



2023 Red Willow County Birding Challenge

January 1 – December 31, 2023

For birders, the area in and around McCook and Red Willow County is a special place. The native sand sage prairies of southwest Nebraska attract a remarkable variety of some of North America's most interesting birds. The region is also on one of the principal routes of the Central Migration Flyway for waterfowl's annual trip between breeding and wintering areas.

Join us for the 2022 Red Willow County Birding Challenge!

The 2022 Birding Challenge runs from January 1 – December 31, 2022 and is open to birders of all skill levels from around the world.

Find any 50 bird species in Red Willow County to complete the Challenge. Some species are common and found in many places, while others are rare and may be limited to a specific habitat or part of Red Willow County.

All challenge finishers will earn a 2023 commemorative patch!

Challenge Rules & Steps

1. Pick up your Birding Challenge entry form from the McCook/Red Willow County Visitors Bureau office at 402 Norris Avenue, Room 318 or print a form from [this page](#).
2. For each bird species you find, complete the information on the entry form.
3. At least one of your birding locations must be at the Red Willow State Recreation Area. Participants must submit park permit or a picture of their permit with their Birding Challenge entry form.

4. Up to 15 bird species may be found at Medicine Creek State Recreation Area and/or Swanson State Recreation Area.
5. Send the completed form to the McCook/Red Willow County Visitors Bureau (P. O. Box 147, McCook, NE 69001) or email your form to carol@visitmccook.com. Completed forms must be postmarked or emailed by January 3, 2024. Forms may also be submitted in person at the McCook/Red Willow County Visitors Bureau during normal business hours.
6. All Challenge completers will receive a 2023 Red Willow County Birding Challenge patch.

Additional Information

1. The Challenge is open to all ages and all countries.
2. Only one entry will be accepted per individual. If a participant finds more than 50 species, those species can be documented on additional entry forms, but all forms must be submitted at the same time and clearly marked with the participant's name and information.
3. Please be thorough in filling out forms and write legibly. Illegible entries will not be counted.
4. Any information that is filled out on the entry form questionnaire helps in maintaining the Birding Challenge program and future challenges. Please help us by answering the questionnaire fully.
5. Most importantly, follow the rules set out in the American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics, which can be found at <https://www.aba.org/aba-code-of-birding-ethics/>. Destruction of bird/natural habitats or stress to the wildlife in Red Willow County will result in the disqualification of Birding Challenge forms for the current and all future challenges.

Take the Challenge!

Great McCook / Red Willow County Birding Locations:

Barnett Park
South Highway 83

Kelley Park / Bolles Canyon
East 3rd and M Streets

Kelley Creek Walking Trail
Access at Kelley Park - East 3rd and M Streets and
Karrer Park - 1546-1798 East B Street

Red Willow State Recreation Area
11 miles North of McCook on Hwy 83

Other Birding Locations:

Up to 15 bird species out of 50 may be found at the following nearby birding locations:

Medicine Creek State Recreation Area
40611 Road 728
Cambridge, NE

Swanson State Recreation Area
36166 Road 44B
Trenton, NE