

BIRDING

BIRDING



SHOREBIRDS

Along Bedford County's lakes, streams, wetlands and the Juniata River, sharp-eyed bird observers may thrill to the sight of the rare and endangered Least Bittern or its larger cousin, the American Bittern ... more common, but still a secretive resident. Both are perfectly camouflaged and very difficult to detect. Other long-legged wading birds that frequent the County include the Great-blue, Little-blue, Green, Tricolored, Black-crowned Night and Yellow-crowned Night Herons. In addition, the Great Egret and the Snowy Egret catch the bird lover's eyes in Bedford County. Bedford County hosts an extensive list of shore birds, ranging from Sandpipers to Snipe to Avocets. They will challenge even a seasoned birder's identification skills. Bring your best bird book, your life list and prepare to stay a while.

KILLDEER



(*Charadrius vociferus*) is a "Plover". It nests in fields and open expanses of gravel and is easily recognized by its loud, insistent; "Kill-dee, Kill-dee, Kill-dee" calls. The Killdeer scurries about on long legs, searching for insects. It is beautiful and graceful in flight. It has a golden-red rump, a long tail and pointed, white-striped wings.

GREAT BLUE HERON



(*Ardea herodias*) nests in a few rookeries in Bedford County and can be seen along streams and lakes. The Great Blue is four feet tall with a 52 inch wingspan. It eats frogs, lizards, fish and even muskrats. The Great Blue wades stealthily in shallow water while hunting and uses its long, sharp bill to grasp or spear prey.

AMERICAN BITTERN



(*Botaurus lentiginosus*) is classified as "threatened" in Pennsylvania. The Bittern may be seen in local wetlands, but a sharp eye is required to detect this perfectly camouflaged bird. When it feels threatened, it will stand perfectly still with its bill pointed skyward, making it practically invisible in its marsh land habitat.

BLACK CROWNED NIGHT HERON



(*Nycticorax nycticorax*) is black-backed and pale gray or white below with gray wings and appears to be formally dressed in a tuxedo. Stocky and short-legged, it hunts shallow waters for aquatic organisms. It is normally nocturnal, but it can be observed along Dunning Creek, and at Shawnee State Park at dawn or dusk.

GREAT EGRET



(*Ardea alba*) is a large white bird with long black legs and yellow bill. Majestic and graceful in flight with its 55 inch wingspan and an exceptionally long body. It eats fish, frogs and amphibians. The Great Egret and its smaller cousin, the Snowy Egret, visit here during spring and summer months.

GAMEBIRDS

Wild Turkeys are common along farm field edges and their spine tingling gobbles can be heard ringing from ridge tops and rural woodlots during the spring. The Ruffed Grouse thrives in our rich forests. A lover of young forest, it benefits from the County's logging industry. The "Drumming" of male Ruffed Grouse is commonly heard in the early morning hours of springtime and with a lesser frequency through summer and fall. The secretive American Woodcock is classified as a shorebird even though it prefers the forest to the shore. Woodcock are common residents of many streamside wetlands and great numbers of transient woodcock visit during spring and fall migration. Although they are a challenging gamebird for hunters, more humans have become familiar with the woodcock by observing its elaborate courtship flights at dawn and dusk of early spring days.

RUFFED GROUSE

(*Bonasa umbellus*) PA's Avian symbol. The grouse is the King of game birds. It is beautiful and perfectly camouflaged by rich brown and mellow gray feathers. Males display their broad banded tails and unique neck ruffs during courtship. Their trademark "drumming" sound is commonly heard on spring mornings.



RING NECKED PHEASANT

(*Phasianus colchicus*) provides many hours of enjoyment afield for hunters. Good numbers are released in the County each fall. They're most easily observed during springtime when proud males crow and strut about in plain view while wooing hens.



MOURNING DOVE

(*Zenaidura macroura*) can be found in large numbers in Bedford County and thousands more migrate through the County seasonally. Look for them in crop lands. These sleek birds are one of nature's most agile, speedy fliers. Their cooing has the air of a mournful cry, hence their common name.



AMERICAN WOODCOCK

(*Scolopax minor*) is actually classified as a shorebird, but the Woodcock favors wet woodlands and dense thickets. Their long beaks probe rich soil for their preferred food; earthworms. The woodcock is a superb flier that migrates great distances at night, further enhancing its mystery.



