

Great Wisconsin Birding & Nature Trail

Central Sands Prairie Region





Sandhill Cranes.

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Wing your way through Wild Wisconsin

The *Great Wisconsin Birding and Nature Trail* is your invitation to observe the fascinating and diverse world of wildlife that exists in every corner of the state.

By late 2008, the Wisconsin DNR Endangered Resource Program will have developed a series of five highway-based viewing guides, each highlighting unique regional ecosystems of Wisconsin. Each will link a set of waypoints, refuges and wild places that offer the best birding and wildlife watching opportunities.

This is the fourth of those five guides - the Central Sands Prairie Birding and Nature Trail. It covers seventeen Wisconsin counties in the center of the state. Published in 2007, it includes 78 waypoints from the massive 43,000-acre Necedah National Wildlife Refuge in the west to High Cliff State Park in the east.

In 2008, the Southern Savanna Trails Birding and Nature Trail will complete the series. The first three guides in the series, the Lake Superior Northwoods edition released in 2004, the Mississippi/Chippewa Rivers edition from 2005, and the Lake Michigan edition from 2006, are still available in limited numbers.

Waypoints on each trail will be marked with the program's distinctive Sandhill Crane logo. As you travel, watch for these signs – they are your invitation to the fascinating world of Wisconsin wildlife.

ALAN ORR



Common Goldeneye in flight.



Waypoint marker.

State Natural Areas



Wisconsin's State Natural Areas (SNAs) protect outstanding examples of native biological communities such as prairies, pine barrens, bogs, and boreal forests. They also preserve significant geological and archaeological features and are often the last refuges in Wisconsin for rare species of birds, animals, plants, fungi, lichens, and a host of other organisms.

Code of Ethics

The Great Wisconsin Birding and Nature Trail is your gateway to the natural world of Wisconsin. The Code of Ethics serves to guide you as you seek your favorite waypoint sites across the state.

- Treat birds and other animals with respect, never disturbing or collecting anything in their habitat.
- Trails, roads and paths found at the sites provide good access to the property. Avoid leaving them unless you are in a wilderness area.
- Wisconsin has strict trespass laws. Private property does not have to be posted or fenced in Wisconsin. Ask permission if you want to enter private land. Know where you are – pay attention to posted property boundary signs.
- Dogs must be leashed on all state lands during the bird-nesting season from April 15 through July 31.
- Lead by example. Leave the property litter-free and in good condition for the next traveler.
- Give nature a voice. Thank the property owner, manager or staff person for the opportunity to enjoy nature at their site.

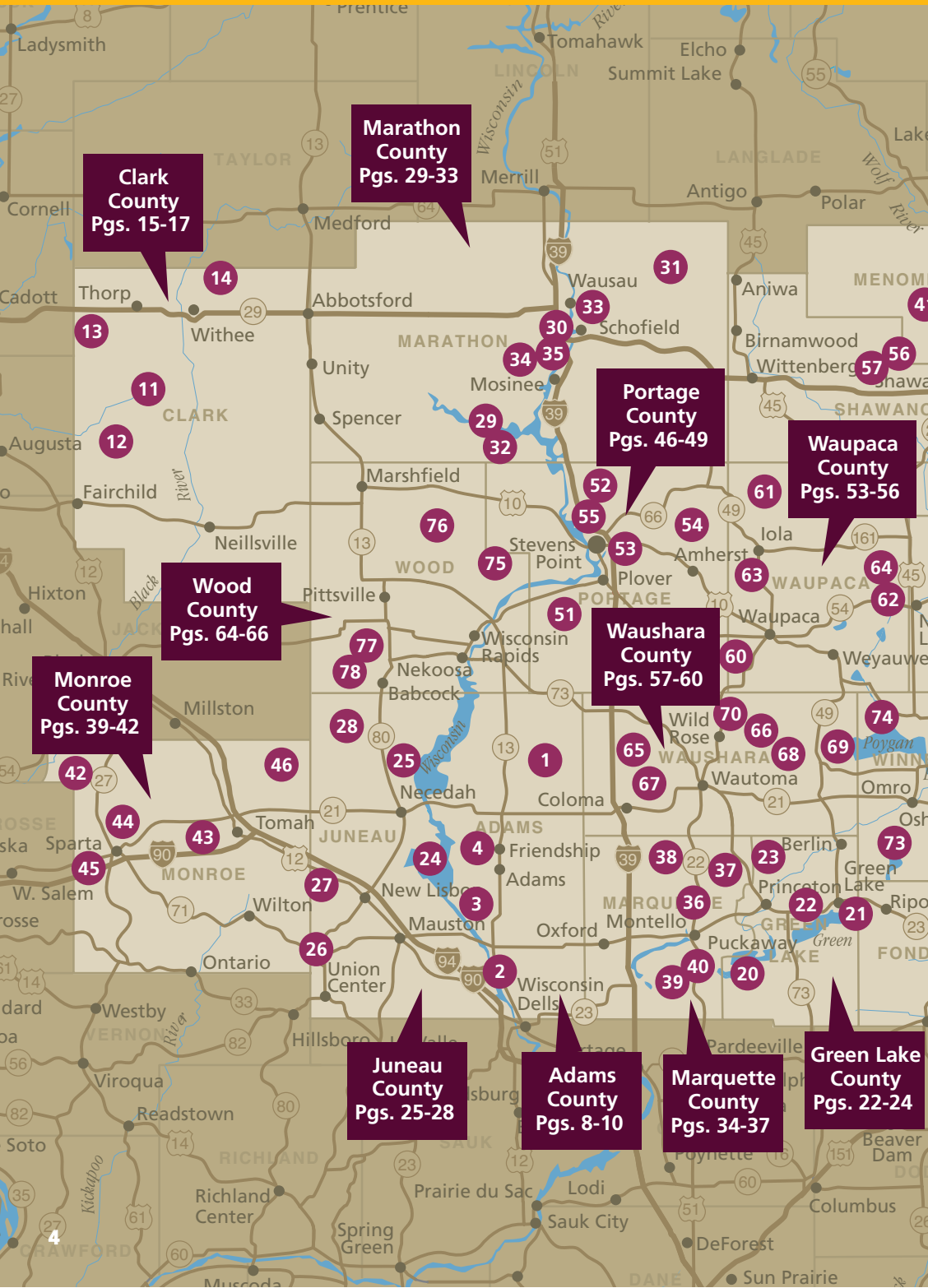
DON ABRAMS



Monarch Butterfly.

Great Wisconsin Birding & Nature Trail

Central Sands Region

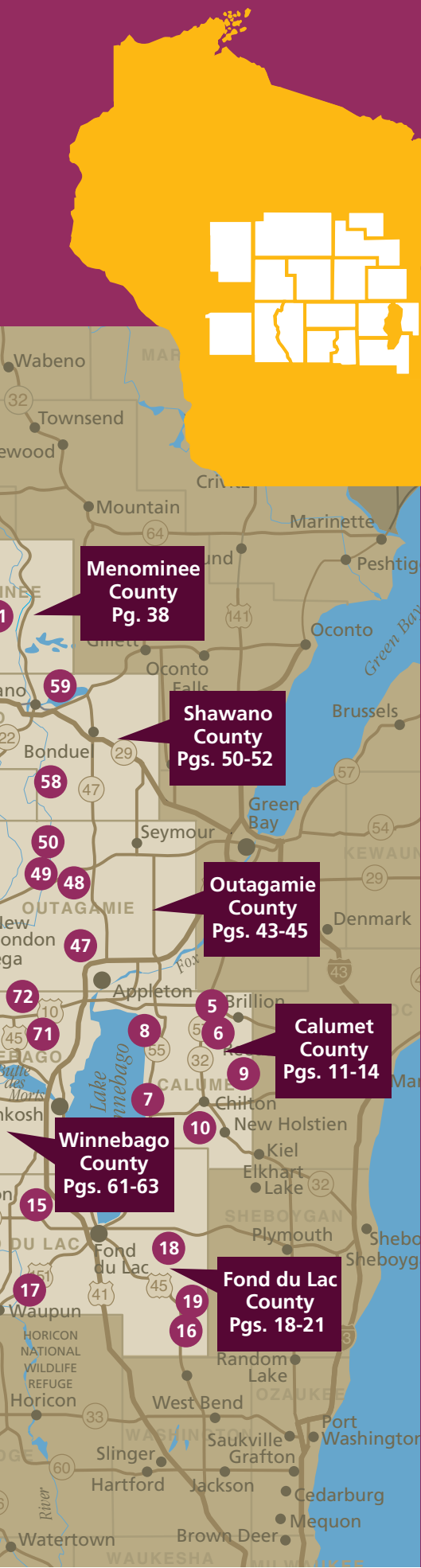


Using the Guide

Information for this guide was gathered locally from Wisconsin DNR, naturalists, birders, and a range of wildlife enthusiasts. Each site was nominated locally and evaluated as part of the regional project.

Site information includes a contact phone number, driving directions, a small locator map, a description of the property, common and rare birds and wildlife, and a Web site if available. Except as noted, admission to these properties is free. Hours are included, even though most properties are open 24/7.

As you would expect, most of these waypoints are remote, wild locations. While every effort has been made to provide accurate driving instructions, we recommend that you bring a county map or gazetteer to help in finding these sites. Other prudent equipment would include a compass, flashlight, water, a granola bar or two, insect repellent, and a good pair of walking/hiking shoes.



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Adams County



When the last great glacier swept through Wisconsin 12,000 years ago leveling much of the Midwest, it spared the southwestern corner of the state including Adams County.

Consequently, the county's landscape is graced by many fanciful spires, buttes and mesas that were once islands in Glacial Lake Wisconsin. Native Americans and their European successors gave these solitary pinnacles colorful names like Ship Rock, Friendship Mound, Rabbit Rock, Roche-A-Cri, and Lone Rock.

As the glacier retreated, its meltwater carved the state's lakes and rivers, including the Wisconsin River that forms the western border of Adams County. That border includes two large impounded lakes on the Wisconsin River – Petenwell Lake and the Castle Rock Flowage. At 23,040 and 13,955 acres respectively, the lakes are the second the fifth largest in Wisconsin. The lakes are havens of water recreation offering quality walleye fishing and plenty of water for all types of boating.

Near Friendship, the county seat, you can visit **Roche-A-Cri State Park** (608/339-6881, www.wiparks.net). The French name refers to the 300-foot-high rock outcropping that is the central feature of this quiet park. Climb the stairway to the top for a spectacular panoramic view. The park contains Native American pictographs (rock paintings) and Petroglyphs (rock carvings) that date to 100 A.D., as well as 41 family campsites and 6 miles of hiking trails.

1

Colburn State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/421-7800

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

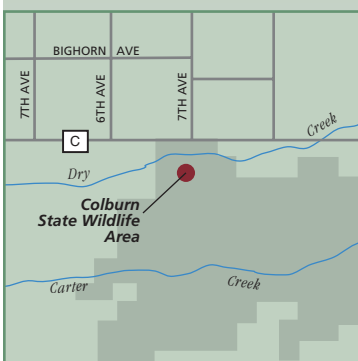
Signature species: Sandhill Cranes, Ruffed Grouse & American Black Duck

Rare species: Sedge Wren, Veery & Pileated Woodpecker

Gazetteer: Page 52, D-3

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Friendship



Nearly 5,000 acres of marshes and forests draw in a nice variety of birds and wildlife. Look for herons and egrets in the marshes that run along Carter and Big Dry Creeks. The wooded areas are attractive to many nesting songbird species and numerous woodpeckers. Bald Eagles are frequently seen hunting over Colburn, which is just a few miles east of the Wisconsin River. The property supports many mammals including deer, badgers, woodchucks, mink, fox and coyotes. Colburn is a great place to hike and fish. Good roads, including Rustic Road R-50, take you around and through this property.

Directions: From Friendship drive north on Hwy 13 about ten miles to Cty C, then east on C six miles to the property.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Sedge Wren

Dells of the Wisconsin River State Natural Area

Phone: 608/339-3385

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Bank Swallow, Cliff Swallow & Barn Swallow

Rare Species: Yellow Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler & Northern Waterthrush

Gazetteer: Page 43, C-5

Parking: Parking areas

Nearest food & lodging: Wisconsin Dells



This property is 1,300 acres in size and protects some of the most pristine areas of the Dells of the Wisconsin River in parts of Adams, Columbia, Juneau and Sauk Counties. The birding opportunities are great along a spectacular gorge, cliffs, tributary canyons, and unusual rock formations carved by the catastrophic drainage of glacial Lake Wisconsin some 12,000 years ago. The sandy uplands are wooded with both hardwood and pine species, including hemlock, red oak and white pine. This forest diversity draws in many different species of birds. Many unusual plants grow here including tiny asters, ferns, and sedges.

Directions: From Wisconsin Dells, go east 0.6 miles on Hwy 13, then north 1.7 miles on River Road to a parking area west of the road. A hiking trail leads to the river. Another parking area is located 1.9 miles farther north along River Road. The rock formations are best seen by water. A boat landing is

located on River Road, 0.5 mile north of Hwy 13. The cliffs and side canyons are closed to the public to protect sensitive features.

TOURISM PHOTO FILE



Fall color along the Upper Dells.

3

Quincy Bluff & Wetlands State Natural Area

Phone: 608/339-3385

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

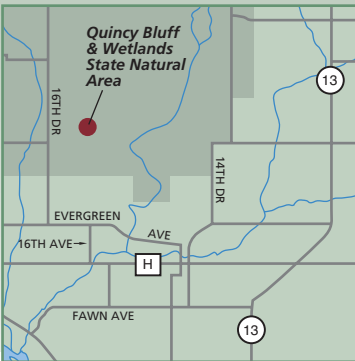
Signature species: Willow Flycatcher, Great Blue Heron & Common Raven

Rare species: Blue-headed Vireo, Red-headed Woodpecker, Gray Jay & Golden-crowned Kinglet

Gazetteer: Page 43, B-5

Parking: Parking area

Nearest food & lodging: Friendship



Quincy Bluff & Wetlands is a 5,102 acre, landscape-scale natural area in the flat, sandy bed of former Glacial Lake Wisconsin. Quincy Bluff and Rattlesnake Mound are both sandstone mesas that border this vast wetland complex of sedge meadow, tamarack swamp, shrub-carr and small ponds. Low sandy ridges support barrens communities of jack pine and Hill's oak. Quincy Bluff looms 200 feet above the wetland and is forested with oak and pine. Small forest openings support prairie plants and draw in some interesting grassland sparrows. Overhead, Turkey Vultures and Bald Eagles soar on warm currents of air, while Red-tailed Hawks perch on tree limbs along woodland edges.

Directions: From the intersection of Hwy 13 and Cty H east of White Creek, go west 2.4 miles on Cty H, then north 0.4 miles on 16th Ave, then west 0.5 miles on Evergreen Ave, then north 2.4 miles on 16th Drive to a parking area east of the road.

4

Roche-a-Cri State Park & Roche-a-Cri Mound State Natural Area

Phone: 608/565-2789

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Turkey Vultures & Bald Eagles

Rare species: Common Raven, Winter Wren & Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

Gazetteer: Page 52, D-2

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Friendship

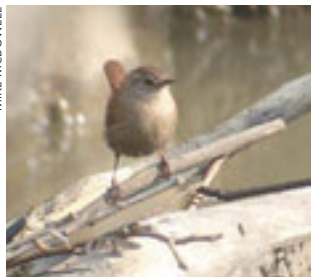
Fee: Park fees apply



This 605-acre state park is dominated by a 300-foot-high rocky butte that once stood as an island surrounded by the waters of glacial Lake Wisconsin. There is excellent interpretive information about the rock at the foot of the 303-step wooden stairs that takes you to the top. Once at the top, you'll get a bird's-eye view of the flat Central Sands plain that unfolds before you. Turkey Vultures use the high mound as a roost site. Below, a long and steep talus slope and small rock shelter contains Native American petroglyphs (rock carvings). Don't forget your camera!

Directions: From Friendship, go north on Hwy 13 two miles to the park entrance.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Winter Wren

Calumet County



Occupying much of the eastern shore of Lake Winnebago, Wisconsin's largest inland lake, Calumet County is a beautiful landscape of rolling farms broken by panoramic limestone cliffs and wetlands teeming with wildlife. Friendly small towns and eco-tourism bring travelers back again and again.

The county's most prominent geologic feature is the Niagara Escarpment, a low line of dolomitic limestone bluffs that rises above the countryside. One of several ancient ridges in the bedrock of the Great Lakes Basin, the Niagara Escarpment begins in New York State, arches west over Lake Huron into Michigan's Upper Peninsula, then down through Door County to the Wisconsin-Illinois border.

