ROCKY CREEK CONSERVATION AREA Woodland Restoration Project Unit
Edge Wade, spring 2017
1,500 acres  Shannon Co.  DeLorme 65, A 8/9
GPS: 37.061267,-91.314737
MDC owned: contact Eminence office, 573-226-3616
Conservation Atlas:
http://mdc7.mdc.mo.gov/applications/moatlas/AreaList.aspx?txtUserID=guest&txtAreaNm=s

Directions: From Eminence (total distance 8.7 miles, 22 minutes), at the intersection of MO 106 and MO 19, go south on MO 19 (a.k.a. Main St.) for 1.3 miles. Go left onto Rt. F and follow it for 3.1 miles, continue onto CR 106-513 [old MO 19] for 3.3 miles, turn left onto CR. 313, a.k.a. Shopping Center Rd. 313. The driving tour begins .5 along CR 313 at the junction with CR 324 (go straight onto CR 324.

The junction of 313 and 324 is the beginning of the driving tour described below.

ADA Information: Birding for those with difficulty walking is limited to birding by car or by short walks on the unpaved roads in this area.

Features of interest to birders: The scattered tracts of the 38,000 acre Rocky Creek CA are overwhelmingly an even-age forest of black, scarlet and white oak, hickory and some shortleaf pine, resulting from The Great Cutover around the beginning of the 20th Century. Hardwood species have invaded native shortleaf pine forest areas. Most of the tracts have little or no access by auto beyond county roads with few opportunities for pulling off for safe, rewarding birding.

This Birders’ Guide is limited to the 1,500 acre Woodland Restoration Project Unit of Rocky Creek CA because it features a 4.75 to 5-mile driving tour that provides excellent birding access to the best habitat diversity in Rocky Creek CA.

The forest management project is part of multi-state landscape scale woodland restoration efforts to enhance open oak/pine woodland communities of uneven-age trees. A goal for this area is that it will eventually again host Red-cockaded woodpecker, Brown-headed Nuthatch and Bachman’s Sparrow—species that have been extirpated from Missouri due to loss of suitable habitat.

It is highly recommended that birders download the Pine Oak Woodland Driving Tour pamphlet that explains forest management practices along this route and includes a larger version of the map reproduced below. The discussion of habitats and forestry management practices is a very useful aid in understanding conditions that affect bird species found in the differing microhabitats. Recognition of these microhabitats is a valuable birdfinding tool.
To download the pamphlet, in the online MDC Conservation Atlas area summary for Rocky Creek Conservation Area, scroll to the last item in the “Activities” section, labeled “Tours.” Click on the blue link “driving tour”.

The driving tour starts at the junction of roads 313 and 324, and goes counterclockwise following 324 to a left onto 313, following it to a left onto 323 to return to the starting point. Roads are marked by brown square wooden markers with white numbers at the intersections. The silviculture treatment areas are identified by yellow signs with numbers one through nine that correspond to the numbers in the pamphlet.

Birders are encouraged to explore roads that intersect and/or extend beyond the driving tour route.

**When to Visit/Species to Expect:** Anytime can be fun birding, although the heat and humidity of an Ozark summer may be daunting. Resident interior forest species and neo-tropical migrants that thrive here include American Woodcock, Wild Turkey, Northern Bobwhite, Yellow-throated Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Carolina Chickadee, and Chipping Sparrow.

Below are samples of what to expect in season. Additional reports from the area will surely add species to the occurrence lists.


Spring (early to mid-April): Wood Duck, Wild Turkey, Cooper’s Hawk, Great-blue Heron, TV, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallow, Brown Creeper, Brown Thrasher, Louisiana Waterthrush, Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Pine Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow.

Late April, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Red-eyed Vireo, Indigo Bunting.

May and June: American Redstart, Prairie Warbler, Acadian Flycatcher, White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-breasted Chat, Summer Tanager.

Autumn: Barred Owl, Great-horned Owl.

**Toilets:** None
Camping: Not recommended.

Hazards/Limitations: ATVs roaring at top speed may be encountered on the roads occasionally. Prescribed burns are an integral part of the forest management for this area. A burn is probable in early spring 2018.

Nearby Birding Sites: Ozark National Scenic Riverways (Rocky Falls, Blue Spring Natural Area*, and additional sites), Buttin Rock Access* and Chilton Landing* both at Eminence, Current River SP*, Echo Bluff SP*, and several units of Angeline and Sunklands conservation areas.

*Indicates Birders’ Guide available when this guide was written. See http://www.mobirds.org/Locations/SiteGuides.aspx for these and additional guides.

The unit featuring the Woodland Restoration Project is the southern tract with the internal road network shown on this map:
Enlargement of the Woodland Restoration Project unit showing the road network.

Map from Driving Tour pamphlet showing placement of silviculture signs.