eyed (uncommon), Yellow-throated, Blue-headed, Red-eyed and Philadelphia Vireo, Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Mourning, Blackpoll, Connecticut, Pine, Palm, Parula, Bay-breasted, Cape May, Nashville, Prairie (uncommon), Hooded (uncommon), Canada and Wilson's Warbler, Ovenbird, American Redstart, Northern Waterthrush, Fox, Lincoln's, Chipping, Swamp, Song, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows, Dark-eyed Junco, Eastern Towhee, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Baltimore Oriole and Indigo Bunting and the occasional American Woodcock.

While here you can get another view of the Trout Pond. Be careful as you approach the pond here as most of the waterfowl, etc, are usually at this side of the pond and may be easily flushed.

There is an area of benches here that can accommodate 15 to 20 people and is a good place for a group to stop for a rest and maybe a snack.

The area across the lagoon here is the Wildlife Sanctuary and you may see an occasional Black-crowned Night-Heron on the beach or in a tree, or an Osprey hunting the lagoon or perched beside it. I have on several occasions heard Carolina Wren singing in the Sanctuary as I stood by the lagoon.



Hanlan's Point - North side of the Trout Pond.  
Looking east (from Lakeshore Ave.) along the path  
into the area.



Hanlan's Point - North side of the Trout Pond.

Waterfowl in the lagoon may consist of Mute or Trumpeter Swan, Canada Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common and Hooded Merganser and watch for Caspian and Common Tern, Belted Kingfisher and swallows flying past or over the lagoon.

As you leave this area to either go back to the beach trail/path or up the paved road on the west side of the island be sure to check the grassy area on your right (between the two roads) for Eastern Bluebird, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, thrushes or Eastern Towhee, warblers and sparrows.



Hanlan's Point - Looking north between the north side of the Trout Pond and the tennis courts. Lakeshore Ave. is to the left of the photo.

I / we usually walk straight back towards the lake and the dunes trail again but if you are trying to catch a ferry boat or don't want to bother with the beach trail then take the right hand paved road (the one at the start of the path into the north side of the Trout Pond) as this is the shortest of the two roads that start just south of here.

Birding can be good along this road to the ferry dock as well, especially flycatchers, and warblers.

Be sure to check the lagoon for waterfowl (See Sections 12 on Page 26 and the top of this page)

When open there are two washrooms and one park-run snack bar (not always open) between here and the ferry docks as well as a couple of water fountains. Some of the best birding areas are around the two washrooms especially the one just south of the ferry dock.



Hanlan's Point - Looking north along Lakeshore Ave. from just north of the Trout Pond. The lagoon is off to the right of the photo.

*Note: - A reminder once again - If you are birding here between April 15th or so and the Victoria Day long weekend or after Labour Day the last ferry from Hanlan's Point is at 6:15 pm during the week. You will have to walk back to Centre Island if you miss it and after Thanksgiving day holiday to April 15<sup>th</sup> or so (Check the ferry schedule on their web site) the following year there is no ferry to Hanlan's Point at all, so if you bird from Ward's Island to Hanlan's Point at that time you will have to walk back to Ward's Island to catch a ferry.*

---

**SECTION 13 - HANLAN'S POINT - THE DUNES PATH FROM THE TRAIL OPPOSITE THE NORTH SIDE OF THE TROUT POND (AS MENTIONED AT THE END OF SECTION 11) TO THE TENNIS COURTS.**

This stretch of the dune trail/path is from just opposite the north side of the Trout Pond to the boardwalk at the north end of the tennis courts that are south of the south end of the airfield fence (There are cedar stick seats and an arch there).

Be aware that the beach on your left here is a "Clothing Optional Beach" and that you may also encounter unclothed persons on or close to this trail/path as well as on the beach. If disturbed the beach here is not very productive and a lot of the beach has been eroded away during the last couple of years.

The path between the dirt path to the north side of the Trout Pond is through bush and tree covered sand dunes and can be a tad warm in late May and August but well worth it some days. There are mature willow, cottonwood and birch trees along the way with a few Silver Maples and Wild Grape vines thrown in.

For those that do not want to walk up this sandy trail/path a lot of the birds can be seen or heard from the paved road that parallels the path several yards to the right. As you walk along the paved road be sure to check the area on your right (towards the lagoon) for Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Bluebird, Brown Thrasher, Orange-crowned and Palm Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Eastern Towhee, Indigo Bunting and Baltimore Oriole.

Some days there are many Northern Flickers along the dune trail/path eating ants, and in the trees, you may also see Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy, Hairy and Red-bellied Woodpecker (uncommon). Both Black-billed Cuckoo, Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Ruby-throated Hummingbird have been found along here as well as both nuthatches, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (nests here), both kinglets, Brown Creeper, Marsh, House, Winter and Carolina Wren, Northern Mockingbird (uncommon), all six thrushes (sometimes in large numbers) that includes the American Robin.

Other birds seen here include White-eyed (uncommon), Yellow-throated, Philadelphia, Blue-headed, Red-eyed and Warbling Vireo (nests here), a large selection of warblers including Northern Parula, Orange-crowned, Mourning, Palm (can be common), Pine, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped (many at times), Canada, Wilson's and Blackpoll Warblers, Ovenbird and in three different years a Yellow-breasted Chat (uncommon) was found in the bushes.

Brown Thrashers bred here in the past but the area is much disturbed since the opening of the "Clothing Optional Beach" but they may be found during migration. Sparrows can be well represented along here with White-throated Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco being the most numerous. Watch also for Fox, Lincoln's, Chipping, Swamp and Song Sparrow and Eastern Towhee.

At the start of this path I found a Grasshopper Sparrow (uncommon) one year and in that same area at other times Vesper Sparrow. This is also a good place to see Scarlet Tanager and Baltimore Oriole at close range.

In the fall especially, check overhead for migrating raptors and swallows, thousands of Blue Jays, many hundreds of Cedar Waxwing, American Crow, American Robin, House Finch, American Goldfinch, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle and smaller flocks of Purple Finch and Rusty Blackbird as well as Turkey Vulture, hawks and falcons, especially the Merlin.



Hanlan's Point - The Dunes Path.  
Looking south opposite north side of the Trout Pond.  
The lake is to the right of the photo.



Hanlan's Point - The Dunes Path.  
Looking north opposite the clothing optional beach.  
The beach and lake are to the left of the photo.

The area to the east of the dunes path (across the paved road) can be a very productive area as well for vireos, thrushes, warblers and sparrows. Watch also for Eastern Bluebird, both nuthatches, Scarlet Tanager and Rose-breasted Grosbeak and in the fall there can be a large number of both kinglets in the goldenrods and trees.

After reaching the south end of the tennis courts you will be entering the next stretch of the beach trail/path between the boardwalk at the south end of the tennis courts to the boardwalk at the north end of the tennis courts. The area here is more open than the preceding section of the path and is flanked by tall cottonwoods, thick bushes and dogwood on the paved road side and brush covered sand dunes on the lake side.

Again you may choose to walk the paved road instead of the path and that is a good idea too as many birds can be found in the cottonwood and willow trees there as well as the bushes (a rare Swainson's Warbler was found here) and also in the underbrush, unless cut down, and the pine and spruce trees beside the tennis court fence.

Savannah, Chipping, White-crowned, White-throated, Field, Vesper and Fox Sparrows are often spotted beside or on the fence and if you choose the path (a rare Yellow-throated Warbler was found at the start of this path) watch for pretty well most of the birds mentioned on the first stretch of the path. You will also have a better view of the sky here. There are some nice evergreens in this area that the Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Goldfinch and some warblers frequent and in Spring 2019 we found 2 male Grasshopper Sparrows on the grass here.

This area seems to act as a sort of trap or gathering place for tired and feeding birds both working their way down from the ferry dock area or up from Gibraltar Point and over from other parts of the Islands, depending on the season.

Some of the good birds found here were American Woodcock, Whip-poor-Will (uncommon), and Common Nighthawk (uncommon). In fall of 2009 a Virginia Rail (uncommon) was in the grass beside the road. Look for Red-bellied Woodpecker (uncommon) and Red-headed Woodpecker (rare), both cuckoos, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Winter, House and Carolina Wrens, White-eyed (uncommon), Philadelphia and Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-winged, Golden-winged, Mourning, Orange-crowned, Cerulean (uncommon), and Connecticut Warbler, and Vesper, Nelson's (uncommon), Clay-colored (uncommon), Fox, Chipping, Lincoln's and Field Sparrow, Eastern Towhee and sometimes Purple Finch. Check the Finches closely as House Finch can also be found in this area.



Hanlan's Point - The Dunes Path.  
Looking north opposite the tennis courts.  
The lake is to the left and the tennis courts to the right.



Hanlan's Point - Looking south on the west side of the tennis courts. The tennis courts are to the left of the photo and the Dunes Path is to the right of the photo.



Hanlan's Point - From the tennis courts south of the airfield to the Hanlan's Point ferry dock.

**SECTION 14 – HANLAN'S POINT - NORTH END OF TENNIS COURTS TO SOUTH END OF AIRFIELD FENCE**

From this area you again have a choice of either staying between the cottonwood trees and the sand dunes or walking up the outside (or right side) of the cottonwood trees. Either way can be good. The area covered here is between the boardwalk fence (There are cedar stick seats and an arch there) at the north end of the tennis courts and the south end of the airfield fence.

Whichever route you take to the airfield fence you will have a great view of the sky so watch for migrating raptors and passerines, passing terns and the occasional Great Egret, Black-crowned Night-Heron and Great Blue Heron. It will be hard to miss the many cormorants going to and from the Leslie Street Spit nesting colony. Most of the swallow species may be seen overhead as well, and at times Chimney Swift can be abundant during migration. Watch and listen for Fish Crow as one or two are being seen yearly on or over The Islands now.

