Swainson’s Hawk
*Buto swainsoni*
Size: L: 19 - 22 in., WS: 46 - 54 in.
Description: Brown/gray above, white below, brown-red chest, dark beak and yellow legs.
Diet: Mammals and insects
Habitat: Grasslands
Viewing: Spring/fall, statewide; summer, west

The mixedgrass prairie region is a transitional zone between the tallgrass prairie of the east and the shortgrass prairie of the west. As a result, the vegetation of this area varies, with a combination of tallgrass and shortgrass prairie plants. There are many wetlands, rivers, and streams. Wooded zones surround almost every waterway. Precipitation is greater in the east, with about 28 inches annually, compared with 20 inches in the west.

The land is primarily used for agriculture, with around two-thirds converted to cropland and much of the remaining third used for grazing livestock. There is however, a diversity of wildlife found in this region, including the annual spring staging of 500,000 sandhill cranes around the Platte River in central Nebraska. This spectacle draws around 80,000 nature enthusiasts each year, with about half from outside of Nebraska.

**Bird Viewing Tips**

1. Stay quiet and calm.
2. Be discreet — wear muted clothing and limit fragrances.
3. Use your ears! Listen for bird songs and calls.
4. Use binoculars to get a closer look, always keep a respectful distance from wildlife.
5. Be patient.
6. Go to where the habitat is — visit state parks and other public lands.
7. Do your homework — learn what species of birds live in the area.

**Mallard**
*Anas platyrhynchos*
Description: Males: green head, yellow bill, orange legs, brown body, blue wing patch and black curly tail. Females: mottled brown with orange legs, blue wing patch.
Diet: Seeds, aquatic plants and insects
Habitat: Rural to urban
Viewing: Year-round, statewide

**Greater White-fronted Goose**
*Anser albifrons*
Description: Stocky brown with white rump, orange legs and pink bill bordered with white feathers.
Diet: Plants, berries and grains
Habitat: Wetlands
Viewing: Spring/fall, central to east

**Northern Harrier**
*Circus hudsonius*
Size: L: 18 - 20 in., WS: 40 - 46.5 in.
Description: Medium-sized raptor with broad wings, long tail and white rump patch.
Diet: Small mammals and birds
Habitat: Grasslands, wetlands
Viewing: Year-round, statewide

**Beaks as Tools**

- Nectar Feeder
- Excrement
- Gravehole
- Specialist Seed Eater
- Fishing
- Abor Feeding
- Surface Probing
- Probing
- Chiseling
- Raptor

NOT TO SCALE

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Lark Sparrow
Chondestes grammacus
Description: Chestnut and cream head, streaked brown above, pale below, black "mustache" and spot on chest, long tail with white corners.
Diet: Seeds
Habitat: Grasslands
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide

Dickcissel
Spiza americana
Size: L: 2.5 - 3.2 in., WS: 6.7 - 7.0 in.
Description: Gray with rusty shoulders, yellow on chest, above eye, and at corner of bill. Males have black V on chest.
Diet: Seeds and insects
Habitat: Marches, fields
Viewing: Summer, statewide but more common in east

Grasshopper Sparrow
Ammodramus savannarum
Size: L: 4.3 - 4.7 in., WS: 8.0 - 8.5 in.
Description: Streaky sparrow with brown above, buff below, white eye ring, yellow lore, short tail.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Grasslands
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide

Northern Bobwhite
Colinus virginianus
Description: Stocky ground bird patterned in brown, rufous, buff, and black. Males: black and white pattern on face. Females: buffy throat and eyebrow.
Diet: Seeds, plants, and insects
Habitat: Open fields and woodlands
Viewing: Year-round, statewide except southwestern Panhandle and northwest

Field Sparrow
Spizella pusilla
Size: L: 4.7 - 5.9 in., WS: 7.9 in.
Description: Pale gray head, white eye ring, rufous on top of head and behind eye, pink beak.
Diet: Seeds and insects
Habitat: Fields with bushy thickets
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide, though rare in Panhandle

Red-winged Blackbird
Agelaius phoeniceus
Description: Males: black with red wing patch boarded in yellow. Females: streaky brown.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Wetland and fields
Viewing: Year-round, statewide though more limited in winter

Bobolink
Dolichonyx oryzivorus
Size: L: 5.9 - 6.3 in., WS: 10.6 in.
Description: Flat head, short tail. Males: black with white rump, buff-yellow nape. Females: buff with brown back, flank streaking.
Diet: Seeds and insects
Habitat: Grasslands
Viewing: Spring/fall, statewide; summer, east and central

Yellow Warbler
Setophaga petechia
Size: L: 4.7 - 5.0 in., WS: 6.3 - 7.9 in.
Description: Small bright yellow bird with a large black eye. Males have red streaking on chest.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Open woodland
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide

Great Blue Heron
Ardea herodias
Description: Tall with long legs and neck, dagger-like bill, gray body, lighter face with black stripe above eye.
Diet: Fish, frogs, small birds
Habitat: Wetlands
Viewing: Spring/fall, statewide; summer, northeast

Killdeer
Charadrius vociferus
Description: Brown shorebird with white belly, chin, and face markings, two black chest bars and long legs.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Rural to urban
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide

Upland Sandpiper
Bartramia longicauda
Size: L: 11.0 - 12.6 in., WS: 18.5 in.
Description: Slender speckled brown shorebird with long neck, small head and large black eye.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Grasslands
Viewing: Spring/fall, statewide

Northern Pintail
Anas acuta
Size: L: 20.0 - 29.9 in., WS: 34 in.
Description: Duck with long neck and tail. Males: brown head, white stripe and stripe on neck, and gray back. Females: mottled brown.
Diet: Seeds and aquatic insects
Habitat: Wetlands
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide

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Sandhill Crane
Antigone canadensis
Size: L: 47.2 in., WS: 78.7 in.
Description: Tall with long legs and neck, dagger-like bill, gray body with rusty wash. Adults have pale cheek and bright red skin on top of head.
Diet: Aquatic plants, small animals and seeds
Habitat: Wetlands
Viewing: Spring, central

Northern Bobwhite
Colinus virginianus
Size: L: 8 - 11 in., WS: 13 in.
Description: Stocky ground bird patterned in brown, rufous, buff, and black. Males: black and white pattern on face. Females: buffy throat and eyebrow.
Diet: Seeds, plants, and insects
Habitat: Open fields and woodlands
Viewing: Year-round, statewide except southwestern Panhandle and northwest

Western Meadowlark
Sturnella neglecta
Size: L: 6.3 - 10.2 in., WS: 22 - 24 in.
Description: Robins with short tail, flat head, long bill, brown back, yellow front, and black V on chest.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Grasslands
Viewing: Year-round, statewide

Ring-necked Pheasant
Phasianus colchicus
Description: Buffy cinnamon with red face, green neck with white ring at base, and long barred tail.
Diet: Seeds, insects, fruit
Habitat: Agricultural land and fallow fields
Viewing: Year-round, statewide

Dickcissel
Spiza americana
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Viewing: Spring, central

Greater Prairie-chicken
Tympanuchus cupido
Description: Large grouse with barred brown plumage, males have orange air sacs on their neck used in display.
Diet: Seeds and insects
Habitat: Open grasslands
Viewing: Year-round, central and limited southeast

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