



IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION - Birding Sites in Cerro Gordo County

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Blue-wing Marsh

GPS Coordinates: 43.0834956379463,-93.4430980682373

Ownership: None listed

Description: Pure natural area primarily used for hunting.

Habitat: Open prairie/marsh.

Directions: In Cerro Gordo Co., just south of Clear Lake (the lake itself). Near Ventura, take S-14/Balsam Ave. about three miles south from U.S. 18 to 220th St. Go two miles east on 220th where the marsh is at Dogwood Ave.

Public Hunting Area

Amenities: Parking | Trails |

Clear Lake - Cedar Ave. Access

GPS Coordinates: 43.1103355584608,-93.4479260444641

Ownership: None listed

Description: Extreme southwest public access to Clear Lake.

Habitat: Public access to Clear Lake with small parking lot. Spotty woodland edge along Farmer's Beach from the parking lot west to Lone Tree Point. This cove is one of the few remaining natural areas on Clear Lake.

Directions: On the western half of the south shore of Clear Lake. Along B-35, 1.5 miles east of Balsam Ave., or 1/2 mile west of Dogwood Ave., take Cedar Ave. about 1/3 mile to the access at the lake.

Walking the shore, Farmer's Beach is about 1/4 mile west, and Lone Tree Pt. another 1/4 mile beyond this.

Amenities: Parking | ADA Accessible Trails

Clear Lake - sandbar

GPS Coordinates: 43.1205325833244,-93.4582901000977

Ownership: None listed

Description: Natural sandbar groomed as a picnic area.

Habitat: Narrow peninsula of land extending into Clear Lake. The initial area is groomed as a picnic area. From about the halfway point to the end, the peninsula is clogged with brush and trees, but the western edge is sandy and walkable.

Directions: The sandbar extends into Clear Lake from McIntosh Woods S.P.

Amenities: Restrooms | Parking |

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo Co., IA) (eBird Hotspot) (Important Bird Area)

GPS Coordinates: 43.1268826,-93.4142692

Ownership: None listed

Description: Iowa's 3rd largest natural lake. Primarily used for boating and recreation.

Habitat: Large natural lake averaging 8-10 feet in depth. There is a state park on the south shore that consists of a small sandy beach with adjacent picnic area. On the north shore is McIntosh Woods State Park which includes a small natural sandbar. At the far western edge is Ventura Marsh. Most of the shoreline of Clear Lake has been developed, but there is still a small tract of natural shoreline at the extreme southwest edge.

Directions: The eastern half of Clear Lake is surrounded by the city of Clear Lake, in western Cerro Gordo County. At the western edge sits the city of Ventura.

Public Hunting Area

Amenities: Restrooms | Drinking Water | Parking | Trails | Camping |

Clear Lake City Park (eBird Hotspot)

GPS Coordinates: 43.1355353,-93.384465

Ownership: City

Description: Small city park in downtown Clear Lake that incorporates the eastern shore of Clear Lake.

Habitat: Viewing of and access to Clear Lake from its eastern edge. The only habitat is the lake itself, so early spring and late fall waterfowl may be observed from this vantage point.

Directions: Downtown Clear Lake.

Amenities: Restrooms | Drinking Water | Parking |

Lime Creek Conservation Area

GPS Coordinates: 43.1902841080925,-93.2016563415527

Ownership: County

Description: County Conservation Headquarters. Nature Center and large conservation area along Winnebago River

Habitat: Several restored prairies, 20-acre pond, mixed woodlands and riparian habitat along Winnebago River.

Directions: - at the north edge of Mason City in Cerro Gordo Co. Take U.S. 65 north and look for signs to the park on the east.

Public Hunting Area

Amenities: Restrooms | Drinking Water | Parking | Trails | Camping |

Lime Creek Nature Center (eBird Hotspot)

GPS Coordinates: 43.1902841,-93.1923866

Ownership: County

Description: Headquarters for County Conservation.

Habitat: Nature Center with CC Office. Aquariums, animal displays, active bee hive, outdoor bird feeding area, large meeting room, library, some equipment rental.

Directions: At the Lime Creek Conservation Area on the north side of Mason City. Take U.S. 65 north.

