

opening is gradually being reclaimed by the forest. After birding here, retrace your steps. As you return to the main trail, scan to the left. If there has been ample rain, there may be sufficient water to hold an occasional wetland bird.

Back on the main trail, a few yards west a metal gate blocks vehicles. At this point, the wide road ends and a sometimes narrower trail continues. It is generally level and dry, but there are occasional permanently muddy spots which must be bypassed where water seeps from the hillside. The path runs west for about two miles, mostly within sight of the river, terminating at the Davis railroad tunnel. Most people bird the main trail as far as desired, or as far as time permits, and then return detouring on occasional sections of trails along the river. When you reach gate number 2, if you took the riverside path initially on the way upstream, try the gravel road on the way back as the steep hillside can give good views up into the interior forest for species such as Ovenbird.

Another option at 0.9 miles upstream is to take a trail that leads upslope along a tributary away from the river. This interior trail makes a 1.2 mile loop through the upland deciduous forest, emerging at the stream near the small parking lot. There are several trail junctions along the way that can be confusing. A compass and/or GPS device and a PVSP complete trail map are recommended for travel away from the river.

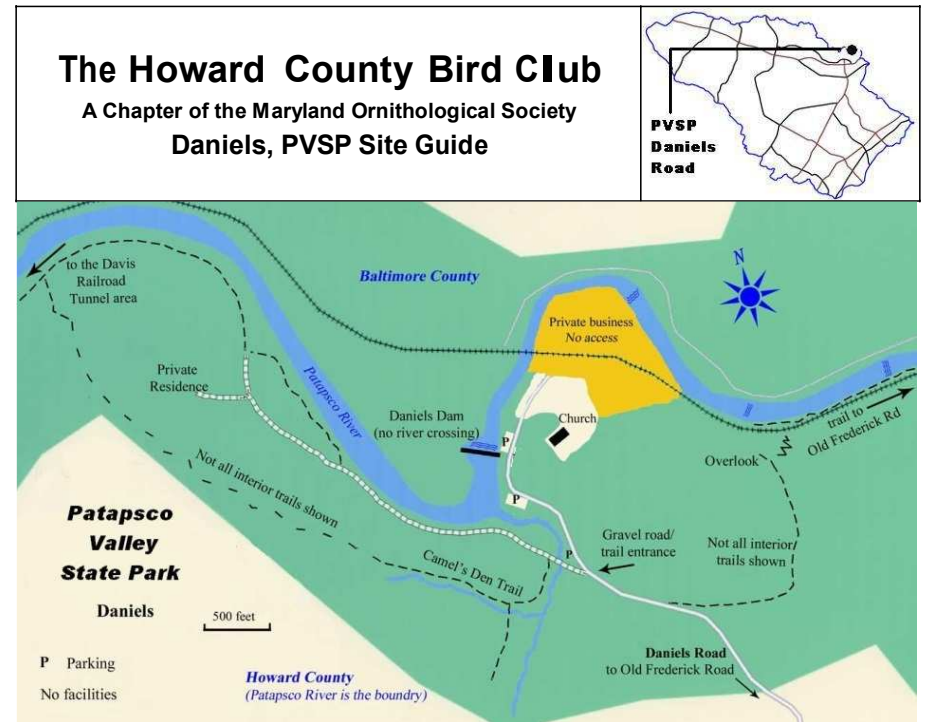
Downstream Trails - Downstream trails are not easily accessed. See the original complete site guide on the website for directions.

Highlights: In addition to birds, special plants, and dragonflies, this section of PVSP was the site of the town of Daniels, sited adjacent to the dam to power textile mills. The Gary Memorial United Methodist Church (still active) and the dam are among the few remnants of that era. An informational sign below the church provides more details about the community that once existed there. There is a fish ladder adjacent to the dam. This is the last remaining dam on the Patapsco River and will be removed eventually.

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This material is a digest. Further information, including complete species lists, photographs, and additional information can be found at https://howardbirds.org/birdinghowardcounty/Daniels/daniels_overview.htm

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The Daniels section of Patapsco Valley State Park (PVSP) is one of the county's choice birding locations. Its multiple hillside and floodplain trails provide excellent access.

Size: This is one of the public-access sections of the 14,000 acre PVSP which winds 32 miles along the Patapsco River.

Trails/Paths: The most popular path runs upstream parallel to the river as far as the Davis railroad tunnel, a distance of about two miles. A network of trails on the hillsides can also be explored.

Habitat: Floodplain forest along the river; upland deciduous woods on steep hillsides; several forested tributary valleys; limited open areas mostly adjacent to the dam and in the vicinity of the historic church at the end of Daniels Road.

Best Months: Spring, summer, and fall. Because some Neotropical species breed here, late spring and early summer can be particularly productive.