Some of the birds you may see depending on your route are Whip-poor-Will (uncommon), if you are real lucky, American Woodcock, Northern Flicker, Red-headed (rare, more likely in the fall), Red-bellied (uncommon), Downy and Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (may be many), Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatch, Winter and House Wren, most of the flycatchers including Olive-sided (tips of trees), Great Crested, Yellow-bellied, Willow and Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe (can be common), Eastern Wood-Pewee and Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Bluebird, all six of the thrush species and Brown Thrasher.



Hanlan's Point - Looking north just west of the tennis courts - A boardwalk to the beach and lake starts just to the left of the photo.

Other birds frequenting this area are Yellow-throated, Blue-headed, Philadelphia, Warbling and Red-eyed Vireo, many warbler species including Golden-winged and Blue-winged, Mourning, Northern Parula, Connecticut, Palm (may be many Palms), Magnolia, Blackpoll, Blackburnian, Cerulean (uncommon), Prairie (uncommon) and Orange-crowned Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Mockingbird (uncommon) and many sparrows at times that could include a Le Conte's (rare), Clay-colored (uncommon), Fox, Vesper and Lincoln's Sparrow.

One day in May of 1997 before the pine and spruce trees were no more than a few feet high a Virginia Rail was found under a pine tree and in October 2010 two Wild Turkeys (uncommon) were spotted in this area. Only one Wild Turkey was being seen on the islands as of December 2011 and could be seen anywhere, but this area was the best bet, especially between mid-October to late March when the number of visitors to Hanlan's is much lower than other parts of the islands. *These Turkeys are no longer being seen and may have been killed by Coyotes.*

If you chose the sand dune side, when you reach the wide path between the beach and the south end of the airfield fence, turn right or east and bird towards the "Sparrow Patch".

This short path can be very productive as it is lined on one side by spruce and pine trees and deciduous trees and dogwood on the other side.

No matter which route you take (between the dunes and trees or east of the trees,) be sure to approach the area we call the "Sparrow Patch" slowly (at the southwest corner of the airfield fence) and you may spot a few sparrows or warblers on the tips of the grasses, goldenrods or on the fence. The Lilac Bushes here can also hold some good birds like warblers, sparrows and thrushes. In the fall of 2019 we found Sedge Wrens and Clay-colored Sparrows on these bushes and Gray Catbirds probably nest in the Lilac bushes.



Hanlan's Point - The Dunes Path - Looking south from the trail between the Sparrow Patch and the beach. The Sparrow Patch is off to the left of the photo.

Check the grassy area on the east side of the trees (south of the airfield fence) as some times Northern Flicker, Horned Lark, Eastern Meadowlark and Bobolink and the usual Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle and Brown-headed Cowbird can be found feeding here and if there are any large puddles check for Green-winged Teal, Mallard, Gadwall, Killdeer, Solitary Sandpiper and Wilson's Snipe. I spotted the two Wild Turkeys here (see above) feeding among a few hundred Canada Geese.



Hanlan's Point - Looking north halfway between the tennis courts and the south end of the airfield fence. The beach and lake are off to the left of the photo.

## **SECTION 15 – HANLAN’S POINT - SOUTH END OF AIRFIELD FENCE INCLUDING THE "SPARROW PATCH"**

The “Sparrow Patch” is a small area of Lamb’s-quarters, White sweet clover, goldenrod and other plants and grasses flanked on the east side by a large patch of lilac bushes and dogwood. On the west side there are tall pine, spruce, maple and cottonwood trees. On the north side by the airfield fence, there are goldenrods and dogwood, and on the south side, a few Manitoba Maples, some benches and a fire pit. The "Sparrow Patch" is actually a mound of dredged sand and small stones from the beach, left there by the parks department years ago for some unknown reason. They never came back to remove it and over time plants covered and hid the sand and stones.

Many of the birds often fly to or may be on the fence if they detect your approach, so check these carefully as Sedge, House and Winter Wren, Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglet, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, Orange-crowned, Nashville, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Magnolia and Palm Warbler, Savannah, Grasshopper (uncommon), Lincoln’s, Fox, Clay-colored (uncommon), LeConte’s (rare) and Nelson’s (uncommon) Sparrow have been seen on the lower part of the fence. American Kestrel, Merlin, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Gray Catbird, Eastern Bluebird, Baltimore Oriole, Eastern Meadowlark and Bobolink have all been seen on the top of the fence.

The list of sparrows that prompted the name of “Sparrow Patch” is impressive (17 species) and includes American Tree, Chipping, Clay-colored (uncommon but with increased sightings here and between the Hanlan’s ferry dock and the Sparrow Patch), Field, Vesper, Savannah, Grasshopper (uncommon), Le Conte’s (rare), Nelson’s (uncommon), Fox, Song, Lincoln’s, Swamp, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco and Eastern Towhee.

Also found lurking and feeding in the patch have been Mourning Dove, Sedge (uncommon), Winter and House Wren, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Red-eyed Vireo, both kinglets, Black-Capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Goldfinch, Pine Siskin, House and Purple Finch, Gray Catbird, American Robin, Least and Great-crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Phoebe, Brown Thrasher, Hermit and Swainson’s Thrush, Northern Cardinal, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Nashville, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Orange-crowned and Wilson’s Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Baltimore Oriole and Red-winged Blackbird.

The surrounding trees and bushes can have, besides some of the preceding birds American Crow, Eastern Bluebird, Bobolink (yes, in the bushes), Northern Parula, Blackpoll, Black-and-white, Blackburnian, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Bay-breasted, Cerulean (uncommon), Prairie (uncommon), Pine and Cape May Warbler, American Redstart, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Purple Finch. Listen for the occasional Lapland Longspur (uncommon), Horned Lark or American Pipit migrating overhead and again be sure to check any birds on or beside the fence as mentioned above.

In the spring of 2009 a Fish Crow (accidental but increasing) was heard and seen low over this area being chased by a resident American Crow (providing good comparison of voices and size between the two species), and in the fall of the same year a Western Kingbird (rare) was found perched on the Lilac Bushes beside the “Sparrow Patch”.

All in all a place not to be bypassed and you should also check the trail from here to the beach for flycatchers, vireos, thrushes, warblers and sparrows. Both kinglets, Palm and Yellow-rumped Warblers can be common along this trail.



Hanlan’s Point - The Sparrow Patch. - Looking north towards the city. - The southwest corner of the airfield fence is near the top of the photo and the large Lilac Bush is to the right of the photo.



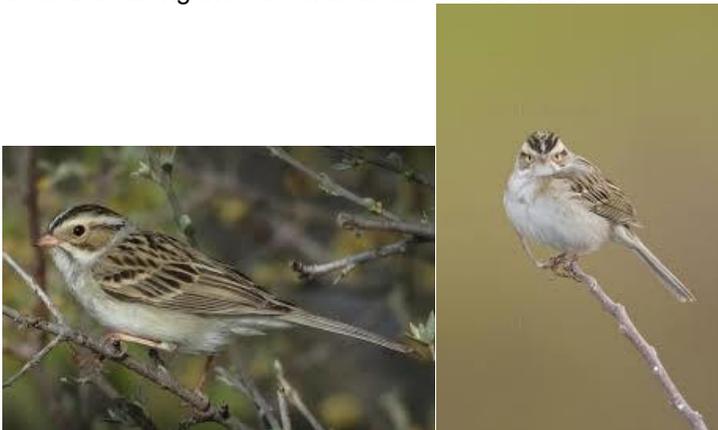
Hanlan’s Point - The Sparrow Patch - Looking east towards the Lilac Bush. The Lilac Bush is at the back and the airfield fence is off to the left of the photo.

When done birding here you again have a choice of where to go. You can either head along the fence to the east side of the airfield then on up to the ferry dock (Section 19, Page 38), you can walk the path up along the west side of the fence (Section 16, Page 34) and out onto the beach at the far (north) end of the path, or you could walk straight out to the beach along that wide path between the "Sparrow Patch" and the lake (Section 17, Page 36)



Hanlan's Point - The Sparrow Patch.  
This is the typical habitat.

The two photos below are The two most common views of the Clay-colored Sparrow seen in the Sparrow Patch area as well as along the east side of the airfield fence.



## SECTION 16 - WEST SIDE OF THE AIRFIELD FENCE

If you choose to walk up the west side of the airfield fence be sure to check the fence top itself as well as any bird perched below the top. If birds are below the top often you will only see their head or rear end and tail sticking through the chain links.

The first hundred yards or so of this path is through a mix of trees and bushes that come close to the fence. Watch for vireos, thrushes, warblers and sparrows along here – especially Savannah, Song, Fox, LeConte's (rare) and Nelson's (uncommon) Sparrow.

Checking the fence top may reveal American Kestrel, Cooper's, Sharp-shinned and Red-tailed Hawk, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, American Robin, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, Black-capped Chickadee, Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglet, Magnolia, Palm and Yellow-rumped Warbler, Eastern Meadowlark and Bobolink as well as the sparrows.

Once you come to the area (see photo at right) where the field starts you will right away notice some Tree Swallows overhead or on the fence. Barn Swallows frequent this area as well.

Be sure to check the airfield itself as you go along for Killdeer (nests there), Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs, Lapland Longspur (uncommon), Horned Lark, Eastern Meadowlark and Bobolink as all are known to spend some time here during migration. Over the airfield you will often see an American Kestrel, Peregrine Falcon or a Red-tailed Hawk hunting. Merlin is a frequent visitor as is Northern Harrier. Upland Sandpiper has been seen on the airfield in the past.

