

# NEW HAMPSHIRE'S WILDLIFE VIEWING & BIRDING TRAILS

Osprey



White-breasted nuthatch



Snowshoe hare



Moose



New Hampshire  
[visitnh.gov](http://visitnh.gov)

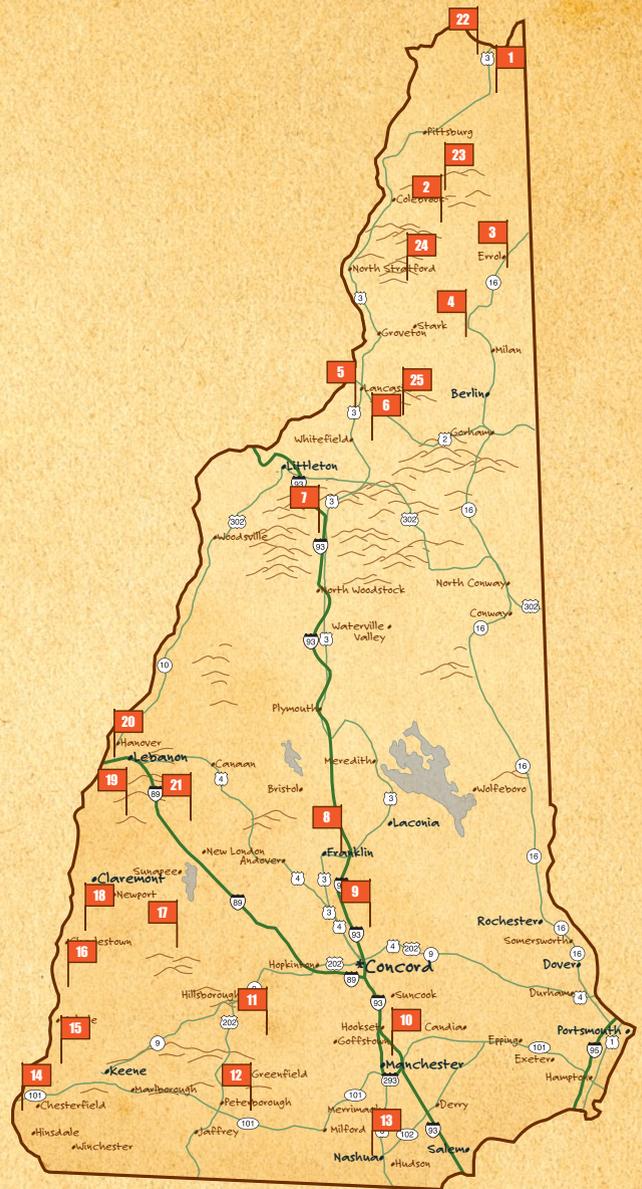
Discover the beauty and abundance of nature through  
New Hampshire's Wildlife Viewing & Birding Trails Tour.

[visitnh.gov](http://visitnh.gov)

# NEW HAMPSHIRE'S WILDLIFE VIEWING & BIRDING TRAILS

New Hampshire is home to some of the best wildlife and birding trails found in New England. Use this map to plan your adventure and discover some of the most unique and scenic locations for catching a glimpse of nature!

1. East Inlet Pond – Pittsburg
2. Route 26 Wildlife Viewing – Dixville Notch
3. Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge – Errol
4. Pontook Reservoir – Dummer
5. Weeks State Park – Lancaster
6. Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge – Whitefield
7. Franconia Notch State Park – Franconia
8. Winnepesaukee River Trail – Franklin and Tilton
9. Hoit Road Marsh Wildlife Management Area – Concord
10. Amoskeag Fishways – Manchester
11. Crotched Mountain – Greenfield
12. Miller State Park – Peterborough
13. Mine Falls Park – Nashua
14. Wantastiquet Mountain Natural Area – Chesterfield
15. Warwick Preserve – Westmoreland
16. Fall Mountain State Forest – Langdon
17. Pillsbury State Park – Washington
18. Hubbard Hill State Forest – Charlestown
19. Helen Woodruff Smith Wildlife Sanctuary – Meriden
20. Boston Lot Lake – Lebanon
21. McDaniels Marsh – Enfield
22. Fourth Connecticut Lake – Pittsburg
23. Coleman State Park & East Colebrook Fields – Stewartstown
24. Nash Stream Forest – Stark
25. Mount Starr King & Mount Waumbek – Jefferson



