

Birding at Cylburn

Information provided by the Baltimore Bird Club
Photographs by Bill Hubrick
<http://baltimorebirdclub.org>

For easy birding start on the grounds near the Cylburn Mansion...

and scan the trees around the circle drive for Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in spring and fall and other woodpeckers year round, among the European Starlings and American Robins.

A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker drilling holes to get sap from trees. Check the Nature Museum to see a sample of bark after many drillings!



An American Robin finding fresh holly berries in winter when worms are hard to come by.



Birding tips from the experts!

- The best time to watch birds is in the early morning or late afternoon, near dusk.
- Spring and fall bring the greatest variety of species as they pass through in migration.
- Bird feeders, when full, give close-up views year-round of birds such as chickadees and titmice.
- Don't forget that birds can be seen everywhere—in the grass, on the paths, in the bushes, in the trees, and in the sky.
- Don't forget to listen—birds are often heard before they're seen.

Proceed around the side of the Mansion...

following the asphalt to the Shady Garden, Rose Garden, and City Garden, looking for Goldfinches, Carolina Wrens, Blue Jays, and Cedar Waxwings.



The American Goldfinch loves the seeds left by the flowers in the Arboretum gardens.



The Carolina Wren eats mostly insects, that also abound in the gardens.



Two berry-loving mimics, the Gray Catbird (left) and Northern Mockingbird (right) entertain with their calls mimicked from nature and man-made sounds. The catbird migrates south for the winter, while the mockingbird stays around all year.

Cylburn offers several loop trails that pass through a variety of habitats from interior forest to forest edge, open meadow, bog, and garden settings. *A good birding route from the Mansion follows the driveway to the right, past the Carriage House...* to see Gray Catbirds (spring through fall), and Northern Mockingbirds, two of the most frequently seen birds on the property.

As you pass the Schoolhouse... look toward the bird feeder where seed-eating birds are often seen in abundance (if the feeder is full!).



Male (with red coloring in head) and female House Finches crowd a thistle feeder.



Even woodpeckers, in this case a Red-bellied, like to supplement their insect diet with seeds and suet.

Continue to the Garden of the Senses...

and look into the trees behind the garden. This is a good place to look for warblers during spring and fall migration, especially when the sun is out. Most warblers are seen only in migration, although the Yellow-rumped Warbler can be seen all year.



The Yellow-rumped Warbler, noted for its distinctive coloring, can be seen all year round.



While the Black-throated Blue Warbler will only be seen in spring and fall migration.

As you continue your walk, the asphalt path turns to mulch and leads to an intersection of several paths...

The Circle Trail is deeper in the woods and will usually turn up a thrush or two but the Woodland Edge Trail, on the edge of the woods, has the potential for finding more warblers in the sunny tree patches.



Don't confuse the American Redstart (warbler on left) with the look-alike Baltimore Oriole, which is half again bigger. Baltimore Orioles have nested in Cylburn for many years.

Many birds prefer open fields... In any of the fields you may see flycatchers, sparrows and buntings searching for bugs and seeds.



The Chipping Sparrow is named for its rapid trilled chip note, chip-chip-chip-chip-chip-chip, all at the same pitch.



The intense blue coloring of the Indigo Bunting can almost look black in the shade.

Keep your eyes open looking above you as well as in the trees and on the ground... Keep your eyes peeled for hawks, vultures, geese, and gulls or other airborne displays. Some of the best avian shows in town take place high in the air!



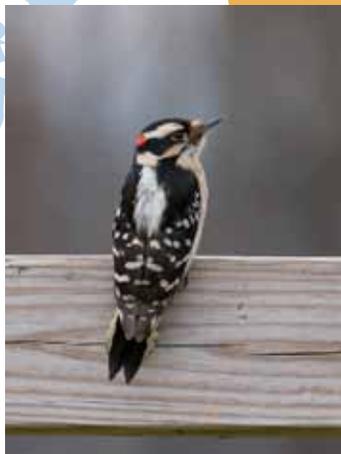
These Eastern Kingbirds, distinctive because of the white band on their tail, chase an American Crow. The crow was probably too close to their nest.



A lone American Robin, its red breast aglow, sits on this bare snag observing Chimney Swifts swirling in the air around him. The swifts are actually smaller than the robin, but are closer to the camera and appear larger.



Canada Geese (left) flying overhead can often be seen as well as heard. The Red-tailed Hawk soaring above has molted (lost) a tail feather.



The small Downy Woodpecker is common in the woods at Cylburn.



A Wood Thrush showing off his speckled breast. In the early morning you can often hear him singing.

Should you decide to go *left from the Carriage House, you can follow the asphalt road past the greenhouses...* and down to Cylburn Avenue that has a streambed at the intersection. There you might see bluebirds, thrushes, Common Yellowthroats, swallows, sparrows, finches, and Mourning Doves.



Barn Swallows nest in the eaves of the Greenhouse and the Mansion. They can be seen all summer catching insects mid-air to feed their young.



The magnificent, red-eyed Eastern Towhee can often be heard saying its name from the road down to Cylburn Avenue.



Eastern Bluebirds can be seen all year in many parts of the woods around Cylburn.



The Common Yellowthroat likes areas with water, so they are found around the bog or in the stream near the Cylburn Avenue entrance.

We've only touched on the birds that have been spotted at Cylburn. Please explore on your own or join one of our walks. And don't forget to enter your findings in the Trail Tracker, located in the Visitor Center.

GOOD BIRDING ALL!

<http://baltimorebirdclub.org>

Photos by Bill Hubick