Some days you may wonder why you bothered with this area but at other times you will be glad you did. It can be a quiet walk or a busy one, and on some days they are doing aircraft engine testing right near the fence along here so be prepared for a wall of sound on occasion, very annoying to say the least and for security the grasses, etc. have been cleared along the bottom of the fence and you will notice security cameras aimed along the fence and **if you or another person has a medical emergency you will notice that there are large numbered signs that you can use to give emergency responders your location and in fact they are all along the fence on both sides of the airfield.**

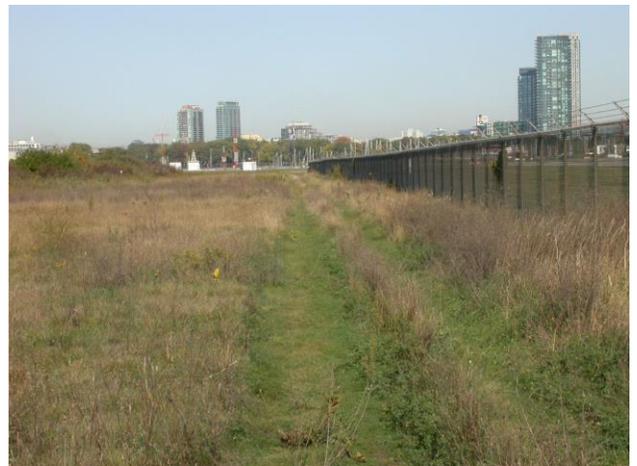
On the good days you may encounter large numbers of Northern Flicker, Eastern Kingbird (mid to late August), Eastern Phoebe or Palm Warbler (especially late September to mid-October). Other birds you may find besides most of the same sparrow species as in the "Sparrow Patch" are American Bittern (uncommon), Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned, Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawk, Merlin, American Kestrel and Peregrine Falcon, Killdeer, Short-eared Owl (uncommon but at least one or two are found each fall or spring), Horned Lark, Hermit Thrush (can be common at times), Yellow-rumped, Nashville and Magnolia Warbler, American Pipit (usually overhead), Bobolink, and Eastern Meadowlark.



Hanlan's Point  
Beach and area on the west side of the airfield fence.



Hanlan's Point - West side of airfield fence.  
Looking west from beside the fence.  
The lake and beach are beyond the trees and the Sparrow Patch is off to the left of the photo.



Hanlan's Point - West side of the airfield fence.  
Looking north just north of the Sparrow Patch.  
The beach and lake are off to the left of the photo.

If you walk through the grass here you will probably flush Song and Savannah Sparrows and if you do they most often fly to the left into the heavy brush and dogwood on the west (beach) side of the area where they are usually hard to see.

This area on the west side of this area has standing water most years and here you may find Common Snipe, American Woodcock, Willow Flycatcher, and Swamp Sparrow, Yellow Warbler (nests here) and Common Yellowthroat, or you may hear a Virginia Rail, Sora or Marsh Wren. In late September, 2005 a Dickcissel (rare) was found here.

Again I want to remind you to watch the sky for the at times large flocks of Blue Jays, American Goldfinch, House Finch, American Robin, Red-winged and Rusty Blackbird, Common Grackle, and Brown-headed Cowbird and smaller flocks of American Crow, Eastern Bluebird, American Pipit and the occasional Lapland Longspur (uncommon) or two as they migrate past.

When you reach the north end of the fence here it turns sharp left (west) and goes out to the beach. Along this stretch Eastern Phoebe, Palm Warbler, Swamp, Song, Savannah, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows, and Dark-eyed Juncos can be common beside and on the fence. Check the blackbirds for Rusty Blackbird and the occasional Common Snipe.

The area on your left along this short stretch of the path is quite thick and birds can be hard to see. The trail is sometimes flooded and if you are not wearing waterproof footwear you may have to return back down the path to the "Sparrow Patch" area and walk out to the beach from there, see Section17, Page 36.



Hanlan's Point - West side of the airfield fence.  
Looking northwest about halfway along the fence.  
The lake and beach are beyond the trees on the left.

## SECTION 17 - BEACH AREA WEST OF THE AIRFIELD FENCE

Although this stretch of the beach is well north of the “Clothing Optional Beach” you may still encounter an unclothed person or two either on the beach (walking or sunbathing) or in the bushes.

Besides the sand and lake there are sand dunes covered by brush, short trees and grass and close to the lake is a semi-permanent pond/slough and at times after a storm or strong westerly winds small pools form on the beach as a result of the high waves. Check these pools for waterfowl, shorebirds and gulls.

Waterfowl to look for on the lake are Common and Red-throated Loons (uncommon), Horned Grebe, Mute and Tundra Swan (uncommon), Canada Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Black and Long-tailed Duck, Redhead, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, White-winged Scoter, Red-breasted and Common Merganser and Double-crested Cormorant and on and over the lake and beach look for Common and Caspian Tern, Bonaparte's and Great Black-backed Gull, and all six swallow species. In March and in late October and into November look for Iceland, Glaucous and Lesser Black-backed Gull (rare), March is your best bet for these. A Pomarine Jaeger was seen here in October of 2010 and in the spring of 2011 and in 2019 a juvenile Iceland Gull, a juvenile Glaucous Gull, an adult Lesser Black-backed Gull and an adult Iceland (Thayer's) Gull were on the beach among the Ring-billed Gulls. The first three of these nice gulls stayed into May.



Hanlan's Point - Beach area west of the airfield.  
This is north of the clothing optional beach.

Shorebirds that have been seen are Spotted, White-rumped, Baird's, Least, Semipalmated, and Pectoral Sandpiper, Dunlin, Sanderling, Whimbrel (uncommon), Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot (uncommon), American Avocet (rare), Black-bellied, Golden and Semipalmated Plover and Killdeer. In Spring 2005 a Piping Plover (rare) spent part of a day here and in the spring of 2008 another Piping Plover spent two days here and again one was found here on May 9th of 2011. In June of 2015 three Piping Plovers were found here along with a Wilson's (very rare) and a Snowy Plover. The Piping Plovers did nest (first time in 80 years) but a storm destroyed the nest. See:-

<http://www.jeaniron.ca/Shorebirds/2015/pplovers.htm> &  
<http://www.jeaniron.ca/Shorebirds/2015/nesting.htm>

There is a slough or pond on the beach partly flanked by small willows and several species use it to rest or feed including Great Blue Heron, Mute and Trumpeter (uncommon) Swan, Mallard, Gadwall, Wood Duck, Northern Shoveler, Canvasback, both Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, several shorebird species including many Spotted Sandpipers (nests here), Solitary Sandpiper and Killdeer (nests here). Sometimes a Belted Kingfisher looks in as there are tiny fish and Painted Turtles in the slough but some days the slough can be completely empty of birds.

*Note: - The slough area has changed quite a bit since this photo was taken but it's still there. The area on the west side of the slough (left side of the photo) now contains a 6 to 8 foot sand dune all along that area topped by young Willow Trees and some grasses, etc. and at the north (far) end is a large stand of invasive Phragmites that hopefully will be eradicated by some dedicated volunteers for The City of Toronto Parks Department.*



Hanlan's Point - The Slough.  
Beach area west of the airfield. This area is north of the clothing optional beach - The airfield is to the right of the photo - Slough area has more vegetation now.

We have found Nelson's and Le Conte's Sparrow beside the Phragmites, but they quickly flew into the Phragmites and disappeared. You only have a short time to identify them if they do pop up to check you out because they are famous for running like a mouse along the ground through the grass.

In the willows watch for Yellow, Palm (sometimes numerous), Yellow-rumped, and Nashville Warblers, Song, Vesper and Savannah Sparrows and the grass and bushes should be checked for Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Orange-crowned, Magnolia, Nashville, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, and Palm Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Song, Savannah, Nelson's (uncommon), LeConte's (rare), Vesper, Chipping, Swamp, Fox, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrow and in the shorter grass or on the beach American Pipit, Horned Lark or Lapland Longspur (uncommon).

In the fall of 2006 two Chestnut-collared Longspurs were well seen as they walked through the thin grass near the slough and occasionally an American Bittern (uncommon here) or Short-eared Owl (uncommon here) is flushed from the grass as are Eastern Meadowlarks and in October 2011 a Virginia Rail.

All six species of swallow may be seen here on a good day and except for Centre Island this is the best place to spot Cliff Swallow. Many birds migrate past, up or down the beach depending on the season. Many raptors and a great number of Blue Jays also pass by and some days the sky is filled with Chimney Swifts.



Hanlan's Beach - Area west of the airfield fence.  
Typical grassy area north of the path from the Sparrow Patch at the south end of the airfield fence.

---

### **SECTION 18 - SOUTH END OF THE AIRFIELD FENCE**

If you are done checking the west side of the airfield fence or the beach or if you just want to head for the Hanlan's Point ferry after checking the "Sparrow Patch" be sure to check along the south side of the airfield fence east of the Sparrow Patch (See Section 15 on Page 32 and below for a list of birds that may be seen on the fence).

In early spring there may be a flooded area just east of the Lilac Bushes that over the years has had both Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, American Wigeon, Killdeer and Common Snipe.

On, beside or near both sides of the fence check for American Kestrel, Least and Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Sedge (uncommon) and Winter Wren, Gray Catbird, Hermit, Swainson's, Gray-cheeked and Wood Thrush, Veery, Eastern Bluebird, Brown Thrasher, Orange-crowned, Nashville, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped and Palm Warbler, Northern Cardinal, Nelson's (uncommon), Le Conte's (rare), Grasshopper (uncommon), Savannah, Lincoln's, Chipping, Song, Fox, Swamp, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Eastern Towhee, Bobolink (sometimes they are on the grass between here and the tennis courts to the south), and Eastern Meadowlark. Watch overhead for passing Caspian and Common Tern, Great Blue and Black-crowned Night-Heron, Great Egret, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin and the occasional Osprey. All six species of swallows may be seen here but Tree and Barn Swallow are the most common.



Hanlan's Point - South end of the airfield fence. Looking west towards the Sparrow Patch and lake. The Sparrow Patch is to the left of the goldenrod in the background and the beach path starts just beyond the goldenrod.

