

## **PAWNEE PRAIRIE NATURAL AREA**

Edge Wade, 2017

476 acres Harrison Co. DeLorme 14, F-4

GPS: 40.519729,-94.147709

MDC owned, agreement; for information call 660-646-6122

This site is within the National Audubon Society's Grand River Grasslands Important Bird Area (map below), and is on the Great Missouri Birding Trail. The northeast corner of the MDC land is adjacent to The Nature Conservancy's 434-acre Pawnee Prairie.

**Directions:** From I-35 at Eagleville, go west into town, then north on US 69 for 3.2 miles to a left turn (west) onto MO 46. Go west about 9 miles to Hatfield, to a left (south) turn onto 140<sup>th</sup> Ave. for .5 mile to the parking lot on the left.

**ADA Information:** There are no facilities. Wide, mown, natural surface pathways transverse the area.

**When to Visit/Species to Expect:** Late May into early July is generally considered to be the optimum period to bird here. Henslow's, Grasshopper, Field and Song Sparrow and Bobolink can be expected, as well as the ubiquitous Dickcissel and Red-winged Blackbird. Western Meadowlarks are often present into early June; listen carefully. Sedge Wrens are known to come here for their second nesting in late July and August, but are also present in mid-late June.

Summer records include Green Heron, Upland Sandpiper, Loggerhead Shrike, Northern Harrier, Bell's, Warbling and Red-eyed Vireo, and Orchard and Baltimore Oriole. Ring-necked Pheasant may be seen or heard. Keep an eye out for Greater Prairie-Chicken, but do not expect them. Willow Flycatcher is likely near the large pond.

Records for August through February are very scant. They show the possibility of seeing Horned Lark. American Tree, Clay-colored, Fox, Savanna, Lincoln's and Swamp Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos pass through, some possibly winter here. Short-eared Owl may be present.

March and early April are good times to seek Smith's Longspur here. Rough-legged Hawk may be seen.

**Features of interest to birders:** This area and the adjacent Nature Conservancy property compose the largest holding of remnant tallgrass prairie in northern Missouri other than The Nature Conservancy's 3,680-acre Dunn Ranch Preserve about a mile away.

None of this area has ever been plowed. Most of this rolling terrain (about 400 acres) is considered degraded prairie, largely due to cattle overgrazing. Ongoing restoration practices include prescribed fire and controlled cattle grazing.

In summer, even the most ardent birder is likely occasionally to focus attention on a striking representative of the grand array of prairie wildflowers present.

From the small parking lot on the west side, a wide, mown pathway (field road) leads into the prairie. This is not a loop trail. Branches of pathways allow exploration of differing portions. The center of the area is worth the walk to experience the 74 acres of high-quality prairie with the greatest diversity of plants and birds.

There are three small willow-lined ponds (totaling 2 acres). The first is easily viewed from the pathway not far from the parking lot.

**Toilets:** None

**Camping:** None

**Hazards/Limitations:** Prepare for an extended time with no shade. Ticks may be encountered. Strong wind may interfere with hearing grassland species.

**Nearby Birding Sites:** Lott's Creek CA\*, Dunn Ranch, Emmett and Leah Seat Mem. CA, Grand Trace CA\*, Worth County Community Lake\*, Sowards Ford Access.\*

See <http://www.mobirds.org/Locations/SiteGuides.aspx> for these and additional guides.

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HARRISON COUNTY  
476 ACRES

