

Loop 11– Caddo Canyons Loop

What to Expect: The dominant landscape in this Loop are the canyon systems, cut by water through dry, rolling plains. These narrow, vertical-walled canyons provide protection from the sun and hot winds. Small flowing streams wind through densely wooded bottomlands that show marked affinities to eastern deciduous forests. In fact, these canyons contain some of the most diverse forest of the Great Plains. Eastern tree species such as sugar maples, box elder, Ohio buckeye, and black walnut can be found in the canyons. The canyons also support ferns, mosses and flowering wildflowers associated with eastern forests. The bird life in these canyons resembles that of the Ozark Mountains including the **Eastern wood-pewee**, **wood thrush**, **white-eyed vireo**, and **Louisiana waterthrush**. In sharp contrast, the dry eroded slopes and bluffs above the canyons support scrub oak and Eastern redcedar. Here you will observe **rock wrens**, **3 oriole** species, **roadrunners** as well as **skinks** and **collared lizards**, basking on the rock ledges. Reservoirs in this Loop support abundant wintering **waterfowl**, **herons** and **egrets** in summer and **osprey** during fall migration.

Lodging: [Clinton Lodging](#); **Cordell:** [41 Motel](#); **Weatherford:** [Weatherford Lodging](#).

Camping: [Crowder Lake University Park](#); [Cordell Reservoir \(Adams Lake\) and Public Use Area](#) – Entrance key required, Cordell City Hall, 101 E. Main St., 580.832.3825, M-F – 8 am – 5 pm; [Ft. Cobb State Park](#); [Red Rock Canyon Adventure Park](#)

One-Day Outings: Fill up your gas tank and pack a picnic lunch (grocery stores in Clinton, Cordell, Hinton and Weatherford) or eat at one of the many cafes and restaurants in the above listed towns.

Parks: A day could easily be spent at each of these parks: [Crowder Lake University Park \(11-2\)](#), [Ft. Cobb State Park \(11-4\)](#) or [Red Rock Canyon Adventure Park \(11-5\)](#). [Crowder Lake \(11-2\)](#) offers a 1 mile hard surface interpretive trail. For boating and fishing spend the day at [Ft. Cobb State Park \(11-4\)](#) where personal watercraft can be rented. Be sure to check out the Nature Center. [Red Rock Canyon Adventure Park \(11-5\)](#) is an oasis created by narrow red walls and flowing creeks that offers several nature trails to explore. There is an admission fee.

[Cordell Reservoir \(Adams Lake\) Wildlife Conservation and Public Use Area \(11-8\)](#)

includes the 10-acre Cordell Reservoir, also known as Adams Lake, and its associated 74-acre Wildlife Conservation and Management Area. This area exhibits a variety of habitats for wildlife watchers that include a spring-fed creek, open reservoir, wetlands, old growth hardwood bottomlands, savannahs and shortgrass prairies. An Entrance Key and Permit is required. Permits and entrance keys can be obtained at the Cordell City Hall, 101 East Main Street in Cordell (580.832.3825) from 9:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M. Monday through Friday.

Prairie Canyon (11-7): For your own private excursion into a Caddo canyon, schedule a private tour at **Prairie Canyon**. A guided tour on this private property located near Hinton, includes a combination of driving through upland prairie and scrub brush and walking down into deep canyons that shelter large trees such as Caddo maples, oaks, walnuts, and hackberries. A walk within the canyon alongside a stream provides the opportunity to observe evidence of many wildlife species such as bobcat, beaver, turkey and deer. This site provides birders the opportunity to look for both typical eastern songbirds such as red-eyed vireos and Baltimore orioles as well as western songbirds such as great-crested flycatchers and rock wrens within the canyon and grasshopper sparrows in the prairie. Guided tours are available all year. For more information call 580.772.4192.

Birding Route: A good opportunity to observe both eastern and western bird species can be found on this Loop. Early morning first stop should be at [American Horse Lake \(11-1\)](#). Return to E0940 Rd. and turn left (west). Travel approximately 1.5 miles and follow curve right onto N2500 Rd. and continue north 9 miles and turn left (west) onto E0850 Rd. Travel 7 miles to the junction of State Hwy 33. Turn left (south) and drive 4 miles to the junction of State Hwy 54. Take State Hwy 54 south for 15 miles to the city of Weatherford for a break. Next continue south of State Hwy 54 for 7 miles and turn right (east) onto E1100 Rd. Travel 2 miles to N2140 Rd. and turn right (south) and travel 1 mile to the entrance of [Crowder Lake University Park \(11-2\)](#). Check out the lake and the paved trail for bird activity. Next, drive back to State Hwy 54 and turn left (south) and drive 9 miles to the junction of State Hwy 152. Turn left (east) and drive 10 miles to N2490 Rd. and turn right (south). Travel 3 ½ miles to the parking area of [Fort Cobb Wildlife Management Area \(11-3\)](#). Drive the dirt road to Walnut Slough and walk the dike to search for wetland birds. Return to N2490 Rd.(also known as CS2500), turn left (south) and drive just over 2.5 miles where the road ends. Turn left (east) onto E1250 Rd. and turn right (south) in ¼ mile onto N2490 Rd. Drive 2 miles then turn left (east) onto E1270 Rd. Drive almost 7 miles to [Ft. Cobb State Park \(11-4\)](#). Drive around the Park and look for birds in the trees and on the lake. Take CS2530 south to the junction of State Hwy 9 and turn left (east) and continue 2 miles to the junction of State Hwy 146 and turn left (north). Take State Hwy 146 for 12 ½ miles to the intersection of State Hwy 152. Turn right (east) and drive 4 miles to the junction of State Hwy 8 in the town of Binger and turn left (north) and travel 12 miles to the entrance to [Red Rock Canyon Adventure Park \(11-5\)](#). This route is about 114 miles. Also recommended is a drive that begins north of [Red Rock Canyon Adventure Park \(11-5\)](#) at the junction of State Hwy 37 that begins at Main Street in the middle of the town of Hinton. This drive winds its way through majestic hills and canyons. At the intersection of State Hwy 152, turn right (west). Keep your eyes open for the bison herd as you circle back toward Hinton. This additional drive is around 65 miles.

Evening Walk: After dinner consider walking the trail at [Hinton Recreational Trail and Nature Park \(11-6\)](#) located on the north end of Hinton, entrance is on the west side of

Hwy 8, 0.2 mile north of Sky View Drive. The $\frac{3}{4}$ mile concrete walking trail winds its way around a small lake and habitat perfect for evening bird and wildlife watching. Trail is well lighted and picnic tables with benches are scattered around the trail. This nature park creates a "slice of nature" within a city.