

# RIVER 'ROUND Conservation Area

River 'Round is a 330-acre Conservation Area in Franklin County owned and operated by the Missouri Department of Conservation. It is located on the inside of a large, looping meander of the Meramec River that provides 3.6 miles of river frontage. River 'Round is located east of St. Clair and is open from 4 a.m. until 10 p.m. daily.

For fishermen there is an improved boat ramp for access to some promising waters for smallmouth and rock bass. For shore fishermen access is good because of the extensive gravel bars. Statewide fishing regulations apply but check the Conservation Department website or the onsite bulletin board for special regulations.

For floaters putting in at the River 'Round Access at River Mile 72, it is an eight mile float downstream to the Chouteau Claim Access.

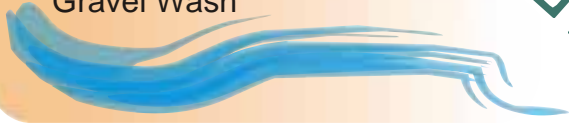


For hunting and trapping again state regulations apply, but River 'Round does have special regulations that sportsmen must be familiar with.

River 'Round features 150 acres of forest and 160 acres of old field and grasslands to explore. A special attraction are the expansive gravel beaches, however, with many discoveries to be made such as those mentioned on the following pages.

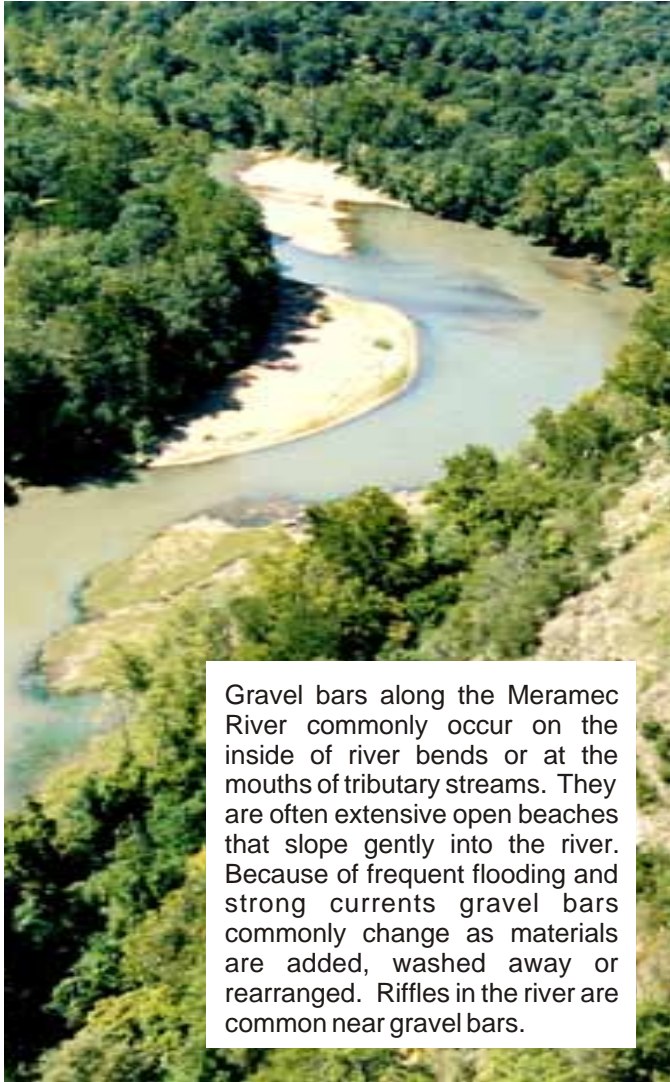
# Gravel Bar

Gravel Wash



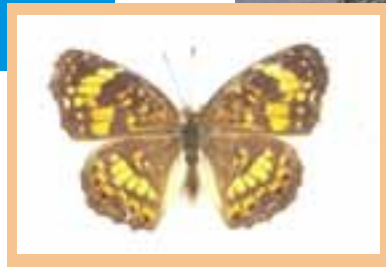
Natural Community

Beachcombers will no doubt spot the Killdeer (below) during their explorations. This common shorebird will first be seen running across the beach, and, taking flight, will circle around it. The gravel bar is their home, finding such food as flies, mosquitoes, grasshoppers, and in the river shallows, crayfish. Killdeer nest on the gravel bar, laying eggs in a shallow depression among the rocks. The spotted eggs blend into the gravel background.



Gravel bars along the Meramec River commonly occur on the inside of river bends or at the mouths of tributary streams. They are often extensive open beaches that slope gently into the river. Because of frequent flooding and strong currents gravel bars commonly change as materials are added, washed away or rearranged. Riffles in the river are common near gravel bars.

Most of the rock of the gravel bar is chert, formed from sediments during the Paleozoic Era, 250 million years ago. Other rock types, such as limestone, that formed at the same time as the chert, have long ago dissolved and washed away. The chert, however, is composed of silica and is extremely hard and long lasting. Once exposed on the surface, the chert works slowly down the Ozark hillsides gathering at the river. Here the rocks are slowly ground smooth by river currents grinding them together.



The water willow (above) is a herbaceous plant commonly found in colonies at the river's edge. This tough little plant has a root system that helps it survive floods as well as anchor the gravel bar. Although its leaves resemble willow trees and shrubs it is not related to that plant family. Deer will browse this plant and the silver checkerspot butterfly (above) feeds on the flower's nectar. The plants provide protective cover for young bullfrogs (above) and the Northern Water Snake. It flowers throughout the summer.