

WAUKESHA COUNTY'S BIRDING HOTSPOTS

updated March 2023

VERNON WILDLIFE AREA – “VERNON MARSH”

NOTE: Public hunting area – wear appropriate clothing for visibility during hunting season. No facilities.

Habitats: 4,655 acres consisting of mostly wetlands and flowages with the Fox River snaking through. Adjoining uplands consist of grasslands and woodlots. A calcareous fen is on the south side. The area offers excellent wildlife habitat, especially for migrating and nesting waterfowl.

Trails: The two main access points for birders are Frog Alley Road on the west side (turn east from Hy 83) and Benson Avenue on the east (turn west from Hy XX). The end of Frog Alley Road features a parking lot at the top of the hill; follow the trails that head down the hill to the north and then split – turn right to head into the marsh or go straight to traverse upland habitats. While the dikes are mostly level for walking, they can often be overgrown with grass, so be prepared for ticks and watch for ankle-deep holes hidden by the grass. The Benson Avenue access is reached by driving across the tracks into the parking lot (sometimes the gate is open, permitting driving to a second gate); walk on the road and dikes through the woods and into the marsh. Note that it's possible to be trapped in the Benson Ave parking lot by a parked train.

Location: North of Mukwonago in eastern Waukesha County. Parking lots are located off of Hy 83, Frog Alley Road, Hy I, Hy NN, and Benson Avenue. See map on website for parking locations.

Birds: The general Vernon Marsh location has 206 species on eBird; Frog Alley has 220 species and Benson Avenue 232 species. Highlights include Trumpeter and Tundra swan, 20 duck species, Black-necked Stilt, Black Tern, American White Pelican, Least Bittern, Osprey, Bald Eagle, 8 species of flycatcher, White-winged Crossbill (winter), Yellow-headed Blackbird, and 23 species of warbler.

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/wildlifeareas/vernon.html>

PARADISE VALLEY STATE WILDLIFE AREA – BARK RIVER UNIT

NOTE: Public hunting area – wear appropriate clothing for visibility during hunting season. No facilities.

Habitats: Wetland, river, wood edge, grassland. Glacial Drumlin Trail forms the northern boundary of the property.

Trails: Viewing platform near parking lot and disabled-accessible blind approximately 2/3 mile from the platform. Main trail into the wildlife area is a combination of mowed grass, broken asphalt, and rough gravel. Going past the blind requires boots. Trail branches left before the blind, providing a one-mile (each way) trail that is sometimes covered with water. Trail north from parking lot goes toward the Glacial Drumlin Trail and then west to follow the river (2.5 miles each way); mowed grass to rough path. 500 yards from the viewing platform is a canal that may not be passable. The trail does not connect to the bike trail. The home on the northwest corner of Kincaid near Paradise Valley has several active feeders.

Location: from Hy 67 in Dousman, turn west onto Hy Z (Ottawa Ave.), then turn west onto Kincaid Lane. Park in the lot at the end of the road.

Birds: 207 species on eBird, including Greater White-fronted Goose, Trumpeter Swan, 19 duck species, 16 shorebird species (including Black-necked Stilt), Caspian, Black, and Forster's tern, American White Pelican, Least

Bittern, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Broad-winged Hawk, five owl species, Red-headed Woodpecker, and Yellow-headed Blackbird.

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/wildlifeareas/paradisevalley.html>

ENGEL CONSERVATION AREA

Habitats: 155 acres consist of upland woodlands, wetlands (including wet woodlands and wet prairie plantings), and upland prairie plantings.

Trails: Trails are mostly level, though most times of the year boots are required, as portions of the trail around the wetland are usually spongy. Some of the woodland trails are quite muddy in spring.

Location: S92 W19656 Henneberry Dr., Muskego 53150 (south of Hy L and west of Hy Y/Racine Ave.). Parking is off Henneberry Drive.

Birds: 213 species on eBird. The wetlands provide habitat for a variety of migrating and nesting marsh birds, with a small wooden platform for viewing the largest open water pool above the cattails. In dry years, shorebirds can sometimes be seen from the platform during migration (18 shorebird species on eBird). Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, and Green Heron are common summer residents, and Black-crowned Night-Heron is regular during fall. For spring warblers, walk around the wetland (especially in the woods along the southeast edge of the wetland), and walk along the tree line along the northern-most trail. During fall migration, a variety of sparrows can be seen in the grasslands and marsh edges.

