Birds Of Wesselman Woods

A field guide to the wintering and migrating birds of Wesselman Woods, Evansville Indiana

Created by Evelyn Parts



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Name, Status, Photo	Size/Shape and Coloring	Habitat and Behavior	Calls and Songs
<image/> Fhoto by Evelyn PartsYellow-Bellied Sapsucker (W)	Size: Fairly small woodpeckers with straight bills, and long wings Color: Mostly black and white, red foreheads long white stripe along folded wing, black/white stripes curve from face to black chest shield and yellowish underparts.	Common in deciduous forests, often nests in groves of small trees and open woodlands Perch upright on trees, feed at sap wells, drill neat rows of holes in trees.	Call: Scratchy, nasal, often repeated mewing. Song: Squealing, territorial repeated <i>quee-ah quee-ah</i> .
Black-Capped Chickadee (W)	 Size: Short neck, large head, spherical body shape. Smaller than a sparrow. Short bill thicker than warbler's but thinner than a finch's Color: Black cap & bib, white cheeks, soft gray back, underparts buffy on sides to white beneath. Black cap extends just beyond the black eyes. 	Common in open woodlands/clearing/s uburbs Often takes from feeders and eats elsewhere. Acrobatic, often fly across open areas one at a time. Forage in thickets and low tree branches.	Call: Lower, slower- paced <i>chick-a-dee-</i> <i>dee-dee</i> than Carolina Chickadee's. Song: Clear whistled <i>fee-bee</i> or <i>fee-bee-</i> <i>bee</i> with higher- pitched first note.
Frown Creeper (W)	Size: Small and lanky birds, long spine-tipped tails. Slim body, slender downcurved bill. Smaller than White-Breasted Nuthatch. Color: Streaked brown and buff above, white underparts. Easily blends into bark. Brownish heads with broad buffy stripe over the eyes.	Nests in coniferous, mixed, or swampy forests.Searches for small insects by hitching upward, spiraling around tree trunks/limbs. Moves with short jerky motions w/ tail supporting. Fly weakly to next tree to hitch upward.	Call: Soft, sibilant see. Song: High-pitched, variable see see titi see.