Amenities: Restrooms | Drinking Water | Parking |

Mallard Marsh (eBird Hotspot)

GPS Coordinates: 43.2407529,-93.4665397

Ownership: County

Description: Pure natural area.

Habitat: Three small lakes with some marsh edging, and both prairie and woodlands on surrounding acreage.

Directions: In the northwest corner of Cerro Gordo Co. From I-35 take B-20 west 7.5 miles to S-14/Balsam Ave. 1.5 miles north on S-14 turn east on 325th St. to the marsh parking area shortly on your left.

Public Hunting Area

Amenities: Parking | Trails |

McIntosh Wildlife Area (Important Bird Area)

GPS Coordinates: 43.1275489037465,-93.4494495391846

Ownership: State

Description: Small grassland with low wet areas, on the north side of Clear Lake.

Habitat: Primarily grassland with two low areas that sometimes hold water. Edged by thin woodlands especially on the southwest.

Directions: - on the western north shore of Clear Lake in Cerro Gordo Co. A little more than five miles west along U.S. 18 from I-35, take Cardinal Ave. south one half mile to Lake St. and look for the sign to the area.

Public Hunting Area

Amenities: Parking |

McIntosh Woods SP (eBird Hotspot) (Important Bird Area)

GPS Coordinates: 43.1283755,-93.4496307

Ownership: None listed

Description: State Park on north side of Clear Lake.

Habitat: Mixed woodland, small pond, huge parking lot with access to Clear Lake, area for cleaning fish, shelter houses, cabins, camping.

Directions: From the city of Clear Lake, take North Shore Drive west about 3 miles.

Amenities: Restrooms | Drinking Water | Parking | Trails | Camping | Cabins |

Parker's Woods

GPS Coordinates: 43.153539861553,-93.2124280929565

Ownership: City

Description: Mason City city park with picnic area, playground, shelter house, woodland trails.

Habitat: Narrow wooded edge along Willow Creek.

Directions: In Mason City, Cerro Gordo Co. One half mile north of U.S. 18 along U.S. 65, go west on 1st St. NW just past the railroad yard to Jackson Ave. and the park.

Amenities: Restrooms | Parking | Trails |

Shellrock Greenbelt (Important Bird Area)

GPS Coordinates: 43.1839947109931,-93.0526971817017

Has Site Guide

Ownership: None listed

Description:

Habitat:

Directions: In Cerro Gordo Co. east of Mason City. Take Hwy. 122 east about 2.5 miles past the edge of Mason City to Warbler, the next road after Vine. Take Warbler 2.5 miles north to 290th and look for the parking area.

Amenities:

Spring Park

GPS Coordinates: 43.1998577668946,-93.1992530822754

Ownership: None listed

Description:

Habitat:

Directions: Just north outside Mason City in Cerro Gordo Co. Follow U.S. 65 north out of town, and past Lime Creek Conservation Area look for B-20/300th St. to the right (east). Go east on B-20 and quickly come to Spring Park on your right.

Amenities:

Teal Basin

GPS Coordinates: 43.2153101118388,-93.4429264068604

Ownership: None listed

Description:

Habitat:

Directions: In the northwest corner of Cerro Gordo Co., 5.5 miles west of I-35 along B-20.

Amenities:

Ventura Marsh WMA (eBird Hotspot) (Important Bird Area)

GPS Coordinates: 43.1153657,-93.4846489

Ownership: None listed

Description:

Habitat:

Directions: At the far west end of Clear Lake. Viewing is from S-14/Main St., one half mile south of U.S. 18 at Ventura.

Amenities:

Winnebago River

GPS Coordinates: 43.148405174692,-93.1605863571167

Ownership: None listed

Description:

Habitat:

Directions: just southeast of Mason City in Cerro Gordo Co. Birch Dr. is two miles east of U.S. 65 along Hwy. 122 out of Mason City, on the south side of the road.

Amenities:

Zirbel Slough WMA (eBird Hotspot) (Important Bird Area)

GPS Coordinates: 43.0529907,-93.3525467

Ownership: None listed

Description:

Habitat:

Directions: In central Cerro Gordo Co. Two miles south of U.S. 18, take the B-43 exit off I-35 and go two miles west to Hwy. 107. Go south one mile on 107 to 200th St., and west on 200th one mile to the slough, past Heather Ave.

Amenities: