Birding Opportunities at Rock Ridge Prairie

Rock Ridge Prairie, 203 acres and located in Cottonwood County near Jeffers, is one of the highest quality black-soil prairies remaining in SW Minnesota. This SNA contains remnant prairie, a prairie restoration, and agricultural fields that will be restored to prairie in the future. A pond and evergreen plantings occur in a small area on the northeast corner of the site. Fifty-three species of birds have been observed here. Prairie associated species such as clay-colored sparrow, Smith’s longspur and bobolink make their homes here. This area is one of the few places in the state where birders can regularly find Smith’s longspurs during their spring and fall migration periods.

Access is best from the Township Road that runs along the south boundary or from Cottonwood County Road 2 on the east boundary of the SNA. There are no trails on the SNA but hiking is relatively easy on the prairie.

**Taxonomy, Season and Abundance Key**

The names and taxonomic arrangement of species follows that of the Checklist of the Birds of Minnesota (January, 2005) prepared by the Minnesota Ornithological Union (MOU) Records Committee.

The **seasons** in the checklist are defined as follows:

- **Sp** (Spring) = March, April, May
- **Su** (Summer) = June, July
- **Fa** (Fall) = August, September, October, November
- **Wi** (Winter) = December, January, February

**Abundance codes** are defined as follows:

- **C** = Common — present, relatively easy to find
- **U** = Uncommon — observed, may be difficult to find
- **O** = Occasional — may or may not be present in any year
- **R** = Rare — has occurred at least once, may recur
This checklist contains the names of all birds that have been documented at this site by reliable observers, including principal observer Bob Janssen, as well as MOU records, and data contained in research reports. Funding for this project was provided in part by the State Wildlife Grants program administered by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Checklist layout by Jennifer Lintelmann. Persons interested in the sources used in preparation of this list may contact Project Supervisor/Nongame Specialist Katie Haws at 218-308-2641.

For more information contact DNR Information Center, 500 Lafayette Rd. St. Paul, MN 55155-4040 651-296-6157 or toll-free 888-MIN-NDNR (646-6367).

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