



**Low-Elevation Species
Advanced Practice Week 2
March 13 – March 17, 2018**

Goal: Familiarize yourself with the **auditory** characteristics of the following **seven** species:

- Great-tailed Grackle
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Yellow-headed Blackbird
- Marsh Wren
- Brown-headed Cowbird
- Ring-necked Pheasant
- Sandhill Crane

Auditory ID: Below you will find recordings of some typical calls and songs for this week’s species. Listen through the tracks and pay attention to the characteristic tone, patterns, call notes and phrasing that I have noted. Groups or pairs of these species can be easy to confuse with one another. I will describe some ways to help yourself differentiate between these similar-sounding species.

After getting familiar with the recordings, go outside and see if you can hear any of these songs or calls. Remember- bird songs vary between individuals, and even within individual birds- try to listen to as many different songs as possible for each species to help you learn the songs!

Track #	Species	Code	Characteristics to listen for
1	Great-tailed Grackle	GTGR	The GTGR has an array of sounds, including those that sound like machinery, and the sound of a rusty gate hinge. Listen to the rapid-fire “ki-ki-ki-ki” territorial song in this recording, and other high, clear, mechanical sounds, and compare to the background of Yellow-headed Blackbirds and Red-winged Blackbirds.
2	Red-winged Blackbird	RWBL	This recording has the three main vocalizations you are likely to hear from the RWBL. It starts with the “chack” call note, then goes into the distinctive song: “conk-la-ree!”, and then goes into the downward whistled alarm “tear”
3	Yellow-headed Blackbird	YHBL	The YHBL has an assortment of rough sounds, mellow whistles and drawn out phrases- it sounds a little like the bird is being strangled. They also have a low-pitched “check” call note.
4	Marsh Wren	MAWR	The MAWR song has a very gurgling, rattling, sound. It sounds both musical and mechanical.
5	Brown-headed Cowbird	BHCO	The BHCO song is a low, gurgle followed by a thin whistle. The song almost sounds like a water-droplet. They also have a flat, hard, rattle call.
6	Ring-necked Pheasant	RNEP	The male RNEP gives a grating “crow,” which sounds like a rusty, squeaky gate, or a truncated version of a domestic rooster’s crow.
7	Sandhill Crane	SACR	The SACR has a loud, resonant, wooden rattle. The rolling bugle is typically long and slightly descending.