WILD TURKEY

(*Melagris gallopavo*) PA's largest game-bird abounds here. These birds can be seen at dawn and dusk along wooded field edges. Their gobbles add excitement to spring mornings. Trapped turkeys from Bedford County have aided in the resurgence of turkeys across the nation.



WATERFOWL

All manner of waterfowl ride the uplifting highway of Bedford County's bird-friendly wind currents during their bi-annual migrations and thousands rest and feed on the County's lakes and streams. Shawnee State Park Lake's central-west location at the foot of the Allegheny Front, places its 451 acres of shallow waters directly beneath waterfowl migrating along the Allegheny Front. Its food-rich waters offer migrating and resident waterfowl a veritable Garden of Eden. Some days, as many as twelve separate species of ducks, including sea ducks, can be sighted.

The county's waterfowl attractiveness quotient is enhanced by numerous privately-owned, restored wetlands and man-made impoundments that have been established specifically for waterfowl. These areas range in size from a few to several hundred acres and attract an amazing array of ducks, geese, swans and shorebirds.



WOOD DUCK

(*Aix sponsa*) is the most colorful gamebird native to North America, and is highly terrestrial, nesting in tree cavities in forested bottom lands and along woodland streams. The hen may select a tree quite distant from water for her nest. The "Woody" is a local resident and thousands more migrate through the County seasonally.



MALLARD

(*Anas platyrhynchos*) are often semi tame throughout the US. They're common year round (especially at Fort Bedford Park in downtown Bedford). The male is shown. The female is mottled brown with black smudges on an orange bill.



AMERICAN WIGEON

(*Anas americana*) is a beautiful duck with a shining white crown on the male which gives the species its common name of "Baldpate". In flight, wigeons display a large white patch on the front of the wing. Females are ruddy brown with gray heads and necks. Classified as a "diving duck" and highly prized by hunters.



BLACK DUCK

(*Anas rubripes*) are sooty brown and appear black at a distance. The underside of their wing is white and appears to flash silver in flight. Both sexes have yellow-brown heads and metallic blue wing patches. The hen quacks like a mallard. The male voice is a low croak. Commonly sighted on our streams and at Shawnee State Park Lake.



SURF SCOTER

(*Melanitta perspicillata*) is also known as the "Skunk-head" due to the very obvious dual white patches on its black head. Indigent to salt water off-shore and along the east coast, it can be seen in Bedford County following stormy nights during spring and fall migrations. Look for them on Shawnee Lake, especially in springtime.



GREEN WINGED TEAL

(*Anas crecca*) are small with superb flying abilities. Males have a gray body, brown head and white on the front of the wing. Sunlight reveals an iridescent green in the wing and a green patch on the side of its head. The hen is small, brown and speckled with an iridescent green wing.



REDHEAD DUCK

(*Aythya americana*) are generally gray with a black chest and a round red-brown head and black tipped bill. The female is brown with a broad gray wing-stripe. Classified as a diving duck, it is a common migrant through Bedford County at Shawnee Park and along the Juniata.



CANADA GOOSE

(*Branta canadensis*) are common residents year round, especially at Shawnee Park. Hard to miss, as they often frequent the shore along the lake. Less common visitors to the county are the Greater White Fronted Goose, Ross's Goose and Brant.



TUNDRA SWAN

(*Cygnus columbianus*) is a visitor during seasonal migration. They are not everyday visitors, but when they descend on Shawnee Lake it is usually in huge numbers. Note the black bill. Best time to see them is in the spring and fall.



SONGBIRDS

Bedford enjoys an exceptional abundance and diversity of resident and migrant songbirds. Some believe the County hosts the largest number of nesting bird species of any Pennsylvania County. This amazing bird wealth is attracted and supported by the County's vast and diverse habitat and the exceptional water quality of its many streams. Spring and fall warbler migrations thrill birdwatchers along and atop our many ridges while numerous wetland restoration projects attract a fascinating array of grassland and marsh birds. Shawnee State Park is a popular nesting area for warblers. Another great area to observe migrating warblers, flycatchers, tanagers, etc. is the vast acreage of the Martin Hill area of Buchanan State Forest.

