

Field Checklist for Stephens Forest

* = confirmed or likely area breeder

Iowa Wildlife Action Plan **Migratory Species of Greatest Conservation Need**

Iowa Wildlife Action Plan **Nesting Species of Greatest Conservation Need**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greater White-fronted Goose | <input type="checkbox"/> Ring-billed Gull |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snow Goose | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cackling Goose | <input type="checkbox"/> Rock Pigeon* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canada Goose* | <input type="checkbox"/> Eurasian Collared-Dove* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Duck* | <input type="checkbox"/> Mourning Dove* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gadwall | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Wigeon | <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-billed Cuckoo* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mallard | <input type="checkbox"/> Black-billed Cuckoo* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blue-winged Teal | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Shoveler | <input type="checkbox"/> Barn Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hooded Merganser | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common Merganser | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Screech-Owl* |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Great Horned Owl* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Bobwhite* | <input type="checkbox"/> Barred Owl* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ring-necked Pheasant* | <input type="checkbox"/> Long-eared Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ruffed Grouse* | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Saw-whet Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wild Turkey* | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Common Nighthawk* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pied-billed Grebe | <input type="checkbox"/> Chuck-will's-widow* |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Whip-poor-will* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Double-crested Cormorant | <input type="checkbox"/> Chimney Swift* |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruby-throated Hummingbird* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great Blue Heron* | <input type="checkbox"/> Belted Kingfisher* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great Egret | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green Heron* | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Red-headed Woodpecker* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey Vulture* | <input type="checkbox"/> Red-bellied Woodpecker* |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-bellied Sapsucker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Osprey | <input type="checkbox"/> Downy Woodpecker* |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Hairy Woodpecker* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bald Eagle* | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Flicker* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Harrier | <input type="checkbox"/> Pileated Woodpecker* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sharp-shinned Hawk* | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooper's Hawk* | <input type="checkbox"/> American Kestrel* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Goshawk | <input type="checkbox"/> Merlin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-shouldered Hawk* | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broad-winged Hawk* | <input type="checkbox"/> Olive-sided Flycatcher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swainson's Hawk | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Wood-Pewee* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-tailed Hawk* | <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-bellied Flycatcher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rough-legged Hawk | <input type="checkbox"/> Acadian Flycatcher* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golden Eagle | <input type="checkbox"/> Alder Flycatcher |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Willow Flycatcher* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sora | <input type="checkbox"/> Least Flycatcher* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Coot | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Phoebe* |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Great Crested Flycatcher* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Killdeer* | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Kingbird* |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Loggerhead Shrike* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spotted Sandpiper* | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Shrike |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lesser Yellowlegs | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Upland Sandpiper* | <input type="checkbox"/> White-eyed Vireo* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Semipalmated Sandpiper | <input type="checkbox"/> Bell's Vireo* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Least Sandpiper | <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-throated Vireo* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pectoral Sandpiper | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue-headed Vireo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wilson's Snipe | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Woodcock* | |

- Warbling Vireo*
- Red-eyed Vireo*

- Blue Jay*
- American Crow*

- Horned Lark*

- Purple Martin*
- Tree Swallow*
- N. Rough-winged Swallow*
- Bank Swallow*
- Cliff Swallow*
- Barn Swallow*

- Black-capped Chickadee*
- Tufted Titmouse*

- Red-breasted Nuthatch
- White-breasted Nuthatch*

- Brown Creeper**

- Carolina Wren*
- House Wren*
- Winter Wren
- Sedge Wren***

- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher*

- Golden-crowned Kinglet
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet

- Eastern Bluebird*
- Veery***
- Gray-cheeked Thrush
- Swainson's Thrush
- Hermit Thrush
- Wood Thrush***
- American Robin*

- Gray Catbird*
- Northern Mockingbird***
- Brown Thrasher*

- European Starling*

- Cedar Waxwing*

- Lapland Longspur

- Ovenbird*
- Louisiana Waterthrush***
- Northern Waterthrush
- Golden-winged Warbler**
- Blue-winged Warbler***
- Black-and-white Warbler***
- Prothonotary Warbler**
- Tennessee Warbler
- Orange-crowned Warbler
- Nashville Warbler
- Mourning Warbler

- Kentucky Warbler***
- Common Yellowthroat*
- Hooded Warbler***
- American Redstart*
- Cerulean Warbler***
- Northern Parula*
- Magnolia Warbler
- Bay-breasted Warbler
- Blackburnian Warbler
- Yellow Warbler*
- Chestnut-sided Warbler*
- Blackpoll Warbler
- Yellow-rumped Warbler
- Yellow-throated Warbler
- Black-throated Green Warbler
- Canada Warbler**
- Wilson's Warbler
- Yellow-breasted Chat***

- Eastern Towhee***
- American Tree Sparrow
- Chipping Sparrow*
- Clay-colored Sparrow
- Field Sparrow***
- Vesper Sparrow*
- Lark Sparrow***
- Savannah Sparrow*
- Grasshopper Sparrow***
- Henslow's Sparrow***
- Fox Sparrow
- Song Sparrow*
- Lincoln's Sparrow
- Swamp Sparrow
- White-throated Sparrow
- Harris's Sparrow
- White-crowned Sparrow
- Dark-eyed Junco

- Summer Tanager*
- Scarlet Tanager*
- Northern Cardinal*
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak*
- Blue Grosbeak
- Indigo Bunting*
- Dickcissel***

- Bobolink***
- Red-winged Blackbird*
- Eastern Meadowlark***
- Western Meadowlark*
- Rusty Blackbird**
- Common Grackle*
- Brown-headed Cowbird*
- Orchard Oriole*
- Baltimore Oriole*

- Purple Finch
- House Finch*
- Pine Siskin
- American Goldfinch*
- House Sparrow*



Belted Kingfisher
USFWS



American Redstart
Photo by Josh Otten

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Written by Jenni Dyar, AmeriCorps, 2008
Updated by Natalie Randall, 2012 and Julia Dale, AmeriCorps, 2014

Stephens Forest

Bird Conservation Area

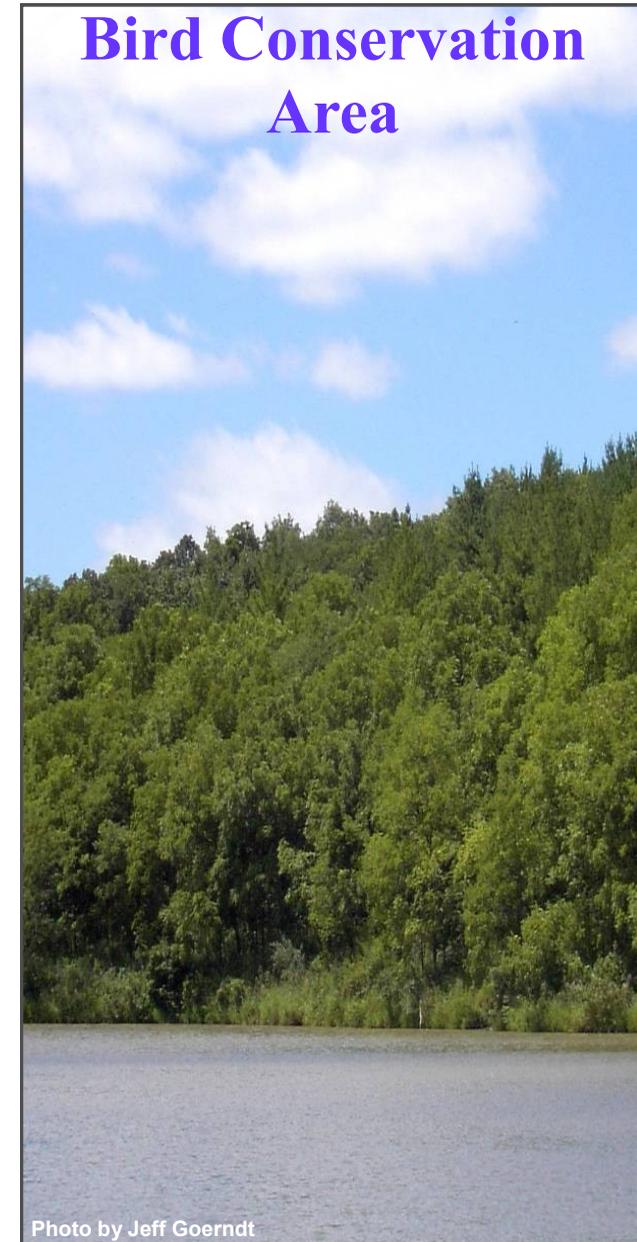
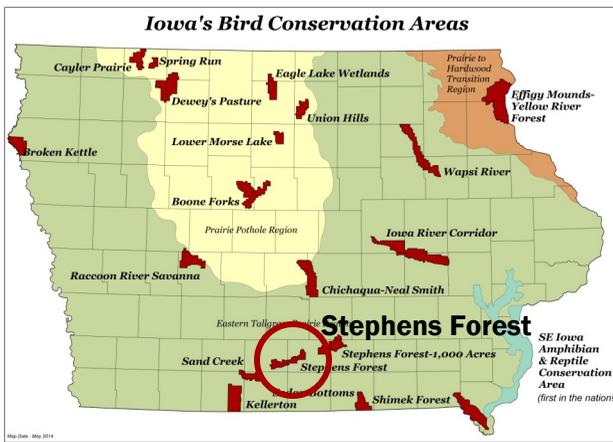


