



SPRING TRAILS FIELD GUIDE

BIRDS

BLUE JAY (*CYANOCITTA CRISTATA*)

Habitat

- ☐ Mostly near oak trees and forest edges
- ☐ Urban and suburban areas

Food

- ☐ Glean insects and take nuts and seeds in trees
- ☐ Dead or injured small vertebrates

Behavior

- ☐ Complex social systems and tight family bonds
- ☐ Communicate vocally and through body language
- ☐ High crest, high aggression



BLACK VULTURE (*CORAGYPS ATRATUS*)

Habitat

- ☐ Open woodland areas

Food

- ☐ Primarily carrion with occasional small fish and small live animals

Behavior

- ☐ Nest in dark cavities such as caves or hollow trees
- ☐ Spot carcasses by soaring overhead and by their keen eyesight
- ☐ Have long-term monogamous relationships



CAROLINA WREN

(*THRYOTHORUS LUDOVICIANUS*)

Habitat

- ☐ Frequently vegetated habitats
- ☐ Gravitate toward shrubby, wooded residential areas

Food

- ☐ Insects and spiders, sometimes plant matter

Behavior

- ☐ Alone or in pairs and groups
- ☐ Use curved bills to turn over decaying vegetation and shake apart large bugs
- ☐ Stay on ground mostly



CHIPPING SPARROW (*SPIZELLA PASSERINA*)

Habitat

- Woody areas with grassy openings as well as suburbs

Food

- Seeds, grasses, and herbs with protein-rich insects during mating season

Behavior

- Males are defensive against other Chipping Sparrows during mating season, but tolerate other species.
- Form large flocks dozens to forage
- Flight pattern is energetic, straight, and only slightly undulating.



EASTERN BLUEBIRD (*SIALIA SIALIS*)

Habitat

- Open country around trees with little understory
- Common along pastures, fields, parks

Food

- Insects (caterpillars, beetles crickets, grasshoppers...) and fruit (sumac, blueberries, black cherry...)
- Rarely salamanders, shrews, snakes, lizards

Behavior

- Perch on wires and fence posts



GREAT BLUE HERON (*ARDEA HERODIAS*)

Habitat

- Freshwater and saltwater habitats, sometimes grasslands and agricultural fields

Food

- Nearly anything within striking distance (fish, reptiles, insects, birds)

Behavior

- Wades slowly or stands still watching for prey
- In flight neck folds in "S" shape
- Elaborate courtship ritual



GREAT EGRET (*ARDEA ALBA*)

Habitat

- Wetland areas, some grasslands and flooded farm fields.

Food

- Small fish with occasional amphibians, reptiles, birds, and invertebrates.

Behavior

- Stalks with neck extended and wings close to body
- Form monogamous pairs each breeding season



MOURNING DOVE (*ZENaida MACROURA*)

Habitat

- Open country, scattered trees, woodland edges

Food

- Seeds, grains, nuts

Behavior

- Feed on the ground and in the open
- Preen with gently neck nibbling progressing to head-bobbing in unison



NORTHERN CARDINAL (*CARDINALIS CARDINALIS*)

Habitat

- Dense shrubby areas
- Nest in dense foliage and perch high for singing

Food

- Seeds, fruit, insects

Behavior

- Hop through low branches and forage on or near the ground
- Sing and preen from high branch of shrub
- Crest raises during agitation



NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*MIMUS POLYGLOTTOS*)

Habitat

- Open ground and shrubby vegetation
- Prefers grassy areas

Food

- Insects (beetles, earthworms, butterflies, ants, wasps...) and fruit
- Sometimes drink sap from pruned trees

Behavior

- Perches on wires and fence posts
- Can sight prey from 60 feet away



PILEATED WOODPECKER (*DRYOCOPUS PILEATUS*)

Habitat

- Mature deciduous woodlands or young forests with dead trees

Food

- Carpenter ants and insects

Behavior

- Forage in large, dead wood
- Use long barbed tongues to extract beetle larvae



TUFTED TITMOUSE (*BAELOPHUS BICOLOR*)

Habitat

- Deciduous woods, orchards, parks
- Low elevations

Food

- Mainly insects (caterpillars, beetles, ants, wasps...)
- Seeds and berries

Behavior

- Flit from branch to branch of canopy looking for food
- Hold seeds with feet and hammer open with beaks
- Can hang upside down or sideways



MAMMALS

WHITE TAILED DEER (*ODOCOILEUS VIRGINIANUS*)

Habitat

- Very adaptive, but prefers a mixture of hardwoods, croplands, brush lands, and pasturelands.

Food

- Grasses, legumes, weeds, fruits, agricultural crops, shrubs, and vines.

Behavior

- Has very few natural predators; primarily managed through hunting.
- Prone to overpopulation
- Tends to be shy around humans.



EASTERN FOX SQUIRREL (*SCIURUS NIGER*)

Habitat

- Wooded areas with scattered trees and a relatively open understory.

Food

- Primarily nuts and seeds

Behavior

- Fast and focused
- Will approach humans if acclimated



COYOTE (*CANIS LATRANS*)

Habitat

- Very adaptable, wooded areas, prairieland, and urban areas all host coyotes.

Food

- Rabbits, rodents, fish, deer, frogs, fruit, grass, carrion, and snakes

Behavior

- Keen vision and a strong sense of smell
- Form strong family bonds, young are raised dutifully by parents
- Communicate with a distinctive call



FISH

BLUEGILL SUNFISH (*LEPOMIS MACROCHIRUS*)

Habitat

- Freshwater lakes and streams, slow-moving and rocky streams.