**New Hampshire**  
visitnh.gov

DEPARTMENT OF RESOURCES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
DIVISION OF TRAVEL AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT



American black bear



American black duck



Black-capped chickadee



Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge

## New Hampshire's Wildlife Viewing & Birding Trails

Wildlife viewing can be challenging, as animals can easily remain hidden, allowing viewers only a glimpse as the animals turn and blend into their surroundings. Increasing your knowledge about where certain animals live and knowing in what season species are most visible, will help you have successful viewing experiences.

Listen in April and May for the choruses of spring peepers and woodfrogs as they sing from the wetlands, trying to attract a mate. Early June is a good time to see bears grazing on the ski slopes of Cannon Mountain. Ospreys fly along the Androscoggin River in July and August. On a crisp, clear day in mid-September, Miller State Park affords views of hundreds of broad-winged hawks as they migrate south. Winter is a great time to search for bald eagles along the lower Merrimack River in Manchester or to read stories of winter survival by looking for tracks in the snow.

There are many places to explore wildlife in New Hampshire.

## Wildlife Viewing in the Great North Woods

New Hampshire's Great North Woods extend from the high elevations of the White Mountains to the hilly lake country of the northern Canadian border. The land is dominated by forests and farms nestled in the major river valleys.

Typical wildlife of this region includes moose, deer, bear, fisher and snowshoe hare. Dark-eyed juncos, evening grosbeaks and boreal chickadees live here year-round. Common loons, ospreys and Blackburnian and bay-breasted warblers are among the summer residents.

## East Inlet Pond

Pittsburg

A canoe or kayak will make this experience more rewarding. Early summer mornings are the best time to find moose feeding on aquatic plants. You may be able to spot an array of boreal forest birds including boreal chickadees, ruby-crowned kinglets and magnolia and blackpoll warblers. Other interesting birds often sighted here include spruce grouse, common snipes, common goldeneyes, American black ducks, gray jays and black-backed woodpeckers.

## Route 26 Wildlife Viewing Area

Dixville Notch

In the spring and early summer months there are plenty of opportunities to view moose and deer. A large lick, a place where road salt collects in a wet area, provides moose with important minerals. The moose may be there any time of day, but the best viewing time is in the early morning or evening. Colorful wood warblers nest in the shrubs.

Just to the west of this site is Dixville Notch State Park. Hike to Sanguinary Ridge and listen for the rare Bicknell's thrush in the spruce fir forest. It's a good place to see and hear Blackburnian and magnolia warblers as well as a myriad of other migratory songbirds. Year-round you may find boreal chickadees and black-backed and three-toed woodpeckers.

## Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge

Errol

As you canoe or kayak on the refuge, wildlife waits around every bend. Bald eagles, ospreys and loons nest here and are often seen during the summer. Great blue herons, eastern kingbirds and belted kingfishers are common sightings. Don't be surprised to see a moose wading or swimming in the water. During fall migration, shorebirds and waterfowl use the area for resting and feeding.

## Pontook Reservoir

Dummer

The Pontook Dam on the Androscoggin River forms a reservoir and wetland area. During the spring and summer, the early morning and late evening are excellent times to look for moose. The wetland provides a nesting area for a variety of birds including American bitterns, pied-billed grebes, common loons, wood ducks, hooded mergansers, and American black and ring-necked ducks. Common yellowthroats, olive-sided and alder flycatchers, Nashville warblers, northern waterthrushes and bay-breasted warblers are all possibilities.

