



Photo courtesy of George Housley, Jr. ©

RAPTORS

Osprey

Pandion haliaetus

- Status: Permanent resident, nests at Grand Bay
Abundance: Common
When found: Year round
Habitat: Hunts over water. Often nests inland.
Best locations: Power Line Right-of-Way, Bayou Heron Boat Launch

Notes: Ospreys nest atop the power line towers near the Coastal Resources Center. Look for them in nearby trees, picking apart a striped mullet or bluegill.

Bald Eagle

Haliaeetus leucocephalus

- Status: Winter resident, nests at Grand Bay
Abundance: Fairly common
When found: September–May.
Absent in summer.
Habitat: Maritime forest, bays, salt marsh
Best locations: Bayou Heron Boat Launch, Point aux Chenes

Notes: Bald Eagles differ from most of Grand Bay's birds by nesting in the winter rather than during spring or summer.



Photo courtesy of Sharon Milligan ©



Photo courtesy of Olivia Graves ©

Northern Harrier

Circus cyaneus

- Status: Winter resident
Abundance: Common
When found: October–April
Habitat: Salt marsh, open pine savanna
Best locations: Bayou Heron Boat Launch, along all bayous.

Notes: Harriers and raccoons are probably the most deadly predators of marshbirds and rice rats at Grand Bay. Harriers cruise low over the marsh looking for prey. When they spot something they hover briefly then instantly drop upon it, disappearing into the grass.



Photo courtesy of Sharon Milligan ©

Peregrine Falcon

Falco peregrinus

- Status: Winter resident
Abundance: Uncommon
When found: October–April
Habitat: Bays, bayous, salt pannes, mudflats, shell middens
Best locations: Bangs Island, Point aux Chenes, Grand Battures

Notes: The Peregrine Falcon is the fastest animal on our planet. One crafty falcon has learned to use boats to help it hunt. This Peregrine follows a boat around the Reserve waiting for a grebe or small duck to flush, so that it can swoop down and grab the fleeing bird out of the air. The photo above was taken seconds after one such attack, which on this occasion was unsuccessful.