

Hartford Beach State Park



Located: 11.5 miles north and 1.75 miles west of Milbank, South Dakota.

Roberts County, Twp 122N Rng 48W Sec 3

Access: State Park Entrance Fee or License required. Paved roads, parking lots, and maintained hiking trails throughout.

Hartford Beach State Park prairie (photo by Dennis Skadsen)

Description:

Hartford Beach State Park is one of South Dakota's most unique parks offering the outdoor enthusiast the opportunity to view several plant and animal communities that include tallgrass prairie, deciduous forest, and spring-fed cold-water streams. Forty-two species of butterflies have been observed in the park; including the rare Dakota skipper on the park's remnant tallgrass prairie. A total of 184 species of birds have been observed in the park including 22 species of warblers. The patient birdwatcher may be able to observe six species of woodpeckers in the park including the Yellow-bellied sapsucker, Red-bellied woodpecker, and the rare Pileated woodpecker. For birdwatchers the best time to visit Hartford Beach State Park is during spring migration in early May, when warblers and other migrants are at their peak numbers. For butterfly enthusiasts, the last week of June through early July is the peak flight period for many of the parks butterflies including the Dakota skipper.

The Aspen Spring Hiking Trail winds along one of the parks spring-fed cold-water streams up onto the parks remnant tallgrass prairie and is the best area for bird and butterfly watching.

