

BURNHAM PARK—
MCCORMICK BIRD SANCTUARY

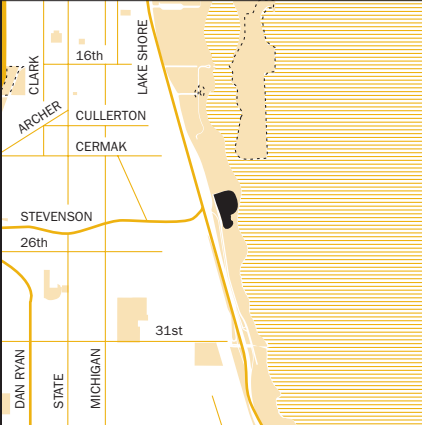
The most dramatic feature of the McCormick Bird Sanctuary is the prairie on top of an underground parking garage **1**. A mix of short prairie grasses and flowers have been planted. The crisply rectangular grassland is inhabited by little bluestem, black-eyed susans, yellow coneflower, and other prairie plants.

The primary purpose of the site is to supply habitat for migrating birds; there are few other places along Chicago's lakefront that have the same open, grassy character. In spring of 2004, birders counted 1,000 sparrows in a single day at this new prairie. These weren't the English sparrows typical of cities, but were native sparrows, the sort seen in Chicago only during migration. Seventeen of the birds were Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrows, a species characterized in David Sibley's *Field Guide to the Birds of Eastern North America* as "solitary and secretive."

To the south of the grassland, sumac and chokeberry populate a fairly steep slope off the garage and back into parkland **2**.

Over 500 shrubs were planted in this area. At the bottom of the slope is a small pond **5**, edged by slabs of limestone. Blue flag irises bloom around the sides, and dragonflies hover nearby. This water element is an important feature for wildlife, including birds. The pond's water circulation system is powered by solar energy; the system is located inside the south end of the fenced prairie. Beyond the pond is a large grove of hawthorns and newly-planted bur oaks **4**.

The mix of habitats here is already showing results for birds, making this a prime spot for birders to visit during migration.



Burnham Park—
McCormick Bird Sanctuary



ADDRESS 2400 S Lake Shore Dr
OWNER Chicago Park District
ACREAGE 8.43

HABITATS
1 3 Prairie / Grassland
2 4 Forest / Woodland
5 Aquatic

DIRECTIONS Due to limited road access, the best way to visit the sanctuary is by bicycle or on foot using the Chicago Lakefront Trail. If driving, parking is available in the McCormick Place garages.

