

## “Great Bend — It’s In Our Nature To Inspire!”

If your inspiration comes from birding, hiking, biking, paddling, or photography. . . then **Great Bend, KS** is your natural wonderland.

Fashioned from whole Kansas cloth, deeply held-Midwestern values and motivated by perseverance and resolve, Great Bend is a blend of 19th century pioneer spirit and 21st century vision. It is a city that has made peace with, and thrives by the environment in which they live, while embracing their role as the guardian of one of nature’s most inspiring habitats.

You will find rural charm, amazing natural resources, and true Midwestern hospitality combined with all the amenities travelers need and expect for an “inspiring” visitor experience.



## Great Bend Services

**Great Bend Population:** 15,652

### Lodging

- America’s Best Value Inn  
3500 10th Street - (620) 793-8486
- Baltzell Motel  
705 10th Street - (620) 792-4395
- Best Western Angus Inn  
2920 10th Street - (620) 792-3541
- Comfort Inn  
911 Grant Street - (620) 793-9000
- Days Inn  
4701 10th Street - (620) 792-8235
- Highland Hotel and Convention Center  
3017 10th Street - (620) 792-2431
- Travelers Budget Inn  
4200 10th Street - (620) 793-5448
- Travelodge  
3200 10th Street - (620) 792-7219

### Wireless Internet Access

- Great Bend Convention & Visitors Bureau office
- Great Bend Zoo - Raptor Center

### Library

Great Bend Public Library  
1409 Williams Street - (620) 792-2409

### Emergency

911

### Road Conditions

511

### Hospitals

- St. Rose Ambulatory and Surgical Hospital  
3515 Broadway - (620) 792-2511
- Great Bend Regional Hospital  
514 Cleveland Street - (620) 792-8833



3007 10th St., Great Bend, Kansas 67530  
[www.visitgreatbend.com](http://www.visitgreatbend.com)  
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# Birding

## Great Bend, KS



[www.VisitGreatBend.com](http://www.VisitGreatBend.com)

## Central Kansas Bird Watching Locations

### 1. Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area

About 45 percent of the North American shorebirds population stops here during spring and fall migrations. Of the area’s 19,857 acres, about 12,000 are covered by shallow water.  
GPS: N38.52220 W-98.62353.

### 2. The Nature Conservancy Cheyenne Bottoms Preserve

This 7,700-acre portion of Cheyenne Bottoms is managed by the Nature Conservancy. TNC’s management goal for this land is to protect its native wildlife diversity. Drive approximately 2 miles east along the Byway from Hoisington (K-4 Highway). GPS: N38.52098 W-98.73808.

### 3. Quivira National Wildlife Refuge

More than 300 bird species have been observed in and around the 30 bodies of shallow water that cover about 7,000 of the refuge’s 21,820 acres. GPS: N38.07097 W-98.49081.

### 4. Arkansas River Nature Trail (entrance at Stone Lake)

Agricultural lands, riparian woodlands (cottonwoods, red mulberry, sand plum, and blackberry trees), wildlife, wet meadows, and marshy areas are abundant through this seven mile trail along the Arkansas River. South Trail Entrance: south end of Washington Street and south side of Stone Lake. GPS: N38.3485 W-98.7739.

### 5. Hike Bike Trail at Stone Lake

This is the paved levee trail that follows the Arkansas River and the flood control ditch. Length: approximately 7 miles. Ends at the Main Street bridge over the flood control ditch. Starting point: West of 10th & Patton. GPS: N38.36162 W-98.83167.

### 6. Dominican Sisters Convent

The convent has a sidewalk trail that connects to small bridges and leads to a rock monument that features statues of praying children. There are also an enormous amount of evergreen and pine trees that house an assortment of wildlife and birds, including Cedar Waxwings.  
Location: 3600 Broadway Avenue. GPS: N38.3664 W-98.8011.

### 7. Brit Spaugh Park and Zoo

This community park and zoo hosts thousands of migratory travelers along the central flyway as well as an e-bird trail tracker at the newly designed Raptor Rehabilitation Center.  
Location: 2123 Main Street. GPS: N38.3746 W-98.7652

