

A BIRDERS' GUIDE TO MISSOURI PUBLIC LANDS

BOIS D'ARC CONSERVATION AREA--UPDATED 7/15/2010

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3,172 acres Greene Co. DeLorme 51, G-10

MDC owned; for information call 417-895-6880

Directions: From Springfield, on I-44, go northwest on US 160 (exit 75) to Willard. From US 160 northwest of Willard, take Rt. UU south. The area may be entered from Rt. UU along FR 84 or FR 94. The area may be reached from the south by taking Rt. T north from I-44 at exit 67, going through the town of Bois D'Arc.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: Barn Owls have been seen here. March is a good time to look for waterfowl, especially Greater White-fronted, Snow and Ross's Geese on the cropland, and to find wintering Loggerhead Shrikes. A great variety of sparrows may be here, both in breeding season and wintering. Scissor-tailed Flycatchers are present in summer.

Several small ponds and low areas may attract American Woodcock. Green Heron are likely at the Aquatic Resource Education Pond on the west side of Rt. UU.

The potential for passerines in migration has not been explored well.

Features of interest to birders: A grid system of roads at one-mile intervals gives good access to this large area.

22 parking areas, including the one at the headquarters [maintenance facility, only] privy, give easy access to points of entry to walk the area, or provide birding from the lots.

The area has about a thousand acres in old fields, 1,200 acres in cropland, more than 600 acres in forest and woods, 200 acres of non-prairie grassland, about 80 acres of glade, and 10 acres of wetland.

Management for small game hunting includes long stretches of shrub hedgerows and fencerows attractive to many bird species. These run along the roads and many are accessible from parking lots. Check them for Bell's and White-eyed Vireos and Yellow-breasted Chats.

The 5-mile Osage Orange trail in the southeast part of the area (accessed from 2 parking lots on FR 94 on the south and 1 parking lot on FR 84 on the north) winds past woods, old fields, a glade and a couple of small ponds, providing a good sampling of the area habitats.

Toilets: Flush toilets in the Outdoor Education Center at the Andy Dalton Shooting Range off FR 61; 1 privy in parking lot at the headquarters (a maintenance facility, only) on FR 94, and a privy at the Aquatic Resource Education Pond on Rt. UU.

Camping: Special use permit required

Hazards/Limitations: Active shooting ranges (firearms and archery); special hunts (managed deer hunt and turkey hunting for people with disabilities during which the area is closed to all other activities); heavy hunting use, especially in the fall; beagle field trials; youth dove hunting; several sinkholes dot the area.

Nearby Birding Sites: Rocky Barrens Conservation Area, Little Sac Woods Conservation Area, Phenix Access