

# Byway Fact Sheet

## Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area



Cheyenne Bottoms becomes a giant convention whose participants come twice a year for food and rest. It is the midway point along the Central Flyway, a route birds use in traveling from the coastline of South America to the Arctic.

**Population:** Abundantly millions. Nearly 45 percent of all migratory shorebirds nesting in North America stage at Cheyenne Bottoms. Birders have seen 333 of the 471 species in Kansas.

Cheyenne Bottoms is a 41,000 acre basin; 19,857 are managed as a wildlife area by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism; an additional 8,000 are managed by The Nature Conservancy. Cheyenne Bottoms is designated as a Wetland of International Importance by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Of the 50 states, only Kansas and Florida have two Ramsar-designated wetlands

“The spectacle of shorebird migration is something all wildlife watchers should experience. Cheyenne Bottoms provides the habitat for migration stop over, and in North America. There are few locations that can rival both the species diversity and sheer numbers of birds present here.”

Mike Rader  
Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism

### Things To Do

- **Birding/Photography** The spring and fall migration periods offer the best opportunities to view large numbers of different species in this one location. In spring, waterfowl and sandhill cranes can begin arriving as early as February. Wading birds begin arriving in March and April. Most shorebirds arrive in late April and early May.
- **GPS Customized Tour** on the Wetlands and Wildlife National Scenic Byway. The device is available for rent from Great Bend Hotels and the Great Bend Visitor's Center.
- **Biking** non-paved roadways within the Refuge allow for an up close wildlife experience.



### Notable celebrities:

Whooping Cranes, Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcon, Least Tern and Piping Plover. It is also a haven for grassland bird

species such as Lark and Grasshopper Sparrows, Northern Harriers, Upland Sandpipers, Burrowing Owls and Dickcissels.

### Notable People:

*Frank Robl* began banding birds at Cheyenne Bottoms in the 1920s and was one of the first in the nation to map the routes of migratory birds.

*Ed Martinez* began banding shorebirds at Cheyenne Bottoms in 1960's which helped determine the migration routes and define the Central Flyway.