



Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos

Size: L: 19.7 - 26 in., WS: 32 - 27.4 in.

Description: Males: green head, yellow bill, orange legs, brown body, blue wing patch and black curly tail. Females: mottled brown with orange legs, blue wing patch.

Diet: Seeds, aquatic plants and insects

Habitat: Rural to urban

Viewing: Year-round, statewide



Greater White-fronted Goose

Anser albifrons

Size: L: 25 - 32 in., WS: 53 in.

Description: Stocky brown with white rump, orange legs and pink bill bordered with white feathers.

Diet: Plants, berries and grains

Habitat: Wetlands

Viewing: Spring/fall, central to east



Northern Harrier

Circus hudsonius

Size: L: 18 - 20 in., WS: 40 - 46.5 in.

Description: Medium-sized raptor with broad wings, long tail and white rump patch.

Diet: Small mammals and birds

Habitat: Grasslands, wetlands

Viewing: Year-round, statewide



Swainson's Hawk

Buteo swainsoni

Size: L: 19 - 22 in., WS: 46 - 54 in.

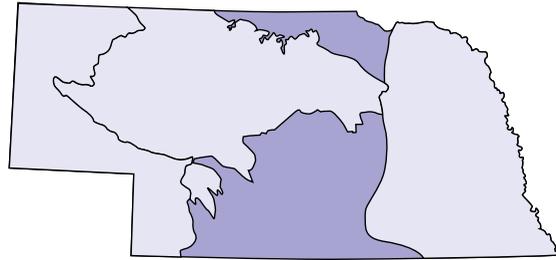
Description: Brown/gray above, white below, brown-red chest, dark beak and yellow legs.

Diet: Mammals and insects

Habitat: Grasslands

Viewing: Spring/fall, statewide; summer, west

Mixedgrass Prairie Region



The mixedgrass prairie region is a transitional zone between the tallgrass prairie of the east and the shortgrass prairie of the west. As a result, the vegetation of this area varies, with a combination of tallgrass and shortgrass prairie plants. There are many wetlands, rivers, and streams. Wooded zones surround almost every waterway. Precipitation is greater in the east, with about 28 inches annually, compared with 20 inches in the west.

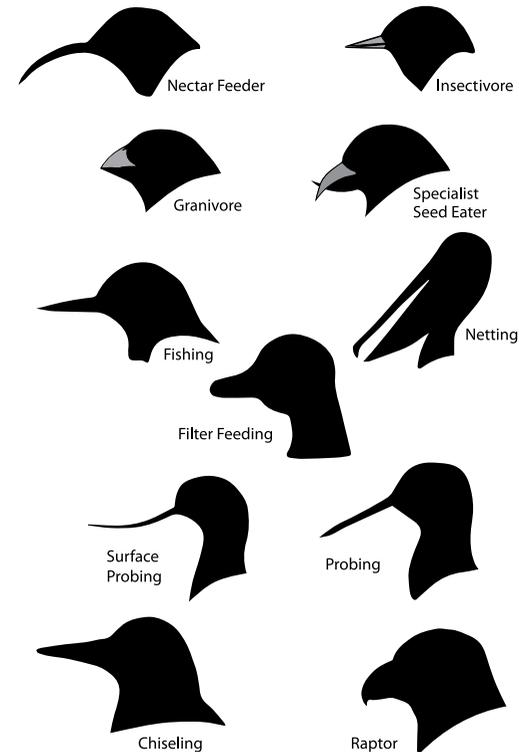
The land is primarily used for agriculture, with around two-thirds converted to cropland and much of the remaining third used for grazing livestock. There is however, a diversity of wildlife found in this region, including the annual spring staging of 500,000 sandhill cranes around the Platte River in central Nebraska. This spectacle draws around 80,000 nature enthusiasts each year, with about half from outside of Nebraska.



Bird Viewing Tips

1. **Stay quiet and calm.**
2. **Be discreet** — wear muted clothing and limit fragrances.
3. **Use your ears!** Listen for bird songs and calls.
4. **Use binoculars** to get a closer look, always keep a respectful distance from wildlife.
5. **Be patient.**
6. **Go to where the habitat is** — visit state parks and other public lands.
7. **Do your homework** — learn what species of birds live in the area.