*Note: - Since 2012 the area all along the fence is now mowed on a regular basis and all bushes, etc. at the fence are removed.*

---

## **SECTION 19 - EAST SIDE OF THE AIRFIELD FENCE BETWEEN THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE AIRFIELD FENCE AND THE AREA JUST SOUTH OF THE FERRY DOCKS**

The walk up the east side of the airfield fence is an easy walk on a manicured lawn, but don't let that fool you as this can be one of the best and busiest walks during your Island visit. The area close to the fence consists of dogwood, sweet clover, goldenrod, lilac bushes and mature willow and maple trees. These trees will make you wish you were wearing a neck brace at times as you stare high into the trees trying to identify (or even see) the vireos, warblers, etc.

As you walk along watch and listen for birds in the brush and trees and watch for the variety of birds that sit on the fence. On some days the grass may be host to a large number of Northern Flickers and at other times all of the expected thrushes, especially Hermit and Swainson's. Killdeer used to nest here and when they did then the parks people occasionally would cordon their nest site off depending on who is informed as not all employees were so kind.

There are always a few birds here on slow days, but if you luck into a day when many birds are present then watch and listen for Red-headed Woodpecker (rare - fall seems to be the best time) and Red bellied Woodpecker (uncommon), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Acadian (rare), Willow, Alder, Great Crested and Olive-sided Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, all six swallow species, Winter, House, Marsh, Sedge (uncommon) and Carolina Wren, Brown Creeper, both nuthatches, both kinglets, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (nests), Yellow-throated, Philadelphia and White-eyed Vireo (uncommon), Eastern Bluebird, Veery, Wood, Gray-cheeked, Swainson's and Hermit Thrush, Gray Catbird (nests), Brown Thrasher and Northern Mockingbird.

Warblers, sparrows, finches and blackbirds are also well represented here. Connecticut, Mourning, Orange-crowned (sometimes common), Parula, Cerulean (uncommon), Prairie (uncommon), Blue-Winged, Golden-winged, Canada and Wilson's Warbler, (pretty well all the eastern warblers have been seen along here) Clay-colored (increased sightings lately), Nelson's (uncommon), LeConte's (rare), Grasshopper (uncommon), Lincoln's, Vesper, Swamp and Fox Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Scarlet and Summer Tanager (rare), Indigo Bunting, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, House and Purple Finch, Baltimore and Orchard Oriole, Eastern Meadowlark, Red-winged and Rusty Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird and Bobolink.

Some of the rarer birds seen here over the years have been an American White Pelican overhead in October 2010, two Sandhill Cranes overhead in April 2011, Yellow Rail (flushed near the fence by two experienced birders), a Black-backed Woodpecker, Yellow-breasted Chat and Kentucky Warbler.

On peak fall migration days (northwest winds are best) a large number of raptors may pass over and through this area, and some hunt the area as well. Birds such as Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Northern Harrier, Bald Eagle, Cooper's, Sharp-shinned, Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks, Northern Goshawk, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin and American Kestrel. Broad-winged Hawk and Golden Eagle are a rarer sighting. but do occur occasionally.

Also during peak migration watch overhead for large flocks (at times) of Chimney Swift, American Crow, Blue Jay, Cedar Waxwing, American Robin, Eastern Bluebird (smaller flocks), Red-winged and Rusty Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, House Finch and American Goldfinch. You may also see a Great Egret or a Green Heron overhead, or hear American Pipit or Lapland Longspur with luck and the occasional Common Nighthawk.

Be sure to check the airfield as you walk along for Killdeer or other shorebirds like Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. Northern Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, American Kestrel, Eastern Meadowlark, Bobolink and sometimes just a foot or so inside the fence and on the lower part of the fence you may spot Savannah, Field, Swamp, Chipping, Clay-colored and Song Sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos and of course White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows.



Hanlan's Point - East side of the airfield fence.  
Looking north from the southeast corner of the fence.  
The airfield is to the left and Lakeshore Ave.  
is to the right of the photo.

## SECTION 20 - HANLAN'S POINT - FERRY DOCK AREA

The Hanlan's Point Ferry Dock area is a great place to bird if a fall out has occurred, or it can be fairly quiet.

Many birders start their Island birding from here and if you luck into a medium or large fallout of birds you may not get past the Trout Pond or even the south end of the airfield fence.

Be sure to check the area at the docks and beside the lagoon before heading to the west or fence side of this area.

I start here in late September and through October for the variety of sparrows and the later arriving birds. In my opinion Hanlan's Point is probably the best place in the GTA to find Orange-crowned Warbler, especially in the fall.

The area has large mature willows and cottonwoods, some larch, cedar, pine and spruce trees as well a thick ground cover of grasses, sweet clover and goldenrod. In front of the ferry docks are thick dogwood and lilac bushes as well as pine and spruce trees with a mix of smaller to medium size trees such as birch and chestnut.

The birds to be found here are about the same as the preceding area along the east side of the airfield fence, with the exception of some of the rarer birds mentioned, Watch for about the same overhead birds along the fence and on the ground, in the grass, bushes and trees watch and listen for Red-headed (rare), Red-bellied (uncommon), Downy or Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Northern Flicker, all six swallow species, Chimney Swift, both nuthatches, both kinglets, Olive-sided, Yellow-bellied, Willow, Least, and Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe (may be common, especially on the fence), Eastern Wood-Pewee and Eastern Kingbird.

This area has been good over the years for many other species such as Sedge, Marsh, Winter, House and Carolina Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Yellow-throated (uncommon), White-eyed (rare), Red-eyed, Warbling and Philadelphia Vireo, Wood, Swainson's, Hermit (may be very common), and Gray-cheeked Thrush, Veery, Eastern Bluebird (on the fence), Brown Thrasher, Gray Catbird (nests) and Northern Mockingbird.

Also seen here were Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Orange-crowned, Mourning, Connecticut, Parula, Palm (can be common), Pine, Prairie, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted, Cape May, Canada and Wilson's Warbler, Ovenbird and Northern Waterthrush, Scarlet and Summer Tanager (rare), Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Cardinal, Fox, Vesper, Lincoln's, Swamp, Clay-colored (uncommon), Song, Savannah, Chipping, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Dark-eyed Junco (can be abundant), House and Purple Finch, Baltimore and Orchard Oriole and Bobolink (check the fence area).

One of my fellow birders spotted a Pileated Woodpecker for us here one fall. LeConte's Sparrow (rare) should occur here and in early October of 2011 I found two Nelson's Sparrows in the northwest corner of the airfield fence and on Oct.18, 2019 we found a very early Snowy Owl on the southwest side of the airfield runway.

Check the dock area for Canvasback, White-winged Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Long-tailed Duck, Common and Caspian Terns, and the occasional Horned Grebe.



Hanlan's Point - Ferry dock area - Looking northwest from the road beside the ferry dock. The airfield is beyond the trees and the ferry dock is to the right of the photo.



Hanlan's Point - Ferry dock area - Looking north just west of the ferry dock. The city is in the background and the ferry dock is to the right of the photo.

---

## SECTION 21 - HANLAN'S POINT - LAGOON SIDE – ALONG LAKESHORE AVE.

If you have the time or have missed the ferry you may want to check the area along the lagoon between the docks and the washroom about 300 yards / 100m or so south of the docks.

In the lagoon along here you may find Mute Swan, Canada Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Black Duck, Redhead, Canvasback, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Green-winged Teal, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, White-winged Scoter, Hooded, Red-breasted and Common Merganser and American Coot.

Osprey, Common and Caspian Tern, Belted Kingfisher and swallows hunt the lagoon and occasionally a Great Blue, a Great Egret or Black-crowned Night-Heron may be spotted on the shore across the lagoon on Mugg's Island or on the Hanlan's side. If there is still some ice on the lagoon in March check the Ring-billed and Herring Gull groups for Great Black-backed, Iceland and Glaucous Gull loafing on the ice and one year we found a Lesser black-backed Gull.

Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, American Kestrel all watch for a chance to get a meal here.

Pretty well all of the preceding birds are possible here but sparrows and thrushes can be quite common. Dark-eyed Juncos, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows can be very common on the grass and under the bushes and in October especially sometimes you almost have to kick them out of the way. In September of 2011 we found a Hooded Warbler behind the washrooms and across the road from the washrooms are bushes that usually have warblers like the two Golden-winged Warblers found together in May of 2011.

In the spring these birds are even in the tops of the trees when the blossoms and catkins are sprouting and this area seems to be a magnet for Yellow-rumped Warblers.

Some of the trees are small enough here that you can see a lot of the birds at or just above eye level.

If you only plan to spend a half day birding and you came over on the Hanlan's ferry your route could be through the area to the right (west) of the ferry, down the fence line and over to the Sparrow Patch, down to at least the tennis courts area (or Trout Pond) and then back to the ferry up the lagoon side.



Hanlan's Point - Ferry dock area - Looking south along the east side of the loop road. The ferry dock washroom building is directly to the left of the photo.



Hanlan's Point - Looking south along the road and lagoon just north of the first washroom building south of the ferry dock. The lagoon is to the left of the photo.