## Weeks State Park

Lancaster

During the fall hawk migration, the summit is a good place to view broad-winged and sharp-shinned hawks, bald eagles, peregrine falcons and ospreys as they head south. A narrow 1.5 mile road to the summit of Mount Prospect affords great views of the surrounding area. A wide array of songbirds nest in the park.

## Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge

*(part of the Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge)*

Whitefield

Moose and white-tailed deer frequent the area and there is considerable beaver activity. Over 200 species of birds can be seen here throughout the year. During the summer loon, American bittern, ring-necked duck, green-winged teal, northern harrier, osprey, Virginia rail, black-backed woodpecker, olive-sided flycatcher, gray jay and Swainson's thrush are just a few of the birds you may hear or see.

Weeks State Park



During the spring and summer, the early morning and late evening are excellent times to look for moose.

## Franconia Notch State Park

Franconia

As early as mid-March, scan Cannon Mountain and Eagle Cliff for a view of peregrine falcons. Early June mornings are the time to look for black bears on the slopes of the Cannon Mountain Ski Area. Visitors often see moose at Echo Lake in the spring and summer. At the mountain summit, listen for Bicknell's thrushes and look for gray jays, boreal chickadees and white-throated sparrows.

For more wildlife viewing and birding locations in the Great North Woods visit [wildnh.com](http://wildnh.com).

## Merrimack River Wildlife Trail

The Merrimack River Watershed has a diversity few other places match. More than 400 species of fish, mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians can be found in these fun-to-explore outdoor areas. At its core is a network of sites in the Merrimack River Watershed selected for bird watching, wildlife viewing, historical and educational opportunities.

## Winnepesaukee River Trail

Franklin and Tilton

Bike or walk this trail to explore a variety of rich riparian habitat including cattail wetlands, a beaver pond and tumbling water. The river provides a variety of summer homes for belted kingfishers, tree swallows, bank swallows, song sparrows, great catbirds, common yellowthroats, red-eyed vireos and many other birds.



White-tailed deer (fawn)

## Hoit Road Marsh Wildlife Management Area

Concord

Located within 7 miles of the state capital, this area is a great place to view wildlife. In the spring and early summer, wood ducks and hooded mergansers use the wood duck nest boxes. Look for wading birds such as green and great blue herons along the marsh edges. In the fall you can see American black ducks, mallards, green-winged teal and Canada geese. You may also see moose, deer, otters and beavers.

## Amoskeag Fishways

Manchester

From late April to mid-June visitors have a unique opportunity to watch both resident and migrating anadromous fish use the fish ladder. An aquarium allows you to see a variety of fish at any time of year. The Amoskeag Fishways site provides excellent opportunities to see bald eagles during the winter. Also look for a variety of ducks such as common goldeneyes, American black ducks and mallards in the open water below the dam. During the summer, the landscaping for wildlife has made the site attractive to hummingbirds, butterflies and a wide variety of songbirds.

## Dutton Brook Trails, Crotched Mountain

Greenfield

The gradually graded accessible trail to the Dutton Brook Wetland allows you to explore the woods and a beaver created wetland. Visit in May and June and the air will be filled with songs of birds, both those that live here year-round and those that spend their summers nesting here. You might be lucky enough to spy evidence of beaver, mink, deer and moose.

## Miller State Park

Peterborough

Not only are there great views from Miller State Park, but the Pack Monadnock Raptor Observatory is located here. The observatory is staffed from September through October. The fall sky plays host to migrating birds. In mid-September, vast kettles of broad-winged hawks are often seen. In the summer, look for turkey vultures, ravens, black-capped chickadees and blue- and black-throated green warblers.

## Mine Falls Park

Nashua

Even though Mine Falls Park is surrounded by city, it boasts a wide variety of wildlife-viewing opportunities. From mid-May to June look for evidence of largemouth bass and a variety of sunfish nesting in the canals. The wetland in the middle of the park provides nesting sites for red-winged blackbirds, song sparrows, common yellowthroats and mallards. The large trees are summer homes for scarlet tanagers, Baltimore orioles and red-eyed vireos. Year-round birds include chickadees, nuthatches and blue jays. Evidence of muskrat, beaver, otter, mink and raccoon can be found along the wetlands, river and canals.

