

NORTHWEST INDIANA **COMPREHENSIVE** **BIRDING TOUR**

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INTRODUCTION

This is, without a doubt, the most important Tour I will ever do for the state of Indiana. More rare birds are reported from this Region of the state than all other regions combined. This is especially true in the fall. Total numbers of individual species are much higher as well. The reason for this is the funneling effect of Lake Michigan on fall migration.

Many birds follow the shoreline of Lake Michigan while migrating south. By doing this they avoid the open waters of the lake. Migrating down the shoreline means they invariably end up at the most southern tip of the lake. Hence, the funneling effect. Many nocturnal migrants find themselves caught over the open waters of the lake. When they finally reach landfall at the southern edge of the lake, they are exhausted and hungry. The heavy industrialization and urban sprawl along the lakefront leaves very few refuges for these exhausted migrants. The end result is a highly concentrated number of migrants in the few remaining parks and woodlots still in existence along the lakefront. We call these sites **LAKEFRONT MIGRANT TRAPS**. In this tour, these lakefront migrant traps will be designated as such. Once these migrants have made a partial recovery, they may move farther inland to more suitable feeding sites and denser cover for protection from predators.

When fully recovered, migrants disperse south from the lakefront along what I call Lake Michigan's, **"FUNNEL CORRIDOR"**. The eastern perimeter of this corridor starts at the east shore of Lake Michigan extending down past Lake Monroe and on to the Ohio River. The western perimeter of this corridor is the Indiana/Illinois state line. Birding sites along this corridor are well known

and heavily birded. These sites benefit from falling directly beneath the path of the Lake Michigan Funnel.

In birding the Lakefront, **WEATHER** is the most crucial factor. In spring, the optimal condition exists when winds are from the South. If a southern front ushers in a thunderstorm or severe weather, migrants riding the south winds north may be grounded in the traps along the Lakefront. If winds are from the north, the entire northwest region may be totally void of migrants. In fall, the birding is good when winds are from the north. North winds move migrating waterfowl, shorebirds and seabirds closer to the shoreline of Lake Michigan for easy detection. Birders typically wait for the approach of a cold front accompanied by strong north winds. Such fronts may yield a bonanza of rare or uncommon species. When these cold fronts do occur, birders congregate at strategic sites along the Lakefront. These **LAKEWATCH SITES** have, over time, out performed other locations along the lake front for rare or unusual species. In this Tour, these Lakewatch Sites will be designated as such. I want all birders to have a positive birding experience while using this Tour. That is why it was written with the beginning birder in mind. Many seasoned birders may find some of the instructions unnecessary. This same set of instructions may, however, be crucial to a beginner. Especially if they have never birded the Lakefront before. In this Tour, you will be birding the following Counties in Tour order: Jasper, Starke, Laporte, Porter, Lake, Newton, Benton and Warren.

A SCOPE IS MANDATORY WHILE USING THIS TOUR.
A MINIMUM OF 7 DAYS IS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THIS TOUR.

PLEASE REVIEW THE AMERICAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION'S "PRINCIPLES OF BIRDING ETHICS" BEFORE STARTING THIS TOUR.

PLEASE DO NOT TRESPASS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY.

BIRDING TOOLS FOR NORTHWEST INDIANA

“Birds of the Indiana Dunes”, by Kenneth J. Brock – This book is a must for any birder who plans to visit and bird Northwest Indiana. It contains a detailed description of the Indiana Dunes Region and an excellent accounting of the funneling effect of Lake Michigan. A great bird finding guide, It also serves as a checklist for the Dunes area complete with an Occurrence Histogram for most species. Most species accounts include a finding guide, status report and notable observations. I have used this book extensively over the years and in the creation of this Tour.

Motorola Two Way Talkabout Radios – These palm sized two way radios are used extensively by birders in this area and throughout the United States. The American Birding Association has adopted **Channel 11 – Code 22**, as the channel and code to be used by birders on the North American Continent. They have a range of 2 miles. The range can extend up to 5 miles if on flat land with few trees.

Cellular / Digital Phones – Where the range of the Talkabout ends, the mobile phone takes over. As the popularity of birding continues to grow and becomes more organized, the communications network will become more extensive. There is little doubt that mobile phones will play an integral part of this process. There is no faster way to find out about a rare bird discovery than by mobile phone.

Topographical Maps – The “Indiana Atlas and Gazetteer” by Delorme, lists the county roads and greater detail of the area you want to bird.

Weather Radio – A weather radio is essential when birding the

Dunes Region. Wind direction and speed is especially crucial where the Lakefront is concerned. Example: A cold front with north winds of 30 to 40 m.p.h. hits the Lakefront earlier than expected. You are at Willow Slough. Listening to your weather radio alerts you to this fact. You then immediately rush to a Lakewatch Site on Lake Michigan. The strong north winds will force rare and unusual species closer to shore for easy detection.

Spotting Scopes – At the Lakefront, your scope is just as important as your binoculars. Recent advancements have been made in optics technology. High end scopes now exist which provide clear and bright images at 60 power. These scopes are of particular interest to Lakefront birders. Many birds on the lake are discovered and identified at a range of ½ mile and beyond. A bright and clear image at 60 power gives a birder an overwhelming advantage and is well worth the investment. A few of the manufacturers which make these high end scopes are Kowa, Leica, Swarovski, Nikon and Zeiss. The zoom eyepiece is mandatory.

Drive by Birding – This birding technique is used extensively in this tour and by “Big Day” participants all over the United States. A simple definition: Driving down the road with windows rolled down, recording all the species one sees and hears from within the vehicle. If you are not doing a Big Day, you will have plenty of time to pull over and investigate any avian activity that you hear or see. Scan the countryside and listen for songs or chip notes while driving slowly through the area. For the beginner who is not birding by ear yet, simply listen for songs or chip notes foreign to the sounds you hear in your yard. But remember, warblers often feed in flocks with Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Chickadee and other common birds found in our yards.

1.JASPER – PULASKI STATE FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA: Jasper and Pulaski Counties Indiana Delorme Map: Page 25, B-10

Habitat: Agricultural fields, extensive marsh, open and densely wooded areas. Observation Towers for both the Sandhill Cranes and the extensive marsh exist on the property. Most of the Sandhill Crane field and the marsh are in Pulaski County.

When To Visit: The Sandhill Cranes are the main attraction here. The most significant numbers of Cranes can be found in October, November, February and March. The marsh attracts shorebirds, waterfowl and waders during all migratory periods. Waterfowl may overwinter if the water stays open.

Strategy: We will concentrate on the Sandhill Cranes and the marsh at this location.

Directions: From Indianapolis, take I-65 north to S.R.43. Take S.R. 43 north until it becomes S.R. 421 (at the intersection of S.R. 43 and S.R. 24). Continue north on S.R. 421 into Pulaski County. Go past the town of Medaryville and turn left (west) on S.R. 143 (a large “Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area” sign will be at this intersection). Go past Fish and Wildlife Lane (Jasper-Pulaski Visitor Center) and turn right (north) on C.R. 1650W. (a brown “Sandhill Crane Tower” sign signals this road). Take the next immediate left (west) at the “Sandhill Crane Observation Tower” sign, and park here. Take the trail at the northeast corner of this parking lot to the Observation Tower. The largest concentration of Sandhills will occur during the early Morning and late afternoon. During the day, most of the birds are foraging in the corn fields which surround the refuge.

Most birders prefer to visit the tower in the late afternoon. Watching them fly in to the staging area after feeding in the fields all day is quite a spectacle. The next parking lot north will accommodate the handicapped.

From the Sandhill Crane Observation Tower, return south on C.R. 1650W. back to C.R. 550N. / S.R. 143.

Turn left (east) on S.R. 143 / C.R. 550N..

At the stop sign, turn left (north) on S.R. 421.

Turn left (west) on C.R. 700N. (a “Jasper-Pulaski Tree Nursery” Sign will signal this road).

Turn left (south) into Parking Area B.

