

KENDZORA CONSERVATION AREA

Sherry Leonardo and Laura Robinson, October 2019

746 Acres, Buchanan and Platte Counties. DeLorme 26, B-5

GPS: 39°32'00.1"N 94°38'44.3"W

MDC owned; for more information call (816) 858-5718

Directions: From Kansas City take US 169 north about 27 miles from downtown airport, turn left onto SW State Highway Z. After 3.7 miles, turn right onto N. Platte Ave/ Union Mill Rd. Go past homes and enter CA. Restroom and gas are available in Trimble on US 169.

ADA Information: Not wheelchair accessible.

When to visit/ Species to expect: Spring and fall migrations for passerines and waterfowl. This is a conservation area that is not visited much and birders often have the area to themselves, unless it's hunting season. Since the road is a throughway, there is traffic, but very sparse.

Features of interest to birders: The land donated by Anthony and Beatrice Kendzora comprises wet and dry woodland in 200 acres of bottomland and 300 acres timber, 190 acres grassland, wetlands, a small lake, the Platte River, and some fallow cropland, which can be good for shorebirds after rain.

Birders can walk along levees to get behind ponds managed for duck hunting. Surrounding farm roads to the north are good for sparrows and grassland birds. Water levels vary due to management and weather.

The best way to bird is to come from the south and work north. Just past Edgerton homes are low-lying woods to the left/west and higher, drier woods to the right/east. Both sides are good for birds such as woodpeckers, warblers and vireos. As water levels are managed and weather dependent, low-lying areas may be swampy.

Park in the designated lot on the right. Across the road is access to a levee trail, which is usually maintained. It can be walked for about ¾ mile but does not loop. On the left are woods and river and on the right are ponds. At the entrance, look for a Yellow-Billed Cuckoo pair and Prothonotary Warblers, Yellow Warblers, Common Yellowthroat and woodland species like vireos. Along the ponds: egrets, Great Blue and Green Heron, kingfishers, ducks, eagles and hawks may be present. Be sure to look for night-herons. Often seen are beaver and muskrat.

Starting from the parking lot, take the trail northeast and stay to the right to get to the lake. It's about 1/2 mile to the lake and does not loop. Here, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pileated, Downy and other woodpeckers may be seen, along with towhees, orioles, sparrows, Summer Tanager, Dickcissel and Blue Grosbeaks.

The next parking stop is the gate on the left, about midway between the two designated parking lots on the MDC map, across from the spillway area. (About ¼ mile from first parking area.) This is the lowest point and may be inaccessible during heavy rain events.

Park at the edge of the gate, do not block it. Behind the gate, walk slowly atop the levee, which is usually maintained, eventually veering right. Access along the levee is about ½ mile and does not loop. Here is where American Pipit, swallows, ducks, geese, warblers, kingfisher, Merlin, eagles and cormorants have been seen. Teal, grebes, blackbirds, catbirds and Red-Shouldered Hawks are regulars. Look for Snipe; also Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers.

Across the road is the spillway, which often has Wood Ducks and the occasional Northern Waterthrush. Along the road on the lake/northeast side is good, sloped woodland, but there is a gully, which often has water so there is little access to the slope. At one point, there is a small bridge to get across, but it is usually inaccessible due to lack of maintenance.

Pond edges along the road are often loaded with Prothonotary and Yellow Warblers along with Northern Parulas. Keep an eye out for occasional Swamp Sparrows.

Next, stop at the far end of the main road, just before it turns north. There is space to park on the left/pond side. The ponds end and fallow fields begin. If there is shallow water in the fields there may be Yellowlegs and Killdeer and Sandpiper. This has been good for sparrows, Blue Grosbeak and raptors.

Back in the car, turn north along N. Platte Ave./ Union Mill Road. It becomes 361 at this point. There is another parking area, on the left, with the Kendzora sign, but this area is usually not mowed, so it's bush whacking and not worth the stop. Continue by car (there are farm dogs) and bird slowly to check for Grasshopper and other sparrow species along the way, especially the fencerows. Nearing the corner, stay aware for Bobolink, then Northern Bobwhite, Eastern Bluebird and Lark Sparrow. Continue birding for grassland birds as the road veers right to become SE West Rd.

