

COLUMBIA AUDUBON NATURE SANCTUARY

Bill Mees, spring 2017

28 acres Boone Co. DeLorme 37, A/B-10

GPS: 38.9423121,-92.3929038

3607 Bray Avenue, Columbia MO

Owned and maintained by Columbia Audubon Society



This site is on The Great Missouri Birding Trail, <http://greatmissouribirdingtrail.com/Wordpress/>

The eBird website has this “hotspot” designated as Columbia Audubon/Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary.

Directions: From I-70 in Columbia, take the Stadium Blvd. Exit (124) south 1 mile to a right onto Broadway. Go 0.4 mile to the first traffic light, turn left onto Fairview Road and go 1 mile to a right on Bray Avenue, then 0.4 mile to a right onto Cunningham Road for a short block straight into the area parking lot.

The trailhead kiosk, visible from the parking lot, offers maps, natural history-focused postings, the area’s bird checklists, and recently identified species submitted to eBird.



ADA Information: Leading from the parking lot on the south side of the property is the 8-foot wide concrete Scott’s Branch Trail. Going west from the lot, it runs past the prairie, a wooded area, and leads down to a boardwalk overlooking Scott’s Branch Creek (about 0.25 miles). Trails within the site are narrow natural surface and traverse area hills. There are 11 benches along the natural surface trails.

Features of interest to birders: Visitors are greeted with views of a re-established Missouri prairie (planted in January 2016). Trails go through gentle hills of grassland and mixed species woods that feature the state champion American Hornbeam and several

massive old growth White Oaks. Scott's Branch Creek and a small spring add an aquatic element.

The ability to experience Missouri's nature has benefitted from the removal of bush honeysuckle as part of an ongoing volunteer effort to remove invasive exotics from the sanctuary. The area's accessibility has been enhanced courtesy of Boy Scout projects, most notably trail markers, benches, and 3 bridges. Readily visible bluebird nest boxes are another Boy Scout project. Nesting success is monitored and recorded by Audubon volunteers.



Two trails looping through the area provide options as to distance to walk and habitats to experience. The .56 mile long east loop trail begins just north of the parking lot. There is a cut-off leading up from the creek that may be taken to shorten the walk.

Spurs from the loop trails lead to the concrete Scott's Branch Trail and into the city-owned Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary. The .5-mile west loop is connected to the east loop at the bridge across Scott's Branch near the north end of the property.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: Anytime is good. Visitors have identified 146 bird species in the area. This 28-acre natural area and the adjacent city-owned 90-acre Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary provide nesting habitat for resident species and have the potential of attracting a good spectrum of migrants, as these acres are nature's island of green within the city limits.

Spring migration brings numerous Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets, Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes, and American Woodcock. Olive-sided, Yellow-bellied, and Least Flycatchers should be watched and listened for. The bird checklist is proof that a wide variety of warblers can be expected during migration. One need only to look up and scan the tree tops for these travelers.

Many Northern Parula, Kentucky Warblers and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers will establish nests, joining the resident Black-capped Chickadees, Tufted Titmice and White-breasted Nuthatch. Both Red-eyed and White-eyed Vireos are usual nesters, as is Summer Tanager.

Summer regulars include Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift and Ruby-throated Hummingbird. All Missouri resident species of woodpecker are here. Species of flycatchers nesting within the sanctuary are Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Great-crested and Acadian Flycatcher. The Acadian Flycatcher seems to prefer the area along a section of the trail shortly after entering the woods at the trailhead.

Fall migration records show a near mirror image of spring visitors, including Blue-headed and Philadelphia Vireos.

Winter welcomes Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, more Red-headed Woodpeckers and Northern Flickers, and additions to the resident populations of Red-bellied, Downy, Hairy and Pileated Woodpeckers.

Keep an open eye for Winter Wren, Swamp Sparrow, and Rusty Blackbird near the creek and spring. The Red-headed Woodpeckers are often sighted in the woods near the trailhead and along the concrete Scott's Branch Trail near the boardwalk.

Raptors are regularly seen overhead, especially Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks and Turkey Vultures. Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks are frequently seen. Mississippi Kites may be found some summers. Broad-winged Hawks and Northern Harriers have been seen in migration. Although not often seen, but not infrequently heard, are Barred Owl and for 2 years (2016 & 2017) nesting Great Horned Owls.

Toilets: None

Camping: None allowed

Hazards/Limitations: The area is closed to dogs and bicycles except on the concrete trail.

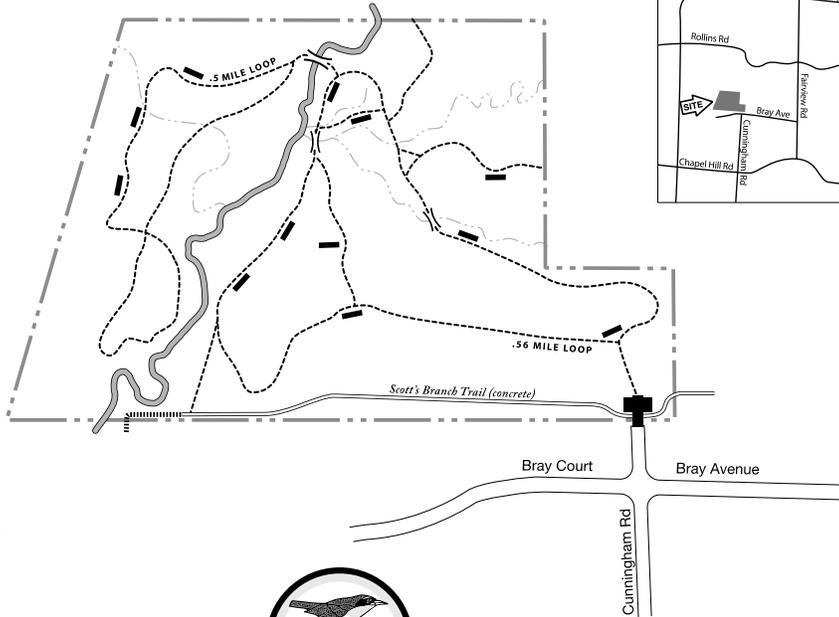
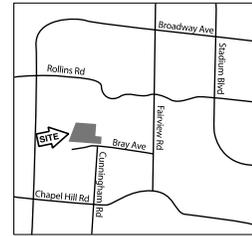
Nearby Birding Sites: Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, Eagle Bluffs CA.

Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary

3607 Bray Avenue, Columbia, MO

28 ACRES

VICINITY MAP



LEGEND

- Boundary
- Trail
- Concrete
- Boardwalk
- Stream
- Drainage
- Foot Bridge
- Bench
- Parking Lot

DISTANCE

- East trail loop = .56 miles
- West trail loop = .5 miles



Thanks to Aaron Oleson for helping develop this map and placing trail markers as his Eagle Scout project.
Revised 3/24/2017