

## **Birding and Wildlife Viewing**

A diversity of wildlife abounds along the streams, valleys and mountaintops of Nelson County. The Hiking page on this website lists the trails within the county with many species of birds and wildlife to see and photograph. [LINK TO HIKING](#)

As designated by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries there are many **Virginia Watchable Wildlife Trails** within the county that cover both the Mountain and Piedmont regions.

### **In the Mountain Region of Nelson County:**

Description, Directions and a Map can be found on each link below:

[Blue Ridge Rail Trail](#) is a former railway bed converted to a hiking trail with a level well-maintained path where inhabit indigenous to lower elevations may be seen.

[Lake Nelson](#) is a 40 acre lake surrounded by woodland with a variety of waterfowl best viewed in the spring and fall.

[Rockfish Valley Hawk Watch](#) is a site where volunteer hawk-watchers congregate annually to count the hawk migrations from mid-August to November.

[The Wintergreen Nature Foundation's](#) Trillium House at Wintergreen Resort has 24 blazed trails, numerous mountain overlooks, 30 miles of hiking trails, and a nature preserve.

[Spruce Creek Park](#) trails along and easy walking path by the south fork of the Rockfish River with grassy areas, and mountain views that offer a diversity of birds and wildlife.

[Crabtree Falls](#) (U.S. Forest Service) is a cascading waterfall deep into the mountain slopes of the Blue Ridge with a variety of bird species along a moderate to strenuous hiking trail.

[Montebello Area](#), on top of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is a great place to view a variety of wildlife, stop at the state fish hatchery, and hike to Spy Rock, one of the highest elevations in the county.

[Royal Oaks](#) provides a perfect getaway with accommodations along the Blue Ridge, including short walking trails through a patch of hardwood forest filled with birds associated with the Blue Ridge.

### **In the Piedmont Region of Nelson County**

[Fortune's Cove Preserve](#) has extremely rare vegetation in the rocky glades and is a quiet area for listening to the many sounds of a variety of birds found in the forest along the crest of Woods Mountain.

[James River Wildlife Management Area](#) trail runs along the north shore of the James River with prolific habitat, including many species of waterfowl, butterflies and native birds.

[Rockfish River Depot](#) offers views while driving scenic Rockfish River Road, with ample opportunities to stop and scan the river and tree tops for waterfowl.