Start walking west to the marsh.

At the intersection of C.R. 700N. and C.R. 1650W., you will see the “Marsh Observation Trail” sign. Take this trail west one mile to the Observation Tower, which will be on the left (south) side of the road.

During waterfowl hunting season the trail is open as follows:

Oct.13 to Dec.22 – 1:00 P.M. to sunset, Saturday and Sunday.

3:00 P.M. to sunset, Monday thru Friday.

2. KANKAKEE STATE FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA – Starke County **Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, H-12**

Habitat: Agricultural fields (flooded), marsh, wet woodlands and open woodlands.

When To Visit: Migratory periods – October, November, December, February, March, April and May. The fields are usually dry during the shorebird migration of July, August and most of September. Visited primarily for the shorebird and waterfowl migration. In winter, look for Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs and Rough-legged Hawks.

Strategy: Here we will focus on 3 strategic sites where most of the waterfowl and shorebirds concentrate.

Directions: From Parking Area B of Jasper-Pulaski State Fish and Wildlife Area, turn right (east) on C.R. 700N..

At the stop sign, turn left (north) on S.R. 421.

Continue north as S.R. 421 and S.R. 10 become the same road.

Turn right (east) on S.R. 10 (flashing yellow traffic light and a Nipsco Power Substation signal this intersection).

Go through the town of North Judson and turn left (north) on S.R. 39 (a brown “Kankakee Fish and Wildlife Area” sign and Yellow flashing traffic light will signal this road).

Turn left (west) on **Toto Road** (a brown “Kankakee State F.W.A.” sign will signal this road as well).

When you pass the Kankakee F.W.A. Headquarters and C.R. 450W., begin looking for a gravel parking lot on the right (north) side of the road. Turn right into this gravel pull off and bird the flooded fields to the north.

Turn around and head back east on Toto Road.

At the stop sign, turn left (north) onto S.R. 39.

Just before the intersection of S.R. 39 and S.R. 8, pull into the Parking lot on the left (west) side of the road. This is a

Waterfowl Observation Area. On the west side of S.R. 39 is the main marsh. On the east side of the road are fields which are flooded in spring and fall. During migratory periods, this area can harbor huge numbers of shorebirds and waterfowl. Scan both sides of the road. From this waterfowl resting area parking lot, continue north on S.R. 39 to S.R. 8. Turn left (west) on S.R. 8. Turn left (south) on **C.R. 500 W.** This road will elbow right (west) at the brown “Kankakee Fish and Wildlife Area” sign and become **C.R. 2100S.**

Veer right (west) onto C.R. 2100S. and scan the flooded fields on both sides of the road for shorebirds and waterfowl. Brewer’s and Rusty Blackbirds and American Pipits are usually found here in the spring. When you run out of wet fields or reach C.R. 600 W., turn around and head back east on C.R. 2100 S..

At the elbow of C.R. 2100 S. and C.R. 500 W., continue east on The gravel road into Kankakee F.W.A.. Bird the wet fields on both sides of the road.

If you have lots of time, use the drive-by-birding technique to bird additional county roads. **Ten Mile Road** (River Road) starts On S.R. 8, .5 miles west of the intersection of S.R. 8 and S.R. 39. It lies at the southeast corner of the bridge where S.R. 8 crosses the Kankakee River. It is a 10 mile one – way road that runs between the north entrance on S.R. 8 and the more southern exit on S.R. 39, which is $\frac{3}{4}$ miles south of the intersection of S.R. 8 and S.R. 39. In spring, bird the flooded fields along this road.

3. KINGSBURY STATE FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA – Laporte County **Indiana Delorme Map: Page 20, E-2**

Habitat: A wide variety including extensive marsh areas, dense and open woodlands, large stands of pine, agricultural fields, dense roadside shrubs, grasslands and meadows.

When To Visit: Year round. Migratory periods are obviously the most productive. In early summer, look in the main marsh for nesting species such as Virginia Rail, Common Moorhen, Sandhill Crane and Wood Duck. In winter, look for Bald Eagle, Merlin and Rough-legged Hawk.

Strategy: In this tour, we will bird the main marsh. One is encouraged, if time allows, to explore other areas of this refuge.

Directions: From C.R. 500 W. at Kankakee State F.W.A., turn Around and head back north on C.R. 500 W..

Turn right (east) on S.R. 8.

Turn left (north) on S.R. 39 (flashing red traffic light).

Go across S.R. 30 and turn right (east) on S.R. 6 (4-way stop-flashing red traffic light).

Turn left (north) on S.R.35 (flashing yellow traffic light).

Turn right (east) on C.R. 500 S. (Kingsbury County Market will signal this turn).

At the dead end / T-section, turn right (south) on Hupp Road.

Cross the R.R. tracks and enter Kingsbury State Fish and Wildlife Area.

At the first 4-way stop, turn left (east) and continue on Hupp Road.

Turn right (south) on River Road.

Drive a ½ mile or so and look for the marsh on the left (east) side of the road. Park along the side of the road and walk up to the dike. Scan the marsh.

If time permits, use the drive-by-birding technique to bird the county roads within this refuge.

Remember to drive west on the main park road (Hupp Road) to Return to S.R.35.

4. LAPORTE LAKES – Laporte County **Indiana Delorme Map: Page 20, C-1**

Habitat: A series of small lakes surrounded by an urban residential area close to downtown Laporte.

When To Visit: During waterfowl migration – October, November, December, February, March and April.

Strategy: We will visit Pine and Stone Lakes here.

Directions: From Kingsbury State Fish and Wildlife Area, Turn around and head back north on River Road.

At the stop sign / T-section, turn left (west) on Hupp Road.

At the first 4 –way stop, turn right (north) and continue north on Hupp Road.

Cross the R.R. tracks and turn left (west) on C.R. 500 S..

Turn right (north) on S.R. 35.

Continue north on S.R. 35 into downtown Laporte and go across the bridge.

Turn left (west) into Soldier Memorial Park (a large brown “Soldier Memorial Park” sign is on the left hand side of the Road). If you have gone past the Super 8 Motel, you have gone too far.

Continue west on this road as it soon becomes Wardner Avenue, Birding the lake along the way.

Turn right (north) on Greenleaf Street.

Continue on Greenleaf Street till you see a brown “Boat Launch” sign and parking lot on the right hand side of the road.

Turn right (north) into the boat launch parking lot.

Walk down to the boat launch and scan the lake.

To scan the north side of Pine Lake, take S.R. 35 north till you see the Yacht Club on the left (west) side of the road.

Turn left into the Yacht Club and bird the lake from the parking lot.

5. MICHIGAN CITY HARBOR – Laporte

County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, A-11

Habitat: Deep water lake, extensive beach, Nipsco Power Plant with a warm water discharge, outer breakwall.

When To Visit: All migratory periods. The best time to visit this Site is in the fall. In late July, August and September, look for migrating shorebirds along the beaches. In late September, look for Sabine’s Gull, Terns and early Jaegers.

In November, look for migrating waterfowl, Jaegers, Purple Sandpiper, late shorebirds and dream about Ancient Murrelet.

Strategy: Once you have scanned the beaches and outer breakwall, set up a lake watch. Spend a couple hours watching Birds fly by.

Directions: From the boat launch at Laporte Lakes, turn left (east) on Greenleaf Street.

Turn left (east) on Lake Shore Drive.

At the stop sign, Lake Shore Drive will then become Wardner Avenue. Continue east on Wardner Avenue to S.R. 35.

Turn left (north) on S.R. 35.

At the T-section / stop light, turn left (west) on S.R. 35 / 20 / I-94.

Veer right onto the I-94 Chicago entrance ramp.

Take I-94 west to Exit 34A / S.R. 421 South / Westville.

Turn right (north) on S.R. 421 (flashing red traffic light).

Continue north on S.R. 421 into Michigan City, where S.R. 421 turns into Franklin Street (at S.R. 20).

In downtown Michigan City, turn right (east) on 9th Street.

Turn left (north) on Pine Street.

