

## Important Bird Areas

Fort Fisher, with its beaches and marshes, is part of a larger area that includes Bald Head Island and the surrounding marshes and open water.

This area has been designated as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by the National Audubon Society because of the wide variety of birds that nest and feed here.

The sandy beaches provide feeding and nesting areas for shorebirds which lay their well-camouflaged eggs directly on the sand.

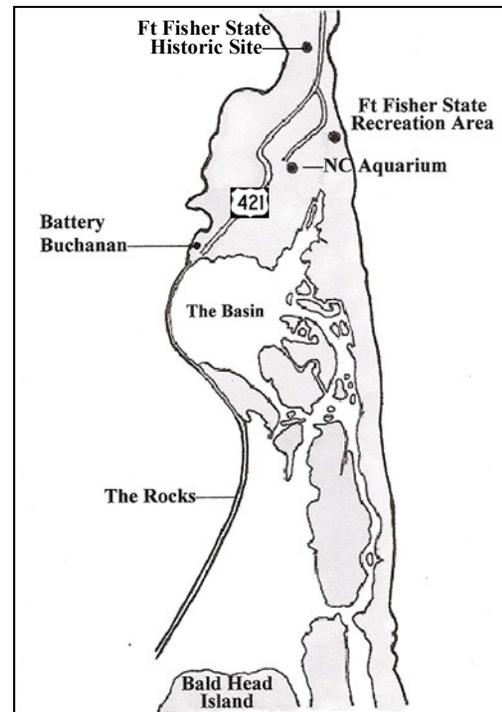
In the marshes and mudflats, 8,000 to 10,000 wading birds find food during the nesting season and many stay year-round.

Twelve species of ducks can be found in the river and ocean.

In the fall, migratory warblers, sparrows, and raptors stop to rest here before continuing south.

In the summer, Painted Buntings, beautiful songbirds with red, blue, yellow and green feathers, come north to nest on Bald Head Island. They can be seen at the feeders in nearby Carolina Beach State Park.

## Bald Head/Fort Fisher IBA map



Cape Fear Audubon Society  
[www.capefearaudubon.org](http://www.capefearaudubon.org)

## Audubon Important Bird Areas Program



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Bald Head/Fort Fisher IBA

# BIRDS TO SEE AT THE BALD HEAD/FORT FISHER IBA

Photographs by John Ennis



**Royal Tern** (20" long)

Royal terns are large, slender terns with a long, orange beak and a fringe of black feathers around the head. Watch for them flying and diving for fish offshore. For a short time in breeding plumage, they have a solid black cap with a shaggy crest.



**Least Tern** (9" long)

Smallest of our terns, the Least Tern has a bright yellow beak. They can be seen on the beaches or diving for fish offshore. They are on the Audubon Watch List as globally imperiled.



**Black Skimmer** (18" long)

Skimmers are often seen flying low at the water's edge, skimming the water with their lower bill submerged. They are black above, white below. They are on the Audubon Watch List as threatened.



**American Oystercatcher** (17.5" long)

Oystercatchers are dark above, white below. Look for the long, orange-red, carrot-shaped beak. They are often seen on oyster bars, mudflats and on the jetty at the Basin.



**Brown Pelican** (51" long)

Pelicans can be seen flying in lines or V's over the water or diving headfirst for fish. Their prehistoric silhouette is unmistakable.



**Wilson's Plover** (7.75" long)

Plovers are the small birds seen feeding on the beach in a stop-and-go style. Wilson's Plover has a dark neck band, flesh-colored legs, and a distinctively long and heavy beak. Threatened.