### 8. Wetlands and Wildlife Byway

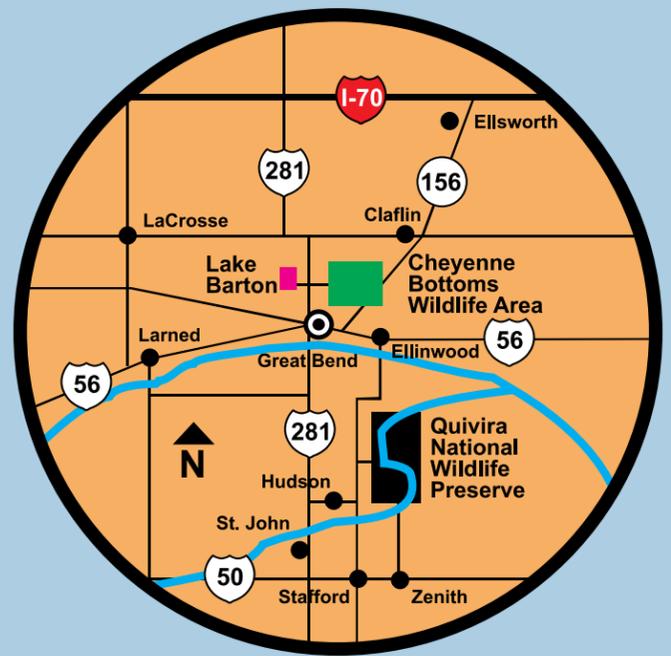
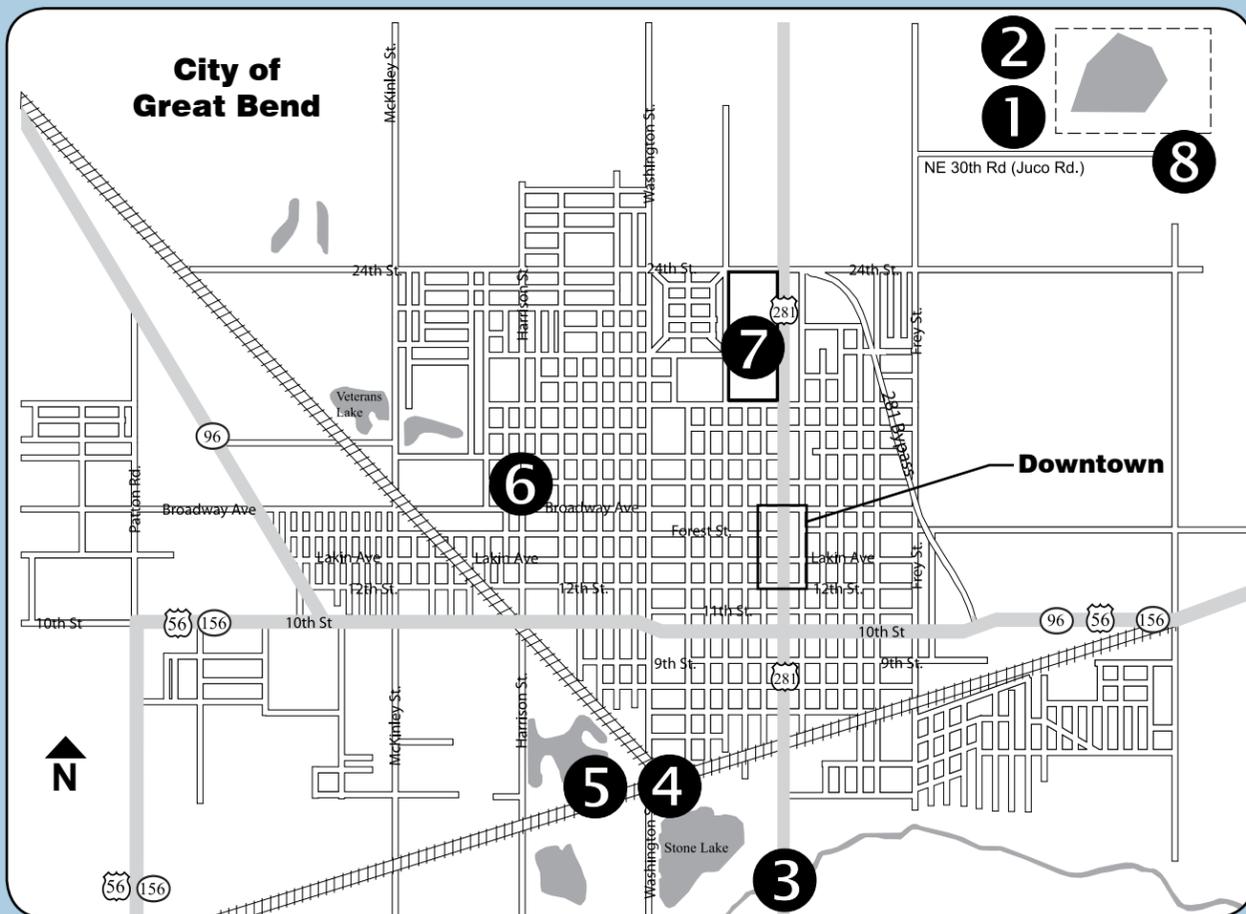
This 77-mile Byway showcases two of the world’s most important wetlands — Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. The journey between provides viewing opportunities in agricultural fields, wooded shelter belts, pot hole wetlands, and prairie grasslands.  
GPS: N38.52149 W-98.77814.