RUBY THROATED HUMMINGBIRD



(*Archilochus colubris*) is the only hummingbird found regularly in Bedford County. Normally seen during summertime in forest edges, parks and gardens. The male is shown. The female has a green back and white front.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE



(*Icterus galbula*) The male is fiery orange with a black head and shoulders. The female is olive above and yellow below with two white wing-bars; the male has one wing-bar. They are common summer residents of Bedford County that often respond to sugar water feeders and citrus fruit at backyard feeders.

CARDINAL



(*Cardinalis cardinalis*) is actually a Grosbeak (named for the thick bill shape) and prefers low, dense cover, found in forests or the shrubs around family backyards. Similar to the Scarlet Tanager, but differs with a crest atop its head and a mostly red wing.

CEDAR WAXWING



(*Bombocilla cedrorum*) is a common visitor to our game lands, parks and forests. Waxwings have velvet-like plumage and a yellow band at the end of their tail. They are commonly observed in flocks, feeding on wild fruits. They will also chase flying insects.

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH



(*Carduelis tristis*) males are greenish yellow in the winter and yellow with black wings in the summer. The female is a dull olive-yellow with blackish wings. Goldfinches feed on weed seeds in the fall and frequent backyard bird feeding stations in spring.

SCARLET Tanager



(*Piranga olivacea*) is bright scarlet with black wings and tail. This springtime migrant flits about the forest in search of insects. Females are dull green above and yellowish below, with brownish or blackish wings. Their voice is four or five short nasal phrases of "chip-burr" that is robin-like but hoarser.

RED BELLED WOODPECKER



(*Melanerpes carolinus*) is a crow-sized woodpecker with a red crest that covers the top and back of the head and neck. Historically a southern species, but recently its range has extended and it is now a common resident of Bedford County.

INDIGO BUNTING



(*Passerina cyanea*) is usually seen in dense brush lands. The male's summer plumage is a deep, rich, iridescent blue darker than that of the Eastern Bluebird. The female is plain brown with paler under parts. The song is recognizable because it repeats each note exactly. Common nesters throughout Bedford County.

WHITE BREASTED NUTHATCH



(*Sitta carolinensis*) is very common in our forests and parks. Often seen around trees where they nest in the tree cavities. They are common in two varieties, the white breasted (shown) and the red-breasted nuthatch. They do visit feeders for suet or seeds.

PARULA WARBLER



(*Parula americana*) is a tiny, bluish warbler with a yellow throat and breast. It has two white wing-bars and a greenish patch on the back. The male has a dark band crossing his breast. The female lacks this band, but can be identified by her generally blue and yellow color and white wing-bars. A common nester here.

PRAIRIE WARBLER



(*Dendroica discolor*) is a common warbler with yellow under parts striped with black in which the striping is confined to the sides. Two black face-marks, one through the eye and one below, are conclusive ID markings. Faint chestnut markings may be seen on the male's back. A common nester in Bedford County thickets.

TUFTED TITMOUSE



(*Baeolophus bicolor*) is very common in Bedford County, often flitting from branch to branch in the leafy cover provided by a tree. Their call is "peeto, peeto, peeto". Gray and white with a perky crest, pale face, black forehead and rusty sides.

RAPTORS

Bedford County's magic carpet of wind currents and thermals along the Allegheny Front supports the passage of thousands of raptors (predatory birds) during seasonal migrations. Spring and fall are prime times to observe an array of diverse raptors gliding effortlessly along on the friendly local winds. Bedford County is 78% forested and these avian predators find ample prey within its varied age woodlands, forest edges and openings. Each winter, the County enjoys a wintering population of Golden Eagles and good numbers of visiting Rough-legged hawks. The Northern Goshawk also nests in Bedford County. During the fall migration, it is not uncommon for the daily hawk sighting tally to exceed 2,000 birds per day. (Consult the "Hawk Watch" portion of this brochure.)

AMERICAN KESTREL



(Falco sparverius) is the smallest Pennsylvania hawk and a true falcon, as indicated by its aerobic flight. Commonly seen perched upon electric transmission wires and bare tree limbs along highways and weedy fields where they prey upon small rodents, large insects and small birds, hence the common name: Sparrow Hawk. Males have blue gray wings and the female is reddish brown.

