

Bird Families seen in and around The Villages



The Village Birders

Keep Looking Up

Presented by Gary Babic

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What are Bird Families?

- Birds are typically described by their unique species and genus names
- Northern Cardinal is *Cardinalis cardinalis*



But there are also bird families

Next higher level up in classification

Birds that are similar

Appearance, behavior, DNA

Northern Mockingbird and Gray Catbird are in the same family, *Mimidae*:



Wide range of families

- Some families have a single member! These are called “monotypic”. Three of these families have been seen in The Villages.
- So unusual they have no near relatives
- Other families are large – the largest is Tyrant Flycatchers with over 400 family members!
- Worldwide there are currently 238 bird families
- And here in The Villages area we have 55 different families!
- And we're going to (quickly) describe them all!

Some background

- Most pictures are from Cornell's All About Birds web site
- All of the birds have been seen in The Villages or on on Village Birders field trips
- Alice will summarize some of the trips to whet your appetites to join us



“Our” 55 bird families

- 40 that are easily seen, easy to identify. If you keep your eyes open and go on bird walks, you are likely to see them in The Villages
- 4 that are not so easily seen or identified
- 8 that can only be seen outside The Villages
- Also, 12 which have special members that are seen on trips outside The Villages – Alice will talk about where to see them!
- Lastly, our 3 monotypic family members

40 Easy to see / identify

- *Ducks, Geese and Waterfowl* – Canada Goose
- *Pheasants and Grouse* – Wild Turkey
- *Grebes* – Pied-billed Grebe
- *Pigeons and Doves* – Mourning Dove
- *Nightjars and Allies* – Common Nighthawk
- *Hummingbirds* – Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- *Rails, Gallinules and Coots* – American Coot
- *Cranes* – Sandhill Crane

40 Easy to see / identify

- *Stilts and Avocets* – Black-necked Stilt
- *Plovers and Lapwings* – Killdeer
- *Sandpipers and Allies* – Least Sandpiper
- *Gulls, Terns and Skimmers* – Ring-billed Gull
- *Storks* – Wood Stork
- *Anhinga and Cormorants* – Anhinga
- *Pelicans* - White Pelican
- *Hérons, Egrets and Bitterns* – Great Blue Heron

40 Easy to see / identify

- *Ibis and Spoonbills* – White Ibis
- *New World Vultures* – Turkey Vulture
- *Hawks, Eagles and Kites* – Bald Eagle
- *Owls* – Great Horned Owl
- *Kingfishers* – Belted Kingfisher
- *Woodpeckers* – Red-bellied Woodpecker
- *Falcons and Caracaras* – American Kestrel
- *Tyrant Flycatchers* – Eastern Kingbird

40 Easy to see / identify

- *Shrikes* – Loggerhead Shrike
- *Vireos* – Blue-headed Vireo
- *Tits and Chickadees* – Tufted Titmouse
- *Crows, Jays and Magpies* - Blue Jay
- *Gnatcatchers* – Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher
- *Wrens* – Carolina Wren
- *Starlings* – European Starling
- *Swallows* – Tree Swallow

40 Easy to See / identify

- *Mockingbirds and Thrashers* – E. Mockingbird
- *Waxwings* – Cedar Waxwing
- *Old World Sparrows* – House Sparrow
- *Finches* – House Finch
- *New World Sparrows* – Savannah Sparrow
- *Troupials and Allies* – Eastern Meadowlark
- *New World Warblers* – Palm Warbler
- *Cardinals* – Northern Cardinal

4 that are hard to see/identify

- *New World Quails* - Northern Bobwhite
- Likes grassy fields, seldom comes into the open
- Distinctive call
- Lake Pan in morning



4 that are hard to see/identify

- *Swifts* – Chimney Swift
- Summer visitor
- Does not perch, instead clings
- Usually seen in flight
- Looks a bit like a swallow but flight is different



4 that are hard to see/identify

- *Kinglets* – Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- Small, active bird in trees and shrubs
- Often with other species
- Crown seldom evident



Photo: Barb Peterson

4 that are hard to see/identify

- *Wagtails and Pipits* – American Pipit
- Winter visitor, feeds in grasslands, usually in small groups
- Like a sparrow but larger and more upright



