

NASA Plum Brook Station

Restroom:

There are restrooms available at the security check in center at Plum Brook. Please use these rather than the Mobil gas station in order to provide more time in Plum Brook for birding

There is a restroom available at the Engineering building inside Plum Brook. The location is marked on the last map below. There are also picnic tables at this location in the event that the group would like to have a sit down lunch.

There is a Mobil gas station (7001 Milan Rd, Sandusky, OH 44870) approx. 2 miles from the turn off to Plum Brook (E Scheid Rd)

All participants **MUST** be US citizens

All participants **MUST** present a valid US government issued photo ID at the security check point

Estimated arrival at Plum Brook is 7:30 AM. Check in with security should be fairly quick as they will have name badges already printed. They will verify each ID with the name listed on the badge. Estimated departure will need to be at 1:00 PM. Approximately 5 hours of birding time within Plum Brook

Site Information

NASA Plum Brook Station is one of the largest, fenced facilities in Ohio, 6400 acres owned by NASA (10 sq miles), 5200 acres enclosed. In WWII the site was the Plum Brook Ordnance Works, where over a billion pounds of TNT and other explosives were manufactured for the war effort. In 1958 NASA began acquiring the site for field test operations originating at the parent Lewis Field Research Center, now, the Glenn Research Center near Cleveland.

Plum Brook Station has five major ecosystem remnants: a) native tallgrass prairie, b) oak-hickory forest, c) oak savanna, d) mixed-mesophytic deciduous forest, and e) remnants of elm-ash swamp forest (an outlier of the Black Swamp 30 miles to the west).

Additionally, other upland habitats abound, particularly woody brush, old-field meadows, and early successional forests. Few other Ohio sites have such a concentration of native habitats. One 100-acre area is restored wetlands.

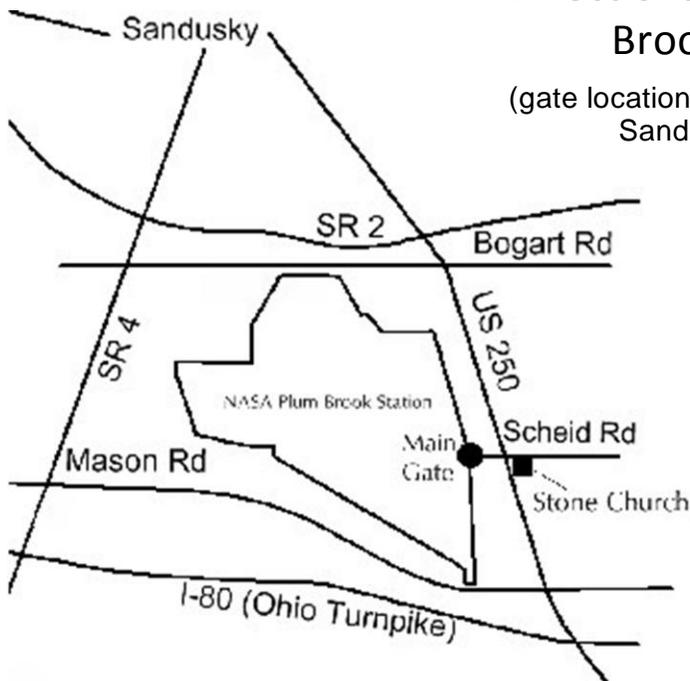
Visitation is restricted to registered visitors during specific events. Cameras are allowed and photography encouraged. Visitors must wear and display a NASA Security badge, issued at the entrance. Visitors must be accompanied and directed by a NASA employee, in this case, John Blakeman, Plum Brook Station Environmental Specialist (a prairie and raptor expert, a field biologist familiar with local natural history).

Except for five to eight specific birding sites, birders will be restricted to viewing from the vehicle or the immediate roadside. Plum Brook Station has over 60 miles of vacant interior highway, allowing close access to a variety of habitats. We have permission to leave the vehicle and walk into specific birding habitats throughout the Station, as directed by Mr. Blakeman.

Large areas of brush habitat attract large populations of migrant “drop-outs,” eating in the brush before crossing Lake Erie just 4 miles to the north. Various raptors occupy the station, including two Bald Eagle nests. Wild Turkeys are abundant. Pileated Woodpeckers are present. Our specific off-road birding sites have been selected by experienced wildlife biologists who do extensive ornithological field work at the Station.

Directions to NASA Plum Brook Station

(gate location) 3597 Scheid Rd.
Sandusky, Ohio



If you are coming from the West:

Using SR 2 – Take SR 2 EAST, turn RIGHT onto US 250 South. Proceed past Bogart Rd 2.6 miles to Scheid Rd

(find lone, stone church on corner). Turn right (west) on Scheid Rd, to Plum Brook Station Gate.

