Birds of Fort McCoy



Natural Resources Branch Fort McCoy, WI 2008

Birds of Fort McCoy

Fort McCoy is a 60,000 acre military installation located in Monroe County, about seven miles west of the city of Tomah, six miles east of the city of Sparta, and approximately 35 miles east of the city of La Crosse, Wisconsin. The installation lies within the west central region of Wisconsin, the most rugged portion of the state. The area is unglaciated and characterized by steep narrow ridges and broad valleys, and is extensively stream-dissected.

Fort McCoy's acreage is considered to have excellent value to wildlife. Dense forests and semi-open woodlands cover approximately 47,000 acres. There are 11 lakes, 20 major or tributary streams, and over 4,000 acres of wetlands. There are several thousand acres of open fields, oak savannas, and upland and lowland brush areas. The installation has diverse vegetation supporting over 800 plant species. Three State Natural Areas have been designated within Fort McCoy's boundaries: the 300-acre oak savanna known as the Fort McCoy Barrens, and two riparian areas, Silver Creek and Clear Creek.

There are numerous programs geared for avian management. Wetlands management enhances the nesting habitat for waterfowl and wading birds. Artificial nesting structures include wood duck boxes, osprey platforms, kestrel boxes and eastern bluebird boxes. Several species of upland game birds have extensive habitat improvement programs. Monitoring is conducted by Fort McCoy staff members or graduate researchers in an effort to help staff biologists design management plans. Threatened and endangered species have specific management procedures that are closely maintained.

The following list contains over 260 species which represent sightings and observations by Fort McCoy Natural Resource personnel, and surveys by ornithologists and avian biologists.

Checklist nomenclature and organization follow the A.O.U. Checklist of North American Birds, 7th Edition, 1998 and current supplements.

Legend

 $\begin{array}{ll} S-March-May & F-September-November \\ s-June-August & W-December-February \end{array}$

A – Average spring arrival date

a – abundant
 b – common
 u – uncommon
 o – occasional
 r – rare
 x – accidental
 A species which is very numerous.
 Certain to be seen in suitable habitat.
 Present, but not certain to be seen.
 Seen only a few times a year.
 Seen at intervals of 2-5 years.
 Has been seen only once or twice.

**Breeds *Probably breeds

Species denoted by **boldface type** have not been observed on Fort McCoy, but within a 10-mile radius of the installation's boundaries.

Fort McCoy is an excellent example of how wildlife and daily military training can co-exist.

