



Birds of Big Ridge State Park

1015 Big Ridge Park Road, Maynardville, Tennessee 37807 / 865-992-5523

Bald eagles, herons, and kingfishers can be seen on the lakes as well as many species of waterfowl during the winter. Common loons sometimes visit during the winter and can be seen on Norris Lake. The trails are good places to see migratory birds in the spring and fall. Over 110 species of birds have been observed here throughout the year but the autumn months are the best.



American Woodcock

Responsible Birding

- Do not endanger the welfare of birds.
- Tread lightly and respect bird habitat.
- Silence is golden.
- Do not use electronic sound devices to attract birds during nesting season, May-July.
- Take extra care when in a nesting area.
- Always respect the law and the rights of others, violators subject to prosecution.
- Do not trespass on private property.
- Avoid pointing your binoculars at other people or their homes.
- Limit group sizes in areas that are not conducive to large crowds.
- Enjoy yourself!

Helpful Links

Tennessee Birding Trails
www.tnbirdingtrail.org
Field Checklist of Tennessee Birds
www.tnwatchablewildlife.org
eBird Hotspots and Sightings
www.ebird.org
Tennessee Ornithological Society
www.tnbirds.org
Tennessee State Parks Birding
www.tnstateparks.com/activities/birding



T E N N E S S E E
State Parks
www.tnstateparks.com

Additional Nearby State Park Birding Opportunities

Cove Lake – Campground, Restaurant / Caryville, TN 37714 / 423-566-9701
www.tnstateparks.com/parks/about/cove-lake

Norris Dam – Cabins, Campground / Rocky Top, TN 37769 / 865-426-7461
www.tnstateparks.com/parks/about/norris-dam

Panther Creek – Campground / Morristown, TN 37814 / 423-587-7046
www.tnstateparks.com/parks/about/panther-creek

Seven Islands – Day Use, Boat Ramp / Kodak, TN 37764 / 865-407-8335
www.tnstateparks.com/parks/about/seven-islands

Birding Locations In and Around Big Ridge State Park

A hiking trail map is available at the park.

Lake Trail: 36.24953, -83.93439 -1.5 Miles - Natural Surface - Moderate - Winter, Spring, Fall
This 1.5-mile (distance one way) easy to moderate trail meanders around one side of the 49-acre Big Ridge Lake. It crosses Big Ridge Dam, which was constructed in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corp. The young men of the CCC are responsible for building the dam and many of the other structures in the park. This trail is an excellent one for viewing wildlife such as deer, frogs, heron, wood ducks, and much more.
Featured Birds: great blue heron nesting sites, bald eagle, osprey, belted kingfisher, wood ducks, Canada geese, red-tailed hawk.

Fisherman's Trail: 36.24803, -83.91883 - 0.3 Miles - Natural Surface - Easy - Winter, Spring, Fall
This short and easy trail begins near the back entrance of the park and takes you to an area of Norris Lake known as Poor Land Valley.
Featured Birds: bald eagle, belted kingfisher, gulls, woodpeckers, northern flicker, and in the winter the occasional common loon

Big Valley Trail: 36.24600, -83.92240 - 1.7 Miles - Natural Surface - Difficult - Year-round
The trail is a strenuous hike that travels a road once used by many of this area's earlier settlers as they hauled corn down to the Norton Gristmill. The trail traverses Pinnacle Ridge, descends into Dark Hollow and then climbs to the top of Big Ridge. This trail has a wide variety of forest community changes and an elevation change, so the opportunity exists to see a lot of the upland species.
Featured Birds: red shouldered hawk, great horned owl, warblers, woodpeckers, golden-crowned kinglet, hermit thrush, Carolina wren, dark-eyed junco, eastern towhee

Softball Field: 36.24228, -83.93111 - 0.1 Miles - Natural Surface - Easy - Winter, Spring, Summer
This site offers both open field and edge habitat. You can often see American woodcocks perform their aerial displays here at dusk during late winter and early spring.
Featured Birds: American woodcock, gold finch, Carolina chickadee, tufted titmouse, northern cardinal, eastern bluebird, blue jay, red-tailed hawk.

Nearby Birding Locations

Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery: Entrance: 36.12102, -84.11529 - Year-round
www.tn.gov/twra/article/twra-fish-hatchery-system - 865-457-5135
The fish hatchery is operated by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency for rearing cool water fish and is also a productive place for shorebirds, wading birds, and waterfowl. Nearly 200 species of birds identified. Open 8:00 to 4:30, Monday through Friday.
Featured Birds: warblers, sandpipers, plovers, herons, Swainson's thrush, marsh wren, Philadelphia vireo, merlin, eastern phoebe, eastern kingbird, ducks, killdeer, willow flycatcher, double crested cormorant, osprey, lesser yellowlegs and greater yellowlegs.

Sharps Ridge Memorial Park: Overlook: 36.0055, -83.9393 - 865-215-4311 - Spring, Fall
www.knoxvilletn.gov/government/city_departments_offices/parks_and_recreation/parks
This 111 acres park is designated as a bird sanctuary by City of Knoxville and is one of the best places in the Knoxville region to observe migrant songbirds during the spring. Nearly 150 species of birds identified.
Featured Birds: warblers, vireos, thrushes, tanagers, woodpeckers, orioles, blue-gray gnatcatcher, indigo bunting, rose-breasted grosbeak, yellow-bellied flycatcher, least flycatcher, veery, white-breasted nuthatch, great horned owl, and Cooper's hawk.

House Mountain State Natural Area: Parking Area: 36.10479, -83.76273 - Winter, Spring, Summer
www.tn.gov/environment/program-areas/na-natural-areas - 865-215-6600
House Mountain is a favorite place for birdwatchers as the 2,100-foot crest of the forested mountain provides significant vistas. Nearly 100 species of birds have been observed.
Featured Birds: broad-winged hawk, warblers, indigo bunting, ruffed grouse, pileated woodpecker, scarlet tanager, and wild turkey.