

**The Delaware Breeding Bird Atlas
2008 - 2012**

**Safe Dates for Delaware Breeding Birds
With
Breeding Notes**

Species	Safe Dates	Breeding Notes
Pied-billed Grebe	5/20 to 6/30	confirmed nests generally late in MD/DE
Double-crested Cormorant	6/1 to 7/15	nest building may begin by late April
American Bittern	5/15 to 7/10	nesting begins during April (MD)
Least Bittern	5/25 to 6/30	
Great Blue Heron	5/1 to 6/30	adults return to colonies by mid- to late February
Great Egret	5/15 to 6/30	nest construction may begin in late March
Snowy Egret	5/15 to 6/30	
Little Blue Heron*	5/25 to 6/30	
Tricolored Heron	5/15 to 6/30	
Cattle Egret	5/25 to 6/30	
Green Heron	5/20 to 6/30	
Black-crowned Night-Heron	5/15 to 6/30	nesting begins by late March-early April
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	4/20 to 7/15	nesting normally begins during April (OH)
Glossy Ibis	5/15 to 6/30	
Black Vulture	5/1 to 7/15	
Turkey Vulture	5/20 to 7/15	
Canada Goose	4/15 to 6/30	nest construction during March
Mute Swan	4/1 to 6/30	courtship in late February, nest built by 3/15 (MD)
Wood Duck	4/1 to 6/30	exploring cavities in late February
Gadwall	5/20 to 6/30	
American Black Duck	5/20 to 6/30	nesting begins by mid-March (MD)
Mallard	5/1 to 6/30	nesting begins in early March (MD)
Blue-winged Teal	6/1 to 6/30	
Northern Shoveler	6/1 to 6/30	nested in salt marsh (DE)
Green-winged Teal	6/1 to 6/30	
Hooded Merganser	5/1 to 6/15	most nests initiated mid-March to early April (MD)
Common Merganser†	5/10 to 7/15	
Ruddy Duck	6/10 to 6/30	courtship into mid-June (DE)
Osprey	5/15 to 7/31	nest construction begins in March
Bald Eagle	4/15 to 5/15	nest building in December, courtship in January
Northern Harrier	5/10 to 7/25	courtship normally mid-March into April
Sharp-shinned Hawk†	5/25 to 7/31	courtship should occur mid-March to early April
Cooper's Hawk	5/15 to 7/31	courtship begins in March
Red-shouldered Hawk	4/20 to 7/31	courtship displays as early as January
Broad-winged Hawk	6/1 to 7/31	courtship normally April & early May
Red-tailed Hawk	5/15 to 7/31	courtship normally begins in February
American Kestrel	5/20 to 6/30	courtship most evident in March
Peregrine Falcon	6/1 to 6/30	courtship displays by mid-February
Ring-necked Pheasant	4/1 to 8/30	males displaying in late March-early April
Wild Turkey	3/15 to 8/15	courtship begins in March
Northern Bobwhite	4/1 to 9/30	
Black Rail	5/1 to 7/31	
Clapper Rail	4/15 to 7/31	
King Rail	5/1 to 7/15	
Virginia Rail	5/15 to 7/15	breeding may begin in early April (MD)
Sora	6/1 to 7/10	nesting probably begins in early May (MD)
Common Moorhen	5/20 to 7/31	nest building through 7/16 (MD)
American Coot	5/20 to 7/31	nesting can begin in April (OH)
Piping Plover†	4/15 to 6/30	courtship during April

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Killdeer	4/15 to 6/20	
American Oystercatcher	5/1 to 6/30	small nest territories used for several years
Black-necked Stilt	5/1 to 6/30	
Willet	5/20 to 6/25	
Spotted Sandpiper	6/10 to 6/25	
Upland Sandpiper	5/10 to 6/25	courtship during late April-early May
American Woodcock	3/20 to 6/10	courtship flights begin in December
Laughing Gull*	5/1 to 6/30	nest building begins in late April (MD)
Herring Gull*	4/1 to 6/30	nest building begins in late March (MD)
Great Black-backed Gull*	4/1 to 6/30	nest building begins in mid-March (MD)
Gull-billed Tern	5/15 to 7/15	arrives at colonies by mid-May (NJ)
Common Tern	6/1 to 7/1	
Forster's Tern	5/15 to 7/1	
Least Tern	5/20 to 7/1	
Black Skimmer	6/1 to 7/10	
Rock Pigeon	1/1 to 12/31	
Eurasian Collared-Dove	3/1 to 7/31	
Mourning Dove	4/1 to 7/1	
Black-billed Cuckoo	6/1 to 7/31	
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	6/1 to 8/15	
Barn Owl	4/1 to 8/1	
Eastern Screech-Owl	12/1 to 6/30	courtship begins in February (MD)
Great Horned Owl	12/1 to 6/30	courtship beginning in December (MD)
Barred Owl	1/1 to 6/30	courtship starts in "late winter" (MD)
Long-eared Owl†	5/1 to 8/15	
Short-eared Owl†	4/25 to 8/31	courting on 4/9 (PA)
Common Nighthawk	5/20 to 7/15	
Chuck-will's-widow	5/1 to 7/15	breeding activity starts in late April (MD)
Whip-poor-will	5/10 to 7/15	
Chimney Swift	5/20 to 7/15	gathering nest material through 6/24 (DE)
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	5/25 to 7/5	
Belted Kingfisher	5/1 to 7/1	nesting begins in late March (MD)
Red-headed Woodpecker	5/15 to 8/15	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	3/1 to 7/1	
Downy Woodpecker	3/1 to 7/1	
Hairy Woodpecker	3/1 to 7/1	
Northern Flicker	4/20 to 7/20	
Pileated Woodpecker	3/1 to 7/15	
Eastern Wood-Pewee	5/25 to 7/31	
Acadian Flycatcher	5/15 to 7/25	
Willow Flycatcher	6/5 to 7/20	
Least Flycatcher	6/1 to 7/15	
Eastern Phoebe	4/20 to 7/1	
Great Crested Flycatcher	5/25 to 7/31	
Eastern Kingbird	5/25 to 7/5	
Loggerhead Shrike†	3/15 to 6/30	
White-eyed Vireo	5/15 to 7/31	
Yellow-throated Vireo	5/15 to 7/15	nest building 5/4 (DE)
Warbling Vireo	5/25 to 7/25	
Red-eyed Vireo	6/1 to 7/15	
Blue Jay	5/15 to 7/15	
American Crow	4/1 to 7/1	
Fish Crow	4/25 to 7/15	
Horned Lark	3/25 to 7/1	territorial activity as early as January

