

### 3 NUNAVAAQ ROAD

lat: 71.2655169 / long: -156.8374937

**Optimal birding:** Around May 25 through June 20

The coastal bluffs along Nunavak Road are a magnet for shorebirds, particularly vagrant Buff-breasted Sandpipers (Puvviaqtuuq, Satqagiġaq), and are one of the best sites in Utqiaġvik for breeding Western Sandpipers and American Golden-Plovers (Tulik, Tullik, Tuulligġuk). From the bluffs, watch for migrating eiders, gulls, loons, and occasional Pelagic Cormorants (Iġitqaaq) and alcids, as well as polar bears, bowhead and beluga whales, seals, and walruses. The tundra on either side of the road also hosts nesting Parasitic (Miġiaqsaayuk) and Pomarine Jaegers (Isuŋŋaġluk, Isuŋŋaaluk) and many shorebirds.

**Note:** Be cautious near the gravel pit, as people often use it for shooting.

### 4 IMAIQAUN ROAD

lat: 71.2625734 / long: -156.7721749

**Optimal birding:** Around May 25 through June 20

Imaiqsaun Road, also called Freshwater Lake Road, leads away from town and deadends at Freshwater Lake—one of the most accessible spots for Arctic Terns and Sabine's Gulls which breed there in small numbers. The best birding is toward the end of the road. Terns often roost on the shore while the Sabine's Gulls are often in the marshes on either side of the road. Pacific and Red-throated Loons also breed on the lake.

### 5 SOUTH SALT LAGOON

lat: 71.3048585 / long: -156.7266072

**Optimal birding:** Around May 25 through June 20

Spot shorebirds, waterfowl, and vagrants at the lagoon's south-end beach. Semipalmated (Liva, Livaqpauraq, Nivilivilakpak, Livalivaq), Western, and White-rumped (Qupilguqsuiyuk) sandpipers congregate here to forage. There are often Little and Red-necked Stints, Long-tailed Ducks (Aaqhaaliq, Aaqhaalliq, Aaġaaliq, Aahaaliq, Argiq), and Black Brant (Niġlingaaq).

**Note:** This lagoon is a sewage treatment pond. Do not approach the water or walk on the tundra.

This birding trail offers site recommendations and descriptions, driving directions, special travel notes, and possible species. The Utqiaġvik Alaska Birding Trail was created as a community asset for economic development and educational purposes.

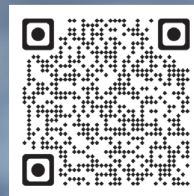
#### Iñupiat language resources include:

Iñupiatun Uqaluit Taniktun Sivuniġit  
Official Website of the North Slope Borough  
Indigenous Knowledge Liaison Robin Mongoyak

#### Keep up with the annual Utqiaġvik Migratory Bird Festival on social media at:

facebook.com/utqbirdfest  
instagram.com/utqmigratorybirdfest

Birders in town on the road system do not need a UIC land use permit. It is only necessary when traveling off-road on the tundra area or north to Piġniq or Point Barrow. For more information, see:



UIC LAND  
USE INFO

#### IN COLLABORATION WITH

- Alaska Department of Fish and Game • Audubon Alaska
- Iġisaġvik College • Iñupiat Heritage Center
- North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management
- UIC Science • U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Tuzzy Consortium Library

 Audubon | ALASKA



ALASKA  
BIRDING TRAIL  
UTQIAĠVIK

King Eider - Mick Thompson

### 1 CAKEEATER/GAS WELL ROADS

lat: 71.2761339 / long: -156.6450251

**Optimal birding:** Around May 25 through June 20

Cakeeater and Gas Well roads are fantastic birding locations for their abundance of breeding species and rarities. Keep an eye out for all species of shorebirds and waterfowl, plus Snowy Owls (Ukpik) and Peregrine Falcons (Kirgavigruaq, Kirgavik) atop telephone poles. Footprint Lake is a prime location for Steller's Eiders (Iġniqauqtuuq), Black Brant (Niġlingaaq), Tundra Swans (Quġruk, Qugruk), and Pomarine Jaegers (Isuŋŋaġluk, Isuŋŋaaluk). Just past the gas plant on Gas Well Road, a series of ponds are among the best sites in town for Spectacled Eiders (Qavaasuk) and other waterfowl.

**Note:** Do not pass the "UIC Shareholders Only" sign at the gas plant if you do not hold a UIC permit. If you purchase a permit, sign in at the main gas plant building.