Continue north on Pine Street past S.R. 12.

Follow the Beach / Marina signs.

Go across the green channel bridge and turn right on Lakeshore Drive.

Turn left (north) into Washington Park / Michigan City Harbor.

Park at the north end of the parking lot, next to Lake Michigan.

Scan the beach to the east. Then, scan the lake for waterfowl, gulls, terns, shorebirds and seabirds.

Take the sidewalk west to the beginning of the Lighthouse Catwalk. From there, scan the Nipsco Power Plant beach to the Southwest. Then, scan the rock-laden outer breakwall, which is Northwest of the Lighthouse. Walking out to the Lighthouse will give you a much closer view of the outer breakwall. During severe weather or high waves, do not attempt to walk out to the lighthouse.

Walk back east to the parking lot. From the parking lot you may set up a Lake Watch, or move on to the next location.

Exit the parking lot going south. At the stop sign, turn right.

To your immediate right is the Marina. Scan the Marina docks and water for late fall and winter, gulls and waterfowl.

6. MOUNT BALDY – Laporte County **Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, A-10**

Habitat: A very high sand dune with a beautiful view of Lake Michigan. Down below and to the south is the park area.

The dense shrubs and trees around the park provide excellent cover for migrating passerines. A foot trail branches off from The Mount Baldy Boardwalk west into a deciduous woods.

When To Visit: Migratory periods: April, May, September and October for migrating passerines. One should search the shrubs and trees surrounding the park area. In spring, a hawk watch can be conducted from atop Mount Baldy. In winter, scan the gulls along the shoreline and out on the lake. As they come in to their evening roost, look for rare wintering gulls: Mew, Glaucous, Lesser Black-backed, Greater Black-backed, Thayer's, Iceland and California.

Strategy: Unless you are setting up a Lakewatch or Hawkwatch, this should be a quick stop to check for migrating passerines. Search the woodland edge around the park and restroom area.

Directions: Exit the Michigan City Harbor parking lot by going south on Brown Basin Street. Cross the green channel bridge and follow this road as it winds around the police station.

At the stop light, turn right (west) on S.R. 12.

When you get to the outskirts of town and cross the R.R. tracks, look for the brown "Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore-Mount Baldy" sign.

Turn right (north) on Rice Street (Mount Baldy).

Park in the lot next to the rest rooms. Follow the trail in the northwest corner of the parking lot.

At the fork in the trail, athletes may scale Mount Baldy directly, or follow the trail left and climb the treated wood boardwalk.

From the boardwalk, a foot trail leads west into the woods.

7. BEVERLY DRIVE – Porter County **Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, B-10**

Habitat: Extensive marsh, deciduous woods (wet and dry), dense and open brushy areas.

When To Visit: In spring, Beverly Drive is one of the top producing sites for migrating passerines in the state of Indiana. In spring and early summer, one can check this area for nesting species such as Blue-winged Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Virginia Rail and Common Moorhen. In winter, a Northern Shrike usually stakes out a territory here.

Strategy: Drive-by-birding is the technique used here. When you see or hear avian activity, pull over and investigate. Beverly Drive is a speed trap and police do not allow vehicles to stop on the road. If you do stop, make it very brief. If you do encounter birds on this road, it is better to turn off at the next available side street and walk back to where you heard or saw the birds.

Directions: From Mount Baldy, turn right (west) on S.R. 12. Within 25 yards and at the curve in the road, veer right onto Beverly Drive (no road sign here).

Drive slowly and listen for migrating passerines and marsh birds.

Turn right (north) on St. Clair Avenue.

Turn left (west) on Idler Avenue.

Turn left (south) on Constance Avenue.

Turn right (west) on Beverly Drive.

Turn right (north) on Broadway.

8. BEVERLY SHORES – Porter County
Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, B-10
A Lakewatch Site

Habitat: Deep water lake and beach.

When To Visit: Migratory periods for shorebirds, waterfowl and seabirds. Shorebirds – Late March, April, May, July, August, September and October. Waterfowl – Late February, March, April, October, November and December.

Directions: From Beverly Drive, turn right (north) on Broadway. Turn left (west) on Lakefront Drive.

Turn right into the 2nd lakefront viewing area parking lot.

Scan the lake and beach.

Continue west on Lakefront Drive.

Veer left (south) on East State Park Road.

Stop at the first house on the left. Search and listen here for Prairie Warbler in spring. They nest in this area.

Continue south on East State Park Road.

Turn left (east) on Beverly Drive (first T-section you come to- no street sign here).

Continue east for about 1/3 mile. Pull over at the first gravel pull off you come to.

Scan the marsh on the north side of the road for waterfowl, waders and rails.

9. FURNESSVILLE WOODS – Porter County **Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, B-10**

Habitat: Deciduous woods.

When To Visit: For passerine migration: April, May, late August, September and October.

Directions: From Beverly Drive, make a U-turn and continue West on Beverly Drive.

Turn left (south) at the T-section, on East State Park Road.

One can also bird this T-section for wetland species.

Go across S.R. 12.

Turn right (west) on Furnessville Road (the street is not marked.

It is the street just before you reach S.R. 20. Turn right at the “School House Shop” sign on the right side of the road).

Turn left (south) on C.R. 200 E. (T-section).

Go about a ¼ mile south and just beyond the yellow “Pedestrian Walking” sign.

Park here and bird the trail on both sides of the road for warblers, Thrushes, vireos and other passerines.

10. HERON ROOKERY UNIT – Porter **County** **Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, C-10**

Habitat: A wet deciduous woods. A stream is at the northern edge of this woods.

When To Visit: For passerine migration: April, May late August, September and October. A Great Blue Heron Rookery is in the eastern portion of this woods.

Directions: From the Furnessville Woods, continue south on C.R. 200 E..

At the stop sign, turn right (west) on S.R. 20.

Take exit S.R. 49 South.

Continue south on S.R. 49 and cross over I-94.

Turn left (east) on Indian Boundary Road.

Turn left (north) on Brummit Road (T-section / 4 way stop).

Turn right (east) on C.R. 1300 N..

On the east side of the intersection of C.R. 1300 N. and C.R. 450 E., is the Heron Rookery Unit parking lot. Park in this gravel lot and follow the foot trail east.

The trail will eventually veer north. At the stream and “Caution-Trail Surface may erode” sign, follow the trail east along side the Stream for a ¼ mile or so.

Turn around and return to your vehicle.

11. INDIANA DUNES STATE PARK

Porter County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, B-9

Habitat: Deep water lake, beach, open woodlands, deciduous Woods (wet and dry) and a large marsh.

When To Visit: For passerine migration: April, May, Late August, September and October.

Directions: From the Heron Rookery Unit, follow C.R. 1300 N. West back to C.R. 300 E..

At the T-section / stop sign, turn left (south) on C.R. 300 E..

At the first elbow in the road which veers right, C.R. 300 E. then becomes Brummit Road.

Turn right (west) on Indian Boundary Road.

Turn right (north) on S.R. 49.

Take S.R. 49 to the Indiana Dunes State Park entrance.

Once past the gatehouse, take the second road right (east) (following the brown “Campground-Nature Center-Wilson’s Shelter” sign).

Go past the campground and turn left into Wilson’s Shelter.

Park at the north end of the lot. You will see a sign for Trails 8, 9 and 10.

Follow this trail north to the marsh boardwalk (50 yards). Scan

the marsh. In spring, look for Prothonotary Warbler near the boardwalk.

If time permits and you are up for a long hike, continue past the 1st marsh boardwalk and turn right onto Trail 10.

Trail 10 will border the large marsh. You will eventually come to an observation platform on the right side of the trail. This will give you a better view of the entire marsh.

Continuing on Trail 10, turn right onto Trail 2.

Trail 2 will bring you back to Wilson's Shelter.

At the beginning of Trail 2 near Wilson's Shelter, a Red-shouldered Hawk has been nesting here every year.

From Wilson's Shelter, turn right (west).

Turn right (north) at the brown "Nature Center" sign.

