

Field Checklist for Raccoon River BCA
* = 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

__ Greater White-fronted Goose	__ Virginia Rail
__ Snow Goose	__ Sora
__ Ross's Goose	__ Common Gallinule
__ Cackling Goose	__ American Coot*
__ Trumpeter Swan*	
__ Wood Duck*	__ Sandhill Crane
__ Gadwall	
__ American Wigeon	__ Black-bellied Plover
__ Mallard*	__ American Golden Plover
__ Blue-winged Teal*	__ Semipalmated Plover
__ Northern Shoveler	__ Killdeer*
__ Northern Pintail	__ American Avocet
__ Green-winged Teal*	__ Spotted Sandpiper*
__ Canvasback	__ Solitary Sandpiper
__ Redhead	__ Greater Yellowlegs
__ Ring-necked Duck	__ Willet
__ Greater Scaup	__ Lesser Yellowlegs
__ Lesser Scaup	__ Upland Sandpiper*
__ Bufflehead	__ Hudsonian Godwit
__ Hooded Merganser*	__ Marbled Godwit
__ Common Merganser	__ Semipalmated Sandpiper
__ Red-breasted Merganser	__ Least Sandpiper
__ Ruddy Duck	__ White-rumped Sandpiper
	__ Baird's Sandpiper
__ Northern Bobwhite*	__ Pectoral Sandpiper
__ Gray Partridge*	__ Dunlin
__ Ring-necked Pheasant*	__ Stilt Sandpiper
__ Wild Turkey*	__ Short-billed Dowitcher
	__ Long-billed Dowitcher
	__ Wilson's Snipe
	__ American Woodcock*
	__ Wilson's Phalarope
__ Pied-billed Grebe*	__ Bonaparte's Gull
__ Horned Grebe	__ Franklin's Gull
__ Eared Grebe	__ Ring-billed Gull
	__ Herring Gull
	__ Caspian Tern
__ Double-crested Cormorant	__ Black Tern
__ American White Pelican	__ Forster's Tern
__ American Bittern	
__ Least Bittern	
__ Great Blue Heron*	
__ Great Egret	
__ Cattle Egret	
__ Green Heron*	__ Rock Pigeon*
__ Black-crowned Night-Heron	__ Eurasian Collared Dove*
	__ Mourning Dove*
__ Turkey Vulture*	
	__ Yellow-billed Cuckoo*
__ Osprey	__ Black-billed Cuckoo*
__ Bald Eagle*	
__ Nothern Harrier*	__ Barn Owl*
__ Sharp-shinned Hawk	__ Eastern Screech-Owl*
__ Cooper's Hawk*	__ Great Horned Owl*
__ Northern Goshawk	__ Snowy Owl
__ Red-shouldered Hawk*	__ Barred Owl*
__ Broad-winged Hawk*	__ Long-eared Owl
__ Swainson's Hawk	__ Short-eared Owl
__ Red-tailed Hawk*	__ Northern Saw-Whet Owl
__ Rough-legged Hawk	__ Common Nighthawk*
	__ Eastern Whip-poor-will*

