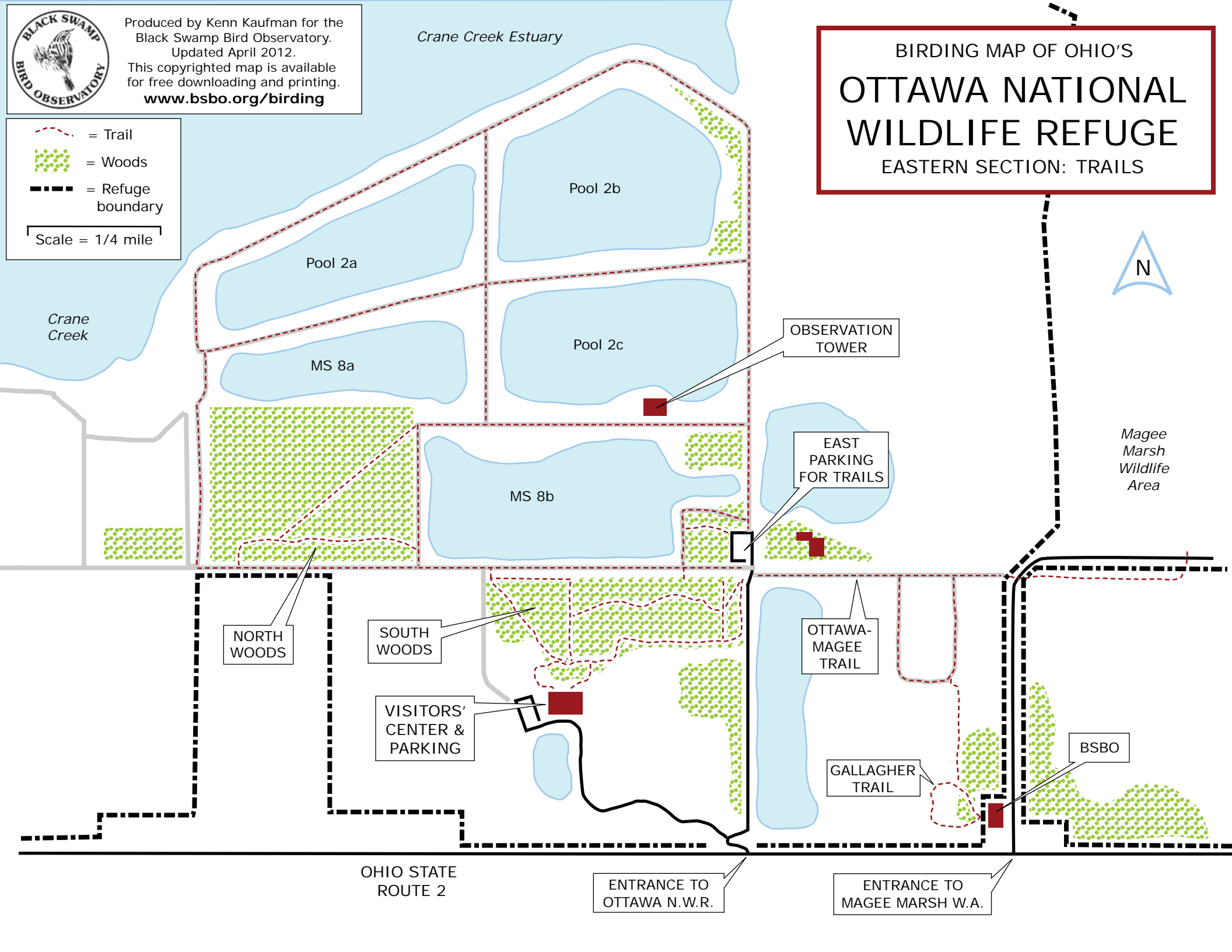




Produced by Kenn Kaufman for the Black Swamp Bird Observatory. Updated April 2012. This copyrighted map is available for free downloading and printing. www.bsbo.org/birding

BIRDING MAP OF OHIO'S
OTTAWA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
EASTERN SECTION: TRAILS

= Trail
 = Woods
 = Refuge boundary
 Scale = 1/4 mile



NORTH WOODS

SOUTH WOODS

VISITORS' CENTER & PARKING

OHIO STATE ROUTE 2

ENTRANCE TO OTTAWA N.W.R.

GALLAGHER TRAIL

ENTRANCE TO MAGEE MARSH W.A.

OTTAWA-MAGEE TRAIL

OBSERVATION TOWER

EAST PARKING FOR TRAILS

BSBO

Magee Marsh Wildlife Area

Crane Creek Estuary

Pool 2b

Pool 2a

Pool 2c

MS 8a

MS 8b

Crane Creek

Birding the trails and eastern section of 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 this map was produced independently, and 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.

Trails on dikes around large impoundments and through wooded areas in the eastern part of the main unit of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge provide very productive birding at all seasons. Occasionally these areas may be closed for a few days for reasons of habitat management, but typically they are open seven days a week from dawn to dusk. Trails through the woods are best birded slowly, on foot, but the dirt roads on the dikes around the larger impoundments (Pools 2a, 2b, and 2c, and MS 8a and 8b) may be explored by bicycle (a mountain bike with wide tires is best).

The Visitors' Center is a good place to start. The center itself has interpretive displays, knowledgeable staff and volunteers, a bookshop, and an elevated observation deck. Trails immediately behind the center lead to a boardwalk through a beautiful swampy woodland and connect to the rest of the trail system.

A second access point is the east parking lot, half a mile directly north of the main entrance. From here one may walk through the wooded areas to the west and south or around the impoundments to the north. The small unnamed woodlot just west of this parking lot, as well as the South Woods and North Woods, are all favorite places to look for warblers and other songbird migrants during spring and fall.

Pools 2a, 2b, and 2c, as well as MS 8a and 8b, are usually good places to look for ducks, grebes, egrets, and other marsh birds. When water levels have been lowered, they may have many

shorebirds as well. In addition to water birds, however, birders should note that the brush and trees along the dikes can be excellent for close views of warblers and other migrating songbirds on days following a good overnight arrival of migrants. The birds can be concentrated in these narrow strips of vegetation and can be surprisingly easy to see.

An observation tower on the south side of Pool 2c offers a good overview of the pool and marsh.

The trail along the north side of Pool 2a and Pool 2b overlooks the estuary of Crane Creek. Water levels in the estuary vary from day to day; they are often lower on days with southwest winds and higher with northeast winds (when the wind causes Lake Erie waters to back up into the estuary). When the water is low, there are often many shorebirds here.

(Note that in spring 2012, the north and east sides of Pool 2b are closed to protect a nesting pair of Bald Eagles.)

From the east parking lot it is also possible to walk east along the Ottawa – Magee Partnership Trail. This also can be accessed from its east end on the Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, where it connects to the parking area at the Sportsmen's Migratory Bird Center. The trail passes through areas of thickets, woods, and marsh, and can be very good for wintering sparrows and for a wide variety of other songbirds during migration. This trail connects to the John F. Gallagher Memorial Trail, which is also accessed from behind the Black Swamp Bird Observatory, just north of State Route 2 at the entrance to Magee Marsh Wildlife Area. The trail leads through woodland edge, second growth woods, and meadow.

A new trail, not shown on this map, is opening in spring 2012. Accessed from the parking lot at the Magee Marsh Wildlife Area boardwalk, this new "Crane Creek Estuary Trail" will loop west through open woods similar to those along the Magee boardwalk, and should provide excellent views of warblers and other migratory songbirds in spring and fall.