Photo by Jeff Goerndt

Lucas and Clarke Counties



Located in south-central Iowa, Stephens Forest is the thirteenth designated Bird Conservation Area (BCA) in Iowa. The Stephens State Forest complex is named for Dr. T.C. Stephens, a prominent educator and native of Sioux City. Divided into 7 units totaling 14,112 acres, it holds some of the largest tracts of contiguous forest in Iowa and is home to bird species such as the Red-shouldered Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Bobolink, Grasshopper Sparrow, Wood Thrush, Kentucky Warbler, Eastern Whip-poor-will, and American Woodcock. The Stephens Forest BCA contains the Woodburn, Whitebreast, and Lucas units and surrounding areas, encompassing 8,192 acres, with 6,751 acres in protected public ownership. In 2014, a second Bird Conservation area containing core habitat in Stephens State Forest was dedicated. The Stephens Forest– Thousand Acres BCA contains similar habitat to the original Stephens Forest BCA and is home to many of the same outstanding bird species. The presence of large enough tracts of quality habitat to allow for two Bird Conservation Areas is a testament to the importance of both the forest and grassland habitat of this unique area for breeding and migratory birds.

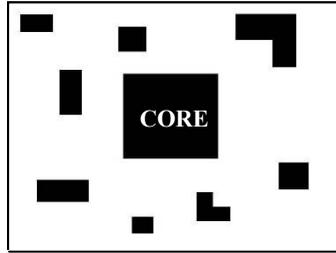


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BIRD CONSERVATION AREAS

Within the last two decades, alarming declines in a large number of species of North American birds have led to the emergence of national and international programs dedicated to the conservation of game and non-game birds. Since 1999, bird conservation organizations and enthusiasts have worked together under an umbrella called the North American Bird Conservation Initiative to “conserve all birds in all habitats.” As part of this initiative and in an effort to protect dwindling populations of many Iowa birds, the **Bird Conservation Area (BCA)** program was established by the Iowa DNR Wildlife Bureau in 2001. The present model BCA encompasses at least 10,000 acres of public and/or private lands with approximately 25 percent of the area established as key bird habitat. This concept is backed by research that suggests viable bird populations require conservation efforts at a landscape level. Each BCA also includes a large “core” area of protected high-quality habitat. Surrounding this core are private lands, plus additional public tracts, all managed to provide good bird habitat.



A BCA Model: Shaded areas depict public habitat protected for

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IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

The Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program is a global effort to identify and conserve areas that are vital to birds and other biodiversity. Designated IBAs include sites for breeding, wintering, and/ or migrating birds. By working to identify and implement conservation strategies, the IBA Program hopes to minimize the effects of habitat degradation and loss of birds and other wildlife.

STEPHENS FOREST DIVERSITY

Glaciers left deposits of glacial till over the area and prevailing westerly winds carried soil in from the Missouri River Valley, covering the area with a rich, fine silt layer. On the sides of hills, erosion has exposed glacial deposited materials and, in some instances, the underlying sedimentary material. The terrain is therefore characterized by narrow, flat ridges separated by deeply cut drainages.



PLANTS

The region is a mix of mostly oak-hickory and bottomland hardwood timber, with some tallgrass prairie. White and Red Oak and various hickory species are common. Other tree species such as Black and Bur Oak, Shingle Oak, White and Red Elm, Cottonwood, Hackberry, Green Ash, Silver Maple, Black Walnut, and various evergreen species can also be found.



ANIMALS

The forest is home to White-tailed Deer, Gray and Fox Squirrels, Raccoons, Cottontail Rabbits, Woodchuck, Muskrat, Skunks, Red and Gray Fox, Bobcats, Coyotes, Beavers, Opossums, and other small mammals.

Non-venomous snakes are common, like the Eastern Hognose Snake, Prairie Kingsnake, and Prairie Ringneck Snake. A lucky visitor may be able to catch a glimpse of Iowa’s only legless lizard, the elusive Slender Glass Lizard. Other amphibians and reptiles found in the area include the Smallmouth Salamander, Gray Tree Frog, Cricket Frog, and Spring Peeper.

A list of Iowa’s Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) can be found at www.iowadnr.gov by entering “Wildlife Action Plan” in the search. If you encounter uncommon or rare species in this BCA, please contact the Wildlife Diversity Program to report your sightings.



PARTNERSHIPS

The Stephens Forest Bird Conservation Area was made possible due to a partnership between the Lucas and Clarke County Conservation Boards, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Iowa Audubon, the National Wild Turkey Federation, and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.



Lucas County Conservation Board