__ Chimney Swift*	__ Ruby-crowned Kinglet
__ Ruby-throated Hummingbird*	__ Eastern Bluebird*
	__ Veery*
__ Belted Kingfisher*	__ Gray-cheeked Thrush
	__ Swainson's Thrush
__ Red-headed Woodpecker*	__ Hermit Thrush
__ Red-bellied Woodpecker*	__ Wood Thrush*
__ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	__ American Robin*
__ Downy Woodpecker*	
__ Hairy Woodpecker*	__ Gray Catbird*
__ Northern Flicker*	__ Northern Mockingbird*
__ Pileated Woodpecker*	__ Brown Thrasher*
__ American Kestrel*	
__ Merlin	__ European Starling*
__ Peregrine Falcon	
	__ American Pipit
__ Olive-sided Flycatcher	__ Cedar Waxwing*
__ Eastern Wood-Pewee*	
__ Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	__ Lapland Longspur
__ Acadian Flycatcher*	__ Snow Bunting
__ Alder Flycatcher	
__ Willow Flycatcher*	__ Ovenbird*
__ Least Flycatcher*	__ Louisiana Waterthrush*
__ Eastern Phoebe*	__ Northern Waterthrush
__ Vermilion Flycatcher	__ Golden-winged Warbler
__ Great Crested Flycatcher*	__ Blue-winged Warbler
__ Western Kingbird	__ Black-and-white Warbler
__ Eastern Kingbird*	__ Prothonotary Warbler
	__ Tennessee Warbler
__ Loggerhead Shrike*	__ Orange-crowned Warbler
__ Northern Shrike	__ Nashville Warbler
	__ Mourning Warbler
__ Bell's Vireo*	__ Kentucky Warbler
__ Yellow-throated Vireo*	__ Common Yellowthroat*
__ Blue-headed Vireo	__ American Redstart*
__ Warbling Vireo*	__ Cape May Warbler
__ Philadelphia Vireo	__ Cerulean Warbler
__ Red-eyed Vireo*	__ Northern Parula*
	__ Magnolia Warbler
__ Blue Jay*	__ Bay-breasted Warbler
__ American Crow*	__ Blackburnian Warbler
	__ Yellow Warbler*
__ Horned Lark*	__ Chestnut-sided Warbler
	__ Blackpoll Warbler
__ Purple Martin*	__ Palm Warbler
__ Tree Swallow*	__ Yellow-rumped Warbler
__ Northern Rough-winged Swallow*	__ Yellow-throated Warbler*
__ Bank Swallow*	__ Black-throated Green Warbler
__ Cliff Swallow*	__ Canada Warbler
__ Barn Swallow*	__ Wilson's Warbler
	__ Yellow-breasted Chat
__ Black-capped Chickadee*	
__ Tufted Titmouse*	__ Spotted Towhee
__ Red-breasted Nuthatch*	__ Eastern Towhee*
__ White-breasted Nuthatch*	__ American Tree Sparrow
__ Brown Creeper	__ Chipping Sparrow*
	__ Clay Colored Sparrow*
__ Carolina Wren*	__ Field Sparrow*
__ House Wren*	__ Vesper Sparrow*
__ Winter Wren	__ Lark Sparrow*
__ Sedge Wren*	__ Savannah Sparrow*
__ Marsh Wren*	__ Grasshopper Sparrow*
__ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher*	__ Henslow's Sparrow
	__ Le Conte's Sparrow
__ Golden-crowned Kinglet	

__ Nelson's Sparrow	__ Eastern Meadowlark*
__ Fox Sparrow	__ Western Meadowlark*
__ Song Sparrow*	__ Yellow-headed Blackbird*
__ Swamp Sparrow*	__ Rusty Blackbird
__ White-throated Sparrow	__ Brewer's Blackbird
__ Harris's Sparrow	__ Common Grackle*
__ White-crowned Sparrow	__ Great-tailed Grackle
__ Dark-eyed Junco	__ Brown-headed Cowbird*
	__ Orchard Oriole*
__ Summer Tanager*	__ Baltimore Oriole*
__ Scarlet Tanager*	
__ Northern Cardinal*	__ Purple Finch
__ Rose-breasted Grosbeak*	__ House Finch*
__ Blue Grosbeak*	__ Common Redpoll
__ Indigo Bunting*	__ Pine Siskin
__ Dickcissel*	__ American Goldfinch*
__ Bobolink*	__ House Sparrow*
__ Red-winged Blackbird*	



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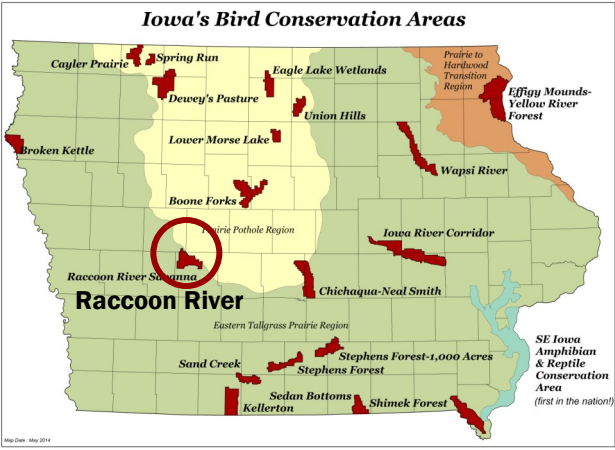
Raccoon River
Savanna