For additional sites along the Merrimack River Wildlife Heritage Trail visit [merrimack.wildnh.com](http://merrimack.wildnh.com).

## Connecticut River Birding Trail

The Connecticut River Birding Trail isn't a linked "trail" with connecting paths, but a joint conservation, education and tourism venture that identifies 128 prime places for birding in the Connecticut River watershed. The sites range from local slices of protected land to expansive national refuges and state parks; destinations where visitors and local residents alike can get out and enjoy their natural surroundings. The Birding Trail Maps contain a bounty of information with site descriptions, directions and bird species lists.

## Southern Section

### Wantastiquet Mountain Natural Area

Chesterfield

Two natural communities come together in this area, making it one of the most ecologically significant sites in the state. Here, the northern New England acidic rocky summit community meets the southern New England talus forest. The woods include sycamores, cottonwoods, mountain laurels, hemlocks and sugar maples. The Connecticut River serves as a travel corridor for more than a hundred different kinds of birds. In late April and early May thousands of warblers pass through this area on their way north.

### Warwick Preserve

Westmoreland

There are many rewards for both the birder and the flower lover here. The bedrock is limestone, enriching the soils to yield a rich diversity of plant life. Common birds of southern New Hampshire forests are found here including the red-tailed and broad-winged hawk, pileated woodpecker, eastern phoebe, eastern wood peewee, brown creeper, wood and hermit thrushes as well as scarlet tanagers and ovenbirds.

### Fall Mountain State Forest

Langdon

This 934-acre piece has forest, shrub/scrub wetlands and old fields. There are a variety of birds associated with each of these habitats that make this a good place to see everything from wood duck and hooded mergansers to winter wrens, black-throated green warblers, field sparrows and indigo buntings.

Ruby-crowned kinglet



Hundreds of wildlife species are found in the Connecticut River Watershed throughout the year.

### Pillsbury State Park

Washington

The best way to explore the ponds and lakes is in a canoe or kayak. Evidence of beaver work is easy to find. Spring heralds the arrival of a variety of wetland and forest songbirds. During the summer look for wood ducks, hooded mergansers and loons. During fall migration, waterfowl stop to rest and feed.

### Hubbard Hill State Forest

Charlestown

The forest is a mixture of hardwood and hardwood-softwood with abundant hemlock. During the summer, look for broad-winged hawk, eastern wood peewee, red-eyed vireo, veery, hermit and wood thrushes. Year-round look for great horned and barred owls, brown creeper, red and white-breasted nuthatches and pileated woodpeckers.

### Upper Valley Section

#### Helen Woodruff Smith Wildlife Sanctuary

Meriden

This was one of the first bird sanctuaries in the United States. It is located on thirty acres of mature sugar maple and white pine forest. Watch for evidence of downy, hairy and pileated woodpeckers. Scarlet tanagers, red-eyed vireos and ovenbirds sing frequently in early summer. Resident birds include black-capped chickadees, white-breasted nuthatches and brown creepers.

### Boston Lot Lake

Lebanon

The 286-acre historic reservoir site has a 46-acre pond surrounded by sugar maple, beech, red oak, hemlock and white pine trees. The diverse habitat means a wide variety of birds from spotted sandpipers to northern goshawk. You can see five different kinds of swallows as well as field, fox, song and white-throated sparrows.

## McDaniels Marsh

Enfield

Bring your canoe or kayak to explore this 300-acre open marsh. Wildlife is in abundance; moose, deer, mink and more can be seen here. The marsh is used by a variety of waterfowl for nesting including wood duck, hooded and common mergansers as well as American black duck. Yellow-rumped warblers, common yellow-throats and song sparrows are also common.