Coverage Time: From less than half an hour investigating only areas near parking lots to a long half day depending on the season and the number of trails covered.

Notable Birds: Wood Duck, Wild Turkey, Little Blue Heron, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, White Ibis, Glossy Ibis, Eastern Screech-Owl, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Veery, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Golden-winged Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Summer Tanager, Lincoln's Sparrow.

Amenities: No facilities. Small boat launch area above dam. A small paved parking lot adjacent to boat launch has six spaces with an additional gravel parking area a few hundred yards beyond. Note that there are No Parking signs along the lower part of Daniels Road. That means that, especially on weekends and holidays, parking is at a premium. On weekdays, be alert to truck traffic from businesses at the end of the road.

Handicapped Access: Parking is on asphalt or gravel. The first half mile of the mostly gravel/dirt upstream trail along the river is level. Hillside trails are rocky with moderate to steep slopes. Parking lots offer views of the river, sky, some floodplain vegetation, and a sampling of steep, wooded hillsides.

Operation and Hours: State park hours are 8:00 a.m. till dusk. No fees.

Layout: Daniels Road winds downhill from Old Frederick Road deadending at the Patapsco River. At this location, the river is the boundary between Howard County and Baltimore County. The dam creates a two-mile slack water stretch upstream. The main trail upstream along the river is mostly broad and shaded. Multiple hillside trails can be accessed from the main trail.

Birding: The Daniels section of PVSP offers county birders a secluded yet easily accessible birding locale. It is well-known for a wide variety of migratory and resident warblers and other passerines.

Shortly after the turn from Old Frederick Road onto Daniels Road you will enter woods. Listen for forest birds, including Worm-eating Warbler. Although this appears to be a rural road, do not stop in a lane as there is a surprising amount of truck traffic from the businesses at the end of the road.

Near the bottom on the left, you will pass a gated entrance to a gravel road which is the trailhead for the main trail west along the river. Continue on Daniels Road a short distance to a six-space paved parking lot, also on the left. Park here if there is space. In the spring, listen for Worm-eating Warblers and sometimes Black-and-white Warblers in the mountain laurel on the steep hillside across from the lot. If there are no spaces available, continue around the corner where there is a gravel parking area on the left.

If the sun has not yet reached the trees in the small parking lot area, you may wish to check the vicinity around the dam and the church farther along the road as these areas will get the first sun. Watch for traffic when walking along

the narrow section of road connecting the first lot to the larger parking lot in the dam area. The open area near the fish ladder can have Eastern Phoebes and other flycatchers. Walk along the road below the church scanning the fringe of trees along the riverbank for warblers and orioles. Watch the sky for raptors and vultures. A few Broad-winged Hawk flights have been reported, mostly in the fall. Red-tailed Hawks and Ospreys are observed frequently. Black and Turkey vultures sometimes roost and hunt in the area. Listen for Barred Owls and Eastern Screech-Owls at dawn and dusk.

After birding the dam and the church area, walk back up Daniels Road past the first parking area birding the trees and undergrowth along the stream. There will be activity here before it starts on the main trail. Continue along the road to the trailhead.

Enter the gated gravel road heading west a few hundred feet up Daniels Road from the small parking lot. Within 50 feet, after crossing the first stream, an option for a brief detour is to turn left on a narrow path (Camel's Den Trail) that goes uphill along the right side of the stream. This stream valley can produce nesting Louisiana Waterthrushes. Watch and listen for Barred Owls, Pileated Woodpeckers, and other forest birds. Most birders explore a short way up this side stream and then return to the main trail. Do not be in a hurry to leave this section of the main trail (just south of the small parking lot) as birds can be found anywhere here. There was once a house on the uphill side which accounts for some non-native trees. Although it is only a short distance to where the trail reaches the river, this initial section is often an especially productive location on sunny mornings during migration.

Upstream Trails - Follow the wide gravel road upstream (which is to the left when facing the river). The morning sun will be at your back. The river here is slack water for almost two miles above the dam. Ospreys and even Bald Eagles are possible here. The road often has muddy areas which are usually easily skirted. Listen again for Worm-eating Warblers on the steep slope to the left. The road at first runs close to the water, but soon the floodplain widens, and a dirt path leads off to the right along the water. The trees at the water's edge along this path may have the most activity in the morning sun. This area can have a diversity of birds including Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Once a Prothonotary Warbler pair nested successfully in a tree close to the path. In late May, a female Wood Duck with downy young may occasionally be spotted hugging the shoreline. The riverside path rejoins the road and becomes the main trail about one-half mile from Daniels Road. At this point on the main trail, a short spur angles slightly uphill to the left. It leads to an area where there were, at one time, several buildings. What was once a large