Beaks as Tools



NOT TO SCALE



Birds of the Nebraska Mixedgrass Prairie



Identification Guide

NEBRASKA
— GAME PARKS —

OutdoorNebraska.org



Lark Sparrow

Chondestes grammacus

Size: L: 6.0 - 7.6 in., WS: 11 in.
Description: Chestnut and cream head, streaked brown above, pale below, black "mustache" and spot on chest, long tail with white corners.
Diet: Seeds
Habitat: Grasslands
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide



Dickcissel

Spiza americana

Size: L: 2.5 - 3.2 in., WS: 6.7 - 7.0 in.
Description: Gray with rusty shoulders, yellow on chest, above eye, and at corner of bill. Males have black V on chest.
Diet: Seeds and insects
Habitat: Marshes, fields
Viewing: Summer, statewide but more common in east



Yellow Warbler

Setophaga petechia

Size: L: 4.7 - 5.0 in., WS: 6.3 - 7.9 in.
Description: Small bright yellow bird with a large black eye. Males have red streaking on chest.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Open woodland
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide



Great Blue Heron

Ardea herodias

Size: L: 38 - 54 in., WS: 65.8 - 79 in.
Description: Tall with long legs and neck, dagger-like bill, gray body, lighter face with black stripe above eye.
Diet: Fish, frogs, small birds
Habitat: Wetlands
Viewing: Spring/fall, statewide; summer, northeast



Grasshopper Sparrow

Ammodramus savannarum

Size: L: 4.3 - 4.7 in., WS: 8.0 - 8.5 in.
Description: Streaky sparrow with brown above, buff below, white eye ring, yellow lore, short tail.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Grasslands
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide



Northern Bobwhite

Colinus virginianus

Size: L: 9.75 in., WS: 13 in.
Description: Stocky ground bird patterned in brown, rufous, buff, and black. Males: black and white patterned face. Females: buffy throat and eyebrow.
Diet: Seeds, plants, and insects
Habitat: Open fields and woodlands
Viewing: Year-round, statewide except southwestern Panhandle and northwest



Greater Prairie-chicken

Tympanuchus cupido

Size: L: 17 - 18 in., WS: 24 - 28 in.
Description: Large grouse with barred brown plumage, males have orange air sacs on their neck used in display.
Diet: Seeds and insects
Habitat: Open grasslands
Viewing: Year-round, central and limited southeast



Killdeer

Charadrius vociferus

Size: L: 8 - 11 in., WS: 18 - 19 in.
Description: Brown shorebird with white belly, chin, and face markings, two black chest bars and long legs.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Rural to urban
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide



Western Meadowlark

Sturnella neglecta

Size: L: 6.3 - 10.2 in., WS: 22 - 24 in.
Description: Robin sized with short tail, flat head, long bill, brown back, yellow front, and black V on chest.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Grasslands
Viewing: Year-round, statewide



Field Sparrow

Spizella pusilla

Size: L: 4.7 - 5.9 in., WS: 7.9 in.
Description: Pale gray head, white eye ring, rufous on top of head and behind eye, pink beak.
Diet: Seeds and insects
Habitat: Fields with bushy thickets
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide, though rare in Panhandle



Ring-necked Pheasant

Phasianus colchicus

Size: L: 20.0 - 27.6 in., WS: 20 - 24 in.
Description: Buffy cinnamon with red face, green neck with white ring at base, and long barred tail.
Diet: Seeds, insects, fruit
Habitat: Agricultural land and fallow fields
Viewing: Year-round, statewide



Upland Sandpiper

Bartramia longicauda

Size: L: 11.0 - 12.6 in., WS: 18.5 in.
Description: Slender speckled brown shorebird with long neck, small head and large black eye.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Grasslands
Viewing: Spring/fall, statewide



Red-winged Blackbird

Agelaius phoeniceus

Size: L: 6.7 - 9.0 in., WS: 12.2 - 15.8 in.
Description: Males: black with red wing patch boarded in yellow. Females: streaky brown.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Wetland and fields
Viewing: Year-round, statewide though more limited in winter



Bobolink

Dolichonyx oryzivorus

Size: L: 5.9 - 8.3 in., WS: 10.6 in.
Description: Flat head, short tail. Males: black with white rump, buff-yellow nape. Females: buff with brown back, flank streaking.
Diet: Seeds and insects
Habitat: Grasslands
Viewing: Spring/fall, statewide; summer, east and central



Sandhill Crane

Antigone canadensis

Size: L: 47.2 in., WS: 78.7 in.
Description: Tall with long legs and neck, dagger-like bill, gray body with rusty wash. Adults have pale cheek and bright red skin on top of head.
Diet: Aquatic plants, small animals and seeds
Habitat: Wetlands
Viewing: Spring, central



Northern Pintail

Anas acuta

Size: L: 20.0 - 29.9 in., WS: 34 in.
Description: Duck with long neck and tail. Males: brown head, white chest and stripe on neck, and gray back. Females: mottled brown.
Diet: Seeds and aquatic insects
Habitat: Wetlands
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide