

BOLLINGER MILL STATE HISTORIC SITE

Mark Haas, 2022

44 acres, Cape Girardeau Co., DeLorme 58, F2

GPS: 37.3669, -89.8022

DNR owned. For information, call 573-243-4591

Directions: From Jackson, take Highway 34 west 6.5 miles to Highway HH. Turn left (south) and go 0.4 miles to the site.

ADA Information: Birding by vehicle is quite limited on this small site. Woodland birds might be seen and heard in the single gravel parking lot located in a riparian zone. There is one accessible vault toilet.

When to visit/species to expect: This site is named for George Bollinger, who built the mill and dam on Whitewater River in the early 1800s. Unfortunately, the mill pond is bordered by private land and difficult to access. There is a quarter mile of DNR-owned riverbank on both sides downstream of the dam. Still, few of the 140 species reported here are waterfowl or shorebirds. This is a birding site mainly for woodland birds.

Expect most of the resident woodpeckers year-round and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in winter. Also in winter, look for Hermit Thrush, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Brown Creeper, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. Fox Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and Field Sparrow are among the winter sparrows you might see—in the few odd corners with brushy habitat. Of the 27 warblers seen here, most have been reported during spring migration. The same is true for migrant thrushes and vireos.

In summer, expect Wood Thrush, Summer Tanager, and all of the common woodland vireos and flycatchers. Also, you'll have a good chance for Northern Parula, Kentucky Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Yellow-throated Warbler. Among the year-round residents are Eastern Phoebe and Red-shouldered Hawk.

The riverbanks often grow lush with giant ragweed. You may often see double-digit numbers of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks feeding there during fall migration, late September to early October.

Features of interest to birders: Be sure to walk across the Civil War-era Burfordville Covered Bridge, the oldest and largest of the four remaining covered bridges in the state. Then walk a short distance on CR 360 to the site boundary, turn right, and walk the border between the private ag field and the brushy/wooded DNR land down to the river. This is a good spot for Fox Sparrow on one side and open-land birds and raptors on the other.

Back on the other side of the river, search the tall trees around the picnic and parking area. Walk to the narrow point of land where a small stream empties into the Whitewater and scan for kingfishers, Great Blue Herons, and Wood Ducks. No vehicles are allowed beyond the bridge that crosses the small creek. But continue walking on the service road. It takes you a short distance through prime riparian woods before ending at a gate for private land. The other good option after crossing the bridge is to veer right into a small clearing in the woods. This spot is often "warbler central" in spring. Continue across the clearing to a short trail (steep and rough) that takes you through the best woodland on the historic site and up to a ridge-top cemetery where many of the Bollinger family are buried.

From the parking lot and privy, another good option is to follow the small creek to a wooded field edge. Stop to check the scattered trees. Then go around that edge into a rectangular grassy field bordered by woods on three sides. You may often get a surprise on that route, such as a Winter Wren in season. From there, continue across Hwy HH to the DNR maintenance buildings, where you can

walk behind to the site boundary and view pasture and hay fields for more open-land birds like Northern Harrier or Eastern Kingbird. Birding behind the area headquarters may also occasionally yield an unexpected bird. Be sure to respect private land near DNR buildings.

If you want to divert yourself into some history, the mill is often open to the public for self-guided tours and displays with artifacts of the milling operation.

Picnic Areas: One.

Toilets: One accessible vault toilet near the picnic area.

Camping: Prohibited.

Hazards/Limitations: Private land and homes are mixed with DNR property, so be considerate of neighbors and careful to avoid trespass.

Nearby Birding Sites: Lake Girardeau CA, Maintz Wildlife Preserve, Old Plantation Access, Block Hole Access.

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