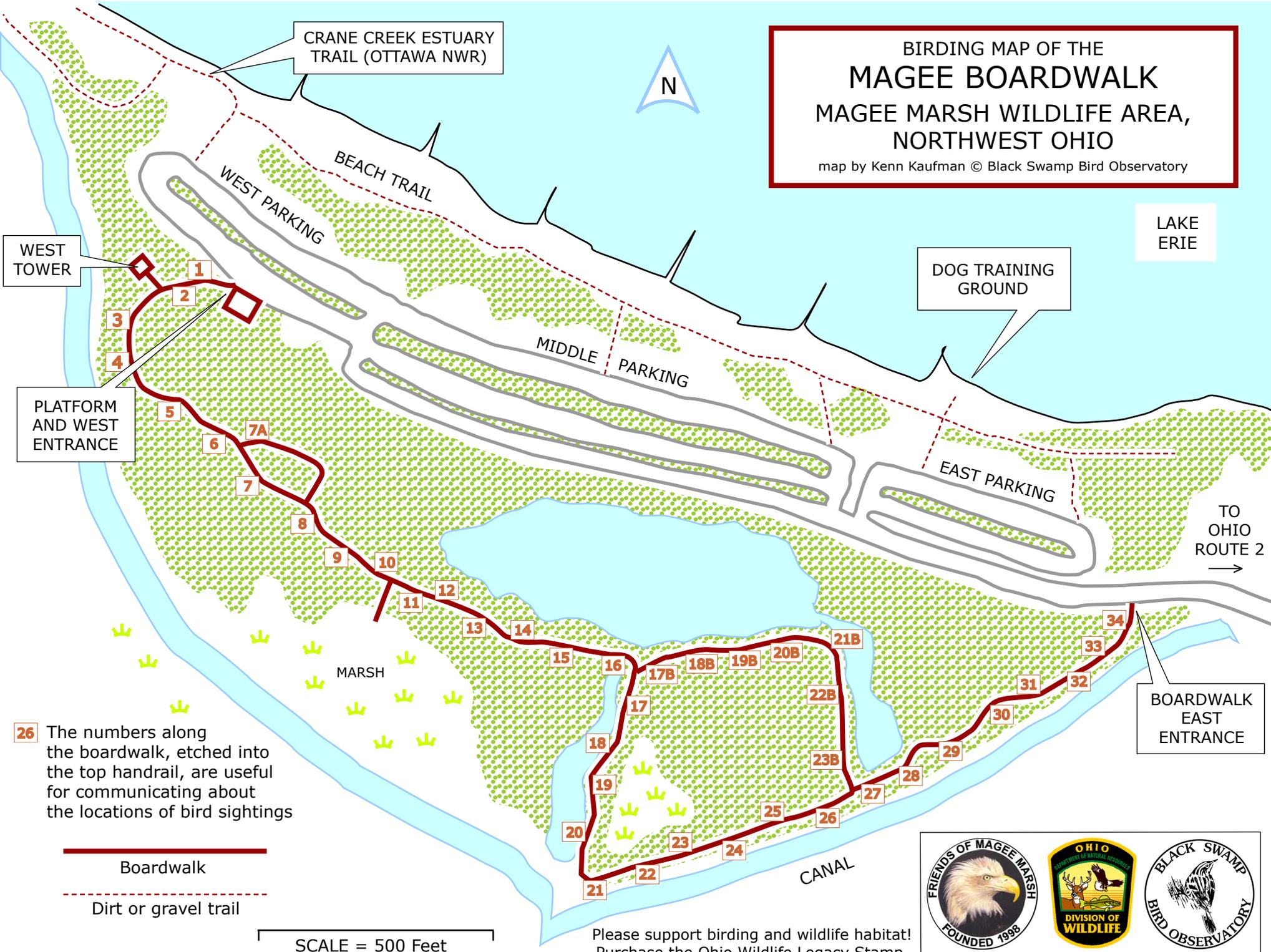


# BIRDING MAP OF THE MAGEE BOARDWALK MAGEE MARSH WILDLIFE AREA, NORTHWEST OHIO

map by Kenn Kaufman © Black Swamp Bird Observatory



**26** The numbers along the boardwalk, etched into the top handrail, are useful for communicating about the locations of bird sightings

