Birds Around Alberta (Summer)

American White Pelican

The largest bird to see in Alberta. It boasts a wingspan well over 2 metres and a long, pouched orange bill.

Pelicans can be seen in many areas of Alberta outside of the mountains and far northwest.

Cedar Waxwing

Smaller and sleeker than a Robin, look for silky browns, crested head, black mask and a bright yellow band at the end of the tail.

These are our summer waxwings, come autumn they will head further south and Bohemian Waxwings will move in from the north.

Northern Flicker

A large woodpecker with distinctive, bold patterns and a long, slightly downcurved bill.

Our only predominantly brown woodpecker. It also sports a speckled or spotted front and yellow or pinkish orange underwing colours.

Great Horned Owl

A large owl with broad ear tufts and an overall barred front. Colours vary from pale greys to dark browns.

Alberta's provincial bird, this owl is very widespread, found in a wide range of habitats.

Black — capped Chickadee

A small songbird with a black cap and throat, white cheeks and cheery calls. DeeDeeDee DeeDeeDee

Common across Alberta in any wooded habitat and a regular at backyard birdfeeders.

Eastern Kingbird

Plain dark grey back and white front with a white tip on its black tail. Often seen perching in the open watching for insects.

Tyrannus tyrannus the perfect Latin name as this bird can be a real little tyrant. Territorial, loud, but fun to watch.

Red — winged Blackbird

All black except for the bold red and yellow patches on the wings. Widespread in wetland areas across Alberta.

Unlike the showy males females are streaky brown for camouflage. These are some of the most abundant of all North American birds.

Mallard — Male & Female

Common across Alberta, males have the distinctive iridescent green head and females are streaky brown.

Like many birds mallards are sexually dimorphic meaning males and females have a different appearance from each other.

American Robin

With its red orange breast and grey head and back the robin is recognized by most of us.

For many robins are a sign of spring, but there are always a few that overwinter in some urban areas of Alberta.

Common Nighthawk

A body about the size of a robin, but wings much longer angled and pointed. Look for a white bar across the wings in flight.

Not really hawks at all, they feed on insects in flight. They perch on the ground or lengthwise along branches. Listen for a nasal BUZZZZZ.

Great Blue Heron

Great for sure! The largest and heaviest heron we have with a wingspan approaching 2 m.

Elegant grey blue colours overall. A silent and patient hunter of fish, amphibians and invertebrates.

House Wren

Smaller than a chickadee, but big in voice with a loud, varied, rattling, bubbling song.

They are streaky grey brown overall with long slender bills for reaching into crevices. Common in areas of dense brush and woods.

Merlin

A medium sized falcon with a streaky breast, white bands on a black tail and solid brown or grey on the back.

Like all falcons it is streamlined with pointed wings and is a fast flyer. It hunts mostly small birds, but will also hunt dragonflies on the wing.

White-breasted Nuthatch

Chunky with a stubby tail, black head white front and blue grey back, a little bigger than a chickadee.

Look for it climbing head-first down tree trunks as it looks in cracks and crevices for insects and seeds.

Ring-billed Gull

Seagulls are all the same! Not really and this one has the perfect name. Look for the black ring around its bill.

The most common gull in North America found on all types of water bodies, but also in farmers fields or restaurant parking lots.

Ruffed Grouse

A chicken-like ground bird named for the black neck ruff of the males seen when displaying.

Known for the thump-thump-thump drumming of males in the spring. They can be found in most wooded habitats, but are not common.

Yellow Warbler

A common and wide-spread warbler in Alberta. Similar in size to a chickadee, but with a stout, pointed bill.

Generally bright yellow overall, males may show reddish streaks on the breast while young birds may be more drab.

Rufous Hummingbird

Males are reddish orange overall with a iridescent red throat patch, females show more green on the back.

Magical flying jewels, hummingbirds are tiny, but amazing creatures with an incredible array of physical abilities.