New York City is for the birds. Birding by the season. From Central Park to Jamaica Bay, New York City boasts some of the best birding in the United States. Over 350 species are recorded in the five boroughs. Whether you are near the City or beyond, the birding opportunities are vast and varied. For more information, visit www.nycaudubon.org.
From Central Park to Jamaica Bay, New York City boasts some of the very best birding in the United States: over 350 species have been recorded in the five boroughs. The City owes this rich birdlife to a lucky confluence of location and habitat. Situated at a pivotal point along the Atlantic Flyway, it is a major migratory stopover. Many species also stay to breed or spend the winter in the City’s diverse landscape of forest, marsh, grasslands, and shoreline. Many of these prime birding spots are just a subway or bus ride away. Let’s get birding on the MTA!

**BIRDING TIPS**

- **Bird in the early morning or late afternoon, particularly in spring when songbirds are actively singing.**
- **Bring the right gear.** Binoculars are great for songbirds, but a spotting scope is key when observing shorebirds or waterfowl.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

- **NYC Bird Alliance’s online guide**
  - [www.nycbirdalliance.org/go/birding](http://www.nycbirdalliance.org/go/birding)


**SPRING**

- **Migrating songbirds in Central, Prospect, Forest, Clove Lakes, Van Cortlandt, and other City parks.** Migrating shorebirds at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge.

**SUMMER**

- **Red-tailed Hawks and Peregrine Falcons throughout the City.** Beach-nesting birds on Rockaway beaches and breeding songbirds and waterbirds at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Inwood Hill Park, and Staten Island parks. In late summer, migrating shorebirds at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge.

**WINTER**

- **Waterfowl at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Pelham Bay Park, Fort Tilden, and park lakes and reservoirs.** Snowy Owls at Floyd Bennett Field and Freshkills Park, and Bald Eagles on Hudson River ice floes near Inwood Hill Park.

**FALL**

- **Migrating songbirds in Central, Prospect, Forest, Conference House, Van Cortlandt, and other City parks.** Migrating raptors at Fort Tilden and the Staten Island Greenbelt.
1. CENTRAL PARK, MANHATTAN (SpFW)
72nd St., 103rd St.
Manhattan’s 843-acre centerpiece is a magnet for spring and fall migrants, making it one of the best birding spots in the United States. When shifting weather patterns cause a migrant “fall-out,” the density of songbirds is what birders dream of.
WHERE TO GO: Enter at 72nd Street to Strawberry Fields and bird to the Lake and Ramble, or at 103rd Street and explore the Great Hill and North Woods. Visit the Reservoir for wintering waterfowl.
BIRDS TO SEE: songbirds, wading birds, waterfowl, and raptors.

2. JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE, QUEENS (SpSuFW)
BROAD CHANNEL, D13-B61, Q15 Bus
Part of Gateway National Recreation Area, the refuge covers 8,000 acres of open bay, salt marsh, mudflats, ponds, fields, and woods. Over 300 species have been recorded in the bay, world-renowned for its shorebird migration.
WHERE TO GO: Walk north about three-quarters of a mile (or take the Q52 or Q53 bus) to the Visitor Center. Explore the East and West Ponds and the forested paths of the North and South Gardens.
BIRDS TO SEE: shorebirds, waterfowl, wading birds, marsh birds, songbirds, and raptors.

3. PROSPECT PARK/ BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN (SpFW)
• Prospect Park or Grand Army Plaza
• Eastern Parkway-Brooklyn Museum or Prospect Park
With 526 acres of woods, meadows, and bodies of water, Prospect Park offers a striking diversity of bird habitat. On peak spring days, nearly 100 species have been spotted here. The nearby Brooklyn Botanic Garden offers excellent birding as well.
WHERE TO GO: Enter at Eastern Parkway or Prospect Park and explore the “Waterhole,” a migratory stopover, as well as the Little Gullry, Gullflats, and Woodcocks. Bird with a friend; it’s easy to get lost.
BIRDS TO SEE: songbirds, raptors, waterfowl, wading birds, shorebirds, marsh birds, and seabirds.

