

## LAKE GIRARDEAU CONSERVATION AREA

Mark Haas, 2022

350 acres, Cape Girardeau Co., DeLorme 58, G1

GPS: 37.2818, -89.8456

MDC owned. For information, call 573-290-5730

**Directions:** From Jackson, take Highway 34 west eight miles to Highway U. Go six miles south to Crump and take Hwy RA one mile into area.

**ADA Information:** The best birding by vehicle is on the entrance road to the boat ramp, in the campground, along Highway RA, and on the short entrance to the east fishing dock. Accessible fishing docks on the west and east ends of the lake provide good views of the water. There are accessible vault toilets near each of these docks. There is an accessible picnic pavilion at the west end of the lake.

**When to visit/species to expect:** The area is named for this 162-acre lake. The shoreline is mostly wooded and steep-sided, so few of the 167 species reported here are shorebirds. Fifteen duck species have been seen here, mainly during fall and spring migration. Dabblers will make brief stops, but not stay for long. Expect most of the resident woodpeckers year-round and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in winter. Also in winter, look for Hermit Thrush, Winter Wren, kinglets, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. Fox Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and Field Sparrow are among the winter sparrows you might see. Of the 22 warblers seen here, most have been reported during spring migration.

In summer, expect Wood Thrush, Summer Tanager, and all of the common woodland vireos and flycatchers. Also, you'll have a good chance for Prothonotary Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Yellow-throated Warbler. Among the year-round residents are Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Towhee, and Bald Eagle (which often perch on the wooded shoreline across from boat ramp).

**Features of interest to birders:** It always pays to scan the lake for ducks or waders in season. The courtesy dock right next to the boat ramp is an excellent spot to set up your spotting scope. The fishing dock on the east side of the lake will give you another perspective on the water.

The entrance road goes a short distance with woods on both sides, brushy areas, and then loops through the open ground near the boat ramp, picnic area, and fishing dock. Off this loop is the campground spur, which is one of the best spots for woodland birds on the conservation area.

A quarter mile south of the entrance on RA is a pulloff for a service road. There is space to park at the gate without blocking the road. Here you can walk through woods and onto the dam. Cross the dam for some good brushy habitat on the east end. At that point you can drop down on a rough service road that takes you through second growth woodlands and old fields, ending at the east boundary line.

At the southwest corner of the area, on CR 387, is a small pond surrounded by trees and brush. It is always worth checking. And while there, you can scan for open-land birds on the big private ag field to the west. The south boundary of the area is a brushy woodland edge that you can bird by carefully walking along Hwy RA. Leaving the area, check out the entrance road (off Highway U), to the east fishing dock. A stand of pines borders this road and there are pines on private land across the highway.

**Picnic Areas:** One, with accessible picnic tables under a pavilion.

**Toilets:** Three accessible vault toilets. Two near fishing docks and one near campground.

**Camping:** There is a primitive camping area with picnic tables, grills, and lantern posts on 11 campsites.

**Hazards/Limitations:** The lake can often be busy with fishermen. Waterfowl hunting is prohibited and deer hunting is by archery methods only.

**Nearby Birding Sites:** Bollinger Mill SHS, Maintz Wildlife Preserve, Old Plantation Access, Block Hole Access.

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CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY  
350 ACRES



