



Globally Important Bird Areas



Fort Riley Military Reservation, Kansas

Ornithological Highlight: One of the top sites for Henslow's Sparrow; several other grassland birds breed there.

Location: Geary, Riley and Clay Counties, adjacent to the cities of Junction City and Manhattan

- *Eastern Tallgrass Prairie* (NABCI Bird Conservation Region #22)
- *Osage Plains* (PIF Physiographic Area #33)

Size: 100,671 acres

Ownership: U.S. Army

Habitats: tallgrass prairie

Land use: military training, agriculture, and wildlife conservation

Site description: Fort Riley is the largest expanse of public land in the Flint Hills, which represents the largest remaining area of tallgrass prairie in the world. More than half the base is native or replanted tallgrass prairie.

Birds: With maximum counts of 2,000, Fort Riley is the best site for Henslow's Sparrow in Kansas and one of the very best sites for the bird throughout its range. The fort also contains a representative association of tall-grass prairie birds including Greater Prairie-Chicken, Upland Sandpiper, Grasshopper Sparrow and Dickcissel.

Conservation issues: Unlike private land in the Flint Hills, cattle grazing is excluded from the installation. An extensive agricultural hay lease program is managed on the installation. The fort has a prescribed burn program that strives to average one burn every three years. In some years this results in thousands of acres of prime habitat for Henslow's Sparrow.

Visitor information: Access by the public to Fort Riley is restricted on a daily basis. Call 785-239-6211 for access information. Best time to visit is during breeding season, from mid-May to early July.

References:

Cully, J.F., Jr., and H.L. Michaels. 2000. Henslow's Sparrow habitat associations on Kansas tallgrass prairie. *Wilson Bull.* 112 (1): 115-123.