<https://www.cityofmuskego.org/Facilities/Facility/Details/31>

SOUTH KETTLE MORAIN STATE FOREST

State forest is open from 6am to 11pm daily. Headquarters address: S91 W39091 Hy 59, Eagle 53119. **State vehicle admission sticker required at most sites.**

Over 22,000 acres of glacial hills and lakes. Predominant vegetation types: upland deciduous forests, sedge meadows and other wetlands, native prairies, savanna, shrub-carr, cool-season grasslands, upland shrublands, and conifer plantations.

SKMSF, which is managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, has been designated an Important Bird Area. Birds of special note include Cerulean Warbler and the largest population of Hooded Warbler in the state. Grassland birds such as Northern Harrier, Sedge Wren, Henslow's, Field, and Grasshopper sparrow, Bobolink, and Eastern Meadowlark also find extensive habitat here. Other high-conservation-priority species include American Woodcock, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Whip-poor-will, Belted Kingfisher, Willow Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Eastern Wood-Pewee, and Wood Thrush.

Hiking trail descriptions: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/kms/recreation/hiking>

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/kms/>

<http://www.audubon.org/important-bird-areas/south-kettle-moraine-state-forest>

Kettle Moraine Low Prairie State Natural Area

Habitats: Northern portion has wet prairie and fen, while wet-mesic prairie lies to the south where the land slopes down to the river. Small upland islands within the wetland contain recovering oak opening and dry-mesic prairie.

Location: From the intersection of State Hys 67 and 59 in Eagle, go north on Hy 67 2.1 miles to a gated access lane leading west, with a small parking lot at the gate. Walk west along the access road 0.5 mile to the southeast corner of the site.

Birds: 131 species on eBird, including both cuckoos, Red-headed Woodpecker, Acadian and Alder flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Chat, 21 warbler species, and Dickcissel.

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/naturalareas/index.asp?SNA=88>

D.J. Mackie Picnic Area

Habitat: Forest.

Location: North side of Hy ZZ east of Hy 67. If the gate is locked, park to the side and walk into the site. Go past the picnic area and enter the woods on the trail to your left, where there are well-used dirt trails.

Birds: 123 species on eBird, including Red-shouldered and Broad-winged hawk, Acadian Flycatcher, and 24 warbler species (including Hooded and Cerulean).

Lapham Peak Unit

NOTE: Open from 6am to 9pm year round. Gate prohibits vehicular access when park is closed.

Habitats: Prairie, woodlands, wetlands, and ponds. Lapham Peak is the highest point in Waukesha County (1,233 feet).

Location: W329 N846 County C, Delafield 53018. On Hy C, one mile south of Interstate 94, and north of Hy 18.

Trails: More than 17 miles of loop trails in the forest vary in difficulty. Some trails are paved, one of which loops south (uphill) from Homestead toward the Hausmann Nature Center, and one of which goes west (across Hy C) from the Evergreen area. Wooded trails have large hills. Some trails are open to mountain bikers and horseback riders. Many of the trails are groomed for cross-country skiing in winter and therefore not available for walking. Includes a portion of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail (a narrow, winding, rugged trail).

Birds: 186 species on eBird, including Broad-winged Hawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Veery, 17 sparrow species, 30 warbler species, and Scarlet Tanager.

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/lapham/>

https://www.trailville.com/wiki/WI_Kettle_Moraine_Lapham_Peak_Unit

Mukwonago River Unit

NOTE: Public hunting area – wear appropriate clothing for visibility during hunting season. State vehicle admission sticker not currently required at this property, which is under development.

Habitats: Forest, 35-acre Rainbow Springs Lake.

Location: East of Hy 67, west of Hy 83, about five miles west of Mukwonago and about three miles north of East Troy. Parking area on Hy LO; park and walk into the property; parking lots also on Hys J and E in Walworth County.

Birds: 162 species on eBird, including Yellow-throated Vireo and 25 warbler species.

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/mukwonago/>

Old World Wisconsin

NOTE: Outdoor museum with entrance fee (no state vehicle admission sticker required). Open seasonally.

