

# TURNERS FALLS AREA

# BIRDING GUIDE



A PROJECT OF THE  
GREAT FALLS DISCOVERY  
CENTER  
AND  
RIVERCULTURE

TURNERS FALLS,  
MASSACHUSETTS



**HILLSIDE**  
PLASTICS, INC.



**TURNERS FALLS**  
RIVERCULTURE



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Western Massachusetts  
Electric





**"In wilderness is the preservation of the world"  
(Henry David Thoreau)**

Turners Falls, Massachusetts warmly and enthusiastically welcomes birders –we are in the heart of a geographic region, the Connecticut River watershed, home to numerous resident and migratory birds. A twenty minute drive in any direction could result in the spotting of dozens of the 125 bird species (and some possible strays) that populate the area annually. The various habitats provide the perfect sites and migratory pathways that birders seek – all with the bonus of visiting the state's beautiful countryside, enhanced by its changing seasons.

Studying and viewing birds in their natural state is a rewarding activity; it can range from backyard birding to enjoying vacations planned around birds' migratory habits. Visitors will appreciate the staff members' expertise at the Great Falls Discovery Center. Whether

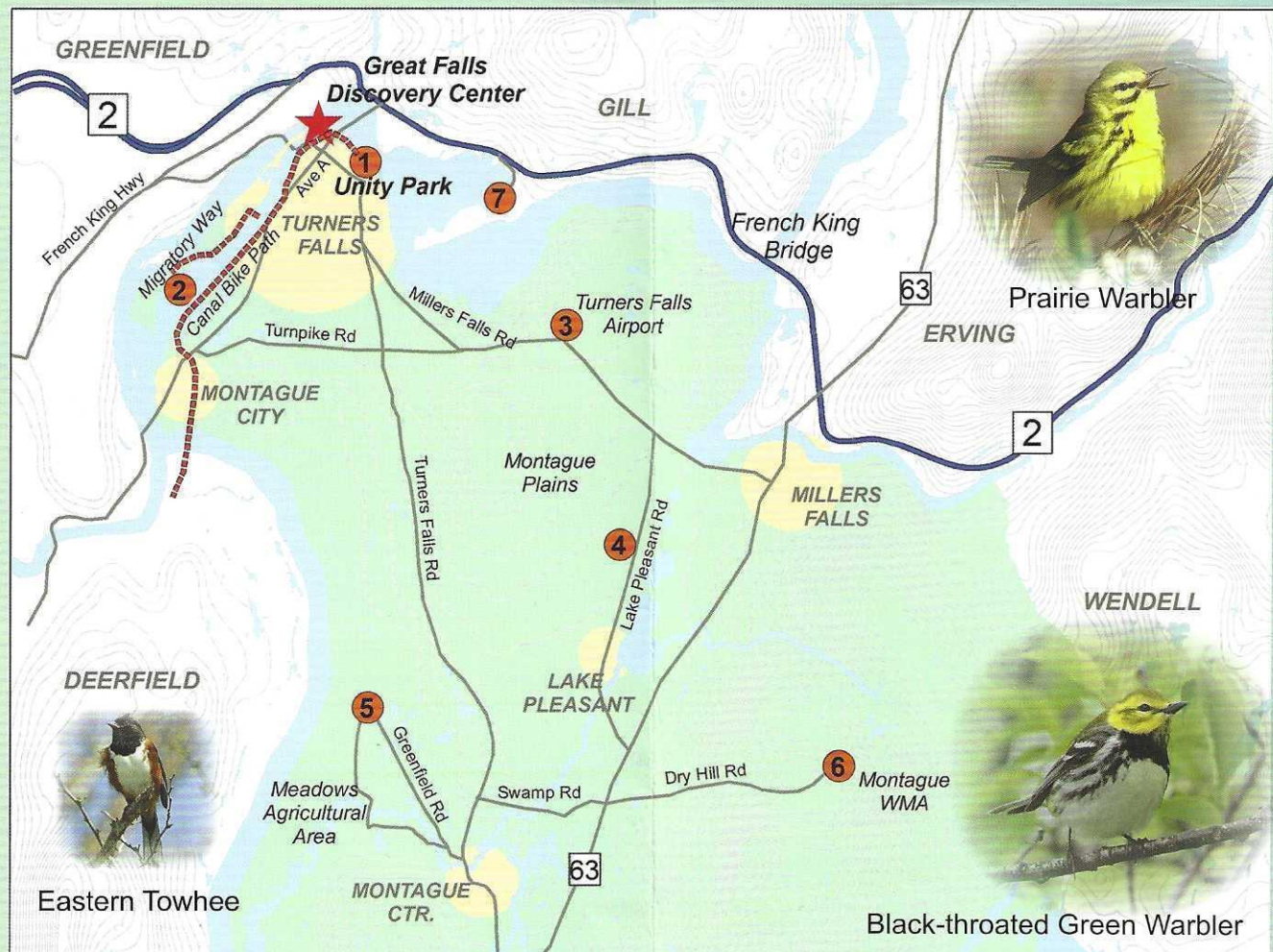
you are an expert on the habits and melodies of songbirds or cannot identify one sparrow from another, the Center offers an opportunity to learn more about wilderness habitat and its importance to birds.