You can camp atop the escarpment at **High Cliff State Park** near Sherwood, (920/989-1106, www.wiparks.net). The park offers 112 family campsites, 10 miles of mountain bike trails, Indian effigy mounds and a terrific beach and marina on Lake Winnebago. The park is particularly lovely in autumn when the fall colors play against the bluffs.

To learn more about the area's geology, flora and fauna, visit the **Ledge View Nature Center** near Chilton, the county seat (920/849-7094, www.co.calumet.wi.us). This 105-acre park includes a 60-foot observation tower, three natural caves, an arboretum, 2.5 miles of trails and a nature center with museum-quality, interactive exhibits. Staffed by three naturalists, the nature center is open 8am-4:30pm weekdays and 10am-4:30pm weekends.

5

Brillion Nature Center

Phone: 920/756-3591

Web:
www.brillionnaturecenter.net/

Signature species: Osprey,
Yellow-headed Blackbird & Sedge
Wren

Rare Species: Least Bittern,
American Egret & Prothonotary
Warbler

Gazetteer: Page 55, C-8

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging:
Brillion or Hilbert



The Brillion Nature Center features a large marsh, pond, and trails for viewing wildlife. It's a great place to watch ducks, Sandhill Cranes, herons and nesting Osprey. Aquatic insects and frogs can be found in Jason's Pond. Wisconsin fish, reptiles, and amphibians can be viewed inside the nature center. There's a boardwalk trail to a viewing platform. Trails also lead to marsh overlooks. Watch for mink and muskrats in and along the pond edges. The 20-year-old prairie restoration here draws a mix of grassland birds and butterflies. Special events and hikes are held throughout the year and are listed on the center's website.

Directions: From Brillion drive 1.5 miles south on Cty PP, then west on Deer View Road to the parking lots.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Gray Catbird

6

Brillion State Wildlife Area

Phone: 920/832-1804

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Osprey, Sandhill Crane, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Long-billed Marsh Wren & warblers

Rare Species: Peregrine Falcon, Upland Sandpiper, Henslow's Sparrow & Short-eared Owls

Gazetteer: Page 55, C-7

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Brillion or Hilbert



This 5,000-acre property offers 7.5 miles of trails for hiking and birding. There are many species of birds on the marsh, but of particular interest is the county's largest population of Sandhill Cranes. A boardwalk trail leads to a large viewing platform that extends out into the marsh. From here you can view the cranes as well as nesting Osprey. Black terns fly over the marshes and Long-billed Marsh Wrens call from the cattails. Listen for the melodious screech of Yellow-headed Blackbirds as they call from watery perches in the marshes. Both the North Branch of the Manitowoc River and Spring Creek flow through the property.

Directions: South of Brillion, Cty PP connects to many parking areas on the east side of the property. Access the north and west sides vis Conservation, Bastian, Irish, Hilbert, Riemer, or Voss Roads.

7

Calumet County Park

Phone: 920/849-1494 or 439-1008

Web: www.travelcalumet.com

Signature species: Yellow-headed Blackbird, Black Tern, Tennessee Warbler & Western Meadowlark

Rare species: Henslow's Sparrow, Forester's Tern & Peregrine Falcon

Gazetteer: Page 55, C-6

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

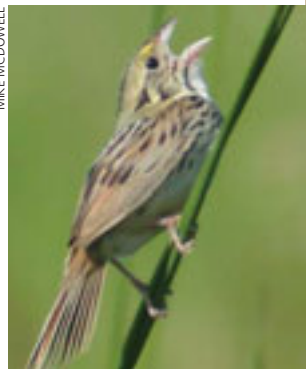
Nearest food & lodging: Sherwood, Chilton and Menasha



This lovely 200-acre county park is located due south of High Cliff State Park on the eastern shore of Lake Winnebago. It offers 71 campsites, a marina and boat launch, a concession building, five miles of hiking/mountain biking trails, and historic Indian effigy mounds. It boasts the best warbler viewing in the county including Connecticut, Prairie and Black-throated Blues. Look for small shorebirds feeding along the beaches in spring and fall as well as many species of ducks just off shore. American White Pelicans nest on this lake and are interesting to see as they fly in graceful formations overhead.

Directions: From Sherwood, drive south five miles on Hwy 55 to Cty EE west 1.5 miles to the park entrance.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Henslow's Sparrow

High Cliff State Park & High Cliff Escarpment State Natural Area

Phone: 920/989-1106

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Trumpeter Swan, American White Pelican, Northern Parula Warbler & Red-breasted Nuthatch

Rare species: Snow Bunting, Winter Wren, Orchard Oriole, Dickcissel, Upland Sandpiper & Yellow-breasted Chat

Gazetteer: Page 55, C-6

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Sherwood, Chilton and Menasha

Fee: Park fees apply



This state park is the only state-owned recreation area on Lake Winnebago, Wisconsin's largest inland lake. The park offers a marina, historic site, 112 campsites, 5 miles of hiking trails, and an accessible cabin for people with disabilities. Lake Winnebago draws in large rafts of waterfowl during migrations in the spring and fall. The State Natural Area features both shaded and exposed cliff habitats along the Niagara escarpment, talus slopes supporting wet-mesic forest, more than a mile of Lake Winnebago shoreline, and outstanding examples of conical and effigy mounds in the level woodland about the escarpment.

Directions: From Sherwood drive west 2 miles on Spring Hill Road to the park. The Lime-Kiln Hiking Trail provides access to the natural area.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Dickcissel

JEAN MAYER



High Cliff State Park.

9

Killsnake State Wildlife Area

Phone: 920/832-1804

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Sedge Wren, Northern Harrier, Grasshopper Sparrow & Bobolink

Rare species: Upland Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope & Dickcissel

Gazetteer: Page 55, D-8

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Chilton



Directions: Located 3 miles northeast of Chilton via Hwy 151 or Cty Y.

Nearly 6,000 acres in size, the Killsnake State Wildlife Area is a favorite place for wildlife viewers because of the rivers, marshes, brushy areas and sizeable cedar swamp that harbor a diverse avian population.

The property extends east into Manitowoc County. Its water resources include the Manitowoc, Killsnake and Cedar Rivers.

There are prairie restorations and old grassy fields that attract many grassland birds as well as interesting mammals, like badgers. In the fall, look for Short-eared Owls hunting over the meadows. In winter, look for Rough-legged Hawks while Snow Buntings and Lapland Longspurs flock along roadsides and in fields.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Grasshopper Sparrow

10

Ledge View County Park & Nature Center

Phone: 920/849-7094

Web: www.travelcalumet.com

Signature species: Red-bellied Woodpecker, Bobolink, Eastern Wood Pewee & Willow Flycatcher

Rare species: Loggerhead Shrike, Common Raven & Scarlet Tanager

Gazetteer: Page 55, D-7

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lot

Nearest food & lodging: Chilton



This 104-acre county park is home to the Ledge View Nature Center. The park has a 60-foot observation tower, an abandoned Niagara dolostone quarry, three natural caves, an arboretum and 2.5 miles of hiking trails. There is an exhibit building with live animals and museum-quality interactive educational exhibits on the Niagara Escarpment, bats, lake sturgeon and birds. Hike on your own or join one of the naturalists for a bird

hike. Explore the caves with a guide or climb the observation tower to get a bird's-eye view of the area. The escarpment is so named because it runs west from Niagara Falls, disappears under Lake Erie, reappears in Door County and runs south through Illinois to Iowa.

Directions: Located on Short Road 1.5 miles south of Chilton via Cty G.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Willow Flycatcher

Clark County



Seventeen percent of Clark County's 1,216 square miles is county forest – that's 207 square miles or 133,000 acres of recreation. The county's eleven parks are located within the forest, which also offers 135 miles of summer-use ATV trails, 16 miles of looped single-track motorcycle trails at Knobby Ridge, and 34 miles of looped non-motorized biking and cross-country skiing trails at the Levis/Trow Mound Recreational Area.

Neillsville, in the southern part of the county, is the county seat. It offers a pair of unusual museums and a beautiful veterans' memorial park.

The **1897 Jail Museum**, an imposing four-story brick building with a pair of turrets, is more fortress-like than penal (715-743-6444, www.clark-cty-wi.org/JailMuseum.htm). Tours include the sheriff's residence, a charming, old-fashioned living quarters, as well as the bleak cellblocks.

The **Wisconsin Pavilion** originally served as the state's exhibit hall at the 1964-65 New York World's Fair (715/743-3333, www.clark-city-wi.org/Pavilion.htm). Dismantled and reassembled in Neillsville, the pavilion now houses four radio stations, a cheese and gift shop and a private collection of New York World's Fair memorabilia.

The **Highground Veterans Memorial Park** pays tribute to America's war dead and honors surviving veterans, their service, and their sacrifice (715/743-4224, www.thehighground.org). The 140-acre park overlooks 500,000 acres of woodland scenery. It includes many sculptures that honor America's veterans.

11

Mead Lake County Parks – North & South

Phone: 715/743-5140

Web: www.co.clark.wi.us

Signature species: Black-and-white Warbler & Clay-colored Sparrow

Rare species: American White Pelican & Osprey

Gazetteer: Page 62, B-2

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Closest food & lodging: Greenwood



Mead Lake is the largest lake in Clark County, boasting a pair of county parks along its shores. There are paths, boat ramps and roads to explore for many species of birds. The parks include wetlands, woodlands, open water and shrubby marshlands; each habitat holds species different from the next. During spring and fall, waterfowl of all types include Northern Pintail, Ring-necked and Redhead ducks. American Bittern and Green Herons use the marshes along the Eau Claire River. Here, you can see many species of warblers, thrushes, and sparrows. Overhead, Osprey and Bald Eagles soar on summer thermals. This is a great place for a relaxing paddle around the lake.

Directions: From Greenwood, go west 7 miles on Cty G/Rock Creek Rd, then north 1.5 miles on Bachelors Avenue to either North Lake or South Lake Roads.

Rock Dam Lake County Park

Phone: 715/743-5140

Web: www.co.clark.wi.us/

Signature species: Red-bellied Woodpecker, Hermit Thrush & Broad-winged Hawk

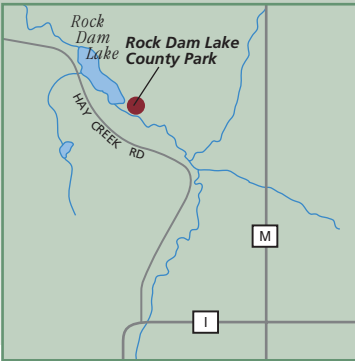
Rare species: Red-headed Woodpecker

Gazetteer: Page 62, C-2

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Neillsville



Rock Dam Lake is a hotspot for ducks, herons and other water birds. Both paved and unpaved roads traverse the area, so it's easy to bird by car. One of the best roads to cruise is Camp Glove Road. A number of small creeks and streams flow through the area and attract a variety of birds. Look for Pine and Yellow Warblers along the waterways, and Tufted Titmice and Sharp-shinned Hawks in the shrubby growth. Beaver dams often

cut across the streams and creeks. The pools of water that form behind the dams attract Belted Kingfishers and Green Herons. Black bears and porcupines enjoy the large blocks of forest here and can be seen along the roads at dawn or dusk.

Directions: From Fairchild in the southeast corner of Eau Claire County, travel 8 miles north on Cty H, then 5.5 miles east on Rock Dam Road to the park.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Hermit Thrush

Schmidt Maple Woods State Natural Area

Phone: 715/232-1517

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Indigo Bunting, Scarlet Tanager & Chestnut-sided Warbler

Rare species: Red-shouldered Hawk & Winter Wren

Gazetteer: Page 62, A-1

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Park on roadside

Nearest food & lodging: Stanley or Thorpe



The western part of Clark County is heavily forested with a nice mix of prairie, forests, scrub and hardwood stands. It offers the traveler habitat that attracts a variety of birds and wildlife. Schmidt Maple Woods is a gently rolling, wooded, 87-acre property that contains one of the best southern mesic forests in this part of the state. Sugar maple, basswood, hickory, elm and ash trees offer habitat to songbirds and wildlife. Trillium, violets and wild geraniums bloom in the spring, while the sugar maple leaves turn brilliant colors in the fall. Look for Common Ravens, White-throated Sparrows and numerous species of warblers, woodpeckers, and thrushes as you walk the area.

Directions: From Stanley, go south 1.5 miles on Cty NN, then east 1 mile on Cty N, then south 1.25 miles on Copenhafer Avenue to the northeast corner of the property.

Sportsman Lake Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/ 743-5140

Web: www.co.clark.wi.us/

Signature species: Tundra Swan & American Woodcock

Rare species: Least and American Bittern, Sora Rail & American Black Duck

Gazetteer: Page 62, A-4

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Owen or Withee



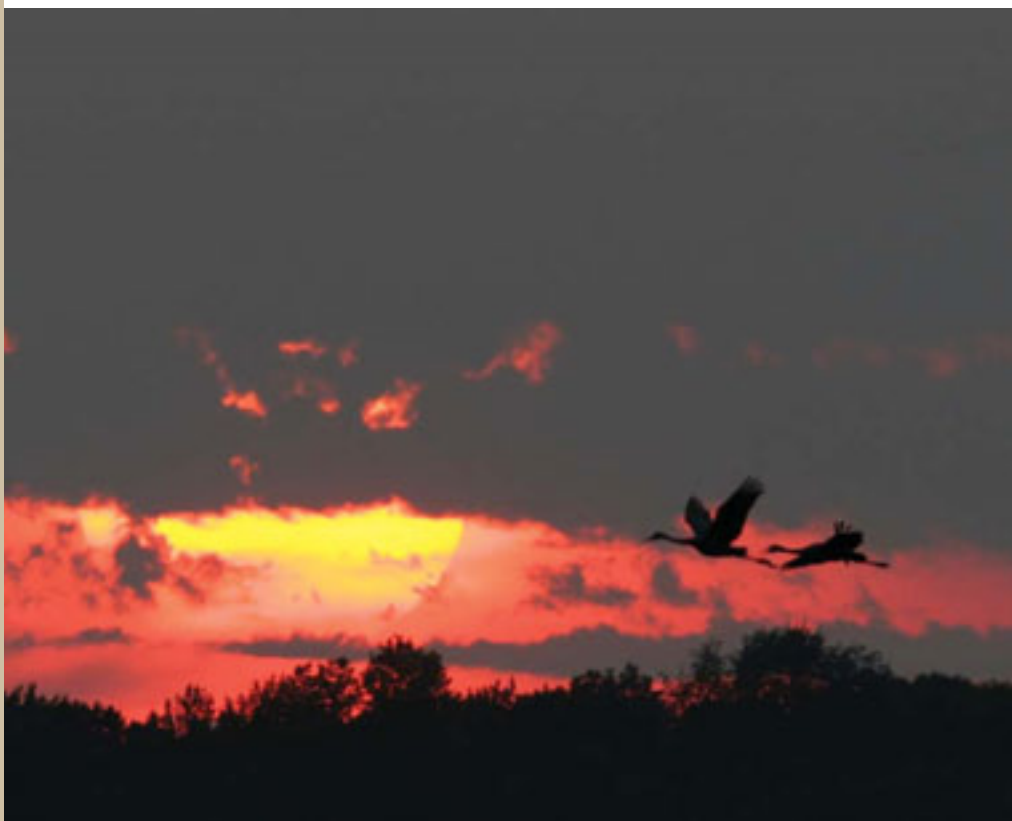
Clark County owns this 1,200-acre wildlife area dominated by open marsh and grassy uplands. It's a good place to learn your waterfowl and add some new species to your checklist. During spring and fall migrations it attracts a variety of waterfowl and wetland birds including Black Terns, Black-crowned Night Herons, and Lesser Yellowlegs. Canvasback, Bufflehead, Northern Pintails and Ruddy Ducks can be seen



Sora Rail

here. The watershed also contains nesting Bald Eagles and a small flock of Prairie Chickens, so be sure to drive along the roads that circle the property. Wild Turkeys are seen year-round, while White-fronted and Snow Geese use the property in spring and fall.

Directions: From Owen, drive north 1.5 miles on Cty D, then west on Pine Road.



Sandhill Cranes.

Fond du Lac County



Located at the foot of Lake Winnebago, Fond du Lac (French for “far end of the lake”) County welcomes birders with open arms. To the east, the county borders the Northern Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. To the south, it crosses the northern perimeter of the Great Horicon Marsh. Both are prime avian habitat.

To the west, Ripon is the home of Ripon-good cookies, Republicans and really big horses. You can tour the **Little White Schoolhouse** where the Republican party was founded in 1854 (920/748-6764, www.ripon-wi.com). Outside of town, you can visit **Larson’s Famous Clydesdales** where ringside performances and stable tours showcase these gentle giants (920/748-5466, www.larsonsclydesdales.com).

