



Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists

Lanark County Bird Watching Journeys

Compiled by Cliff Bennett for the Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists
For *Lanark County Birding Journeys*, Feb 2009

Town of Mississippi Mills

1. Appleton and Mississippi River

How to Get There: From Carleton Place, go north on County Rd. 29 towards Almonte. At Wilson St. turn towards village of Appleton, meander through the village and over the bridge, then left on River Rd. to bay and boat launch.

Observation Points: River viewing all along Wilson St.. Viewing at bay. Reverse and follow River Rd. to County Rd.17 (Appleton Sideroad). Turn right to look along Mississippi River.

Watch For: Open field birds and killdeer along golf course, River Rd. and Appleton Side Rd. Migrating ducks, loons, grebe, herons and kingfisher along water. Occasional bald eagle over river in bay. Warbling vireo nests in willows at bay. Martin house to east of bay. Swallows and shorebirds.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons. Some open water in winter.

2. Ramsay 7th Concession

How to Get There: In downtown Carleton Place, follow Bridge St. north to Thomas St., then right onto Ramsay Conc. 7. From Almonte, take County Rd. 29 south to Rae Rd., turn west on Rae Rd. to Ramsay Conc. 7 and turn left.

Observation Points: There are several fields that flood in spring and fall all along this concession road. Various open fields, marshy land, woodlots and farm buildings.

Watch For: Shore birds and plovers when fields flooded; swallows around barns, resident red-tailed hawk near intersection with Drummond Rd. and field birds in open areas.

Seasonal Information: Best in spring and late autumn but good general birding all year.

3. Old Perth Road in Mississippi Mills

How to Get There: From Almonte or Carleton Place, find Old Perth Rd. on County Rd. 29 at the western edge of Almonte.

Observation Points: Good general birding all along Old Perth Rd. to end. Walk northwards on unopened Ramsay 6th Conc. and 7th Conc. Scan marshlands and creek, and heavily wooded roadway.

Watch For: Wetland birds in marshes and creek; great for warblers, tanagers, indigo buntings, brown thrashers, flycatchers.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons. Part of road not winter maintained but usually open.

4. Gemmill/Metcalf Park

How to Get There: In Almonte, find arena on Bridge St.

Observation Points: Begin behind the arena, follow different trails from bottom of hill. Cross road and scan river. Take River Walk from behind post office for extra viewing of river.

Watch For: Forest birds, sharp-shinned hawk and merlin, cardinals, grebe and some ducks.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons. Much open water in winter.

5. Almonte Waste Sanitation Ponds

How to Get There: From Almonte, take County Rd. 16, (Wolf Grove Road) west. Ponds are on the right, about 1/2 km. from the intersection with County Rd. 29.

Observation Points: (i) Main Gate on County Rd.

(ii) Turn right at next intersection at the Auld Kirk, drive about 400 m to gate across from cemetery. Look for sign for bird watching and Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists' nature trail. Trail leads to Al Potvin observation tower overlooking the municipal waste sanitation ponds).

Watch For: Shorebirds when water is low, ducks, geese, green heron and grebe.

Seasonal Information: Good from ice melting to freeze-up.

Note: For all municipal waste sanitation ponds, **enter at your own risk.**

6. Mill of Kintail

How to Get There: From Carleton Place, take McNeely Ave. to Town Line Rd. and County Rd 29. Turn left and then right onto Ramsay Conc. 8 at town limits and drive approx. 10 km. to Mill. From Almonte, take County Rd. 29 north three km. to Clayton Rd; drive two km. to Ramsay Conc. 8 and then north to Mill gate.

Observation Points: Before gateway, check open fields. From Mill parking lot, follow trail along river to mill. At mill, look for different species around all buildings. Cross over foot bridge and follow woodland trails.

Watch For: Hawks and sandhill cranes in open fields; spotted sandpipers along river; bluebirds, swallows and sparrows around buildings and warblers and thrushes in wooded areas.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons but trails are used by X-country skiers in winter. Drop a donation in the metal box at parking lot.

7. Bellamy Road

How to Get There: From Carleton Place and Almonte, travel north on County Rd. 29 to Cedar Hill Rd. This road leads onto Bellamy Rd.

Observation Points: From roadway only, open fields along Cedar Hill Rd. and the start of Bellamy Rd. Most of Bellamy Rd from Indian Creek is wooded. If time, check out trails at Fulton's Pancake House.

Watch For: Sandhill cranes in open fields; bluebirds and thrushes and other woodland species. In breeding season, listen for sandhills calling. Extensive wetlands along roadside produce ducks, grebes and herons. Winter seed eaters in woods.

