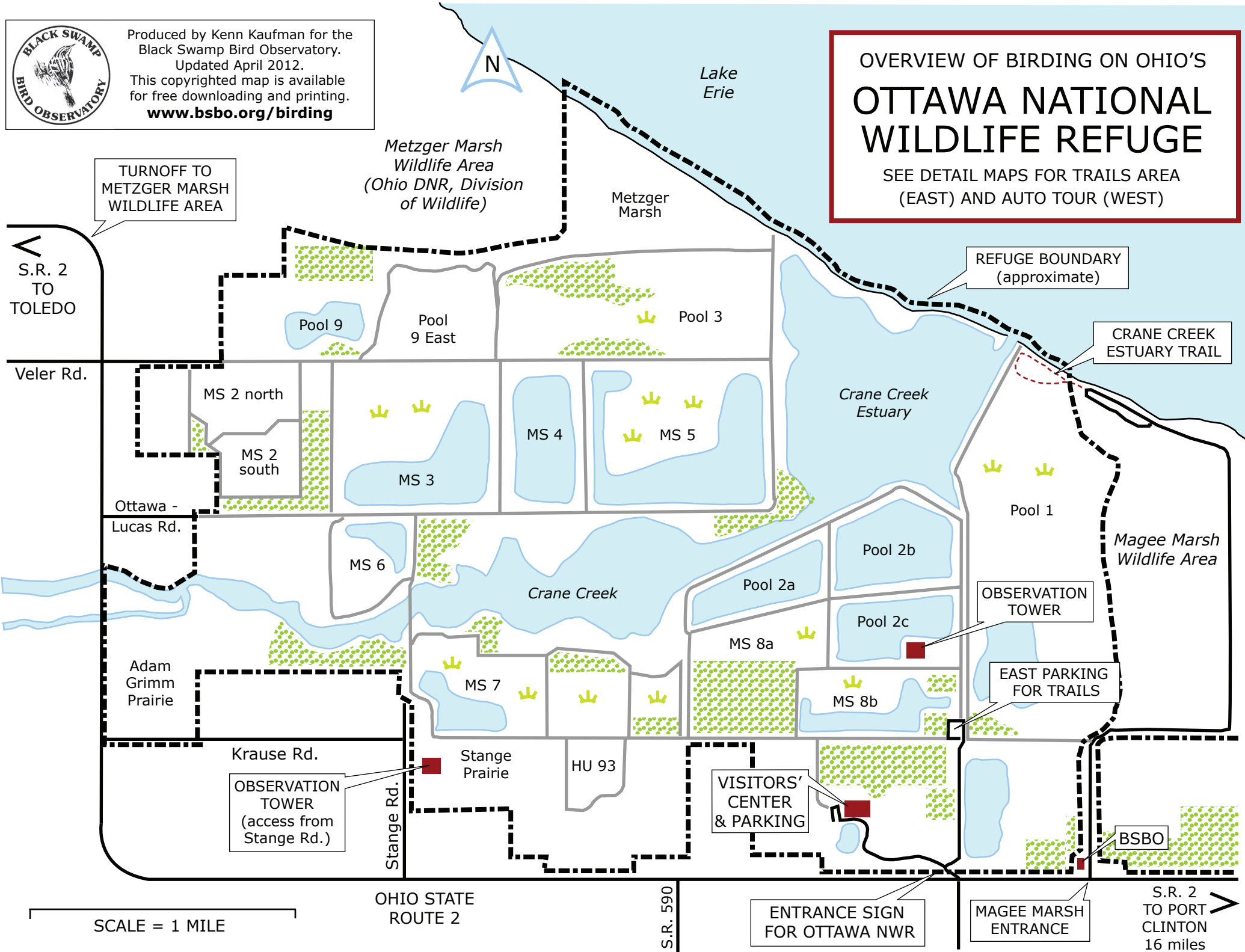




Produced by Kenn Kaufman for the Black Swamp Bird Observatory.
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www.bsbo.org/birding