---

*Note: - Since Porter Airlines and Air Canada have started to use the airfield the noise level has gone up drastically, especially in the morning after 7:00 a.m. We have noticed the birds are put to flight when airplanes start their run or use their reverse thrusters at the east end of the airfield. The noise continues for quite some time and the birds usually do not return to the ferry dock area. Even the Starlings are put to flight.*

*You may also be assaulted with a wall of sound when a Porter airplane parks at the south end of the airfield and the ground crew winds the engines to a loud roar when testing those engines, or the Ornge helicopter noisily hovering over the south end of the airfield for an extended period. Both are very loud and also put birds to flight. You will find it hard to even talk to or hear your fellow birders. One of the worst places to picnic on The Islands because of the airport noise (in my opinion). So much for a Toronto Jewel for people to escape to from the noise, etc. of The City.*

---

### Some Nesting or Resident Birds on the Islands

Double-crested Cormorant	Downy Woodpecker	Gray Catbird
Mute Swan	Northern Flicker	Brown Thrasher
Canada Goose	Eastern Wood-Pewee	European Starling
Mallard Duck	Willow Flycatcher	Warbling Vireo
Canvasback	Eastern Phoebe	Yellow Warbler
Cooper's Hawk	Purple Martin	Northern Cardinal
Red-tailed Hawk	Tree Swallow	Chipping Sparrow
American Kestrel	Cliff Swallow	Savannah Sparrow
Killdeer	Barn Swallow	Song Sparrow
Spotted Sandpiper	Blue Jay	Red-winged Blackbird
Ring-billed Gull	American Crow	Common Grackle
Herring Gull	Black-capped Chickadee	Brown-headed Cowbird
Common Tern	Carolina Wren	Baltimore Oriole
Belted Kingfisher	House Wren	House Finch
Mourning Dove	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	American Goldfinch
Rock Pigeon	American Robin	House Sparrow

---

#### List of some birds and where you may find them: See Note at bottom of this list.

*Note:- ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area) and is also known as Ward's or Algonquin Island Natural Area.*

- Horned Grebe - On the lake off of the Ward's Island boardwalk, Trout Pond on Gibraltar Point, off Gibraltar and Hanlan's Points and in the lagoons from Centre Island to Hanlan's Point.
- Eared Grebe - (Uncommon) - On lake off Ward's Island and Hanlan's Point.
- Red-necked Grebe - On the lake off the Ward's Island boardwalk and off Gibraltar Point and on Toronto Harbour off Snake Island.
- Common Loon - Overhead throughout and on lake off Ward's Island, Gibraltar and Hanlan's Points.
- Red-throated Loon (uncommon) – On the lake off Gibraltar Point and occasionally on lake off Ward's Island.
- Great Egret - Overhead and beside lagoons throughout in small numbers (they nest on the Leslie Street Spit). Most reliable place is the Trout Pond on Gibraltar Point.
- Green Heron – Beside the Snug Harbour Islands Lagoons and the Trout Pond on Gibraltar Point.
- Black-crowned Night-Heron - Ward's Island - Sometimes roosting in trees along Lakeshore Ave. near the Eastern Gap east of the washroom. They roost in the internal lagoon at Snug Harbour and beside the Trout Pond.
- American Bittern (uncommon) - Hanlan's Point - Occasionally in the grass on the west side of the airfield fence and the beach area grass and occasionally in the area beside Ward's Meadow beside the Eastern Gap on Ward's Island.
- Wood Duck - Same as Green Heron but check the lagoons throughout.
- Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Canvasback (maybe nesting here), American Wigeon - Trout and Lighthouse Ponds but check the lagoons throughout.
- Hooded Merganser - Often present in the Snug Harbour Islands internal lagoon as well as in the Trout and Lighthouse Ponds and the lagoon just south of the Hanlan's Point ferry dock.
- Scoters - On lake throughout but best place has been off of the Ward's Island boardwalk, on the lake off Gibraltar Point some times in the Hanlan's Point ferry dock area.
- Raptors - around airfield on Hanlan's Point - Cooper's Hawk hunts throughout as it nests on the Islands.

Other raptors include eagles - watch overhead throughout during northerly winds in the fall and during spring Migration. In 2009 two Black Vultures were seen overhead on two separate days.

- Peregrine Falcon - Nests in Toronto and is often seen hunting the airfield on Hanlan's Point but can be seen overhead almost anywhere throughout.

- Merlin - Could be spotted overhead anywhere throughout during migration but shows up more often in the airfield area on Hanlan's Point and over the beach west of the airfield fence.

- Wild Turkey - New resident species for the Islands for a short time - Seen on Hanlan's Point and wintered in the Sanctuary during the 2010/2011 winter. Not seen since 2011.

- Shorebirds and Gulls - best place is the north end of Hanlan's Point Beach when not disturbed by humans.

- Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos - Could be encountered anywhere but best places seem to be Ward's Island ESA areas, Snake Island, the Trap area and anywhere between the Trout Pond and the Hanlan's Point ferry dock area.

- Owls - The Sanctuary. The Sanctuary is closed to the public at present. Someday it may again be open to birders. I mention the Owls there as someone always asks me about them but they are rarely encountered down there now.

- Short-eared Owl - (uncommon) - On the west side of the Island Airfield fence and at times migrating over the lake.

- Red-headed Woodpecker - (Rare) - Ward's Island ESA areas and Hanlan's Point.

- Red-bellied Woodpecker - (Uncommon) - Throughout - listen for its call. Some Springs we do see several migrants.

- Olive-sided Flycatcher - Ward's Island ESA areas, Algonquin Island ESA areas, Snake Island, Snug Harbour, Lighthouse area on Gibraltar Point and on Hanlan's Point from the north side of the Trout Pond to the Ferry Docks. Check tips of trees.

- Northern Rough-winged Swallow - Ward's and Centre Island lagoons and the Trout Pond.

- Cliff Swallow - Overhead throughout but easily found at Centre Island as they nest under the pier on the south side of the Island. Also at times there may be many over the Hanlan's Beach area west of the airfield fence or over the grassy area at the south end of the airfield fence. During August this species and the other five species may be overhead in numbers throughout the Islands.

- Purple Martin - Seen overhead in migration but best place is around the new School on Centre Island as they have a Purple Martin house on top of the school. There is also a Martin house on the north side of the Lighthouse Pond.

- Carolina Wren - Nests on Ward's (residential area mostly) but also in the Trap area, Algonquin and Snake Islands, Snug Harbour Islands and the Sanctuary. May be seen or heard anywhere on the Islands but at this writing it is hard to find but is still a resident.

- House Wren - Same areas as the Carolina Wren and it also nests on The Islands.

- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher - Nests throughout but best places to see it is in Ward's Island ESA areas, Algonquin and Snake Island, the Trap Area and the north side of the Trout Pond.

- Eastern Bluebird - Occasionally at Ward's and Algonquin Island Meadows but best areas are west of the Trout Pond and anywhere along the airfield fence (east, west or south sides) on Hanlan's Point and at the south end of the Filtration Plant on Gibraltar Point.

- Gray-cheeked Thrush - Anywhere but most often at Ward's Island ESA areas and along the east side of the airfield fence on Hanlan's Point.

- Brown Thrasher - Ward's Island ESA areas, Snake and Algonquin Islands, between the fire station and the Snake Island bridge, Lighthouse area, north side of the Trout Pond, and along the Hanlan's Point beach trail. Numbers have decreased due to human disturbance since the opening of the Clothing Optional Beach.

- Northern Mockingbird (uncommon) - Could be found anywhere in migration but most often at Ward's Island ESA areas and along the beach trail north of the Trout Pond. One spent 3 months in the Algonquin bridge area on Ward's Island in 2019. Watch for it as well west of the Fire Station on Ward's Island.
- American Pipit - Over Ward's Island Meadow, over beach (and on the beach) and fence on west side of the airfield and over the airfield. Listen for it calling Pipit overhead almost anywhere during migration.
- White-eyed Vireo and Yellow-throated Vireo - Ward's Island ESA areas, north side of the Trout Pond, Hanlan's Point tennis courts area, along the east side of the airfield fence and in the Hanlan's Point ferry dock area.
- Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers - Almost anywhere but the best areas are Ward's Island ESA areas, the Trap area, anywhere between the Trout Pond and the Hanlan's Point ferry dock, especially just to the west of the tennis courts on Hanlan's Point.
- Orange-crowned Warbler - Almost anywhere but best areas are Ward's Island ESA areas, just east of the Island fire station, Algonquin Island Meadow and area, the Trap area, area of rough grass and Sweet Clover just south of the Aerial cars (Sky Ride) on Centre Island, west of the Trout Pond, anywhere around the airfield fence (east, west or south sides) on Hanlan's Point, the beach area on Hanlan's Point west of the airfield fence and especially the area just west of the ferry dock on Hanlan's Point between the dock and the fence. Large numbers have been seen during Fall migration some years.
- Prairie Warbler (uncommon) - Has been seen along the boardwalk and in the washroom area on Ward's Island, on the north side of the Trout Pond and on Hanlan's Point between the tennis courts and the ferry dock.
- Pine Warbler - Ward's Island ESA areas, Snake Island, Snug Harbour and any treed area on Hanlan's Point.
- Palm Warbler - Have be seen in large numbers (100 to 200 some days) during Fall migration. Hanlan's Point being best.
- Cerulean Warbler (uncommon) - Same areas as the Prairie Warbler and just west of the fire station on Ward's Island.
- Mourning Warbler - Ward's Island ESA areas, Wyandot Ave. On Algonquin Island, between Lenore Ave. and Centre Island in the boardwalk area, Snake Island, Snug Harbour, the Trap area on Ward's, the area beside the Sparrow Patch on Hanlan's Point and in the Hanlan's Point ferry dock area. Heard more often than seen in the spring.
- Connecticut Warbler - Ward's Island ESA areas, just east of the Island fire station on Ward's Island, Snake Island, the Trap Area, area between the tennis courts on Hanlan's Point and the south end of the airfield fence and in the Hanlan's Point ferry dock area – west side of the area.
- Yellow-breasted Chat (uncommon) - Has been seen at Ward's Island ESA areas, Snake Island, between the north side of the Trout Pond and the tennis courts on Hanlan's Point and along the east side of the airfield fence on Hanlan's Point south of the Hanlan's Point ferry dock area.
- Summer Tanager (rare) - Individuals found beside the Eastern Gap on Ward's Island, just west of the Trout Pond on Gibraltar Point and along the east side of the airfield fence on Hanlan's Point. In Spring of 2019 we saw 5 of them.
- Grasshopper and Nelson's Sparrows - (both uncommon) Best places are the Sparrow Patch at the south end of the airfield fence on Hanlan's Point and anywhere along the airfield fence (east, west or south sides) on Hanlan's Point.
- Le Conte's Sparrow (rare) - Same areas as the Grasshopper and Nelson's Sparrows.
- Clay-colored Sparrow (uncommon) - Same areas as the above three sparrows but mostly at the south end of the fence but sightings have increased in 2018 and 2019 along the east side of the fence in the Sparrow Patch area.
- Vesper Sparrow - Ward's Meadow, the Sparrow Patch and the west side of the airfield fence on Hanlan's Point.
- Fox Sparrow - Almost anywhere in areas with cover for them to forage in. Ward's Island ESA areas and the area east of the Island fire station are good areas as is the beach path, Sparrow Patch and airfield fence line on Hanlan's Point.
- Eastern Towhee - Same as the Fox Sparrow but heard as often as seen.

