



Pine Siskin

This small finch has a brown-streaked body and thin, pointy bill. Its wings have white bars and patches of yellow. Very common some years, noisy flocks of siskins search for seeds and insects in trees and on the ground. They often hang upside down on branches.



American Goldfinch

A small finch with a loud, tuneful song. The breeding male is bright yellow and black; the female is more muted brownish yellow. This seed eater is a common breeding bird in rural Delta wherever there are bushes, hedgerows and small trees.



Song Sparrow

This is a dark grey and brown, streaky sparrow with a grey bill. It skulks around hedges, brambles and shaded areas in gardens, parks, and along dikes. The bold brown streaks on its chest converge in a central spot. It has a melodious song, sung from a high perch.



Fox Sparrow

This secretive sparrow is a winter visitor, that scratches for seeds on the ground under bushes. The "sooty" subspecies has a cocoa-coloured back and head, and yellow bill; its white chest has bold brown streaks. It sings a sweet spring song before it departs north.



White-crowned Sparrow

This large sparrow has bold black and white head stripes, yellow bill, and pale brown underparts. Immatures have brown crown stripes. In spring, males sit on fence posts or shrubs to deliver their trilling songs; some leave for summer. In winter, sparrows that stay in Delta gather into mixed feeding flocks.



Golden-crowned Sparrow

A large, grey-brown, western sparrow with a grey bill and golden crown. It nests in the north. Flocks regularly winter in Delta, feeding on the ground and sheltering under hedges along dykes, in parks and agricultural areas. In winter plumage the crown may be faint.



Savannah Sparrow

This sparrow is a summer visitor to Delta. It nests in open grassy areas and perches on fence posts or tall grass to deliver its buzzy song. Its plumage matches its habitat: streaked brown and white, with yellow throat and facial stripes, pale pink legs and a small pink bill.



Dark-eyed Junco

A resident sparrow found year-round but more common in winter. Local subspecies has a white belly, black head, brown back and sides. Flocks feed on the ground, scratching for seeds and insects. It flashes the white edges of its tail when it flies.



Spotted Towhee

Strikingly coloured, this orange, black, and white bird looks quite exotic! It is actually a common, year-round resident, living wherever there are dense shrubs – in gardens, parks, farmland, and along the dykes. Its call notes are varied and include harsh buzzes and trills. Note its red eyes.



Western Meadowlark

The beautiful song of the Western Meadowlark is infrequently heard in Delta. This migrant passes through in spring and fall, occasionally in winter. Individuals or small groups feed on the ground or perch on fences and small bushes in farmland and outside the dykes.



Red-winged Blackbird

The song of this marsh-dweller is a familiar spring sound. The male's plumage is jet-black with bright red shoulder patches, edged with yellow. Females are brown, streaked, and with sharp bills. Blackbirds nest in freshwater cattail marshes and winter in farmland in flocks.



Brown-headed Cowbird

Flocks of cowbirds are a common sight in Delta, to the detriment of other species; this bird lays its eggs in other birds' nests. Host birds then feed and raise the cowbird chick. Male cowbirds are black with a brown head; females and juveniles have paler, streaked breasts.



Brewer's Blackbird

Mixed flocks of blackbirds gather in Delta's wetland areas and their calls can be heard from early spring onwards. Brewer's Blackbird lacks the red wings of its relative, and is slimmer, with a thin bill. Males are glossy black with beady yellow eyes; females are dark brown.



Orange-crowned Warbler

This warbler is a regular seasonal visitor to parks and woodlands. Its crown is seldom visible, and it is best identified by its downward trilled song, commonly heard in spring. Its yellow-green plumage blends well with the bushes and trees in which it constantly forages.



Common Yellowthroat

Loud bursts of "witchety witchety" song from the marshes and reedbeds signal the arrival of nesting yellowthroats. If the male is seen, its bold black face mask and yellow throat instantly identifies it. The female is much duller-coloured and more easily overlooked.



Yellow Warbler

Arriving in spring from Central and South America, this brightly coloured warbler sings a descending trill. It can be surprisingly difficult to see among the fresh leaves. Watch for a predominantly yellow bird with a black eye; the male has red streaks on the breast.



Yellow-rumped Warbler

A common spring and fall migrant. The breeding male has grey upperparts, streaked black, and bright yellow throat, rump and flank patches. Females and non-breeding birds have dull grey-brown and white plumage with yellow throat and rump. A white throat distinguishes "Myrtle" subspecies from "Audubon's".



Wilson's Warbler

Another migrant from the tropics, this small warbler skulks around in low shrubs and bushes and is quite bold. Its song is also a descending series of notes. Look for a small, brilliant yellow bird with a black cap and beady black eyes.



Western Tanager

The beautiful Western Tanager winters in the tropics. In Delta it is an uncommon summer visitor to woodland, such as Watershed Park. Look high up in the trees to see the male's bright red head, yellow breast, and black wings. The female is a subdued greenish yellow, with white wing-bars.