### 2 PIĠNIQ SEAWATCH

lat: 71.3486754 / long: -156.5902259

**Optimal birding:** Around July 1 through October 31

The Piġniq (duck camp) north of the Naval Arctic Research Laboratory (NARL) is the final developed area before the spit leading to Point Barrow. This area sees its peak activity in the late summer and fall as hundreds of thousands of King and Common eiders funnel over the narrow sand spit as they cross from Elson Lagoon to the Chukchi Sea. These migrating waterfowl are an important food source for subsistence hunters. The sparsely vegetated spit also hosts breeding Semipalmated Plovers (Qurraaquraq, Kurrakuraq), and Baird's Sandpipers (Puvviaqtuuuyaqaq, Nuvaksruk). Toward the end of the summer, the lagoon near the duck camp is a staging area for large numbers of Yellow-billed Loons (Tuullik). This area is also the best place in the world to observe Ross's Gulls, as over half of the world's population migrates by in mid-October.

**Note:** Polar bears become more frequent closer to Point Barrow and have come onto land here. Remain vigilant and avoid this area if bears are present.

6 BARROW CEMETERY

lat: 71.2899017 / long: -156.7726775

Optimal birding: Around May 25 through July 1

This is one of the best sites in town for vagrant passerines. Walking the perimeter of the cemetery can stir up vagrants that may be sitting on the ground. From the perimeter, scan the tops of crosses and fence posts for flycatchers and swallows, or Arctic Warblers (Songakpalutunyik, Songakpalutungiq, Sungaqpaluktungiq) foraging along the ground. The cemetery is also one of the most consistent sites for Redpolls (Saksakiq, Saksarñiq, Saksarñuraq, Ukpiksiuvuk). Snowy Owls (Ukpik) are known to hunt from atop the gravestones.

**Note:** This is an active cemetery. Visitors should remain on perimeter and not walk among gravesites.

7 AIRPORT OVERLOOK

lat: 71.2858499 / long: -156.8070399

Optimal birding: Around May 25 through July 31

The overlook near the airport is possibly the best sea-watching site in town, as the high bluffs give a good vantage point toward the lead of the ice. From the bluffs, watch for seabirds like eiders, loons, and kittiwakes. This is also among the best places to see marine mammals like bowhead and beluga whales, seals, walruses, and polar bears on the ice.

8 NAVAL ARCTIC RESEARCH LABORATORY

lat: 71.3239685 / long: -156.6737163

Optimal birding: Around May 25 through July 1

The NARL is one of the best sites for vagrant passerines. Flycatchers hunt insects breeding in stagnant water, thrushes forage in the marshy tundra, and swallows perch on fences and fly over catching insects. The sparsely vegetated area serves as reliable sites for breeding Baird’s Sandpiper (Puvviaqtuuyaaq, Nuvaksruk) and Semipalmated Plover (Qurraaquraq, Kurrakuraq).

**Note:** NARL is a neighborhood with permanent residents. Please be respectful of personal property and spaces.

Utqiaġvik

- Hotel
- Airport
- Groceries
- Museum & Library
- Hospital



9 STEVENSON STREET BEACHFRONT

lat: 71.3071037 / long: -156.7477222

Optimal birding: Around May 25 through July 1

The general area along the coast near where Ahmaogak and Stevenson streets meet is an ideal site for sea watching. Large flocks of eiders migrate over this area while kittiwakes and other gulls forage near the coast. Look toward the leading edge of the ice for other seabirds like Crested Auklets (Iqsralik), Pelagic Cormorants (Injitaq), and Horned Puffin (Qitaññaq). This has also been a great spot for polar bears as there are often scraps of whale and other meats on the sea ice here, the gut piles of which attract bears.

**Note:** Polar bears occasionally come onto land here when the sea ice is near. Remain vigilant and leave the area if a bear comes too close.

10 NUNAVAAG GRAVEL PIT

lat: 71.27767 / long: -156.8210866

Optimal birding: Around May 25 through June 20

This is a fantastic place for vagrant shorebirds and passerines. At the gravel pit’s bottom, there are a series of shallow ponds and puddles that attract vagrant stints and other sandpipers. Vagrant passerines will often shelter around the equipment here as well.

**Note:** Be cautious near the gravel pit, as people often use it for shooting.

Utqiaġvik, Alaska is the economic, transportation, and administrative center of the North Slope Borough. Located on the Chukchi Sea coast, this is the northernmost community in the United States. It is traditionally known as Ukpeagvik, or “place where snowy owls are hunted.” Utqiaġvik was incorporated as a first-class city in 1958. We respectfully acknowledge that Utqiaġvik and the surrounding land belong to the Indigenous caretakers of Iñupiat heritage.