



Birds of East Park Reservoir

The East Park Reservoir was originally constructed between 1871 and 1889. Since that time, the reservoir has operated as a water storage facility, providing fresh drinking water to homes and businesses in Center City and South Philadelphia. Water stored in the reservoir is initially cleaned at Philadelphia Water treatment plants and is then pumped up to the reservoir for storage.

There are four water storage basins in the East Park Reservoir. The West Basin, by far the largest of the four, is a 40-acre storage basin and has not been used for water storage since sometime during the early or mid 20th century. Because the West Basin was never drained after being decommissioned, it gradually became a wild lake inhabited by fish and aquatic plants. Isolated and protected within the reservoir, with no water inflow, the West Basin is filled only from rainfall and snow. As a result, the West Basin is a relatively clean body of water that lacks the pollution and silt that plague our local rivers, streams, and wetlands.

Many species of water birds are attracted to the relatively clear and unpolluted water that harbors fish and aquatic plants, important food for the water birds. Dabbling ducks, like mallards and wood ducks, eat aquatic plants, insects and roots found just below the water's surface and feed by floating and eating food they can reach with their bills. Diving waterfowl, like canvasback ducks and mergansers, dive deep beneath the water's surface to capture fish and aquatic plants, and are particularly attracted to the West Basin. These diving waterfowl also include loons, grebes, coots, cormorants, and several other species of diving ducks. Other species, such as herons and kingfishers, look for fish along the edges of the West Basin. Fish eating raptors such as Ospreys and Bald Eagles occasionally visit the basin to snatch fish from the water's surface. Canada Geese, gulls and other water birds that do not dive for their food also visit the West Basin mainly to loaf on its waters.

The water birds described above use the West Basin mainly during autumn, winter and spring. Most of these are migratory species that spend the winter here and leave to breed in Canada or the northern U.S. during the summer. In addition, a number of species of land birds--from hawks to swallows--use the woodlands bordering the West Basin. Some of these birds are found in the area throughout the year while others only occur during specific times of the year (in winter, summer, spring, or autumn).

Bird Checklist

1. Canada Goose
2. Wood Duck
3. Gadwall
4. American Wigeon
5. American Black Duck
6. Mallard
7. Northern Shoveler
8. Green-winged Teal
9. Canvasback
10. Redhead
11. Ring-necked Duck
12. Greater Scaup
13. Lesser Scaup
14. Long-tailed Duck
15. Bufflehead
16. Common Goldeneye
17. Hooded Merganser
18. Common Merganser
19. Red-breasted Merganser
20. Ruddy Duck
21. Red-throated Loon
22. Common Loon
23. Pied-billed Grebe
24. Horned Grebe
25. Red-necked Grebe
26. Double-crested Cormorant
27. Great Cormorant
28. American Bittern
29. Great Blue Heron
30. Green Heron
31. Black-crowned Night-Heron
32. Black Vulture
33. Turkey Vulture
34. Osprey
35. Bald Eagle
36. Northern Harrier
37. Sharp-shinned Hawk
38. Cooper's Hawk
39. Red-shouldered Hawk
40. Broad-winged Hawk
41. Red-tailed Hawk
42. American Kestrel
43. Merlin
44. Peregrine Falcon
45. American Coot
46. Killdeer
47. Spotted Sandpiper
48. Solitary Sandpiper
49. Greater Yellowlegs
50. Lesser Yellowlegs
51. Semipalmated Sandpiper
52. Least Sandpiper
53. American Woodcock
54. Ring-billed Gull
55. Herring Gull
56. Great Black-backed Gull
57. Rock Pigeon
58. Mourning Dove
59. Yellow-billed Cuckoo
60. Black-billed Cuckoo
61. Eastern Screech-Owl
62. Great Horned Owl
63. Common Nighthawk
64. Chimney Swift
65. Ruby-throated Hummingbird
66. Belted Kingfisher
67. Red-bellied Woodpecker
68. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
69. Downy Woodpecker
70. Hairy Woodpecker
71. Northern Flicker
72. Olive-sided Flycatcher
73. Eastern Wood Pewee
74. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
75. Acadian Flycatcher
76. Willow Flycatcher
77. Least Flycatcher
78. Eastern Phoebe
79. Great Crested Flycatcher
80. Eastern Kingbird
81. White-eyed Vireo
82. Yellow-throated Vireo
83. Blue-headed Vireo
84. Warbling Vireo
85. Philadelphia Vireo
86. Red-eyed Vireo
87. Blue Jay
88. American Crow
89. Fish Crow
90. Purple Martin
91. Tree Swallow
92. Northern Rough-winged Swallow
93. Bank Swallow
94. Cliff Swallow
95. Barn Swallow
96. Carolina Chickadee
97. Black-capped Chickadee
98. Tufted Titmouse
99. Red-breasted Nuthatch
100. White-breasted Nuthatch
101. Brown Creeper
102. Carolina Wren
103. House Wren
104. Winter Wren
105. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
106. Golden-crowned Kinglet
107. Ruby-crowned Kinglet
108. Eastern Bluebird
109. Veery
110. Gray-cheeked Thrush
111. Swainson's Thrush
112. Hermit Thrush
113. Wood Thrush
114. American Robin
115. Gray Catbird
116. Northern Mockingbird
117. Brown Thrasher
118. European Starling
119. Cedar Waxwing
120. Ovenbird
121. Worm-eating Warbler
122. Northern Waterthrush
123. Blue-winged Warbler
124. Black-and-white Warbler
125. Prothonotary Warbler
126. Tennessee Warbler
127. Nashville Warbler
128. Connecticut Warbler
129. Mourning Warbler
130. Common Yellowthroat
131. Hooded Warbler
132. American Redstart

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| 133. Cape May Warbler | 148. Black-throated Green Warbler | 163. Scarlet Tanager |
| 134. Cerulean Warbler | 149. Canada Warbler | 164. Northern Cardinal |
| 135. Northern Parula | 150. Wilson's Warbler | 165. Rose-breasted Grosbeak |
| 136. Magnolia Warbler | 151. Eastern Towhee | 166. Indigo Bunting |
| 137. Bay-breasted Warbler | 152. American Tree Sparrow | 167. Bobolink |
| 138. Blackburnian Warbler | 153. Chipping Sparrow | 168. Red-winged Blackbird |
| 139. Yellow Warbler | 154. Field Sparrow | 169. Rusty Blackbird |
| 140. Chestnut-sided Warbler | 155. Nelson's Sparrow | 170. Common Grackle |
| 141. Blackpoll Warbler | 156. Fox Sparrow | 171. Brown-headed Cowbird |
| 142. Black-throated Blue Warbler | 157. Song Sparrow | 172. Orchard Oriole |
| 143. Palm Warbler | 158. Lincoln's Sparrow | 173. Baltimore Oriole |
| 144. Pine Warbler | 159. Swamp Sparrow | 174. Purple Finch |
| 145. Yellow-rumped Warbler | 160. White-throated Sparrow | 175. House Finch |
| 146. Yellow-throated Warbler | 161. White-crowned Sparrow | 176. Pine Siskin |
| 147. Prairie Warbler | 162. Dark-eyed Junco | 177. American Goldfinch |
| | | 178. House Sparrow |



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