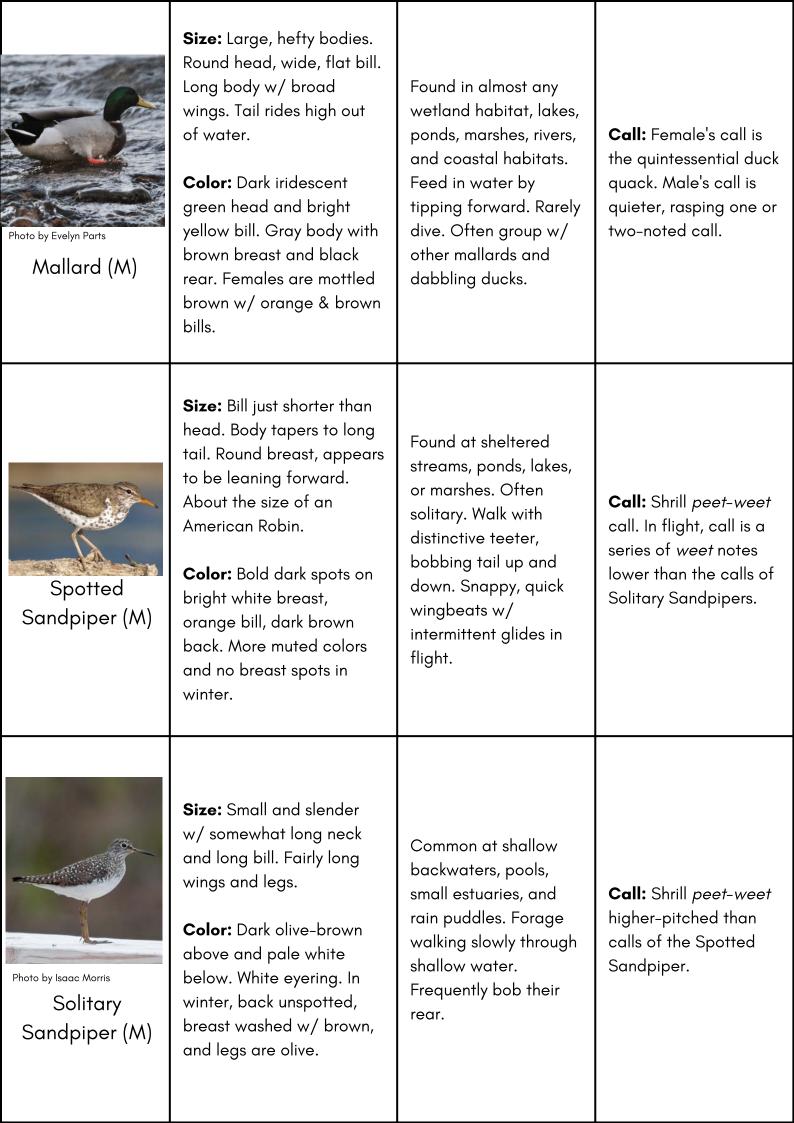
Winter Wren (W)	Size: Plump, round ball. Stubby tail usually held straight up. Small thin bill. Larger than a hummingbird, smaller than a Carolina Wren. Color: Appears brown overall, darker brown barring on wings, tail, and belly. Pale tan eyebrow strip, brown cap. Pale tan throat and barred belly.	Nests in dense brush, especially along stream banks, mainly in moist coniferous woods. Hops and scampers through understory. Bob whole bodies as if doing squats. Rapidly beat wings in flight to get to cover. Very secretive birds.	Call: Similar to the Song Sparrow's, often heard as <i>kelp-kelp</i> . Song: Rapid series of melodious trills.
Fhoto By Isaac Morris Hermit Thrush (W)	Size: Similar to American Robin, but smaller. Color: Rich brown head & back, warm reddish tail, pale underparts, distinct spots on throat & smudges on breast.	Found in coniferous/mixed woodlands & thickets. Hops/scrapes in leaf litter to forage. Cocks tail and bobs slowly while flicking wings, often wanders into open areas.	Call: Deep <i>chuck</i> often doubled, and a whiny upslurred, <i>wee</i> . Song: Serene series of flutelike notes with similar phrases repeated at varying pitches.
Golden- Crowned Kinglet (W)	Size: Tiny w/ round body, short wings, and skinny tail. Color: Pale olive above, gray below. Black and white stiped face w/ bright yellow-orange crown patch. Thin white wingbar, and yellow edges on black flight feathers.	Common in coniferous woodlands. Usually concealed in high, dense trees. Pluck small insects from conifer needle clusters.	Call: Series of high, thin <i>tsee</i> notes. Song: Almost inaudibly high series of <i>tsee</i> notes accelerating into a trill.
Ruby-Crowned Kinglet (W)	Size: Tiny w/ relatively large heads, thin tails, thin and small straight bills. Coloring: Olive-green overall. Prominent white eyering and wingbar. Blackish bar in wing. Ruby crown of male only occasionally visible.	Common in woodlands and thickets. Restless and acrobatic birds. Quickly flit through lower and middle level of foliage. Almost constantly flick their wings	Call: Scolding <i>je-ditt</i> . Song: Several high, thin <i>tsee</i> notes followed by descending <i>tew</i> notes, ending in warbled three-note phrase.

Photo by Isaac Morris Yellow-Rumped Warbler (W)	Size: Fairly large/full bodied. Large head, sturdy bill, and long, narrow tail. About the size of a Black- Capped Chickadee. Color: Gray w/ flashes of white in wings, yellow on face, sides, and rump. Females are duller than males and have some brown.	Abundant in coniferous or mixed woodlands. Typically forage in outer tree canopies at middle heights. Often sally out and catch insects midair. Eats more berries in winter and travel in large flocks.	Call: sounds like <i>myrtle</i> . Song: Slow warble, rising or falling at the end in <i>audubon's</i> a musical trill in one song of <i>myrtle</i> .
Rusty Blackbird (W)	Size: Medium-sized with slender, slightly decurved bill and medium-length tail. Color: Rusty feather edges, pale yellow eyes, and buffy eyebrow. Females are gray-brown w/ pale eyes, and eyebrow contrasting with darker feathers near the eye.	Uncommon & declining in wetland woods/swamps. Nests in shrubs/conifers near water. Often gather in small flocks and feed on ground walking and flipping leaves. Hold long tail up when feeding.	Call: Harsh <i>tschak</i> call. Song: High, squeaky <i>koo-a-lee</i> song.
Fhoto by Isaac Morris Purple Finch (W)	Size: Large and chunky w/ powerful conical beaks longer than a sparrow's. Short tail clearly notched at tip. Color: Delicate pink-red head & breast, mixed w/ brown back and cloudy white belly. Female has no red and coarsely streaked below.	Found in coniferous/mixed woodland borders, suburbs, parks, and orchards. Readily come to feeders. Noisy, but hard to find (feed high in trees). Undulating flight. May descend to eat seeds from plants/stalks in weedy fields.	Call: Musical <i>chur-lee</i> call. Sharp <i>pit</i> call when in flight. Song: Rich warbling lower & less strident than a House Finch's song.

Fine Siskin (W)	 Size: Small w/ sharp pointed bills. Short notched tails. Forked tails & pointed wingtips in flight. Color: Brown and streaky. Subtle yellow edges to wings and tails. Flash yellow when taking flight, flutter, or display when mating. 	Found in coniferous and mixed woods in summer, and forests, shrubs, and fields in the winter. Often visit feeders in winter or cling to tips of conifers to pick at seeds. Forage in tight flocks, twittering incessantly.	Call: Rising <i>tee-ee</i> call. Harsh, descending <i>chee</i> call in flight. Song: Similar to American Goldfinch's but huskier.
Photo by Evelyn Parts Dark-Eyed Junco (W)	Size: Medium-sized w/ rounded head, short stout bill, fairly long tail. Color: Generally dark gray/brown w/ pink bill, and white outer tail feathers that flash open, especially in flight	Breed in coniferous/mixed woodlands. Found in a variety of habitats in winter and migration. Birds of the ground, hopping around bases of trees/shrubs. Look for fallen seeds.	Call: Sharp <i>dit</i> and a rapid twittering call in flight. Song: Musical trill on one pitch.
American Tree Sparrow (W)	Size: Small, round- headed, often fluff feathers and appear chubby. Small bills and long thin tails for sparrows. Color: Rusty cap and eyeline w/ gray head. Streaked brown back. Smooth gray to buff breast. Often dark smudge in center of breast.	Breeds along edge of tundra in open areas with scattered trees & brush. Small flocks hop on ground, foraging for grass/weed seeds. Individuals perch in open atop shrubs & low tree branches.	Call: Musical <i>teedle-eet</i> call. Thin <i>seet</i> call. Song: Begins w/ several clear notes, followed by variable, rapid warble.

White-Crowned Sparrow (W)	Size: Large sparrow w/ small bill & long tail. Head can be distinctly peaked or smooth & flat. Slightly larger than a song sparrow. Color: Black black and white stripes on head. Pale pink or yellow bill.	Generally common in woodlands, grasslands, and roadside hedges. Usually low at the edges of brushy habitat. Hop on the ground or branches below waist-level.	Call: Loud <i>pink</i> and a sharp <i>tseep</i> call. Song: Usually one+ thin whistled notes followed by twittering trill.
With the second secon	Size: Large, round-bodied, stout bills, and medium- length tails. Smaller than Spotted Towhee. Color: Highly variable - generally rust-brown above w/ mix of rust and gray on head. Brown splotches on flanks and chest center. Bill ranges from yellow to dark gray	Found in undergrowth in coniferous or deciduous woodlands and chaparral. Kicks leaf litter on ground in search of insects & seeds. Rarely venture far from cover. Frequently flock with other sparrows.	Call: <i>Tschup</i> note similar to Lincoln Sparrow's, but louder. Song: Sweet and melodic.
Swamp Sparrow (W)	Size: Medium-sized w/ short, conical bill. Moderately long tail. Overall very similar to Song Sparrow. Color: Quite dark overall. Bright rusty crown + wings. Grayish breast w/ whitish throat and gray nape.	Nests in dense, tall vegetation in marshes and bogs. Perch and forage in vegetation near ground/water. Typically forage near water's edge or in brushy patches.	Call: Prolonged <i>zee</i> softer than the Lincoln Sparrow's. Eastern Phoebe-like <i>chip</i> . Song: Slow musical trill on one pitch.