Using US 6 – Take US 6 N to SR 2 EAST, turn RIGHT onto US 250 South. Proceed past Bogart Rd 2.6 miles to

Scheid Rd (find lone, stone church on corner). Turn right (west) on Scheid Rd, to Plum Brook Station Gate.

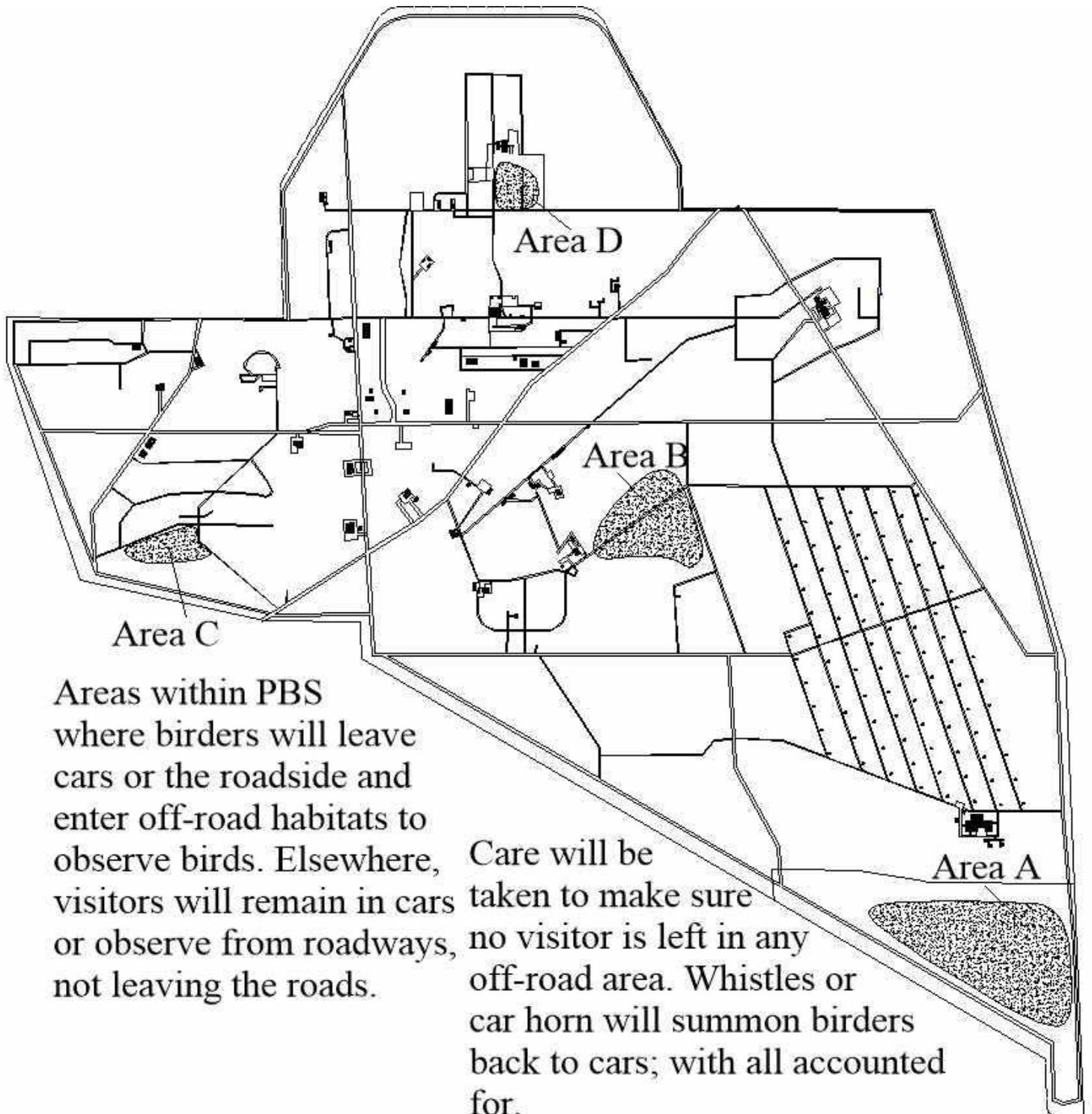
Using SR 4 – Take SR 4 North 1.5 miles north of the Ohio Turnpike to Mason Rd. Turn right (east) on to Mason Rd. Proceed east to US 250. Turn left (north) on US 250, proceed 1.9 miles north to Scheid Rd (find lone, stone church on corner). Turn left (west) on Scheid Rd, to Plum Brook Station Gate.