Habitats: Wetlands, oak woodlands, red pine plantings, open grassland, oak savanna, prairie remnants, and restorations.

Trails: Five miles of gravel roads and hiking trails wind through natural areas and restorations. Trams are equipped to transport visitors using wheelchairs.

Location: W372 S9727 Hy 67, Eagle 53119; on the west side of Hy 67 south of Eagle.

Birds: 115 species on eBird, including Black Tern, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Warbler, and Scarlet Tanager.

<https://oldworldwisconsin.wisconsinhistory.org/>

Ottawa Lake Recreation Area and Dog Trial Grounds

Habitats: 17-acre lake, beach, wetlands, and forest. Well-developed campground and day use areas. Encompasses Ottawa Lake Fen State Natural Area along the north edge of the lake. Ottawa Dog Trial Grounds: grassland and woods.

Trails: Paved road; trails through campground. Dog trial grounds: well-worn dirt paths.

Location: Ottawa Lake campground/day use area is south of Dousman on Hy 67 and west on Hy ZZ (across from Scuppernong Springs Nature Trail). Ottawa Lake Fen SNA, which lies along the northern end of the lake, is best accessed by canoe from a boat landing on the southeast side of Ottawa Lake. Ottawa Dog Trial Grounds is north of the campground along Hy 67 – use the east entrance.

Birds: 190 species on eBird, including wading birds, American Woodcock, Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Bluebird, Wood Thrush, and 25 warbler species (including Blue-winged and Cerulean). Dog trial grounds: 99 species, including Blue Grosbeak.

<https://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/LakePages/LakeDetail.aspx?wbic=822200>

Ottawa Lake Fen State Natural Area: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/naturalareas/index.asp?SNA=128>

Paradise Springs Nature Trail

Habitats: Spring-fed creek and catch-and-release trout pond surrounded by forest.

Trails: Paved accessible 0.5-mile loop trail. Short trail to creek and trail on north side of pond, sometimes muddy (requires navigating over pond outlet).

Location: West of Eagle on Hy N, north of Hy 59. Across Hy N from Paradise Springs Prairie/Cabin.

Birds: 176 species on eBird, including Tufted Titmouse, Purple Finch, and 31 warbler species.

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/kms/recreation/hiking> (scroll down to the trail for a pdf file)

Paradise Springs Prairie/Cabin

Habitat: Restored prairie.

Location: West of Eagle on Hy N north of Hy 59. Park in lot for Paradise Springs Nature Trail; this site is across Hy N.

Birds: 129 species on eBird, including Short-eared Owl, Eastern Bluebird, Clay-colored Sparrow, Bobolink, and Eastern Meadowlark.

South Unit Headquarters, Kettle Moraine State Forest

NOTE: Headquarters building houses a nature center and museum, open year-round.

Habitats: Feeders, pond, and forest.

Trails: One-mile Stony Ridge nature trail begins behind headquarters.

Location: About three miles west of the village of Eagle on south side of Hy 59.

Birds: 148 species on eBird, including Broad-winged Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker, 13 sparrow species (including Henslow's), and 19 warbler species.

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/kms/naturecenter.html> (scroll down to Nature Trails for a link to a pdf)

Scuppernong Prairie State Natural Area

Habitats: Wet-mesic prairie on level, poorly drained ground. Large and open nature of site provides excellent habitat for uncommon grassland birds.

Location: From the intersection of Hys 67 and 59 in Eagle, go north and west on Hy 59 1 mile, then north on Hy N 1.4 miles to a parking area on the west (south of Wilton Road).

Birds: 180 species on eBird, including American Woodcock, Wilson's Snipe, 5 owl species (including Short-eared), Henslow's and Clay-colored sparrow, Yellow-breasted Chat, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel.

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/naturalareas/index.asp?sna=6>

Scuppernong Ski and Hiking Trails

Habitats: Rolling hills through hardwood forest and pine plantations.

Trails: Three color-coded loop trails range from 2.3 to 5 miles, for hiking, snowshoeing, and ungroomed skiing. Mostly gentle grades with a few steep sections. Ice Age National Scenic Trail can be accessed from this trailhead.

Location: On Hy ZZ east of Hy 67 north of Eagle and south of Dousman.

