



Shoalwater Birders

Welcome from the Shoalwater Birders! We would like to share with you our favorite birding spots on the Peninsula. 1 to 2 hours before high tide is best for the shorebirds; bay tide is 1 hour later. Early morning before 10:00 and after 4:00 is best for songbirds, etc.

Please avoid trespassing on private property.

sp = spring | **su** = summer | **f** = fall | **w** = winter | **ay** = all year

1. Fort Columbia (sp – su - f)

Walk the woods for warblers, towhees and other songbirds. Check the cliffs and water for resident shorebirds.

2. Chinook County Park (ay)

Look out in the bay for Bald Eagles, pelicans, cormorants, herons and shorebirds.

3. Stringtown Road (f - w - sp)

Bird the bay from your vehicle, paying attention to the private property signs.

4. Chinook Valley Road (ay)

In the summer this is a good place for warblers, vultures, hawks and kites. In the winter the flooded fields are good for waterfowl, raptors and shorebirds – most is private property.

5. Walberg Road, which runs east up the hill off Chinook Dike Road (sp – su - f)

This rough road leads up to the Ilwaco watershed. The higher elevations might produce some different species. An all-wheel or 4-wheel drive vehicle is recommended.

6. Ilwaco Boat Basin (ay)

Go to the far end of the boat ramp parking lot and look out over Baker Bay to the south. Species to watch for are Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, Common Loons, ducks, geese, cormorants and Bald Eagles.

7. Cape Disappointment State Park (ay)

All of the park is good, especially in the off-season. Turn right into the park from the main road and go to the second parking area on the left during nesting season. You might see Brandt's Cormorants, Pelagic Cormorants and Pigeon Guillemots living on the cliffs or in the harbor. If you go right into the campground, check out the ponds and marshes. O'Neal Lake is a possible spot for Pied-billed Grebes and ducks. Osprey nest in the tall trees behind the marsh. The McKenzie Head Trail offers a panoramic view and large variety of birds, especially in the winter. Look near the boat launch across from the park entrance for Common Loons, cormorants, mergansers, pelicans and Bald Eagles. Follow signs to North Jetty to bird near the parking areas and the walking path to Benson Beach (marked by a sign at the second or third parking area).

8. North Head Lighthouse (sp – su)

There are four trails here. The one that leads to the lighthouse will put you near cliffs to view Pigeon Guillemots and cormorants during the nesting season. You also might see or hear Olive-sided Flycatchers. On the trail behind the houses hummingbirds, Western Tanagers and Pileated Woodpeckers have been sighted.

9. Beard's Hollow (su – f)

Nice trail out to the ocean. Marsh Wrens and warblers are viewed here, as well as birds on the rocks and swallows nesting in the crevices.

10. Black Lake (ay)

There is a trail around the lake. A pair of Osprey usually nests on the light pole at the school. It is a great place to view Trumpeter Swans in the winter months. Also watch for mergansers, Green and Great Blue Herons.

11. Long Beach Boardwalk (ay)

See the information panels along the walk and the new path to Clark's Tree.

12. Loomis Lake Boat Launch (ay)

Entry on 188th off the highway. When the gate is closed, about a quarter-mile walk to the lake (and restroom). Possible sightings of ducks, geese, and mergansers - Trumpeter Swans in the winter.

13. Klipsan Beach 227th Ave. Ponds and Marshes (ay)

A pair of Osprey often nest in the marsh at the eastern end of 227th; also in the manmade nest at the western end. Waterfowl and shorebirds are present, especially during winter. Surrounding area is private property but good viewing from the road, pulling out of the path of any traffic.

14. Park Ave. in Ocean Park (ay)

Park Avenue is west of the main highway. South from the Bay Avenue beach approach, check the ponds and riparian areas for songbirds, waterfowl, Great Blue Herons and Belted Kingfishers.

15. Ocean Park Bay Avenue Beach Approach (ay)

This is a good place to view a variety of gulls because people feed them. Shorebirds are in the area except during the nesting season, with peaks during spring and fall migration. Scoters and pelicans can be spotted in the near surf.

16. The Canals in Surfside, North of 311th and west of I Street (f – w - sp)

You will have to drive around the neighborhood to find public footbridges and viewing spots as most of the land surrounding the canals is private property. A good starting point and information source is the Surfside Homeowners Association Office at 31402 H Street. There are geese, ducks, blackbirds, songbirds, finches and Great Blue Herons.

17. 357th Avenue Beach Access (ay)

Quite a walk through the dunes to the beach but fewer people in this area can mean more birds. Park out of the way and respect the signs. This is a public path where pheasants, Northern Harriers and Bald Eagles may be seen. Shorebirds concentrate on the beach at high tide during migration and Peregrine Falcons may be seen year-around.

18. Oysterville Road Ponds (ay)

At the west end of Oysterville Road in the winter, depending on the water levels, you can see waterfowl and shorebirds. In the summer months, watch the riparian areas. Avoid cranberry bogs and private properties.

19. Leadbetter Point – Unit of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge (ay)

There are trails here through a variety of habitats (and a restroom). You can access Willapa Bay, the Pacific Ocean, old forests, dunes and marshes. Areas may also be closed due to the ground nesting of Snowy Plovers. You are in Black Bear country, so make noise while moving through; this will not disturb the birds. Thousands of shorebirds feed on the mud flats during migration.

20. Oysterville Cannery (f – w – sp)

Take Oysterville road east to the end and go north a couple of blocks to the Sea Farm. This is a good place to watch the bay with a scope before high tide.

21. Oysterville-Territory Road (w)

On the bay side of Territory Road is a large field where hawks, shrikes and Peregrines can be seen. There are snipe during the winter; they hunker down in the tall grass and blend in well.

22. Nahcotta Boat Basin (f – w – sp)

This is a good place to set up a scope to study the bay without any hiking. You might see Common Loons, Western and Horned Grebes, Brant Geese, Great Blue Herons and Bald Eagles. Watch the distant pilings. Black Turnstones often can be seen on the oyster shell piles.

23. East 113th Street off Sandridge Road (f – w – sp)

Comes to a dead end with room to turn around. Dusky Canada Geese are plentiful in the bay.

24. Lone Fir Road and the Cemetery on 85th off Sandridge Road (w – sp)

The area to the north of the road, Tarlett Slough, is part of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge; the other side is private property. Both areas are fenced, but you can bird the pond from the road between the fences or obtain the key to the gate from the WNWR office for a closer view. Possibilities are Killdeer, Yellow Legs, White-fronted Geese and Red-necked Phalaropes. In the early fall, watch for migrating Aleutian Canada Geese. In the summer, you will see swallows, Savannah Sparrows and possibly a Western Bluebird.

25. Riekkola Unit of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge (f – w – sp) off Sandridge Road and 65th

Hunting season is October into January. In the large fields at the end of the road you will find large concentrations of Canada Geese, ranging from the “cackling” race, the duskys and lessers, to the giants. Go inside the gate, take the trail to the left for other sightings in woods and meadows. Birding is now allowed on the dike road.

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Any day is better when we share it with our bird friends.