

STEYERMARK (JULIAN) WOODS CONSERVATION AREA

Edge Wade, summer 2015

72.42 acres Marion Co. DeLorme 25, H-8

GPS: 39.739594,-91.388532

MDC owned; for more information call 573-248-2530

Directions: From US 61 in central Hannibal, take Hwy.168 north, then CR 410 east 1 mile to a pull-off parking area on the right.

The area is named for St. Louis native, botanist Dr. Julian A. Steyermark. He collected more than 130,000 plants in 26 countries (and a place in the Guinness Book of Records for the effort). His three-volume "Flora of Missouri," 1963, describing 2,400 plants is the "go to" reference for Missouri botanists and serious wildflower enthusiasts.

ADA Information: The one-mile trail is not paved, and is steep in many places.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: The 64-species checklist is the product of only ten birding visits, most in April and May. Warblers are fairly well represented with 13 species. This rich environment is surely a good migratory stopover for several more. Vireo sightings include White-eyed, Yellow-throated, Philadelphia and Red-eyed. The limited flycatcher list is due to the lack of birding trips in the appropriate season, not lack of birds. Winter birding here would turn up some good sparrow numbers and variety.

Features of interest to birders: The area is Mississippi river hills forest and woodland with a better-than-usual diversity because it was not covered by glacier, so has a mix of plants found further north and those more consistent with other parts of Missouri. The mature woodland includes sugar maple, basswood, Kentucky coffee tree, blue ash and black walnut. The understory has paw paw, bladdernut and ironwood. The forest floor is open in many places. All of this adds up to excellent habitat for a wide variety of birds.

The one-mile loop trail traverses the southern portion with good elevation changes (creek bottom to hilltop and back) and a stretch through restored forest.

Toilets: None

Camping: With special use permit only

Hazards/Limitations: None other than some steep sections of trail. Because the site is within Hannibal city limits, there is no hunting in any season.

Nearby Birding Sites: Ray (J Thad) Memorial Wildlife Area, Riverview Park (Hannibal), Fabius Chute Access, Dupont Reservation CA, Ted Shanks CA.