Birds: 160 species on eBird, including Yellow-billed Cuckoo, 10 flycatcher species (including Acadian and Alder), and 30 warbler species.

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/kms/trails.html>

https://www.trailville.com/wiki/WI_Kettle_Moraine_South_Scuppernong_Trails

Scuppernong Springs Nature Trail

Habitats: Spring-fed ponds and stream, wetlands, and forest.

Trails: Dirt trails, which can be muddy. Self-guiding nature trail.

Location: South of Dousman on Hy 67 and west on Hy ZZ; across from Ottawa Lake Recreation Area.

Birds: 189 species on eBird, including Red-shouldered Hawk, Alder Flycatcher, Wood Thrush, 17 sparrow species, and 30 warbler species.

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/kms/recreation/hiking>

Stute Springs Nature Trail

Habitats: Foundations of a former 180-acre farm, spring house, and stone fences. Mix of woods, prairie, and wetlands.

Trails: 1.5-mile loop, which is dirt, gravel, and mowed grass. Self-guided nature trail.

Location: Near Palmyra on Hy Z just south of Hy 59; across from Emma Carlin trails.

Birds: 155 species on eBird, including Pileated Woodpecker and Acadian Flycatcher.

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/kms/recreation/hiking>

http://www.trailville.com/wiki/WI_Kettle_Moraine_South_Stute_Springs_and_Homestead

OCONOMOWOC RIVER

Habitat: River that spills into Fowler Lake. While it is similar to any other river in summer, in winter there is almost always open water to some extent.

Location: In the city of Oconomowoc. Depending on the lighting, one of the following three spots can provide excellent views: west of the bend from the Oakwood Ave. bridge; east of the bend – please be respectful – from in La Belle Cemetery (enter via Grove St. off of N. Oakwood Ave.); and south of the bend at the end of Thompson Road.

Birds: 113 species on eBird, including 22 duck species. Look especially for wintering geese, swans, ducks, and coots.

Map of Oconomowoc: <https://www.oconomowoc-wi.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5/Oconomowoc-Streets-Map?bidId>

SCHOOL SECTION LAKE

Habitat: 122-acre lake.

Trail: Earthen berm provides a flat, easy walk. Birds can also be observed on School Section Lake Drive, but parking is restricted on this road.

Location: In Dousman. West from Hy 67 on Hy D, and west on School Section Lake Road. Access from public boat launch on the north shore of the lake (off School Section Lake Road) with parking available. Note that this boat launch requires a county lake access permit: <https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/landandparks/park-system/park-fees/annual-lake-access-sticker/>.

Birds: 167 species on eBird, including Trumpeter and Tundra swan, 19 duck species, Black Tern, Common Loon, American White Pelican, American and Least bittern, Great Blue, Black-crowned Night-, and Green heron, Bald Eagle, and Yellow-headed Blackbird. Best during migration.

<https://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/lakepages/LakeDetail.aspx?wbic=825000>

BEAVER DAM LAKE

Habitat: 36-acre lake. Water lilies and other aquatic vegetation cover much of the surface, providing nesting and loafing platforms for grebes, herons, and terns.

Location: View from boat launch/parking lot on Hy Cl. Lake is west of Hy 67, north of Hy N, and east of Hy Z in far western Waukesha County.

Birds: 161 species on eBird, including Trumpeter Swan, 17 duck species, Black Tern, and Red-headed Woodpecker (has nested in dead trees near lake).

<https://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/lakepages/LakeDetail.aspx?wbic=774300>

UWM AT WAUKESHA FIELD STATION

NOTE: Open year round; visitors welcome to explore the station during daylight hours.

Habitats: Restored prairie/oak savanna, a small lake with marshlands, a shallow pond, and a cold-water stream.

Trails: 3.5 miles of mowed walking trails, as well as boardwalks over wetland areas.

Location: W349 S1280 S. Waterville Road, Oconomowoc 53066.

Birds: 158 species on eBird, including 13 duck species, American Woodcock, and Wilson's Snipe.

<https://uwm.edu/waukesha/field-station/>

LITTLE MUSKEGO LAKE

Habitat: 506-acre lake surrounded by residential neighborhoods with numerous public access sites.