Seasonal Information: Good roadside birding all seasons.

8. Pakenham Conservation Area

How to Get There: From Almonte, go north on County Rd. 29 to village of Pakenham or, from Ottawa, take 417 north to Exit 169, Kinburn Side Rd. to Pakenham. Conservation area is both sides of Five Span Stone Bridge.

Observation Points: Park sites, both sides of river.

Watch For: Bay ducks, especially in fall, herons, spotted sandpiper, kingfisher and misc. upland species.

Seasonal Information: Good all season. Some open water in winter.

Township of Lanark Highlands

9. Drummond's Pond to Taylor Lake

How to Get There: From Almonte, take County Rd. 16 west to Upper Perth Rd. The ponds are 1/2 km along this road at the intersection with Ramsay Conc. 1.

Observation Point: From roadway only.

Watch For: Ducks and shorebirds on ponds. Continue on: Upper Perth Rd. to Lanark Highlands Conc. 12 (field birds, bobolink, wild turkeys), north on Conc. 12 to Taylor Lake (water and marsh birds including bittern, loons). House wren, catbirds and cowbird around cottage at lake. Occasional merlins.

Seasonal Information: For ponds, Spring and Fall is best. Pond dries up in summer.

For Taylor Lake, Spring to freeze-up. Remainder, all seasons.

10. Clayton to Command Bridge

How to get there: From Almonte, take County Rd. #16 west to County Rd. #9, north on #9 into Village of Clayton. Continue west on #9 to Galbraith Rd. and south to bridge over Indian River.

Observation Points: (i) In Clayton, check out bay by dam at boat launch and across the road to view downriver. (ii) At Command Bridge on Galbraith Rd, view marshes and river on both sides.

Watch For: Ducks, herons and shorebirds by dam. Herons and sometimes perching hawks down river. At Command Bridge, ducks, herons, warblers, loons, swamp sparrows. Continue down this road for whip-poor-wills in late evening springtime.

Seasonal Information: Best in spring and autumn. General winter birding along roadways

11. Deachman's Bridge, Lanark

How to Get There: From Perth, go to Lanark Village on County Rd. 511. In the middle of the village on the main street (George), turn east on Owen and then onto Rosetta Rd. From Almonte, take County Rd. 16 to 511 and south to Village and Owen St.

Observation Point: Bridge over Clyde River on Rosetta Rd.

Watch For: Swallows under bridge, various water birds and black terns upriver. Continue on Rosetta Rd. for good open rural birding including northern shrikes in winter.

Seasonal Information: May to October is best at the bridge. All seasons for open rural areas.

12. Bairds Trail

How to Get There: From Perth, take County Rd. 511 north, through Lanark Village to County Rd. 8. Turn right (east) to park (sign). From Almonte, take County Rd. 16 to Middleville, turn south one block to County Rd. 8. Follow to park sign.

Observation Points: Small park and entire trail is good birding.

Watch For: Chestnut-sided warbler which nests at edge of parking lot. Northern waterthrushes and woodland warblers and thrushes. Sedge wrens near boardwalk. Northern harriers over marsh.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons.

13. Purdon Wetland Complex

How to Get There: From Perth, take County Rd. 511 to County Rd. 8. Follow Conservation Area signs. From Almonte take County Rd. 16 to Hopetown, go south on 511 to County Rd. 8.

Observation Points: From either parking lot, follow trails throughout the area.

Watch for: Grebes and ducks on small lake, kingfisher, forest species on Mosquin Trail. Check out the roadway between the two parking lots.

Seasonal Information: Trails not open in winter.

14. Dalhousie Lake, east end

How to Get There: From Perth, take County Rd. 511 to Balderson, west on County Rd. 7 to County Rd. 12 and west to McDonalds Corners. North on County Rd. 8 to bridge at Dalhousie Lake. From Almonte, take County Rd. 16 to Hopetown, County Rd. 511 south to County Rd. 8 and follow along to Dalhousie Lake.

Observation Points: View ball diamond before lake, east end of lake and further along shoreline on County Rd. 8.

Watch For: Osprey nest at ball diamond; ducks, herons, grebe, kingfishers, shore birds along lake and river shore; swallow species under bridge.

Seasonal Information: Frozen during winter with a little open water under bridge.

Township of Tay Valley

15. Brooke Valley

How to Get There: Take Hwy. 7 west of Perth to Brooke and Old Brooke Rd.

Observation Points: Trans Canada Trail crosses this road in four places. Walk trail sections or view entire area from road. McGowan Lake at west end.

Watch For: Many different species in various habitats.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons.