<caption></caption>	Size: Large, full-bodied w/ rounded head, long legs, and long, narrow tail. Color: Brown above and gray below w/ black-and- white-striped head. Bright white throat, yellow between eye and bill.	Common in woods, forest edges, pond and bog edges, and copses near the treeline. Stay near ground, scratching through leaves in flocks. Eat buds off of low bushes. Sing frequently.	Call: Sharp <i>pink</i> and drawn-out, lisping <i>tseep</i> . Song: Thin whistle, usually two notes followed by three triple notes <i>pure sweet Canada Canada Canada</i> .
Fhoto by Evelyn Parts Great Blue Heron (M)	Size: Long legs, thick dagger-like bill. "S" shaped neck. Broad, rounded wings. Color: Appear blue gray from a distance. Wide black stripe over eye continuing beyond back of the head.	Found in saltwater and freshwater habitats from open coasts, marshes, sloughs, and riverbanks to lakes. Wade slowly, stalking fish in shallow water/open fields. Stab quickly with strong sharp bills.	Call: When landing, call is a squawking roh-roh-roh. When fledged, a series of clucking <i>go-go-gos</i> building to rapid <i>frawnk</i> squawk.
Photo by Isaac Morris Green Heron (M)	Size: Short and stocky. Short legs, thick necks, broad rounded wings. Long dagger bill. About the size of American Crow. Color: Deep green back, chestnut breast and neck. Dark gray wings.	Found in variety of habitats - prefer streams, ponds, and marshes with woodland cover. Usually stand motionless at water's edge fishing. Don't wade often.	Call: Loud, shapr <i>kyowk</i> call.



Wilson's Snipe (M)	Size: Medium-sized, pudgy w/ short, stocky legs. long straight bill. Rounded head w/ short tail. Color: Dark head w/ buffy/white stripes. Dark back w/ three long buffy streaks. Buffy chest streaked & spotted w/ brown.	Lives in muddy pond edges, damp fields, and other wet, open habitats. Forage by probing muddy ground for earthworms. Heads move up and down like sewing machine at low speed.	Call: Harsh two- syllable <i>ski-ape</i> call when flushed. <i>Wheet</i> call from perching males when breeding.
Flycatcher (M)	Size: Short primary wing feathers, long tail. Round head, compact body. Color: Grayish olive above w/ dusky breast. Grayish olive head w/ white eyering. Very faint yellow wash on belly. Two distinct white wingbars.	Inhabits deciduous woods, orchards, and parks. Congregate in clusters during breeding season. Flit from perch to perch among dead branches in middle/upper forest canopy	Call: Sharp <i>whit</i> sometimes in a series. Song: Dry <i>che-bek</i> accented on second syllable. Usually in a rapid series.
Bewick's Wren (M)	Size: Slender body, long tail held upright. Slender, slightly decurved long bills. Color: Subdued brown & gray. Long brow-like white stripe over eye. Plain brown wings & back. Gray-white underparts. Tail barred w/ black and tipped w/ white spots.	Found in brushland, hedgerows, stream edges, open woods, and clear-cuts. Cocks tail over back. Often flick tails from side to side. Skulk through tangles of leaves/branches to find insects.	Call: Flat, hollow <i>jip</i> . Song: Variable high thin buzz and warble similar to the Song Sparrow.