- Lapland Longspur - On and over the airfield on Hanlan's Point and the beach area west of the airfield.
- Eastern Meadowlark - Same as the Lapland Longspur but also check Ward's Meadow and area.
- Rusty Blackbird - Overhead anywhere during migration. Sometimes stops at the small ponds on the southeast side of the Island School on Centre Island but the wet area on the west side of the airfield fence on Hanlan's Point can have a few as well.
- Orchard Oriole (uncommon) - Ward's Island and Algonquin Island ESA areas and along the east side of the airfield fence from the Hanlan's ferry dock to the south end of the fence.

- Purple Finch - Almost anywhere during migration. Check the area on the north side of the Trout Pond, the Sparrow Patch on Hanlan's Point and the Hanlan's Point ferry dock area. This bird can sometimes be found feeding in the grass.

*Note: - Some of the birds may not always be found in their expected or preferred habitats. Birds during migration some times when tired come down wherever they can. For example, I found a Nelson's Sparrow in the woods in the Sanctuary and Margaret Liubavicius found one in the woods near the Hanlan's Point tennis courts. Other seemingly out of habitat birds were a Virginia Rail under a pine tree, one in the grass beside the same tennis courts as above, a Marsh Wren in a pine tree, a Whip-poor-Will on a house step on Ward's Island, etc.*

### Mammals, turtles, snakes and amphibians

- Raccoon – Not common anymore, most often seen asleep in a tree on Ward's Island.
- Gray Squirrel - Common throughout but decreasing due to predation by nesting Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawks.
- Coyote – Occasionally comes over on the ice in the winter from the Leslie Street Spit and is also a resident now. Any cat gone missing or found dead is blamed on this animal and many island residents tell of sightings of 1 to 5 animals.
- American Mink - Increasing throughout. Watch for it hunting and playing anywhere along the lagoons and beside or in the lake. Often seen at the ferry docks and off the Boardwalk.
- Virginia Opossum - Two were seen beside Lakeshore Ave. at Fifth St. in 2008 and some residents on Algonquin Island and eastern Ward's Island have reported seeing an Opossum.
- Beaver - Not too common but you may see one swimming in the eastern Gap or off the Ward's Island beach, they breed at the Leslie Street Spit and have a lodge in the Trout Pond.
- Muskrat - In lagoons throughout as well as the Trout Pond. Often seen while up on any ice left in the lagoons in the spring.
- White-tailed Deer - May 2010 - there were 2 does (maybe more) on the Islands. This is a first for the Islands. One of the does may have arrived on The Islands by crossing on the ice from the Leslie Street Spit or Cherry Beach while she was pregnant and that may account for the second doe being slightly smaller.

*Note: - In 2011 I was informed that the carcasses of two deer were found in the Wildlife Sanctuary. A sad and mysterious end for those two beautiful animals.*

- Turtles - Best places to see Eastern Painted, Blanding's or Eastern Map Turtles is the internal lagoon in Snug Harbour and in the Trout Pond. Red-eared Slider and Snapping Turtle were often seen in the Sanctuary in the past. Up to 12 Painted Turtles may be seen in the slough on Hanlan's Point beach and if you look closely you may see some tiny turtle heads in the slough. Look into the small bay opposite the Centre Island School as well for Eastern Map and Eastern Painted Turtles.
- Snakes - Mostly Eastern Garter Snake (including the melanistic (black) form) that may be spotted anywhere and there are also some Brown Snakes on the Islands. These animals are not common at all on the Islands.
- Frogs and toads - Leopard and Green Frog - A few may be found in wet areas on The Islands and American Toads are common in most wet areas and beside lagoon between Algonquin Bridge and Snug Islands bridge and can be abundant in flood years

### Some butterflies seen on The Islands

I do not list Butterflies seen on The Islands myself but several other birders do and following are some of the butterflies seen over the years by others.

#### Many thanks go to Alfred Adamo for the following list.

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Silver-spotted Skipper           | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Cloudywing       | <input type="checkbox"/> Least Skipper         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> European Skipper                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Fiery Skipper             | <input type="checkbox"/> Peck's Skipper        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tawny-edged Skipper              | <input type="checkbox"/> Crossline Skipper         | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Broken-Dash  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Little Glassywing                | <input type="checkbox"/> Hobomok Skipper           | <input type="checkbox"/> Dun Skipper           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black Swallowtail                | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Tiger Swallowtail | <input type="checkbox"/> Checkered White       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cabbage White                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Clouded Sulphur           | <input type="checkbox"/> Orange Sulphur        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Little Yellow                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Harvester                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Gray Hairstreak       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Tailed Blue              | <input type="checkbox"/> Spring Azure              | <input type="checkbox"/> Summer Azure          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Silvery Blue                     | <input type="checkbox"/> American Snout            | <input type="checkbox"/> Variegated Fritillary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great Spangled Fritillary        | <input type="checkbox"/> Tawny Emperor             | <input type="checkbox"/> Pearl Crescent        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Crescent                | <input type="checkbox"/> Question Mark             | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Comma         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compton Tortoiseshell            | <input type="checkbox"/> Mourning Cloak            | <input type="checkbox"/> American Lady         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Painted Lady                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Red Admiral               | <input type="checkbox"/> Common Buckeye        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Admiral/Red-spotted Purple | <input type="checkbox"/> Viceroy                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Little Wood-Satyr     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common Wood-Nymph                | <input type="checkbox"/> Monarch                   |  |

Best places to see butterflies I'm told are the Flower Gardens between the Centre Island ferry dock and the pier over the lake at the south end of the Island as well as the Children's Garden just to the east of the Island School.

Butterflies can be found throughout the Islands not just in the above gardens.

---

*A Winter Note: - After about November the first or so waterfowl numbers start to increase on and over the lake as well as in the harbour and also in the lagoons and the Lighthouse and Trout Ponds.*

*Many of these waterfowl will spend the winter down there on the lake and harbour and in the open ice free areas of the lagoons if there are any openings until the middle or late March.*

*Some of the wintering waterfowl are Mute and Trumpeter Swans, Canada Goose, Gadwall, Mallard, Black and Long-tailed Ducks, both Scaup, mostly Greater, Canvasback, Redhead, Common Goldeneye, many Bufflehead and Red-breasted Mergansers, Common and Hooded Merganser, White-winged Scoter and lesser numbers of Black and Surf Scoters and the occasional American Widgeon, Ring-necked and Ruddy Duck, Coot and Horned Grebe.*

***One last Note - Some of the photos in this guide do not represent the present condition of some of the areas due to the ongoing and apparently senseless cutting and removal of trees and bushes - in my opinion.***

***Another last Note – Please use discretion when reporting Owl sightings. I can't tell you not to I just want you to think of possible Owl harassment by some when reporting any exact location.***