## Northern Section

### Fourth Connecticut Lake

Pittsburg

This is the beginning of the Connecticut River. The hike to the lake is a little less than a mile. The bog mat has pitcher plants, sundews and bladderworts. Look for boreal chickadee, black-backed woodpecker, gray jay and spruce grouse. During the summer listen for golden-crowned kinglet, Swainson's thrush, Canada, Nashville and yellow warblers as well as Northern parula and Lincoln's sparrow.

## Coleman State Park & East Colebrook Fields

Stewartstown

With farm fields and woods, this park on the shore of Little Diamond Pond offers many exciting opportunities. This is an important habitat for grassland species such as the savannah and song sparrow, bobolink, eastern meadowlark and northern harrier. The surrounding forest has a wide variety of birds including winter wren, ruby-crowned kinglet, red-eyed vireo and northern parula.

**More than 100 species  
of birds, 50 mammal species,  
15 amphibians and 10 reptiles plus  
butterflies, dragonflies and insects  
live in the Nash Stream Forest.**



Yellow-rumped warbler

## Nash Stream Forest

Stark

This is one of New Hampshire's largest state forests. It encompasses a variety of wetland and upland habitats. More than 100 species of birds, 50 mammal species, 15 amphibians and 10 reptiles plus butterflies, dragonflies and insects live here. Spruce grouse, American woodcock, northern saw-whet owl, black-backed woodpecker, olive-sided, alder, least and great-crested flycatchers are all found here.

## Mount Starr King & Mount Waumbek

Jefferson

The upper third of these mountains are spruce fir forest. You can see a variety of warblers as you hike to the 3000' summit including black-throated blue, black-throated green, blackpoll, Canada, Nashville and ovenbird warblers. Listen for the long call of the winter wren—you may even hear a Bicknell's thrush. Near the summits look for gray jay, boreal chickadee and black-backed woodpecker.

There are over 120 sites on the Connecticut River Birding Trail. For more information and to purchase maps visit [ctriverbirdingtrail.org](http://ctriverbirdingtrail.org).



Clockwise: Bald eagle, belted kingfisher, downy woodpecker

## Tips For Wildlife Viewing

### Check the Season

Most sites offer wildlife viewing opportunities only during certain times of the year. Before heading to a site, make sure it's the right season.

### Watch at Dawn & Dusk

This is when most wildlife species are active enough to view.

### Use the Right Tools

A field guide, a pair of binoculars and comfortable shoes are a good start. Scanning wide areas with binoculars is often essential to locate animals.

### Be Patient

Successful wildlife viewing often requires waiting and searching for longer than you may expect.

### Stay Quiet

Noise frightens wildlife away. Move slowly and quietly to increase your chances of viewing wildlife and to avoid stressing the animals you want to watch. Sit quietly for an hour to observe what happens around you.

### Use a Blind

Hide behind natural or artificial blinds (even your vehicle will help you see more wildlife).

## Conservation Through Responsible Viewing

### Keep Your Distance

Stay on established trails and maintain a comfortable distance for the wildlife. The goal of successful wildlife watching is to see animals without interrupting their normal behavior. All wild animals are potentially dangerous if approached.

### Don't Feed the Animals

There is plenty of food available in the wild. Human food can cause digestive problems, provide improper nutrition and even kill an animal or result in an animal having to be killed.

### Control Pets

Pets are a hindrance to wildlife viewing. Leave pets at home or keep them on a leash.

### Respect the Rights of Private Landowners

Always ask permission before entering private property and leave no trace that you have been there.

### Share the Woods with Others

Be respectful of others who may also be viewing the surrounding wildlife.

### Carry In/Carry Out

Always bring home anything you bring with you.

Special thanks to the NH Fish and Game Department.

Images courtesy U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

For more information please visit [wildnh.com](http://wildnh.com).



Watchable Wildlife  
Viewing Site

*The above binoculars represent the international symbol for wildlife viewing.*