Swainson's Thrush (M)	Size: Slim w/ round heads and short straight bills. Long wings and medium- length tail. Color: Medium-brown w/ pale underparts and spotted chests. Large buffy eyerings extend to front, creating "spectacles" Whitish throat bordered w/ dark brown stripe on sides.	Found in moist woods and swamps. Shy but vocal. Skulk in shadows of dark forest interior. Forage for insects on ground. Eat small fruits during migration.	Call: Sharp <i>quirk</i> . Peeping <i>queep</i> can be heard at night. Song: Ascending spiral of varied whistles.
Gray-Cheeked Thrush (M)	Size: Compact w/ relatively short bill & long wings. Color: Grayish brown above & gray below. Dark spotting on breast & throat. Plain face compared to most thrushes. Grayish lores & incomplete eyering.	Favors coniferous or mixed woodlands. Forage by consuming fruit in trees. Peck invertebrate prey on ground. Tend to remain hidden.	Call: Sharp <i>pheu</i> similar to Veery's but higher-pitched and not descending. Song: Thin and nasally like Veery's but first and last phrases drop and middle phrase rises.
Veery (M)	Size: Medium-size w/ plump body and round head. Straight narrow bill. Fairly long wings and legs. Color: Uniformly bright cinnamon-brown above w/ indistinct spotting on chest and pale underparts. White throat w/ buffy- orange cast.	Found in dense, moist woodlands and streamside thickets. Inconspicuous, forage on ground and logs for invertebrates. Often sing in late spring and summer, especially at dawn and dusk.	Call: Sharp, descending, whistled <i>veer</i> . Song: Descending series of <i>veer</i> notes.

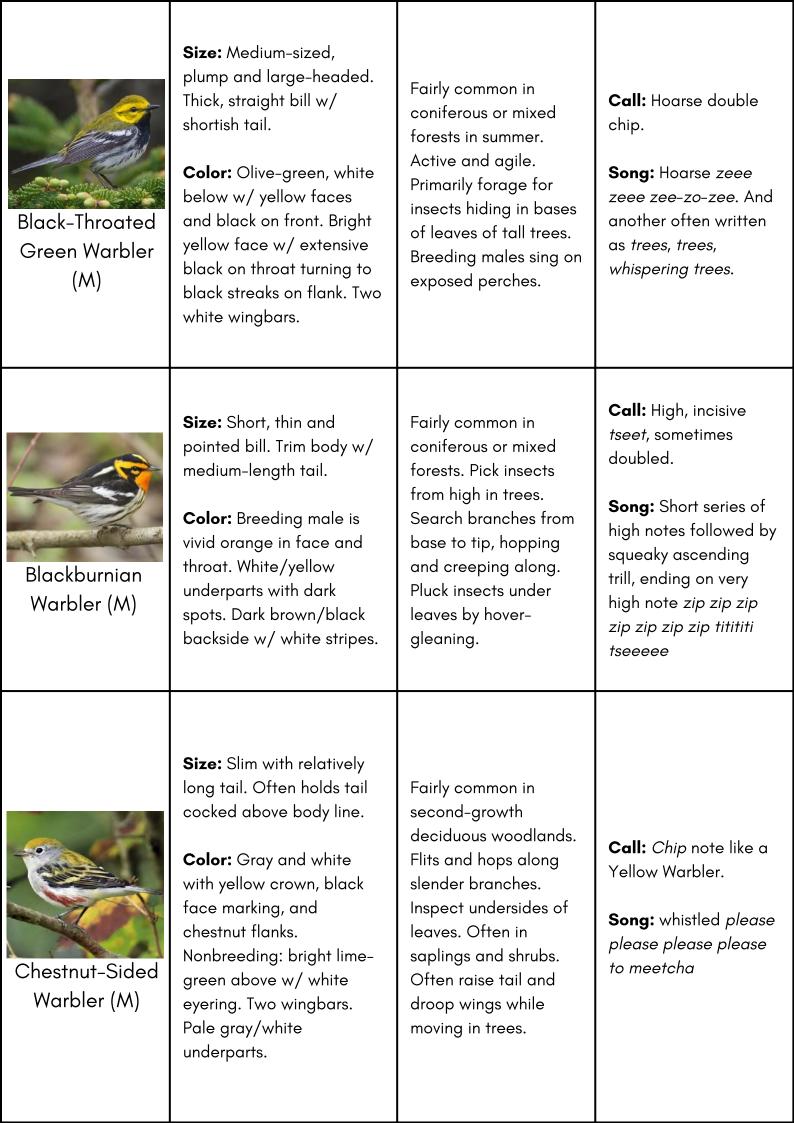
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Photo by Isaac Morris Blue-Headed Vireo (M)	Size: Stocky & small w/ medium length tail. Heavy, hooked bill. Thick legs compared to warblers. Color: Moss-green w/ blue/gray head and white underparts. Clean white throat and "spectacles" Blackish wings & tail w/ two white wingbars.	Common in mixed woodlands. Forage at middle heights in mature trees. Move slowly from branch to branch in search of insects. Move slowly, looking in all directions before pouncing on prey.	Call: Remarkably variable - shrieks, trills, and nasal <i>nyaa</i> notes. Song: Similar to Red- Eyed Vireo, but slower.
Philadelphia Vireo (M)	Size: Small for vireo but chunky compared to a warbler. Color: Olive above, yellow throat, pale below with yellow underparts. Dark grayish crown with dark line through the eye. Pale eye stripe.	Found in open woodlands, streamside willows, and alders. Forage relatively high in trees, slowly moves along branches and watches leaves for insects. Often join mixed-species flocks in winter.	Call: Nasal <i>ehhh</i> very similar to other Vireos' calls. Song: Resembles Red- Eyed Vireo, but slower, thinner, and higher- pitched.
Tennessee Warbler (M)	Size: Small and stocky. Short till, thin, sharply pointed bill. Color: Gray head w/ white line over eye. Green back, whitish underparts through undertail coverts. Females are more green, less contrast between head and back.	Found in coniferous, mixed, and open woodlands. Forage on slender branches in high forest canopy. Feed primarily on insects, especially the spruce budworm caterpillar.	Call: High-pitched, sharp <i>tsip</i> or <i>tit</i> . Song: Two/three parts w/ several rapid two- syllable notes followed by a few higher single notes, ending with staccato trill.

