

A BIRDERS' GUIDE TO MISSOURI PUBLIC LANDS

SEVENTY-SIX CONSERVATION AREA

Allen Gathman, spring 2015

818 acres, Perry Co. DeLorme 58, A-3

GPS: 37.720509,-89.62281

MDC owned; for additional information call: 573-290-5730

Directions: From I-55 north, take exit 105 at Fruitland. Follow Hwy 61 north 3 miles and take a right on Hwy C. Follow Hwy C north about 17 miles to Brazeau, and turn right on Hwy D. Follow D 4.5 miles until it turns into Perry County Road 437, and enters the conservation area.

From I-55 South, take exit 135 and turn east on Hwy M. In .6 mile turn right on Hwy 61. Follow Hwy 61 south through Perryville about 19 miles, then turn left (east) on Hwy D. Follow Hwy D 13 miles until it turns into Perry County Road 437 and enters the conservation area.

When to Visit/Species to Expect: Not entirely known. Most recorded visits are during Christmas Counts. Migration periods for passerines, possible shorebirds; winter for raptors, woodpeckers, sparrows should produce good finds. Some winter waterfowl may be found migrating along the river.

Features of interest to birders: Mostly mixed hardwood forest. There is river access with wing dams for fishing. Extensive meadows are maintained on ridge tops with some food crops planted for wildlife, including grain and blackberries.

Enter on Perry County Road 437. There are several parking areas along the road, which ends in a parking area on the Mississippi, with a small campground on the right. The area north of this parking lot is a low field where grassland and shrubland species may be found. There is an access road north along the railroad which provides views of shrubs and low trees on the east, and a bluff with tall woods on the west across the railroad.

To maximize diversity of habitat in minimum time, start at the first parking lot on the left as you drive into the conservation area. This lot has access to Wilkinson Trail, a three-mile loop going through woodland and some open meadows, with some nice views of the river. You can follow the trail for its full length or take the second option described below, a circuit of a bit under 2 miles, taking you through creekbed, forested hills, meadow, brambles, river, and shrubland habitats.

Wilkinson Trail: Take the trail to the right, which parallels the creek and the road. Warblers, sparrows, and other passerines tend to concentrate along the creek here. After about ¼ mile, you'll reach the parking area for the main trailhead. At this point, the trail turns left (north) and goes uphill through dense woods. There will be plenty of woodpeckers and some good views into the canopy for migrating warblers as you go

uphill.

After a little over 1/3 mile, the trail enters a large meadow. This meadow is exceedingly birdy in fall and winter, with numerous sparrow species present, and other species in the trees at the edges. It's a good place to view raptors as well.

The trail continues due north through the meadow toward the river, and then re-enters the woods. The river overlooks are pretty, but the habitat remains consistently woodland the rest of the way.

Second Option: Instead of continuing on the trail through the meadow, either turn back to the trailhead, or if growth, mowing, and weather conditions make it possible, turn right (northeast) along a branch of the meadow going slightly downhill about 500 yards. At the bottom of this part of the meadow are rows of blackberry bushes; in summer they attract various species.

From the blackberry field a service road leads downhill to the right (southeast) to the road again, about 250 yards. This is the last parking lot before the railroad tracks. If the meadow isn't walkable, park here and walk up the service road to the blackberries. From here, walk or drive down to the river parking area described above. It's a little over half a mile back to the first parking lot on CR 437.

Toilets: None

Camping: No facilities

Hazards/Limitations:

Typical hunting uses; wear orange during seasons. When Chester gauge is at 32.5' and Cape gauge is 37.5' road access is closed.

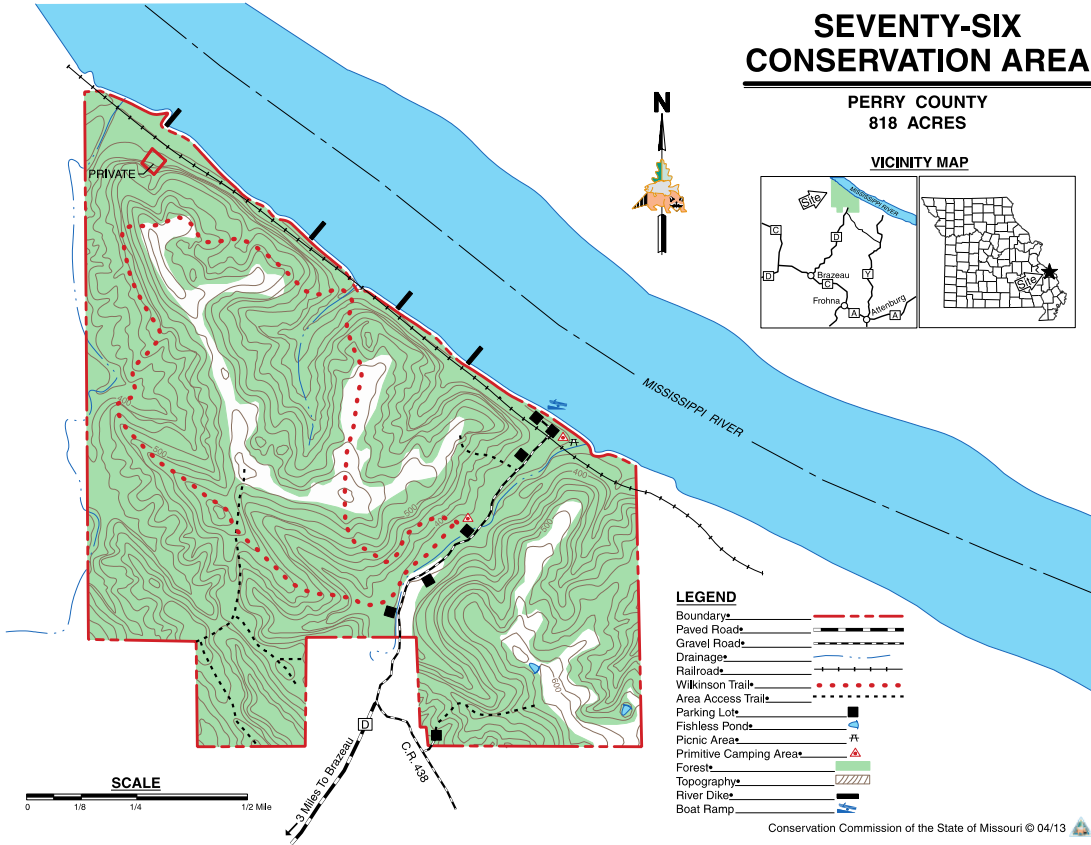
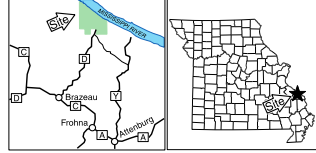
Nearby Birding Sites:

Red Rock Landing CA, Apple Creek CA

SEVENTY-SIX CONSERVATION AREA

PERRY COUNTY
818 ACRES

VICINITY MAP



- LEGEND**
- Boundary
 - Paved Road
 - Gravel Road
 - Drainages
 - Railroad
 - Wilkinson Trail
 - Area Access Trail
 - Parking Lot
 - Fishless Pond
 - Picnic Area
 - Primitive Camping Area
 - Forest
 - Topography
 - River Dike
 - Boat Ramp



3.1 Miles To Paris, Mo.
C.R. 438