

MONROE COUNTY – INDIANA

BIRDING TOUR

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Please review ABA's "Principles of Birding Ethics" before starting this Tour. Please do not trespass on private property.

If you are not on the In-Bird-L serve, the State of Indiana's Wild Bird Discussion list and E-mail alert hotline, then you may pass along rare bird sightings to me at spancol@aol.com. I will then post your sightings to In-Bird-L. Please post your name, E-mail address and phone number, when sending bird sighting information.

1. YELLOWWOOD LAKE STATE FOREST

Brown County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, B – 5

Habitat: Small lake with cattails, a mixed coniferous and deciduous woodlands on a hilly terrain. Dense shrubs decorate the woodland edge of the forested areas.

When To Visit: This is an excellent site for passerines during spring and fall migration. One can scan the lake for dabbling ducks during waterfowl migration. In winter, birders search for winter finches and owls among the pine stands.

Directions: From Indianapolis, take S.R. 37 south to the Walnut Street Exit (first Bloomington exit).

Take Walnut Street south to S.R. 45 / 46.

Turn left (east) on S.R. 45 / 46.

Follow S.R. 45 / 46 and turn left (east) on S.R. 46.

Follow S.R. 46 to Brown County.

Turn left on Yellowwood Road.

Turn left at the T-section (Greenvalley / Yellowwood),

following the Yellowwood State Forest signs.
 Turn right at Yellowwood / Jackson Creek Road sign (State Forest sign leading to the boat ramp / family campground).
 Continue east on this road, passing the State Forest Office.
 Turn into the parking lot on the left, which is the Jackson Creek Trail / Tecumseh / Yellowwood Trailhead.
 Bird the lake, playground and woodland edge.

2. MIDDLEFORK WATERFOWL RESTING AREA – Brown County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, C-5

Habitat: Marsh area of Monroe Lake.

When To Visit: Bald Eagles might be found here during the winter months. The best time to visit for waterfowl is October, November, December, March and early April. Shorebirds and passerines can be found in April, May, August, September and October.

Directions: From Yellowwood Lake, follow the main park road back to the T-section ("Jackson Creek Road" sign), and turn left. Turn right at the steel bridge (a Greenvally sign is here). Turn right (west) on S.R. 46. Continue west on S.R. 46 to T.C. Steele Road. Turn left (south) on T.C. Steel Road. Go past the T.C. Steel Nature Preserve. Turn right at Gilmore Ridge Road. Turn left at the first Deckard Ridge Road. Follow Deckard Ridge Road and turn left on Axom Branch Road. Park at the dead end and scan the lake from the overlook. Another place to view Middlefork is from the first Deckard Ridge Road. To reach this site, turn around and take Axom Branch Road back north to Deckard Ridge Road. Turn right (east) on Deckard Ridge Road.

Follow Deckard Ridge Road to Mailbox # 7748.
You will see a "No Vehicles Beyond This Point" sign here,
on the right (east) side of the road.
Park here and follow the trail leading east from the "No
Vehicles" sign down to the marsh / lake.

3. STILLWATER MARSH

Monroe County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, C-5

Habitat: Marsh and open woodlands.

When To Visit: Waterfowl – late September (Teal), October, November, December, March and April. When there is habitat suitable for shorebirds – April, May, late July, August and September.

Directions: From the Middlefork Waterfowl Resting Area, follow Deckard Ridge road back south to T.C. Steele Road. Turn right (northeast) on T.C. Steele Road.

Take T.C. Steele Road back to S.R. 46.

Turn left (west) on S.R. 46.

Turn left (south) on Kent Road.

Take Kent Road to the first gravel road on the right (west) hand side of the road (McGowan Road – no street sign here to indicate McGowan Rd.).

Follow this road west till you see the observation deck, which will be on the right (north) side of the road. Scan the marsh for waterfowl and shorebirds.

4. NORTHFORK WATERFOWL RESTING AREA – Monroe County Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, C-5

Habitat: Marsh. Forested hills and wet agricultural fields surround or are in the same general vicinity.

When To Visit: This site is visited during spring and fall migration for Waterfowl, waders and shorebirds. The best months to visit are March, April, May, August, September, October and November.

Directions: From the Stillwater Marsh Observation Deck, continue west on McGowan Road.

Follow McGowan Road as it veers right at a private drive. While driving toward North Fork, scan the wet fields and creek on the right hand side of the road.

Park in the lot next to the "North Fork Service Area" sign. Scan the marsh and walk the trails which extend out into the marsh.

5. FRIENDSHIP ROAD – Monroe County Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, C-5

Habitat: Crop fields, grasslands, open woodlands and a small river.

When To Visit: Birds can be found during both spring and fall migration. However, the absolute best time to visit is in the spring, when most of the fields along this road are flooded.

Directions: From the North Fork Waterfowl Resting Area, follow McGowan Road east back to Kent Road.

Turn left (north) on Kent Road.

Turn left (west) on S.R. 46.

