



## Globally Important Bird Areas



### *Fort Campbell, Kentucky and Tennessee*

**Ornithological Highlight:** one of the largest grassland areas east of the Mississippi River, it is an important site for Henslow's Sparrow and other watch-listed grassland birds

**Location:** on the Kentucky-Tennessee state line, near Clarksville, Tennessee

- *Central Hardwoods* (NABCI Bird Conservation Region #24)
- *Interior Low Plateaus* (PIF Physiographic Area #14)

**Size:** 105,000 acres

**Ownership:** U.S. Army

**Habitats:** grassland, oak barrens, woodland

**Land use:** military training and exercises

**Site description:** Fort Campbell is home to the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division and functions as a training installation for airborne assault troops. With about two-thirds of its land area in Tennessee, the fort is at the southern end of a large historic grassland area, the Kentucky Barrens, which once covered some 2 million acres. At present about 40,000 acres of the fort is grassland and oak barrens, representing one of the largest existing grasslands east of the Mississippi. A critical link in grassland bird conservation in the east, the vegetation is dominated by native, rather than exotic, grasses.

**Birds:** Little bird work was done on the fort until the late 1990s. At present researchers from the University of Tennessee are sampling birds on 30 to 40 randomly selected plots within the accessible part of the grassland, but much of the area is off-limits as an impact zone for ordnance. In the sampled areas, researchers have found about 150 territories of Henslow's Sparrow, probably only a fraction of the bird's numbers there. Also many Dickcissel and Grasshopper Sparrow nest there and there are a few Bachman's Sparrow.

**Conservation issues:** To keep the area open for airborne training, the grasslands are burned on a 3-year cycle. There is a program to remove pine plantations and to restore these areas to oak barrens. The area is being considered for reintroduction of Greater Prairie-Chicken.

**Visitor information:** Access to the installation is controlled; biologists there occasionally take visitors out to the grassland area. For more information, call 270-798-9260.

Fort Campbell home page: <http://www.campbell.army.mil/campbell.htm>