PEREGRINE FALCON



(Falco peregrinus) is one of the fastest flying birds and visits here during seasonal migrations. In Spring, you might spot it pursuing ducks on local wetlands and lakes but your best bet for putting him on your life list is at the Hawk Watch (below). The Peregrine is crow-sized and displays the dark moustache of a falcon. It has long pointed wings, a long, narrow tail, and its quick rowing wing-beats make it easy to identify.

MERLIN



(Falco columbarius) is mid-sized between the Peregrine and the Kestrel. The Merlin is about the size of a blue jay with broad black bands on the tail. Males are bluish-gray above and females are dusky brown. Both display the black moustache of the falcons. Look for them in open areas throughout the County during seasonal migrations.

BALD EAGLE



(Haliaeetus leucocephalus) is indigenous and migrates through Bedford County. Bald Eagle nesting has been reported on the Juniata River and a nest on Raystown Lake is providing an increasing frequency of eagle sightings throughout the County. During migrations, large numbers of Bald Eagles pass the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch and they can often be observed fishing at Shawnee State Park during springtime.

OSPREY



(Pandion haliaetus) is a large black-and-white hawk, that is white below with a prominent white head. The Osprey or "Fish Hawk", as it is also known, is often mistaken for the Bald Eagle. Both dine nearly exclusively on fish and it is common to observe the Osprey plunging into the Juniata River throughout the County, even in the town of Bedford. They are commonly sighted at Shawnee State Park in the spring.

OTHER PRETTY HANDY INFO

"BEDFORD COUNTY BIRDING" IS PRODUCED BY:



PROFESSIONAL GUIDE SERVICE

This Birding Brochure couldn't have been produced without the information and photography of conservationist, Tim Flanigan.



Tim Flanigan & Drummer at the Allegheny Plateau Hawk Watch

If you'd like to hire a professional guide to help you discover the birds, wildlife and wildflowers in and around Bedford County, Tim is the one you should contact. You can call him at (814)623-7865. One day or multi day trips are available.

Drummer, Tim's Brittney Spaniel, is an optional assistant that you may request. He works for biscuits. Tim used to work for biscuits, but converted to the dollar system when Drummer was suspected of embezzeling biscuits from the company.

GPS NAVIGATION



We've marked the birding locations below with GPS coordinates. ** Note that the coordinates are in the "Degrees-Minutes -Thousandths of a minute" format. (hddd-mm.mmm) Our visitors guide is GPS friendly too. Keep watching our web site for future downloads of Bedford County GPS Driving tours.

SNOWY OWL

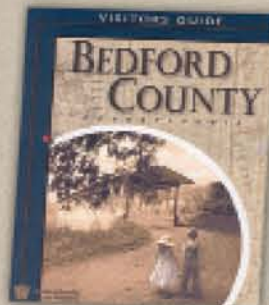
(Bubo scandiacus) is an uncommon visitor to Bedford County. But, during severe winters, when extreme snow depths in its more northern habitat drives it south in search of prey, Snowy owls will venture into our area. This powerful arctic predator hunts by day. It is large and predominantly white, flecked with black spots.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

#1 - ESSENTIAL

This birding brochure was designed to work together with the Bedford County Visitors Guide. There's a map in the center of this visitors guide that'll help you find each of the birding locations we list below. Call the Bedford County Visitors Bureau at (800)765-3331 to get a copy. Also, if you plan to visit the James Buchanan Forest, we recommend that you get a map to help you find your way. The Visitors Guide and the map are free. The Bedford County Visitors Guide also has info about lodging, dining and attractions in our area.



#2 - RECOMMENDED

Obviously, we can't list here every bird species common to the area in a pamphlet of this size. Indeed, we've excluded the listing of some very common birds (robins, sparrows) to list more interesting species. You should get an in-depth field guide about the bird species you'll find in Bedford County. We recommend two in particular, available through most book stores.

Kaufman - Field Guide to Birds of North America

Peterson - Birds of Eastern and Central North America



#3 - RECOMMENDED

Get some form of magnification (Binocular) to help you with your identification efforts.

#4 - SUPPLEMENTAL INFO

We've placed some additional birding info on our web site at: "www.bedfordcounty.net". Click on the Birding Link.

