



Woodbridge Ecological Reserve Visitor's Guide

Where do we start for a self-guided tour?

The best place to start is the beginning, at the south site of the reserve. This part of the reserve is open year-round during all times of day. You are welcome to travel out early in the morning to enjoy the awakening of a new day or wait until just before sunset, as local residents finish up their day and the birds begin to settle in for the night. Depending on the time of year, the sights and sounds are wonderful. Interpretive panels at the site provide you with information about the birds.

When should we visit?

The best seasons to visit is during the fall and winter months (October - February). The sights and sounds are most spectacular during these months, in the early evening just before sunset. Bring along your favorite birding book and binoculars to help you identify the birds you are seeing. Remember, birds have a large personal space and will usually not land very close to where you are sitting or standing. You are welcome to come out to the reserve during other seasons of the year to see the local residential birds and wildlife. No matter what time of year you choose to visit, early morning and evening hours are usually the most rewarding.

Why is the Reserve on Woodbridge Road?

The south site of the reserve has four major ponds which are irrigated by water from Sycamore Slough during the winter months to provide fresh water habitat. It is used largely by the greater and lesser sandhill cranes for roosting (sleeping at night). This is to better see predators such as coyotes. Other sites along Woodbridge Road and in the nearby delta are used for feeding and loafing during the day. The greater sandhill crane seems to travel only within a 2 mile radius from the roosting site to their feeding grounds.

Other locations on Woodbridge Road

You might like to explore further west on Woodbridge Road, to see cranes and other birds feeding in surrounding farm fields (Woodbridge Road dead ends within 6 miles). If you choose to drive down the road looking at all the bird activity, we would ask that you please stay in your cars. Woodbridge road is a working farm road and during the fall large grain trucks move rather quickly down the narrow road. Your safety is very important to us and we would recommend the use of emergency flashers if you are moving slowly or pulled over on the road. Again, **sunset** is the prime viewing opportunity for "crane fly-in" during the fall/winter season.