

## Bird Island-Twin Lakes

**Location:** Brunswick County

**Total Size:** 800.0 ha (1,976.0 acres)



**Site Description:** Bird Island is located on the North Carolina-South Carolina border. In fact, the southwestern end of Bird Island is in South Carolina. It is one of the few undeveloped barrier islands remaining in the southern North Carolina. Luckily, Bird Island will remain undeveloped and will be protected forever as part of the North Carolina Estuarine Reserve system thanks to the determination and commitment of the Bird Island Preservation Society. The Society worked hard for more than a decade to acquire and protect the island. In addition to barrier island beach and dunes, the Bird Island site includes extensive saltmarsh that supports a variety of bird species throughout the year.

The Twin Lakes portion of the site consists of two freshwater ponds bounded by residential development and a golf course, and adjacent salt marsh on the mainland. The lakes provide a resting area and roost for wood storks and other species of waterbirds.

**Habitats:** freshwater pond, saltmarsh, barrier island beach and dunes, intertidal sandflat and mudflat.

**Land Use:** residential development, recreation, and hunting

**Primary Threats:** human disturbance, residential/commercial development, introduced predators, and recreational development/overuse

**Protection Status:** The barrier island and saltmarsh are part of the Bird Island Estuarine Reserve protected and managed by the North Carolina Estuarine Reserve Program. The lakes are in private ownership and are not afforded protection.

**Conservation Issues:** The ponds, surrounding trees, water quality, hydrology and a sufficient buffer zone should be maintained. Nesting sites for beach-nesting birds such as Wilson’s Plovers, American Oystercatchers, Willets, terns and skimmers should be located, posted, patrolled and monitored during the nesting season. Surveys of landbirds, shorebirds, waterbirds, and waterfowl during breeding, migration and winter are lacking and needed.

**Birds:** This site has North Carolina's only regularly occurring flock of Wood Storks. No evidence of nesting has ever been found, but the wood storks have used the area regularly for more than a decade. The storks rest and roost in the trees bordering the freshwater ponds and then travel to the nearby saltmarsh to forage. This is the northernmost limit of the Wood Stork’s range in North America.

**Key Bird Species**

Criteria		Season	Number	Year	% NC
1	Wood Stork	All (NB)	75	2003	98 %

B=Breeding FM=Fall Migration SM=Spring Migration W=Winter NB=non-breeding