Location: In the city of Muskego. See map on website for location of the 18 public access sites; at the lake look for a numbered 24" circular green sign identifying each. Often the adjacent property will attempt to blur the property line, but don't worry – you have a right to be there. Parking for each site is wherever there's room. Scope needed. Suggested viewing sites: Muskego Access #12, Park Drive – Park Drive dead-ends at Lake Drive; height above water allows for distant viewing. Idle Isle Park – beach can have shorebirds; nominal parking fee.

Birds: 136 species on eBird, including Greater White-fronted Goose, 23 duck species, Horned and Eared grebe, and 6 swallow species. Avoid summer because of recreational use of the lake; other seasons can be productive, with loons easy to find in spring, thousands of coots in fall, and a thousand roosting gulls in winter. Access #12: 78 species.

<https://www.cityofmuskego.org/545/Little-Muskego-Lake>

<https://muskego.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=507c9933ac7f4249919c95c0628cb573>

BADERTSCHER PRESERVE

NOTE: Bow hunting is allowed – wear appropriate clothing for visibility during hunting season.

Habitats: 104 acres of reclaimed farmland, featuring prairie, oak savanna, wetlands, and woodlands.

Trails: Trails wind through the property, and they feature steep hills, mud, rocks, and stairs. Trails begin at the parking lot. Where the trails branch, the northern section leads by oak savanna to the west and small ponds to the east. The western branch of the trail leads through oak savanna. The trail heading east travels through prairie and around wetlands.

Location: S74 W20312 Field Dr., Muskego 53150 (on the west side of Muskego). Parking lot is off of Field Dr.

Birds: 144 species on eBird, including nesting Great Horned Owl, Tufted Titmouse, Common Redpoll in winter, and 13 warbler species.

<https://www.cityofmuskego.org/Facilities/Facility/Details/Badertscher-Preserve-30>

Trail map: <https://www.cityofmuskego.org/DocumentCenter/View/2223>

PEWAUKEE RIVER GREENWAY

NOTE: Part of the property is a public hunting area – wear appropriate clothing for visibility during hunting season.

Habitats: Wetland, upland grassland, and river.

Trails: A short walk down the hill and around the gate leads to a wetland created as a mitigation site by the Wisconsin DOT. The groomed section of trail reaches only about a quarter mile past the gate, but frequent visitors

keep a worn path around the marsh year-round. Hiking east from the loop around the marsh leads to the Pewaukee River, which is a reliable place to find migrant warblers and swallows. South of the marsh is county property, which is mostly upland grassland; look for Field Sparrow and Northern Flicker.

Location: In the city of Pewaukee. East of Bluemound Rd./Morris Rd. and Hy 16, southwest of Watertown Rd., and west of Pewaukee Rd. Also known as Pewaukee River Parkway. Parking off of Bluemound Rd – go straight east from the bridge on Hy JJ over Hy 16.

Birds: 148 species on eBird, including Virginia Rail and Sora, American Woodcock, American Bittern, and Alder and Willow flycatcher.

Map of the property: https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/globalassets/parks--land-use/park-system/hunting/huntingmap_2012-pewaukee-11x17.pdf

RYAN PARK

Habitats: Situated on a west-facing hill, this park is an excellent example of reclaimed agricultural land turned into prairie. With a large wooded section in the middle to provide cover, this place is a local migrant trap as well as host to many resident breeders.

Trails: Extensive well-groomed trails navigate nearly the entire property through the prairie and woods. Premium brush habitat runs close to the trails, making this a prime spot to find sparrows and other skulkers in migration. Other than the loop nearest the parking lot, most of the trails include significant inclines, and they can be muddy in spring and after rains. If you make it to the top, views of Milwaukee and Pewaukee Lake are possible on a clear day.

Location: W262 N4656 Ryan St., Pewaukee 53072. Southeast of the intersection of Ryan Rd. and Lynndale Rd.

Birds: 130 species on eBird, including 7 flycatcher species and 14 sparrow species.

FOX RIVER SANCTUARY NEAR E.B. SHURTS ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

Habitats: River and surrounding bottomlands.

Trails: The Glacial Drumlin State Trail begins here. Short wood-chip-covered trails (which are sometimes muddy) branch from both sides of the paved walkway east of the river. Across the river and the tracks the paved trail, for a short distance, follows a gully that attracts migrants in spring when it's wet.

