

Birding at Elk Neck State Park

Birdwatching is one of the most popular activities at Elk Neck State Park. With a variety of habitats along the peninsula, visitors can see many types of birds throughout the seasons but especially during times of migration. Elk Neck State Park falls within the Atlantic Flyway zone.



Photo Credit: US Fish and Wildlife Service,
<https://www.fws.gov/media/migratorybirdprogramadministrativeflywaysstateandprovincemapjpg>

Maryland Biodiversity Project

Since 2021, Elk Neck State Park has partnered with the Maryland Biodiversity Project (MBP), a non-profit organization that performs nature studies of Maryland's living things (birds, insects, plants, and others) to promote conservation, science, and education. This MBP community has cataloged more than 20,600 species, including nearly 13,000 species with photographs and features the work of more than 18,000 naturalists and photographers. For more information about the Maryland Biodiversity Project or to see the data collected from the nature studies, visit <https://www.marylandbiodiversity.com/>.

Common Birds seen at Elk Neck State Park

- Length (L), Wingspan (WS), Habitat (H), Features (F), Seasons (S)
- Numbers viewed taken from 2022 Bird Count Aug-Nov Summary

Ring-billed Gull

Larus delawarensis

L: 17"

WS: 48"

H: Beaches, ponds, reservoirs

F: Yellow bill w/black, ring; pale gray above; white; yellow legs

S: All year

viewed in bird count: 4137



Photo Credit: Skip Russell, Flickr

Double-Crested Cormorant

Phalacrocorax auritus

L: 32"

WS: 52"

H: Coastal areas, bays, lakes

F: Large black body, orange to yellow skin on face and throat; hooked bill

S: All year

viewed in bird count:4024



Photo credit: Dennis Church, Flickr

Snow Geese

Chen caerulescens

L: 30"

WS: 54"

H: Shallow marshes and ponds, grain fields

F: White body w/ black wingtips; large pink bill; pink legs

S: Fall - Spring

viewed in bird count: 104



Photo Credit: Mick Thompson, Flickr

Tundra Swan

Cygnus columbianus

L: 52"

WS: 85"

H: Estuaries, lakes

F: Huge white body; black bill w/ yellow patch near eye

S: Fall - Spring

viewed in bird count: 1937



Photo Credit: Sergey Yeliseev, Flickr

Forster's Tern

Sterna forsteri

L: 19"

WS: 31"

H: Marshes, lakes, bays

F: Breeding adult w/ full black cap; orange bill w/ dark tip; forked tip

S: All year

viewed in bird count: 2942



Photo Credit: Len Blumin, Flickr

Red-winged Blackbird

Agelaius phoeniceus

L: 9"

WS: 13"

H: Marshes, ponds, wet fields



F: Male: jet black w/ red or orange shoulder patch w/ yellow edge
S: All year

viewed in bird count: 14632

Photo Credit: Ashok Boghani, Flickr

American Goldfinch
Carduelis tristis

L: 5"
WS: 9"
H: Shrubby areas, farms, gardens
F: Male: yellow body; dull orange bill; black wings, tail and cap
S: Spring - Fall

viewed in bird count: 15017



Photo Credit: Karin Lewis, Flickr

Common Grackle
Quiscalus quiscula

L: 12"
WS: 17"
H: Farmlands, parks, wetlands
F: Mostly black; iridescent wings in sunlight; yellow eyes
S: All year

viewed in bird count 128181



Photo Credit: Tim Sackton, Flickr

Cedar Waxwing
Bombycilla cedrorum

L: 7"
WS: 12"
H: Countryside, suburbs, parks
F: Brown overall; black eyestripe; yellow-tipped tail and red-tipped wings
S: All year

viewed in bird count: 14685



Photo Credit: Diana Robinson, Flickr

Eastern Bluebird

Sialia sialis

L: 7"

WS: 9"

H: Farmlands, country yards

F: Male: Bright blue head, wings and back, rust colored breast

S: All year

viewed in bird count: 1201



Photo Credit: Miki Jourdan, Flickr

Blue Jay

Cyanocitta cristata

L: 11"

WS: 16"

H: Woodlands, parks, gardens

F: Blue crest and back; white around the eye; primarily blue wings w/ black bars

S: All year

viewed in bird count: 18462



Photo Credit: Phil Romans, Flickr

American Robin

Turdus migratorius

L: 10"

WS: 14"

H: Fields, woodland edges, lawns

F: Yellow bill; dark gray upperparts; brick red below

S: All year

viewed in bird count: 25026



Photo Credit: MD Dept of Natural Resources, Flickr

Scarlet Tanager

Piranga olivacea

L: 7"

WS: 12"

H: Mature woodlands

F: Male: bright red body; black wings and tail

S: Spring - Fall

viewed in bird count 148



Photo Credit: Steven Kersting, Flickr

Pileated Woodpecker

Dryocopus pileatus

L: 17"

WS: 29"

H: Mature woodlands, suburbs

F: Black body and wings; red neck; males w/ red stripe on chin

S: All year

viewed in bird count: 17



Photo Credit: Jerry McFarland, Flickr

Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted)

Colaptes auratus

L: 13"

WS: 19"

H: Open woodlands, parks, suburbs

F: Yellow under wing and tail; black spotted underparts; black bill; red blaze on nape

S: All year

viewed in bird count: 1505



Photo Credit: Mark Moschell, Flickr

Bald Eagle

Haliaeetus leucocephalus

L: 35"

WS: 85"

H: Bays, lakes, rivers, fields

F: adults: white head, tail;
hooked yellow bill; yellow feet

S: All year

viewed in bird count: 139



Photo Credit: MD Dept of Natural Resources, Flickr

Osprey

Pandion haliaetus

L: 24"

WS: 70"

H: Coastlines, bays, rivers

F: White head; dark streak through
eye; dark above; white below;
underwings boldly patterned

S: Spring - Fall

viewed in bird count: 86



Photo Credit: Mick Thompson, Flickr

Turkey Vulture

Cathartes aura

L: 27"

WS: 69"

H: Woodland edges, fields

F: Large black body; red,
unfeathered head, trailing wing
edge silver in flight

S: All year

viewed in bird count: 1319



Photo Credit: Mark Moschell, Flickr
