

A BIRDERS' GUIDE TO MISSOURI PUBLIC LANDS

LITTLE PRAIRIE CONSERVATION AREA--UPDATED 7/15/2010

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342 acres Phelps Co. DeLorme 47, F-6

MDC owned; for more information call 573-368-2225

Directions: From I-44 Exit 189 east of Rolla (Rt. U exit), take the outer road (north side of the interstate) going east. This is signed as Historic US 66. Turn left (north) onto Rt. RA. At .6 miles is the pull-in for Heilbrunn Prairie; .1 mile further, take a left onto Towell Lake Rd. to view the lake from the south side; .4 miles further on Rt. RA leads to the north side road and parking areas.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: Anytime, but the area is especially good for waterfowl (October through April), including the possibility of seeing all species of geese expected in Missouri. Common Loons, Eared, Horned and even Western Grebes may appear. Twelve species of raptors have been reported; 21 species of warblers have been seen in migration and during the breeding season.

Features of interest to birders: 4 parking lots (two on each side of the lake), plus a parking pull-in at Heilbrunn Prairie.

32-acre Heilbrunn Prairie is a native prairie with a straight line trail going west from the parking pull-in; a small pond is south of the trail.

95-acre Towell Lake may be viewed from several points along Towell Lake Rd. and from the 4 parking areas.

Although there are no designated trails, a mowed path for fishing access (1.1 miles) runs along the dam and the north side of the lake. It gives good access along the shoreline.

More than 3 miles of unofficial trail goes around the lake. Access points are from the south parking area, from Towell Lake Rd. at the corner of the dam, and from the entrance turn off RA (a.k.a. CR 2290 north of this point) on the north side of the lake. This is a long loop with no options for short cuts. It provides close views of the two arms at the west (upper) end of the lake, and goes through woods (about 98 acres), old fields about (95 acres), and along the dam at the east end.

Toilets: 3 privies (1 on south side of the lake, 2 on the north side)

Camping: None

Hazards/Limitations: None noted other than hunting seasons (archery only for deer)

Nearby Birding Sites: Schuman Park Lake (Rolla), Scioto Lake (James Foundation, St. James),

Meramec Spring Park and Merramec Spring Fish Hatchery, Woods (Woodson K.) Memorial Conservation Area