



North Carolina

Birding Trail

mountains • piedmont • coast

Northern Foothills

1 Yadkin River Greenway

Owner: Yadkin River Greenway Council

Yadkin and Reddies Rivers, between N. Wilkesboro and W. Kerr Scott Reservoir
336-973-3237

Wilkes County

www.yadkinrivergreenway.com

Site Description: This paved greenway system is a nice mix of riparian zone and other habitats. The YMCA-Riverside Park section adjoins large recreational fields, which attract good numbers of migrating shorebirds and songbirds. The Reddies River-Health Foundation section is adjacent to large agricultural fields with ample shrubby borders and fruit-producing trees and shrubs. Both sections also border good sized patches of mature forest. This variety of habitats reflects the variety of bird species found at any season. Summer brings Indigo Bunting, occasional Blue Grosbeak, Orchard Oriole, a variety of vireos, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and many warblers, including Yellow-throated Warbler, Common Yellowthroat and Northern Parula. Cliff and Barn Swallows are also found along the Greenway. Fall can be very good time to visit, with a wide variety of resident and more common birds (e.g., Gray Catbird, Northern Cardinal, woodpecker species) and many migrating songbirds and shorebirds. Recently, Upland Sandpiper and Buff-breasted Sandpiper have been observed in the recreational fields by the YMCA access, along with scores of Killdeer and Canada Geese. During the fall migration, the Reddies River section hosts good numbers of warblers, including Tennessee, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, Cape May, Black-throated Blue Warblers and Ovenbird.

Species of Interest: Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Northern Parula, Baltimore Oriole

Habitats: floodplain forest, oak forest & mixed hardwoods/pine, river, early successional

Access & Parking: The greenway has seven trailheads between North Wilkesboro and W. Kerr Scott Reservoir. In North Wilkesboro: 1) Smoot Park, 2) on D Street at Reddies River Bridge, 3) on D Street at the Health Foundation/West Park. In Wilkesboro: 1) at Cornerstone Church, 2) at Tyson Trailhead behind Wilkes Heritage Museum, 3) at the east end of Collegiate Avenue, 4) behind Wilkes Family YMCA adjacent to Rivers Edge Park. The final trailhead is at the base of the dam at W. Kerr Scott Reservoir. Parking is available at all trailheads. The greenway can be accessed daily during daylight hours.

Directions: Two of the easiest trailheads to find are the YMCA access adjacent to Rivers Edge Park and the Health Foundation/West Park trailhead on D Street. To the YMCA access: follow NC 268 south from its junction with US 421. Go 1.3 miles on NC 268 South to the YMCA center on the right. Parking is available at Becky's Park, immediately behind the YMCA; or continue from this parking lot an additional 0.1 miles to the recreational fields. To the Reddies River/Health Foundation/West Park access: exit from US 421 onto US 421 Business just west of the NC 268 interchange. Go 1.3 miles to West Park on the right. Proceed down to the river in the large parking lot beside the Express YMCA and look for the trailhead immediately adjacent to the Wilkes Rehabilitation Center.

Coordinates: N 36° 09' 13" W 81° 09' 32" (Health Foundation access)

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2 W. Kerr Scott Reservoir

Owner: US Army Corps of Engineers

499 Reservoir Road, Wilkesboro, NC 28697
336-921-3390

Wilkes County

www.saw.usace.army.mil/wkscott/index.htm

Site Description: This US Army Corps of Engineers Reservoir affords many birding opportunities. A birding trip here should start at the Visitor Assistance Center, where you can get more information on the many parks surrounding the reservoir and find out about restricted hunting areas. Many of the nearby parks offer great views of the reservoir, with trails that pass through a variety of habitats. Watch the margins of the lake for migrant shorebirds, including Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers. During the breeding season, many birds of the transition zone from piedmont to mountain habitats are found here, including Pine and Yellow-throated Warblers and good numbers of Yellow-billed Cuckoo. The pine-dominated areas around the lake are some of the most reliable areas for Brown-headed Nuthatch closest to the higher mountain regions. Evenings under a full moon bring Whip-poor-will calling. In winter, the lake attracts a number of gull species, including many Ring-billed Gulls, as well as rarer species for the mountains, such as Herring and Bonaparte's Gulls. In November and March, various waterfowl species turn up with regularity. Some of the grassy and shrubby areas at the various parks attract migrating and wintering sparrows like White-crowned, Swamp and Vesper Sparrows.

Species of Interest: Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Whip-poor-will, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Brown-headed Nuthatch, wintering waterfowl

Habitats: floodplain forest, oak forest & mixed hardwoods/pine, wetlands, early successional, reservoir

Special Concerns: Hunting is allowed on W. Kerr Scott Reservoir during certain times of the year. Birders should be aware of current hunting regulations and seasons, and take adequate safety precautions during those times. For more on hunting precautions, see the hunting season information at the beginning of this guide.

Access & Parking: The reservoir can be visited daily during daylight hours. The Visitor Assistance Center is open daily from 7:30am to 4:30pm. Fees apply for some activities.

Directions: From US 421, take Exit 286B. Turn on NC 268 West and go 3 miles. Turn right on Reservoir Road at the W. Kerr Scott Dam and Reservoir sign. Go 0.25 miles and turn left into the Visitor Assistance Center parking lot.

Coordinates: N 36° 07' 19"

W 81° 14' 57"

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3 Whippoorwill Academy and Village

Owner: Edith Carter

11928 NC 268 West, Ferguson, NC 28624
336-973-3237

Wilkes County

Site Description: This small and historic property contains a collection of log buildings where programming focuses on the historical and cultural heritage of the area, but good birding opportunities exist, as well. Ample agricultural lands provide nesting areas for Eastern Meadowlark, Blue Grosbeak, Field, Song and Chipping Sparrows, and other open habitat birds. Shrubby habitats support White-eyed Vireo, Eastern Towhee, Gray Catbird and Brown Thrasher. A pleasant walk down a trail to the Yadkin River should yield breeding Northern Parula, Yellow-throated Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-throated Vireo, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Summer Tanager, and Baltimore and Orchard Orioles. Migration seasons bring good numbers of tanagers and warblers following the river, as well as sparrows and other songbirds to the agricultural fields. During the fall, this area is also a good place to watch for migrating raptors, given its position at the bottom of the Blue Ridge Escarpment. Almost any time of year, a visitor can easily see quite a few common birds, including Northern Cardinal, Northern Mockingbird, Carolina Wren, Carolina Chickadee, and several woodpeckers.

Species of Interest: Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Northern Parula, Yellow-throated Warbler, Blue Grosbeak, Eastern Meadowlark

Habitats: northern hardwood/cove forest, dry coniferous woodlands, oak forest & mixed hardwoods/pine, river/stream

Access & Parking: The buildings and grounds are open to the public April – December. Daily hours are: Saturday and Sunday, mornings by appointment for guided tours, 3pm to 5pm for self tours; Monday – Friday, by appointment for guided tours. Please call ahead to avoid conflicts with school groups or special events. Many historical programs are also available to the visitor.

Directions: Whippoorwill Academy is 12 miles west of Wilkesboro, on NC 268 West.

Coordinates: N 36° 05' 05" W 81° 21' 22"

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4 Lenoir Greenway

Owner: City of Lenoir

Numerous access points in Lenoir, NC
828-757-2165

Caldwell County

www.ci.lenoir.nc.us

Site Description: The Lenoir Greenway includes 7.2 paved miles of trail, spreading over 25 acres of land. Benches along the way provide nice rest areas. The greenway passes through a variety of habitats, ranging from streamside bottomlands to open fields to early successional growth. Migrating songbirds can be found along the streamside during the spring and fall. A walk along the edge of the soccer field can also produce some nice birding opportunities. By late spring, be on watch for a variety of birds that breed along the greenway, including House Wren, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Ovenbird, Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird and Orchard Oriole. Swallows are found feeding over the open fields during the summer.

Species of Interest: Eastern Kingbird, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Ovenbird, Orchard Oriole

Habitats: floodplain forest, oak forest & mixed hardwoods/pine, river/stream

Access & Parking: The Lenoir Greenway has four primary access points; parking is available at three of them: Library Access, Powell Road Access, and Zack Fork Road Access. Signs and kiosks mark the trailheads. The greenway can be accessed daily during daylight hours.

Directions: To the Library Access: from the intersection of US 321 and US 64, travel north on US 321 for 0.5 miles to Hospital Avenue. Turn left and go 0.1 mile. Turn right into the library parking lot. To the Powell Road Access: from the intersection of US 321 and US 64, travel north on US 321 for 0.8 miles to Nuway Circle. Turn right and go 0.1 mile to Powell Road. Turn right and go 1.1 mile to the access parking lot on the left. To the Zack Fork Road Access: from the intersection of US 321 and US 64, travel north on US 321 for 0.8 miles to Nuway Circle. Turn right and go 0.4 miles to Zack Fork Road. Turn right and go 0.5 miles to the second parking lot on right.

Coordinates: N 35° 55' 19" W 81° 31' 21" (Library Access)

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