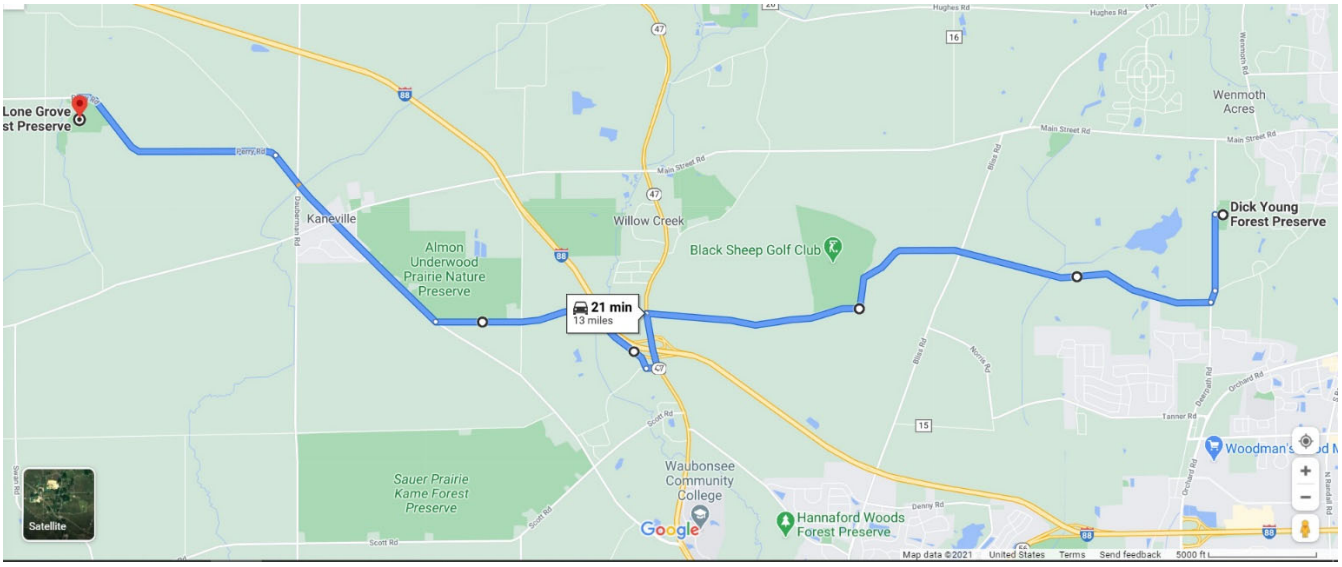
Jerry Hope Memorial Country Roads Birding Routes, 2021