Location: 810 W. College Ave., Waukesha 53186. Park in lot at Shurts building and walk southwest for access to the sanctuary and the Glacial Drumlin Trail; street parking also available.

Birds: 143 species on eBird, including Chimney Swift, Broad-winged hawk, and 29 warbler species. On a good day during spring migration, warblers and vireos are everywhere.

MUSKEGO HORN PARK

Habitats: Neighborhood park featuring woods and wetlands.

Location: S79 W18200 Lions Park Dr., Muskego 53150. Horn Park is south of Hy O (Janesville Road) between Hy Y (Racine Ave.) and Pioneer Dr. From Janesville Road turn east on Lions Park Dr., turn south on Pioneer Dr., and turn west on W. Tower Dr. Parking lot available.

Birds: 111 species on eBird, including Greater White-fronted Goose, Broad-winged Hawk, and Yellow-headed Blackbird.

<http://www.cityofmuskego.org/Facilities/Facility/Details/19>

NEWELL AND ANN MEYER NATURE PRESERVE (THE NATURE CONSERVANCY)

Habitats: Oak woodland, oak savanna, wetlands, and agricultural lands restored to native prairie.

Trails: From the parking lot, the old driveway passes through a prairie where Bobolink and Northern Harrier are often found. At the old homestead look for Eastern Wood-Pewee and Yellow-throated Vireo; Scarlet Tanager can be found in the oaks. A trek down the hill leads to the wetland complex, with marsh birds and waterfowl in breeding or migration season.

Location: S104 W38319 Highway 67, Eagle 53119 (about 2.5 miles southwest of Eagle). The entry drive is one mile southwest of the intersection of Hys 67 and LO. Park in the lot just inside the entrance driveway and walk into the preserve.

Birds: 140 species on eBird, including Red-shouldered Hawk, 6 woodpecker species, 5 flycatcher species, Carolina Wren, Brown Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, American Pipit, 13 sparrow species, Yellow-breasted Chat, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel.

<https://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/wisconsin/placesweprotect/newell-and-ann-meyer-nature-preserve.xml>

SIMMONS WOODS PARK

Habitats: Woods; the Pewaukee River runs along the northern edge of the park with a cattail marsh flanking it.

Trails: An approximately mile-long trail through the woods includes an 800-foot-long boardwalk through the marsh and along the Pewaukee River.

Location: 889 Cecilia Dr., Pewaukee 53072. Just north of W. Capitol Drive and just east of Hy 16.

Birds: 114 species on eBird, including 16 warbler species; look east from the boardwalk for an active heron rookery.

Locator map: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Simmons+Woods+Park,+Pewaukee,+WI+53072/@43.087506,-88.2549583,16z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x8805ac015d8e43d9:0x2e61cdcb0641806b!8m2!3d43.0880588!4d-88.2491605>

WAUKESHA COUNTY PARKS

Park system birding locations include eight parks and Retzer Nature Center. Open sunrise to 10pm year round. **Daily or annual county park entrance fee required at all county parks except Retzer Nature Center. Lake access sites (boat launches at Nagawicka, Pewaukee, Nemahbin, and School Section lakes) require a separate fee.**

<https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/findapark/>

Fox Brook Park

Habitats: 223-acre park includes wetlands and lake formed as a result of gravel pit operation.

Trails: One-mile paved trail around lake, with three wildlife viewing areas.

Location: 2925 N. Barker Rd., Brookfield 53045 (south of Capitol Drive on west side). Large parking area.

Birds: 131 species on eBird, including 9 duck species, Common Loon, American Woodcock, and Willow Flycatcher.

<https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/foxbrook>

Fox River Park

Habitats: 257-acre park features mature woods, wetlands, meadows, and the Fox River.

Trails: Over six miles of diverse trail types from paved to difficult. Canoe launch.

Location: W264 S4500 River Rd., Waukesha 53189. South of Hy 59 on Hy X (Saylesville Rd.) to Hy H (River Rd.). Parking areas throughout park.

Birds: 176 species on eBird for nearby Fox River Parkway (which extends north and south along the river), including 11 shorebird species, 5 thrush species, and 18 warbler species.

<https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/foxriver/>

Menomonee Park

Habitats: 464 acres of rolling field, maple woods, cattail marsh, wetlands, and 16-acre quarry lake.