4. VAN CORTLANDT PARK, BRONX (SpF)
Van Cortlandt Park-242nd St.
Over half of this accessible park’s 1,146 acres offer excellent bird habitat, including deciduous forests, meadows, wetlands, and a constructed lake. Over 60 species breed here.
WHERE TO GO: Enter at West 242nd Street and explore the Putnam Trail, John Vassar Nature Trail, Van Cortlandt Lake, Tibbett Brook, and nearby freshwater wetlands.
BIRDS TO SEE: songbirds, wading birds, waterfowl, and raptors.

5. THE AMUDSEN TRAIL: GREAT KILLS PARK AND THE GREENBELT, STATEN ISLAND (SpF)
SIR Oakwood Heights
Walk two blocks to the Amundsen Trail (White Trail), which connects High Rock Park and the Staten Island Greenbelt to the north with Gateway National Recreation Area’s 1,250-acre Great Kills Park to the south.
WHERE TO GO: Hike south to visit the beaches, marsh trails, mudflats, and woodland of Great Kills Park (Crooker’s Point is particularly productive)—or northwards toward the wooded trails of High Rock Park and visit the Greenbelt Nature Center.
BIRDS TO SEE: songbirds, raptors, waterfowl, wading birds, shorebirds, marsh birds, and seabirds.

6. FOREST PARK, QUEENS (SpF)
Kew Gardens-Union Turnpike, Q37 Bus
This forested eastern end of this 538-acre park is a songbird migration hotspot; the park’s “knob and kettle” terrain, a leftover from the last ice age, hosts magnificent oak and pine groves.
WHERE TO GO: From the subway, walk or take the Q37 bus to enter Metropolitan Avenue and Forest Park One. Explore the “Waterhole,” a migratory stopover, as well as the Litle Gullry, Gullflats, and Woodcocks. Bird with a friend; it’s easy to get lost.
BIRDS TO SEE: songbirds and raptors.

7. PELHAM BAY PARK, BRONX (SpFW)
Pelham Bay Park
At 2,356 acres, this remote and wild New York City Park includes open water, salt marsh, rocky shore, old- and new-growth forest, shrubland, rare coastal tall-grass meadows, and dry and wet oak savannas.
WHERE TO GO: The most accessible part is the southern zone. Cross the walkway over I-895 and turn left into the park to reach the Pelham Bay Nature Center and explore Huntington Woods, wet meadows, and the waterfront. A visit to Hunter and Twin Islands in the beautiful and rugged northern part of the park is also well worth the effort.
BIRDS TO SEE: songbirds, raptors, waterfowl, wading birds, shorebirds, marsh birds, and seabirds.

8. CLOVE LAKES PARK, STATEN ISLAND (SpF)
From St. George Ferry Terminal: 6416 Bus Victory Blvd. & Clove Rd 541 Clove Forest Ave.
Over half of this 196-acre park is made up of hilly woodlands, ponds, and streams, and is known on Staten Island as the place to see waterfowl and other neotropical migrants, particularly in spring.
WHERE TO GO: Start at Martling Avenue and explore the wooded paths along the stream that runs between Brooks, Marlinton, and Clove Lakes. A pair of Great Blue Herons has nested in recent years next to the Martling Avenue Bridge.
BIRDS TO SEE: songbirds, waterfowl, wading birds, and raptors.

9. INWOOD HILL PARK, MANHATTAN (SpF)
BEDFORD PARK BLVD. OR 218TH STREET
This 25-acre preserve, home to resident Wood Ducks and Great Horned Owls, comprises gardens, ponds, woodland areas, a 40-acre old-growth forest, and a steep section of the Bronx River.
WHERE TO GO: Exit onto one block (or take the B28 bus) and enter at the Morrisania Gate to explore the Twin Lakes area and forest trail; cross Heather Bridge to reach the River Trail.
BIRDS TO SEE: songbirds, wading birds, and raptors.

10. THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN, BRONX (SpF)
Bedford Park Blvd., B26 Bus
This 250-acre preserve, home to resident Wood Ducks and Great Horned Owls, comprises gardens, ponds, woodland areas, a 40-acre old-growth forest, and a steep section of the Bronx River.
WHERE TO GO: Exit onto one block (or take the B28 bus) and enter at the Morrisania Gate to explore the Twin Lakes area and forest trail; cross Heather Bridge to reach the River Trail.
BIRDS TO SEE: songbirds, wading birds, and raptors.

Find more details at www.nycbirdingalliance.org/going-birding

Sp: spring  Su: summer  F: fall  W: winter