



In the spring of 2025, PA Parks & Forests Foundation conducted an online survey of “Your Favorite Trail to ...”. Here are some resulting ideas for birdwatching.

What is Birdwatching?

Birdwatching is the observation of wild birds in their natural habitat, often using binoculars or a scope. This can be done for recreation, conservation, or scientific purposes.

All State Parks/Forest Mentioned

- Susquehannock State Forest
- Pymatuning State Park
- Chapman State Park
- Moraine State Park
- Nolde State Forest
- Black Moshannon State Park
- Blue Knob State Park
- Buchanan State Forest
- Canoe Creek State Park
- Codorus State Park
- Erie Bluffs State Park
- French Creek State Park
- Hills Creek State Park
- Nolde Forest Environmental Education Center
- Ohiopyle State Park
- Oil Creek State Park
- Shawnee State Park
- Vosburg Neck State Park

Tips For Birdwatching

- Be quiet and observe
- Use binoculars effectively

- Find a spot and stay put
- Record your observations
- LEAVE NO TRACE! - minimize your impact on the environment

Try Out These Apps!

- Audubon Bird Guide (Free)
- BirdsEye (Free w/ In-App Purchases)
- Merlin Bird ID (Free)
- ChirpOMatic (\$3.99)

Basic Gear

- Binoculars
- Camera
- Quiet footwear
- Field guide or birding app
- Weather appropriate clothing
- Notebook or app for logging



Photo Credit: Kody Beer, Pymatuning State Park

Moraine State Park

County:

Butler County

Lake Arthur

- Contains the Waterfowl Observation Area, easily accessible from Route 528
- Great observations to be made during migration seasons
- Ducks, grebes, and coots

Sunken Garden Trail

- 3.5 mile loop trail
- Marked by blue blazes
- Considered “Easiest Hiking”
- Can spot various bird species in wooded areas, including warblers
- Trailhead amenities include restrooms, drinking water, and picnic tables
- Access to this trail is located right across Pleasant Valley Road from the Pleasant Valley Picnic Area

Vosburg Neck State Park

County:

Wyoming County

Eagle Trail

- 1.01 mile point to point trail
- Not marked by blazes
- Ideal for beginner birders
- Potential for seeing eagles and other birds

River Trail

- 0.6 mile long loop trail
- Not marked by blazes
- Overlooks of the river provide exquisite views of herons, gulls, geese, and osprey

Pymatuning State Park

Counties:

Located in both Crawford and Mercer counties

Pymatuning Reservoir

- Attracts various bird species, especially during fall and spring migrations
- Great place to observe water fowl such as tundra swans, mergansers, and buffleheads
- Other species such as bald eagles, herons, and osprey
- Access points include US Route 6 (north shore), Pennsylvania Route 285 (east shore), US Route 322 (south shore)

Four Island Bay Launch

- Boat launch area with a good view of the reservoir
- Attracts water fowl such as geese and cormorants

Black Jack Swamp

- Encompasses 725 acres of mature forest of hardwoods and eastern white pines, secluded coves, and narrow shrub-lined channels
- Also has vast wetlands
- Accessible via kayak or canoe launched from the Wilson Boat Launch near Route 6



Photo Credit: Britney Lenig, Moraine State Park

These fact sheets are funded, in part, by a grant from AARP.