In Fond du Lac, the county seat, you can view the Niagara Escarpment and beautiful shoreline of Lake Winnebago aboard the **Lakeside Sprit** (800/937-9123, www.fdl.com). Enjoy 400-acre **Lakeside Park** where you can climb to the top of the city’s light-house, ride an antique carousel or miniature railway, or feed the deer (800/937-9123, www.fdl.com). History thrives at the **Galloway House & Village** (920/922-1166, www.fdl.com/history). The complex of thirty historic buildings includes the 30-room Victorian Galloway House and the Blakely Museum. South of town, the **Wild Goose State Trail** runs 32 miles south to Clyman Junction in southern Dodge County (920/929-3135, www.wiparks.net). This hiking-biking trail skirts the western edge of the Horicon Marsh, a 32,000-acre avian paradise.

15

Eldorado State Wildlife Area

Phone: 920/424-7896

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Greater Yellowleg, Sandhill Crane, American & Least Bittern

Rare Species: Long-billed Dowitcher, Caspian Tern, American Woodcock, Loggerhead Shirke & Upland Sandpiper

Gazetteer: Page 46, B-1

Seasonality: Open all year

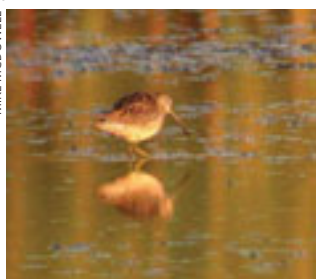
Nearest food & lodging:
Fond du Lac



Eldorado is one of the richest marshes in the area; a favorite place for bird watchers. Grasslands, marshes, woodlands and brushy areas accent this 6,371-acre property. Open water areas of the marsh attract some unusual shorebirds in years when water levels are low and there are exposed mud flats for feeding. Hundreds of Sandhill Cranes congregate here during the fall migration to feed and rest before traveling south. In the winter, look for Horned Larks and flocks of Snow Buntings and Lapland Longspurs on snowy roads and fields. Occasional Snowy Owls are also seen in winter.

Directions: From Eldorado, travel 2 miles north on Cty C, then east 1 mile on Cty N.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Long-billed Dowitcher

Kettle Moraine State Forest – Northern Unit, Ice Age Trail Visitor Center & Haskell Noyes Woods State Natural Area

Phone: 262/626-2116 (State Forest); 920/533-8322 (Ice Age Trail Visitor Center)

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

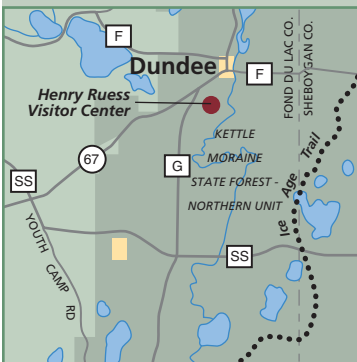
Signature Species: Black-capped Chickadee, White and Red-breasted Nuthatch & Warbling Vireo

Rare Species: Winter Wren, Brown Creeper, Blue-winged, Nashville & Golden-winged Warbler

Gazetteer: Page 46, C-4

Seasonality: Open all year

Nearest food & lodging: Campbellsport



This 30,000-acre state forest includes state natural areas and the Ice Age Trail. Visitors can explore rolling hills, lakes, forest and grasslands containing many interesting habitats, species of animals and plants. A stop at the Henry S. Reuss Visitor Center is the perfect way to learn about this glaciated area that includes numerous kames, kettles, and ridges left behind by the glaciers. Also



MIKE MCDOWELL

Black-capped Chickadee

found within this property is the Haskell Noyes Woods SNA, a classic example of southern dry-mesic forest dominated by sugar maple and red oak. Spring wildflowers are scattered throughout the site and put on a showy display in April and May.

Directions: From Campbellsport, travel northeast about 5 miles on Hwy 67 to the Henry S. Reuss Visitor Center. There are many other entrances to this large state forest.



Great Horned Owl chick.

17

Marsh Haven Nature Center

Phone: 920/887-9899

Web: www.marshhaven.com/

Signature species: Canada Geese, Trumpeter Swan & Yellow-headed Blackbird

Rare Species: Least Bittern, Northern Shoveler, Red-shouldered Hawk & American Black Duck

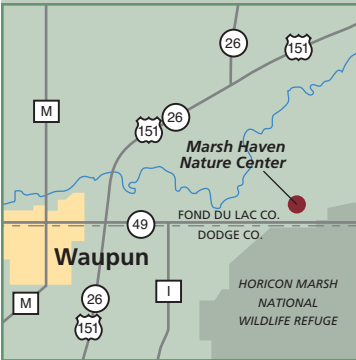
Gazetteer: Page 45, C-7

Seasonality: Open mid-April through mid-November.

Parking: Parking lot

Nearest food & lodging: Waupun

Fee: Admission fee



This private, non-profit, 47-acre nature center is located next to Horicon National Wildlife Refuge. It offers a good mix of habitat with hiking trails that access prairies, wetlands and woodlands. At the end of the woodland trail, visitors can climb an observation tower with a great overview of the marsh. Marsh Haven offers hikes and tours, a museum, art gallery, gift shop and classroom. Spectacular migrations of Canada Geese are seen during fall migrations with numbers of birds reaching more than 100,000. The restored prairies are best viewed in July and August when blooming wildflowers are at their peak attracting numerous species of colorful butterflies.

Directions: Located 3 miles east of Waupun on Hwy 49.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Northern Shoveler

18

Mullet Creek State Wildlife Area

Phone: 920/424-7896

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: American Woodcock, Sandhill Crane, Wild Turkey & Ruffed Grouse

Rare species: American White Pelican, Loggerhead Shrike, Upland Sandpiper & Bobolink

Gazetteer: Page 46, B-4

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Fond du Lac



This 2,177-acre property is a mix of marshes, woods and grasslands. The open water draws many species of waterfowl during migration, while the larger landscape attracts Red-tail Hawks, Northern Harriers, Bald Eagles and Turkey Vultures. Warblers nest in the woodlots, while Baltimore Orioles, Eastern Phoebe, and White-eyed Vireos nest in the scattered trees and brushy areas. Look for Loggerhead Shrikes perched in lone trees, and American Kestrels as they hover above the grasslands and meadows hunting for small mammals. Coyotes, deer, woodchucks and mink are common here; an evening drive should yield many good sightings.

Directions: Located 12 miles east of Fond du Lac via Hwy 23 to Hillview Road, then south to entrance.

Spruce Lake Bog State Natural Area – Northern Unit Kettle Moraine State Forest

Phone: 262/626-2116

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Gazetteer: Page 46, C-4

Signature species: Common Yellowthroat, Swamp Sparrow, Veery & Alder Flycatcher

Rare species: Northern Waterthrush, Nashville & Canada Warbler & White-throated Sparrow

Seasonality: Open all year

Nearest food & lodging: Campbellsport



Located two miles north of the Henry S. Reuss Visitor Center, this property features an undisturbed shallow seepage bog lake in one of the area's many kettle holes. The 35-acre lake supports a great show of blooming water lilies in the summer. The vegetation found here is rich in plants more characteristic of northern Wisconsin sphagnum bogs; Black spruce, cotton grass, royal fern and pitcher plants. This northern plant community supports northern species of birds that nest here, giving you the opportunity to see them without going too far north. A trail and boardwalk lead from the parking area to the lake.

Directions: From Campbellsport, drive northeast 7 miles on Hwy 67, then west 0.2 mile on Cty F, then north 1.3 miles on Vista Dr, then west .05 miles on Airport Rd to a parking area north of the road.

MIKE MCDOWELL



White-throated Sparrow

DON ABRAMS



A blaze of fall color in the Kettle Moraine State Forest, Northern Unit.

Green Lake County



The landscape of Green Lake County is dominated by a pair of large and divergent lakes – Green Lake and Lake Puckaway.

Green Lake is one of the state's deepest lakes. Plunging 237 feet, the cool waters of this 7,300-acre lake harbor an excellent lake trout and walleye fishery. Lake Puckaway, on the other hand, is very shallow; just 3 feet deep on average and only 5 feet at its deepest. At 5,000-acres, Puckaway is more lowland marsh than lake, yet fishing is good and waterfowl are common.

The City of Green Lake has been a top tourism destination for more than a century. The lake is the key attraction and the area's resort offerings include water sports of every kind. One of those resorts, the Heidel House, operates **The Escapade**, a 60-foot, catamaran-style boat that tours the lake (800/444-2812, www.heidelhouse.com). The Green Lake area is also known nationally for its three excellent golf courses – Lawsonsia, Mascoutin and Tuscumbia. The lovingly restored Thrasher Opera House is another community gem.

To the north, Berlin charms visitors with its many Victorian homes and beautiful Nathan Strong Park. In western Green Lake County, Princeton's downtown is a delightful mix of boutiques and artisan shops. The city's Saturday morning flea markets (May thru October) are legendary. To the south, Markesan sparkles in the midst of lush farmland. For a glimpse of local history, visit the town's **Grand River Valley Museum** (920/398-3554).

20

Grand River Marsh State Wildlife Area & Fountain Creek Wet Prairie State Natural Area

Phone: 920/361-3149

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Henslow's Sparrow, Black-crowned Night-Heron & Blue-wing Teal

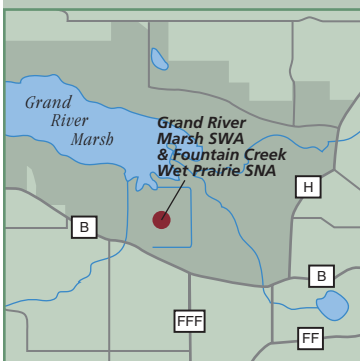
Rare species: Red-necked and Eared Grebe & American Black Duck

Gazetteer: Page 44, C-3

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Montello or Marquette



The Grand River Marsh SWA is a 10,000-acre complex of marsh, grassland, oak savanna, river and woodlots. The property is a magnet for migrating waterfowl and is a favorite hunting spot in autumn. There are many trails to hike and 3 boat landings for your canoe or kayak. The extensive marshes draw in herons, Osprey and the Double-crested Cormorant. The Fountain Creek Wet Prairie SNA is a large, low-lying grassland in the basin of the marsh. Wet prairie is uncommon and characterized by prairie cord grass, blue-joint grass and mountain mint. The property's bird list includes Sandhill Crane, Northern Harrier, Sedge Wren, Horned Lark and Bobolink.

Directions: From Montello, travel south 5 miles on Hwy 22, then east 2 miles on Cty B to the property's entrance. This large property has 22 parking areas.

Green Lake Bike Trails

Phone: 800/253-7354

Web: www.visitgreenlake.com

Signature species: Swamp Sparrow, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-rumped Warbler & Gray Catbird

Rare species: American White Pelican, Eared Grebe & Canvasback Duck

Gazetteer: Page 45, B-5

Parking: Parking provided

Nearest food & lodging: Green Lake, Princeton, Berlin, or Ripon



Green Lake has developed a series of on-road bike tours; quiet rides to neighboring small towns or a 27-mile loop around the city. You can pedal off to Princeton or Ripon or Berlin and enjoy views of the rural countryside as you go. As you travel past meadows and rolling hills, look for small songbirds in the thickets, raptors perched along trees in woodlots and Turkey Vultures overhead. Listen for Willow Flycatchers calling from the elderberry bushes, and for the chatter of Belted Kingfishers.

Directions: Bike maps are available at the Green Lake Chamber of Commerce or on their web site, above.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Yellow-rumped Warbler

Puchyan Prairie State Natural Area

Phone: 920/361-3149

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: American Bittern, Black Tern and Northern Harrier

Rare species: Blanding's turtle, King Rail & Henslow's and Le Conte's Sparrow

Gazetteer: Page 45, A-5

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Park along road

Nearest food & lodging: Green Lake



This site is a mosaic of open wetland communities including sedge meadow, marsh and low prairie in the floodplain of the Puchyan River. As you walk toward the river, the vegetation grades into a broad shallow marsh. A small island in the wetland contains black and bur oak trees surrounded by hazelnut shrubs. The bird list for this 169-acre property is extensive. As you explore the property, look for mink and ground squirrels. The display of wildflowers is diverse with 130 native species recorded.

Directions: From Green Lake, go north 1.3 miles on Hwy 49, then west 3 miles on Cty J, then north and west on 1.3 miles on Cty CC, then north 0.4 miles on Puchyan Marsh Road to the southwest corner of the site.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Le Conte's Sparrow

White River Marsh State Wildlife Area

Phone: 920/361-3149

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Red-shouldered Hawk, American Kestrel, Eastern Kingbird & Bobolink

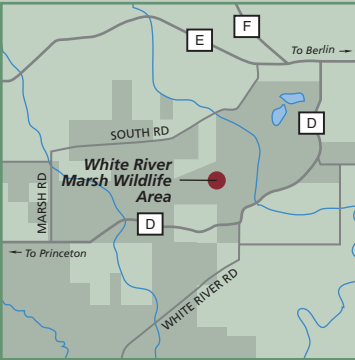
Rare Species: Cerulean Warbler
Blanding's turtle

Gazetteer: Page 44, A-4

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging:
Neshkoro, Berlin and Princeton



12,000 acres of lowland forest, oak savanna, grasslands and sedge meadow await you at this large property. The White and Fox Rivers flow through the landscape providing ample water to keep the marshes and lowlands hydrated. Two canoe launch sites access the Fox River where you'll find herons, bitterns and other wading birds. Wild Turkeys hunt for insects and nuts in the oak savanna while Bobolinks, Savannah Sparrows and Sedge Wrens are found in the grasslands and sedge meadows. Watch for Bald Eagles, Broad-winged Hawks and Turkey Vultures as they hunt over the meadows. Badgers, woodchucks, red fox and coyotes are common here.

Directions: From Princeton, travel 6 miles north on Cty D.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Bobolink

GENE STAVER



White-tail deer.

Juneau County



The northern third of Juneau County, above Hwy. 21, is dominated by the 43,000-acre **Necedah National Wildlife Refuge** (608-565-2551, www.fws.gov/mid-west/necedah). Whooping Cranes, Sandhill Cranes and Trumpeter Swans call Necedah home, as do gray wolves and Karner blue butterflies.

The central third of Juneau County, between I-90/94 and Hwy. 21, is farm field and lowland forest drained by the Yellow and Lemonweir Rivers. To the east, **Buckhorn State Park** occupies 7,000 acres on the shores of Castle Rock Lake, an impoundment of the Wisconsin River (608/565-2789, www.wiparks.net). To the west, **Mill Bluff State Park** straddles the Juneau/Monroe County line (608/427-6692, www.wiparks.net). The park protects several of the glacial buttes that dot northern and central Juneau County.

The southern third of the county, below I-90/94, is riddled with hills and valleys, part of southwestern Wisconsin's "driftless" area untouched by the glaciers. It boasts three terrific railbed bike trails. The **Elroy-Sparta State Trail** passes through three century-old tunnels on its 34-mile run from Elroy west to Sparta (888/606-2453, www.elroywi.com). The **400 State Trail** cruises southeast along the Baraboo River 22 miles from Elroy to Reedsburg (800/844-3507, www.wiparks.net). Finally, the **Omaha County Trail** passes through yet another tunnel on its 13-mile run north from Elroy Commons to Camp Douglas (608/847-9389, www.400statetrail.org).

24

Buckhorn State Park & Wildlife Area

Phone: 608/565-2789

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Osprey, Bald Eagle, Great Horned Owl & Belted Kingfisher

Rare species: Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Goshawk & Broad-winged Hawk

Gazetteer: Page 42, A-3

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Necedah

Fee: Park fees apply



Buckhorn is a 4,500-acre peninsula in the Castle Rock Flowage, bordered on the east by the Wisconsin River and on the west by the mouth of the Yellow River. The park harbors many interesting habitats including rare sand blows and oak barrens that attract flycatchers and sparrows. A two-mile canoe trail with interpretive signage traverses wetlands where you can observe herons, rails and waterfowl. Five miles of hiking trails and a park naturalist program are good for birders; you'll want to explore the prairies and savannas for interesting birds to add to your checklist. The park is proud to offer an accessible cabin and fishing/boat pier.