Black-headed Grosbeak

This summer visitor also prefers forested habitats. Its tuneful song, similar to that of the American Robin, is sung from high in a tree. Look for a robin-sized, bright yellow, black and white bird, with a stout bill. The female is brown and orange with two white head stripes.

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DELTA NATURALISTS SOCIETY
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Delta COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Park & Garden Birds in Delta

Delta is home to many different park and garden birds. Some live here year round, while others, such as warblers, winter in warm climates and migrate here to nest. They benefit from long summer daylight hours and abundant insect food. Seed-eating finches often winter in big flocks.

Gardens and parks with ponds, mature trees, and bushy shrubs are excellent bird habitat, not just for resident and wintering birds but also for migrating birds and summer visitors. Insect-eating warblers and flycatchers from the tropics need plenty of trees and shrubs. Birds can be difficult to see among the leaves, so listen for their calls. Garden feeders and water features attract a wide variety of birds.

Use Merlin Bird ID app to identify birds you see and hear.
Use eBird or iNaturalist apps to identify birds and record their locations.



Rock Pigeon

The common pigeons of farms and cities, they are an introduced, feral bird in North America. Their plumage varies from dark grey, with white wing bars, to various combinations of white, brown, and grey feathering. Their legs and feet are pink.



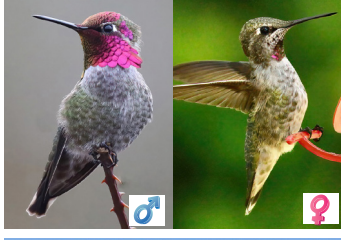
Band-tailed Pigeon

This large pigeon, native to west coast coniferous and mixed forests, forages on nuts, seeds, berries and insects. It is now uncommon in Delta. Look for the wide grey band on the end of its tail and listen for its deep "who-oo" call. Its legs and feet are yellow.



Eurasian Collared-Dove

A relative newcomer to Delta, this dove has spread into suburban and rural locations and is present year-round. Its plumage is pale pink and grey, with a small black line on its neck and black eyes. It calls "ku-koooo ku" from trees and rooftops.



Anna's Hummingbird

The most common species of hummingbird in Delta, the Anna's is a year-round resident. The male has bronze-green upperparts and an iridescent, crimson-red crown and throat. Females have a red throat patch. They eat insects but also come regularly to feeders.



Rufous Hummingbird

These colourful hummingbirds visit Delta for the summer. They winter in Mexico. Slightly smaller than the Anna's, the male is rufous-red, with a white chest and scarlet throat. Females and immatures are mostly green and white, with copper-coloured rumps.



Willow Flycatcher

A summer visitor to wetland areas, this little brown and white bird is more often heard than seen. It has a characteristic two or three note “fitz-bew” call, given from a perch in the willow bushes and, as its name suggests, it eats insects.



Tree Swallow

Tree Swallows nest in dead trees and in nest boxes and need to be near water. They feed on insects, caught in flight. Adult plumage is a combination of glossy dark blue on the back and white below. Juveniles are brown above, and paler below. They have a twittery call.



Northern Shrike

An exciting bird to encounter, this winter visitor typically perches in the open, on top of a small bush. Marshland and grassland areas are good locations to find it. Although shrikes are songbirds, they act like hawks, catching and eating rodents and small birds.



Violet-green Swallow

This fast-flying swallow is glossy violet and green on its back, but often looks dark above, with white around the eyes and on underparts. It nests in summer from Alaska to Mexico and winters in Central and South America. Like other swallows, it is an aerial insectivore.



Steller's Jay

The official bird of British Columbia, the Steller's Jay lives in coniferous forests and parkland habitats. It has dark blue wings and tail, and a black crest that can be raised or lowered. These wary birds may be attracted by growing hazelnuts or supplying peanuts.



Northern Rough-winged Swallow

This species is rather uncommon in Delta and can easily be overlooked. Rough-winged are small, with brown and white plumage and wings that are noticeably longer than other swallows. They often swoop low over fresh water, hunting for insects.



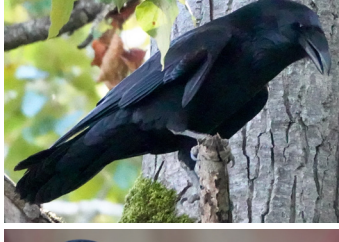
American Crow

These all-black, noisy birds are common throughout Delta. Crows are intelligent, social, and fun to watch. They nest in trees and forage on lawns, in parks and on beaches. Their raucous calls summon neighbouring crows to ward off intruding hawks or raccoons.



Barn Swallow

This once common swallow is now endangered, although still seen regularly in Delta. It has blue-black upper parts, red-brown forehead, chin and throat, and deeply forked tail. It nests in sheds and barns, and feeds on insects.



Common Raven

Ravens look very similar to crows, but are larger, with big, heavy bills, and wedged, not straight-edged tails. They tend to fly in pairs rather than flocks. Their calls are different too, with a more “croaky” sound. Ravens are much less common in Delta than crows.



