

Ohio River Area

Louisville, KY & Southern Indiana

Submitted by Brainard Palmer-Ball

The Ohio River around Louisville, KY offers numerous birding opportunities. The locations listed below are all within short driving distance of one another and each spot provides views of the river and various additional habitats.

The southern Indiana section is easily accessed from Louisville by crossing the river via either Interstate 65 or the 2nd Street Bridge. Each location is found along Riverside Drive.

- **Falls of the Ohio State Park**

Clarksville, IN 47129
38.272697, -85.760929

The Falls of the Ohio State Park Interpretive Center is situated over ancient fossil beds that are among the largest in the world. The center's observation deck is a good place to scope these expansive areas of exposed rock and their surrounding waters. Species of interest include migrating shorebirds, wintering waterfowl, herons, egrets, and various gulls and terns. Walking trails give access to the fossil beds in addition to wooded areas along the river which can be good places to spot various songbirds, both as residents and during migration. Peregrine Falcons can often be observed hunting along the flats or perched upon the historic 14th Street Bridge.

Especially in the summer, the park can become rather busy with visitors; birding tends to be more productive early in the day or off-season.

- **Ashland Park**

Clarksville, IN 47129
38.271521, -85.756728

- **Jeffersonville Waterfront Overlook**

Jeffersonville, IN 47130
38.269586, -85.738636

Ashland Park and the Jeffersonville Waterfront are both great places to view the waters of the Ohio River where wintering and transient waterfowl comprise the bulk of the species of interest. Eared Grebe, Black Scoter, White-winged Scoter and Lesser Black-backed Gull are some of the recent attractions.

The following spots along the Kentucky side of the river can all be accessed from River Road, a 10 mile scenic byway running from Waterfront Park in downtown Louisville to highway 42 in Prospect.

- **Mouth of Bear Grass Creek**

Louisville, KY 40207

38.267850, -85.724244

Another good place for viewing the river is located next to the mouth of Bear Grass Creek. It is best observed from a small point extending out along the creek that can be accessed by turning into the WaterSide Condominiums across from Frankfort Avenue. On the east end of the marina is a store and parking area adjacent to the point.

- **Carrie Gaulbert Cox Park**

Louisville, KY 40207

38.284468, -85.691618

Cox Park is a short way upriver from Bear Grass Creek. The park consists of a walking trail around open grass with scattered trees and ample parking near open views of the river.

- **Caperton Swamp**

Louisville, KY 40207

38.290375, -85.680973

A short distance upriver from Cox Park, Caperton Swamp has a small parking lot near the intersection of River Road and Indian Hills Trail. Immediately across River Road from this parking area is a stone stairway that leads down to the river's edge. Within the swamp area is a 0.9 mile loop trail where species of interest include Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Prothonotary Warbler and various migrating warblers. It is a nice walk but the trail closely approaches Interstate 71 which can be rather noisy.