

North Anna Battlefield Designated a Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail

The North Anna Battlefield Park has been designated a Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. The North Anna Battlefield Park is maintained by the Hanover County Parks and Recreation Department and encompasses 172 acres and over 6 miles of well-maintained and marked trails through an oak-hickory forest.

Information provided by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries showcase the wildlife at North Anna: “Year-round bird residents include a variety of woodpecker and other common species, such as American Robin, Mourning Dove, Blue Jay, Northern Cardinals, Carolina Chickadee, and Tufted Titmice. Other observable wildlife include the White-tailed Deer, Gray Squirrel, and other small mammals. During the spring and summer, birders may see or hear red-eyed Vireo, Ovenbird, Wood Thrush, Scarlet Tanager, Great Crested Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers. Observable species along the river include: Bald Eagles, Belted Kingfisher, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Northern Parula, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Kingbird, Great Blue Heron, and Osprey. Lizards and skinks may be observed around the trails and dragonflies may also be observed around the river. Wintertime visitors include Yellow-rumped Warbler, Ruby- and Golden-crowned Kinglets, Hermit Thrush, and Red-breasted Nuthatch. During spring, a variety of migrating warblers may be seen such as the Black-throated Green and Blackburnian. It may also be possible to observe Spotted Sandpipers near the river.”

In addition to wildlife, the park contains some of the most pristine Confederate and Union earthworks and interpretive trails in the country. These historic markers and interpretive signs offer information about rifle pits, trenches, and the days when more than 150,000 soldiers faced one another in battle. There are 23 interpretive historic markers on the trail that were donated by the Blue & Gray Education Society. This often overlooked battle at the North Anna River was an important part of the 1864 Overland Campaign, which consisted of major battles at the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, North Anna and Cold Harbor leading to the siege at Petersburg. This campaign was significant because it pitted General Ulysses S. Grant against General Robert E. Lee for the first time and represented a change in overall Union military tactics to a war of attrition, leading to an escalation of casualties, and an eventual hastening of the end of the war and reunification of the country.

North Anna Battlefield Park is located at: 11576 Verdon Road, Doswell, VA 23047

For park information, please contact Hanover County Parks and Recreation at: (804) 365-7150 or visit www.hanovercounty.gov