

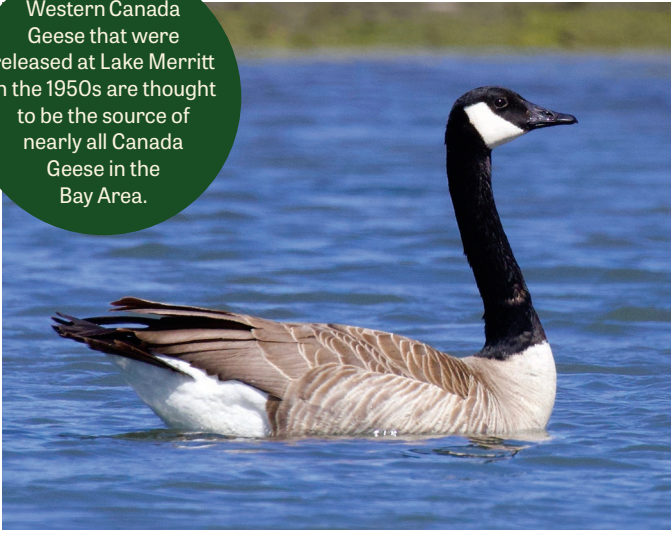
# Birds of Crissy Field

PHOTOS BY  
JONAH BENNINGFIELD



DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS

Western Canada Geese that were released at Lake Merritt in the 1950s are thought to be the source of nearly all Canada Geese in the Bay Area.



### CANADA GOOSE

29.9 - 43.3 inches ~ wetlands ~ year-round

Great Blue Herons in the Presidio primarily hunt pocket gophers but also eat fish, lizards, and amphibians.



### GREAT BLUE HERON

38.2 - 53.9 inches ~ marshes, fields ~ year-round

Western Snowy Plovers, while federally protected, are still threatened by loss of habitat due to human activity.



### SNOWY PLOVER

6.4 inches ~ beaches ~ winter

Killdeer lure predators away from their nests by pretending to have a broken wing.



### KILLDEER

7.9 - 11 inches ~ shorelines, grasslands ~ year-round

The Curlew's long bill makes it the ideal tool for plucking crabs and shrimp buried 4-6 inches down in muddy burrows.



### LONG-BILLED CURLEW

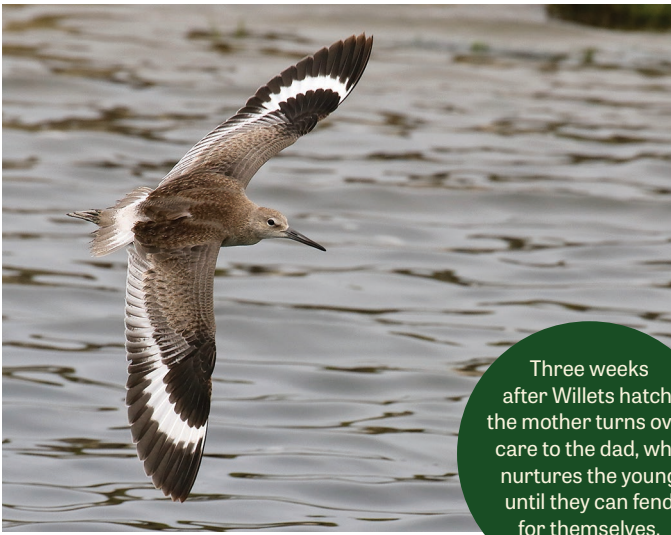
19.7 - 25.6 inches ~ mudflats, marshes ~ year-round

Savannah Sparrows eat crustaceans and snails as well as seeds of grasses. It can be seen leaping up in brief zig-zagging flights.



### SAVANNAH SPARROW

4.3 - 5.9 inches ~ grasslands ~ year-round



Three weeks after Willets hatch, the mother turns over care to the dad, who nurtures the young until they can fend for themselves.

**WILLET**

13 - 16.1 inches ~ shorelines ~ spring/fall/winter



This species loves anchovies, and when anchovy populations rise, Elegant Terns have greater nesting success.

**ELEGANT TERN**

15.3 - 16.5 inches ~ coastlines ~ summer



The Least Sandpiper is the world's smallest sandpiper.

**LEAST SANDPIPER**

5.1 - 5.9 inches ~ mudflats ~ fall/winter



Snowy Egrets stir the water with their yellow feet, which scares minnows into open water where they can catch them.

**SNOWY EGRET**

22.1 - 26 inches ~ marshes ~ year-round



John James Audubon—father of modern bird science—named the Brewer's Blackbird after his friend Dr. Thomas Brewer.

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD ♂**

8.3 - 8.7 inches ~ various ~ year-round



Greater Yellowlegs actively feed in shallow water, running after minnows or walking through water while moving their bill back-and-forth.

**GREATER YELLOWLEGS**

3.9 - 8.3 inches ~ marshes ~ spring/fall/winter



SANDERLINGS

**M**y name is Jonah Benningfield, and I have been birding in the Presidio since I was eight years old. Crissy Field is one of the many spots that I have grown up birding in, and it is an important wintering site for small numbers of waterfowl and shorebirds. While my primary passion is birding for the sake of identification, over the years I have developed a side interest in photography. The two interests go together well, and the photos in this guide are my best effort to represent some of the birds one is likely to see when walking around Crissy Field – both the lagoon and the field. With a little luck, you'll be able to see some of the species pictured here, and I hope that you enjoy a look into the world of birding.



Questions, please contact [rberkov@presidiotrust.gov](mailto:rberkov@presidiotrust.gov)

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Sources cited: Young Birder's Guide to Birds of North America, Bay Area Birds: From Sonoma County to Monterey Bay, Audubon Guide to North American Birds, [allaboutbirds.org](http://allaboutbirds.org)