



## Site Nomination Criteria

### Definitions

An Important Bird Area (IBA) is a site providing essential habitat to one or more species of breeding or non-breeding birds. Sites are usually discrete and distinguishable in character, habitat, or ornithological importance from surrounding areas. Boundaries may be natural, such as watersheds, or man-made, such as roads and property boundaries. Ideally, an IBA should exist as an actual or potential protected area, or it should have the potential to be managed for the benefit of birds and other wildlife. There is no pre-determined size for an IBA, but wherever possible an IBA should be large enough to encompass the resources that are significant to the birds throughout the season for which they are important. Not all IBAs can or will meet this last definition--bottlenecks or migration corridors for raptors being one example.

### Criteria

A site meeting any one of the criteria in the following five categories may qualify as an IBA. Many sites will meet several criteria. These criteria should not be considered absolute, and other factors, such as relative importance to other sites, may be weighed in making final site selections.

Category NV-1: Sites important to species of concern in Nevada.

1(a) Sites that regularly support significant breeding or non-breeding densities of one or more of the species listed as endangered or threatened in the state of Nevada. Applies primarily to breeding or wintering sites, though regular migratory areas may be considered if known to be of exceptional importance.

1(b) Sites that regularly support significant breeding or non-breeding densities of species identified as high conservation priorities by Partners in Flight in the Nevada Partners in Flight Bird Conservation Plan (1999).

Sites meeting criteria 1(a) or 1(b) should be those where the species occurs or potentially occurs with some regularity, not areas of infrequent occurrence. Ideally, these sites will benefit many species. The species covered by criteria 1(a) and 1(b) are listed below.

#### Federally Endangered Species

<sup>1</sup>Brown Pelican  
<sup>1</sup>Wood Stork  
Yuma Clapper Rail  
<sup>1</sup>Least Tern  
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

#### Federally Threatened Species

Bald Eagle  
<sup>1</sup>Mountain Plover (proposed)

#### Partners in Flight Nevada Priority List

Clark's Grebe  
American White Pelican  
White-faced Ibis  
Cooper's Hawk  
Northern Goshawk  
Swainson's Hawk  
Ferruginous Hawk  
Prairie Falcon  
Greater Sandhill Crane

<sup>1</sup>The occurrence of these species in NV is considered accidental. As such, they are unlikely to contribute to the selection of an IBA, but are included here for completeness.

Sage Grouse	Gray Vireo
Snowy Plover	Pinyon Jay
American Avocet	Bank Swallow
Long-billed Curlew	Juniper Titmouse
Black Tern	Western Bluebird
Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Sage Thrasher
Flammulated Owl	LeConte's Thrasher
Burrowing Owl	Phainopepla
Short-eared Owl	Orange-crowned Warbler
Calliope Hummingbird	Virginia's Warbler
Lewis's Woodpecker	Lucy's Warbler
Red-naped Sapsucker	Black-throated Gray Warbler
White-headed Woodpecker	Grace's Warbler
Three-toed Woodpecker	MacGillivray's Warbler
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Wilson's Warbler
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	Yellow-breasted Chat
( <i>Empidonax traillii eximus</i> )	Vesper Sparrow
Willow Flycatcher ( <i>E. t. brewsteri</i> , <i>E. t. adastus</i> )	Sage Sparrow
Gray Flycatcher	Blue Grosbeak
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Bobolink
Loggerhead Shrike	Scott's Oriole
	Black Rosy Finch

Category NV-2: A site harboring an assemblage of species restricted to a unique or threatened natural community type.

The site contains an assemblage of species characteristic of a habitat type that is

2(a) rare, threatened, or unusual within the state or region;

2(b) an exceptional representative of a natural or near-natural habitat within the state or region.

This category is intended to cover relatively large areas capable of supporting significant bird populations, especially of species with particular habitat requirements such as wetland dependent or grassland nesting birds (for example, Snowy Plover, Bobolink). Small remnants of an exceptional habitat type may be included, however. Selection of sites will be based on avian assemblages with the habitat community type, not on the habitat community type alone. Characteristic species of birds and other wildlife indicative of the habitat type should be identified and, if possible, quantified.

Category NV-3: Sites where significant numbers of birds concentrate for breeding, migration, or over-wintering.

Sites that regularly hold significant numbers of one or more species, breeding or non-breeding, including migration, and including sites supporting a high diversity of bird species. Significant numbers are subjectively defined, but should include 1 percent or more of the state's population. The guidelines indicated below provide some logical thresholds for site selection. Except where indicated, numerical estimates should be based on a short period of time, such as one-time counts on daily surveys, not on cumulative totals. Introduced, naturalized, and nuisance birds (e.g., Starlings, Canada Geese) will not be used to designate a site.

3(a) Congregations of waterfowl: The site regularly supports at least 2,000 breeding/wintering waterfowl or 5,000 migrating waterfowl. “Waterfowl” includes such birds as loons, grebes, ducks, coots, and moorhens.

3(b) Congregations of gulls or terns: The site regularly supports at least 1,000 gulls or 50 terns over a short period of time during any season.

3(c) Congregations of shorebirds: The site regularly supports 1,000 or more shorebirds at one time.

3(d) Congregations of raptors: The site is a migratory corridor for at least 1,000 raptors (seasonal total) during spring or fall migration, or is a winter concentration area used by at least 100 raptors. The area may include topographic features that funnel birds through a particular site.

3(e) Concentrations of wading birds: The site regularly supports 100 or more pairs of wading birds (herons, egrets, ibises, stilts, avocets).

3(f) Congregations of migratory land birds: The site is an important migratory stopover, bottleneck, or migratory corridor. Sites should contain exceptional numbers and/or diversity. No absolute threshold in numbers is set.

3(g) Single species concentrations: The site regularly supports significant concentrations of a congregatory species but may not meet the thresholds for specific groups of birds listed in criteria 3a-3f above. Such sites should support a higher proportion of a species counted on a statewide basis than other comparable areas.

#### Supplementary Criteria

The following two criteria may be used to supplement or support a site nomination. By themselves, they are insufficient to warrant the designation of a site in Nevada as an IBA. In addition to the two criteria described below, you are encouraged to list other outstanding resources that characterize the site you are nominating (see nomination form).

#### Category NV-4: Sites supporting long-term avian research efforts.

Sites protected under this criterion should be a natural area where a long-term avian research project is based. Past or on-going research at the site should have contributed substantially to ornithology, avian ecology, or bird conservation. Publication of relevant findings in a widely recognized, peer-reviewed journal (e.g., *The Auk*, *Condor*, *Wilson Bulletin*, *American Birds*, *Journal of Field Ornithology*, *Ecology*, *Conservation Biology*) is one of the primary considerations. Breeding Bird Survey blocks and Christmas Bird Count routes, while important within the context of their own programs, will not qualify an area as an IBA.

#### Category NV-5: Sites providing important, bird-specific educational opportunities.

Sites supporting educational programs in which a significant component of the program content focuses on avian ecology, bird identification, biodiversity, or the value of high-quality habitat for birds. Sites may be in a natural, urban, suburban, or rural setting, but should retain significant natural habitat. Sites where educational programs are being developed will also be considered, as will sites where habitat restoration is a significant management goal.

**Further Information**

If you require further assistance or need to obtain the nomination form that should accompany these criteria, please contact the IBA Program at the address below. You may also wish to check the web at [www.NevadaAudubon.org](http://www.NevadaAudubon.org) for information and assistance.

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