

WASHINGTON STATE PARK

Pat Lueders, 2017

Washington Co. 2,157.57 acres DeLorme 28, 4-E

GPS: 38.0855809,-90.675313

DNR owned; see Missouri State Parks website

Washington State Park is an eBird hotspot, 128 species.

Park development began in the early 1930s, with the work of Company 1743, an African-American company of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Their stonework is visible throughout in buildings, on trails and roadsides.

Directions: The park is in the central eastern part of the state one hour south of St. Louis on Hwy. 21, about 14 miles northeast of Potosi, five miles south of De Soto. Gas is available at the park entrance.

ADA Information: Rugged terrain can be expected on all trails. Birders with limited walking ability will find reasonably good birding from parking lots and near picnic shelters and the boat launch. The campground roads allow birding with a minimum traffic flow.

When to Visit/Species to Expect:

Spring: A variety of thrushes and warblers have been sighted during migration including: American Redstart, Black-and-white, Tennessee, Nashville, Blackpoll, Chestnut-sided, and Black-Throated Green Warbler, and Swainson's and Gray-cheeked Thrush.

Summer: Washington State Park has a wide variety of habitats including native hardwood forest, limestone glades, savannas, and gravel access to the Big River. This variety provides nesting opportunities for both residents and summer breeders. Nesting warblers are abundant and include Ovenbird, Kentucky, Prairie, Worm-eating, Blue-winged, Prothonotary, Yellow, and Yellow-throated, Warblers, Louisiana Waterthrush, Northern Parula, Common Yellowthroat, and Yellow-breasted Chat.

Additional nesting migrants include Acadian Flycatchers, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Wood Thrush, Baltimore and Orchard Oriole, Eastern Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Indigo Bunting, Blue Grosbeak, Summer and Scarlet Tanager, Song, Field and Chipping Sparrow, Belted Kingfisher, and Eastern Towhee.

Features of interest to birders: There are three trails that provide access to different habitats, including the Washington State Park Hardwood Natural Area;

all rated rugged. 1000 Steps Trail is 1.5 miles; Opossum Track Trail is 2.5 miles; and, Rockywood Trail is 6 miles.

Shaded picnic areas are available. Natural points of interest include petroglyphs, dolomite cliffs, and quaint rock shelters.

Toilets: Numerous clean restroom facilities are placed throughout the park.

Camping: Tent, RV, and 1,2, & 3 bedroom cabins. There is a large swimming pool for registered campers.

Hazards/Limitations: Some trails are rocky and slippery when wet.

Nearby Birding Sites: St. Joe State Park*, St. Francois SP*, Pea Ridge CA.