



## IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION - Birding Sites in Jasper County

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### **Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve (eBird Hotspot)**

**GPS Coordinates:** 41.7050877,-92.7862358

**Ownership:** County

**Description:** Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve, managed by Jasper County, has three access areas-- Skinner Ridge area on the west side of the park, Ahrens Access on the in the center at the reservoir, and East Access. A long mowed trail system connects the eastern and western portions of the preserve. An observation tower is located on Skinner Ridge.

**Habitat:** A 25-acre manmade lake, several smaller ponds, wetland, oak savanna, woodland, and tallgrass prairie provide a variety of habitats for birds.

**Directions:** In eastern Jasper County, just north of I-80. Take exit 179, go north on Hwy. T-38, then go east on Jacob Ave. Access points are along this road.

**Amenities:** Restrooms | Parking | Trails |

### **Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve--Ahrens Access (eBird Hotspot)**

**GPS Coordinates:** 41.705555,-92.786385

**Ownership:** County

**Description:** Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve, managed by Jasper County, has three access areas. Ahrens Access is in the center at the man-made lake. A long mowed trail system connects the eastern and western portions of the preserve.

**Habitat:** A 25-acre manmade lake, several smaller ponds, wetland, oak savanna, woodland, and tallgrass prairie provide a variety of habitats for birds. Ahrens Access is the closest access to the lake.

**Directions:** In eastern Jasper County, just north of I-80. Take exit 179, go north on Hwy. T-38, then go east on Jacob Ave. Access points are along this road.

**Amenities:** Restrooms | Parking | Trails |

### **Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve--Main Access (eBird Hotspot)**

**GPS Coordinates:** 41.7075,-92.77945

**Ownership:** County

**Description:** Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve, managed by Jasper County, has three access areas. The Main Access is on the east side of the preserve. A long mowed trail system connects the eastern and western portions of the preserve.

**Habitat:** A 25-acre manmade lake, several smaller ponds, wetland, oak savanna, woodland, and tallgrass prairie provide a variety of habitats for birds. The main access is the closest to the small ponds.

**Directions:** In eastern Jasper County, just north of I-80. Take exit 179, go north on Hwy. T-38, then go east on Jacob Ave. Access points are along this road.

**Amenities:** Restrooms | Parking | Trails |

### **Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve--Skinner Ridge Access (eBird Hotspot)**

**GPS Coordinates:** 41.702778,-92.793335

**Ownership:** County

**Description:** Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve, managed by Jasper County, has three access areas. Skinner Ridge Access is a small parking area on the west side of the preserve. A long mowed trail system connects the eastern and western portions of the preserve. An observation tower is located on Skinner Ridge.

**Habitat:** A 25-acre manmade lake, several smaller ponds, wetland, oak savanna, woodland, and tallgrass prairie provide a variety of habitats for birds.

**Directions:** In eastern Jasper County, just north of I-80. Take exit 179, go north on Hwy. T-38, then go east on Jacob Ave. Access points are along this road.

**Amenities:** Parking | Trails |

### **Lewis Park**

**GPS Coordinates:** 41.6760692313845,-93.2293796539307

**Ownership:** City

**Description:** Lewis Park is a city park in Colfax. It is seldom visited by birders but holds a surprising variety of birds.

**Habitat:** Like most city parks, Lewis Park consists of mowed areas with scattered trees. It also includes a mowed trail through a little-used disc golf course winding through a wooded area, a small meadow, and up to a small grove of conifers. Much of the park has been left unmowed in recent years, creating a small grassland area. The surrounding area includes an oak savanna, cattle pasture, and the high school athletic field. A creek also runs through the park, adding to the diversity of birds possible here.

**Directions:** Lewis Park is located behind the high school in Colfax. From I-80, take the Colfax exit 155 and go south into Colfax. Turn left onto East Division Street until it comes to a T. Turn left onto North League Road and take the first right and follow the gravel road on the right into the park.

**Amenities:** Restrooms | Parking | Trails |

### **Neal Smith NWR (eBird Hotspot) (Important Bird Area)**

**GPS Coordinates:** 41.5755524,-93.2627163

**Ownership:** Federal - USFWS

**Description:** Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge is a 5,600 acre tallgrass prairie and oak savanna restoration site. Birding can be done from roadsides as well as three main trails--the Savanna Trail, Tallgrass Trail (ADA Accessible), and Basswood Trail. The Prairie Learning Center provides information on tallgrass prairie and oak savanna, as well as a gift shop, restrooms, and eating area. Building hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 12:00 to 5:00 Sundays. Closed on federal holidays after Labor Day and before Memorial Day.

**Habitat:** Tallgrass prairie provides a large expanse of habitat for grassland birds. Neal Smith NWR is perhaps the premier location in Iowa for Henslow's Sparrows. The 800-acre fenced bison and elk area provides excellent habitat for Grasshopper Sparrows and Bobolinks. Mowed and burned fields provide habitat for Smith's Longspurs during migration. Short-eared Owls are present in winter. Oak savanna and

woodlands also provide habitat for forest and edge bird species, including Red-headed Woodpeckers.

**Directions:** Located in southwest Jasper Co., just south of Hwy. 163 at the Prairie City exit. "Walnut Creek N.W.R." in the older Sportsman's Atlas edition. Road construction is currently underway (summer and fall 2015), so take 129th St. south from Hwy. 163, then turn left onto 102nd Ave. to reach the visitor center.

### **Public Hunting Area**

**Amenities:** Restrooms | Drinking Water | Parking | Trails | ADA Accessible Trails

### **Rock Creek SP (eBird Hotspot)**

**GPS Coordinates:** 41.7515413,-92.8403778

**Ownership:** State

**Description:** Rock Creek State Park is a large recreational area in Jasper County. Trails and roads provide access to a large lake and surrounding habitat types. A long 7.8-mile multi-use trail circumnavigates the lake.

**Habitat:** Rock Creek Lake is a large body of water that provides habitat for waterfowl. Surrounding vegetation includes shrubby areas, forests, and planted prairie.

**Directions:** From Newton, take Highway 6 east about 5 miles to the intersection with Highway 224. Turn north on 224 another 5 miles until you get to CR F27. Turn right for about 3 miles and you are at the park.

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