

# Shiawassee Refuge Improves Interpretive and Directional Signs at Ferguson Bayou Trail

*October 2007*

Ferguson Bayou Trail is one of the most visited public use facilities at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. This 4.5 mile trail is popular among hikers, bikers, joggers, cross country skiers, and snowshoers because of its flat, level surface. As a result it has been designated a National Recreation Trail.



*A young visitor reads a new interpretive sign along Ferguson Bayou Trail.  
Steven F. Kahl; September 2008*

Also, the trail traverses a wide variety of habitats, including floodplain forest, buttonbush sloughs, brushy areas, and cropland. The refuge maintains wildlife observation and photo blinds along the trail, as well as Grefe Tower which overlooks thousands of acres of marsh, open water, grassland and forest. Consequently, it is the trail most often utilized by visitors who are specifically intent on observing and photographing wildlife. Visitors commonly see deer, eagles, herons, egrets, ducks, geese, and a wide diversity of other wildlife here.

Birders particularly value the trail as the most reliable place in Michigan to see prothonotary warblers.

The refuge improved the trail by installing new interpretive and directional signs. Interpretive topics include the refuge's designation as an Important Bird Area, biological control of purple loosestrife, how to spot wildlife along the trail, and restoration of farmland to wetland. Also, directional signs were put in at each intersection to let visitors know the direction and distance to each trail amenity. Thus, these improvements will help visitors to gain a better understanding of the refuge's wildlife and programs and to orient around the trail.



*New directional sign helps guide visitors along Ferguson Bayou Trail.  
Steven F. Kahl/USFWS; April 2008*