16. Murphy's Point Provincial Park

How to Get There: From Perth Take County Rd. 1 south towards Rideau Ferry. Turn onto County Rd. 21 and follow signs to park. From Smiths Falls, take Hwy. 15 to Lombardy, turn west onto Rideau Ferry Rd., cross over bridge at Rideau Ferry and on to County Rd. 21. Follow the signs to park.

Observation Points: There are five good walking trails in this park, all great for spring, summer and fall birding. Register at park gate and pick up trail map.

Watch For: Forest warblers, woodland thrushes, flycatchers, shore and water species.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons. Some trails open to cross-county skiers only in winter.

Town of Perth

17. Tay River/Rideau Trail

How to Get There: From Perth, follow Craig St. towards Smiths Falls. Immediately after crossing the bridge over the Tay River, turn right onto Riverside Rd.

Observation Points: Tay River on one side, heavy tangled brush on other. Take Rideau trail through fence at end of road and follow to end of river and on into marsh.

Watch For: Herons, bitterns, listen for rails all along the river. Watch for cardinals, tree sparrows, waxwings in tangled shrubbery.

Seasonal Information: Frozen in winter but good general birding on roadway.

Township of Drummond/North Elmsley

18. Perth Wildlife Preserve

How to Get There: From Perth, take County Rd. 1 south 2 km. to Wildlife Rd.

Turn east at Preserve sign.

Observation Points: Bird all along this road. Check out waste sanitation ponds on right. Park at Reserve area and take trail to Tay River Marsh.

Watch for: Warblers everywhere, fall migration species, water birds on ponds, osprey over marsh, rails and other marsh birds.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons. Ponds and marsh frozen over in winter.

19. Rideau Ferry Conservation Area

How To Get There: From Perth, take County Rd. 1 south of town to Rideau Ferry. Look for Conservation Area sign on left within the village. From Smiths Falls, take Hwy. 15 to Lombardy, go west on Rideau Ferry Rd. to village, cross over the bridge and Conservation Area sign is on the right.

Observation Points: All along roadway to picnic area and along lakeshore of Lower Rideau Lake. Check out village around marina and bridge.

Watch For: Swans, loons and many ducks, especially in spring. Finches and cardinals along roadway. Substantial duck migration area in spring and fall.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons. Some open water from bridge and marina.

20. Beveridge Locks/Tay Marsh

How to Get There: From Smiths Falls, take County Rd. 43 West to Port Elmsley, then onto County Rd. 18 to lock station. From Perth, take County Rd. 43 east to Port Elmsley, then onto County Rd. 18 to lock station.

Observation Points: Scan canal down to lakeshore and area. Walk under the bridge and follow road to upper locks and continue onto trails to scan marsh.

Watch For: Osprey nests, herons, many berry eaters, ruffed grouse, swallows, marsh birds and many others.

Seasonal Information: Trails not open in winter but road to upper locks is. Some open water in locks in winter.

21. Mississippi Lake National Wildlife Area

How to Get There: From Carleton Place, take hwy 7 west past Innisville to Drummond Conc. 10B for first entrance and Drummond Conc. 9A for second entrance. Turn left both times. From Perth, go east on hwy. 7 for above roads and turn right both times.

Observation Points: On 10B, go to end of road, park and walk in to area and lakeshore. Heavy hedgerow growth along roadside. On 9A, drive to boat launch, observe along McIntyre Creek and into marsh at lake.

Watch For: Berry eating species like cardinals and finches. Ducks, grebes and herons. Wild turkeys in open fields and woodland warblers and thrushes in forest area.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons. Heavy duck population in fall.

22. Blueberry Marsh/McIntyre Creek

How to Get There: From Carleton Place, take hwy 7 west past Innisville to Drummond Conc. 7. Turn right. From Perth, follow County Rd. 511 north to Drummond Conc. 7. Turn right.

Observation Points: Good birding all along this road, especially along McIntyre Creek and through Blueberry marsh.

Watch For: Waterbirds, marsh and sedge wrens in marsh and creek. Northern harriers over marsh. Wild turkeys in fields. Hawks.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons.

Town of Smiths Falls

23. Smiths Falls Park and Canal

How to Get There: In Smiths Falls, take Elmsley St. east to Old Slys and then further east along Hwy. 43 following canal.

Observation Points: (i) Cross canal on Old Slys and explore park along river. (ii) View Rideau canal and marshes along Hwy. 43.

Watch For: In park, shore and water birds, open area regulars and warblers in season.

Along 43, water birds, herons and grebes. Swallows and martins over river and canal. **Seasonal Information:** Good all seasons. Some open water in winter.