GOLDEN EAGLE



(Aquila chrysaetos) are rare in the East, but substantial numbers of Golden Eagles visit Bedford County during winter and can be observed soaring along local ridges or hunting in fields. They are occasionally sighted in summer months as well. The Allegheny Hawk Watch commonly records greater numbers of passing (migrating) Golden Eagles than most other such sites on the East Coast.

EASTERN GOSHAWK



(Accipiter gentilis) was once known as the "grouse" hawk. This hawk visits Bedford County during severe winters in Canada. Several nest in Bedford County annually in scattered stands of conifer trees. The Goshawk is the largest accipiter in the State with a wing-span of up to 47". Look for them in the Pine Natural Area of James Buchanan State Forest near Chaneyville. Call for a map of the Pine Natural Area of the James Buchanan Forest. (800)765-3331

OWLS

Silent flight, superb dim-light vision and acute hearing, make owls the ultimate night hunter. Their nocturnal nature precludes easy viewing but their presence is betrayed by their eerie calls in the dark of night. From the Great-horned Owl to the small, docile Saw-whet Owl, these secretive and silent night-hunters abound within Bedford County. The ghostly white Snowy Owl visits the county irregularly in wintertime. Bedford County's many dairy farms and reverting wetlands host a growing number of rare Barn Owls and an increasing amount of grass-land habitat is attracting surprising numbers of the endangered *Short-eared Owls*. These rare owls commonly begin hunting in early evening and can be easily observed hunting weedy grasslands.

BARRED OWL

(Strix varia) is a large gray-brown owl with a heavily barred throat and a heavily streaked breast. It lacks the yellow eyes of most owls but its large dark eyes serve it well while hunting in stream bottoms and forested wetlands for a diet that includes a substantial amount of cold-blooded animals. Its eight-note call is loud and unmistakable.



COMMON SCREECH OWL

(Megascops asio) is a beautiful little owl with a quavering whistled call. It may be observed in both red and gray color phases. Although it sports ear tufts, like the Great-horned, the Screech owl is Robin-sized. It prefers to nest in tree cavities and preys on small rodents and large insects. Screech-owls are quite common and their songs enliven Bedford County nights.



BARN OWL

(Tyto alba) stands about 16" tall. It is buffy-brown and gray above and white below and may be described as; long-legged, knock-kneed and monkey-faced. Its large head, overall white body and wings, from beneath, and light moth-like flight gives it an eerie ghost-like appearance in flight. It is commonly observed near farms where it prefers to roost and nest in old buildings and silos.



GREAT HORNED OWL

(Bubo virginianus) is the largest Pennsylvania owl. It stands two feet tall and sports large wide-set horns, (feather tufts) atop its head, as though exclamation marks for its bright yellow eyes. The Great-horned is rusty-brown and gray above with dark barring on its underside. It preys on small mammals and birds and is very common in Bedford County. Its booming hoots are especially noticeable during early spring.



SAW WHET OWL

(Aegolius acadicus) is surprisingly tame and may be seen roosting in conifer trees in daylight. Tiny, but beautiful, it is generally brown spotted with white and its breast is streaked with white. Its flat-topped, round head appears large for its body and is accented with piercing yellow eyes. Each year, many Saw-whets are captured and banded in Bedford County.



Best Bedford County

Hawk Watch

Visitor's Guide Map Grid: C1
GPS: 40° 04.908N - 078° 43.731W

The Allegheny Plateau Hawk Watch site also offers one of the most awe-inspiring vistas in Eastern America. On occasion, eagles pass at eye level; so close that one can see the color of the great bird's eyes. This is a must-see, must-do experience for all birders. Operated by the Allegheny Plateau Chapter of the Audubon Society. During seasonal migrations, (spring and fall) daily raptor counts commonly exceed more than 2,000 hawks.

BEST TIME TO SEE BIRDS: The gate is usually open from mid-August through late November and March-early May. The gate is closed during off-season months, but foot access is easy via a level gravel road. Best birdwatching months are September and October. During peak spring and fall migration cycles, bird identification experts are on site daily. Peak times daily are mid morning and late afternoon. Volunteers also count migrating Monarch Butterflies and dragonflies.

SPECIES YOU WILL FIND HERE: Bald and Golden Eagles are commonly seen and more than 50 Golden Eagles were counted on one day. Falcons: Peregrine, Merlin, Kestrel and Gyrfalcon. Harrier: Northern Harrier. Accipiters: Goshawk, Coopers Hawk and Sharp-shinned Hawk. Buteos: Red-tailed, Red-shouldered, Rough-legged, Broad-winged and Swainson's Hawk. Kites: Mississippi and Swallow-tailed Kite. Osprey

CHALLENGES: Minimal comforts. There is a porta-potty on site.
REWARDS: This is Interstate-95 for migrating birds.

DIRECTIONS: From the traffic light in Schellsburg, travel 3.3 miles west on US Route 30. Turn right onto Burns Mills Road (Rt 469). Travel 1.7 miles to a stop sign and turn right onto Helixville Road (SR 4012). Travel 1.4 miles and turn left onto Lambert Mountain Road (T501). Climb the face of the Allegheny Plateau for .7 of a mile to the hawk watch entrance on your left, just past the crest of the mountain. A blue metal gate identifies the access roadway. Proceed .2 mile via this gravel road to the hawk watch parking area and walk 100 yards to the edge of the Allegheny Front.

** NOTE **

The "No Trespassing" signs near the hawk watch denote only the adjoining property. They do not apply to the hawk watch. You are welcome guests at the Allegheny Plateau hawk watch.



Shawnee Lake @



VISITORS GUIDE MAP GRID: D2
GPS: 40° 01.574N
078° 38.136W
Call for a park map.

Shawnee State Park is 3983 acres of superb wildlife habitat. Its shallow 451 acre lake is directly beneath one of the East Coast's most heavily-used bird migration routes. From the bird's perspective, the Park is a full-service bed-and-breakfast for seasonally migrating songbirds, raptors, shorebirds and an amazing array of North American waterfowl. The shallow waters invite all manner of waterfowl to feed on the lake's rich fish and plant food resources.

BEST TIME TO SEE BIRDS: Usually bird populated throughout the year, but most Eastern American ducks, including sea ducks, can be observed on the lake during spring and fall migration periods with springtime being the best time to fill your life list.

SPECIES YOU'LL FIND HERE: Mallard and Black Ducks, American Wigeons, Gadwalls, Green and Blue-winged Teal, Canvas backs, Redheads, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Wood Ducks, Pintails, Shovelers, Hooded, Red-breasted and Common Mergansers, Ring-necked Ducks, Buffleheads and the highly animated Ruddy Ducks on Shawnee Lake. Avian visitors also include two species of loons, four species of grebes, six species of herons, two bittern species, two egrets species and numerous shorebirds as well as Canada and Snow geese and often literally thousands of Tundra Swans that convert the lake surface to a sea of brilliant white. Occasional visits of Ross's, White-fronted Geese and Brant add to the lake's intrigue. Following spring storms it is not uncommon to observe a variety of East Coast sea ducks such as the Scoters and Old Squaw or Long-tailed Ducks resting on the lake. The lake is also attractive to Bald Eagles and Osprey.

CHALLENGES: None really. Lots of parking and easy access.
REWARDS: Waterfowl galore. The Park's excellent road and hiking trail system, ample parking areas, restroom facilities, modern campground, cabin rentals and numerous lakeside picnic tables make birding this site an absolute joy.

DIRECTIONS: Travel US Route 30, 10 miles west from Bedford to the traffic signal in Schellsburg. There, turn south onto Route 96 and travel 1 mile, across two bridges and turn left into the park entrance. The park office is immediately on the right and park personnel will be happy to provide maps and further information about the park's assets. Another park entrance is located 1 mile east of Schellsburg, on US Route 30. Park office phone: (814) 733-4218. On the web: www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/.

Birdwatching Spots

JAMES BUCHANON STATE FOREST

VISITORS GUIDE MAP GRID: F2
GPS: 39° 49.830N - 078° 32.640W

We have a great map of James Buchanan State Forest. For best results, call us for one. (800)765-3331 Over 29,000 acres of Buchanan State Forest extend south from Rainsburg to the Mason/Dixon line. During seasonal migrations, warblers, tanagers and flycatchers, including the Great-Crested Flycatchers can be sighted throughout the forest while ravens and raptors soar overhead.