Directions: From Necedah, travel south 4 miles on Hwy 80 to Hwy 58, then south 3 miles on Hwy 58 to Cty G east, and follow signs to the park.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Belted Kingfisher

25

Cranberry Creek Mound Group State Natural Area

Phone: 608/339-3385

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Great Crested Flycatcher & Chipping Sparrow

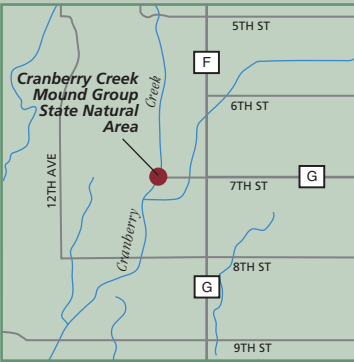
Rare species: Red-shouldered Hawk & Merlin

Gazetteer: Page 51, C-8

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking along road

Nearest food and lodging: Necedah



This 675-acre site preserves one of the largest and best-preserved mound complexes in the Upper Midwest. The site contains conical, linear, oval, and effigy mounds built by Woodland Indians. The southern cluster contains bear and panther mounds and a 50-foot-long bird effigy with a wingspan of 125 feet. After adding the bird effigy mound to your checklist, look for warblers in the floodplain forest along Cranberry Creek. The old-growth northern dry forest and open pine forest are good places to see Chipping Sparrows, Kingbirds and Eastern Bluebirds.

Directions: From Necedah, go north 10 miles on Cty G to its junction with Cty F and 7th Street. Park in the southwest corner of the intersection and walk west along 7th Street into the site. The best mounds are located east of Cranberry Creek, north of the drainage ditch and south of 7th Street.

26

Elroy-Sparta State Trail

Phone: 608/462-2410

Web: www.elroy-sparta-trail.com

Signature species: Meadowlark, Bobolink & Eastern Bluebird

Rare species: Carolina Wren & Lark Sparrow

Gazetteer: Page 42, C-1

Seasonality: Open year round

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Kendall or Elroy

Fee: Trail fees apply



Wisconsin's Elroy-Sparta State Trail was the first rail-to-trail conversion in the country. Running 34 miles between Elroy and Sparta, the trail passes through wetlands, prairies, farmland and unglaciated areas. Birding is always good along the trail. The three century-old railroad tunnels highlight the trip. On its west end, a bridge over I-90 at Sparta connects the Elroy-Sparta to the La Crosse River State Trail. On its eastern end, the Elroy-Sparta connects to the 400 State Trail at the Elroy Commons. Juneau County's Omaha Trail goes north from Elroy to Camp Douglas.

Directions: Elroy Commons is located on Railroad Street in Elroy.

MIKE McDOWELL



Eastern Bluebird

Mill Bluff State Park

Phone: 608/427-6692

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Northern Raven, Turkey Vulture & Eastern Bluebird

Rare species: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher & Blue-headed Vireo

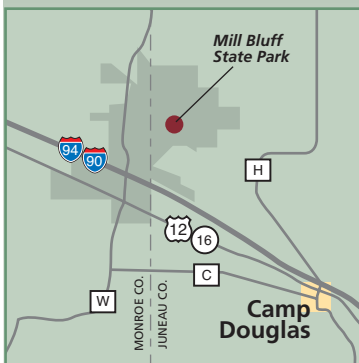
Gazetteer: Page 42, A-1

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Camp Douglas

Fee: Park fees apply



The tall sandstone bluffs rising from the flat plain amaze travelers passing through this park. These buttes were islands in glacial Lake Wisconsin during the Ice Age, some 12,000 years ago. Hardwood and pine forests here draw many species of warblers, woodpeckers and hawks. Turkey Vultures and Bald Eagles ride the warm air currents rising from the plain – vultures likely nest in the rock formations of the bluffs. Warbling Vireos, Least Flycatchers and White-breasted Nuthatches are found in the wooded areas while Cliff Swallows are seen in large numbers near the bluffs where they nest and hunt for insects on the wing. This 1,600-acre park offers 25 campsites, 2 miles of hiking trails and a swimming area.

Directions: The park is located on both sides of I-90/94. Take the Camp Douglas exit (#55) to Hwy 12/16 west 2 miles to the park.



Mill Bluff State Park.

Necedah National Wildlife Refuge

Phone: 608/565-2551

Web:

<http://midwest.fws.gov/necedah>

Signature Species: Whooping Crane, Eastern Meadowlark, Trumpeter Swan, Osprey & Timber Wolf

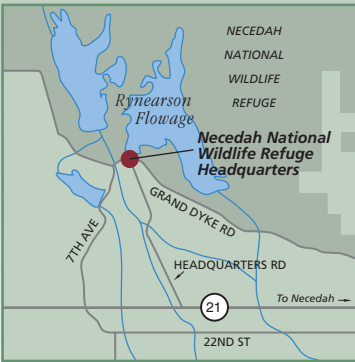
Rare Species: Timber Wolf, Karner Blue Butterfly, Whooping Crane re-instatement area

Gazetteer: Page 51, D-7

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking Lots

Nearest food and lodging: Necedah



This 43,696-acre refuge is a magnet for birds and mammals because of its size and the diversity of its landscapes. It was designated as an Important Bird Area and is home to more than 200 species of birds including Trumpeter Swans, songbirds, herons, rails, nearly every species of waterfowl and many kinds of shorebirds. There are miles of roads to drive, trails to hike, and observation decks to climb.

Opportunities at Necedah include environmental education, fishing, hunting, interpretation, photography and wildlife observation.

Directions: From Necedah, travel 3 miles west on Hwy 21, turn north onto Headquarters Road and travel about 2 miles to the refuge headquarters.

HERBERT LANGE



Red-headed Woodpecker

WHOOPING CRANE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP



Whooping Cranes take flight.

Marathon County



Marathon is Wisconsin's largest county covering 1,545 square miles. It is largely agricultural land. Marathon County dairy farmers place second in the state for total milk production and for number of dairy herds. Interestingly, Marathon County leads the nation and the world in the production of dry ginseng root. Most is exported to China.

The county is neatly bisected by the Wisconsin River. A workhorse for the paper industry, the river provides water for mills in Wausau, Rothschild and Mosinee in Marathon County. Dams built for the paper industry on the river created the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir and Lake DuBay, which today give the county its recreational flavor.

Wausau, the county seat, is the home of the **Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum**, nationally renowned for its annual Birds in Art exhibit (715/845-7010, www.lywam.org). If you're wondering about the county's ginseng connection, visit **Hsu's Ginseng Enterprises** just north of town (800/826-1577, www.hsuginseng.com). Southwest of town, **Rib Mountain State Park** covers 1,500 acres of Rib Mountain, the fourth highest point in the state (715/842-2522, www.wiparks.net). The park offers spectacular views of the countryside from several overlooks, 30 family campsites, and some great skiing and snowboarding at one of the largest downhill facilities in the state. In town, history buffs will enjoy the **Marathon County Historical Museum** housed in the beautiful Victorian home of former lumber baron Cyrus Yawkey (715/842-5750, www.marathoncountyhistory.com).

29

Big Eau Pleine County Park & Dells of the Eau Claire River State Natural Area

Phone: 715/785-9000

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Broad-winged Hawk & Blackburnian Warbler

Rare species: Long-eared Owl, Scarlet Tanager & Cedar Waxwing

Gazetteer: Page 77, D-6

Parking: Parking areas

Nearest food & lodging: Wausau



This beautiful SNA occupies the southern part of the Dells of the Eau Claire County Park and includes a segment of the Ice Age Trail. The park protects a dramatic, narrow gorge where water cascades over rock outcroppings. The gorge and surrounding uplands are wooded with sugar and mountain maple, hemlock, and yellow birch. Canada yew is abundant and spring wildflowers are spectacular. Many species of warblers, sparrows, and thrushes as well as unusual hawks and owls live here including the Northern Saw-whet Owl, Northern Goshawk, Lincoln's sparrow and Ruffed Grouse. Bring your camera; this is one photo-op you won't want to miss.

Directions: Take Highway 52 east from Wausau 15 miles to Highway Y. Go south on Y for 1.5 miles to park.

30

Big Eau Pleine Woods State Natural Area

Phone: 715/785-9000

Web site: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Cerulean Warbler & Acadian Flycatcher

Rare species: American White Pelican, Winter Wren & Solitary Sandpiper

Gazetteer: Page 64, B-2

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Mosinee



This 105-acre SNA is located in Big Eau Pleine County Park occupying a peninsula jutting into 6,700-acre Big Eau Pleine Reservoir. It is the area's best example of old growth mesic forest. Look for Bald Eagles and Red-shouldered Hawks. Red-necked and Eared Grebes can be seen along with a variety of shorebirds and herons. Overhead, Hooded Warblers hunt for insects in the sugar maple canopy. In the spring, White-throated Sparrows scratch for seeds and insects among the blooming carpet of bloodroot, trillium, violets and hepatica. In the fall, the sugar maple, yellow birch, and red oak put on a colorful show.

Directions: From Mosinee, go west 5.5 miles on Hwy 153, then south 6.3 miles on Eau Pleine Park Road to a parking area for the Giant Hardwoods Nature Trail west of road.

31

Bluegill Bay County Park

Phone: 715/261-1550

Web: www.co.marathon.wi.us/

Signature Species: Wilson's Snipe & Yellow Warbler

Rare species: Red-necked Grebe, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Northern Goshawk, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Pine Grosbeak & Connecticut Warbler.

Gazetteer: Page 64, A-3

Parking: Parking Lot

Nearest food & lodging: Wausau



The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology mentions this park as the best site in Wausau to bird watch year round. Located along the Wisconsin River, it has a nice mix of habitats including upland woods, marsh, brushy edges, and a large pond with an outlet to the river. The property's bird list boasts 175 species with spring and fall being the best seasons. A spring on the property flows year 'round making this is a good place for overwintering species. A good trail system provides access to this 70-acre park. Some rare species include the Red-necked Grebe, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron and Summer Tanager.

Directions: From I-39 take exit 188 (Hwy N). At the stoplights at the end of the ramp, turn east .5 mile to Cloverland Lane, then east 1 mile to the T-intersection. Turn left to enter the park.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Yellow Warbler

George W. Mead State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/457-6771

Web: meadwildlife.org,
www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Bald Eagle,
Sandhill Crane, Ruffed Grouse &
White Pelican

Rare species: Greater Prairie
Chicken, Sharp-tail Grouse &
Loggerhead Shrike

Gazetteer: Page 64, C-2

Parking: Parking lots

Closest food & lodging:
Wausau, Stevens Point &
Marshfield



This large and diverse property is found in parts of Marathon, Wood and Portage Counties. At 30,000 acres, it boasts a bird list of 248 species. Most species of mammals and many species of reptiles and amphibians found in Wisconsin live here. The Little Eau Pleine River flows through the property. There are flowages, small lakes, marshes, grasslands, tamarack bog and woodland areas to explore.

Good roads go to all parts of the property and hiking trails are numerous. Bring your canoe or kayak to explore the water resources.



Greater Prairie Chicken

The new Stanton W. Mead Education & Visitor Center demonstrates state-of-the-art green building technology.

Directions: Exit I-39 at Hwy 34 south and west 4.5 miles to Cty C, then west 8 miles to Cty S, then south 2.5 miles to the visitor center.



George W. Mead State Wildlife Area.

Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum

Phone: 715/845-7010

Web: www.lywam.org

Signature Event: Birds In Art

Gazetteer: Page 64, A-3

Parking: Parking Lot

Nearest food & lodging:
Wausau



One simple idea – birds – filtered through the minds and hands of more than 110 artists creates an annual bird-themed exhibition that is always absorbing, thought provoking, and imaginative. The Birds in Art exhibition opens the weekend after Labor Day and remains open for 9-10 weeks. This single event attracts thousands of visitors to this beautiful art museum located in the eastern edge of the Andrew Warren Historic District in Wausau. The museum's permanent collection contains many beautiful paintings, carvings and sculptures of birds that can be seen year-round, so a visit anytime will charm birders.

Directions: From I-39 take exit 193 (Bridge Street) east to 5th Street; turn right on 5th to Franklin; turn left on Franklin to 12th Street.

Nine-Mile County Forest

Phone: 715/261-1550

Web: www.co.marathon.wi.us/

Signature species: Black-billed Cuckoo, Hermit Thrush & Acadian Flycatcher

Rare species: Red-shouldered Hawk, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Pine and Evening Grosbeaks, Common Redpoll & both crossbills.

Gazetteer: Page 64, A-3

Parking: Parking area

Nearest food & lodging:
Wausau

Fee: Ski pass required in winter



This 5,000-acre county forest offers spectacular views of the area. Several of the trails were designed for cross-country skiing and can be challenging. They do, however, access the site and you will be rewarded with some nice additions to your bird list. The older forest areas attract Cerulean and Hooded Warblers, hawks and flycatchers. Northern Saw-whet, Barred, Screech and Great-horned Owls have all been seen here. Turkey Vultures and Bald Eagles soar overhead. Trails are well marked and benches provide a place to stop, relax and enjoy the view.

Directions: Exit I-39 at Cty N 3.5 miles west to Red Bud Road 1.25 miles south to a trailhead parking area on the west side of the road.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Common Redpoll

Rib Mountain State Park

Phone: 715/ 842-2522

Web: wiparks.net

Signature species: Bald Eagle, Broad-winged Hawk & Osprey

Rare species: Golden Eagle

Gazetteer: Page 64, A-3

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Wausau

Fee: Park fees apply



Rib Mountain is a billion-year-old hill that is the capstone of this beautiful state park. A 60-foot observation tower atop the hill offers spectacular views of the Rib River and valley. From spring through fall, this park is a great place to watch large numbers of Turkey Vultures, hawks and Bald Eagles glide on the thermals above. In the spring, park woodlands attract large numbers of migrating songbirds, especially warblers. In the summer, it holds Winter Wrens, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and Tufted Titmice. In the fall, it offers one of the best spots to watch migrating hawks. The park offers 9 miles of hiking trails, 30 campsites and terrific skiing in the winter.

Directions: Exit I-39 at Cty N .1 mile to the park entrance.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Kentucky Warbler



Rib Mountain State Park.

Marquette County



Marquette County boasts a single stoplight in the entire county – 455 square miles and very little traffic.

The county is named for Father Jacques Marquette, the French explorer who paddled down the Fox River into the area in 1673. The European settlers who followed him dammed the river at Montello creating Buffalo Lake, an important link in the Fox-Wisconsin waterway. Today, the lake is a ten-mile crescent of fishing and boating; the recreational heart of the county.

Montello, the county seat, is a pleasant small town once famous for its granite quarry. The extraordinarily hard, red granite was shipped nationwide and was used in the tombs of both Ulysses Grant and Robert E. Lee. You can still see the quarry from the city's Quarry Park on Main Street. The park includes three small waterfalls that once powered the quarry's drills and saws.

In southern Marquette County near Packwaukee, you can make a reservation to tour **Bison Ridge Ranch** (608-589-5500, www.bison-ridgeranch.com). Nearly 300 bison roam the ranch. Ninety-minute tours include a short video, a wagon ride to see the buffalo, and a chance to check out the gift shop.

Another animal attraction you won't want to miss is the **M H Ranch** near Westfield in western Marquette County (608-296-2171, www.mhranch.com). They breed miniature horses that stand less than 34 inches tall. Tours include a short movie about the ranch's history, a visit to the carriage museum, the training facility, the maternity barn, and a terrific photo-op, so bring your camera.

36

Comstock Bog Meadow State Natural Area

Phone: 920/787- 4686

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Sandhill Crane, Sora & Virginia Rail, Bobolink, Leconte's & Henslow's Sparrow

Rare species: Yellow Rail & Blue-headed Vireo

Gazetteer: Page 44, A-2

Parking: Parking lot

Nearest food & lodging: Montello



This property lies within a large basin in the glaciated Central Plain. It has a quaking bog mat of sedges and sphagnum moss. The alkaline conditions of the water support the growth of unusual plants such as pitcher plant and bog-rosemary. The property changes to a sedge meadow that is treeless and open except for a small area of tamarack, poison sumac, and bog birch. Sandhill Cranes are here by the hundreds in the fall where they rest for migration. Nesting birds around the marsh and sedge meadows include wading birds and some hard-to-find grassland species.

Directions: From Montello, go north 4.8 miles on Hwy 22, then east on 1 mile on Cty J, then north and east 1 mile on Edgewood Road to a parking area north of the road.

