

## BIRD SPECIES TO SPOT AT FLAGSTAFF LAKE

- Canada Goose
- American Black Duck
- Hooded Merganser
- Ruffed Grouse
- Common Loon
- American Bittern
- Turkey Vulture
- Bald Eagle
- Spotted Sandpiper
- Herring Gull
- Barred Owl
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
- Downy Woodpecker
- Hairy Woodpecker
- Black-backed Woodpecker
- Northern Flicker
- Pileated Woodpecker
- Olive-sided Flycatcher
- Alder Flycatcher
- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
- Eastern Phoebe
- Eastern Kingbird
- Blue-headed Vireo
- Warbling Vireo
- Red-eyed Vireo
- Gray Jay
- Blue Jay
- American Crow
- Common Raven
- Tree Swallow
- Black-capped Chickadee
- Red-breasted Nuthatch
- Brown Creeper
- Winter Wren
- Golden-crowned Kinglet
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- Swainson's Thrush
- Hermit Thrush
- American Robin
- Cedar Waxwing
- Nashville Warbler
- Northern Parula
- Chestnut-sided Warbler
- Magnolia Warbler
- Black-throated Blue Warbler
- Yellow-rumped Warbler
- Black-throated Green Warbler
- Blackburnian Warbler
- Black and White Warbler
- American Redstart
- Ovenbird
- Northern Waterthrush
- Mourning Warbler
- Common Yellowthroat
- Canada Warbler
- Scarlet Tanager
- Song Sparrow
- Swamp Sparrow
- White-throated Sparrow
- Dark-eyed Junco
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Common Grackle
- Baltimore Oriole
- Purple Finch
- American Goldfinch
- Evening Grosbeak



*Bald Eagle Eaglets at Flagstaff  
Photo taken by Wildlife Biologist Bill Hanson*

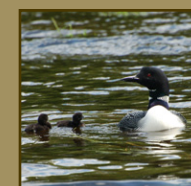
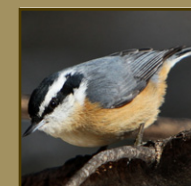
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## FLAGSTAFF LAKE HUT

As a base for birding Maine's Northern Forest, few places are better situated than the Flagstaff Lake Hut. From here it is possible to access most of the region's habitat types over the course of several days and stand a good chance of finding many sought-after birds. Around the hut itself, miles of foot trails pass through various-aged stands of deciduous and coniferous forest, skirt lakeshores, and probe into ponds and beaver flowages where one can find a wide variety of forest species. Paddling the lake by canoe or kayak also provides great opportunities to see water birds at close range.

### Walk 1

A one-mile loop that includes a good array of representative habitat types for this area starts from the Flagstaff Hut's front door. Head down through the birches and bear left on the appropriately named Birch Trail. During the summer months, the dominant song here is often that of the **Red-eyed Vireo**—a species that often sings throughout the day. During pauses in the vireo chorus, listen and watch for other mixed woods species including **Hermit Thrush**, **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **American Redstart**, **Black-throated Green Warbler**, **Ovenbird**, and **White-throated Sparrow**.

Continue out to the point for a view across the lake at Bigelow Mountain, scanning the surface for **Common Loon**. Closer to shore, watch for **Canada Goose**, **Wood Duck**, **Common and Hooded Mergansers**, and perhaps a patrolling **Bald Eagle**. Along the shore itself, listen for the "beeps" of **Spotted Sandpiper** and the dry rattles of **Belted Kingfisher**; both species often give away their presence with their distinctive calls.

From that point, follow the trail along the shore. Shortly after passing into coniferous woods, the trail runs up parallel with an elevated bank on the left which, on careful inspection, reveals itself as an old overgrown beaver dam. The wet woods behind this embankment are a good place to look for **Canada Warblers** and, in the adjacent dense spruce stands, **Magnolia Warblers** can be conspicuous. Continuing a short distance further, the trail comes out onto a grassy woods road. A short detour to the right leads out to a lakeside campsite that provides another great vantage point from which to scan the lake for water birds and views of Bigelow.

Return back along the woods road for several hundred yards to its junction on the left with the Maine Hut Trail. This section traverses a good mix of forest types that are habitat for an array of wood warblers that inhabit this area from May through early September including **Nashville**, **Northern Parula**, **Chestnut-sided**, **Magnolia**, **Black-throated Blue**, **Yellow-rumped**, **Black-throated Green**, **Blackburnian**, **American Redstart**, **Ovenbird**, and **Canada Warblers**. In addition to the warblers, other characteristic northern forest birds along this stretch including **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**, **Winter Wren**, both **Golden-crowned** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**, **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, **Swainson's** and **Hermit Thrushes**, and **White-throated Sparrow**.

As the trail winds back toward the Flagstaff Hut service road, look for an unmarked trail on the left that leads a short distance to a beaver-dam flowage that is just visible as a clearing through the trees. This open wetland with standing cedar snags is a good place to look for various woodpeckers including **Pileated**, **Hairy**, **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, and possibly a **Black-backed**. This is also a good spot to listen and look for **Olive-sided** and **Alder Flycatchers**, as well as a raptor that may be perched in the dead trees. Return to the Hut via the service road.

### Walk 2

Though perhaps not as scenic as a walk along the foot trails surrounding Flagstaff Hut, an out-and-back walk along the service road leading up to the trailhead parking lot can be very good for birding. Wider and more open than the foot trails, the service road allows more room to maneuver for views of birds moving through thick vegetation.

Passing through a variety of mixed-age forest habitats, the 1.1-mile road provides many opportunities to find a wide array of woodland birds. Stopping along the road in different habitats and then scanning the forest for movement is a good approach for finding birds. At least 16 warbler species have been found along this road and that number is certain to grow as more observers bird here. Although there is some overlap, each of these species has its preferred habitat. Look near the tops of tall spruce trees for the fiery orange **Blackburnian Warbler** or the multi-colored **Northern Parula**. **Black-throated Green** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers** are often in mature mixed woods while birch trees and second growth are preferred by **Nashville Warbler**. Dense spruce thickets are often cover for **Magnolia Warbler**, **Black-throated Blue** and **Canada Warblers** are more likely to be found in dense hardwoods. Shrubby regenerating cut-over areas are likely spots to find **Common Yellowthroat** but be alert for the uncommon **Mourning Warbler** in those areas as well.

Although the warblers may be the stars of the show on this walk, many other species are evident here as well, particularly from May through mid July and then from mid August through September. Six woodpecker species are possible here with **Black-backed** being the most uncommon. Look for this species in dead spruce trees, its tell-tale sign being patches of flaked-off bark. In addition to scanning the woods for birds, be alert for birds passing overhead often calling as they do. The various croaks, shrieks, and vocalizations of **Common Raven** can be expected, as are the thin, static-sounding notes of small flocks of wandering **Cedar Waxwing**. At irregular intervals, flocks of **White-winged Crossbills**, **Pine Siskins**, **Common Redpolls**, or **Evening Grosbeaks** move through this area, each distinguishable by its unique flight call. During the breeding season a prominent feature of these woods in the early morning and evening twilight hours is the song of both **Hermit** and **Swainson's Thrushes**. Each has a flute-like and ethereal quality; the Swainson's song spiraling upward almost as though suggesting a question. In forested areas such as this, more birds will typically be identifiable through their songs and calls than by sight so developing some familiarity with their sounds is an important part of the birding experience.