*The numbers referenced here relate to the numbers on the inside map.*

Photos provided by Dan Witt, member of the Central Kansas Photography Club.

“Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience”  
— Ralph Waldo Emerson



## Bird Watching Opportunities

- **Whooping Cranes.** “When I thought about how few of these are in the whole world and I saw a flock of 20, I was seeing one-seventh of the world’s population. And that was to me like seeing Haley’s Comet!” said a Kansas naturalist after his first trip to view whooping cranes at Cheyenne Bottoms. Cranes stop over in the Kansas wetlands in the fall during late October and early November and occasionally in the spring from the end of March through late April. Always call ahead to see if the whoopers are in residence.

- **Shorebirds.** April welcomes common shorebirds (sandpiper, plover, phalaropes, avocets, godwits, and dowitchers). Tens of thousands of these birds flock to the mudflats where they probe for and eat bloodworms to fatten up for the remainder of their journey. (Bloodworms are the larvae of the midge fly which swarms in summer providing food for visiting shorebirds).

“Shorebird watching can be immensely enjoyable.” says Gene Brehm, Wildlife and Parks writer. He notes that the real crowd pleasers are Wilson’s phalaropes and sandpipers. These birds swim rapidly in tight circles to stir insects from the bottom muck. Then they pick out the larvae caught in the resulting current. “A casual observer might think he’s witnessing a group of brain damaged birds!”

- **Summer Birds.** Each summer, the red-winged and yellow-headed blackbirds build nests in the cattails. Great Blue herons, snowy egrets, black-crowned night herons, and American bitterns feast on fish and frogs during the long hot days of summer. Swainson’s hawks and Mississippi kites spend their summers in the wetlands.

- **Raptors.** Marsh hawks, kestrels, and red-tailed hawks are common throughout the year. Barn owls live in specially made boxes near the Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area (CBWA) headquarters. Burrowing owls wait patiently beside prairie dog holes just north of the CBWA. Great horned owls are easily sighted when they cross in front of the moon over The Nature Conservancy Preserve and the CBWA. Owl pellets, containing the hair and bones of small rodents, litter the refuge’s sandy walking areas. Don’t forget to visit the Raptor Center in Great Bend to see more raptors.

- **Eagles.** Winter brings golden and bald eagles to the area. Look for bald eagles in the CBWA and TNCP.

**Come to the Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area and The Nature Conservancy Preserve to enjoy one of the top ten birding spots in the world!**

## Birding Ethics

- Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.
- Support the protection of important bird habitats.
- To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.
- Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, other people in the area, proceed only if access can be controlled, and disturbance minimized.
- Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.
- Respect the law, and the rights of others.
- Do not enter private property without the owners permission.
- Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas.
- Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

## Bird Watching In Central Kansas

### What to Wear

- A hat to shade your eyes, but one that does not interfere with using binoculars.
- A birding vest — Pockets are perfect for storing your binoculars, field guide, a pen, notebook, and insect repellent.
- Neutral colored clothing (not white) will lessen the chance of scaring away skittish creatures.

### What to Bring

- A Field Guide — Locally available at the Kansas Wetlands Education Center and the Great Bend Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- Binoculars — The best birding binoculars, especially for beginners, have a 7x35mm to 8x42mm range of magnification and lens size. Spotting scopes should have a tripod mount because of their much larger magnification. It is difficult to hold a scope steady, especially in windy conditions.
- A Bird List — Important to most birders is a “lifetime list” to record each new sighting. It’s important to observe the bird first, then pull out the field guide to identify the subject. Birds do not remain still for long!

### What to Look For

- Color — What are the predominant colors, as well as spot colors? Where are they located on the body?
- Body — Is the body chunky or slender?

How does it compare to similar species?

- Tail — Is it long, short, divided, wide, narrow, or notched? Are there colors along the edges?
- Head — What are the placement, size, and color of any stripes? What is the plumage color? Is there a top knot?
- Beak — Is it long, short, or slender? Does it curve down or up? Does it cross at points? What is the color?
- Wings — What is the placement and shape in flight? What are the size and color of bars? What is the tip color and shape?
- Feet & Legs — Note the length, shape, and color. Are toes webbed?
- Call & Songs — Recordings of these are available at some libraries, the Kansas Wetlands Education Center, and The Raptor Center on eBird Trail Tracker. Other birdwatchers may be a good resource and there are even some books with bird songs spelled out on the music staff.
- Habits — Habitat and food.