Germania Marsh State Wildlife Area

Phone: 920/361-3149

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

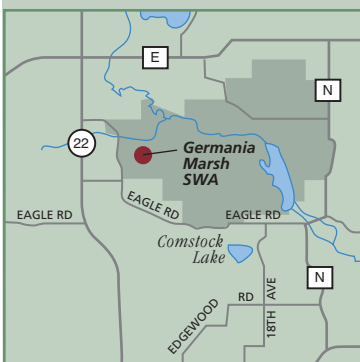
Signature Species: Bald Eagle & Osprey

Rare Species: Common, Black & Forester's Terns

Gazetteer: Page 44, A-2

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Montello and Westfield



This 2,400-acre site is a mix of oak forest, wetlands, sedge meadows and old fields. The Mecan River flows through the property hydrating the wetlands and attracting flocks of waterfowl in the spring and fall. In the summer, the meadows support Karner Blue Butterflies while the marshes hold Blanding's turtles. Look for terns as they dive for small minnows or insects. In the spring, listen for the American Woodcock in the aspen thickets at dusk, and hear the drumming of the Ruffed Grouse in the woods. The sky overhead can be filled with migrating Common Night Hawks in late August. Look for Red-tail Hawks and Turkey Vultures soaring overhead, and low-flying Northern Harriers over the meadows.

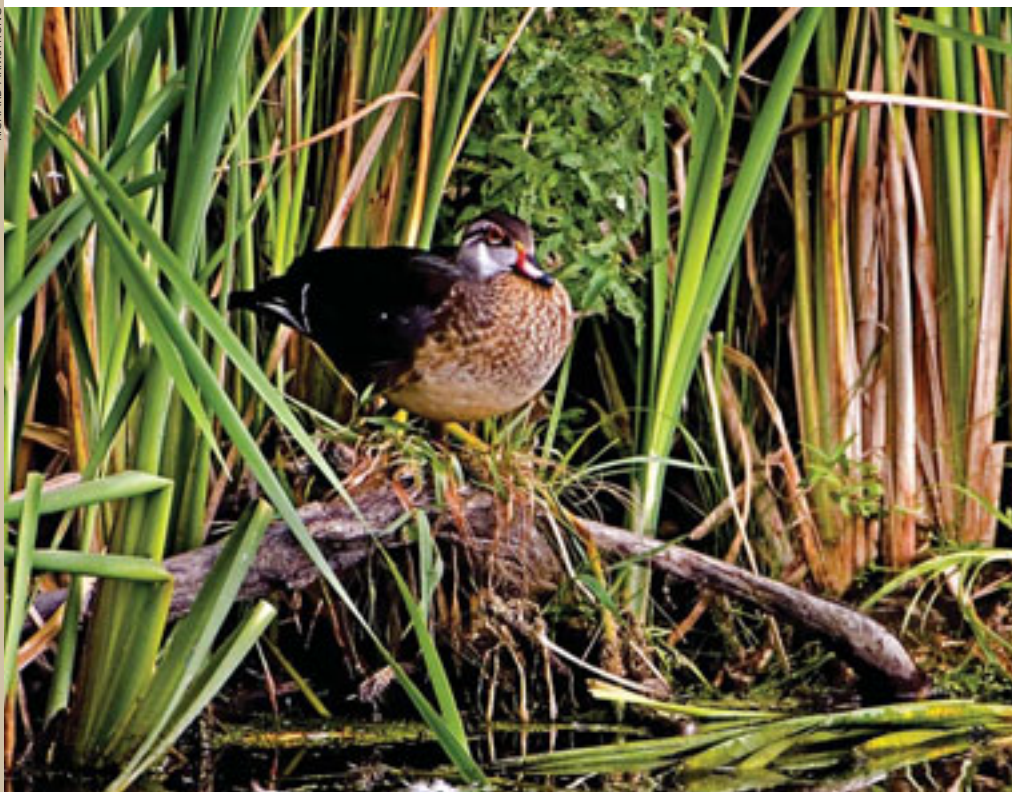
Directions: Located 7 miles north of Montello via Hwy 22.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Forester's Tern

RICHARD ARMSTRONG



Wood Duck.

38

Mecan River State Fishery & Wildlife Area

Phone: 920-361-3149

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

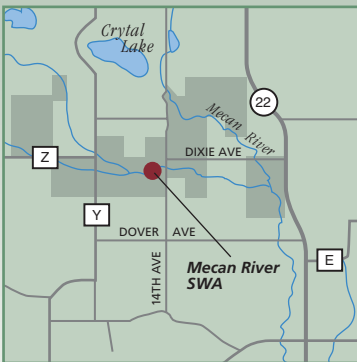
Signature Species: Wild Turkey, Sandhill Crane & Ruffed Grouse

Rare Species: Loggerhead Shrike, Bob-white Quail & Northern Saw-whet Owl

Gazetteer: Page 44, A-2

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Westfield and Montello



The beautiful Mecan River flows through this 740-acre property defining the landscape. The forested uplands offer nesting sites for warblers, woodpeckers and Ruffed Grouse.

An occasional Bob-white Quail can be heard calling in the spring-time. The marshlands are good places to look for turkeys and sedge wrens. The meadows shelter many species of grassland birds. The property is just north of the Mecan River Fisheries Area, so bring your fly rod and your canoe. In the early evening, look for red fox, coyotes, badgers, mink and fox squirrels along the roads.

Directions: Located 11 miles north of Montello on Hwy 22.

RJ & LINDA MILLER



Ruffed Grouse

39

Muir Park State Natural Area

Phone: 920/787-4686

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

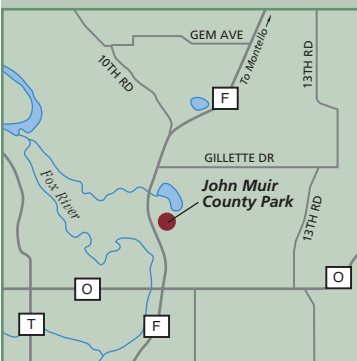
Signature species: Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher & Eastern Kingbird

Rare species: Red-headed Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Bob-white Quail

Gazetteer: Page 44, C-1

Parking: Parking lot

Nearest food & lodging: Endeavor or Montello



Muir Park is the boyhood home of conservationist John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club and the father of the National Park System. This 150-acre property is within John Muir Memorial County Park. It consists of upland and wetland communities surrounding 30-acre Ennis Lake. Small fens along the shoreline and an outlet stream to the Fox River contain many unusual plants, including nodding lady's-tresses orchid. The restored prairie is a magnet for grassland birds such as Bobolinks, while the oak savannas are rich in warblers and other migrating songbirds. A trail takes you around the lake and wooden bridges carry you over wet areas and streams.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Yellow-bellied Flycatcher

Directions: From Montello, go south 7.6 miles on Cty F to the park entrance east of the road.

Observatory Hill State Natural Area

Phone: 920/787-4686

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle & Eastern Phoebe

Rare species: Loggerhead Shrike, Warbling Vireo & Red-headed Woodpecker

Gazetteer: Page 44, C-1

Parking: Parking lot

Nearest food & lodging: Endeavor or Montello



Observatory Hill is the highest point in Marquette County, rising 300 feet above the countryside. It was a favorite childhood haunt of naturalist John Muir who lived nearby. A trail leads to the top where you can immerse yourself in the beauty of this Central Wisconsin landscape. The woods that cover the property are being restored to oak savanna. It contains remnant prairie plants. The mix of oaks, basswoods and cedar trees attract many species of songbirds including Scarlet Tanagers, Cedar Waxwings, Red-eyed vireos, and Golden-crowned Kinglets.

Directions: From Montello, go south 4.8 miles on Cty F, then east 0.5 mile on 14th Road, then south 1.4 miles on 13th Road, then east 0.6 mile on Gillette Drive to a parking area north of the road. A footpath to the summit begins in the northwest corner of the old field.

RON TOEL



Turkey Vulture

JEFF MILLER



Red-winged Blackbird.

Menominee County



41

Wisconsin's Menominee County is actually the Menominee Indian Reservation. The reservation totals 234,000 acres and is home to about 4,000 tribal members. At one time, the Menominee occupied most of central Wisconsin – more than 10 million acres. The Menominee have lived here for more than 10,000 years and have a proud history. They are an Algonquin speaking tribe; Menominee or “O-Maeq-No-Min-Ni-Wuk” means People of the Wild Rice. They are divided

among five ancestral clans: Bear, Eagle, Wolf, Moose and Crane.

Phone: 715/799-5100 or 715/799-4654

Web: www.menominee-nsn.gov

Signature species: Common Raven, Great Blue Heron & Bald Eagle

Rare species: Black Tern, Golden-winged Warbler, Northern Parula & Winter Wren

Gazetteer: Page 66, A-4 and page 78, D-1-4

Seasonality: Open all year

The Menominee are national leaders in sustainable forestry practices. Ninety-five percent of the reservation is forested. It holds the finest old stands of hardwood, pine and hemlock in the Great Lakes basin. It is said that you can see the outline of Menominee County from space – the trees are that much taller than the surrounding landscape. The combination of hardwoods and evergreens makes for spectacular fall colors.

Twenty-four miles of the Wolf River, a federally designated wild river, flows through the reservation. Menominee County is a particularly beautiful area – a remnant of pre-European Wisconsin – with 128 lakes and the Evergreen, Oconto, Red and Wolf Rivers found within its borders. There are a dozen natural and cultural tourist attractions located on the reservation. They include several beautiful waterfalls, Spirit Rock, the Menominee Logging Museum, the College of the Menominee Nation, and Menominee Casino & Bingo. There are also cultural events that the public is invited to attend; consult the Menominee web site for a schedule.



Bald Eagle.

Monroe County



Monroe County bills itself as “Bikes and Berries,” but it’s much more than that. The county is nearly square, bisected east-to-west by Interstate-90.

In the northeast, the area around Warrens is “Cranberry County.” Cranberries are the only fruit native to Wisconsin. So, if God gives you cranberries, you make cranberry juice... and Wisconsin now leads the nation in the production of the tart, red berries for juice. You can learn more about all things cranberry at the **Wisconsin Cranberry Discovery Center** in Warrens (608/378-

4878, www.discovercranberries.com).

Northwestern Monroe County is dominated by the **Fort McCoy Military Reservation** (608/388-2407, www.mccoy.army.mil). Fort McCoy is one of the nation’s leading training centers for Army National Guard units. The 60,000-acre facility includes a pair of excellent recreation areas open to the public, as well as a self-guided driving tour.

The southern half of the county is dominated by the **Elroy-Sparta State Trail**, a 32-mile railbed trail whose western trailhead is in Sparta (800/354-2453, www.elroy-sparta-trail.com). Sparta is also home to the **Deke Slayton Memorial Space & Bike Museum** (888/200-5302, www.dekeslayton.com) and the **Little Falls Railroad & Doll Museum** (608/272-3266, www.raildoll.org). Eleven miles north of Sparta the **Paul & Matilda Wegner Grotto** is a fanciful outdoor park that includes a folk art “Glass Church” created from bits of colored glass and concrete (608/269-8680, www.portalwisconsin.org/wegnergrotto.cfm).

42

Big Creek State Fishery Area

Phone: 608/785-9000

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Bald Eagle, Ruffed Grouse & Wild Turkey

Rare Species: Hooded Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow & Lincoln’s Sparrow

Gazetteer: Page 50, D-1

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lot

Nearest food & lodging: Sparta



Big Creek meanders through this 1,316-acre property managed for trout fishing, hunting, hiking and wildlife viewing. The forests and lowland brush areas attract a variety of birds. Look for Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, Brown Thrashers and Gray Catbirds in the shrubs along the creek with Eastern Bluebirds and Savannah Sparrows in the meadows. Forested sections hold Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Whip-poor-wills, Nashville and Black-and-white Warblers. Blaze your own trail through this area, keeping an eye open for badgers and fox in the meadows, and mink along the creek. For anglers, Big Creek produces some nice trout.

Directions: From Sparta, travel 9 miles north on Hwys 27/71 to Cataract. The property lies to the northwest.

43

Fort McCoy (Military Reservation) Barrens State Natural Area

Phone: 608/388-5766 or 5374 – visitors must call in advance for access permission

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Eastern Bluebird, Sedge Wren, Lark Sparrow, Turkey Vulture & Karner Blue Butterfly

Rare Species: Red-headed Woodpecker, Vesper and Henslow's Sparrows, Bobolink and Western Meadowlark

Gazetteer: Page 41, A-5

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & water: Sparta



While this property is a heavily used military base, there are many rare species of plants and animals found here. This SNA protects an oak barrens of exceptional quality and diversity. Much of the area is open, sandy prairie with groves and scattered trees of black, Hill's, bur, and white oaks. Several large sand blows are habitat for prairie fame-flower and prairie larkspur. Avian life is equally diverse and includes Upland Sandpipers and Grasshopper Sparrows.

Direction: Visitors must call in advance to access the SNA that is located within the Fort McCoy Military Reservation. From Sparta, go east on 8 miles on Hwy 21, then south 1.2 miles on Airfield Range Road to 18th Lane and park along the road. The site lies south of 18th Lane. Visitors must display in the passenger-side windshield a 5 x 8 card that lists name, purpose of visit, and emergency contact number.

44

La Crosse River State Fishery Area

Phone: 608/785-9000

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Belted Kingfisher, Eastern Wood Pewee, Eastern Kingbird, Northern Flicker, Long-billed Marsh & Sedge Wren

Rare species: Pileated Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher & Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

Gazetteer: Page 41, A-4

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lot

Nearest food & lodging: Sparta



This 457-acre property is northeast of the La Crosse River Trail Prairie State Natural area and is dominated by the La Crosse River. The landscape is ideal for Wild Turkeys,

badgers, mink and red fox. Shrubby areas along the stream attract Brown Thrashers, Yellow and Common

Yellowthroat Warblers while the forests harbor a variety of woodpeckers, warblers and the Hermit Thrush. Blue-winged, Golden-winged and Chestnut-sided Warblers nest on this property along with Yellow-rumped Warblers. If you like to fish for trout, or just relax along the river, this property is a great place to visit.

Directions: From Sparta, go 2 miles northeast on Hwy 21 to Angelo, then 2 miles north on Cty I.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Chestnut-sided Warbler

La Crosse River Trail Prairie State Natural Area

Phone: 608/785-9000

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Black & Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Chimney Swift, Least Flycatcher & Eastern Kingbird

Rare species: Red-headed Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher & Purple Martin

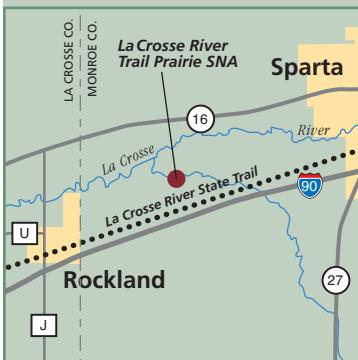
Gazetteer: Page 41, A-4

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Sparta

Fees: Bike trail fee



This property is located along the La Crosse River State trail east and west of Rockland. It features two stretches of dry to dry-mesic sand prairie in a former railroad right-of-way that total 56 acres. These long, linear remnants lie on a sandy terrace of the La Crosse River and are indicative of the once vast prairie and savanna complex that covered this part of the state. Prairie meadows are in bloom from early spring to the last hard frost of October, attracting numerous species of butterflies and many species of grassland birds. This segment of the trail is drier than the La Crosse segment to the west, but you will want to walk or ride your bike and enjoy the beautiful landscape.

Directions: From the trailhead in Sparta, bike or hike west to reach this SNA in Monroe and La Crosse Counties.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Acadian Flycatcher

GENE STAVER



Sandhill Cranes.

Meadow Valley State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/884-2437

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Sandhill Crane, Ruffed Grouse, Barred Owl, Bank and Cliff Swallow & Whip-poor-will.

Rare species: Whooping Crane, American Egret, Trumpeter Swans, Yellow-billed Cuckoo & Karner Blue Butterfly

Gazetteer: Page 51, D-5

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Necedah



This 58,000-acre site features eight flowages, 1,000 acres of open water, a waterfowl refuge, 6 miles of public use roads, 9 primitive campground sites and 25 miles of snowmobile trails available for hiking. It is managed for the optimum production of forest and wetland wildlife, and is a popular place to view wildlife, hunt and fish. Moist soil management allows two or three impounded water drawdowns each year, providing excellent habitat for shorebirds.

This large property extends into Juneau County to the east. Interesting and elusive mammals here include gray fox and snowshoe hares.

Directions: From Tomah, travel east 4.5 miles on Hwy 21 to Hwy 173. Go north four miles to the heart of the property. Explore the many roads to access this large property.



Barred Owl

MIKE MCDOWELL



Hummingbird Moth.

CAROL KNABE

Outagamie County



Outagamie County is the home of the Fox Cities, an urban area of eighteen communities that boomed in the early 20th century producing paper products.

Today, the area is home to a large regional mall and many galleries, antique and specialty shops. It bills itself as “Wisconsin’s Shopping Place.”