Inside the Nature Center, the bird feeders can be monitored for wintering finches and sparrows.

Continue west back to the main park road.

At the main park road, a right (north) turn will take you to the beach and Lake Michigan. To my knowledge, the State Park is seldom used as a Lakewatch site. In summer, you can view the sun setting on the Chicago Sky Line.

Turn left (south) to leave the park.

12. JOHNSON BEACH – HAWK HILL

Porter County

A Hawkwatch Site

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, B-8

Habitat: A sparsely vegetated sand dune. To the north is a partial view of Lake Michigan. To the south is the heavily wooded, urban residential valley of Porter County. To the east is a grove of pines, bordered by a chain linked fence.

When To Visit: For hawks: late March, April and May. Passerine overflights can also be observed during migratory Periods.

Directions: From Indiana Dunes State Park, go south on S.R. 49. Turn right (west) on State Park Road (the first road outside the state park).

At the stop sign / T-section, turn right (north-no street sign here).

This road will elbow left (west) and become Roskin Road.

Roskin Road will elbow right at the dead end sign.

Go past the National Lakeshore Parking lot and turn right (east)

On Duneland Drive.

Turn right (south) on Dabbert Drive.

Follow the foot trail on the east side of the parking lot up the sand dune to “Hawk Hill”.

13. COWLES BOG – Porter County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, C-8

Habitat: Large marsh and deciduous woods.

When To Visit: Waterfowl – Late March, April, early May, October, November and December. For nesting and migrating Wetland species – April, May, June, September, October and November.

Directions: From Johnson Beach / Hawk Hill, follow Dabbert Drive back north to Duneland Drive.

Turn left (west) on Duneland Drive.

Turn left (south) at the stop sign (no street sign-National Lakeshore Parking lot is on the southeast corner).

This road will then elbow left (east), and then elbow right (south).

Go across the R.R. tracks and turn right (west) on S.R. 12.

Turn right (north) on Mineral Springs Road (a “Dune Acres” sign

On the right (north) side of the road will signal this turn).

After crossing the R.R. tracks, turn left (west) into the gravel Parking lot.

At the west end of the parking lot is a gravel truck road.

Walk the gravel truck road west to the brown trail sign.

Follow the arrow on the sign (turn right-north).

Walking north, you will see the marsh to your left (west).

The trail will then veer left (west) and take you out onto

The dike. Scan the marsh to your south.

You can take Mineral Springs Road north till it dead ends at

The guard shack. This will take you to the north end of Cowles Bog.

14. PORT OF INDIANA / HERON

ROOKERY – Porter County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, C – 7 / 8

Access: This site has a public access area. Fishermen and Birders are welcome. However, this is a major international Port and access may be denied if the Terror Alert level is high.

Habitat: Deep water port, L-shaped outer breakwall and a Small woodlot which serves as a mini-migrant trap.

When To Visit: Waterfowl – Late October thru early April.

Passerines – April, May, late August, September and October.

Strategy: This site is visited primarily in the late fall and winter for deep water bay ducks. A Snowy Owl could show up on the outer breakwall in winter. Check the weed fields around the Port for winter finches.

Directions: From the Cowles Bog parking lot, turn right (south)

On Mineral Springs Road.

Turn right (west) on S.R. 12.

Turn left (south) onto S.R. 249 (a green “Port of Indiana” sign is here).

Stop at the guard gate and register with the security guard.

Continue north on this road.

Go past the 4-way stop and turn right at the T-section, C.R. 730 N..

You will immediately elbow left (north), and then cross the R.R. Tracks.

Just beyond the R.R. tracks, turn left (west) on the gravel road which borders a chain linked fence.

Within 50 yards you will reach a gravel parking lot. Scan the channel and outer breakwall from here.

During passerine migration, walk through the woodlot at the west end of the Port.

Take the gravel road back to the east end of the Port. The paved Parking lot here is the official “Public Access Site”.

Scan the east end of the Port.

Return to the main road and exit the Port of Indiana.

Continue south on S.R. 249 and turn left on Marine View Drive.

Turn around and get back on S.R. 249, going north.

Veer right on S.R. 12 / Michigan City exit. On the right (southeast) you will see the **Heron Rookery**. Pull over briefly on the exit ramp (at the yellow “exit 40 m.p.h.” sign).

Scan the dead stick marsh for Great Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron and Great Egret.

15. WEST BEACH / LONG LAKE / PINERY
Porter County – A Lakewatch Site
Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, C-7

Habitat: Deep water lake, shallow lake, pine grove, open woodland and marsh.

When To Visit: Passerines – April, May, late August, September And October. Search the dense shrubs and trees around Long Lake. Shorebirds – late July, August and September. Check for mudflats on Long Lake. A Lakewatch can be conducted on the West Beach Boardwalk.

Waterfowl – October, November, December, February, March and early April. Check Long Lake for dabbling ducks.

Conduct a Lakewatch at the West Beach Boardwalk for waterfowl, shorebirds and seabirds.

Northern Shrike has been found here in past winters.

In winter, the Pinery is the star attraction as birders search it for Winter finches, Owls and Townsend’s Solitaire.

Strategy: Search for passerines in the shrubs along Long Lake while scanning for waterfowl and shorebirds. Scan the lake from the boardwalk while walking to the Pinery.

Directions: From the Port of Indiana, take the S.R. 12 exit and turn left (west) on S.R. 12.

Turn right (north) on County Line Road (West Beach and Long Lake exit – flashing red traffic light).

Cross the R.R. tracks and veer right (east) at the brown “West Beach” sign, following the arrow.

Go past the gate house and turn right into the Long Lake parking lot (a small brown “Long Lake Parking” sign is here).

Follow the trail south to the lake observation platform and scan

Long Lake. There is also an observation tower at the west end of the lake. From the Long Lake parking lot, continue on the main park road northeast to **West Beach**. Park here and follow the main park road northeast on foot. Walk past the West Beach Visitors Center (wooden building). You will then come to a large

brick and cement bath house.

Walk through this building to the beach. To your east is a treated Wood boardwalk called “**Dune Sucession Trail**”. Climb it to it’s Peak. Scan the shoreline and lake. A Lakewatch can be conducted here. Continue east on this boardwalk as it descends into a valley of pines, surrounded by sand dunes. Walk through the **Pinery** searching for winter finches, owls and Townsend Solitaire. Follow the boardwalk back to the bathhouse. Follow the main Park road back to the parking lot and exit West Beach.

16. MARQUETTE PARK LAKEFRONT

SHELTER – Lake County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, C-6

A Lakewatch Site

Habitat: Deep water lake and beach.

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

Seabirds – September, October, November and December.

Passerines – April, May, late August, September and October.

Strategy: This location is used primarily as a Lakewatch site for Shorebirds, waterfowl and seabirds. Passerines overflights can also be observed from this location.

Directions: From West Beach, take the main park road out and Follow the S.R. 12 arrow, veering right.

At County Line Road, turn left (north-instead of taking County Line Road back to S.R. 12).

Turn left (west) on Oak Avenue (4-way stop-brown “Marquette Park” sign is here).

Approaching Marquette Park, turn right (west) on Montgomery Street. Immediately after the right turn will be the Marquette Park Lakefront Shelter on your right (north).

Park here and conduct a Lakewatch.

17. MILLER BEACH – Lake County
Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, C-6
A Lakewatch Site

Habitat: Deep water lake and beach.

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

Seabirds – September, October, November and December.

Passerines – April, May, September, and October (overflights).

Directions: From the Marquette Park Lakefront Shelter, turn Right (west) on Montgomery Street.

Go to the 2nd stop light and turn right (west) on Hemlock Avenue.

Turn right (north) on Lake Street (4-way stop).

Follow Lake Street north to the Miller Beach Parking Lot.

Option 1: Lakewatch – Spend hours watching waterfowl, shorebirds and seabirds migrate up and down the shoreline and Lake.

Option 2: From Miller Beach, walk west along the shoreline all The way to the U.S. Steel breakwall and back, birding the shoreline and lake.

18. CLAY STREET WETLANDS
Lake County
Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, C-6

Habitat: Wetlands / Grasslands.

When To Visit: Shorebirds – late March, April, and May.

Sparrows – April, May, September and October.

Waterfowl – Late February, March, April and May.

Strategy: This is a site most often visited in the spring.

Shorebirds, waterfowl and sparrows are the target birds here.

Directions: From Miller Beach, take Lake Street past S.R. 12 And S.R. 20.

Lake Street will dead end at 15th Avenue (no street sign here).
 Turn right (west) on 15th Avenue.
 Go about ½ mile and turn left (south) on an unmarked gravel Road (a very high chain linked fence with barbed wire is here).
 Take this road south and bird the wetlands on both sides of the road.
 Return north to 15th Avenue.
 Turn left (west) on 15th Avenue.
 Turn left (south) on Clay Street.
 Go past the Illiana Disposal and Recycling Plant on your left (east). Park at one of the gravel pull-offs on the right (west) side of the road. Scan the wetlands from the west side.

19. JEORSE PARK / PASTRICK MARINA

Lake County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, C-5

Habitat: Deep water lake and beach. An urban commercial area.
When To Visit: Shorebirds – April, May, mid-July, August, September and October. Waterfowl – Late February, March, April, May, September, October, November and December.
Directions: From the Clay Street Wetlands, turn around and head Back north on Clay Street. Turn left (west) on 15th Avenue. Take 15th Avenue underneath the I-65 overpass. Go 100 yards and turn left at the “Inland Detroit Diesel Allison” Sign, to turn around. Head back east on 15th Avenue and take the I-90 Toll Road Ramp. Veer right and take exit # 262-Toll Road I-90 / Illinois / Ohio. Veer right again, taking I-90 West to Chicago. Turn right at exit # 10, Cline Avenue. Turn right onto 912 North. Go immediately to the left lane and veer left, taking 912 North / Cline Avenue Ramp. Veer right and take exit # 5 C, Jeorse Park / Pastrick Marina.

Turn right at both stop lights and follow the road around the South side of Harrah's Casino.

Drive to the east end of the parking lot. Scan the shoreline and Lake.

20. LAKE GEORGE / WOODLOT

Lake County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, B-4

Habitat: Lake, Deciduous woods and dense shrubs.

When To Visit: Passerines – Mid-April, May, late August, September and October. Waterfowl – February, March, April, October, November and December.

Strategy: Scan the lake for waterfowl and work the woodlot for warblers and other passerines.

Directions: From Jeorse Park / Pastrick Marina, follow the road west around the south side of Harrah's Casino.

Turn left (west) at the stop light in front of the Casino.

Go past the 2nd stop light and get in the right lane.

Veer right and take the 912 North Ramp (to Chicago).

Take the S.R. 41 exit (Calumet Avenue).

Turn right (north) on S.R. 41.

Turn right (east) on 125th Avenue (look for the "Calumet College" sign).

Lake George is on both sides of 125th Avenue. Scan Lake George for waterfowl, gulls and terns. To bird Lake George, one must now leave their vehicle at the public parking lot at the corner of S.R. 41 and 125th Avenue.

Then, walk east on 125th Avenue to bird the lake.

Continue east on 125th Avenue and turn right (south) on Merlini Drive. Park at 126th Avenue and Merlini Drive.

Search the woodlot for warblers and other passerines.

Another woodlot on the north side of 125th Avenue can also be birded.

21. WOLF LAKE / FORSYTHE PARK

Lake County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, B-3 and 4

Habitat: Lake, urban park with open woodland.

When To Visit: Waterfowl – late February, March, April, October, November and December. Passerines – April, May, Late August, September and October.

Strategy: This location serves as a secondary migrant trap for passerines. The open woodland north of the baseball diamonds can be quite productive, especially when weather fronts are moving through. Wolf Lake can be productive during waterfowl migration.

Directions: From Lake George, take 125th Avenue west to S.R. 41 (Calumet Avenue).

Turn right (north) on S.R. 41.

Turn left (west) on 119th Avenue (a Clark Gas Station is at this Intersection). Take this road west to Forsythe Park.

Wolf Lake will be on the south side of the road.

Scan it for waterfowl, gulls and terns.

Continue on the main park road northwest to the baseball diamonds. Bird the brush around the baseball diamonds for sparrows. Park at the lot across from the shelter house and playground.

From the shelter house, walk north through the open woodland Area. Search the trees for warblers, vireos and other passerines.

22. WHITING PARK – Lake County

A Lakefront Migrant

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, B-4

Habitat: An urban park with open woodland. Deep water lake and beach to the north. The south side of the park is bordered by a high Cement wall. Dense shrubs and vegetation grow on both sides of the wall. The wall serves as a wind break from Lake Michigan's brutal north winds. Because of these attributes, the south side of the wall serves as a shelter for migrating birds seeking shelter.

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

Strategy: Visited primarily for its value as a migrant trap for passerines. For maximum results, visit this location during or after a weather front has past through.

Directions: From Wolf Lake / Forsythe Park, follow the main Park road north (the road is one way – you can't go south).

You will be driving parallel to the canal.

At the stop sign / T-section, turn left (north).

Turn right (east) on Indianapolis Boulevard (you are facing the Unilever Plant – stop sign / T-section).

Continue straight and **do not** turn right at Calumet Avenue (S.R. 41).

Take Indianapolis Boulevard east to Roberts Avenue.

You cannot see the Roberts Avenue Street sign here.

Roberts Avenue will be the first street beyond Benjamin Franklin Elementary School.

Turn left (north) on Roberts Avenue.

Turn right immediately on 117th Street (20 yards from Indianapolis Boulevard).

117th Street leads you directly into Whiting Park.

Cross the R.R. tracks and turn right (east) at the T-section {at this T-section, Whihala beach is to your left (west), Whiting Park to your right (east)}.

Veer right into Whiting Park and then turn left (north) into the Whiting Beach Parking Lot.

Walk south and cross the street into the park.

Then walk west through the park, birding the trees and flower beds (flower beds – Mourning and Connecticut Warblers).

When you reach the west end of the park, return east walking the south side of the cement wall. Walk the brush laden strip of land between the wall and the R.R. tracks.

Passerines will seek refuge behind this wall when strong north winds prevail. When you reach the east end of the wall, walk west through the open woodland part of the park for areas not yet covered. Check the baseball diamonds for sparrows.

Return to your vehicles.

23. MIGRANT TRAP – Lake County

A Lakefront Migrant Trap

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, B-3 / 4

Habitat: A narrow strip of deciduous woods and dense vegetation, peppered with cement construction slabs and boulders. Lake Michigan borders the north end of the trap. To the south is the casino overflow parking lot and R.R. tracks. Hammond Marina borders the east end of the trap. A power plant can be seen from the west end of the trap.

When To Visit: This is the most well known and visited Lakefront Migrant Trap on Lake Michigan. It is also the most productive, given the right set of circumstances.

The best time to visit this site is right before, during or after a weather front has moved through. In spring, results can be amplified if a storm, or rain, prevents migrants from continuing their journey northward. North winds in spring, or south winds in the fall, will typically leave the trap void of avian activity.

Strategy: Visit the Migrant Trap during migratory periods during or after a weather front has moved through.

Directions: From Whiting Park, go south on 117th Street. Turn left (south) on Roberts Avenue. Turn right (west) on Indianapolis Boulevard. Continue past S.R. 41, following the brown “Hammond River Boat – Marina” sign. Turn left (south) at the huge red “Horseshoe Casino” sign. Follow this winding ramp and turn right at the brown “Marina / Overflow Parking” sign. Park at the east end of the overflow parking lot. Enter the sanctuary and walk west, birding the north side of The Migrant Trap (next to Lake Michigan). Be sure to scan the lake and beach. At the west end, be sure to check the flower beds for warblers and sparrows. Also, check the beach and brush just west of the trap. From the west end, work your way back east through the trap, birding the trail on the southern perimeter.

24. EGGER’S WOODS AND MARSH

Cook County – Illinois

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, B-3

Habitat: A marsh and deciduous woods. Open woodland park area surrounded by residential housing to the north. The toll road and a Nipsco Power Sub-station border the east.

When To Visit: April, May, September and October are the best months to visit this site for passerine migration. Yellow-headed Blackbirds can be found nesting here in spring and early summer.

Strategy: This site is visited primarily for the nesting Yellow-headed Blackbirds. Indiana birders wait at the road bordering the east side of the marsh. The Yellow-headed Blackbirds fly east past the power lines and toll road to feed in Indiana. This species is on your Indiana list when they are

east of the power lines.

Directions: From the overflow parking lot at the Migrant Trap, Turn left (east) and return to the exit ramp.

When facing Lake Michigan (T-section), turn left (west) onto the ramp.

Turn left (west) at S.R. 12 / 20 (a “to I-90” sign is overhead And it is also Indianapolis Boulevard).

Turn left (south) at the Skyway Shell (no street sign-a “To I-90” sign is here).

Turn left (south) on State Line Street.

At the T-section (112th Street), turn left (east).

Park on the north side of the road opposite the yellow gate.

A Nipsco Power Sub-station is here.

Walk ¼ mile south on this gravel road to the marsh.

Bird the woodland edge on the west side of the road on the way down.

When you get to the marsh, simply wait for the Yellow-headed Blackbirds to fly over into Indiana.

25. STATE LINE WOODS

WILLIAM W. POWERS STATE FISH AND

WILDLIFE AREA – Lake / Cook County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, B-3

Habitat: A wet deciduous woods which is bordered on the east by Wolf Lake. Bordering the west edge of the woods are R.R. tracks which serve as the Indiana / Illinois border for listing birders. Birds seen east of the tracks are in Indiana.

When To Visit: Passerines – April, May, late August, September and October. Visited primarily for passerine migration.

Strategy: For optimum results, visit this site when weather conditions are favorable. In spring, visit when winds are from the south. In fall, winds from the north are favorable.

Directions: From Egger’s Marsh, continue west on 112th Street

all the way to O Avenue.

Turn left (south) on O Avenue.

Turn left (east) on Veteran's Drive (William W. Powers State Fish and Wildlife Area).

Follow Veteran's Drive north till you reach the north end of Wolf Lake. Park in the northern most parking lot and head north into the woods, staying east of the R.R. tracks for Indiana birds.

26. CINDER FLATTS – Lake County **Indiana Delorme Map – Page 18, C-3**

Habitat: Shallow ponds with a cinder and gravel terrain.

The vegetation is sparse in this industrial setting. Scattered Cottonwood trees offer little cover for migrating passerines.

When To Visit: Shorebirds / gulls / terns – April, May, Mid-July, August, September and October.

Strategy: This site is visited for shorebirds, gulls and terns.

Directions: From William W. Powers State Fish and Wildlife Area, return to the park entrance and turn right (north) on O Avenue. Turn right (east) on 112th Street.

Turn left (north) on State Line Street.

Continue north back to the stop light (McDonald's Restaurant will be on the left-106th Street sign is here).

Turn right (east) on S.R. 12 / 20 / 41.

Go 50 yards and veer right onto the I-80 / 90 / 94 Ramp.

Continue south on I – 90.

Take the S.R. 41 / Calumet Avenue exit.

Turn left (south) on S.R. 41 (Calumet Avenue).

Turn left (east) on 141st Avenue (a Super 8 Motel will signal this Turn).

At 141st and Columbia Avenue, pull off to the right side of the Road.

Scan the ponds on the north side of the street.

27. GRANT STREET WETLANDS

Lake County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, D-5

Habitat: Flooded farm fields and mud flats.

When To Visit: Dabbling ducks, shorebirds and waders – Mid-march, April and May. This area is usually dry in the fall and is not visited by birders at this time.

Directions: From the Cinder Flats, turn around and head back west on 141st Avenue.

Turn right (north) on Calumet Avenue (S.R. 41).

Turn left onto I – 90 East Ramp.

Take exit # 10, 912 / Cline Avenue.

Stay in the left lane and take 912 South / Cline Avenue.

Turn left (south) onto Cline Avenue (to I – 94 sign is here).

Veer right and take I – 94 East / Detroit.

Take the Grant Street exit # 9 A.

Turn right (south) on Grant Street.

Turn right (west) onto the gravel road right in front of “J Care Service Center” (If you have reached the 1st stop light past the exit ramp or, reached the Flying J Travel Center, you have gone too far).

Follow this gravel road west and up onto the dike.

Drive this dike and bird the flooded farm fields on both sides.

If access to the dike is blocked (a locked gate), park at the gate and walk the dike.

Grant Street Wetlands can also be accessed from Chase Street:

Take Grant Street south to 35th Avenue.

Turn right (west) on 35th Avenue.

Turn right (north) on Chase Street.

Go about ¼ mile and turn right into a paved parking lot

Next to the dike. Walk east up to the dike and bird the flooded farm fields.

28. CHASE STREET WETLANDS

Lake County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, D-5

Habitat: Flooded farm fields. Deciduous tree lines surround the two fields. A drainage ditch and grasslands border the fields to the south.

When To Visit: This is a spring site. Like Grant Street, it is usually dry in the fall. Dabbling Ducks, shorebirds and waders – late March, April and May.

Directions: From the Grant Street Wetlands, continue south on Grant Street to 35th Avenue.

Turn right (west) on 35th Avenue.

Turn right (north) on Chase Street.

Pull over to the right (a gravel pull off) immediately after turning onto Chase Street (at the T-section of Chase and 35th).

Park and walk west across Chase Street. Walk south to the T-section of Chase and 35th Street.

From the yellow arrow sign, walk west on the dirt road beyond this T-section.

Bird the first two wet farm fields west of Chase Street.

29. TOM SPORRE WILDLIFE AREA

Lake County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 18, G-6

Habitat: A marsh surrounded by a tree line, with grasslands and farm fields beyond that.

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

Shorebirds – April, May, July, August, September and October.

Sparrows, warblers and other passerines – April, May, September and October. A well known site for Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow in September / October.

Directions: From the Chase Street Wetlands, turn left (south) on Chase Street.

Turn left (east) on 35th Avenue.

Be sure to veer right at the back of the shopping mall, as 35th Avenue temporarily splits.

Turn left (north) on Grant Street.

Take I – 80 / 94 / 6 East Exit.

Take I – 65 South (exit 11).

Take exit # 247, S.R. 231 (Crown Point / Hebron).

At the stop sign, turn right (east) on S.R. 231 South.

Once you pass Iowa Street and the yellow flashing traffic Lights, look for the brown “Tom Sporre Wildlife Area” sign.

Turn right (south) into the Tom Sporre Wildlife Area Parking lot.

Follow the dirt / grass road which begins at the southwest corner of the parking lot. If you don’t have 4-wheel drive, use your best judgement. You may want to walk this road.

This road will take you around the west side of the marsh.

This road becomes impassable at the southeast corner of the marsh. The most southern part of the marsh seems to be the most productive.

30. JERRY ALLEN MARSH

Porter County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, G-8

Habitat: A dedicated Wetlands Preserve. A deciduous woods borders the southern edge of the marsh with farm land to the north.

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

Shorebirds – late March, April, May, July, August, September and October. Passerines at the woodland edge – April, May, late August, September and October.

Directions: From the Tom Sporre Wildlife Area, turn right

(southeast) on S.R. 231.
 Take S.R. 231 southeast to Hebron.
 In Hebron, turn left (north) on S.R. 2.
 Take S.R. 2 north to C.R. 650 S..
 Turn right (east) on C.R. 650 S..
 Turn left (north) on C.R. 450 W..
 You will be at the marsh when C.R. 450 W. elbows right
 And becomes C.R. 550 S..
 At this elbow in the road, turn left (north) onto the grass road,
 which leads to the marsh parking lot.
 Park at the steel gate. Walk past this gate north to the marsh.
 When this road dead ends at the marsh, scan the eastern section
 of the marsh.
 Then, turn left (west) and follow this road to the western
 section of the marsh.
 Scan the west marsh for shorebirds, waterfowl and waders.
 The woodland edge on the south side of the marsh is good
 for migrating passerines.

31. GRAND KANKAKEE MARSH

Lake County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 19, H-7

Habitat: Marsh, woodland edge to the distant north of
 the marsh.

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

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

Directions: From Jerry Allen Marsh, turn right (south) on
 C.R. 450 W..

Turn right (west) on C.R. 650 S..

Turn left (south) on S.R. 2.

Take S.R. 2 past Hebron, where it also becomes S.R. 231.

Turn right (west) and stay on S.R. 2 (also C.R. 1000 S).

Once you pass County Line Road (“Enter Lake County, Leave Porter County” sign is here), look for Union Road. Turn left (south) on Union Road (a “Morrow’s Turkey Farm” sign will signal this road).

Follow Union Road south till it dead ends.

Turn left (east) at this T-section.

Follow this road as it veers right (south) and dead ends at the marsh.

You will see the dike of the marsh on the left (east) side of the road. At the “Authorized Vehicle Only” sign, park by this gate and walk the road south, and then east up on to the dike. Follow the dike around the marsh, scanning for waterfowl, shorebirds and waders.

32. SCHNEIDER SOD FARM

Lake County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 24, B-4

Habitat: Sod farm.

When To Visit: Shorebird migration – April, May, July, August, September and October.

Directions: From Grand Kankakee Marsh, turn around and follow the road back north. As the road winds left (west), turn right (north) on Union Road (as soon as you cross the bridge / drainage canal / T-section / no road sign).

Follow Union Road north to S.R. 2.

Turn left (west) on S.R. 2.

Follow S.R. 2 past I – 65 and the town of Lowell.

Turn left (south) on S.R. 41.

Approaching the town of Schneider, you will see the Huber Sod Farm on the right (west) side of S.R. 41.

Pass the sod farm and turn left (east) on 239th Avenue (if you have passed the Marathon station on your right, you have gone too far).

Turn left (north) on Parrish Avenue. The sod farm begins

after you cross the R.R. tracks, on the left (west) side of the road. Bird the sod farm while driving north on Parrish Avenue. Turn around and head back south on Parrish Avenue. Turn right (west) on 236th Street (north side of R.R. tracks). This gravel road borders the south side of the sod farm. Continue west on 236th Street, birding the sod farm.
Do not access any private drives!!!

33. PRAIRIE CHICKEN REFUGE / ENOS

Newton County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 24, D-4 / 5

Habitat: Prairie, Grasslands, open woodlands and a pine forest.

When To Visit: Nesting grassland species – April, May and June. Wintering grassland species – October, November, December, January, February and March.

Strategy: The drive-by birding technique is used here. Drive slowly and listen for sparrows, meadowlarks, Bobolinks and look for shorebirds in the flooded fields. In winter, scan the fields for hunting Rough-legged Hawks, Northern Harriers, Short-eared Owls and Merlin. Under the cover of snow, look for flocks of Lapland Longspurs with a few Snow Buntings mixed in.

Directions: From the Schneider Sod Farm, turn around and head back east on 236th Street.

Turn right (south) on Parrish Avenue.

Turn right (west) on 239th Street.

Turn left (south) on S.R. 41.

Take S.R.41 South past a green “Lake Village” sign, on the right hand side of the road.

Turn left (east) on C.R. 800 N. (the next road past the Citgo gas station, on the left (east) side of S.R. 41).

Cross the R.R. tracks and go past the Cell phone tower.

Turn right (south) at the first county road (a T-section).

This is C.R. 200 W.. The C.R. 200 W. sign is concealed by a telephone pole.

After you pass C.R. 700 N., roll down your windows. Look and listen for grassland species.

When you see a white “State Refuge” sign on the left (east) side of the road, start pulling over periodically to listen for: Bell’s Vireo, Blue Grosbeak, Grasshopper Sparrow, Dickcissel, Bobolink, Western Meadowlark, Henslow’s Sparrow, Upland Sandpiper and other grassland species.

Turn left (east) on C.R. 250 N..

Go past North Newton Jr. / Sr. High School and turn left (north) into the gravel parking lot with the “Nature Conservancy – Kankakee Sands” sign. Look for Upland Sandpiper here.

Turn left (east) back onto C.R. 250 N..

At the stop sign, cross Meridian Street.

Go about a half mile and pull over (half way through the cattle Pasture to your north – a large tree on the north side of the Road will signal where to stop).

Search and listen for Upland Sandpiper.

Playing a tape of Upland Sandpiper often helps.

Turn around and head back west on C.R. 250 N..

Turn left (south) on C.R. 200 W..

Turn right (west) on C.R. 225 N. (an elbow right).

Turn left (south) on C.R. 250 W..

Go about ½ mile and search for Bobolink in the cattle pastures on the left (east) side of the road.

Turn around and head back north on C.R. 250 W..

At the T-section, turn left (west) on C.R. 225 N..

Turn right (north) on S.R. 41.

Turn left (west) on C.R. 400 N..

Go ½ mile down and stop when you see a grassy hill on the Left (south) side of the road. Search and listen for Upland Sandpiper.

34. KANKAKEE SANDS – NATURE CONSERVANCY HEADQUARTERS

Newton County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 24, D-4

Habitat: Grasslands, wet areas and shallow ponds.

When To Visit: Nesting grassland species – April, May and June. Shorebirds – April, May and June for nesting shorebirds. This area is usually dry in the fall, but it is still excellent for wintering grassland species.

Directions: From C.R. 400 N., turn around and head back east on C.R. 400N..

Turn right (south) on S.R. 41.

Go ½ mile and turn right (west) at “The Nature Conservancy-Kankakee Sands – Efroymsen Restoration Project” sign (also TNC Parking Unit K).

Park next to the Nature Conservancy Office (brown log house).

Walk into the north field toward the huge dedicated boulder. Northwest of the boulder is a shallow pond which is good for shorebirds in spring. Search and listen for grassland species.

Return to the Nature Conservancy Office.

Then, walk into the prairie south of the office.

Walk in a southwesterly direction until you reach another shallow pond. Scan it for shorebirds and dabbling ducks.

If these shallow ponds are dry, then concentrate on grassland species.

35. KANKAKEE SANDS – BOGUS ISLAND **UNIT – NATURE CONSERVANCY**

Newton County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 24, D-4

Habitat: Marsh, wet and dry grasslands.

When To Visit: One could bird this area year round and find good birds. The best time to bird this site is in the spring, since it can dry up by late summer or fall. Birds that have nested here in the past include King Rail, Blue-winged Teal, Wilson's Phalarope, Grasshopper Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Henslow's Sparrow and Upland Sandpiper.

Strategy: Walk the dirt road leading north into the marsh. Set up a scope to view shorebirds. To detect secretive species, playing a tape is the preferred method. Walking into the marsh may destroy habitat and nests. But remember, don't play the tape too long.

Directions: From the Nature Conservancy Headquarters, Return to S.R. 41.

Turn right (south) on S.R. 41.

Turn right (west) on C.R. 225 N.

Go about ¼ mile down and park in the dirt parking lot on the right (north) side of the road. Walk the dirt truck road north to the marsh and grasslands.

36. WILLOW SLOUGH – Newton County **Indiana Delorme Map: Page 24, D / E – 4**

Habitat: Deciduous woods, lake, marsh, grasslands, farm fields and pine forests.

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

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

Passerines – April, May, late August, September and October.

In winter, search for Long-eared Owls in the stands of pines.

Work the county roads for Rough-legged Hawks, Merlin and Short-eared Owls. In deep snow, Horned Larks, Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings can usually be found working the edges of the county roads. White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows can usually be found in good numbers in the winter.