Off-road Birding Areas — NASA Plum Brook Station

Areas A, B, large grasslands with surrounding brush. Good migration dropout areas.
Area C open oak forest and adjacent brush.
Area D 25-acre diverse wetland.

Birding will also be done from roads throughout the facility. We will travel through much of this 5400-acre site. It has perhaps the greatest diversity of wild habitats of any area in northern Ohio.



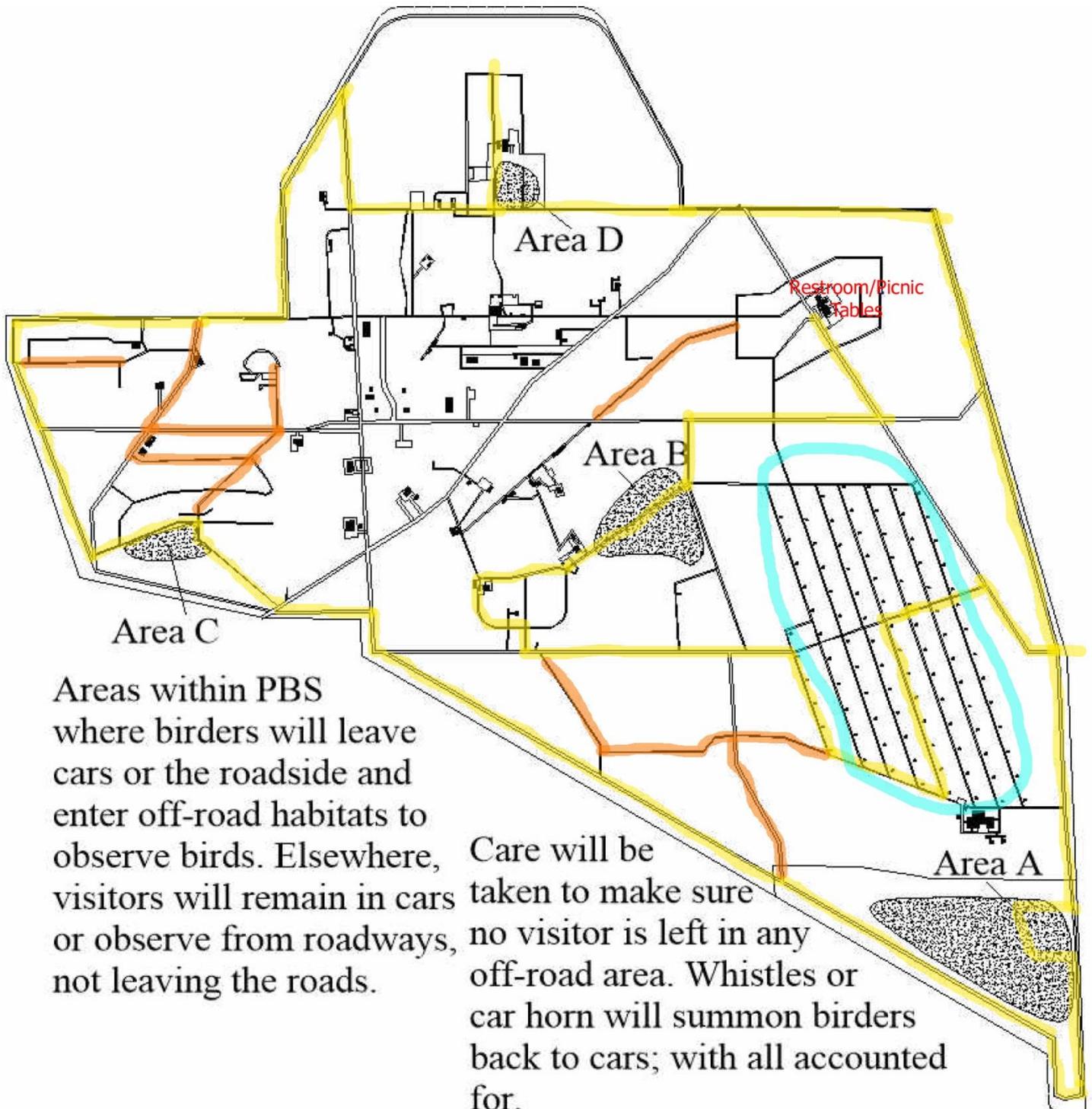
Areas within PBS where birders will leave cars or the roadside and enter off-road habitats to observe birds. Elsewhere, visitors will remain in cars or observe from roadways, not leaving the roads.

Care will be taken to make sure no visitor is left in any off-road area. Whistles or car horn will summon birders back to cars; with all accounted for.

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