

A BIRDERS' GUIDE TO MISSOURI PUBLIC LANDS

WHETSTONE CREEK CONSERVATION AREA--Updated: 8/16/2008

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5147 acres, Callaway Co., DeLorme 38, A-5

Directions: From I-70 Exit #161 (Williamsburg), take Rt. D north to the stop sign. Turn west (left) and continue on Rt. D to CR 1003 (just past elementary school). Turn north (right). Go north 2 miles on CR 1003 to the entrance. Note: CR 1005 runs along the east side of the area; CR 1002 goes along the north, and Rt. EE along the north and east sides.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: Easy access to a variety of habitats make spring and fall migration visits good opportunities for passerines typically found in those periods in central Missouri. Fall and winter visits may produce a variety of waterfowl (bring a scope for the larger bodies).

Features of interest to birders: 7 parking areas are along the gravel road extending from CR 1003 (including a short stub north of the birdy Y intersection near the entrance) give good access to the western portion of the area that includes four of the larger lakes. A short hike is necessary to scope Windy Lake. The upper end of Big Lake may be viewed from the dam of Windy Lake.

North Lake is reached from CR 1002 at the area's northwest corner.

About half the area is forested. The other half includes some savanna and much grassland (more than 1,600 acres of non-prairie (mostly fescue). Five miles of Whetstone Creek frontage provides riparian habitat, but access is from paths not near parking areas.

There are no designated trails, but several paths meander through the area and most of the several lakes/ponds are easily viewed from a parking area or may be explored more closely on a very short walk.

The largest impoundments are: Big Lake, 24.8 acres (boat ramp for viewing); Windy Lake, 15 acres; North Lake, 6.4; South Lake, 2.2 acres; Horseshoe Lake, 5.9 acres; Turtle Rock Lake, 1.4 acres; Buffalo Lake, 2.0 acres.

Toilets: 6 pit toilets

Camping: 2 camping areas near Big Lake

Hazards/Limitations: Horse and dog field trials and training, and a shooting range (on the east side) are among activities that may conflict with birding.

Nearby Birding Sites: Loutre Lick Access, Diggs (Marshall I.) CA, McCredie Farm Lake