

Birding Guide to
Red Rock Landing Conservation Area

Allen Gathman, Fall 2021

559.6 Acres, Perry Co. DeLorme 58, A-3

GPS: 37.7459, -89.6719

MDC owned: for additional information call (573) 290-5730 or see web site at
<https://mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/places/red-rock-landing-conservation-area>

Directions: From I-55, take exit 135 at Brewer, following State Highway M ½ mile east to US-61. Take US-61 south through Perryville to State Hwy P. Drive east on highway P to the intersection with State Highway C at Crosstown; turn left (north) on C, then right (east) on Perry County Road 350. Follow PCR 350 about 4 miles, where it ends at the entrance to the conservation area.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: The area offers considerable diversity. During spring and fall migration, warblers can be plentiful, and 23 species have been reported to date. In winter, numerous sparrow species have been reported. Waders, some shorebirds, and some migrating waterfowl can be found on the river and in the wetland area.

Features of Interest to Birders: This area can be birded in ways ranging from the sedentary to the adventurous, depending on individual preference. The majority of the area is hardwood forest, but other habitats include an intermittent wetland, several ponds including some natural sinkholes, a rocky glade, a mile of Mississippi River frontage, and half mile on Cinque Hommes Creek. The MDC maintains some mowed upland grass fields and some wildlife food plots. This site and nearby Seventy-six Conservation Area are notable breeding sites for woodland warblers, particularly American Redstart.

Approaching on PCR 350, there is a low-water crossing of Omete Creek; while this is private land, a stop beside the county road can yield Belted Kingfisher, occasional waders, and frequently some roosting vultures. The road climbs steeply uphill into the conservation area, and near the welcome sign there is a wide spot where it is possible to pull over. The steep hillsides in this area provide good habitat for Worm-eating Warbler, as well as other woodland species. To the northeast, the road ends in a loop and a small primitive campground. There is a picnic table, along with some convenient flat rocks for a “little sit” at this point.

From the campground it is possible to walk across the railroad tracks and descend into a bottomland area (about 60 acres), with a willow thicket and a shallow pond and wetland. Water levels here depend on the river level and rainfall. The trail leading northeast about 200 yards through the bottoms to the river is usually mowed. This bottomland can be a good spot for passerines as well as waders, occasional shorebirds, and waterfowl. In the summer Prothonotary Warblers are assured. Waterfowl, raptors, and gulls are possible on the river. Sometimes a path is mowed leading northwest to Cinque Hommes Creek, but this route is often overgrown and impassable.

From a parking area 200 yards southwest of the campground a rather strenuous service road/trail leads east. The path climbs about 150 feet in elevation onto a ridge paralleling the river; after about a mile in the woods, it opens into a small natural rock amphitheater and a rocky glade, home to specialized plants such as native prickly pear cactus and hoary puccoon. For the birder intrepid enough to reach this spot, it's worthwhile to continue as the trail curves southwest and down to a small sinkhole pond lined with cattails and willows. This little oasis is often home to various warblers, vireos, and thrushes in appropriate seasons. As the trail curves around to the north, it

passes through some wildlife food crops and mowed grassland, and by a dam that forms a sizeable pond. It then loops back southeast and climbs the ridge again, returning to the amphitheater glade.

Other trails lead further south from the glade to the highest elevation in the conservation area, providing exercise and a striking view but not much more diversity of habitat for birders.

Toilets: None

Camping: Primitive campground, a single site.

Hazards/Limitations:

Typical hunting uses; wear orange during seasons. When the Chester Power river gauge is above 20 feet, road access is closed.