Nashville Warbler (M)	Size: Small songbird, compact w/ round head, plump body, and shortish tail. Fine, straight, and pointed bill. Color: Mostly yellow w/ green back, gray head, & white eyering. White lower belly between yellow breast and yellow undertail coverts.	Found in second- growth woodlands and spruce bogs. Forages for insects at middle levels in outer edges of trees. Often joins other species in mixed foraging flocks.	Call: Dull <i>chink</i> . Song: Series of high <i>see-weet</i> notes and a lower short trill.
Magnolia Warbler (M)	Size: Small with small bill & long, narrow tail. Color: Black mast & black streaking radiating from black neck band. Gray and black above w/ white wing patch, and a yellow throat and belly.	Found in moist coniferous forests. Often forage in low understory, picking leaves from undersides of leaves. Also forages higher in canopy w/ other warblers during migration.	Call: Nasal <i>zic</i> or <i>zeep</i> . Song: Short, whistled <i>weety-weety-weeteo</i> .
Cape May Warbler (M)	Size: Delicate & short- tailed. slender and distinctively decurved bill. Color: Rich yellow/olive above w/ rufous cheeks framed in yellow. Rufous stripes on breast. Yellow underparts. Large white patch on wings.	Breeds in black spruce forests. Hunts insects among branches, sips nectar from flowers, and eats fruit. Takes most food by probing and picking. Sometimes catches insects midair.	Call: Very thin, high <i>sip</i> . Song: High, thin <i>seet seet seet</i> .



