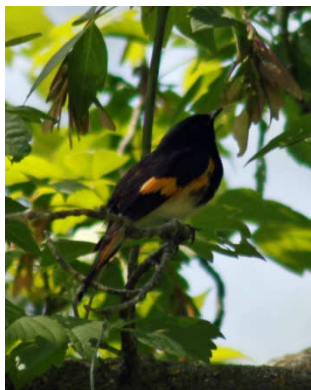


5. Lake Isabel, Hastings WMA & Gores State AMA

Locals call this area of east Hastings “Cowtown” because people historically pastured cows in the bottom lands. You reach the birding sites by exiting off Hwy 61 to 2nd Street. Go east to Bass St. where you can turn south and then take the entrance to the off street parking lot next to Lake Isabel. The city park here has a boardwalk and a pier that are ideal for observing waterfowl on the lake. Boats can be launched if you want to get out on the lake to explore the surrounding shores more closely. During migration this lake attracts many birds. The wooded slope next to the boardwalk attracts good warblers and other song birds. Belted Kingfisher, Cedar Waxwing and Hooded Mergansers are additional specialties you can find here through the breeding season.

Continuing east on 2nd Street to Washington Street, then go one block south to 3rd Street where you turn east and go .4 miles to Lake Street. Here you again turn south for one block to 4th Street and go east. It is .6 miles to the entry gate to the Hastings WMA & Gores State AMA. These state lands are wonderful examples of flood plain forest habitat located right near the junction of two IBAs on the vastly significant Mississippi Flyway. The location is ideal and the habitat is being preserved so birds have their traditional home or stop over during migration.



American Redstart
Photo by Kevin D. Smith

A major Great Blue Heron rookery is located here. Most of the Great Blues found in wetlands throughout the Hastings area use this rookery. At night this forest is a good place to find owls. Great Horned, Bared and Eastern Screech Owls have been detected. There are even past records of Great Gray Owl during invasion years. Woodpeckers are easy to find here most anytime of the year. Downy, Hairy and Pileated Woodpecker as well as Northern Flicker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and occasionally the Red-headed Woodpecker can be found.

On your way back through downtown Hastings you can find plenty of places for refreshments. Maybe stop off for ice cream, a piece of pie or a hamburger and your favorite beverage.



Barred Owl
Photo by Jim Williams



Yellow Warbler
Photo by Jim Williams



Lake Isabel