	S	s	F	W	Α	Charadriidae (Plovers)					
Gaviidae (Loons)						Semipalmated Plover	0		0		5-May
Common Loon**	u	u	0		5-Apr	Black-bellied Plover	С	С	С		20-Mar
Podicipedidae (Grebes)						American Golden-Plover	r		r		25-Apr
Horned Grebe	0		0		10-Apr	Killdeer**	С	С	С		20-Mar
Red-necked Grebe	Х		Х			Scolopacidae (Sandpipers, Phalaropes, A	llies)				
Pied-billed Grebe**	u	u	u		20-Mar	Greater Yellowlegs	u		u		15-Apr
Pelecanidae (Pelicans)						Lesser Yellowlegs	u		u		20-Apr
American White Pelican	х					Solitary Sandpiper	u		u		25-Apr
Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants)						Willet	х				
Double-crested Cormorant	0		0		15-Apr	Spotted Sandpiper**	u	0	0		25-Apr
Ardeidae (Bitterns, Herons, and Egrets)						Upland Sandpiper**	u	С	0		20-Apr
American Bittern*	r	r				Hudsonian Godwit	0				
Least Bittern*						Marbled Godwit	r				
Great Blue Heron**	С	С	С	r	25-Mar	Ruddy Turnstone	r				
Great Egret		r	r			Sanderling	0		0		25-Apr
Little Blue Heron	х					Semipalmated Sandpiper	u		u		10-May
Cattle Egret	х					Western Sandpiper			0	r	•
Green Heron**	С	С	u		25-Apr	Least Sandpiper	u		u		5-May
Black-crowned Night-Heron**	u	u			20-Apr	White-rumped Sandpiper	0		r		10-May
Gruidae (Cranes)					•	Baird's Sandpiper	0		r		15-May
Sandhill Crane**	u	u	u		20-Mar	Pectoral Sandpiper	u		0		20-Apr
Anatidae (Swans, Geese, Ducks)	~	-	~		_0	Dunlin	0		0		25-Apr
Greater White-fronted Goose	х		х			Stilt Sandpiper			r		_0 p.
Snow Goose	u		u		20-Mar	Short-billed Dowitcher	0		•		
Canada Goose**	С	r	u	r	15-Mar	Long-billed Dowitcher	х				
Mute Swan	0		u	•	10 Mai	Common Snipe**	c	С	С	0	30-Mar
Trumpeter Swan	Х					American Woodcock**	С	С	С	O	30-Mar
Tumpeter Swan	r		r	0	20-Mar	Wilson's Phalarope	0	U	C		30 Iviai
Wood Duck**	C	С	C	U	20-Mar	Laridae (Gulls, Terns)	U				
Gadwall		C			20-Mar	Franklin's Gull			v		
American Wigeon	u		u 		20-Mar		•		Х		1 Mov
<u>•</u>	С		u			Bonaparte's Gull	0	r 			1-May 25-Mar
American Black Duck Mallard**	0	_	0	_	20-Mar	Ring-billed Gull	u 	u	u		
	C	C	С	0	20-Mar	Herring Gull	u	0	0		20-Mar
Blue-winged Teal**	u 	u	0		10-Apr	Glaucous Gull				Х	45 0
Northern Shoveler	u		u		20-Mar	Caspian Tern	0		0		15-Apr
Northern Pintail	u		u		25-Mar	Common Tern	0	r			25-Apr
Green-winged Teal	0		0		20-Mar	Forster's Tern	0	r			15-Apr
Canvasback	u		u		25-Mar	Black Tern	0	0			5-May
Redhead	u		u		10-Mar	Cathartidae (New World Vultures)					
Ring-necked Duck*	u	r	u		20-Mar	Turkey Vulture**	u	u	u		10-Apr
Greater Scaup	Х					Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, Allies)					
Lesser Scaup	С		С		20-Mar	Bald Eagle**	0	0	0	0	
Bufflehead	u		u		15-Mar	Northern Harrier**	u	u	u		25-Mar
Common Goldeneye	u		u		15-Mar	Sharp-shinned Hawk	u	u	u	r	10-Apr
Hooded Merganser**	С	u	u		20-Mar	Cooper's Hawk**	u	u	u	0	10-Apr
Common Merganser	0		0		20-Mar	Northern Goshawk	r		r	0	
Red-breasted Merganser	r				25-Mar	Red-shouldered Hawk**	u	u	u		25-Mar
Ruddy Duck	u		u		10-Apr	Broad-winged Hawk**	С	u	С		25-Apr
Rallidae (Rails, Coots, Gallinules)						Red-tailed Hawk**	С	С	С	С	
King Rail					20-Apr	Rough-legged Hawk	0		0	С	
Virginia Rail					20-Apr	Golden Eagle	0		0	u	
Sora**	u	u	u		15-Apr	Osprey**	С	С	u		10-Apr
Common Moorhen						Falconidae (Falcons)					
American Coot	u		u		25-Mar	American Kestrel**	С	С	С	0	15-Mar
Recurvirostridae (Stilts)						Merlin	r		r		10-Apr
Avocet	X					Peregrine Falcon	r		r		10-Apr