OVERVIEW OF BIRDING ON OHIO'S
OTTAWA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
 SEE DETAIL MAPS FOR TRAILS AREA (EAST) AND AUTO TOUR (WEST)



SCALE = 1 MILE

OHIO STATE ROUTE 2

S.R. 590

ENTRANCE SIGN FOR OTTAWA NWR

MAGEE MARSH ENTRANCE

S.R. 2 TO PORT CLINTON 16 miles

Overview of birding at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Ohio

Notes to accompany the birding map provided by Black Swamp Bird Observatory

Note: this is not an official refuge map. Staff of Ottawa NWR were very helpful in providing information, but any errors are not the responsibility of Ottawa NWR or the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Trails, roads, and other areas shown on the map may be temporarily or permanently closed to the public, and visitors must always observe such closures.

Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge currently encompasses more than 5000 acres, including areas not shown on this map, such as sections south of Route 2 and well to the east. The map shows the main areas that are likely to be visited by the birding public.

The majority of the land for Ottawa NWR was purchased with money raised by the federal "duck stamp" (Migratory Bird Conservation and Hunting Stamp). Habitat on the refuge benefits many kinds of birds, not just ducks, and it provides a prime example of the reasons why Black Swamp Bird Observatory always encourages birders to buy the duck stamp!

Ottawa NWR provides the possibility for excellent birding almost every day of the year. Huge numbers of waterfowl gather here in migration, especially in late fall and early spring. Shorebirds are often abundant in spring, late summer, and fall. Wooded areas on the refuge often swarm with warblers and other migrant songbirds, especially in May and September. Notable nesting birds in the marshes here have included American and Least Bitterns, Virginia and King Rails, Sandhill Crane, Black Tern, and Yellow-headed Blackbird. Bald Eagles are common year-round.

Management of wetland areas for wildlife habitat is complicated. Water levels need to be manipulated for different groups of species, for control of invasive plants, and for a variety of other aims. Ottawa NWR staff do a superb job of this, but the reasons for some decisions may not be obvious to a casual observer. At any given time, various impoundments shown on the map may have deep water, shallow water, or no water, so the areas of wetland shown on the map should not be taken as to represent permanent bodies of water.

There are six main ways to approach birding the refuge:

1. Start by going to the Visitors' Center. Open seven days a week, it features fine interpretive displays and a raised observation deck. From behind the center, a boardwalk connects to trails that are open from dawn to dusk every day.
2. Go to the East Parking Lot (shown on the map as "East parking for trails") and walk from there. Various trails lead through woods and around impoundments in the area. The small woodlots often are excellent for songbird migrants. Many ducks and other water birds can be found on pools 2a, 2b, and 2c, and on MS 8a and 8b; the dikes around these impoundments also can be explored by bicycle. See our more detailed map on "Eastern Section: Trails" at www.bsbo.org/birding
3. Go on the Auto Tour. Generally open the third Saturday of the month, and sometimes on other days, it gives access to parts of the refuge that are usually off limits. See our more detailed map of the western section, including the Auto Tour.
4. Check areas of the refuge that are visible from the periphery. Two miles west of the main entrance, Stange Road runs north from State Route 2; near the junction of Stange and Krause is an observation tower. From the tower, with a telescope, you can get a good view of water birds on MS 7 and of grassland birds nearer the tower. To the west on Krause Road is a parking area for the Adam Grimm Prairie, which has typical grassland birds, especially in summer. From State Route 2 west of the refuge, take either Ottawa-Lucas Road or Veler Road east to where they end at closed gates, and look south over the adjacent impoundments, which may have waterfowl or shorebirds.
5. Go to the boardwalk at Magee Marsh Wildlife Area and take the trail that leads west from the northwest corner of the parking lot to reach the refuge's Crane Creek Estuary Trail.
6. There are sometimes opportunities to visit other parts of the refuge as part of the monthly census or other programs. Contact the friends' group, the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge Association, via their website (www.onwra.com) or call the refuge office at 419 898 0014.