## TORONTO ISLANDS - Unofficial CHECKLIST OF BIRDS

Total as of November 24, 2019 - 349

GRTR WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE	BLACK-NECKED STILT	MERLIN	KIRTLAND'S WARBLER
SNOW GOOSE	AMERICAN AVOCET	GYRFALCON	CAPE MAY WARBLER
BRANT	SPOTTED SANDPIPER	PEREGRINE FALCON	CERULEAN WARBLER
CACKLING GOOSE	SOLITARY SANDPIPER	PRAIRIE FALCON	BAY-BREASTED WARBLER
CANADA GOOSE	GREATER YELLOWLEGS	OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER	BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER
MUTE SWAN	WILLET	EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE	YELLOW WARBLER
TRUMPETER SWAN	LESSER YELLOWLEGS	YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER	CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER
TUNDRA SWAN	UPLAND SANDPIPER	ACADIAN FLYCATCHER	BLACKPOLL WARBLER
WOOD DUCK	ESKIMO CURLEW - <i>Extinct</i>	ALDER FLYCATCHER	BLK-THROATED BLU WARBLER
GADWALL	WHIMBREL	WILLOW FLYCATCHER	PALM WARBLER
AMERICAN WIGEON	LONG-BILLED CURLEW	LEAST FLYCATCHER	PINE WARBLER
AMERICAN BLACK DUCK	HUDSONIAN GODWIT	GRAY FLYCATCHER	YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER
MALLARD	MARbled GODWIT	EASTERN PHOEBE	YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER
BLUE-WINGED TEAL	RUDDY TURNSTONE	SAY'S PHOEBE	PRAIRIE WARBLER
NORTHERN SHOVELER	RED KNOT	GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER	BLK-THROATD GRAY WARBLER
NORTHERN PINTAIL	RUFF	VARIEGATED FLYCATCHER	BLK-THROATED GRN WARBLER
GREEN-WINGED TEAL	STILT SANDPIPER	WESTERN KINGBIRD	TOWNSEND'S WARBLER
CANVASBACK	SANDERLING	EASTERN KINGBIRD	CANADA WARBLER
REDHEAD	DUNLIN	LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE	WILSON'S WARBLER
RING-NECKED DUCK	PURPLE SANDPIPER	NORTHERN SHRIKE	YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT
TUFTED DUCK	BAIRD'S SANDPIPER	WHITE-EYED VIREO	EASTERN TOWHEE
GREATER SCAUP	LEAST SANDPIPER	BELL'S VIREO	AMERICAN TREE SPARROW
LESSER SCAUP	WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER	YELLOW-THROATED VIREO	CHIPPING SPARROW
KING EIDER	BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER	BLUE-HEADED VIREO	CLAY-COLORED SPARROW
COMMON EIDER	PECTORAL SANDPIPER	WARBLING VIREO	FIELD SPARROW
HARLEQUIN DUCK	SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER	PHILADELPHIA VIREO	VESPER SPARROW
SURF SCOTER	WESTERN SANDPIPER	RED-EYED VIREO	LARK SPARROW
WHITE-WINGED SCOTER	SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER	CANADA JAY	SAVANNAH SPARROW
BLACK SCOTER	LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER	BLUE JAY	GRASSHOPPER SPARROW
LONG-TAILED DUCK	WILSON'S SNIPE	BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE	HENSLow'S SPARROW
BUFFLEHEAD	AMERICAN WOODCOCK	AMERICAN CROW	LeCONTE'S SPARROW
COMMON GOLDENEYE	WILSON'S PHALAROPE	FISH CROW	NELSON'S SPARROW
BARROW'S GOLDENEYE	RED-NECKED PHALAROPE	COMMON RAVEN	FOX SPARROW
HOODED MERGANSER	RED PHALAROPE	HORNED LARK	SONG SPARROW
COMMON MERGANSER	POMARINE JAEGER	PURPLE MARTIN	LINCOLN'S SPARROW
RED-BREASTED MERGANSER	PARASITIC JAEGER	TREE SWALLOW	SWAMP SPARROW
RUDDY DUCK	DOVEKIE	N. ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW	WHITE-THROATED SPARROW
RING-NECKED PHEASANT	THICK-BILLED MURRE	BANK SWALLOW	HARRIS'S SPARROW
WILD TURKEY	RAZORBILL	CLIFF SWALLOW	WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW
NORTHERN BOBWHITE	BLACK GUILLEMOT	CAVE SWALLOW	GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW
RED-THROATED LOON	ANCIENT MURRELET	BARN SWALLOW	DARK-EYED JUNCO
PACIFIC LOON	LAUGHING GULL	BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE	SUMMER TANAGER
COMMON LOON	FRANKLIN'S GULL	BOREAL CHICKADEE	SCARLET TANAGER
PIED-BILLED GREBE	BONAPARTE'S GULL	TUFTED TITMOUSE	WESTERN TANAGER
HORNED GREBE	LITTLE GULL	RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH	NORTHERN CARDINAL
RED-NECKED GREBE	HEERMANN'S GULL	WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH	ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK
EARED GREBE	RING-BILLED GULL	BROWN CREEPER	BLUE GROSBEAK
BLACK-CAPPED PETREL	CALIFORNIA GULL	HOUSE WREN	INDIGO BUNTING
DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT	HERRING GULL	WINTER WREN	PAINTED BUNTING
GREAT CORMORANT	ICELAND GULL	SEDGE WREN	DICKCISSEL
NORTHERN GANNET	LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL	MARSH WREN	BOBOLINK
AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN	GLAUCOUS GULL	CAROLINA WREN	RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD
BROWN PELICAN	GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL	BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER	EASTERN MEADOWLARK
AMERICAN BITTERN	BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE	GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET	WESTERN MEADOWLARK
LEAST BITTERN	IVORY GULL	RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET	YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD
GREAT BLUE HERON	CASPIAN TERN	EASTERN BLUEBIRD	RUSTY BLACKBIRD
GREAT EGRET	BLACK TERN	VEERY	BREWER'S BLACKBIRD
SNOWY EGRET	COMMON TERN	GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH	COMMON GRACKLE
LITTLE BLUE HERON	ARCTIC TERN	SWANSON'S THRUSH	BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD
CATTLE EGRET	FORSTER'S TERN	HERMIT THRUSH	ORCHARD ORIOLE
GREEN HERON	ROCK PIGEON	WOOD THRUSH	BALTIMORE ORIOLE
BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON	MOURNING DOVE	AMERICAN ROBIN	PINE GROSBEAK
YELLOW-CROWNED NITE-HERON	PASSENGER PIGEON - <i>Extinct</i>	GRAY CATBIRD	HOUSE FINCH
GLOSSY IBIS	YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO	BROWN THRASHER	PURPLE FINCH
BLACK VULTURE	BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO	NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD	RED CROSSBILL
TURKEY VULTURE	BARN OWL	EUROPEAN STARLING	WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL
OSPREY	EASTERN SCREECH-OWL	AMERICAN PIPIT	COMMON REDOLL
MISSISSIPPI KITE	GREAT HORNED OWL	BOHEMIAN WAXWING	HOARY REDPOLL
BALD EAGLE	SNOWY OWL	CEDAR WAXWING	PINE SISKIN
NORTHERN HARRIER	NORTHERN HAWK-OWL	LAPLAND LONGSPUR	AMERICAN GOLDFINCH
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	BARRED OWL	CHESTNUT-COLLARD LONGSPUR	EVENING GROSBEAK
COOPER'S HAWK	GREAT GRAY OWL	SNOW BUNTING	HOUSE SPARROW
NORTHERN GOSHAWK	LONG-EARED OWL	OVENBIRD	EURASIAN TREE SPARROW
RED-SHOULDERED HAWK	SHORT-EARED OWL	WORM-EATING WARBLER	
BROAD-WINGED HAWK	BOREAL OWL	LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH	
RED-TAILED HAWK	N. SAW-WHET OWL	NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH	
ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK	COMMON NIGHTHAWK	GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER	
GOLDEN EAGLE	CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW	BLUE-WINGED WARBLER	
YELLOW RAIL	E. WHIP-POOR-WILL	BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER	
VIRGINIA RAIL	CHIMNEY SWIFT	SWANSON'S WARBLER	
SORA	RUBY-THR HUMMINGBIRD	TENNESSEE WARBLER	
COMMON GALLINULE	BELTED KINGFISHER	ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER	
AMERICAN COOT	RED-HEADED WOODPECKER	NASHVILLE WARBLER	
SANDHILL CRANE	RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER	CONNECTICUT WARBLER	
BLACK-BELLIED FLOVER	YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER	MOURNING WARBLER	
AMERICAN GOLDEN FLOVER	DOWNY WOODPECKER	KENTUCKY WARBLER	
SNOWY FLOVER	HAIRY WOODPECKER	COMMON YELLOWTHROAT	
WILSON'S FLOVER	THREE-TOED WOODPECKER	NORTHERN PARULA	
SEMPALMATED FLOVER	BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER	MAGNOLIA WARBLER	
PIPING FLOVER	NORTHERN FLICKER	HOODED WARBLER	
KILLDEER	PILEATED WOODPECKER	AMERICAN REDSTART	
AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER	AMERICAN KESTREL	PROTHONOTARY WARBLER	

The original Checklist was compiled by David Beadle from his own records and the private records of Glenn Coody, Hugh Curtis, Luc Fazio, Norm Murr and Bob Yulitch. Further sightings have been received from Alfred Adams, Bob Tyler, Gavin Platt, Jay Peterson, Ian Cannell and Ruth Daniels.

A big thanks to David Beadle for giving me the incentive to do this Checklist and a huge thank you to Glenn Coody for his important and exhaustive research into Museum and other historical records.

Format - ACU Checklist Of NA Birds  
Version - Revised 06.04 - [ronnie@proton.me](mailto:ronnie@proton.me)