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Purple Martin	5/10 to 7/5	
Tree Swallow	6/1 to 6/25	
N. Rough-winged Swallow	5/10 to 7/5	nest building begins in early April (MD)
Bank Swallow	6/1 to 6/20	
Cliff Swallow	5/25 to 7/1	nest building by 5/9 (DE)
Barn Swallow	5/25 to 7/10	
Carolina Chickadee	3/1 to 7/1	
Tufted Titmouse	3/1 to 7/1	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	5/15 to 7/31	"late April" (OH)
White-breasted Nuthatch	3/15 to 7/1	as early as 3/25 (MD)
Brown-headed Nuthatch	4/1 to 7/31	
Brown Creeper	5/5 to 7/31	as early as 3/29 (MD)
Carolina Wren	4/1 to 7/31	
House Wren	5/15 to 7/10	earliest egg 4/18 (MD)
Sedge Wren	5/20 to 8/15	most clutches by 2nd week of Aug. (NE)
Marsh Wren	5/10 to 7/15	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	5/1 to 8/1	nest construction through 6/23 (MD)
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	5/7 to 7/1	nest building conspicuous during April
Eastern Bluebird	4/10 to 7/30	
Veery	6/1 to 7/31	
Wood Thrush	5/20 to 7/31	
American Robin	4/15 to 7/15	nest building by 3/21 (MD)
Gray Catbird	5/20 to 7/15	
Northern Mockingbird	4/1 to 8/15	
Brown Thrasher	5/10 to 7/15	
European Starling	4/15 to 6/10	
Cedar Waxwing	6/10 to 7/31	peak breeding now July/August
Blue-winged Warbler	5/20 to 7/5	most nest building after 5/20 (MD)
Northern Parula	5/25 to 7/25	
Yellow Warbler	5/25 to 7/1	
Chestnut-sided Warbler	6/5 to 7/15	nest building 5/24 (DE) and 6/24 (MD)
Yellow-throated Warbler	5/1 to 7/15	nest building 5/8-30 (DE)
Pine Warbler	5/1 to 7/15	nest building by 3/23 (MD)
Prairie Warbler	5/15 to 7/20	nest building 5/5 to 6/9 (MD)
Cerulean Warbler	5/15 to 7/31	
Black-and-white Warbler	5/25 to 7/1	nest finished by 5/7 (DE)
American Redstart	6/5 to 7/5	
Prothonotary Warbler	5/10 to 7/20	
Worm-eating Warbler	5/15 to 7/20	
Swainson's Warbler†	4/25 to 7/31	
Ovenbird	5/20 to 7/15	
Louisiana Waterthrush	5/1 to 7/15	
Kentucky Warbler	5/15 to 7/25	
Common Yellowthroat	5/20 to 7/15	
Hooded Warbler	5/15 to 7/25	
Yellow-breasted Chat	5/20 to 7/5	
Summer Tanager	5/20 to 7/15	
Scarlet Tanager	5/25 to 7/25	
Eastern Towhee	5/7 to 7/15	nest building begins in late April (MD)
Chipping Sparrow	5/7 to 7/15	
Field Sparrow	4/20 to 7/15	
Vesper Sparrow	4/20 to 7/15	nest building 4/2 (DE) and 4/14 (MD)
Savannah Sparrow	5/25 to 7/15	
Grasshopper Sparrow	5/20 to 7/31	frequently move between nesting attempts

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Henslow's Sparrow†	all reports	frequently move between nesting attempts
Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow	5/25 to 7/15	male does not maintain traditional territory
Seaside Sparrow	5/15 to 7/15	nesting begins during April
Song Sparrow	4/15 to 7/15	
Swamp Sparrow	5/15 to 7/15	nesting normally begins in late May along coast
Northern Cardinal	4/1 to 8/15	nest building can begin in last half of March
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	6/1 to 7/15	
Blue Grosbeak	5/15 to 7/15	
Indigo Bunting	5/20 to 7/15	
Dickcissel	5/15 to 7/30	
Bobolink†	6/15 to 7/10	nesting begins during last half of May
Red-winged Blackbird	4/20 to 6/30	males on territory by early February
Eastern Meadowlark	4/20 to 7/15	nest building during last half of April
Common Grackle	4/15 to 6/30	courtship occurs during March
Boat-tailed Grackle	4/15 to 7/15	
Brown-headed Cowbird	4/20 to 6/30	
Orchard Oriole	5/15 to 6/30	
Baltimore Oriole	5/25 to 7/10	nest building by 4/28 (MD)
House Finch	4/15 to 7/30	
Pine Siskin†	5/20 to 7/15	nest building in April (DE)
American Goldfinch	6/1 to 8/30	nest building by 7/6 (MD)
House Sparrow	3/1 to 9/30	

† = Indicates all reports during date dates should be considered at least possible.

* = Indicates only adults should be considered at any time.