

## **A BIRDERS' GUIDE TO MISSOURI PUBLIC LANDS**

### **RANACKER CONSERVATION AREA**

Edge Wade

1,831 acres Pike Co. DeLorme 32, D-4

MDC owned; for additional information call 573-248-2530

Directions: The north end is reached from Rt. RA, west of US 61, three miles south of Frankford, (about eight miles north of US 54 at Bowling Green). Five parking areas are reached on this road.

There are two parking areas for access to the south portion. These can be reached from Rt. U off US 61 at McCune, then north and west on CR 48. The first lot is north of CR 48, about a mile on CR 50. To reach the second lot, stay on CR 48 a mile west beyond the CR 50 intersection.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: Penno Creek is lauded as one of the most natural left in northeast Missouri. It flows near the first parking lot encountered from RA. A while spent along it is sure to turn up a mixed feeding flock.

The physical situation of Ranacker CA, that is, its location at the point where river hills meet the prairie, means ideal conditions for spring migration bonanzas. Early May is a great time to explore it for warblers, thrushes and vireos.

There is a good year-round population of woodpeckers. Summer brings a variety of flycatchers. Wintering sparrows are found fairly easily.

This area should entertain birders well in any season. As of early 2012, it has not been birded often enough to provide a well-rounded checklist, but the potential for a big list is certainly there.

Features of interest to birders: The area is mostly forest, with limited areas of cropland, grasses and old fields.

Narrow valleys can be accessed by several trails (no loops) extending from some of the parking lots.

Toilets: 3 privies

Camping: Primitive camping is allowed on and adjacent to all lots except the one at the shooting range. Walk-in camping is allowed except during firearms deer and turkey seasons.

Hazards/Limitations: Shooting range

Nearby Birding Sites: Ted Shanks CA, DuPont Reservation CA, Anderson (Edward) CA, Vandalia Community Lake, Bowling Green Jack Floyd Mem. Lake