

# 11. Spring Lake Park Reserve

This Park is divided into two units including Schaar's Bluff and Lower Spring Lake. Schaar's Bluff can be reached from CoHwy 42 and it's junction with Idell Avenue East where you go north and curve on to 127<sup>th</sup> Street East. The entry to the Park is on the north side of the road. Trails lead from the developed parking areas to observation sites along the bluff and into the wooded public lands for you to search out the birds. A picnic area with restroom facilities can be used when you visit. Many song birds nest along the forested bluff as well as the grasslands to the south. If you follow the trails south of the "gathering center" you will also find a conifer forest. This is a good place to find birds not readily available at other area locations. Red-breasted Nuthatch and White-winged Crossbill are two such species. Soaring raptors are another prime target for birders when they visit here. Keep a close eye out for a Cooper's or Broad-winged Hawk as you explore the Park and then check for special prairie species along the roadside and power lines of Idell Avenue when leave. This is a good place to find Brewer's Blackbirds, Vesper and Savannah Sparrow.



*Indigo Bunting*  
Photo by Jim Williams



*Eastern Towhee*  
Photo by Jim Williams

The Lower Spring Lake Unit is accessed from Hwy 55 if you go north on Fahey Avenue to Pine Bend Trail. The entry gate to the trailhead is open daily during designated times. Picnic area and restrooms are available next to the archery range. From the parking lot trails lead through the deciduous forest and to the lake. It possible to find Bared Owl during the day and many special birds including: Indigo Bunting, Eastern Towhee and American Woodcock at this prime birding location.



*Entrance to Schaar's Bluff*  
Photo by Kevin D. Smith