DIRECTIONS: Drive E. on Bus. Rt. 30 from Bedford 1 mile. Before crossing the river, turn south onto Rt. 326. Travel 11.2 miles through Rainsburg. Continue to the top of Tussey Mnt. and the entrance to Blankley Rd. The intersection is well marked. Turn right onto this gravel road and continue 2.2 miles to an intersection marked by a sign for the "Sweetroot Natural Area." Turn right and travel .7 miles to the Blankley picnic area. From the Natural Area sign you may continue south for 1.9 to Tower Road and turn right for a distance of .8 miles to the highest point on the mountain, elevation 2,800 ft. Continue south, from Tower Road for 1.5 miles, to a parking lot at the intersection of Blankley Road and Beans Cove Road and you will notice a gated road that continues south. This road is closed to vehicles but it is generally level and provides easy foot access to unique upland wetlands.

REWARDS: Roadside picnic tables in the well-equipped Blankley area where one can rest and dine while watching birdlife in a forest setting. Here, pavilions, fireplaces and restrooms are provided and hand pumps offer fresh cold mountain water.

EVERETT - TENLEY PARK -

VISITORS GUIDE MAP GRID: D4
GPS: 40° 00.992N 078°22:103W

Tenley Park is the ideal site for the casual, senior or physically impaired birder. Additional picnic tables are available in open sites and walking is easy and level on mowed areas or a paved roadway. A comfort station is also available.

Tenley Park is a seventy-five acre oasis of quiet scenery in Everett, Pennsylvania. Here, one can picnic in covered pavilions while enjoying the sights of various fly-catchers such as Phoebe, Pewees and Tree Swallows and an assortment of woodland and water birds. Two small ponds, lined with cat-o-nine-tails, attract Great Blue and Green Herons, Belted Kingfishers and Red-winged Blackbirds. Wood Ducks and Mallards are also commonly sighted on the ponds. In the surrounding forests, Towhees, Ovenbirds and seasonally migrating warblers can be observed.

Directions: From Main Street in Everett, turn north on to Water Street and travel to the first stop sign. There, turn right onto E 1st. Street and travel .2 mile and turn left on to N Hopewell Street. Continue for 1.2 mile to the park.



Rays Cove VISTA

VISITORS GUIDE
MAP GRID: C5

Many scenic vistas exist within Buchanan State Forest, but few rival the Rays Cove Vista for beauty and tranquility. Its location, at 2,200 feet high along the west face of Rays Hill Mountain places it directly in a well-used migratory bird super highway. The vista faces southwest permitting birders to observe seasonally passing raptors riding west wind updrafts ricocheting off the mountainside. On sunny spring and fall days, mid-morning and mid afternoon thermal columns increase the lifting ability of the local air currents encouraging more flights. Directly west of the vista, Harbor Mountain angles northeast to meet Rays Hill. This geographic merging of mountainsides enhances and creates additional updrafts and thermals at the Rays Cove Vista.

GPS: 40° 05.288 N - 078° 13.529 W

BEST TIME TO SEE BIRDS: The best times to observe birds at the Rays Cove Vista are during the spring and fall raptor migrations when all manner of eastern North American birds of prey may be seen daily. (Spring: March through May.) (Fall: September through November.) In addition to migrating raptors, a vast array of forest dwelling birds including turkey and grouse as well as migrating warblers, flycatchers, waxwings and more can be seen at the vista and along the remote and quiet forest roadways of Buchanan State Forest. Bring a cooler and a lunch and enjoy a day of beauty in mountainside grandeur.

CHALLENGES/REWARDS The vista site is a mowed, grassy, man-made forest opening of approximately one acre in size that is sloped, but sufficiently level to support portable chairs. It is just a few feet off a graveled forestry road known as Fisher Road. Ample parking is available, but the final driveway into the vista may not be suitable for cars without a lot of ground clearance. If necessary, park below the final drive and walk the final yards into the vista. No restroom facilities or picnic facilities available.

DIRECTIONS: From Everett, Pa. take Route 26 north for 2.5 miles to Plank Road (SR0009). Turn right onto Plank Road and travel .3 miles to a stop sign and turn right onto Ritchey Bridge Road (SR 1012). Travel 7.1 miles east/northeast to Burnt Church road (T487). Turn left onto Burnt Church Road and travel 1.8 miles and turn right onto Fisher Road, a graveled forestry road that is unmarked at this intersection. Travel uphill for .5 mile and turn into open vista on left. (Distance from Bedford, 21 miles)