Trails: Diverse trail system connects to the 12-mile crushed-limestone Bugline Trail. Numerous parking areas.

Location: W220 N7884 Town Line Rd., Menomonee Falls 53051. East of Hy 164 on Good Hope Rd., then north on Hy V (Town Line Rd.).

Birds: 148 species on eBird, including 7 woodpecker species, 13 sparrow species, and 24 warbler species.

<https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/menomonee/>

Minooka Park

Habitats: 579 acres with a pond, upland and lowland woods, meadows, fen, and wetlands.

Trails: Six miles of trails from easy to difficult. Some trails are groomed for cross-country skiing in winter, and some are designed for mountain biking.

Location: 1927 E. Sunset Dr., Waukesha 53186. Hy Y (Racine Ave.) forms northeast boundary of park; Hy U (Guthrie Rd.) forms western boundary. Numerous parking areas.

Birds: 138 species on eBird, including 7 thrush species, Yellow-breasted Chat, 12 sparrow species, and 26 warbler species.

<https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/minooka/>

Mukwonago Park

Habitats: 355-acre park with ponds, fields, restored prairie, woods, oak openings, and pre-settlement vegetation.

Trails: The few trails rank easy to intermediate.

Location: S100 W31900 County Hwy LO, Mukwonago 53149. Approximately three miles west of Mukwonago. West of Hy 83, east of Hy 67. Ample parking.

Birds: 94 species on eBird, including 4 swallow species, Eastern Bluebird, and Pine Warbler.

<https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/landandparks/park-system/find-a-park/mukwonago-park/>

Muskego Park

Habitats: 193 acres with open areas, wetlands, ponds, and forest.

Trails: Trails wind through 60 acres of forest known as the Hardwood State Scientific Area.

Location: S83 W20370 Janesville Rd., Muskego 53150. East of Hy 164. Ample parking throughout.

Birds: 162 species on eBird, including American Woodcock, 12 sparrow species, and 28 warbler species.

<https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/muskego/>

Naga-Waukee Park and Nagawicka and Pewaukee Lake Access

Habitats: 206-acre park consists of oak hickory forest with thick undergrowth. Access to Nagawicka and Pewaukee lake.

Trails: Paved roads throughout, along with wooded trails. Two boardwalks: one from main park 0.5 mile to Nagawicka Lake access, and another between the boat launch and beach along the Nagawicka lakefront.

Location: 651 Hy 83, Hartland 53029. North of Interstate 94, west of Hy 83. Many parking areas. Lake access sites (require a lake access fee): Nagawicka Lake beach/boat launch parking is restricted to vehicles

towing boats or showing disabled permits (use boardwalk trail from parking lot in park); access to Pewaukee Lake boat launch is east of Hy 83 on Golf Road, north on Hy E (Maple Ave.), and east into the boat launch parking area.

Birds: Nagawicka Lake has 123 species on eBird, including 20 duck species, Tufted Titmouse, and Baltimore Oriole. Naga-Waukee Park: 108 species; Naga-Waukee Park boat launch (Pewaukee Lake): 105 species.

<https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/nagawaukee/>

Nashotah Park

Habitats: 444-acre park features rolling hills with two lakes, grasslands, wetlands, oak forest, oak savanna, and restored prairie.

Trails: Over six miles of trails. In winter trails are groomed for cross-country skiing.

Location: W330 N5113 County Highway C, Nashotah 53058. North of Hy 16 on Hy C.

Birds: 162 species on eBird, including 4 owl species, Northern Shrike, Tufted Titmouse, and 16 sparrow species.

<https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/nashotah/>

Retzer Nature Center

NOTE: No county park fee required.

Habitats: 400 acres with ponds, restored prairies, fields, woods, pine plantation, fen, and wetlands.

Trails: Five miles of diverse trail types from paved to difficult.

Location: S14 W28167 Madison St., Waukesha 53188 (west of Waukesha). South of Hy 18 on Hy DT, then east on Madison St. Ample parking east of visitor center.

Birds: 188 species on eBird, including 8 hawk species, 7 thrush species (including Eastern Bluebird), 17 sparrow species (including Clay-colored and Savannah), and Bobolink.

<https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/retzernaturecenter>