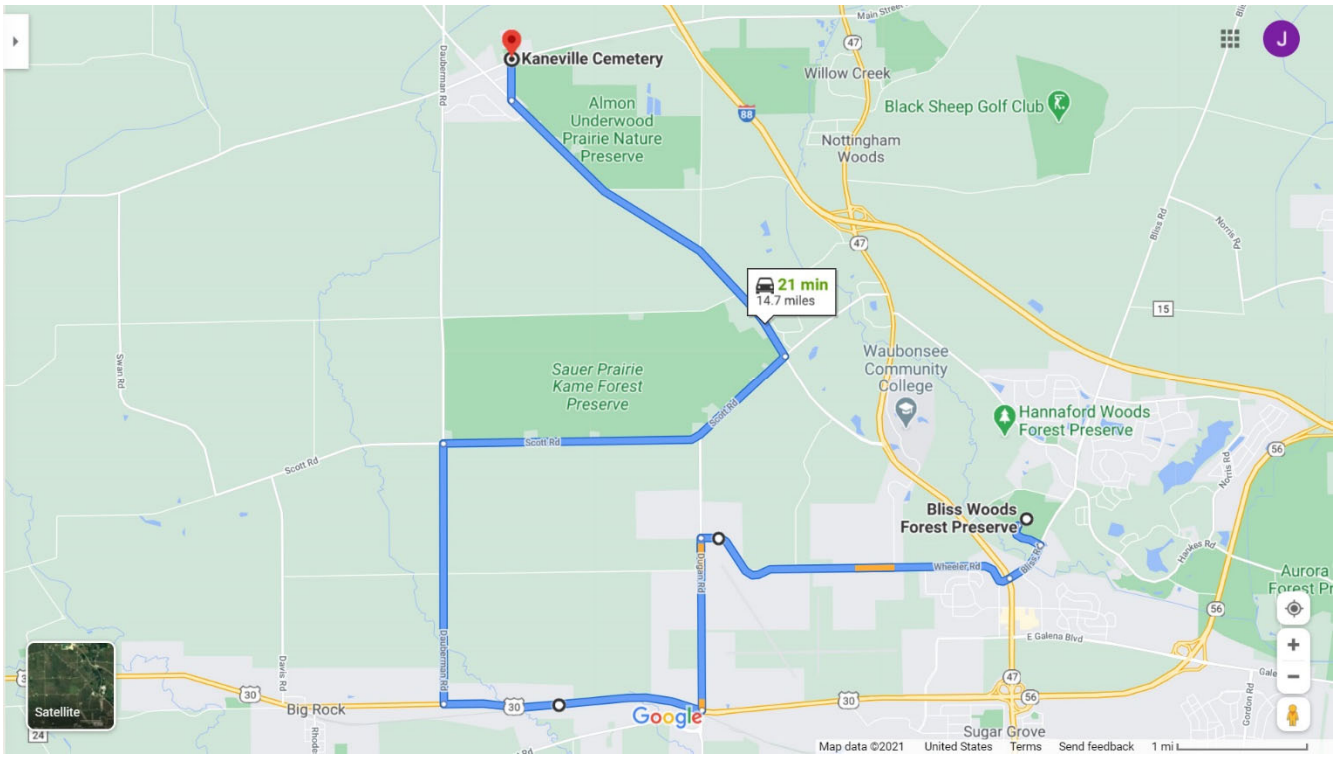
Route A

Begin at Dick Young Forest Preserve (Nelson Lake Road entrance) at 8 a.m. From there, will head south on Nelson Lake Road and turn right onto Seavey Road. Drive slowly along Seavey, looking for mixed flocks of Horned Lark, Lapland Longspur, Song Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, and, with luck, Snow Bunting. (Savannah Sparrow and even an Eastern Meadowlark have been seen in some years.) At Route 47, turn left. Just past I-88, make a right onto Finley and then right again on Seavey Road. Next, turn right on Harter Road and left on Perry Road. End the tour at Lone Grove Forest Preserve, where you can check for Great Horned Owl, Carolina Wren, Barred Owl, Tufted Titmouse and other species.



Route B

Begin at Bliss Woods Forest Preserve (in the main parking lot). Cross Route 47 and head straight onto Wheeler Road. Drive slowly along Wheeler, looking for mixed flocks of Horned Lark, Lapland Longspur, sparrows and, with luck, Snow Bunting. Then, turn left on Dugan Road, where you'll once again be looking for larks and longspurs. Turn right on US 30, then right again on Dauberman Road. Next, turn right on Scott Road, left on Harter Road, and right on Merrill Road. End the tour at Kaneville Cemetery on Main Street Road, in hopes of spotting Eurasian Tree Sparrow and Eurasian Collared Dove.



This is what we may see.

Lapland Longspurs

These can be very numerous in the mixed flocks of larks and buntings. They are much more wary of cars and will flee to the fields. However, they often circle back to exactly where they had been so stay put for a few moments and see if they will return for a better look.

Horned Larks

These will be the most numerous. They are not worried about cars and will let you get quite close before flying.

Snow Buntings

These will be the most elusive. Check every bird in the mixed lark and longspur flocks. Look for the flash of white on the wing and generally paler look

Northern Harrier

Most likely hunting low in the fields over Black Sheep Country Club on Seavey Road.

Snowy Owl

Unlikely but you never know!

Eurasian Tree Sparrow

Eurasian Collared Dove