Gyrfalcon				х		Purple Martin**	u	u	0		20-Apr
Phasianidae Partridges, Grouse, Turkeys	, Quail)					Tree Swallow**	а	а	С		1-Apr
Ring-necked Pheasant*	r	r	r	r		Northern Rough-winged Swallow**	u	u	u		10-Apr
Ruffed Grouse**	С	С	С	С		Bank Swallow**	u	u			20-Apr
Wild Turkey**	С	С	С	С		Cliff Swallow**	С	С	u		15-Apr
Northern Bobwhite	u	u	u	u		Barn Swallow**	а	а	a		15-Apr
Gray Partridge*	u	u	ŭ	x		Corvidae (Jays, Crows)	u	u	u		10 / (p)
Gray Fartriage				^		Blue Jay**	а	а	а	а	
						American Crow**					
Columbidae (Biggons, Doyne)						Common Raven**	a	a	a	a	
Columbidae (Pigeons, Doves)		_	_	_			0	С	0	0	
Rock Pigeon**	С	С	С	С		Paridae (Titmice, Chickadees)					
Mourning Dove**	С	С	С	0		Black-capped Chickadee**	C	C	С	С	
Cuculidae (Cuckoos)					05 M	Tufted Titmouse	r	r			
Yellow-billed Cuckoo**	u	u	0		25-May	Certhiidae (Creepers)					4.4
Black-billed Cuckoo**	С	С	u		20-May	Brown Creeper	u	u	u	r	1-Apr
Strigidae (Owls)						Sittidae (Nuthatches)					
Eastern Screech Owl**	u	u	u	u		Red-breasted Nuthatch	0	u	0	r	
Great Horned Owl**	С	С	С	С		White-breasted Nuthatch**	С	С	С	С	
Snowy Owl	Χ			Х		Troglodytidae (Wrens)					
Barred Owl**	С	С	С	С		House Wren**	С	С	С		20-Apr
Great Gray Owl				Χ		Winter Wren	u		u		15-Apr
Long-eared Owl	Χ					Bewick's Wren	Х	Χ			
Short-eared Owl	r		r	r		Sedge Wren	u	u	u		10-May
Northern Saw-whet Owl**	r	r	r	r		Marsh Wren*	С	u	С		10-May
Caprimulgidae (Nightjars, Goatsuckers)						Regulidae (Kinglets)					
Common Nighthawk**	С	С	С		15-May	Golden-crowned Kinglet	u		u	0	1-Apr
Whip-poor-will**	u	u	С		5-May	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	С		С		5-Apr
Apodidae (Swifts)						Sylviidae (Gnatcatchers)					
Chimney Swift**	С	С	С		25-Apr	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**	u	С	0		1-May
Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)					•	Turdidae (Thrushes)					•
Ruby-throated Hummingbird**	u	С	u		5-May	Eastern Bluebird**	С	С	С		30-Mar
Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)					,	Veery**	u	u	С		10-May
Belted Kingfisher**	С	С	С	r	10-Apr	Gray-cheeked Thrush	0		0		10-May
Picidae (Woodpeckers)						Swainson's Thrush	С		С		10-May
Red-headed Woodpecker**	u	С	С	u		Hermit Thrush	u		u		15-Apr
Red-bellied Woodpecker**	u	u	u	u		Wood Thrush**	u	u	0		1-May
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	u	u	u	r	10-Apr	American Robin**	a	а	а	r	20-Mar
Downy Woodpecker**	С	С	С	c	10 7 (p)	Varied Thrush	ŭ	u	u	x	20 Mai
Hairy Woodpecker**	С	С	С	С		Laniidae (Shrikes)				^	
Northern Flicker**	С		С	r	1-Apr	Loggerhead Shrike		r			
Pileated Woodpecker**	u	c u			1-дрі	Northern Shrike	u	'	u		
	u	u	u	u			u		u	u	
Tyrannidae (Flycatchers) Olive-sided Flycatcher			_		15 Mov	Mimidae (Mockingbirds, Thrashers)		_	_		20 1 2 2
·	0	_	r 		15-May	Gray Catbird**	С	С	С		20-Apr
Eastern Wood-Pewee**	С	С	u		15-May	Brown Thrasher**	С	С	С		20-Apr
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	u		u		15-May	Northern Mockingbird		r			
Acadian Flycatcher	0	0	0		10-May	Motacillidae (Pipits)					
Alder Flycatcher*	u	u	u		15-May	American Pipit	0		0		
Willow Flycatcher*	u	r	0		5-May	Bombycillidae (Waxwings)					
Least Flycatcher**	С	С	u		5-May	Bohemian Waxwing				r	
Eastern Phoebe**	С	С	С		10-Apr	Cedar Waxwing**	С	С	С	r	20-May
Great Crested Flycatcher**	С	С	С		5-May	Sturnidae (Starlings)					
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	Х					European Starling**	u	u	u	u	
Western Kingbird		х				Vireonidae (Vireos)					
Eastern Kingbird**	С	С	С		1-May	Bell's Vireo	Х				
Alaudidae (Larks)						Yellow-throated Vireo**	u	u	u		5-May
Horned Lark**	С	С	С	u		Warbling Vireo**	u	u	0		5-May
Hirundinidae (Swallows)						Philadelphia Vireo	r		r		10-May
											-

