

Nature Observing

With the approximately 120,000 acres of Corps of Engineers operated property in the Pittsburgh District, nature observers have plenty of area to cover in their leisure time. Bird watching, nature photography and observing are enjoyed by many visitors in the Pittsburgh District.

Visit these nature sites:

[[National Audubon Society](#)]

[[Nature Conservancy Web page](#)].

Berlin Lake (330) 547-3781

Eagles have been observed occasionally around the dam area, but as of yet, no nesting sites have been found. Nesting osprey, however, have been observed around the lake.

Conemaugh River Lake (724) 639-9013

A Watchable Wildlife site is located behind the Visitor Center. Also, the newly installed bat roosting box provides visitors the opportunity to note the new box design and proper selection of the installation site.

Crooked Creek Lake (724) 763-3161

A Watchable Wildlife site is located behind the Environmental Learning Center. The Baker Trail that traverses the project provides viewing opportunities for nesting warbler species, as well as other songbirds.

The bluebird nesting boxes at the damsite are used by bluebirds at a rate approaching 50%. Numerous freshwater jellyfish call the Lake home.

East Branch Clarion River Lake (814) 965-2065

East Branch Lake boasts having two osprey nesting sites located at Seven Mile Bay & East Branch Bay.

Kinzua Dam/Allegheny Reservoir (814) 726-0661

A diverse population of birds and mammals thrive here. Endangered and threatened species, including the Bald Eagle and Osprey, are commonly seen. Eagles can often be seen around the dam, especially in winter months when most of the lake is frozen.

Spring is the peak season for this activity, when the wildflowers stand out against the remaining browns of winter, and the sights of newborn animals adds to the excitement of everyone's visit.

Loyalhanna Lake (724) 639-9013

The topography of the Loyalhanna project ranges from the rolling foothills of the Laurel Highlands to the steep, wooded hillsides and ravines found in the vicinity of the dam. The flora and fauna area as varied at the topography. Freshwater jellyfish can be found in the Lake. Two unique fish species have been identified in the tail waters of the dam: bowfin (*Amia clava*) and paddlefish (*Polydon spathula*). The bowfin is generally regarded as a "living fossil" as is the paddlefish. The Sanderson wetlands area has a newly built wildlife blind that overlooks the wetlands. It is located on Derbytown Road.

Mahoning Creek Lake (814) 257-8811

Visitors will delight in the scenic beauty that envelops Mahoning Lake. There are wondrous views along the forested pathways and small inlets along the Lake's shoreline. Numerous plants and animals can be found here. Freshwater jellyfish can be found in the Lake. Since the Lake has a 10 horsepower limit, there is a potential for good wildlife viewing from a canoe.

M. J. Kirwan Dam & Reservoir (330) 358-2622

M. J. Kirwan is a pristine and minimally developed project that allows for many natural areas for observing nature at work. M. J. Kirwan is a routine resting stop for many migratory birds. Depending on the time of year, you may be privileged to observe Common Loons, Whistling Swans, Canada Geese, Ruddy Ducks, Scaups, Mergansers, Golden Eyes, Coots, etc. Whitetail deer, turkeys, rabbits, pheasants, beavers, coyotes, foxes, and much more can be observed at Kirwan.

Mosquito Creek Lake (330) 637-1961

A Watchable Wildlife site is located at Mosquito Creek Lake within the Route 305 Boat Launch area. A bald eagle sighting is possible. Also, an array of wildlife species can be observed in the wildlife refuge at the northern end of the project.

Shenango River Lake (724) 962-7746

Shenango River Lake is host to a Watchable Wildlife project. Located in the Golden Run Wildlife Area east of Route 18 and on the southern shore of the lake, this project has two trails that lead to individual nature observation blinds. Each of the two sites are located in areas favorable to viewing many different species of birds, mammals, and other wildlife.

The Shenango River Lake project is a great place to watch waterfowl, especially herons, egrets, and other migrating waterfowl.

Stonewall Jackson Lake (304) 269-4588

This lake project has nesting ospreys.

Tionesta Lake (814) 755-3512

Tionesta Lake's remote, rural location is home to many species of birds, mammals and other wildlife. Wildflowers, ferns and other plants abound in the forest, fields and edges. The project's trails will afford the visitor, hours of contented observing. Watch for the bald eagles that have been seen in the area. A leisurely drive on the park roads, especially at dawn and dusk, may reveal white tail deer grazing.

Don't miss a drive on the Tionesta Creek Road, which winds along the Tionesta Creek valley upstream of the Dam for nearly 6 miles. Take your time and watch carefully for white tail deer, porcupine, turkey, osprey, hawks, raccoon, opossum and even red fox and black bear.

Tygart Lake (304) 265-1760

The Tygart Lake State Park has a park naturalist that conducts field programs for nature observations.

Union City Dam (814) 763-4477

A variety of ecosystems at the Union City Dam project allow bird watchers and novice naturalists to discover a diversity of flora and fauna.

Woodcock Creek Lake (814) 763-4477

Nature observers have two observation blinds to use when they visit this lake; one is located along the Bossard Nature Trail and one is located at the Dam site.

Youghiogheny Lake (814) 395-3242

The Youghiogheny project is in the heart of the Laurel Highlands. Numerous birds and mammals call this area home. Wildflowers are also abundant. Wood duck use of nesting boxes is among the highest of any of the reservoirs in the Pittsburgh District.