The drive-by birding technique will be used extensively here.

Directions: From the Bogus Island Unit of Kankakee Sands, take C.R.225 N. back east to S.R. 41.

Turn right (south) on S.R. 41.

Turn right (west) on C.R. 100 N. (Yellow flashing signal here with a brown “Willow Slough Fish and Wildlife Area” sign).

Go ¼ mile past C.R. 400 W. and pull over when you see the tall sandy hill on the right (north) side of the road. This is one of the most reliable sites in northwest Indiana for Lark Sparrow, which nests here. Search the sandy road on the south side of C.R. 100 N. (1/4 mile long).

Continue west on C.R. 100 N. and 100 yards past Old Orchard Road / Parking Area 9A. Pull over, search and listen for Turkey at the woodland edge.

Continue west on C.R. 100 N. and turn right (north) into Parking Area 9. Search and listen for Turkey, Lark Sparrow and other passerines.

Continue west on C.R. 100 N. and turn right (north) on C.R. 600 W. (T-section).

Turn right (east) in Parking Area 5D.

Search and listen for Orchard Oriole, Lark Sparrow and other migrants.

Leaving Parking Area 5D, turn left (south) on C.R. 600 W..

Turn right (west) on C.R. 100 N. (T-section).

Go 150 yards or so and turn left (south) on Patrol Road – Area 3. Pull into Parking Area 3A.

This is the intersection of Patrol and Pogue Road. The road leading west from this intersection is blocked by a wire rope.

Walk past this wire rope west and look down on the wet meadow to your south. In spring, Henslow's Sparrows,

American Woodcock, Sedge Wren, Sandhill Crane,

Great Horned and Eastern Screech Owl can often be heard here at dusk. Turn around and head back north on Patrol

Road. Turn left (west) on C.R. 100 N..

Turn left (south) on the 1st gravel road west of Patrol Road (opposite Parking Area 14A).

Listen for Bell's Vireo while driving this gravel road. Sandhill Cranes have been noted foraging in the fields here.

Turn left (east) at the intersection just past Parking Area 4.

At the dead end, park in this lot and walk northeast on the grass Road (roped off). Walk a ½ mile down and back, birding the

J.C. Murphy Marsh.

From this parking lot, go west on Parking Area 4 Road.

Turn left at C.R. 700 W. (dead end / T-section / no C.R. sign).

Drive slowly and turn left (east) at the very next parking area / road. This is “**6A Parking – Salisbury and Rookery**”. The sign is not visible because it is facing the opposite direction (south).

Once you have turned into the Salisbury Rookery (6A), go 10 yards and turn left. Park in front of the dike. Walk up onto the dike and scan for shorebirds and waterfowl.

Then continue east into Parking Area 6A / Salisbury, to the Next parking area.

Take the grass road east past the wire rope for ½ mile or so. The wet fields and marsh are good for migrating shorebirds and waterfowl.

From the Salisbury Rookery / Parking Area 6A, turn left (south) on C.R. 700 W..

Turn left (east) at the large brown “Willow Slough – Fish and Wildlife Area – Division of Fish and Wildlife – Department of Natural Resources” sign.

Follow this road east to the Willow Slough Headquarters.

Park at the northeast end of the lot. Scan **J.C. Murphy Lake** for waterfowl, gulls and terns. Walk to your southeast and bird the southern section of the lake (you can walk out on a small dike here).

Then, walk west past the headquarters and boat launch to the Dam. Walk north on the dike past the catwalk. Veer left onto the widely mowed trail. This trail is good during migration for warblers and other passerines.

37. PINE CREEK GAMEBIRD HABITAT **AREA – Benton County**

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 31, B / C – 8

Access: This area is heavily hunted in the fall.

In fall, restrict your birding to the overlooks on both sides of the road.

Habitat: Marsh, grasslands and scattered trees.

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

Strategy: Most birders visit this site for the waterfowl and Shorebird migration.

Directions: From the Willow Slough Fish and Wildlife Area, Follow the Headquarters road west back to C.R. 700 W. (also State Line Road for Illinois).

At the stop sign, turn left (south) C.R. 700 W..

At the dead end / T-section, turn left (east) on C.R. 2950 N. (old S.R. 114 / C.R. 400 S.).

Turn right (south) on S.R. 41 (flashing red traffic signal).

Take S.R. 41 south past Kentland and veer right onto S.R. 52 East / Lafayette Exit.

On the south side of Fowler, turn left (east) on S.R. 18.

Turn left (north) on C.R. 850 E. (in Benton County).

Turn right (east) on C.R. 200 N..

Continue east on C.R. 200 N. until you see marsh on both sides of the road. Stop here and scan for shorebirds and waterfowl.

Continue east for 50 yards or so. Turn right (south) into "Parking – Lot 3".

From this lot, walk south to the roped off grass road. For Closer viewing, walk south down the grass road to the edge of the marsh.

This grass road will then turn left (east) and take you to another pond / marsh directly behind the farm house east of the refuge.

Scan this pond for waterfowl and shorebirds.

Return to Parking – Lot 3. From the lot, walk north across C.R. 200 N..

Walk past the "Pine Creek Gamebird Habitat Area" sign to the north marsh overlook.

Scan the north marsh for waterfowl, shorebirds and waders. If One has time, work the fields around the marsh for grassland species.

38. BIG PINE CREEK – KRAMER

Warren County

Indiana Delorme Map: Page 30, G-6

Habitat: Extensive mature deciduous woods with steep ravines and Big Pine Creek.

When To Visit: This site is visited primarily for woodland species during spring migration – April and May.

Strategy: Visit this site when you are doing a Big Day in Northwest Indiana. At the southern edge of the northwest Region, species can be found here that typically cannot be found in the dunes area. Carolina Chickadee, Summer Tanager, Yellow-throated Warbler, Kentucky Warbler and Worm-eating Warbler are all species that can't be found in the dunes.

Directions: From Pine Creek Gamebird Habitat Area, turn Around and head back west on C.R. 200 N..

Turn left (south) on C.R. 850 E. (stop sign / T-section).

Turn right (west) on Division Road (also S.R. 18).

At the State Road T-section, turn right (north) on S.R. 18 West / 55 North / 52 West.

At the stop light / Amoco Station, turn left (west) on S.R. 18. Turn left (south) on S.R. 41.

Take S.R. 41 south past S.R.26.

Veer right onto the S.R. 41 South / Attica Exit.

The very 1st road after the S.R. 41 / Attica Exit ramp is Twin Bridges Road (only 30 or so yards south of the exit ramp).

Turn left (east) on Twin Bridges Road.

Take this winding road till it dead ends at a T-section next to **Big Pine Creek**.

Turn left (north) on Pot Holes Road.

Pause at the bridge, scanning and listening for migrating Song birds.

Cross the bridge and turn right (east) on Hogback Hill Road.

Yellow-throated Warbler, Parula Warbler and Louisiana

Waterthrush can usually be heard here in spring.

Stop at Mailbox # 1014 – Hogback Hill.

This section of the road is good for Carolina Chickadee, Summer Tanager and Parula Warbler.

Continue east on Hogback Hill Road.

At the dead end / T-section, turn right (south) on Hunter Hill Road. Immediately to your left you will see a small pull off for one or two cars.

Park here and take the trail east for 150 yards or so, birding for migrating passerines.

Continue south on Hunter Hill Road and pull off at the first Dirt parking area to your right (west).

Scan and listen for Kentucky Warbler here. Check all the steeply wooded ravines along Hunter Hill Road for Worm-eating Warbler. Play a Worm-eating Warbler tape if you have one. From this first dirt pull off on the right, a trail leads west into the woods. Hike this trail for warblers and other passerines.

Continue southeast on Hunter Hill Road to the intersection of Hunter Hill Road and Kramer Road.

At this triangular intersection, Yellow-throated Warbler can be found in the huge Sycamore Tree on the north side of the road. Summer Tanager can be found here as well.

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