Red-eyed Vireo**	30-Apr
Parulidae (Wood-Warblers)	
Blue-winged Warbler**	
Golden-winged Warbler**	
Tennessee Warbler	
Orange-crowned Warbler u u u 10-May Rose-breasted Grosbeak** c <	
Nashville Warbler**	
	5-May
Yellow Warbler**	
Chestnut-sided Warbler** u c u 10-May lcteridae (Blackbirds) Magnolia Warbler c u 10-May Bobolink*** u o Cape May Warbler u o 10-May Red-winged Blackbird* c c c c Yellow-rumped Warbler** c o u 15-Apr Eastern Meadowlark** u c u Black-throated Green Warbler u o u 15-May Western Meadowlark** o o u Blackburnian Warbler o o o o 15-May Yellow-headed Blackbird o Pine Warbler** u u u u 25-Apr Rusty Blackbird u u u Kirtland's Warbler x Brewer's Blackbird* r r r r Parulidae (Wood-Warblers) (continued) Palm Warbler c c c 10-May Brown-headed Cowbird** a c c Bay-breasted Warbler u u u 15-May Orchard Oriole o u r Blackpoll Warbler u u u 5-May Passeridae (Old World Sparrows) Black-and-white Warbler* u u u 5-May Fringillidae (Finches) Prothonotary Warbler o o o o Pine Grosbeak r r r	5-May
Magnolia Warbler	20-May
Cape May Warbler u o 10-May Red-winged Blackbird* c c c c C Yellow-rumped Warbler** c o u 15-Apr Eastern Meadowlark** u c u c u Black-throated Green Warbler u o u 15-May Western Meadowlark** o o u Blackburnian Warbler o o o o 15-May Yellow-headed Blackbird o Pine Warbler** u u u u 25-Apr Rusty Blackbird u u u u Kirtland's Warbler x Raty Blackbird* r r r r Parulidae (Wood-Warblers) (continued) Common Grackle** u u u u U Palm Warbler c c c 10-May Brown-headed Cowbird** a c c c Bay-breasted Warbler u u u 15-May Orchard Oriole o u r Blackpoll Warbler u u u 10-May Baltimore Oriole** a c c C Cerulean Warbler* u u u 5-May Passeridae (Old World Sparrows) Black-and-white Warbler* u u u 5-May Fringillidae (Finches) Prothonotary Warbler o o o o Prothonotary Warbler o o o o Prothonotary Warbler o o o o Pine Grosbeak r r r	
Yellow-rumped Warbler**	10-May
Black-throated Green Warbler u o u 15-May Western Meadowlark** o o u Blackburnian Warbler o o o 15-May Yellow-headed Blackbird o Fine Warbler** u u u u 25-Apr Rusty Blackbird u u u u u U Warbler** r r r r Parulidae (Wood-Warblers) (continued) — Palm Warbler c c c 10-May Brown-headed Cowbird** u u u U Warbler w u u u 15-May Orchard Oriole o u r Blackpoll Warbler u u u 15-May Draseridae (Old World Sparrows) — Black-and-white Warbler* u u u u 5-May House Sparrow** c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c	20-Mar
Blackburnian Warbler	30-Mar
Pine Warbler** Light Warbler warbler with w	30-Mar
Kirtland's Warbler Mirtland's Warbler Parulidae (Wood-Warblers) (continued) Palm Warbler Common Grackle** Brown-headed Cowbird** Brown-headed Cowbird** Brown-headed Cowbird** Coulong Grackle** Droknard Oriole Droknard Oriole<	5-May
Parulidae (Wood-Warblers) (continued) Palm Warbler C Bay-breasted Warbler U U 15-May Brown-headed Cowbird** C Blackpoll Warbler U U 10-May Baltimore Oriole** Cerulean Warbler* U U 10-May Passeridae (Old World Sparrows) Black-and-white Warbler** U U U 5-May Fringillidae (Finches) Prothonotary Warbler C Common Grackle** U U U U T Common Grackle** U U U C T Fringillidae (Finches) Pine Grosbeak C C Common Grackle** U U U U U U U U U U U U	20-Mar
Palm Warbler c c c 10-May Brown-headed Cowbird** a c c Bay-breasted Warbler u u 15-May Orchard Oriole o u r Blackpoll Warbler u u 10-May Baltimore Oriole** a c c Cerulean Warbler* u u u 5-May Passeridae (Old World Sparrows) Black-and-white Warbler** u u u 5-May House Sparrow** c c c c c American Redstart** c u u 5-May Fringillidae (Finches) Prothonotary Warbler o o o o Pine Grosbeak r r r	20-Apr
Bay-breasted Warbler u u 15-May Orchard Oriole o u r Blackpoll Warbler u u 10-May Baltimore Oriole** a c c Cerulean Warbler* u u u 10-May Passeridae (Old World Sparrows) Black-and-white Warbler** u u u u 5-May House Sparrow** c c c c c American Redstart** c u u 5-May Fringillidae (Finches) Prothonotary Warbler o o o o Pine Grosbeak r r r	20-Mar
Bay-breasted Warbler u u 15-May Orchard Oriole o u r Blackpoll Warbler u u 10-May Baltimore Oriole** a c c Cerulean Warbler* u u u 10-May Passeridae (Old World Sparrows) Black-and-white Warbler** u u u u 5-May House Sparrow** c c c c c American Redstart** c u u 5-May Fringillidae (Finches) Prothonotary Warbler o o o o Pine Grosbeak r r r	10-Apr
Blackpoll Warbler u u 10-May Baltimore Oriole** a c c Cerulean Warbler* u o 10-May Passeridae (Old World Sparrows) Black-and-white Warbler** u u u 5-May House Sparrow** c c c c American Redstart** c u u 5-May Fringillidae (Finches) Prothonotary Warbler o o o o Pine Grosbeak r r	10-May
Cerulean Warbler* u o 10-May Passeridae (Old World Sparrows) Black-and-white Warbler** u u u 5-May House Sparrow** c c c c American Redstart** c u u 5-May Fringillidae (Finches) Prothonotary Warbler o o o Pine Grosbeak r r	1-May
Black-and-white Warbler** u u u 5-May House Sparrow** c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c	,
American Redstart** c u u 5-May Fringillidae (Finches) Prothonotary Warbler o o o Pine Grosbeak r r	
Prothonotary Warbler o o o Pine Grosbeak r r	
<u> </u>	
Northern Waterthrush u u 5-May House Finch** u u u u	
,	
	
