

OTTAWA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Guided Van Trip

6:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



Brought to you by Black Swamp Bird Observatory

Sandhill Crane

Field Trip Information

About

One of the most beloved birding hotspots in the region is Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. Many birders enjoy the wonderful auto tour, woodlot trails, and beautiful visitors center. But did you know there is much more to this refuge? There are additional properties all around the region that are owned and managed as part of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, and this van trip sets out to bird the well-known and lesser-known parts of the refuge! The wide array of habitats this trip covers allows for a diverse and exciting species list, including many migrant songbirds, waders, water birds, shorebirds, raptors, and much more!



Black-necked Stilt

Accessibility

Birding the sites covered on this field trip involves a series of wide, almost completely flat trails. Depending on the location, the trails may be mown grass, packed dirt, or loose gravel. While not essential to the birding at this site, the observation tower at Stange Road observation tower has a steep ramp to the top. When driving the auto tour loop, birding is possible from the van, but there could be a few times when the group might get in and out of the van if shorebird or waterfowl flocks are nearby. This trip does involve being away from the vehicle for close to an hour at a time at some of the sites. At all points on this trip, the group will be near the Ottawa NWR Visitor Center, where flush, accessible restrooms are available.



Common Gallinule

Van Trip Information

This van trip departs from Maumee Bay State Park Lodge promptly at 6:00 a.m. and returns at 2:00 p.m. Ottawa NWR is approximately 20 minutes from the lodge. Each site visited is around 5-10 minutes from one another, resulting in less time driving between sites and more time birding.

Birding Information

Target Species

Ottawa NWR protects diverse habitats, including open marsh, forest, and grasslands. In the marsh units, water levels will vary, creating opportunities for an extensive species list. In the marshes, look for Sandhill Cranes, Sora, Virginia and King Rails, Black-necked Stilts, Wilson's Phalaropes, American White Pelicans, Common Gallinules, and any migrant shorebird species using the mudflats. Search cormorant flocks for the rare but almost annual Neotropic Cormorant. The wooded habitat near the visitors center can be one of the best patches for migrant warblers and thrushes. Sometimes, Common Nighthawk and Eastern Whip-poor-wills roost in here, too! Open field habitat can be excellent for sparrows such as Savannah and White-crowned, Horned Lark, and various raptor species!



Savannah Sparrow

eBird Protocol

Your field trip leaders are responsible for eBirding all of The Biggest Week In American Birding field trips. They will be keeping lists during the day for all sites visited. These will become available for participants to add to their eBird accounts. Please be patient as our dedicated festival volunteers sort the checklists that are being submitted and upload them to The Biggest Week In American Birding website. Please allow a few days for this process to take place. You can check the status of your eBird lists by visiting biggestweekinamericanbirding.com and clicking "*Area Info*" in the top menu and selecting "*Field Trips*" and then "*eBird Checklists*" from the dropdown menu. Select the day of your field trip from our menu and look for the trip you attended. There you will find all of the links to the different eBird lists submitted by your field trip leader.



Ottawa NWR
eBird Page