Bird Conservation Area



Photo by Doug Harr

Carroll and Guthrie
Counties



The Raccoon River Savanna Bird Conservation Area (BCA), dedicated in 2006, was the tenth to be created in the state of Iowa. Totalling 54,361 acres, this large land tract encompasses three core areas in which conservation measures can be targeted: Whiterock Conservancy, Springbrook State Park, and Elk Grove Wildlife Area. This the first Iowa BCA to focus on savanna, often likened to a transition zone between prairie and forest that is crucial for many of Iowa’s birds. As many as one-third of the state’s 200 breeding birds can be found nesting in this increasingly rare habitat. Comprised of both public and private land, this mosaic landscape provides refuge to many grassland, savanna, and woodland birds. At least 29 of Iowa’s 67 Greatest Conservation Need (GCN) breeding bird species were recently documented on Whiterock Conservancy land.



Northern Bobwhite
©2008 Jenni Dyar



Grasshopper Sparrow
Jim Durbin

BIRD CONSERVATION AREAS

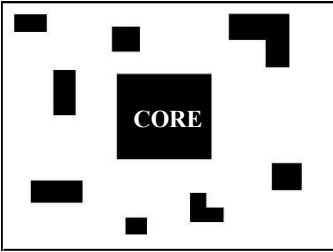
Within the last two decades, alarming declines in a large number of species of North American birds have led to

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



Northern Mockingbird
Doug Harr

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-oriented 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 good bird habitat.

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.



RACCOON RIVER DIVERSITY

Raccoon River Savanna is so named because it contains valuable savanna habitat. This unique landscape is characterized by sprawling oaks interspersed with healthy grasslands and gives modern visitors an idea of what much of Iowa looked like before European settlement. Several species of plants and animals rely on savanna, and many are rarely found outside of this type of habitat.

PLANTS

Because the Raccoon River Savanna boasts a mixture of grasslands, woodlands, and savanna, a variety of species can be found on even a short excursion. One may encounter Indian Grass, Prairie Blazing Star, Purple Prairie Clover, or Butterfly Milkweed in the prairies. Species such as Little Bluestem, Pennsylvania Sedge, Side-oats Grama, Virginia Wild Rye, and Bur Oak typify the savanna habitat. Oak and hickory species dominate the woodlands, and Solomon’s Seal, Bloodroot, Virginia Waterleaf, Columbine, and Jack-in-the-pulpit blanket the understory in the spring.



Prairie Blazing Star
Bruce Ehresman



Butterfly Milkweed
Bruce Ehresman

ANIMALS

Numerous bird species use this BCA for nesting or wintering habitat, and many more stop here during their migrations. A Vermillion Flycatcher was documented in 2005 on Whiterock Conservancy land, and Ospreys were reintroduced starting in 2006 by the nonprofit organization Saving Our Avian Resources. While the Vermillion Flycatcher is a rarity north of Texas, Ospreys can still be seen within the BCA.

The Raccoon River Savanna is vital for many non-avian species as well. Look for the Edwards’ Hairstreak



Edwards’ Hairstreak

butterfly, an Iowa Species of Greatest Conservation Need, throughout the open oak savannas. The Gorgone Checkerspot butterfly flutters among the asters and sunflowers in mesic prairies, as does the Plains Clubtail

dragonfly. The Northern Prairie Skink finds cover in this region’s rocky kames. Wet savanna provides habitat for Cope’s Gray Tree Frog and Northern Leopard Frog. Keep an eye on the ground for a scurrying Meadow Vole, and listen for the chatter of both Fox and Gray Squirrels throughout the wooded portions of this BCA.

Northern Prairie Skink
Photo by Jeff LeClerc www.HerpNet.net



PARTNERSHIPS

Partners in creating the Raccoon River Savanna BCA include Whiterock Conservancy, the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Saving Our Avian Resources, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Audubon, and Carroll and Guthrie County Conservation Boards.