Nearby Birding Sites:

Red Rock Landing CA, Apple Creek CA, Perry County Community Lake

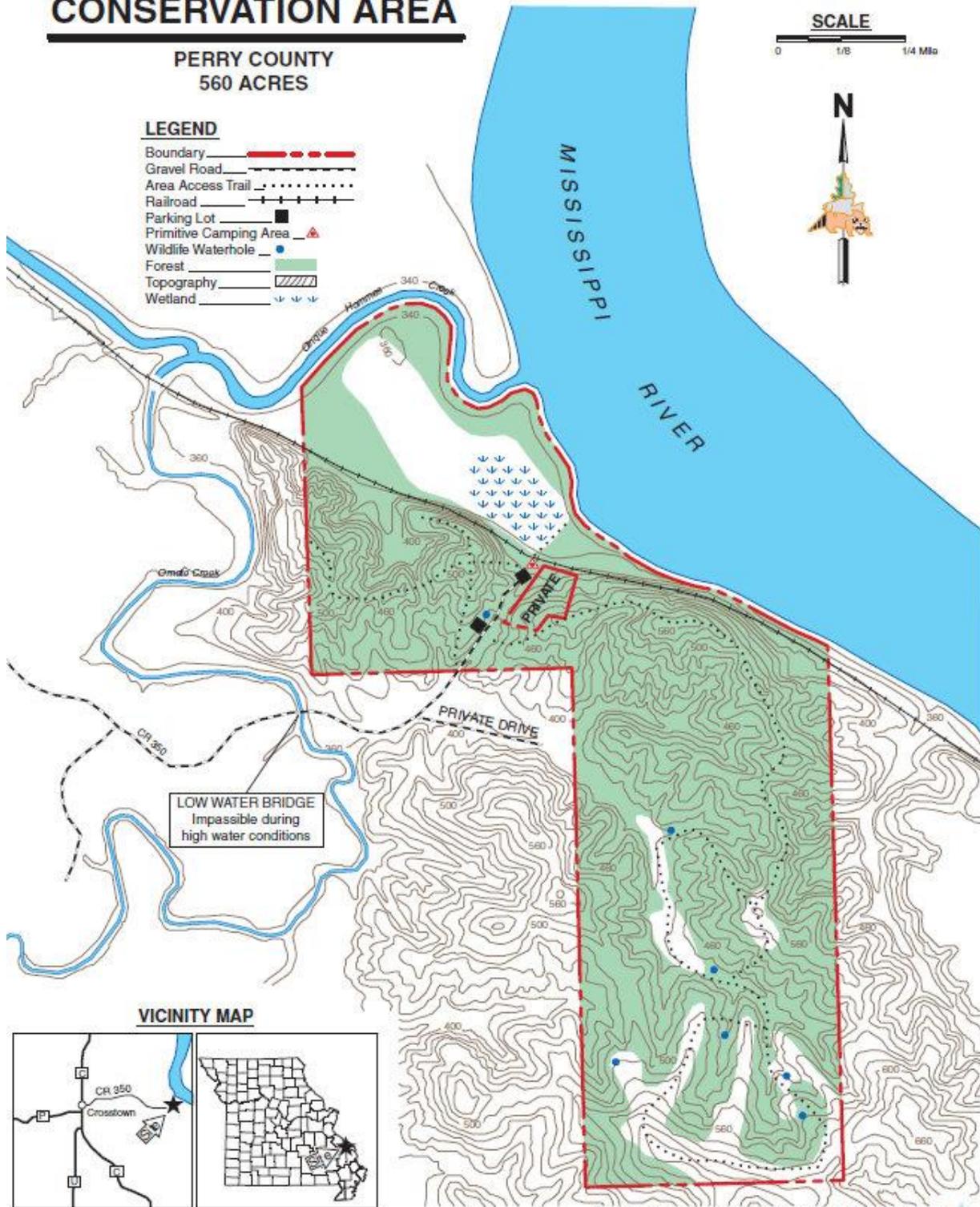
RED ROCK LANDING CONSERVATION AREA

PERRY COUNTY
560 ACRES

LEGEND

- Boundary 
- Gravel Road 
- Area Access Trail 
- Railroad 
- Parking Lot 
- Primitive Camping Area 
- Wildlife Waterhole 
- Forest 
- Topography 
- Wetland 

SCALE
0 1/8 1/4 Miles



VICINITY MAP