Appleton is the largest of the Fox Cities. It was the childhood home of the great Harry Houdini. The Houdini legend, complete with many of his fabled escape props, is showcased at the **Outagamie**

Museum (920/735-9370, www.foxvalleyhistory.org). Appleton was also the site of the first home in the world lit by a central hydroelectric plant. The **Hearthstone Historic House Museum** preserves local history and that first hydro-house (920/730-8204, www.hearthstonemuseum.org).

The **Fox River Mall**, on Appleton’s northwest side, is the largest in Wisconsin with 180 stores (920/739-4100, www.foxrivermall.com). If you brought the kids, you might consider a **Wisconsin Timber Rattlers** baseball game (920/733-4152, www.timberrattlers.com) or a visit to the **Fox Cities Children’s Museum** (920/734-3226, www.kid-museum.org).

Located just east of Appleton, Kaukauna is another Fox Cities community with a pair of fine attractions. The **1000 Islands Environmental Center** is a 300-acre refuge along the Fox River with a nature center, 300 specimens of birds and animals, and miles of nature trails (920/766-4733, www.1000islandsenvironmentalcenter.com). Nearby, the **Grignon Mansion** has been restored to its 1837-62 brilliance (920/735-9370, www.foxvalleyhistory.org).

47

Bubolz Nature Preserve

Phone: 920/984-3700

Web: www.bubolzpreserve.org

Signature Species: Monarch Butterfly & Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Rare Species: Pileated Woodpecker, Scarlet Tanager & Merlin

Gazetteer: Page 55, 5-B

Seasonality: Year round - nature center closed Mondays

Parking: Parking Lot

Nearest Food & Lodging: Appleton



This 758-acre nature preserve has 8 miles of wildlife viewing trails that access fields and a large wetland area, all of which was once a cedar swamp.

The earth sheltered nature center offers guided tours, workshops, classes and programs hosted by staff naturalists. Watch for Bobolinks and Meadowlarks as you hike the grassy fields in the summer. In the fall, look for low-flying Northern Harriers hunting for small mammals. An evening walk through the preserve may produce white-tailed deer or a red fox.

Directions: From Appleton go north 1.5 miles on Hwy 47 to Cty JJ, then west 1.5 miles to Cty A, then south and watch for the property sign.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Mack State Wildlife Area & DOT Mitigation Site

Phone: 715/524-2183

Web site: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Black Tern, Tundra Swan, Yellow-headed Blackbird & Sora Rail

Rare Species: Great Egret

Gazetteer: Page 54, A-4

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest Food & Lodging: New London



This 1,350-acre property is actually two sites; one north and one south of Hwy 54. The property contains marsh, aspen, swamp, hardwood forests, low-land brush and grasslands. An abandoned railroad bed that is slated to become a state trail for hiking and biking bisects the southern section of the property. The area is fairly flat as it was once a glacial lakebed. The 480-acre mitigation site located on Van Patten Drive is north of Hwy 54. Visit the accessible viewing platform and educational kiosk found there to get a bird's-eye view of a wetland and wetland birds.

Directions: From Shiocton, travel east on Hwy 54 two miles to Van Patten Rd, then north .5 mile to the parking area and viewing platform. Or, continue east of Hwy 54 another .5 mile to Herman Rd to access the Mack SWA south of the highway. Both areas are marked with signs.

Outagamie County State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/524-2183

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Ruffed Grouse, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Cerulean Warbler

Rare Species: Osprey and Black Terns

Gazetteer: Page 54, A-4

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest Food & Lodging: Shiocton



This 1,000-acre property allows more access to the many-faceted Wolf River. Trails lead through forest, marsh and grasslands along the river where you can observe waterfowl during migrations. Or, a hike into the swamps can produce a variety of herons and even Black Terns. The terns can be heard calling continually as they swoop and bob above the water hunting insects. Yellow-headed Blackbirds call from their cattail stands as well. Listen for Long-billed Marsh Wrens in the marshes and Sedge Wrens in the grassy uplands.

Directions: From Shiocton, travel 3.5 miles north on Hwy 187 to the property.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

Wolf River Bottoms State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/524-2183

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Sandhill Cranes, Ruffed Grouse & American Woodcock

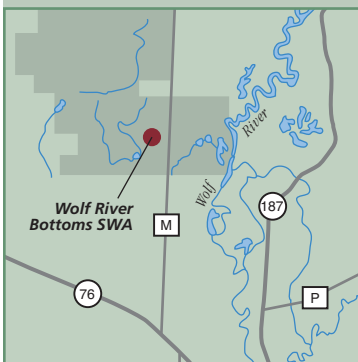
Rare Species: Loggerhead Shrike & Prothonotary Warbler

Gazetteer: Page 66, D-3

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest Food & Lodging: Shiocton or Hortonville



The Wolf River dominates this 2,600-acre property supplying ample water in the spring to fill the wetlands and temporarily flood the lands surrounding the property. All of this water draws in impressive numbers of ducks, geese, swans and shorebirds in April and May. As spring gives way to summer, the meadows and woods teem with warblers and many species of songbirds, while broods of ducks begin to show themselves in the marshes. In the fall, bird migrations can be exciting as well. The area is remote and well worth repeated visits.

Directions: From Shiocton, go north 2 miles on Hwy 76 to Cty M, then north 2 more miles to the property.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Prothonotary Warbler

GENE STAVELAND



Sandhill Cranes.

Portage County



Portage County has an outstanding string of county parks that offer more than 100 family campsites and appeal to a variety of user groups: Becker Lake is a hit with birders, Lake Helen and Sunset Lake have popular swimming beaches, Standing Rocks offers great biking and cross-country skiing trails, as well as downhill skiing, and the Dewey Shooting Range is on-target with hunters.

Stevens Point, the county seat, lies in the heart of the Wisconsin River Valley. A riverside city, it blends industry, academia, recreation and natural beauty. The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point campus includes the **Schmeeckle Reserve**, 275 acres of solitude and a great place for walking, jogging, biking, fishing and wildlife watching (800/236-4636, www.uwsp.edu/cnr/schmeeckle). The reserve's nature center houses exhibits and dioramas as well as the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame. The reserve is a trailhead for the **Green Circle State Trail**, a 30.5-mile hiking and biking trail around the city (800/236-4636, www.stevenspointarea.com).

Downtown, more than sixty buildings comprise the Mathias Mitchell Public Square-Main Street Historic District, a delightful walking tour. The city is the home of Sentry Insurance, owner of the **SentryWorld Sports Center**, a world-class golf course and racquet-sports facility open to the public (866/479-6753, www.sentryworld.com). Founded in 1857, the **Stevens Point Brewery** is a must-stop for a tour and tasting (800/369-4911, www.pointbeer.com).

51

Buena Vista Grasslands

Phone: 608/339-3385

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Greater Prairie Chicken

Rare species: Cattle Egret, Golden Eagle, Snowy and Short-eared Owl, Acadian Flycatcher, Henslow's Sparrow & Bobolink

Gazetteer: Page 52, B-4

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking along roads & parking lots – some roads impassable in winter

Closest food & lodging: Stevens Point or Wisconsin Rapids



This 11,300-acre site is a mix of state-owned and leased lands scattered over 88 square miles. It is home to the largest concentration of Greater Prairie Chickens in Wisconsin. Buena Vista represents one of the most extensive grasslands east of the Mississippi River. The area has been developed by the DNR, the Dane County Conservation League and the Society of *Tympanuchus cupido pinnatus*. In the process of preserving the land for Prairie Chickens, habitat has been developed for a broad array of rare and uncommon birds. Also found within the project are wetlands and nesting Northern Harriers, Sandhill Cranes, Willow Flycatchers and Brown Thrashers.

Directions: From Bancroft, follow Cty W north and then west 7.7 miles to the kiosk/historical marker at the intersection of Cty W & Cty F.

Dewey Marsh State Natural Area

Phone: 715/421-7800

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Northern Harrier, Ruffed Grouse, Grasshopper, Vesper & Savannah Sparrow

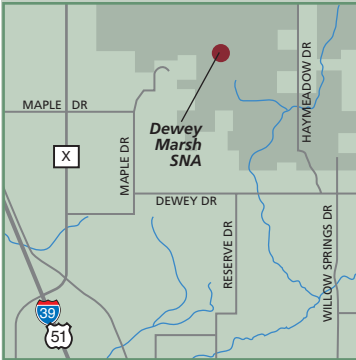
Rare species: Sharp-tailed Grouse & Greater Prairie Chicken

Gazetteer: Page 64, C- 4

Seasonality: Open year round – some roads impassable in winter

Parking: Park along the road

Nearest food & lodging: Stevens Point



Located within the 5,677-acre Dewey Marsh State Wildlife Area, this 926-acre State Natural Area (SNA) contains an expansive conifer swamp, northern sedge meadow and bog embedded with small islands forested with aspen, birch, red maple, and white pine. The sedge meadow forms the headwaters of Hay Meadow Creek. There are areas of conifer swamp containing tamarack and black spruce. During fall migrations, Short-eared Owls can be seen in small flocks. In the winter, look for Pileated Woodpeckers as they fly from woodlot to woodlot. Red Crossbills and White-winged Crossbills can be found in the conifer swamps. All summer long, a wide array of songbirds and grassland species nest in this unique site.

Directions: Located 6 miles north of Stevens Point via Cty X, Reserve Dr, or Willow Springs Dr.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Savannah Sparrow

STEVENS POINT AREA, CVB



Canada Geese on McDill Pond, Stevens Point.

53

Iverson Park

Phone: 715/346-1531

Web: www.StevensPoint.com

Signature species: Scarlet Tanager, Pine Warbler & Wilson's Snipe

Rare species: Great Egret, Trumpeter Swan & Caspian, Forester's and Common Terns

Gazetteer: Page 64, D-4

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Stevens Point



With more than 200 species on its bird list, this park is the place to go for a great urban wildlife experience in Stevens Point. The 121-acre park is located along the Plover River that serves as a major migratory corridor for birds in the spring and fall. The property consists of deciduous and conifer forests, extensive wetlands, the Plover River, and McDill Pond. Many hiking trails traverse the property. There are picnic areas, park shelters and play-ground equipment for the kids. In winter, the trails are a popular with cross-country skiers. The city's 24-mile Green Circle Trail goes through Iverson Park. The park is completely handicapped accessible.

Directions: Entering the city west-bound on Hwy 10, the entrance to the park is the first left after crossing the Plover River; watch for the sign.

54

Richard A. Hemp State Fishery Area

Phone: 715/421-7800

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Blue-winged, Golden-winged & Hooded Warblers, Willow & Alder Flycatchers, Eastern Kingbird

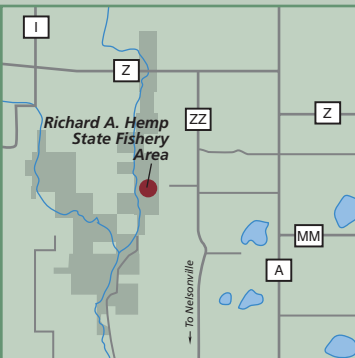
Rare species: Karner Blue Butterfly, Golden Eagle, Common Raven & Louisiana Waterthrush

Gazetteer: Page 65, D-6

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking areas

Nearest food & lodging: Amherst Junction or Stevens Point



This 1,375-acre site is one of the best warbler habitats in Wisconsin. Of the 30 species seen on the property, a total of eighteen have been documented as breeders. The combination of forested, river and wetland habitats makes this a special place. This site is considered semi-wilderness and is a great property to visit. The maple forests and river areas produce an exceptional spring wildflower display. Skunk cabbage bloom first (late winter) followed by marsh marigolds, may apples and trillium. The spring frog chorus can be deafening, as huge numbers of spring peepers, chorus, green and gray-tree frogs sing from spring through summer.

Directions: Located 3 miles north of Nelsonville. Access the property from Cty ZZ and Cty Z. From 3536 Cty ZZ, follow the gravel road just north of the mailbox .75 mile to the parking lot of the Northern Unit; trails run west and north. Or, travel Grayson Rd. to River Rd. and turn north 1 mile to a parking lot.

Schmeckle Reserve

Phone: 715/342-9440

Web:

www.uwsp.edu/cnr/schmeckle

Signature species: Wood Thrush, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Ruffed Grouse & Yellow-bellied Flycatcher

Rare species: Carolina Wren, Chipping Sparrow & Red-headed Woodpecker

Gazetteer: Page 64, D-4

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Stevens Point



This 275-acre reserve on the campus of UW-Stevens Point is a College of Natural Resources field station, providing rich learning and research opportunities for faculty and students. It is located on the north side of the city and serves as a trailhead for the Green Circle Trail that circumnavigates the city. The habitat is diverse with mixed conifer and deciduous forests, wetlands, a small woodland stream and 24-acre Joanis Lake. The Reserve offers 5.5 miles of trails. Its bird list is an impressive 218 species, with 33 species of mammals recorded on the site. In the spring, the amphibian chorus of frogs and toads sing nightly. The reserve's visitor's center houses the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame.

Directions: From I-39 take exit 161 to Bus 51/Division St; turn left at the stoplights onto North Point Dr; the Reserve is on the right just past Michigan Ave.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Chipping Sparrow



Great Blue Heron at the Schmeckle Reserve.

Shawano County



Shawano County steps across northeastern Wisconsin like a lazy Z. The Navarino State Wildlife Area and Shawano Lake dominate the eastern half of the county, while the Stockbridge Munsee Indian Reservation is the largest terrain feature in the west. Long a center of lumbering, the county remains a strong player in the state's timber industry.

At 6,000 acres, Shawano Lake attracts plenty of anglers and boaters. Relatively deep, the lake has a solid reputation for northern pike, walleye and large-mouth bass – even an occasional sturgeon. Slicing through the county north-to-south, the pristine Wolf River offers fly fishing as well as whitewater kayaking and canoeing.

Ten miles south of Shawano, the 14,500-acre **Navarino Wildlife Area** includes 7,000 acres of forest habitat, 1,000 acres of restored prairie, 3,900 acres of bush swamp and 2,000 acres of marsh habitat (715/758-6999, www.navarino.org). Common avian species include ducks, geese, ruffed grouse, woodcock, red-shouldered hawks, and sandhill cranes. Its 56 miles of trails include 12 miles groomed for cross-country skiing during the winter months.

The **Mountain Bay State Trail** parallels Hwy. 29 from Green Bay to Wausau (920/448-4466, www.mountain-baytrail.org). Eighty-nine miles long, the Mountain Bay is the longest multi-use rail-trail in Wisconsin; sixty of those miles are in Shawano County. Bikers and hikers feeling lucky can stop at the **Mohican North Star Casino & Bingo** near Bowler (800/775-2274, www.mohicannorthstar.com).

56

Jung Hemlock-Beech Forest State Natural Area

Phone: 715/524-2183

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo & Eastern Wood Pewee

Rare Species: Red and White Crossbills & Blue-headed Vireo

Gazetteer: Page 66, B-2

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking area

Nearest Food & Lodging: Gresham



This State Natural Area is a remnant of the northern mesic forest that once covered millions of acres of northeastern Wisconsin. There are old-growth hemlock, American beech, sugar maple, yellow birch and scattered white pine trees that are 150-200 years old. The rich ground layer of plants includes bluebead-lily, wintergreen and beech-drops, a root parasite of beech trees. Small sedge-sphagnum bogs contain tamarack and black spruce. Wetlands contain bog-laurel, mountain holly, cotton grass and pitcher plants. Nesting birds fill the property with song in the spring.

Directions: From Gresham, go south and east 2 miles on Cty A, then south 1 mile on Cty U, then east 0.3 mile on Winkle Rd (Cty G) to a parking area south of the road.

Mountain-Bay State Trail

Phone: 715/526-6766

Web: www.co.shawano.wi.us

Signature Species: Catbird, Chimney Swift & Eastern Bluebird

Rare Species: Scarlet Tanager, Wood Thrush & Great Egret

Gazetteer: Page 66, B-4

Seasonality: Open all year

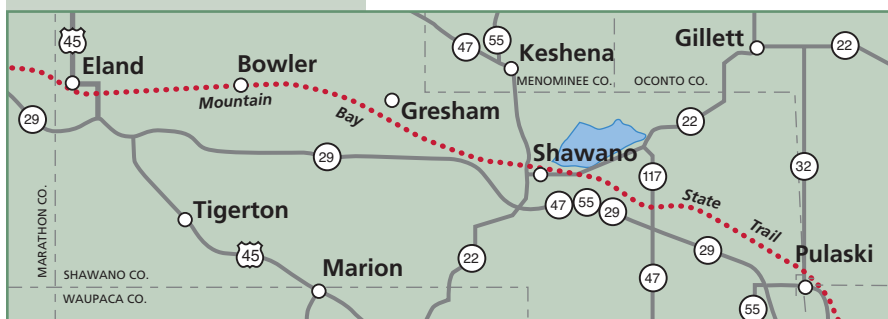
Parking: Parking lots

Nearest Food & Lodging: Shawano

Fees: State Trail Pass fee

This 83-mile state rail-trail gets its name from Rib Mountain in Wausau and the bay of Green Bay. The Shawano County portion of the trail is 53 miles long and spans the county from Eland to Pulaski. The trail passes through beautiful countryside framed by farmlands, marshes, and small villages as well as the Stockbridge Munsee Indian Reservation. Bridges cross many creeks and streams. You can bike, hike or ride your horse along the trail. Don't forget your field glasses for good looks at wildlife.