We all have a part to play in preserving the world's healthy environmental balance. The growth of urban areas will ultimately affect how wildlife will survive. The Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge at the Discovery Center as well as Turners Falls RiverCulture support the continuing care and safeguarding of habitats of all local species. The Center is dedicated to educating everyone on this important endeavor, and we work with the public to maintain the Connecticut River watershed region as it is - a wonderful place for birds and other species to thrive.

The preservation of the world *is* in the wilderness and it is up to all of us to ensure it is preserved for generations to come.

### **Happy Birding!**

To reach the Discovery Center, call 413-863-3221 or visit [www.greatfallsdiscoverycenter.org](http://www.greatfallsdiscoverycenter.org)







Rose-Breasted Grosbeak

**1 CANALSIDE BIKE PATH**

42° 36 23.57 N 72° 33 1.31 W

The old mill buildings along the power canal speak to the history of Turners Falls. Turkey Vultures have been seen congregating atop railings, and smaller songbirds, such as Gray Catbirds, may be spotted among the trees and shrubs in search of food along the water. Common Mergansers and Common Goldeneye can be seen above the dam, near Unity Park.

**2 MIGRATORY WAY**

42° 36 1.62 N 72° 31 26.84 W

Viewing here is best done in the afternoon, as larger numbers of ducks, geese, and gulls come to rest from their daytime feeding activities. Look for the common Ring-billed and Herring Gulls, as well as the less common Iceland and Glaucous Gulls. Mallards, Common Merganser, Common Goldeneye, and Ring-necked Ducks can also be viewed here at various times of the year.

**3 TURNERS FALLS AIRPORT**

42° 35 24.04 N 72° 31 26.84 W

The grounds and habitat of the airport are a continuation of the plains, but because of the long aviation history here, the site is mostly open grassland with some surrounding shrub-land, and therefore attracts some different species of birds. Look for Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrows in the open bluestem grass area here. Check out the tops of young trees for perching Northern Shrikes and Northern Harriers, searching for prey in the open fields.

**4 MONTAGUE PLAINS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA**

42° 34 8.83 N 72° 30 49.68 W

At over 2,000 acres, the area of the Montague Plains is the largest pine barren in Massachusetts. The flat, sandy area is the remains of an outwash delta on what was once the shore of glacial Lake Hitchcock. Many birds can be found within the protected area of the forest, including Brown Thrashers, Eastern Towhee, Pine Warbler, and Field Sparrow. Check this place out in winters of abundant pine cone crops for crossbills. This is a great place to get out and walk around!

**5 FARM COUNTRY**

42° 33 12.34 N 72° 32 58.37 W

The people of the Town of Montague have a history of supporting agriculture and helping preserve such open spaces. A visit to the south-western part of Montague gives evidence of these efforts, for both farming and birding alike. Look for Bobolink and Eastern Bluebird in the hayfields, as well as Indigo Bunting and Eastern Kingbird in the open areas and along phone lines.

**6 MONTAGUE STATE FOREST**

42° 32 44.23 N 72° 29 24.24 W

This forested area includes some small isolate beaver ponds. Look for Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos, warblers, and Scarlet Tanager. Look and listen for Northern Waterthrush, Hermit Thrush, and Wood Thrush along the edges of the small forest wetlands. This is a great place to hone your birding-by-ear skills!

**7 BARTON COVE**

42° 36 15.951 N 72° 31 55.58 W

Depending on the controlled water level, the river here ranges from deep unbroken water to shallows with extensive mud flats. The migration of ducks, herons, and gulls is much more pronounced in the spring than the fall. Red-necked and Horned Grebes, Common Goldeneye, and Ring-necked Ducks like this area. Look for Great Blue Herons along the shoreline and in the trees for Bald Eagles and Ospreys. This spot can be accessed from either side of the river.



	Jan- Mar	April- June	July- Sept	Oct- Dec		Jan- Mar	April- June	July- Sept	Oct- Dec
<b>Rosebeaks</b>					<b>Swans, Geese, Ducks, Mergansers</b>				
Indigo Bunting*		C	C		Mallard*	A	A	A	A
Rose-breasted Grosbeak		C	C		Common Merganser*	U	C	U	C
<b>Swallows, Chicadees</b>					Canada Goose*	A	A	A	A
Bank Swallow*		C	C		Wood Duck*	U	C	C	U
Barn Swallow*		A	A		Mute Swan*	U	U	U	U
Northern Rough-winged Swallow*		U	U		Snow Goose	U			C
Purple Martin		U	U		American Black Duck*		C	C	
Tree Swallow*		A	C		American Coot	U			C
Black-capped Chicadee*	A	A	A	A	Hooded Merganser*	U	C	U	C
<b>Thrushes, Mimic Thrushes</b>					Ringed-neck Duck		C		C
American Robin*	U	A	A	C	Wood Duck*	U	C	C	U
Hermit Thrush*	U	C	U	U	Red-Necked Grebe		O		O
Wood Thrush*		A	C		Horned Grebe		O		U
Brown Thrasher*		U	O	O	<b>Loons, Kingfishers, Cormorants</b>				
Eastern Bluebird*	U	C	C	U	Common Loon*		C		C
Gray Catbird*		A	A	U	Double-Crested Cormorant		C	C	C
Northern Mockingbird*	U	C	C	U	Belted Kingfisher*	U	C	C	C
Veery*		A	C		Virginia Rail*	C	C	C	C
<b>Warblers, Waxwings</b>					Sora*		U	U	
American Redstart*		A	C		Wilson's Snipe*	U	U	U	U
Black-throated Blue Warbler*		C	U		Red-Throated Loon		U		U
Black-throated Green Warbler*		C	U		<b>Herons, Egrets</b>				
Blue-Winged Warbler*		C	U		Great Blue Heron*		A	A	A
Canada Warbler*		C	U		Great Egret		U	U	
Chestnut-sided Warbler*		C	U		Green Heron*		C	C	
Common Yellowthroat*		A	A		<b>Osprey, Hawks, Eagles, Falcons, Shrikes</b>				
Louisiana Waterthrush*		C	U		Bald Eagle*	C	C	C	C
Northern Waterthrush*		C	U		Northern Harrier	O	U	O	U
Overbird*		A	C		Northern Shrike	O			O
Pine Warbler*		O	O		Red-Tailed Hawk*	C	C	C	C
Wilson's Warbler		O	O		American Kestrel*	U	C	C	U
Yellow-rumped Warbler*		A	C	A	Osprey		C	U	C
Yellow Warbler*		A	C		Red-Shouldered Hawk*	U	C	C	C
Cedar Waxwing*	C	C	C	C	Broad-Winged Hawk*		C	C	
<b>Sparrows, Towhee</b>					Turkey Vulture*	C	C	C	C
American Tree Sparrow	C			C	<b>Gulls, Terns</b>				
Chipping Sparrow*		A	A		Lesser Black-Backed Gull	U	U		U
Dark-eyed Junco*	A	C	U	A	Gaucous Gull	U			U
Grasshopper Sparrow*		U	U	O	Herring Gull	A	A	A	
Field Sparrow*	U	U	U	U	Ring-Billed Gull	C	A	A	A
Lincoln's Sparrow		O	O	U	Bonaparte Gull		U	U	
Savannah Sparrow*	U	C	U	U	Common Tern		O	O	
Song Sparrow*	C	A	A	A	Black Tern		O	O	
Swamp Sparrow*	U	C	U	U	Iceland Gull	U			U
Vesper Sparrow*	O	U	U	O	Great Black-Backed Gull	C	A	A	A
White-throated Sparrow*	U	C	U	A	<b>Owls</b>				
White-crowned Sparrow	O	U	O	U	Barred Owl*	U	U	U	U
Eastern Towhee*	O	C	U	O					

#### KEY

Relative Abundance indicates how frequently a bird may be seen in its favored habitat.

A: Abundant - A very numerous species

C: Common - Likely to be seen or heard

U: Uncommon - Present, but not certain to be seen

O: Occasional - Seen only a few times during the season



	Jan- Mar	April- June	July- Sept	Oct- Dec
Eastern Screech Owl*	U	U	U	U
Great Horned Owl*	U	U	U	U
Long-eared Owl	O	O	O	O
<b>Woodpeckers</b>				
Hairy Woodpecker*	C	C	C	C
Northern Flicker*	U	C	A	C
Pileated Woodpecker*	U	U	U	U
Red-bellied Woodpecker*	C	C	C	C
Yellow-billed Sapsucker*	O	C	C	U
<b>Flycatchers</b>				
Eastern Kingbird*		C	C	
Eastern Phoebe*		A	A	U
Eastern Wood-peewee*		U	U	
Great Crested Flycatcher*		C	U	
Least Flycatcher*		C	U	
Olive-sided Flycatcher		U	U	
Willow Flycatcher*		U		
<b>Vireos</b>				
Blue-headed Vireo*		A	C	U
Red-eyed Vireo*		A	C	
Warbling Vireo*		A	C	
White-eyed Vireo			O	
Yellow-throated Vireo*		A	C	
<b>Jays, Crows</b>				
American Crow*	A	A	A	A
Blue Jay*	A	A	A	A
Common Raven*	U	U	U	U
Gray Jay*	O			O
<b>Tanagers</b>				
Scarlet Tanager*		A	A	
<b>Wrens, Kinglets</b>				
House Wren*		C	C	
Winter Wren*	O	C	U	U
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		C	C	U
<b>Finches</b>				
American Goldfinch*	A	A	A	A
Evening Grosbeak*	U	U	U	U
Purple Finch*	O	C	C	C
Red Crossbill	U	U	O	U
White-winged Crossbill	U	U	U	U
<b>Blackbirds, Orioles</b>				
Brown-headed Cowbird*	O	A	C	C
Bobolink*		C	U	
Common Grackle*	O	A	C	C
Eastern Meadowlark*	O	U	U	O
Red-winged Blackbird	U	A	A	C
Baltimore Oriole*		C	U	O

\* Breeds in Western Massachusetts

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