

0
miles

Reset your trip odometer and leave downtown Benson going east on Highway 12 to County Rd. 25 just past the John Deere Dealership.

.75
miles

Turn left on County Rd. 25 and travel north for about a mile where it curves to the north and soon crosses State Hwy. 9.

1.75
miles

Continue on County Rd. 25 across Hwy 9 where you will cross the Chippewa River. Along this route there are several small ponds with mudflats where you can see shorebirds or waterfowl depending on the spring rainfall.

6.8
miles

You will jog east at a "T" and go around the S.E. bay of Lake Moore which is partially hidden by trees.

9.2
miles

Stop at the intersection of 70th St. N.E. and 50th Ave. N.E. Turn right on to County Rd. 26. This will take you into Swift Falls. As you travel along this route, notice the topography becomes hilly. The hills are glacial till from the last glacier that left the area 8 to 10 thousand years ago. There is less farmland as you travel east and large parcels of CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) that is set aside for 10 years. There are also large parcels of land set aside in the CREP (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program) that is

13.9
miles

As you go through Swift Falls you will cross the Chippewa River at the dam.

14.4
miles

Just after the dam, turn right into the entrance of Swift Falls County Park. The park has six shelters each with room for 3-5 campers or trailers. They have water and electric hookups and lots of room for tents. The park has modern rest rooms and showers that are handicapped accessible. There is a playground with swings, slides and more for the kids.

Swift Falls Park

South of the camping area is a part of the park that has hilly woods with about two miles of walking trails for hikers and bird watchers. This is a very good area for many types of wildlife including White Tail Deer, rabbits, squirrels, woodpeckers and many songbirds, especially warblers in late April and May. The river at this point in the park has fairly good fishing for walleye & northern.

Swift Falls Park

The park is a busy place during weekends and holidays in the summer so reservation for camping are important.

0
miles

Reset your trip odometer and turn left out of the park, back through Swift Falls.

.55
miles

Turn left on County Rd. 31. Go South on County Rd. 31 for about one mile.

1.55
miles

Turn right at the first road (60th St. N.E.). This road will meet up with County Rd. 29 at a curve.

3.1
miles

Stay on County Rd. 29 as it jogs west and south through Federal Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA). In years with normal rainfall, these areas are full of wildlife including ducks, geese, herons, egrets and occasionally swans. In dry years, the ponds near the roads are hidden by rushes & cattails. You will notice how the topography has gotten flatter as you approach the WPA's.

6.0
miles

Stay on County Rd. 29 observing a few wildlife sites until you cross the Chippewa River, then stop at the stop sign on State Hwy 9.

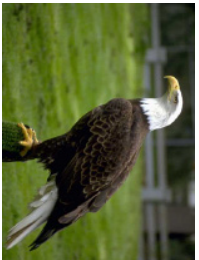
8.6
miles

Turn right on Hwy 9 which takes you back to downtown Benson.

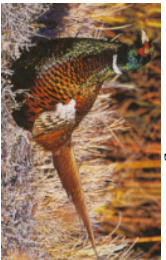
13.9
miles

While watching the roadside, you have probably noticed several 13 Lined Ground Squirrels (Striped Gophers), the most commonly seen mammal in the area.

Here are some of the birds you might see on this tour:



Bald Eagle



Ring-necked Pheasant



Downy Woodpecker



Wild Turkey



Common Yellowthroat



Hermit Thrush



Red-tailed Hawk



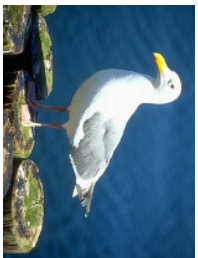
White-crowned Sparrow



Dark-eyed Junco

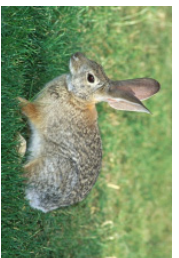


White-breasted Nuthatch



Herring Gull

Here are some of the mammals you might see on this tour:



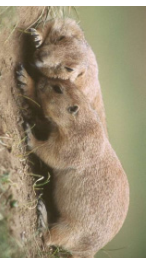
Cotton-tail Rabbit



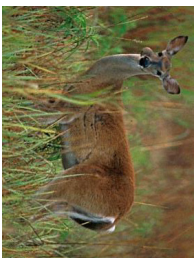
Muskrat



Raccoon



Woodchuck



White-tailed Deer



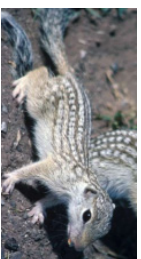
Fox Squirrel



Gray Squirrel



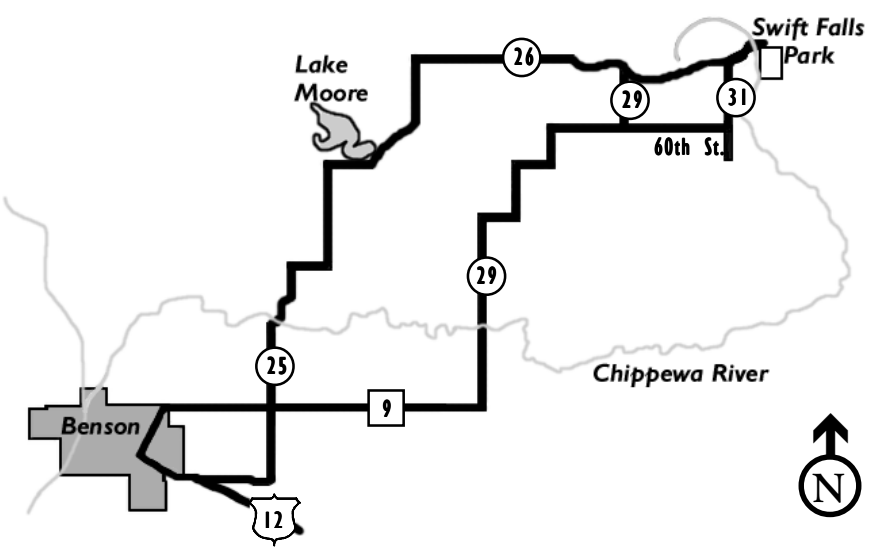
Striped Skunk



13-lined Ground Squirrel which is often called the Striped Gopher or Minnesota Gopher

This tour was developed by Bill Orr. Bill was a local biology teacher who has been studying birds and wildlife in this area for over 50 years. The Benson Chamber of Commerce would like to thank Bill Orr and the EDA for making this publication possible.

29-Mile Wildlife TOUR Woodland Version



Travel time for this tour is about 50 minutes plus the time spent in Swift Falls Park and watching wildlife.

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