

ECHO BLUFF STATE PARK

Edge Wade, 2017

330 acres Shannon Co. DeLorme 55, G-8

GPS: 37.31628,-91.413127

34489 Echo Bluff Drive

Eminence, MO 65466

DNR owned; echobluffstatepark.com; call 573-751-5211 for information

Office hours 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. daily, year-round

Echo Bluff State Park is within the Current/Jack's Fork Watershed Important Bird Area. See <http://www.audubon.org/important-bird-areas/current-jacks-fork-watershed-45> for a description.

Directions: From Salem at the intersection of MO 32 and MO 19, go south on MO 19 for approximately 28 miles (1.5 miles past the entrance to Current River SP) to the well-marked main entrance on the left (east) at Echo Bluff Dr. Note that CR 19-250, about a mile further south on MO 19, is the southern end of horseshoe-shaped of Echo Bluff Dr., and may be used as a southern entrance to the park.

From Eminence, go approximately 16 miles north on MO 19 to the well-marked main entrance on the right.

The best map for this park is in the park brochure, available at Betty Lea Lodge. The hiking and mountain bike trail map (Painter Ridge Trail) is available for downloading on the park website.

The park opened in 2016 on the site of Camp Zoe that operated as an all-girls, then co-ed, camp from 1929 through the summer of 1986. The stables and old camp lodge remain as man-made features from the camp era. Echo Bluff and Sinking Creek below it are among the few physical features left unaltered in the development of the park.

Many visitors will find Echo Bluff SP a delightful way to experience the Current River country without forgoing the comforts of home. For others, this park will be like dipping a toe in the clear, spring-fed streams without ever experiencing the delights of an invigorating swim on a hot summer day. Birders can find birds here, especially if able to hike the trails, but a quiet bird walk may be a challenge.

ADA Information: The expanses of concrete road surface, two miles of concrete walkways, the central area near Betty Lea Lodge, and parking areas and campground provide solid footing and some access to birds by automobile. The area around the bluff top overlook is easily accessible. The trails are rated

moderate to rugged, and are not recommended for people with balance or walking difficulties.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: Season, time of day and portions walked will be especially important for good birding here. The park is so new that few checklists have been submitted to eBird. At this writing, fewer than 100 species have been recorded. All but three trips have been in spring and summer.

In late spring and summer, expect Scarlet and Summer Tanagers, Orchard Oriole, and a good number of warblers in migration and nesting, Cerulean is among them.

Swainson's and Gray-cheeked Thrush have been seen in May. Chuck-will's-widows have been heard at dusk in June from the lodge deck and along the main road. Black Vultures may be seen, as well as the expected Turkey Vulture. Both Fish and American Crow occur (listen carefully and in early summer expect immature American Crows to give a single-note nasal call). Wild Turkey has been reported at least three times from the glade-like area along the entrance road.

March reports include Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets and Hermit Thrush, as well as the resident species typical of the Ozark region.

Wintering sparrows reported are American Tree, Fox, White-throated and Dark-eyed Junco.

Features of interest to birders: Portions of the moderate to rugged 4.23 mile Painter Ridge Trail (much designed for mountain bike enthusiasts) and/or a section of the rugged Current River Trail give access to dolomite-based forests and the birds that seek the habitat niches within.

The open, concrete dominated areas permit easy access to mostly ridge top, disturbed habitats with a fair number of species such as Barn Swallow, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Red-winged Blackbird and Common Grackle.

The short portion of road from the main entrance to the road down to the Bluff Top Pavilion has good woody habitat on the west side. Beware of traffic and pull off completely if you decide to bird it on foot. The road to the pavilion has good potential for woodland species. Take the same precautions if birding it afoot. The lot and area near the pavilion and the trail from there are especially good for passerines, but don't limit your birding to that area.

Just above the pavilion parking lot is a service road off to the right (southwest) leading to an open area with brush piles around it. Watch for sparrows here in winter and summer.

The gravel portion of CR 250 near the southeast corner of the park may provide some good birding with little or no disturbance from autos. Your car can be left at the trailhead parking lot at the junction of this road and Echo Bluff Drive.

Toilets: Flush toilets in the lodge, creekside day-use area, near the bluff top pavilion, and Timbuktu Campground.

Camping: Timbuktu Campground has 60 full-service sites and 12 walk-in tent sites. See the park website for additional information.

Hazards/Limitations: Heavy human presence in warm weather, moderate to rugged trails.

Nearby Birding Sites: Current River SP*, Montauk SP, Ozark National Scenic Riverways (along Current River, Alley Spring, Round Spring, etc.), Blue Spring Natural Area*, Buttin Rock Access* and Chilton Landing* (both at Eminence), Rocky Creek CA (woodland restoration project unit)*.

*Indicates Birders' Guide available when this guide was written. See <http://www.mobirds.org/Locations/SiteGuides.aspx> for these and additional guides.

- Gravel road
- Sidewalk
- Land contour
- Not state park property
- Stream or creek
- Trail
- Trail connector
- Water
- Ozark National Scenic Riverways
- Cabin
- Cabin / Lodging
- ▲ Camping
- Store
- ▲ Hiking trail
- ▲ Mountain biking trail
- ▲ Backpacking trail
- ▲ Picnicking
- ▲ Accessibility
- ▲ Amphitheater
- ▲ Cemetery
- ▲ Dining
- ▲ Dump station
- ▲ Fishing
- ▲ Overlook
- ▲ Park office
- ▲ Parking
- ▲ Picnic shelter
- ▲ Playground
- ▲ Restroom
- ▲ Shower
- ▲ Special-use area
- ▲ Spring
- ▲ Swimming
- ▲ Telephone
- ▲ TH Trailhead
- ▲ VT Vault toilet
- ▲ Water
- ▲ Wi-Fi
- ▲ Woodlot