Cliff Swallow

This swallow has a dark blue back, wings and cap, white underparts and forehead, and rust-coloured neck and rump. Its tail is not forked. They build mud nests under bridges and docks, and hunt for insects on the wing.



Black-capped Chickadee

A very common garden and woodland bird, resident year-round in Delta. Its head and throat are black. It feeds on insects, seeds, and berries, and comes to feeders. Its common call “chick-a-dee-dee-dee” gives the bird its name, but it also whistles “fee-bee”.



Ruby-crowned Kinglet

This very small bird has a bright red crown stripe that it shows when displaying. It has a white patch around its eye, and a bold white wing bar, edged with black. It often flicks its wings and its chattering songs are unexpectedly loud. Listen for them in hedgerows in spring.



Chestnut-backed Chickadee

This is the only chickadee on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. In Delta it is less common than the Black-capped Chickadee and often forages in Western Cedar and Douglas-fir trees. Its name describes how you can tell the two species apart.



Golden-crowned Kinglet

A tiny bird with a high-pitched song, this kinglet can be difficult to spot. In winter, it often comes lower in the trees and can be seen foraging for insects. It is a pale greenish colour, with black and white stripes on its face and wings, and a golden crown patch which is not always visible.



Bushtit

These tiny, long-tailed, grey-brown birds forage in flocks of up to 50 birds in winter. Listen for their constant twittery calls as they search for aphids and other insects, spiders and seeds. In spring, they build hanging gourd-shaped nests of moss, grass and spider webs.



Red-breasted Nuthatch

A colourful bird, with a striped head and rust-red underparts, resident year-round in forests and well-treed gardens. Unlike Brown Creepers, nuthatches can move headfirst down trees as well as up. They feed on seeds and nuts, hoarding excess food by wedging into bark.



Brown Creeper

Look for this small, well-camouflaged bird climbing up the trunks of conifers, its brown plumage blending perfectly with its surroundings. It is resident in Delta forests and well-treed neighbourhoods yet is easily over-looked. Its song is high and tinkling.



Pacific Wren

This is the wren found in forests and woodlands, skulking around in the undergrowth and occasionally giving a long, exuberant burst of song. Its dark brown plumage keeps it well hidden. It has a short tail held in an upright position and a very thin pale eyebrow.



Marsh Wren

Bursts of exuberant song coming from the cattails reveal the presence of Marsh Wrens, heard but seldom seen. Males build multiple dome-shaped nests attached to cattails and breed with several females. Look for a small brown bird with a thin white eyebrow.



Bewick's Wren

This little bird is often heard before it is seen, as it skulks in bushes and undergrowth. In spring it sits up on a branch to deliver its loud and varied song. It has attractive plumage: strong white eyebrows, a white throat and belly, and reddish-brown back and head.



European Starling

This non-native, very common bird with glossy speckles on chest and back, was introduced to North America in the 1800s. It is designated as an invasive species in BC. Starlings roost in large flocks on buildings and aggressively out-compete other birds for nesting holes.



Varied Thrush

This thrush can be seen in winter in shady parts of coniferous forests and well-treed suburbs in Delta. Its long eerie whistle is unmistakable. Dark grey upper parts are mottled with orange on the wings; its throat and belly are also orange. It eats berries and insects.



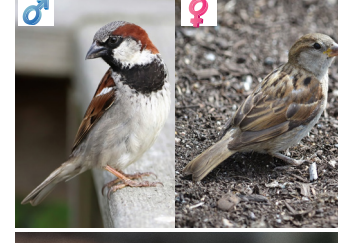
American Robin

A familiar North American thrush found year-round in Delta. It has grey upper parts, black head and orange-red breast. This thrush has a beautiful spring song. It lays 3 to 7 pale blue eggs and feeds on fruits, berries, worms and insects. Large roaming flocks gather in fall.



Cedar Waxwing

This striking songbird is often seen in small flocks, from May to November. Its pink-brown plumage, brown head with crest and yellow-tipped tail are diagnostic. Look for the waxy red spots on the wings. A fruit-eater, it can become intoxicated on fermented berries in winter.



House Sparrow

Introduced from Europe, House Sparrows thrive in urban areas and dominate at bird feeders. The male is brown above, grey on cheek and underparts; its chin and eye patch are black. Females are pale grey below and brown above. Their song is a repeated “chirp”.



American Pipit

These slim, streaky-brown birds with long tails are often difficult to see as they forage in old field meadows and seashore dunes. Listen for their “pip pit” calls as a flock takes flight. Pipits walk and do not hop, and their tail wags as they move.



House Finch

Females have a brown head and brown-streaked underparts. The male has red on its head, throat, chest and rump. Their bills are stout as they feed on seeds and fruit. They often come to feeders. Their song is a cheery warble, and they give various “wheet” calls.



Purple Finch

Females and young males have strongly streaked brown and white chests and strong white facial lines above and below the eye. The male is similar to a House Finch but has raspberry-red plumage and is chunkier. It sings its lovely warbling song from a high perch.