Bay-Breasted Warbler (M)	Size: Small w/ fine pointed bill. Rather long wings & tail. Color: Grayish above w/ reddish-brown crown, breast, & flanks. Black face & creamy buff underparts. Two strong white wingbars.	Breeds in boreal forests, mainly mature coniferous forests. Feeds by hopping and flying around inner parts of trees watching for insects. Forages by gleaning and sometimes hovering.	Song: Series up to 10 high-pitched double notes of <i>see, szee,</i> or <i>teesi</i> notes on one pitch.
Blackpoll Warbler (M)	Size: Small w/ short tails & small thin bill. Long wings. Color: Black and white w/ distinctive black cap & white cheeks bordered by black mustache stripe. Two white wingbars & orange-yellow legs.	Common, nests in coniferous forests. Picks insects off of foliage. Forages near trunks of evergreens. Sings while searching for food in spring migration. Often hide among leaves/branches in trees/shrubs.	Song: Series of high <i>tseet</i> notes.
Palm Warbler (M)	Size: Large w/ fuller belly for a warbler. More upright posture. Tails & legs longer than most warblers. Color: Dull brown/olive above w/ yellow undertail & throat. Yellow belly w/ rusty cap & some rusty streaking on belly. White corners of tail visible in flight.	Nests in brush on the edge of spruce bogs. Found in woodland borders, open brushy areas, and marshes. Nearly constantly wagging its tail. Mainly forage on open ground or in low vegetation.	Song: A rapid, buzzy trill.

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Northern Waterthrush (M)	Size: Large but trim. Short, fine bill, short tail, and long legs. Color: Brownish above w/ prominent pale eyebrow. Pale yellow/buff below w/ dark streaks. Duskier legs than Louisiana Waterthrush.	Found mainly in woodland bogs, swamps, and thickets. Forage on ground or in shallow water. Wades into ponds for prey. Sing mostly from log vegetation, often concealed.	Call: Metallic <i>chink</i> slightly sharper than a Louisiana Waterthrush's. Song: Starts w/ large emphatic notes, ending in lower, rapid notes.
Warbler (M)	Size: Small w/ full body & thick neck. Thin straight bill & moderately long tail & legs. Color: olive above, yellow below w/ gray hood and black chest patch. Sometimes thin white eye arcs. Females are paler and lack chest patch.	Fairly common in dense undergrowth, thickets, and moist woods. Nests on the ground. Forages in low shrubs. Walks along branches to glean insects & eat fruit. Males sing while perched in low undergrowth.	Call: Flat, hollow <i>chip</i> . Song: Series of slurred two-note phrases followed by two lower phrases.
Connecticut Warbler (M)	Size: Plump w/ short tail, long pink legs, and large eyes. Rather heavy, spikelike bill. Color: Gray-hoodeed w/ bold white eyering. Yellow belly and olive back. Females are more muted and can be brownish.	Found in spruce bogs and moist woodlands. Walk on ground or along low branches. Forages slowly and deliberately in areas w/ heavy undergrowth.	Song: Loud, accelerating series of brief, explosive <i>beech-</i> <i>ey</i> or <i>whip-ity</i> .



Savannah Sparrow (M)	Size: Medium-sized w/ short, notched tails. Small head for the plump bodied. Crown feathers often flare to make a small peak. Color: Brown above w/ white below & crisp streaks. Brown upperparts w/ black streaks. Small yellow patch in front of eye.	Common in a variety of open habitats, marshes, and grasslands. Eat seeds on ground alone or in flocks. Males sing dry melodies from exposed, low perches like fenceposts in spring and summer.	Call: Thin <i>seep</i> during flight. Song: Begun with two to three chip notes followed by two buzzy trills.
Fincoln's Sparrow (M)	Size: Dainty w/ rounded belly & head. Back of head often crested. Relatively short tail & thin, conical bill. Color: Streaky brown, buffy, & gray overall w/ rusty edges to wings & tail. Buffy mustache stripe. Crown striped brown & black.	Found in brushy bogs and mountain meadows. Prefers thickets in winter. Secretive - forage on ground, rarely straying far from dense cover. Males sing from exposed perches or tucked in a shrub during breeding season.	Call: Alarm call is a repeated flat <i>tschup</i> in series. Also have a sharp, buzzy <i>zeee</i> call. Song: Loud, rich, rapid bubbling trill.

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