————— Boardwalk  
- - - - - Dirt or gravel trail

SCALE = 500 Feet

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# Birding the Boardwalk at Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, Lucas County, northwest Ohio

Map and notes by Kenn Kaufman, updated April 2018

One of the most famous birding sites in North America. The boardwalk that provides spectacular views of warblers during migration is located on the **Magee Marsh Wildlife Area**, administered by the **Ohio Department of Natural Resources - Division of Wildlife**. The Division of Wildlife was responsible for construction of the boardwalk, completed in 1989. An independent nonprofit support group, **Friends of Magee Marsh**, carried out renovations and improvements to the boardwalk beginning in 2014. The area immediately to the west is part of **Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge**, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The spring bird festival in the area, the Biggest Week In American Birding, is hosted by the **Black Swamp Bird Observatory**, an independent nonprofit organization supported by its members.

**Notes on specific sites:** Although this area offers fine birding most of the year, most visitors come here in spring, so these notes focus on the birding possibilities in April and May.

**Numbers along the boardwalk**, etched into the handrail, are useful for knowing your location and communicating about sightings. Notes about some specific points along the boardwalk:

**Platform at west entrance:** A good vantage point for a variety of species working along the edge.

**2-3:** Often good for warblers feeding low, just inside the forest. The wet area just east of this attracts waterthrushes and other swamp-associated birds.

**West tower:** A raised platform surrounded by willows. Waves of birds move through, so it may be very active or very quiet.

**5:** Migrant Whip-poor-wills sometimes roost in daytime here.

**7A loop:** Very good for treetop warblers in general and often a good spot to see cuckoos in May. The wet area just to the north is good for waterthrushes and other skulkers.

**10:** Open woods, good for thrushes and for skulking warblers like Connecticuts. The spur to the south enters an open area, good for marsh birds, or for scanning treetops for Olive-sided Flycatcher.

**16:** Often a concentration point for warblers. Brush piles just north of this number may have Mourning Warbler in late May.

**18-20:** Good area for Willow and Alder Flycatchers in late May.

**22-33:** With a narrow strip of land along the boardwalk, if you proceed quietly, you may get close looks at thrushes and others on the ground. Dogwood fruits attract many birds in early fall.

**22B:** One of the best areas for Rusty Blackbird in early spring.

**19B:** The pond to the north often has ducks and other water birds, while the swampy area to the south is good for Prothonotary Warbler, Hooded Warbler, and others.

**North edge of woods** (south edge of parking lots): Sometimes the best birding is here, especially early in the morning while things are quiet inside the woods, and especially with south winds. Good for peering into the woods to see thrushes, Ovenbirds, etc., on forest floor. Photography (especially for those using large lenses and tripods) is much easier here than on the confined space of the boardwalk. Please stay out of eagle closure areas.

**Crane Creek Estuary Trail:** From the northwest corner of the parking lot, this trail leads into Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. The half-mile loop reaches the Crane Creek estuary. Shorebirds gather here when the water is low; a spotting scope may be necessary for good views. Songbird migrants are often common.

**Beach Trail:** Worth checking for shorebirds, terns, gulls resting on the short breakwaters, flocks of ducks offshore. Here and elsewhere in the area, please stay on designated trails.

**Dog Training Area:** Beach north of the east parking. Dogs are allowed off leash here, but should be kept on leashes in all other areas, and no dogs are allowed on the boardwalk. This section of beach also offers the easiest access to the lake for kayakers.

*Printing and free distribution of this map made possible by an ODNR - Division of Wildlife grant, funded by the sales of the Ohio Wildlife Legacy Stamp and wildlife license plates.*