Kentucky Warbler x White-winged Crossbill r r r r	
Connecticut Warbler o o 15-May Common Redpoll u u u	
Mourning Warbler** u u u 15-May Hoary Redpoll x	
Common Yellowthroat**	
Wilson's Warbler c c 10-May American Goldfinch** c c c c	
Hooded Warbler** o o Evening Grosbeak u u u u	
Canada Warbler u o u 15-May Yellow-breasted Chat x The first edition of this checklist was compiled and de	signed in
1903 by Major Dannis R. Kuacharar (Pat) Major Ku	
stationed at Fort McCov for a period of three years as	
Scarlet Tanager** c c u 5-May installation Provost Marshall.	the
Emberizidae (Sparrows, Allies)	
Eastern Towhee** c c c 20-Apr An avid birder, he conducted numerous surveys and n	aintained
American Tree Sparrow c c c c careful observations and field notes. After retirement	
Chipping Sparrow** c c c 20-Apr Major Kuecherer conducted extensive migratory and l	reeding bird
Clay-colored Sparrow** u u u 5-May surveys in accordance with federal training area land	nanagement
Field Sparrow** a a c 5-Apr programs.	
Vesper Sparrow** a a c 5-Apr	
Lark Sparrow** u u 20-May This list was greatly enhanced by records and field no	
Savanna Sparrow** compiled over the years by Fort McCoy's fish and wil	
Grassbopper Sparrow** personnel from the Natural Resources Branch and the	Range and
— Glasshopper Sparrow C C u T-May Training Lands Assessment Program. — Henslow's Sparrow r r 5-May	
Le Conte's Sparrow r r 10-May The original checklist was reviewed and edited by Mr	Fric Enetein
Fox Sparrow u u 5-Apr from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	
Song Sparrow** a a a 25-Mar biologists and Mr. Eric Wood, a graduate researcher, in	
	criewed the
Illustration of greechanner anarrows were drawn by Cuc	* 7
Range and Training Lands Assessment Coordinator at	an vos,
Harris' Sparrow r r	

Access to the Fort McCoy Training Areas is restricted due to military training requirements and resulting safety concerns. Groups wishing to inquire about birdwatching opportunities on Fort McCoy must contact the Public Affairs Office at (608) 388-2407. Birdwatching is allowed in the two Fort McCoy Outdoor Recreation Areas: Pine View Recreation Area and Whitetail Ridge Recreation Area.

Please send any comments, corrections, and new observations (especially nesting notes) to the Natural Resources Branch to ensure accuracy in future revisions.

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The Natural Resources Branch under the Directorate of Public Works provides all land management for soils, forests, plant species, fish, and wildlife.