8 families only seen outside The Villages

- *Oystercatchers* – American Oystercatcher
- Shorebird
- Often in groups



8 families only seen outside The Villages

- *Loons* - Common Loon
- Winter visitor
- Mostly along coasts
- Also inland lakes



8 families only seen outside The Villages

- *Frigatebirds* – Magnificent Frigatebird
- Winter visitor
- Steals fish from other birds



8 families only seen outside The Villages

- *Flamingos* – American Flamingo
- Now considered resident in Everglades
- Hurricane visitor



8 families only seen outside The Villages

- *Cuckoos* - Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- Summer visitor
- Uncommon in wooded areas
- Does not sound like a cuckoo clock!



8 families only seen outside The Villages

- *Parrots and Parakeets* – Nanday Parakeet
- Native of Bolivia
- Established populations



8 families only seen outside The Villages

- *Nuthatches* – Brown-headed Nuthatch
- Pine forests
- Small groups
- With chickadees



12 Special Birds

- These are birds that are members of families already mentioned, but which cannot be seen in The Villages
- All can be seen on Village Birders trips
- Unique, worth a special effort to see
- Two are critically-endangered
- Let's have a look...



12 Special Birds

- *Ducks, Geese and Waterfowl* – Fulvous Whistling-Duck
- Cousin to our common Black-bellied W-D
- Likes large flooded fields



12 Special Birds

- *Hérons, Egrets and Bitterns*- Reddish Egret
- Solitary
- Distinctive foraging on tidal flats



12 Special Birds

- *Gulls, Terns and Skimmers* – Black Skimmer
- Bays and inlets
- Drags lower bill through water



12 Special Birds

- *Pelicans* – Brown Pelican
- Smaller than White
- Bird of the coast
- Rarely inland
- Plunge-dives



12 Special Birds

- *Owls* – Burrowing Owl
- Once easily seen in The Villages
- Reserves remain but owls extirpated by foxes
- Nests in ground
- Active in daytime



12 Special Birds

- *Woodpeckers* - Red-cockaded Woodpecker
- Rare, very local
- Mature longleaf pine forests
- Actively managed, nest trees are marked
- Red “cockade” usually not visible



12 Special Birds

- *Plovers and Lapwings* - Piping Plover
- Uncommon winter visitor
- Open, sandy beaches
- Mostly solitary



12 Special Birds

- *Hawks, Eagles and Kites* – Snail Kite
- Rare, only recently expanded to our area
- Apple snails



12 Special Birds

- *Woodpeckers* – Red-headed Woodpecker
- Open woodlands, dead snags
- Was at Lake Pan



12 Special Birds

- *Jays* – Florida Scrub Jay – Florida endemic
- Requires low oak or palmetto scrub, which is prime development land
- Actively managed
- Tame, curious



12 Special Birds

- *Cardinals* – Painted Bunting
- Winter / year-round resident
- Secretive in low shrubs



8 families only seen outside The Villages – wish list

- *Barn Owls* – Barn Owl
- Nests in – barns
- Resident
- Night hunter



12 Special Birds – wish list

- *Falcons and Caracaras* – Crested Caracara
- Resident
- Large, long legs
- Prairies



Lastly, our monotypical birds

- No close relatives
- One is very common, it is likely you will see one today
- One was not seen in The Villages until a few years ago, now is fairly common
- One is a rare visitor, but was seen recently in The Villages

Osprey

- Year-round resident



Limpkin

- What a call!



Yellow-breasted Chat

- Uncommon, Migrant



Where?

- Now, over to Alice Horst who will tell us where these special birds and bird families can be found



Bird families and special birds outside The Villages

- Along the coast: American Oystercatcher, Common Loon, Piping Plover, Brown Pelican, Black Skimmer, Reddish Egret, Magnificent Frigatebird, Nanday Parakeet
- Ocala NF: Florida Scrub Jay, Red-headed Woodpecker, Brown-headed Nuthatch
- Lake Apopka: Fulvous Whistling Duck, Barn Owl (?), Painted Bunting
- Burrowing Owl, Crested Caracara (?), Red-cockaded Woodpecker, American Flamingo, Snail Kite

That's it – 55 families

- Join us on our bird trips in and around The Villages to see these extended family members



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