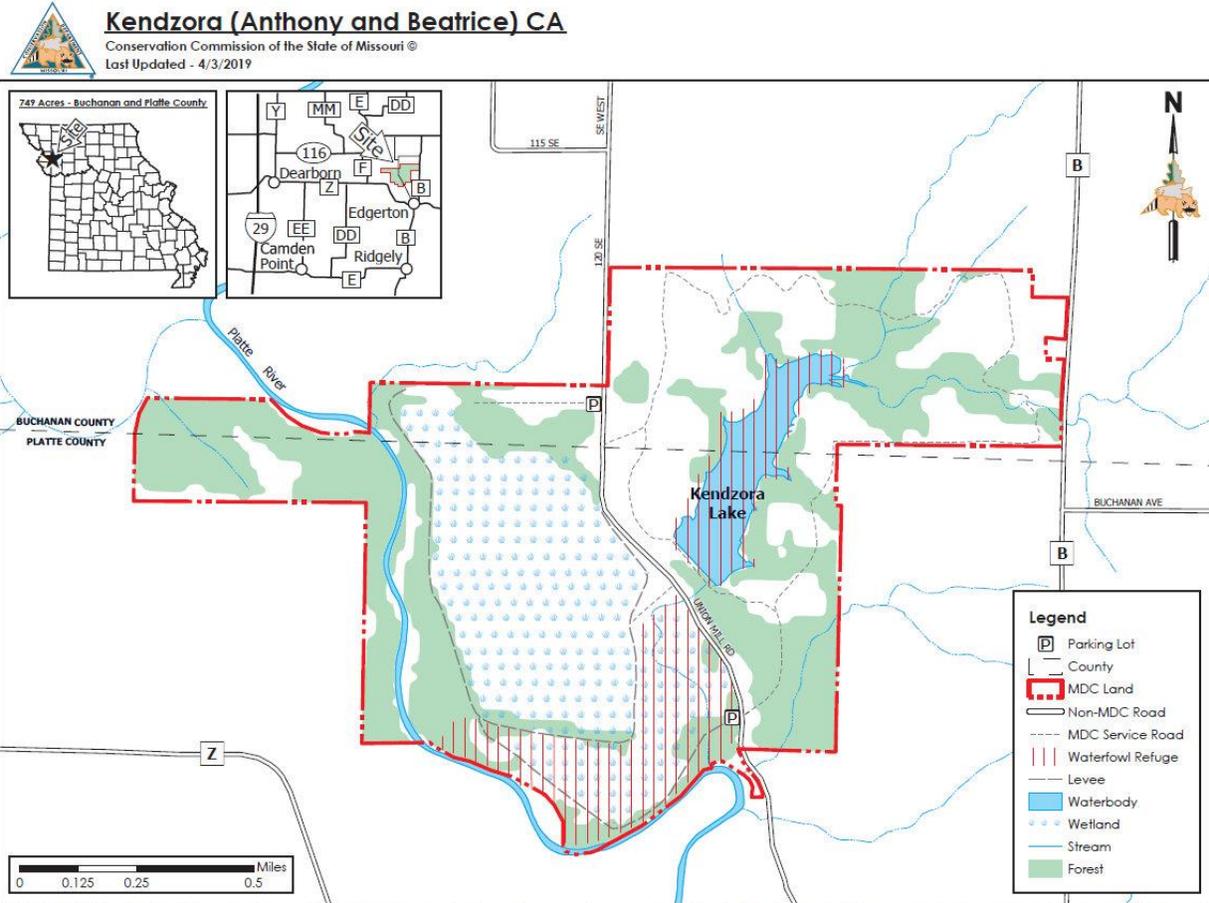
Birding ends at intersection of N. County Rd. B. Take a right and head back to Edgerton. While there is a restaurant in Edgerton, it's recommended to bring snacks/lunch or head to Plattsburg or Smithville. There is an excellent butcher shop in Trimble called Paradise Locker Meats, well worth the side trip.

Toilets: None.

Camping: None

Hazards/Limitations: During heavy rain events, N. Platte Ave./Union Mill Road through the CA may be inaccessible.

Nearby birding sites: Smithville Lake or Hartell CA and McGee CA, both near Plattsburg.



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