Turn left (south) on Friendship Road (1/2 mile from Kent Road).

Bird the wet fields, grasslands and creek along Friendship Road.

When the gravel road splits into two roads, veer left.

The road is rough, but passable.

Park where the road is roped off with a "Waterfowl Resting Area" sign.

Walk the road which forks left down to the marsh. Scan this marsh for waterfowl and shorebirds. The road which forks right leads to another marsh area which contains a small creek.

6. GROSS ROAD – Monroe County **Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, C-4**

Habitat: Hills covered with mature deciduous woods. The steep ravines provide perfect habitat for Worm-eating Warbler.

When To Visit: Visit this site in mid-May and June for Worm-eating Warbler.

Directions: From the end of Friendship Road, follow Friendship Road north back to S.R. 46.

Turn left (west) on S.R. 46.

Turn left (south) on S.R. 446.

Turn left (east) on Knightridge Road.

Ignore the Knightridge Roads on the right (west) side of the road.

Turn left (east) on Gross Road.

Take Gross Road approximately two miles until it turns into a gravel road.

Once you are on the gravel road, proceed another 1/4 mile until you see three metal fence posts sticking up out of the ground on the right (south) side of the road.

Listen here for Worm-eating Warbler. If there is no luck, try playing a Worm-eating Warbler tape. If there is still no luck, keep driving east on Gross Road, stopping intermittently and playing a tape.

7. PAYNETOWN S.R.A. – Monroe County **Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, C / D – 4**

Habitat: Lake, mixed coniferous /deciduous woods, open woodland area and campgrounds.

When To Visit: For Waterfowl and seabirds – September, October, November, December, January, February and March. Passerine migration – April, May, September and October.

Directions: From Gross Road, follow Gross Road west back to Knightridge Road.

Turn left (south) on Knightridge Road.

Turn left (south) on S.R. 446.

Turn right (west) at the Paynetown S.R.A. / Visitor Center.

Follow this main park road to the first major park sign.

Turn left at the park sign, following the Campground / Beach / Interpretive Center / Marina arrows.

Veer right at the General Store and into the R.V. Campground.

Keep to your right while driving through the campgrounds.

Park near camp site #162 and # 163.

Walk southwest between camp sites #162 and #163 to **Jaeger Point**, which overlooks Monroe Lake. Scan the lake for waterfowl, terns and gulls.

Then, leave the R.V. Campground making a hard right (almost a U-turn), heading back toward the General Store.

Turn left (east) at the General Store.

Follow this road past the Interpretive Center till it dead ends at another lake overlook at the **Marina**. Park in this lot and scan the lake for waterfowl.

Then, turn around and head back west to the main park road.

At the main park road turn left (south), following the boat ramp signs. Scan the lake from the **Boat Ramp** for waterfowl.

8. CUTRIGHT S.R.A. – Monroe County **Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, D – 5**

Habitat: Lake

When To Visit: Waterfowl and Seabirds – late September, October, November, December, January, February, March and early April.

Directions: From the Paynetown S.R.A., follow the main park road back to S.R. 446.

Turn right (south) on S.R. 446.

Drive across the Monroe Lake Causeway.

Turn left (east) on the first road after the causeway, into the Cutright S.R.A..

Follow this road to the boat ramp. Scan the lake from the boat ramp for waterfowl and seabirds.

9. FAIRFAX S.R.A. – Monroe County **Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, D / E – 4**

Habitat: Lake, deciduous woods, woodland edge and beach.

When To Visit: Waterfowl and seabirds – September, October, November, December, January, February and March.

Passerines – Bird the woodland edges of the park in April, May, September and October.

Directions: From the Cutright S.R.A., turn right (north) on S.R. 446.

Follow S.R. 446 north to Swartz Ridge Road.

Turn left (west) on Swartz Ridge Road.

At the T-section, turn left on Moore's Creek Road.

Turn left (south) at S. Fairfax Road.
 Follow Fairfax Road south for 3 miles, into the Fairfax S.R.A..
 Turn left (east) into the Fairfax Beach Parking Lot.
 Scan the beach for shorebirds and the lake for waterfowl.
 In winter, scan the tree line and sky for Bald Eagles.
 Leaving the beach parking lot, turn left (south) on the main park
 road. Keep to your left, and follow the road south to the boat
 ramp. Park at the most southern end of the parking lot.
 Scan the lake for waterfowl, seabirds and Bald Eagles.

10. BLOOMINGTON SEWAGE LAGOONS

Monroe County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, A-3

Habitat: Sewage Lagoon, creek, open woodlands and farm fields.

When To Visit: Shorebirds – April, May, late July, August, September and October. Waterfowl – Late September, October, November, early December, March and April.

Directions: From the Fairfax S.R.A., take Fairfax Road north to Smithville Road.

Turn left (west) on Smithville Road.

Turn right (north) on S.R. 37.

Turn left on Bottom Road (immediately after Griffy Creek and watch for the yellow T-section, Bottom Road sign).

