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Photographs and information courtesy of



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VERNON PARISH



Birding Guide

South Toledo Bend State Park
 Set on scenic bluffs overlooking Toledo Bend Lake. Bald eagles nest in the area and winter around the area of the dam. In winter large rafts of waterfowl can be seen from the shore and consist of large groups of diving ducks, including canvasbacks, redheads, and scaup. On occasion, loons, gulls, and terns have been seen.

Hodges Gardens State Park
 Contains seven hundred acres of both wild and cultivated plants inside a large impoundment. It is home to many of the same species found at Kisatchie, as well as a bluebird trail.

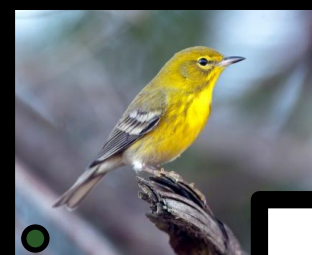
Vernon Parish Lakes
 On either Anacoco or Vernon Lake you might spot any of a variety of waterfowl and aquatic birds, egrets, herons, osprey, and the occasional Bald Eagle.

Kisatchie National Forest
 Longleaf pine ecosystem, with several ponds, pitcher plant bogs and baygalls. Birds to be found in the area are the endangered Red Cockaded Woodpecker, Bachman's Sparrow, Brown Headed Nuthatch, Eastern Wild Turkey, and a variety of wood warblers and other passerine species.

Pine Dwellers love Vernon Parish...



Bachman's Sparrow



Pine Warbler



Red-headed Woodpecker



Red-cockaded Woodpecker



Brown-headed Nuthatch

Vernon Parish...

The "pine dwellers" prefer to live exclusively in pine forests. None of these five are migratory, but remain in Vernon Parish year round. Destruction of their favored habitats has jeopardized all five species to some extent, but with re-forestation, all are making a strong comeback. Of the five, the Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) was at greatest risk since it will only build its nest in a living pine tree.

It takes anywhere from one to three years for a woodpecker to bore out a cavity large enough to hold a nest. One way that Rangers at Kisatchie National Forest encourage their continued habitation, is by drilling holes in trees located in nesting areas throughout the forest. These nesting areas are clearly marked and should not be disturbed.

The little Bachman's Sparrow usually builds a domed nest on the ground near a bush or clump of grass. You might have noticed a Brown-Headed Nuthatch going head-first down a tree trunk – not knowing that this behavior is as unusual for birds as it would be for humans.

The nests of the brightly colored Pine Warbler are deep, open cups near the end of a branch; they feed off the pines as well, poking their tiny bills into the cones to eat the seeds.

Other birds will venture into the pine forests, including the Pileated Woodpecker, Barred Owl, and Ruby-Throated Hummingbird, but they are equally at home in deciduous forests.

- Backyards
- Open Country
- Deciduous Forest
- Near Water
- Shrubby Areas
- Pine Forest

Year Round

In addition to the pine dwellers, the following birds make their homes in Vernon Parish year round. How many can you spot?



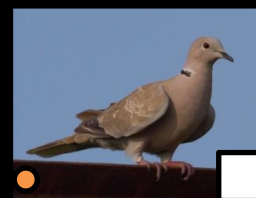
Carolina Wren



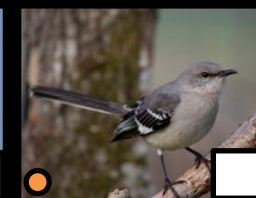
Gray Catbird



Northern Cardinal



Eurasian Collared Dove



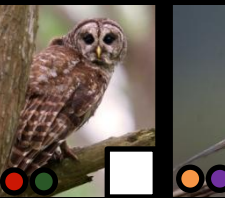
Northern Mockingbird



Eastern Wild Turkey



Eastern Bluebird



Barred Owl



Mourning Dove



Bachman's Sparrow



Pileated Woodpecker



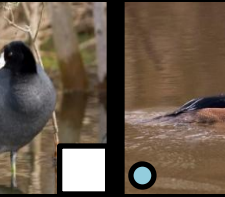
American Kestrel



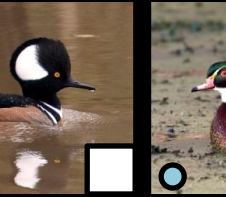
Red-Tailed Hawk



Great Blue Heron



American Coot



Hooded Merganser



Wood Duck



Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher



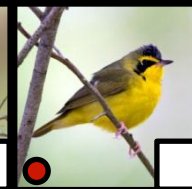
Brown-Headed Cowbird

Summer

These birds visit Vernon Parish during the summer, but spend their winters further south.



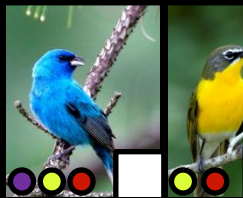
Red-Eyed Vireo



Kentucky Warbler

These birds don't go as far south for the winter as many migratory birds. Look for them during the winter.

Winter



Indigo Bunting



Yellow Breasted Chat



Eastern Kingbird



Orchard Oriole



Ruby-Throated Hummingbird



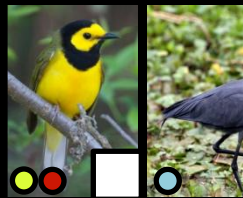
Prairie Warbler



Eastern Phoebe



Northern Pintail



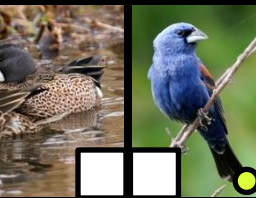
Hooded Warbler



Little Blue Heron



Great Egret



Blue-Winged Teal



Blue Grosbeak



Mallard



Gadwall