

Site Name: Eagle Creek

Description:

Eagle Creek Park is located on the west side of Indianapolis and is one of the largest municipal parks in the county. This park is famous among local birders as a hotspot during migration and also as a place that can attract many rarities.

Specialty Species:

Least Bittern: Walk around the Skating Pond in the spring and summer to hear this bird. The best chance of seeing it is to stand on the west side of the pond and wait for it to fly.

Franklin's Gull: During the fall, there is usually at least one Franklin's Gull mixed in with the usual Ring-billed Gulls at the end of the handicapped road.

Terns: Walk the Coffer Dam or scan from the marina during the spring and fall for a chance to see Forster's, Common, Caspian, or Black Terns.

Waterfowl: Walking the Coffer Dam or scanning the lake from the Ornithology Center, Marina, or Rick's Boatyard Café (outside the park) will give you a good likelihood of seeing many species of waterfowl including both diving and dabbling ducks.

Warblers: Hike around the Marina, Lilly Lake, the Skating Pond, Circle Drive, the North Loop, and the South Fields for an opportunity to see more than 30 species of warblers during peak migration in mid-May. Connecticut Warblers, although hard to find, are most easily found on the NW side Lilly Lake from May 20-25.

Where to Bird: (Locations within the site)

Marina

Lilly Lake

Ornithology Center

South Fields

Skating Pond

Handicap Road

North Loop

Coffer Dam

Rick's Cafe Boatyard (outside the park)

Marina: After parking, walk around the parking lot and down to the tip for many warblers and other migrants. Also walk up the road for more chances to see migrant songbirds. Scan from the tip of the marina from late fall through early spring to see many species of diving ducks.

Lilly Lake: Park in the Ornithology Center parking lot or the Fitness Trail lot. To get to the Fitness Trail lot, turn left on the first road after coming in from the 71st

Street entrance. The parking lot will be on the left. Walk the trail around the scum pond and follow the trail to Lilly Lake. Along the trail, watch for Winter Wren near the creek bed. During the fall and spring, many may be present. Watch carefully for Mourning and Connecticut Warblers along the edge of Lilly Lake during the second half of May. Also, be on the lookout for Red-shouldered Hawk throughout the area.

Ornithology Center: After parking, walk around the trails south of the Ornithology Center. Walking these trails will provide chances for many warblers and other passerines. During spring and fall migration, warblers, kinglets, and other migrants use this area.

South Fields: Coming from the 56th street entrance, take the first right and go past the bluebird boxes to the next curve where there is a small pull off. Walk the trails through the field. Yellow-breasted Chats and Prairie Warblers both nest in the area. During migration, Sedge Wrens and Henslow's Sparrows can be found here. Many sparrows also use this area during migration including Lincoln's, White-throated, and White-crowned. During spring migration, Sora and Virginia Rails occur in the wet areas.

Skating Pond: Walk around the main pond for a chance at Least Bittern. During migration, American Bitterns also use this pond. Walk farther down the road and bird around the building on the right. Many warblers use this area in the spring and fall.

Handicap Road: Drive to the end of this road and park. From here you can scan the area inside and outside the Coffey Dam. Look for shorebirds, gulls, terns, and dabbling ducks outside of the dam, and look for diving ducks inside the dam. Yellow Warblers and Cedar Waxwings live in this area as well.

North Loop: Walk this loop that starts from the Handicap Road for a chance at seeing a wide variety of birds. Many sparrows, warblers, shorebirds and dabbling ducks can be found along the trail. During breeding season, White-eyed Vireos, Yellow-billed Cuckoos, and Brown Thrashers nest throughout this area.

Hours:

Dawn to Dusk

Fees:

\$5 per vehicle

Amenities: (Nature Center, Restrooms, etc.)

Nature Center

Ornithology Center

Restrooms

Picnic Areas
Play Equipment

Handicap Accessibility:

Much of the park is accessible. Areas such as the Marina can be birded from the parking lot. There are some rugged trails that are not handicap accessible.

Trails:

Many trails throughout the park offer ample opportunity to hike.

Auto-tour: (Yes or No)

No

Map: (Link to a Map)

North Half: <http://www.indygov.org/NR/rdonlyres/CCACDED2-7E0A-44F9-812F-C7C9F4CC4A81/0/EAGLECREEKPARKNORTH.pdf>

South Half: <http://www.indygov.org/NR/rdonlyres/7FA5D08D-779E-4CDD-A8D3-F1D241487979/0/EAGLECREEKPARKSOUTH.pdf>

Website:

Indy Parks Department:

<http://www.indygov.org/eGov/City/DPR/Parks/List/Eagle+Creek+Park.htm>

Eagle Creek Park Foundation:

<http://www.eaglecreekpark.org/index2.html>

When to go: Season or Months are most useful

All Year

Hunting: (Allowed or Not Allowed)

Not Allowed

Additional Hunting Information:

None

Fishing: (Allowed or Not Allowed)

Allowed

Additional Fishing Information:

Many areas around the lake are open for fishing.

Background Info:

In the late 1950's, Purdue University received this land as a donation from Eli Lilly & Company. The city of Indianapolis later purchased the land from the

university and created an earthen dam on the north side of the reservoir. This dam created the small lake that that is visible from the Ornithology Center.

Equipment Needed: (Binoculars, Spotting Scope, etc.)

Binoculars

Spotting Scope

Length of Visit:

½ day or full day visit is recommended

Directions:

Eagle Creek Park is located on the west side of Indianapolis, Indiana.

From the North: Take I-465 or I-65 south to the 71st Street exit. Turn right and follow 71st Street until it dead ends into Eagle Creek.

From the South: Take I-465 north to the 56th Street Exit (no reentry to I465 Northbound). Turn left on 56th Street. After 1 mile turn right into the park.

From the West: Take I-74 east towards Indianapolis. Take I-465 North to the 56th Street exit (note: no reentry to I-465 Northbound). Turn left on 56th Street. After 1 mile turn right into the park.

From the East: Take I-70 west through Indianapolis. Take I-465 North to the 56th Street exit (note: no reentry to I-465 Northbound). Turn left on 56th Street. After 1 mile turn right into the park.

Address:

7840 W. 56th Street

Indianapolis, IN 46254

317-327-7110

Name:
Email Address:
Website URL:
Blog URL: