Welcome!
Welcome to the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation’s (JDCF) Valley of Eden Bird Sanctuary. This 409-acre property is one of six public preserves that JDCF owns and stewards in Jo Daviess County, IL. There are over 6 miles of trails for you to explore at this unique place, which is managed and protected primarily for the many bird species that call it home. We therefore ask that you observe some simple rules that will help us safeguard what makes this place special.

Rules:
Unless otherwise posted, Valley of Eden is open daily from dawn to dusk year round. The only permitted entrance is from the main drive off of Rush Creek road that leads to the parking lot. To ensure the preservation of the site, the following activities are NEVER allowed:

- littering
- fires
- camping
- hunting
- biking
- motorized vehicle use
- dogs/dog walking
- entering cow pastures
- opening of gates
- removal of vegetation
- picking of flowers
- crossing fence lines

What will I see?
To date, there have been documented sightings of over 100 different bird species at Valley of Eden with April through August being the prime viewing season. Notable Illinois species of conservation concern include the Henslow’s sparrow, bobolink, red-headed woodpecker, and northern harrier. More common species such as a variety of owls, woodpeckers, and grassland birds can be seen too, making Valley of Eden a birding paradise for people of all ages and birding abilities.

Thank you for visiting JDCF’s Valley of Eden Bird Sanctuary.

JDCF is a non-profit land trust that works in and around Jo Daviess County, IL to help preserve this unique and beautiful part of the Midwest.

Because Jo Daviess County does not have a park preserve or county conservation district to protect and make available recreation areas, JDCF provides this service to our community. We currently have over 950 acres open to the public for FREE outdoor recreational activities.

JDCF is only able to do this work through the support of individuals such as you. Annual membership begins at just $35.00 for you and your entire family! Please join today by visiting www.jdcf.org.
Valley of Eden Bird Sanctuary  
Frequently Asked Questions

**Valley of Eden:** This 409-acre property, located near Stockton, IL, is a generous gift from Nancy Hamill Winter to the Illinois native birds that are in decline and to countless generations of people who will enjoy this preserve and walk away better educated about bird conservation. We thank Nancy for her generous spirit and love for nature.

**The Name:** Valley of Eden is a tribute to the Eden families who settled in this valley and have farmed here for 4 generations. Steve Eden, who lives nearby and runs a successful grain and cattle business leases this property and raises about 60 cattle here annually. His black angus cattle are found in one of the two pastures during most of the growing season. Per Nancy Winter and JDCF’s intent, we will continue the agricultural activity of grazing on this land as part of the management of the property.

**Why is this a bird sanctuary?** Many native Illinois birds have been on the decline for the past 50 years due primarily to habitat loss or alteration to grasslands, forests, and oak savannas. The bird species that have suffered the steepest declines in population are the those that need grassland habitat to thrive. These include the bobolink, Henslow’s sparrow, dickcissel, sedge wren, and many more. The grassland habitat here at Valley of Eden provides the right cover and food mix that allows these species to breed and successfully rear a family. Many grassland species that nest in hay fields are not successful because first cutting of hay typically happens in the middle of nesting season, May 15 to June 15.

**How can I get more involved?** There are a number of volunteer and sponsorship opportunities available.
- Conduct bird surveys.
- Join the Valley of Eden Friends Group.
- Make a financial contribution to the ongoing stewardship of the preserve.

Please contact info@jdcf.org for more information about volunteering and/or contributing.