Bottom Road will now parallel S.R. 37 and Bean Blossom Creek.

Follow Bottom Road till you see the Sewage Plant on your left (west).

Turn left (west) on Maple Grove Road.

The Sewage Lagoon is on the right (north) side of the road. The lagoon is fenced, but you can squeeze through the gate

located in the southwest corner. Scan the Sewage Lagoon for shorebirds and waterfowl.

Also, a creek borders the west end of the lagoon. Be sure and bird the farm fields in the area if they are wet.

11. UPPER WOODALL ROAD

Monroe County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, A-2

Habitat: Grassland and open woodlands.

When To Visit: Visited mostly in the spring and early summer for migrating and nesting grassland species such as – Blue Grosbeak, Grasshopper Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Dickcissel and Bobolink.

Directions: From the Bloomington Sewage Lagoons, continue west on Maple Grove Road.

At the intersection of Maple Grove Road and Maple Grove Road, turn right (north) on the new Maple Grove Road (only in Bloomington !!!).

Follow the second Maple Grove road north until it veers left at a large old unpainted barn, which will be on the right side of the road.

Once you veer left here, the road then becomes Delap Road.

Follow Delap Road west to Woodall Road.

Turn right (north) on Woodall Road.

Drive north on Woodall Road, birding the grasslands on both sides of the road for 2 or 3 miles.

12. MUSCATATUCK'S RESTLE UNIT

Monroe County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, A-3

Habitat: Marsh, open woodlands and farm fields.

When To Visit: Shorebirds – April, May, late July, August, September and October.

Waterfowl – March, April, late September, October and November.

Directions: From Upper Woodall Road, follow Woodall Road south back to Delap Road.

Turn left (east) on Delap Road.

Follow Delap Road to the old barn and veer right (south).

At the intersection of Maple Grove Road and Maple Grove Road, turn left (east) on Maple Grove Road.

Go past the Bloomington Sewage Lagoon and turn left at at the T-section (Bottom Road / Kinser Pike).

Follow Bottom Road and veer left when the road forks.

Continue following Bottom Road and veer left again when it forks a second time.

The **Restle Unit** will be on your left (south) side of the road.

You will see a marsh and observation platform with a large "Restle Unit" sign.

Scan the marsh for waterfowl, waders and shorebirds.

13. LOWER WOODALL ROAD

Monroe County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, A-3

Habitat: Deciduous woods and wetlands.

When To Visit: Waders, Rails and shorebirds – April, May August, September and October. Passerines – April, May, September and October.

Directions: From Muscatatuck's Restle Unit, follow Bottom Road west to Woodall Road.

Turn left (south) on Woodall Road.

Continue south on Woodall Road, scanning and listening for birds in the fields and wetlands on both sides of the road.

When you reach the "Road Closed, Bridge Out" sign, turn around and head back north to Bottom Road.

14. LITTLE AFRICA WILDLIFE VIEWING AREA – LAKE LEMON

Brown County: Shuffle Creek Road to South Shore Drive

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, A – 4 / 5

Habitat: A brushy grassland area with multi-flora rose, scattered trees, a stand of pines and Lake Lemon. The lake has exposed mud most of the time.

When To Visit: Waterfowl – late February, March, early April, October, November and December.

Shorebirds – Late March, April, May, late July, August, September and October.

Passerines – April, May, September and October.

Directions: From Lower Woodall Road, turn right (east) on Bottom Road.

Follow Bottom Road back to S.R. 37.

Turn right (south) on S.R. 37.

Stay in the left lane and turn left (east) on the S.R. 45 / S.R. 46 exit.

Follow this road as it bypasses the campus and downtown Bloomington.

Turn left (northeast) on S.R. 45 (10th Street).

Drive 7 miles to the town of Unionville and turn left on Shuffle Creek Road (just after Unionville Church of Christ, and the U.S. Post Office).

Drive 1.8 miles to the stop sign / fork in the road, turning right on South Shore Drive.

Drive 1.9 miles and turn left at the white and green "**Little Africa Wildlife Viewing Area**" sign (a large wooden post is visible from the road).

Park here and walk around the high chain-linked fence to the trail. Follow the trail as it loops around to the observation platform.

Use your scope to scan the lake and shoreline.

When finished, continue walking the loop as it will return you to your vehicle.

15. RIDDLE POINT PARK – LAKE LEMON

Brown County: South Shore Drive to Tunnel

Road

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 50, A – 4 / 5

Habitat: Lake Lemon

When To Visit: Waterfowl migration – late February, March, early April, late October, November and December.

For seabirds – March, April, May, September, October, November and December.

Directions: From the Little Africa Wildlife Viewing Area, turn

right onto South Shore Drive.

Drive 3 miles to the dead end / T-section, turning right (north) on N. Tunnel Road (a brown "Riddle Point Park" arrow sign is here).

Tunnel Road leads directly into **Riddle Point Park**.

Follow the road as it loops around the point.

Scan the lake from the point.