**SPRING and FALL - EARLY ARRIVAL DATES**

SPECIES	SPRING	FALL	SPECIES	SPRING	FALL	SPECIES	SPRING	FALL			
RED-THROATED LOON	R	W	OCT. 1	AMERICAN WOODCOCK	MAR. 3	SEP. 1	BLUE-WINGED WARBLER	APR. 27	AUG. 27		
COMMON LOON	W	MAR. 31	S	BONAPARTE'S GULL	APR. 16	AUG. 14	GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER	APR. 29	AUG. 28		
PIED-BILLED GREBE		FEB. 10	AUG. 28	CASPIAN TERN	APR. 10	S	TENNESSEE WARBLER	MAY 4	AUG. 20		
HORNED GREBE		MAR. 27	AUG. 21	COMMON TERN	S	APR. 13	ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER	MAY 5	SEP. 11		
RED-NECKED GREBE		MAR. 29	SEP. 14	BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO	MAY 12	AUG. 14	NASHVILLE WARBLER	APR. 17	AUG. 13		
EARED GREBE	R	MAR. 20	OCT. 13	YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO	MAY 22	AUG. 17	NORTHERN PARULA	MAY 2	AUG. 27		
DOUBLE-CR CORMORANT		APR. 2	S	GREAT HORNED OWL	W	APR. 3	NOV. 6	YELLOW WARBLER	S	APR. 17	Nests
AMERICAN BITTERN		APR. 19	SEP. 12	N. LONG-EARED OWL	W	MAR. 27	NOV. 6	CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER		MAY 2	AUG. 12
LEAST BITTERN		MAY 19		SHORT-EARED OWL		APR. 13	SEP. 27	MAGNOLIA WARBLER		MAY 5	AUG. 14
GREAT BLUE HERON	S	MAR. 27	AUG. 13	NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL	W	MAR. 14	NOV. 6	CAPE MAY WARBLER		MAY 5	AUG. 19
GREAT EGRET		MAY 2	S	COMMON NIGHTHAWK		MAY 10	SEP. 8	BLACK-THR BLUE WARBLER		APR. 16	AUG. 18
GREEN HERON		MAY 1	AUG. 26	EASTERN WHIP-POOR-WILL		MAY 1	AUG. 28	YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER	W	APR. 6	AUG. 12
BLACK-CR NIGHT-HERON		MAR. 26	S	CHIMNEY SWIFT		APR. 25	S	BLACK-THR. GREEN WARBLER		APR. 27	AUG. 17
WHITE PELICAN			OCT. 9	RUBY-TH. HUMMINGBIRD		MAY 10	AUG. 17	BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER		MAY 4	AUG. 15
TUNDRA SWAN		MAR. 8	NOV. 15	BELTED KINGFISHER	W	MAR. 19	S	PINE WARBLER		APR. 13	AUG. 21
WOOD DUCK	S	MAR. 20	AUG. 23	RED-HEADED WOODPECKER		APR. 29	AUG. 30	PRAIRIE WARBLER		MAY 19	
GADWALL		W	AUG. 15	RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER		APR. 9	SEP. 20	PALM WARBLER		APR. 16	AUG. 28
AMERICAN WIGEON		MAR. 8	NOV. 1	YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER		APR. 2	AUG. 28	BAY-BREASTED WARBLER		MAY 9	AUG. 16
AMERICAN BLACK DUCK		W	OCT. 7	NORTHERN FLYCCKER	W / S	MAR. 27	Nests	BLACKPOLL WARBLER		MAY 13	AUG. 16
BLUE-WINGED TEAL		MAR. 31	SEP. 30	PILEATED WOODPECKER		APR. 16	SEP. 2	CERULEAN WARBLER		MAY 11	
NORTHERN SHOVELER		MAR. 31	OCT. 1	OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER		MAY 18	AUG. 15	BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER		APR. 26	AUG. 15
NORTHERN PINTAIL		MAR. 27	OCT. 17	EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE		APR. 6	AUG. 12	AMERICAN REDSTART		MAY 3	AUG. 14
GREEN-WINGED TEAL		APR. 3	AUG. 25	YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER		MAY 13	AUG. 13	WORM-EATING WARBLER		MAY 12	
CANVASBACK	W	Nests	Nests	ACADIAN FLYCATCHER		MAY 26		OVENBIRD		APR. 25	AUG. 17
REDHEAD		W	SEP. 26	ALDER FLYCATCHER		MAY 10	AUG. 13	NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH		APR. 27	AUG. 12
RING-NECKED DUCK	W	MAR. 19	NOV. 1	WILLOW FLYCATCHER	S	MAY 1	Nests	LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH		MAY 4	AUG. 15
GREATER SCAUP		W	SEP. 17	LEAST FLYCATCHER		APR. 25	AUG. 12	KENTUCKY WARBLER			SEP. 10
LESSER SCAUP	W	MAR. 24	SEP. 26	EASTERN PHOEBE		MAR. 25	AUG. 15	CONNECTICUT WARBLER		MAY 15	AUG. 17
HARLEQUIN DUCK	W	APR. 13		GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER		APR. 25	AUG. 13	MOURNING WARBLER		MAY 10	AUG. 17
SURF SCOTER		W	OCT. 27	WESTERN KINGBIRD			OCT. 10	COMMON YELLOWTHROAT		MAY 1	AUG. 15
BLACK SCOTER		W	OCT. 27	EASTERN KINGBIRD		APR. 27	AUG. 12	HOODED WARBLER		MAY 9	SEP. 10
LONG-TAILED DUCK		W / S	AUG. 23	LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE		APR. 10		WILSON'S WARBLER		MAY 1	AUG. 15
BUFFLEHEAD		W	OCT. 4	NORTHERN SHRIKE		W	OCT. 23	CANADA WARBLER		MAY 14	AUG. 15
COMMON GOLDENEYE		W	AUG. 30	WHITE-EYED VIREO		APR. 29	SEP. 6	YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT		APR. 30	
HOODED MERGANSER	W	MAR. 19	AUG. 16	YELLOW-THROATED VIREO		MAY 3		SUMMER Tanager		MAY 17	AUG. 17
RED-BR. MERGANSER		W	OCT. 1	BLUE-HEADED VIREO		APR. 24	AUG. 12	SCARLET Tanager		MAY 8	AUG. 17
RUDDY DUCK		APR. 10		WARBLING VIREO	S	APR. 17	Nests	WESTERN Tanager		MAY 17	
BLACK VULTURE			AUG. 24	PHILADELPHIA VIREO		MAY 11	AUG. 12	EASTERN TOWHEE		MAR. 31	AUG. 25
TURKEY VULTURE		APR. 8	AUG. 24	RED-EYED VIREO		MAY 1	AUG. 13	AMERICAN TREE SPARROW		W	OCT. 10
OSPREY		APR. 6	AUG. 15	HORNED LARK		MAR. 26	OCT. 10	CHIPPING SPARROW	S	MAR. 31	Nests
BALD EAGLE	R	MAY 17	SEP. 12	PURPLE MARTIN	S	APR. 18	Nests	CLAY-COLORED SPARROW		MAY 4	OCT. 1
NORTHERN HARRIER	W	MAR. 26	AUG. 17	TREE SWALLOW	S	MAR. 27	Nests	FIELD SPARROW		MAR. 27	SEP. 24
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	W	MAR. 19	AUG. 23	N. ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW		APR. 15	AUG. 4	VESPER SPARROW		APR. 11	SEP. 24
NORTHERN GOSHAWK	W	MAR. 19	SEP. 1	BANK SWALLOW	S	APR. 18	AUG. 4	SAVANNAH SPARROW	S	MAR. 27	Nests
RED-SHOULDERED HAWK			OCT. 3	CLIFF SWALLOW	S	APR. 23	Nests	GRASSHOPPER SPARROW		APR. 18	SEP. 28
BROAD-WINGED HAWK		APR. 25	SEP. 1	CAVE SWALLOW				LE CONTE'S SPARROW		MAY 23	OCT. 2
ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK	W	MAR. 20	SEP. 14	BARN SWALLOW	S	APR. 12	Nests	NELSON'S SPARROW		MAY 18	SEP. 28
GOLDEN EAGLE			OCT. 16	BOREAL CHICKADEE				FOX SPARROW		MAR. 19	SEP. 27
MERLIN	W	APR. 18	AUG. 23	TUFTED TITMOUSE		MAY 3		SONG SPARROW	W / S	MAR. 9	Nests
VIRGINIA RAIL		MAY 13	SEP. 12	RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH	W	MAR. 27	AUG. 16	LINCOLN'S SPARROW		MAY 4	AUG. 23
AMERICAN COOT	W	MAR. 19	OCT. 11	BROWN CREEPER	W	MAR. 9	SEP. 1	SWAMP SPARROW		MAR. 21	AUG. 12
SANDHILL CRANE		APR. 24	OCT. 1	HOUSE WREN	S	APR. 24	Nests	WHITE-THROATED SPARROW	W	MAR. 19	AUG. 21
BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER		MAY 15	SEP. 9	WINTER WREN	W	MAR. 25	SEP. 6	WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW		APR. 29	SEP. 16
AM. GOLDEN PLOVER			SEP. 18	SEDGE WREN		MAY 3	SEP. 15	DARK-EYED JUNCO		W	AUG. 23
SEMIPALMATED PLOVER		MAY 13		MARSH WREN		MAY 3		LAPLAND LONGSPUR			OCT. 12
PIPING PLOVER		MAY 1		GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET	W	MAR. 9	SEP. 15	CH.-COLLARED LONGSPUR			OCT. 9
KILLDEER		MAR. 26	S	RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET		APR. 10	AUG. 27	SNOW BUNTING		W	OCT. 30
GREATER YELLOWLEGS		APR. 30	SEP. 5	BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER	S	APR. 19	Nests	ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK		MAY 4	AUG. 17
LESSER YELLOWLEGS		APR. 19	AUG. 15	EASTERN BLUEBIRD	W	APR. 3	SEP. 20	INDIGO BUNTING		MAY 6	AUG. 18
SOLITARY SANDPIPER		MAY 1	AUG. 15	VEERY		APR. 17	AUG. 18	DICKCISSEL			SEP. 27
SPOTTED SANDPIPER		APR. 27	S	GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH		MAY 5	AUG. 27	BOBOLINK		MAY 1	SEP. 27
WHIMBREL		MAY 19		SWAINSON'S THRUSH		APR. 11	AUG. 14	RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	S	MAR. 8	Nests
RUDDY TURNSTONE		MAY 18	SEP. 17	HERMIT THRUSH	W	MAR. 31	AUG. 21	EASTERN MEADOW LARK		MAR. 20	SEP. 28
RED KNOT			AUG. 28	WOOD THRUSH		MAY 2	AUG. 30	RUSTY BLACKBIRD		MAR. 27	SEP. 20
SANDERLING		MAY 12	AUG. 28	AMERICAN ROBIN	W / S	MAR. 19	Nests	COMMON GRACKLE	S	MAR. 14	Nests
SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER		MAY 9	SEP. 14	GRAY CATBIRD	S	APR. 27	Nests	BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD		MAR. 9	W / S
LEAST SANDPIPER		MAY 12		NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD		APR. 15	AUG. 15	ORCHARD ORIOLE	S	APR. 27	Nests
BAIRD'S SANDPIPER		MAY 29		BROWN THRASHER		APR. 10	AUG. 15	BALTIMORE ORIOLE	S	APR. 17	Nests
PECTORAL SANDPIPER		MAY 29		AMERICAN PIPIT		MAR. 23	SEP. 14	PURPLE FINCH		APR. 8	AUG. 18
DUNLIN		MAY 3	SEP. 20	BOHEMIAN WAXWING		MAR. 27		COMMON REDPOLL	W	MAR. 14	DEC. 13
SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER		MAY 9	AUG. 30	CEDAR WAXWING	W	MAR. 19	AUG. 12	HOARY REDPOLL	W	FEB. 16	DEC. 13
WILSON'S SNIFE		MAR. 27	OCT. 11					PINE SISKIN		MAR. 19	OCT. 4

*Note: These dates are the earliest that the species was first seen by me and may be superseded by earlier sightings after January 1, 2012.*

**W** = Some birds of this species may overwinter in this area – date is the first time seen at The Islands.

**S** = Some birds of this species may remain during summer in the area – date is the first time seen at The Islands.

**R** Rare to Uncommon – Winters in the area occasionally

**Norm Murr**

**January 1, 2012**

*Note: - The above dates are not carved in stone but are dates taken from my own records*