Directions: There are trailheads in Shawano, Eland and Pulaski.



Navarino State Wildlife Area & Nature Center

Phone: 715/758-6999

Web: www.navarino.org

Signature Species: Northern Harrier, Eastern Bluebird, Tundra Swan & American Bittern

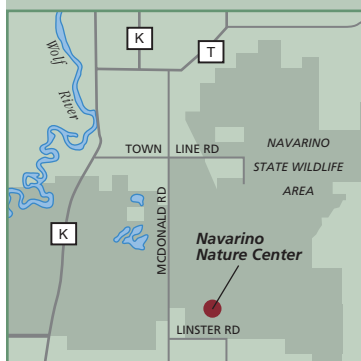
Rare Species: Loggerhead Shrike & Little Blue Heron

Gazetteer: Page 66, 4-C

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking Lots

Nearest Food & Lodging: Shawano or Bonduel



This 15,000-acre property is a mix of prairie, woodlands, marshes and flowages. The Wolf and Shioc Rivers shape the character of this landscape that is home to many species of native mammals including badgers, coyotes, porcupines and beavers. A nature center offers visitors educational opportunities and there are programs led by staff naturalists. There are prairie restorations to explore, or enjoy a 47-mile, self-guided auto tour of the property. Drives through the area in the early evening produce many sightings of deer, or you might hear the call of a Great Horned or Barred Owl.

Directions: From Shawano, go south 5 miles on Cty K to Cty T east 1.3 miles to the hamlet of Lunds, then south 4.5 miles on McDonald Rd to Lindster Rd east to the nature center.

Shawano Lake & County Park

Phone: 715/524-4162

Web: www.co.shawano.wi.us

Signature Species: Yellow-headed blackbird & Common Loon

Rare Species: Red-headed Woodpecker

Gazetteer: Page 66, B-4

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Shawano



At 6,178 acres, Shawano Lake is part of a 62 square mile watershed within the Wolf River Basin. It is heavily used year-round for recreation. It is significant to wildlife, especially during spring and fall migrations when waterfowl of all types can be found on the lake. There are good roads around the lake that lead to five boat launches. Fishing on the lake has always been good; wet a line for walleye, northern, large-mouth bass and panfish.

The county park at the north end of the lake contains woodlands where you can find Red-headed Woodpeckers. American White Pelicans and Tundra Swans can be found on the lake in the spring.

Directions: Located 1 mile northeast of Shawano.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Common Loon



American White Pelicans.

Waupaca County



With terrific water resources and timeless charm, Waupaca County draws visitors in all seasons. The Waupaca area's famous Chain O' Lakes, a string of 22 spring-fed, pristine lakes, offer an ideal setting for water activities of all sorts. The Crystal, Waupaca, Wolf, Little Wolf and Embarrass Rivers are popular for kayaking and canoeing.

The City of Waupaca, the county seat, is a pretty little town with a band shell in the downtown square and a great series of city parks. Two miles to the west, King is the gateway to the Chain O' Lakes. The Wisconsin Veterans Home is located here as is **Clear Water Harbor**, home of the "Chief Waupaca" sternwheeler and the "Lady of the Lakes" motor launch (715/258-2866, www.clearwaterharbor.com). Both offer 1.5-hour sightseeing cruises.

Nearby, **Ding's Dock** offers 3-hour canoe trips down the Crystal River (715/258-2612, www.dingsdock.com). Trips begin with a boat ride through two lakes to the start of the river. The paddle downstream is suitable for youngsters six and older and can be exciting, especially in periods of high water. Buses provide return transportation.

On the west end of the Chain O' Lakes, **Hartman Creek State Park** offers 1,400 acres of more fun (715/258-2372, www.wiparks.net). Enjoy swimming in crystal-clear Marl Lake, 103 family campsites, a nature center with naturalist programs, fishing, and 14 miles of trails, including 8 miles of horse trails and 5 miles of mountain bike trails.

60

Hartman Creek State Park & Emmons Creek Fishery Area

Phone: 715/258-2372

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Scarlet Tanager, Least Flycatcher, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel & Karner Blue Butterfly

Rare Species: Acadian Flycatcher, Grasshopper Sparrow & Henslow's Sparrow

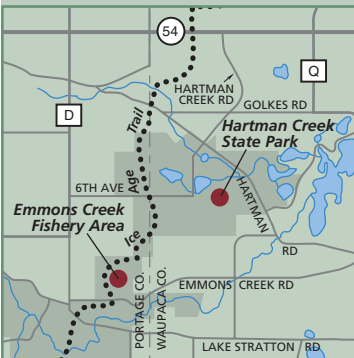
Gazetteer: Page 53, 7-B

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest Food & Lodging: Waupaca

Fees: Park fees apply



With several quiet lakes to explore, these two properties are popular destinations for canoeists and kayakers.

Hikers and birders enjoy the trails that traverse these 2,800 acres, including parts of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. The properties offer a mix of habitats including pine and hardwood forests, oak savannas, old

fields, marshes, lakes, and upland meadows. This variety attracts lots of birds; the bird list for the properties is an impressive 253 species. Volunteer naturalists at the park offer interpretive programs throughout the summer.

Directions: From Waupaca, travel west 5 miles on Hwy 54 to Hartman Creek Road, then south 1.5 miles to the park. Emmons Creek Fishery Area is just southwest and adjacent to the park.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Scarlet Tanager

61

Keller Whitcomb Creek Woods State Natural Area

Phone: 920/787-4686

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Winter Wren, Common Raven, Hermit Thrush & Veery,

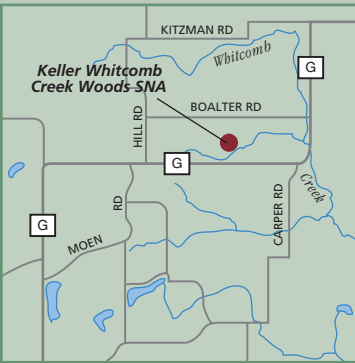
Rare Species: Red-shouldered Hawk, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, & Merlin

Gazetteer: Page 65, D-8

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking along road

Nearest Food & Lodging: Iola



This 97-acre SNA includes the headwaters of Whitcomb Creek, a sandy-bottomed, fast flowing, Class 1 trout stream with naturally reproducing brown and brook trout. The property's northern dry-mesic forest of white pine, red pine, red oak and white oak grades into a mesic forest of hemlock, yellow birch, paper birch, and sugar maple. Low areas near the stream consist of almost pure white cedar. The ground layer contains many species of ferns and fungi. Mink, red fox and reptiles use the area, along with a wide variety of songbirds including Mourning, Nashville and Yellow-rumped Warblers, Ovenbirds, Northern Waterthrush and White-throated Sparrows.

Directions: From Iola, go north 6.5 miles on Cty G to Hill Rd, then north 0.5 mile to Boalter Rd, then east 1 mile to the northeast corner of the site.

62

Mukwa State Wildlife Area

Phone: 920/787-4686

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier & American Kestrel

Rare Species: Northern Shrike, Least Bittern & Great Egret

Gazetteer: Page 54, A-2

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking Lot: Parking lots provided

Nearest Food & Lodging: New London



This 1,290-acre property is a large complex of marsh, river and woods. Some of the river bottom areas are important to spring songbirds while the backwater areas attract many waterfowl species, especially in the spring. Barred and Great Horned Owls nest in the woods and Belted Kingfishers dive for minnows from trees overhanging the water. Tundra Swans can be seen during the fall migration along with numerous species of herons and geese. There are many well-marked access points where you can launch your canoe or kayak for a lazy paddle on the water. Look for mink, muskrat, woodchucks and badgers.

Directions: The property is located 1 mile west of New London on Cty X.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Northern Shrike

Myklebust Lake State Natural Area

Phone: 920/787-4686

Web: www.dnr.wi.us

Signature Species: Mourning Warbler, Pileated Woodpecker & Yellow-throated Vireo

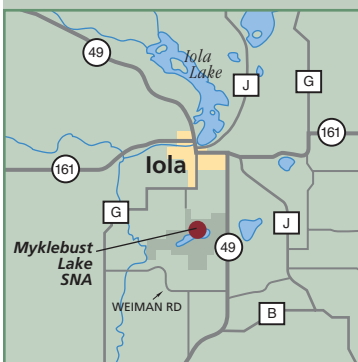
Rare Species: Northern Waterthrush, Least Bittern & Great Egret

Gazetteer: Page 53, A-7

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking Lot: Parking area

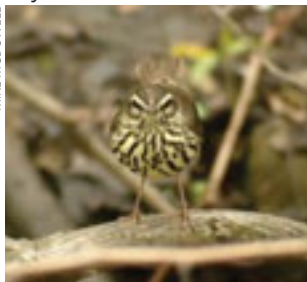
Nearest Food & Lodging: Iola



Myklebust Lake is a deep, 20-acre, marl-bottom lake with undeveloped shoreline and remarkably clear, alkaline water supplied by numerous springs. A small outlet stream feeds the South Branch of the Little Wolf River. White water-lily and bull-head lily bloom here along with many other wetland plants, including wild rice. A northern wet forest of tamarack, red maple and elm borders the outlet stream. A two-acre black spruce bog occupies the south-east corner of the property. The east shore is dominated by a small stand of old white pine, some more than 2 feet in diameter. The uniqueness of the property attracts many species of birds and mammals.

Directions: From Iola, go south 1.1 miles on Hwy 49 to a parking area west of the road. Walk west along an access path to a carry-in canoe landing.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Northern Water Thrush

GENE STAVIER



Tree Swallow.

Waupaca County Sturgeon Trail

Phone: 715/258-6243

Web:
www.waupacacountyparks.com

Signature Species: Lake Sturgeon, waterfowl, songbirds & herons

Gazetteer: Page 54, A-2

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Signs mark parking lots

Nearest Food & Lodging: New London



In April and May, Lake Sturgeon spawn here in this shallow, rocky stretch of the Wolf River. The Sturgeon is Wisconsin's oldest and largest fish. In 2001, the Wisconsin DNR paved a half-mile of surface trail along the river to make it easy and safe for people to observe these ancient creatures. The site is completely accessible. While you're in the area, look for waterfowl during spring and fall migrations, and scan the trees for songbirds. Plans call for trail expansion in the future. This site is always good for wildlife viewing, even when the sturgeon viewing season ends.

Directions: From New London, travel west on Cty X about 2 miles to the site.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Green Heron

BYRON GOETSCH



Sturgeon spawning.

Waushara County



Waushara County is a wonderful blend of farming and recreation. With more than 100 lakes, 150 miles of trout streams, 7,000 acres of public hunting and fishing, and twelve county parks, “outdoors” is spoken here.

In Wautoma, the county seat, visit the **WWII Memorial Building** (866/329-0674, www.visit-waushara.com). Built in 2003, the building honors county veterans and houses both the Wautoma Chamber of Commerce and the Waushara CVB. For local history, tour the **Waushara County Historical Society Museum** housed in what was once the county jail (920/787-7584, www.visitwaushara.com).

In western Waushara County, the University of Wisconsin’s **Hancock Agricultural Research Station** offers fascinating guided tours of its facility and the 150 research projects it conducts annually (715/249-5961, www.cals.wisc.edu/research/stations).

To the north, you can tour the **Wild Rose Fish Hatchery** (920/622-3527, www.dnr.state.wi.us). The facility produces 27 percent of the trout and salmon the DNR stocks; 64 percent of northern pike; 100 percent of lake sturgeon stocked, and 100 percent of spotted musky. The property just completed a new visitor center, part of an ambitious \$24.3 million hatchery improvement project.

Seven miles to the east, the crossroads community of Saxeville boasts a beautiful new covered bridge over the Pine River. Constructed in 1997, the Towne Tress-style bridge is adjacent to a small park in the Town of Springwater. Predictably, the bridge and park have become one of the more popular picnic destinations in the county.

65

Greenwood State Wildlife Area

Phone: 920/424-3050

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Ruffed Grouse & Sandhill Crane

Rare Species: Bob-white Quail & Karner Blue Butterfly

Gazetteer: Page 53, C-5

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest Food & Lodging: Hancock



This site is 1,438 acres of restored oak savanna and prairie, partly done to save the endangered oak savanna community, and partly to encourage its Karner Blue Butterfly population. The prairie habitat is vital nesting cover for Bobolinks, Grasshopper, Field and Vesper Sparrows, and both Eastern and Western Meadowlarks. Look for Karner Blue Butterflies in June and July where lupine plants mix with the stands of prairie grasses. Intermixed with beautiful prairie wildflowers are monarch butterflies and prairie mammals like 13-lined ground squirrels and badgers. You can also hike the Ice Age Trail at this site.

Directions: Located 1.5 miles southeast of Hancock on Cty FF.

Karner Blue Meadow State Natural Area

Phone: 920/787-4686

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Karner Blue Butterfly

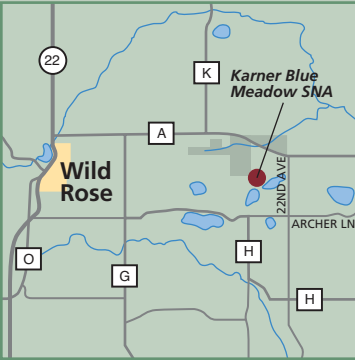
Rare Species: Yellow-billed Cuckoo

Gazetteer: Page 53, C-7

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking area on SE corner of site

Nearest Food & Lodging: Wild Rose & Wautoma



This 40-acre property provides dry, sandy, prairie habitat for a large population of the federally endangered Karner Blue Butterfly. Wild lupine, the only plant the butterfly's larvae feed on, grows here in abundance. Other flowering prairie plants, such as rough blazing-star, black-eyed Susan, and New Jersey tea, supply nectar for adult Karner blues. The tiny butterfly, with a wingspan of only 1 inch, produces two adult generations each year, each living only about a week. Typically, early June and the end of July are the best times to see this beautiful butterfly.

CAROL KNABE



Karner Blue Butterfly

Directions: From just north of Wild Rose, go east on Cty A three miles, then south on 22nd Avenue for .5 mile to the parking area.

Mecan Springs & River State Fishery Area

Phone: 920/424-3050

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Bald Eagle & Red-tailed Hawk

Rare Species: Red-headed Woodpecker & Red-shouldered Hawk

Gazetteer: Page 53, D-5

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking areas

Nearest Food & Lodging: Wautoma



With seven lakes, Mecan Spring and the Mecan River, marshes, woodland and upland grasslands, this is a beautiful site to visit at any season. Bald Eagles nest in the area, and there are good opportunities to view many species of songbirds, herons and waterfowl of all kinds. Occasional flocks of American White Pelicans can be seen in the spring. As you drive the area, consider stopping at boat access points to check for birds. Trout anglers love this river; its clear, cold water produces some fine fish. Kayaks and canoes are a great way to explore these quiet waters and to view the waterfowl they harbor.

Directions: Located 10 miles west of Wautoma on Hwy 21. Use either Cty B or Cty GG north to access the area, and be sure to drive Chicago Road past some of the lakes.

Mount Morris Hills Park

Phone: 920/787-0431

Web: www.1waushara.com/

Signature Species: Turkey Vulture, Eastern Phoebe, & Pileated Woodpecker

Gazetteer: Page 53, C-7

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lot

Nearest Food & Lodging: Wautoma



This county park is a good place to visit in every season. In springtime, the wildflowers are in bloom and warblers and other songbirds are passing through. In summer, it's a great place to hike and look for nesting birds, or bring your canoe and paddle Lake Morris in search of marsh birds and herons. In fall, the colorful leaves of the park's hardwood trees make it a must for a day trip. Turkey vultures glide on the thermals created around the large hill that rises sharply above Lake Morris. Hawks in migration are seen in good numbers at this park in the fall. Take a drive to the top of the hill and watch the hawks move.

Directions: From Wautoma, take Hwy 152 east and north to tiny Mount Morris. Turn left on Cty G to the sign. Driving Cty W will take you around the hill to the entrance to Nordic Mountain.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Cooper's Hawk

GENE STAVER



Wild Turkeys.

69

Poygan State Wildlife Area

Phone: 920/424-3050

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Bald Eagle & Osprey

Rare Species: Least Bittern & American Woodcock

Gazetteer: Page 54, D-1

Seasonality: Open all year – rain & snow may close roads

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest Food & Lodging: Poy Sippi & Wautoma



This large 3,282-acre property lies at the western end of Lake Poygan. The Pine River runs through the area as does Willow Creek. The extensive marsh draws all types of waterfowl, herons and shore-birds. The property has many dikes that lend themselves to hiking and allow you to go just about anywhere on the property. Hunting is popular at this site in the fall, so wildlife viewing is best from one's car during this time. The wooded part of the property is located along Beaver Road; this is the best area to find warblers, flycatchers, woodpeckers and other birds. Gulls and waterfowl can be seen from the boat access point at Badger Drive.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Least Bittern

Directions: From Poy Sippi travel east on Cty H 1.5 miles to Beechnut Road which ends at a parking lot; or south on Hwy 49 to Bighorn Drive or Blackhawk Avenue to access this property.

70

Wild Rose Fish Hatchery

Phone: 920/424-3050

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Trout, salmon, lake sturgeon, northern pike & spotted musky

Gazetteer: Page 54, C-6

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lot

Nearest Food & Lodging: Wild Rose



Don't be fooled; birding is great at this beautiful property where mature trees and the Pine River attract a nice variety of birds. The hatchery is critical to Wisconsin's \$2.3 billion sport fishery producing 27 percent of the trout and salmon the DNR stocks; 64 percent of northern pike; 100 percent of lake sturgeon stocked, and 100 percent of spotted musky. Ninety-four percent of the fish, mostly Brown trout and Chinook salmon, raised at this site go to Lake Michigan. The century-old hatchery is currently undergoing a \$24.3 million dollar renovation. The new Visitor Center opened in 2007 to welcome the public to learn more about the resource.

DOUG STAMM



Chinnok Salmon

Directions: Located just north of Wild Rose on Hwy 22.

Winnebago County



Winnebago is yet another Wisconsin county largely defined by water. To the east, the county borders Lake Winnebago, Wisconsin's largest lake at 137,708 acres. A trio of large lakes – Poygan (14,102 acres), Winneconne (4,507) and Buttes des Morts (8,857 acres) – cut across the center of the county, while Rush Lake (3,070 acres) anchors the south. These water resources and the marshland that surrounds them, sustain large waterfowl populations.

Oshkosh, the county seat, is a picturesque community with a well-preserved sense of its history and a large state university. The city is home to the world's largest aviation event, "EAA AirVenture" that attracts more than 700,000 spectators from 70 countries each year. The annual fly-ins are hosted by the **EAA AirVenture Museum**, which houses a world-class collection of historic civilian and military aircraft (920/426-4818, www.airventuremuseum.org).

Near the university campus, the **Oshkosh Public Museum** exhibits collections of regional and natural history including their fabulous 1895 Apostles' Clock (920/236-5799, www.oshkoshmuseum.org). Across the street, you can tour the traveling exhibits and seasonal gardens of the **Paine Art Center and Gardens** (920/235-6903, www.thepaine.org). The museum is housed in a tudor revival mansion of one of the city's former lumber barons.

The **Grand Opera House** is the jewel of the city's downtown (920/424-2350, www.grandoperahouse.org). This restored 1833 Victorian theater, now a performing arts center, is simply breathtaking.

71

Oshkosh-Larsen Trail Prairies

Phone: 920/424-7896

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Song Sparrow, Sedge Wren, American Goldfinch & American Tree Sparrow

Rare Species: Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark & Short-eared Owl

Gazetteer: Page 54, C-4

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking area

Nearest food & lodging: Oshkosh

Fee: Trail Pass Fee



This site is a series of three low prairie remnants along a 4-mile segment of the Wiouwash State Trail centered on Allenville. The Wiouwash begins in Oshkosh and travels 22 miles north to Hortonville. The prairie segments total just 32 acres, but contain a diversity of native prairie species. Grasses include little blue-stem, Indiangrass, prairie drop-seed, and prairie cord grass. Wildflowers bloom throughout the growing season and include blazing-star, Riddell's goldenrod, downy gentian, stiff gentian and more. Listen for the songs of Eastern Meadowlarks and the call of American Goldfinches overhead.

Directions: From Oshkosh, travel north 7 miles on Hwy 76 to Allenville Rd (Cty G), then west to Allenville and the Wiouwash Trail. Hike or bike the trail north or south for 2 miles.

Rat River State Wildlife Area

Phone: 920/424-7896

Web site: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Green Heron, Yellow-headed blackbird, Willow Flycatcher & Yellow Warbler

Rare species: Orchard Oriole, Louisiana Waterthrush & Mourning Warbler

Gazetteer: Page 54, C-3

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

Nearest food & lodging: Winneconne



This 4,000-acre State Wildlife Area is linked to the Wolf River SWA by water, marsh and the Rat River. Located due east, it contains many of the same species as the Wolf River site, but is much larger with lowland forest and upland grassy fields in addition to marshes and the river. The additional habitats attract a greater mix of birds as well as red fox and badgers. The lowland forest is a good place to spot Golden-winged, Northern Parula and Blue-winged Warblers. The marshy areas hold Long-billed Marsh Wrens, Song and Swamp Sparrows. The brushy areas are good for Red-eyed Vireos, Least and Willow Flycatchers.

Directions: Located 3 miles northwest of Winchester via Cty 11.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Orchard Oriole

Rush Lake State Natural Area

Phone: 920/424-7896

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Red-necked Grebe, Black-crowned Night Heron, Least & American Bittern

Rare Species: Forester's Tern, American Black Duck & Black Tern

Gazetteer: Page 45, A-6

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking area

Nearest food & lodging: Ripon



Because of its rich wildlife population, this property is one of the state's most important wetlands. Most significant are the migratory and breeding bird populations that frequent this site each year. The lake provides habitat for one of the state's largest populations of Red-necked Grebes, a state-threatened species. The 3,100-acre lake is a shallow, marshy seepage lake surrounded by cattails, sedge meadow, wet prairie, and shrub-carr with clear, hard water that is highly productive. In the summer, water lilies bloom on the water and a large variety of marsh birds call from the sedges. Oak Openings and southern dry-mesic forests attract a good variety of songbirds.

Directions: From Ripon, go north 3.5 miles on Cty E to a dirt road on the east side of the road leading to a parking area.

Wolf River State Wildlife Area

Phone: 920/424-7896

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose, American Black Duck & Belted Kingfisher

Rare Species: Least Bittern, American Egret & American White Pelican

Gazetteer: Page 54, C-2

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking lots

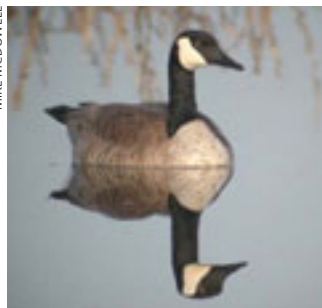
Nearest food & lodging: Winneconne



Water shapes Winnebago County. This 1,620-acre property is a good example of how water is captured, filtered and renewed by vast wetlands. The bird and animal life here is extensive. The Wolf River SWA offers the birder good opportunities to experience the Wolf River and its delta on Lake Poygan by kayak or canoe. Ashore, there are hiking trails that take you close to the river and into marshy areas. This property is a favorite with anglers and hunters. In dry years, spring and fall shorebirds can be numerous here as they search the mudflats for insects. Overhead, soaring Bald Eagles and Osprey hunt for fish.

Directions: From Winchester, travel west 6 miles on Cty 11 to Zittau, turn south on South Rd 1 mile to the parking area.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Canada Goose

ALAN ORR



Great Egret.

Wood County



Located in the geographic center of the state, Wood County is loaded with fun.

Marshfield, near the county's northern border, maintains one of the state's best zoos. **Wildwood Zoo** keeps more than 200 birds and animals including mountain lions, grizzly bear, buffalo, and a large aviary (800/422-4541, www.ci.marshfield.wi.us). **Foxfire Botanical Gardens**, just outside of town, displays seven acres of oriental and western landscape techniques (715/387-3050, www.foxfiregardens.com). Or, you can tour the **Upham Mansion**, the restored 1880 mansion of Wisconsin's third governor, William Henry Upham (715/387-3322, www.uphammansion.com).

A trio of cities along the Wisconsin River in southern Wood County – Wisconsin Rapids, Port Edwards and Nekoosa – shares a common history in the paper industry. Tours of the huge **Stora Enso North American** complex in downtown Wisconsin Rapids offer a close-up look at this paper industry giant including a paper machine longer than a city block (715/422-3789, www.storaenso.com/na). At the **Rainbow Casino** in Nekoosa, you can play the slots, blackjack, roulette or poker (800/782-4560, www.rbcwin.com).

Eight miles north in tiny Rudolph, the **Rudolph Grotto Gardens & Wonder Cave** is a folk-art collection of 29 religious memorials and shrines linked by floral walkways (715/435-3120). Nearby, you can watch cheese being made at the **Wisconsin Dairy State Cheese Company** (715/435-3144).

75

Paul Olson State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/421-7800

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Greater Prairie Chicken, Bobolink & Upland Sandpiper

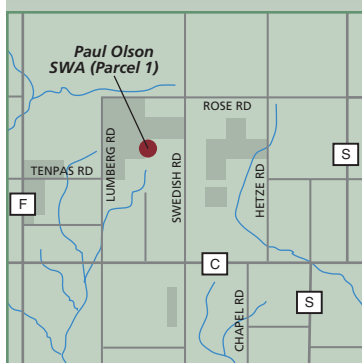
Rare Species: Whooping Crane

Gazetteer: Page 52, A-2

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking provided

Nearest food & lodging: Wisconsin Rapids



The second-largest population of Greater Prairie Chicken in the state is found on Paul Olson. This 1,650-acre property is one of four core management areas for the Greater Prairie Chicken in central Wisconsin and ranks as an Important Bird Area. The property is broken into two locations: one in Wood County and the other in Portage County. The landscape is flat and mostly agricultural, but there are scattered sedge meadows, old fields, swamps and woodlands. This is also a great place to find Sedge Wrens, Clay-colored, Savannah, and Vesper Sparrows. While driving the many roads in the area, look for Northern Harriers hunting over meadows.

Directions: Parcel 1 is located 4 miles west of Rudolph via Cty C to Swedish Rd north. Parcel 2 is located 3 miles north of Rudolph via Cty O in Portage County.

Powers Bluff Maple Woods State Natural Area & Powers Bluff County Park

Phone: 715/884-2437

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature species: Red-eyed Vireo & Ovenbird

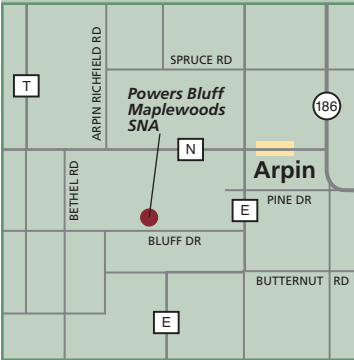
Rare species: Woodland vole & Least Flycatcher

Gazetteer: Page 63, D-8

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking area

Nearest food & lodging: Arpin or Marshfield



This property is perched atop a 300-foot-high hill of quartzite. A rich southern mesic forest of sugar maple, yellow birch, bitternut hickory, ash and basswood covers the slopes. In spring, the forest floor is carpeted with wildflowers and ferns including bloodroot, hepatica, blue cohosh, and violets. The area supports a spectacular display of large-flowered trillium. On the south end of the property, you'll find quartzite rock outcrops covered with columbine and ferns. Bird life includes warblers, flycatchers and other neotropical migrants. This 70-acre site has a hiking trail through part of it for further exploration.

MIKE MCDOWELL



Ovenbird

Directions: Located within Powers Bluff County Park. From Arpin, go south 1 mile on Cty E, then west 1.1 miles on Bluff Dr to the park entrance.

Sandhill State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/884-2437

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Ruffed Grouse, Bald Eagle & Trumpeter Swan, & Sandhill Crane

Rare Species: Red-headed Woodpecker

Gazetteer: Page 51, B-7

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking provided

Nearest food & lodging: Babcock or Pittsville

Fees: Donations accepted



Sandhill Wildlife Area was formerly a game farm developed by Wallace Grange for researching wildlife habitat restoration. His work focused on Sandhill Cranes and white-tailed deer. Grange conducted biological surveys and worked to restore this worn out land to pre-settlement conditions. Bobcats, badgers and many species of birds call this 9,150-acre area home. Flat marshy areas, wooded uplands, and old fields cover the property. The Sandhill Outdoor Skills Center hosts workshops and tours for the public. The Trumpeter Trail, a 14-mile auto or bike tour, takes you throughout the property. There are three observation decks, one that overlooks a bison range.

Directions: Visitor entrance located 1 mile west of Babcock via Cty X.

Wood County State Wildlife Area

Phone: 715/884-2437

Web: www.dnr.wi.gov

Signature Species: Ruffed and Sharp-tailed Grouse & Bald Eagle

Rare Species: Red-headed Woodpecker & Whooping Crane

Gazetteer: Page 51, B-7

Seasonality: Open all year

Parking: Parking provided

Nearest food & lodging: Babcock or Pittsville



The water-rich marshes of this 19,303-acre property attract many species of birds including herons, rails, waterfowl and songbirds. Visit the grasslands in summer for a chance look at a Karner Blue Butterfly, or explore the woodlands for warblers, orioles and tanagers. This property has a small population of Sharp-tailed Grouse that populate the grasslands. Roads allow you to travel the property by car or bike; take Amundsen Road through the cranberry bogs for a chance to see Whooping Cranes. Birders use this property all year 'round.

Directions: Located 1 mile southwest of Babcock via Cty X or Hwy 173.

GENE STAVIER



Bald Eagle

DOUG ALIT



Sandhill Wildlife Area.



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More Sources of Tourism Information

County Contacts

These contacts, in each of the seventeen counties in the Central Sands region, are ready to help you plan your outdoor adventure. They can suggest accommodations and restaurants, as well as attractions and other historical, cultural and environmental opportunities.

Adams County Chamber of Commerce & Tourism
608/339-6997, 888/339-6997
www.adamscountywi.com

Calumet County Tourism
920/849-1493, ext. 200
www.travelcalumet.com

Clark County Economic Development Corp.
715/267-3205, 888/252-7594
www.clark-cty-wi.org

Fond du Lac Area CVB
920/923-3010, 800/937-9123
www.fdl.com

Green Lake Visitors Center
800/662-6927
www.glcountry.com

Juneau County Visitors Bureau
608/847-1904
www.juneaucounty.com/tourism.asp

Wausau-Central Wisconsin CVB
715/355-8788, 888/948-4748
www.visitwausau.com

Montello Area Chamber of Commerce
608/297-7420, 800/684-7199
www.montellowi.com

Menominee Tribal Public Relations
715/799-5217
www.menominee-nsn.gov

Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce
608/269-4123, 800/354-2453
www.bikesparta.com

Fox Cities CVB
920/734-3358, 800/236-6673
www.foxcities.org

Stevens Point Area CVB
715/344-2556, 800/236-4636
www.stevenspointarea.com

Shawano Country Chamber of Commerce
715/524-2139, 800/235-8528
www.shawanocountry.com

Waupaca Area Chamber of Commerce
715/258-7343, 888/417-4040
www.waupacaareachamber.com

Waushara Area Chamber of Commerce
920/787-3488, 877/928-8662
www.visitwaushara.com

Oshkosh CVB
920/303-9200, 877/303-9200
www.oshkoshcvb.org

Wisconsin Rapids Area CVB
715/422-4650, 800/554-4484
www.visitwisrapids.com

More Birding Resources

National Audubon Society
800/542-2748
www.audubon.org/states/wi

Necedah National Wildlife Refuge
608/565-2551
<http://midwest.fws.gov/necedah>

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
608/266-2621
www.dnr.wi.gov

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Centers distribute free publications that detail Wisconsin accommodations, attractions, events, golfing, camping, biking, birding, state parks, and historic attractions. You can also order these free publications on-line at www.travelwisconsin.com, or call toll-free **800/432-8747**.



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www.aldoleopoldaudubon.org

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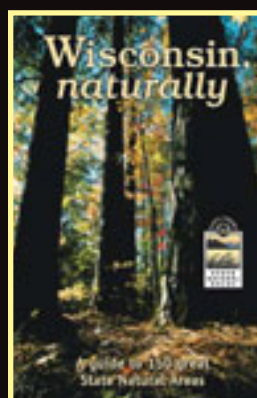
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April 2006

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