24. Upper Reach Park, Smiths Falls

How to Get There: Within the town, follow Lombard St. westward to Abbott St., Turn left and pass over the canal and into park.

Observation Points: Canal entrance into the marshes by open cantilever bridge and around boat houses.

Watch For: Osprey nest on south side of canal, martins and swallows around boathouses, ducks and marsh birds.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons

Township of Montague

25. Kilmarnock and Merrickville

How to Get There: From Smiths Falls, follow County Rd. #43 towards Merrickville. At Kilmarnock, turn onto Kilmarnock Rd. to Rideau Canal Lock.

Observation Points: Check out the marsh along east side of #43 just after Rosedale Road. Just before the locks, view large bay and area. Then follow over canal and along Sturgess Rd. and Roses Bridge Rd. for viewing at bridge. Return to #43 and immediately turn onto Rideau River Rd. which loops back to #43. Continue on into Merrickville.

Watch For: Osprey nests throughout area, ducks and other water birds in bay areas and other open wood species. On Rideau River Rd., check out the river and open fields.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons. Some open water during winter.

26. Nolan's Corners Marsh

How to Get There: From Smiths Falls, go east on Roger Stevens Dr. (County Rd. 4) to Code Dr. (1km). Marsh is at the end of Code Dr. at Rosedale Rd.

Observation Points: Small lay-by at Rosedale Creek and small dam structure.

Watch For: Ducks, grebe and black terns plus other marsh birds.

Seasonal Information: Frozen over in winter.

27. Carroll Road

How To Get There: From Carleton Place, take Hwy. 15 past Franktown, to McLaughlin Rd, and west to Carroll Rd. From Perth, go east on County Rd. 10 to Gilles Corners and Ford Rd. From Smiths Falls, go north on Carroll Rd. from intersection of Cornelia St. and Elmsley St. at hospital.

Observation Points: From the road only. There are several marshes along Carroll Rd. plus forested areas and open fields.

Watch For: Rails in marshes, warblers, woodpeckers and thrushes in forested areas and many field species.

Seasonal Information: Best in spring and fall. Good for winter species in spots.

Township of Beckwith

28. Jock River Bridges in Beckwith

How to Get There: From Ottawa, take Hwy 7 towards Carleton Place to Cemetery Side Rd. (next past Ashton Station Rd.). Turn South to Jock River.

Observation Points: First Bridge is on Cemetery Side Rd. and second is around the corner on Beckwith Conc. 9. Both offer great viewing of Goodwood Marsh.

Watch For: Ducks, grebe, other water and marsh birds.

Seasonal Information: Best in spring and summer; frozen over in winter.

29. Beckwith Nature Trail

How to Get There: Take hwy. 15 south of Carleton Place to Blacks Corners, go east one km. on Beckwith 9th line to Beckwith Recreation Park. Look for trail entrance behind double arena.

Observation Points: Trail follows into Goodwood Marsh for 5 km.

Watch for: Wetland species including thrushes, waterthrush, ruffed grouse, winter wren. Forest warblers, flycatchers and thrushes also.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons. Ski and snowshoe in winter.

30. Scotch Corners Road

How to Get There: From Perth or from Carleton Place, follow Hwy. 7 to intersection with County Rd. 9, between Innisville and Carleton Place. Turn South on Scotch Corners Rd. and follow along to Drummond Conc. 11. Continue on this road to Ebbs Bay Rd. and back to Hwy. 7.

Observation Points: Roadway only. View ponds along roadside in spring and fall.

Watch For: Ducks and other water birds as well as open field and woodlot species.

Seasonal Information: Ponds dry up in summer. Otherwise, good all seasons.

Town of Carleton Place

31. Carleton Place Arena Trail

How to get there: At Carleton Place, take McNeely Ave. from Hwy. 7 to Lake Avenue. On Lake Avenue, go west to find the arena, just behind the hospital on Neelin St.. Park in front of the arena.

Observation Points: At river side of arena, join trail which meanders along the river.

Watch For: Water birds, berry-eating birds, warblers and many others.

Seasonal Information: Good all seasons. Some open water in winter.

32. Carleton Place Centennial Park

How to Get There: In Carleton Place, go through town on Bridge St. to High St. and west to Joseph St. Take Joseph St. to the river. O-ke-lee Trail is marked on right.

Observation Points: Scan park and river shores. Follow trails through area. While in town, drive to other side of river and Riverside Park at boat launch.

Watch For: Ducks in lagoons and in river; waterthrush, cardinals, berry eaters and high canopy warblers. Many duck species from boat launch.

Season Information: Good all seasons. River open in winter.