Food

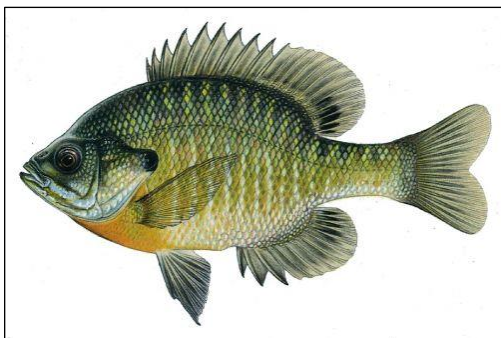
- Small animals, invertebrates, and small fish.

Behavior

- Most active at dawn, hiding under cover during the day time.

Size

- 12-16 in



LARGE-MOUTH BASS (*MICROPERUS SALMOIDES*)

Habitat

- Lakes, reservoirs, ponds, and medium to large rivers. Can also thrive in ditches, creeks, canals, and sloughs.

Food

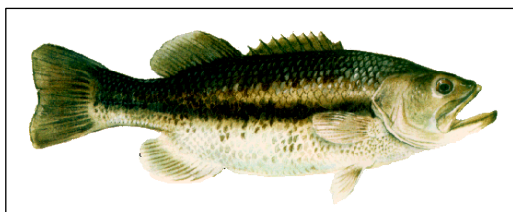
- Other fish, invertebrates, snakes, ducks, and small turtles.

Behavior

- Hunt primarily by ambush
- Spawn in late winter

Size

- 18-24 in



RED EARED SUNFISH (*LEPOMIS MICROLOPHUS*)

Habitat

- Clear ponds with vegetation

Food

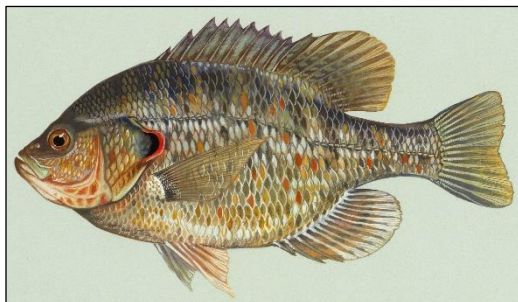
- Snails, clams, small mussels, and mollusks.

Behavior

- Will put up a fight if caught
- Can crack shells in back of throats

Size

- 7.9-16 in



SPIDERS & INSECTS

SPIDERS

JUMPING SPIDER (*SALTICIDAE*)

Habitat

- Open, woodland habitats. Jumping spiders do not prefer hardwood forests.

Food

- Mainly insects sometimes small fish, frogs, tadpoles

Behavior

- Jump onto their prey
- Can jump a distance of more than 30 times their own length
- Very vocal during courtship

Size

- .04-.98 in



WOLF SPIDER (*RABIDOSA RABIDA*)

Habitat

- Open grasslands, suburban lawns, deciduous forests, sandy soil and wet terrain

Food

- Mainly insects

Behavior

- Live on ground and hunt for prey at night
- Do not spin webs

Size

- 2.2 - 35.0 mm



DRAGONFLIES

GREEN DARNER (*ANAX JUNIUS*)

Habitat

- ☐ Riparian habitats, herbaceous vegetation, forests, grasslands, and deserts with ready source of water.

Food

- ☐ Tiny flying insects, mosquitoes

Size

- ☐ 3-4.5 in



EASTERN PONDHAWK (*ERYTHEMIS SIMPLICICOLLIS*)

Habitat

- ☐ Primarily ponds

Food

- ☐ Small flying insects

Size

- ☐ 36-48 mm



AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES

AMPHIBIANS

NORTHERN CRICKET FROG (*ACRIS CREPITANS*)

Habitat

- Shallow ponds with vegetation and full sun or shallow gravel-lined creeks

Behavior

- Diurnal and active all year
- Will jump quickly away when threatened



SOUTHERN LEOPARD FROG (*RANA UTRICULARIA*)

Habitat

- Shallow, freshwater habitats

Behavior

- Nocturnal
- Avoids predators by entering the water and swimming away



SMALL-MOUTHED SALAMANDER (*AMBYSTOMA TEXANUM*)

Habitat

- Lowland forests, open habitats, and anywhere with small breeding ponds without fish.

Behavior

- Live primarily underground
- Tend to hide under rotting logs, rocks, or leaf litter



REPTILES

SOUTHERN COPPERHEAD (*AGKISTRODON CONTORTRIX CONTORTIX*)

Habitat

- Woodland habitats

Behavior

- Will bite and inject its venom when threatened



FLORA

BUR OAK (*QUERCUS MACROCARPA*)

Habitat

- Hardy wooded areas

Characteristics

- Coarsely textured crown with wild and wooly acorns and a large trunk
- Tolerates pollution and heat stress
- Provides a lot of shade for animals



EASTERN PERSIMMON (*DIOSPYROS VIRGINIANA*)

Habitat

- Very common to the Southern Atlantic and Gulf states, preferring a more humid climate

Characteristics

- Produces fragrant flowers during the summer
- Produces round, orange (sometimes blue) fruits from .79 to 2.4 in. in diameter



AMERICAN BEAUTYBERRY (*CALlicARPA AMERICANA*)

Habitat

- Southeastern United States

Characteristics

- Bright purple berries
- Great food source for most animals
- Natural mosquito repellent



YAUPON HOLLY (*Ilex VOMITORIA*)

Habitat

- Adaptable to most soils, prefers sandy sites with both shade and sunlight

Characteristics

- Small, coarse, alternating leaves
- Bright red berries which can induce vomiting in humans

