



Globally Important Bird Areas



Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge Complex Area, Illinois, Iowa and Missouri

Ornithological Highlights: important areas along the Mississippi River for migrant waterfowl, shorebirds and landbirds

Location: includes Port Louisa National Wildlife Refuge, Great River National Wildlife Refuge, Clarence Cannon National Wildlife Refuge, Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge, and Middle Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge; the corridor area includes additional lands from the Rock Island and St. Louis COE Districts managed by the three states, scattered along 340 miles of the Mississippi River from Muscatine, Iowa to Gorham, Illinois

- *Eastern Tallgrass Prairie* (NABCI Bird Conservation Region #22)
- *Prairie Peninsula, Dissected Till Plains* (PIF Physiographic Areas #31,32)

Size: about 111,000 acres are in federal ownership

Ownership: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Habitats: River backwaters and side channels, floodplain forest, marshes, wetland impoundments, grassland, cropland

Land use: hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, interpretation and wildlife education

Site description: Much of the habitat in the river corridor consists of bottomland forest and wetland. Some of the management units on the refuges have low-level levee systems to control artificial river spiking from the lock and dam system and to maintain wetland water levels. In addition to the floodplain acreage managed by these refuges, the Complex also oversees agreements for lands managed cooperatively with the states of Iowa, Illinois and Missouri. The Corps of Engineers is responsible for forest resource management on Corps owned lands in the corridor.

Birds: Along with the Upper Mississippi National Wildlife and Fish Refuge area to the north, this corridor area is important to thousands of migrant and wintering waterfowl using the Mississippi Flyway. In addition, thousands of migrant shorebirds and breeding and migrating passerines utilize the river's habitats. The Red-headed Woodpecker is a common resident and Prothonotary Warbler a common breeder in some sections.

Conservation issues: The refuge units are managed primarily to benefit migratory birds. Impoundments are drained in the summer to allow plant growth and then flooded in the fall to attract the waterfowl, which feed there. Floodplain habitat restoration is a high priority throughout the project area.

Visitor information: Several of the units are closed during migration to protect waterfowl. For information, contact the Refuge Complex Office at 1704 North 24th Street, Quincy, IL 62301, tel: (217) 224-8580. <http://midwest.fws.gov/marktwain/>