

A BIRDERS' GUIDE TO MISSOURI PUBLIC LANDS

LOST VALLEY FISH HATCHERY-UPDATED 12/16/08

Edge Wade: edgew AT mchsi.com

971 acres Benton Co. DeLorme 44, B-1

Directions: From US 65 one mile north of Warsaw, go east on Lost Valley Rd. about one-half mile to the gate, then north on Hatchery Ave. about one mile to the visitor center.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: The visitor center is open May 1 to Labor Day from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., 7 days a week. After Labor Day through April 30, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, except Thanksgiving and the day after, Christmas Eve and Day, and New Year's Eve and Day. The entrance gate may be closed when the visitor center is not open. Birders may park in the lot across the road from the gate and walk the hatchery area if the entrance gate is closed to vehicles.

Features of interest to birders: A surprising variety of easily-accessed habitats offer birders rewarding time spent exploring the hatchery grounds.

There are 61 one-acre ponds, 14 half-acre ponds, and 3 one-tenth acre ponds. These are polypropylene-lined, reducing their attractiveness for shorebirds. Birders may walk the levees separating these ponds.

Of special interest for birds and birders are the features other than the fish-rearing ponds. A borrow pit in the northern portion of the area is indicated as "Borrow Wetlands" (three-acres) on the map. Waterfowl can be expected in season. Toward the center of the area, on the east side of most of the ponds, are an ambient pond and three pollution control detention ponds. These are not lined, so provide a more natural attraction for birds.

On the east side of Hatchery Ave. are two glades (15 acres), one about a quarter mile from the entrance and the second about a half-mile in. Both have mown trails.

Three additional ponds offer possibilities. One is near the west boundary, accessed through grassland; two smaller ponds are near the second glade.

Grasslands and old fields (about 700 acres) and limited riparian woodland along Sterett Creek add to the variety of habitats and expected species.

Forest and woodland total about 250 acres. The east portion is forested and woods along the southeast boundary abut an arm of the Lake of the Ozarks.

An overlook along Hatchery Ave. provides a scope viewing point for the area.

There are no designated trails.

Toilets: 1 restroom in the visitor center

Camping: None

Hazards/Limitations: Gate closure to vehicles, requiring walk-in only access when the visitor center is closed, is an especially limiting factor for birding in early morning and evening. Hunters may be present east of Hatchery Ave.

Nearby Birding Sites: Harry S Truman SP, Harry S Truman Reservoir sites (including the dam and Corps of Engineers visitor center), Brickley Hollow Access, Edmonson Access