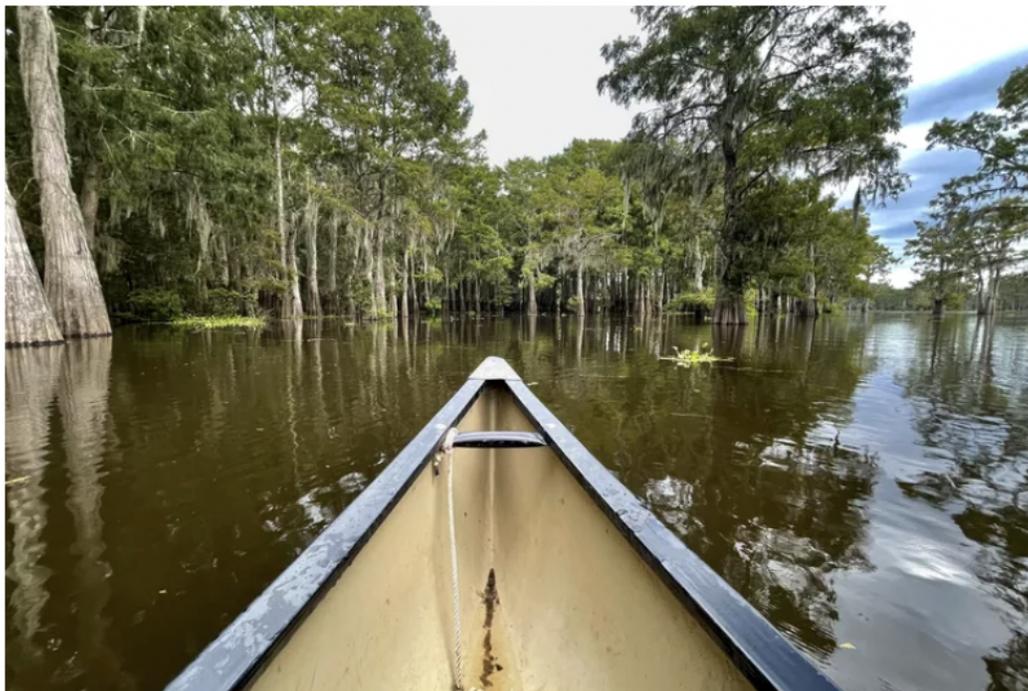


## The Best North American Destinations for a Bird-watching Trip — and Our Tips for Having the Best Time in Each

These crowd-pleasing North American destinations are as perfect for bird-watching as they are for a good old-fashioned vacation.

By **Alexandra Marvar** | Published on August 27, 2023



Atchafalaya National Heritage Area, in Louisiana. PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ATCHAFALAYA NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Perhaps you've heard about the bird-watching boom? Newcomers are flocking to the hobby, which studies have shown has the power to boost happiness. Another upside: unlike many outdoorsy pursuits, this one requires little in the way of specialized equipment or physical fitness.

Serious aficionados often plan their vacations around migrations, visiting spring hot spots such as Nebraska's Platte River Valley or the shores of Utah's Great Salt Lake. But if you're still easing into the hobby — or traveling with friends or relatives who don't know a warbler from a woodpecker — these five alternatives have plenty to offer in addition to bird-watching bliss.



The Audubon Nature Center & Aquarium, in Bristol, Rhode Island. PHOTO: BUTCH LOMBARDI/COURTESY OF AUDUBON SOCIETY OF RHODE ISLAND



The saltmarsh sparrow. PHOTO: CAL VORNBERGER/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

## **Bristol, Rhode Island**

This scenic bayside village between Newport and Providence is home to intriguing species such as the wading willet and the iridescent purple martin, depending on the season. Spotting them is made easier by the boardwalks at the Audubon Nature Center & Aquarium and the hiking route at the Osamequin Nature Trails & Bird Sanctuary.

## **Bragging Rights**

The saltmarsh sparrow may look like an everyday songbird, but this species, which nests at Jacob's Point Preserve, is at risk of habitat loss as sea levels rise.

## **Besides the Birds**

Bristol's waterfront Blithewold estate has 33 acres of manicured gardens surrounding a historic mansion. In nearby Newport, the famed Cliff Walk gives a glimpse of the Gilded Age; spend the night at [The Vanderbilt, Auberge Resorts Collection](#), where the 33 stylish rooms and suites are fresh off a two-year renovation.