In summary, Audubon State Park is a precious gem with its beautiful hills, lakes, trees, birds and wild flowers.

The 692 acre park and the surrounding area, which is known as Wolf Hills, is a fine example of a rich upland forest. The hills rise abruptly from the floodplains of the Ohio River Valley; and since the area is so near the river, the soil is rich and moist with a great variety of plant life. Estimates range from 700 to over 1,000 species of flowering and non-flowering plants in the area; this includes trees, shrubs, herbs, grasses, sedges, ferns, mosses, lichens, fungi, etc.

As for animals, there are 200 species of birds with many species breeding in the area. There are at least 40 species of mammals, reptiles and amphibians; not to mention the thousands of species of lower animals such as snails, worms, crayfish, spiders, insects, etc.

Audubon State Park is located at the Northwestern edge of Kentucky between Evansville and Henderson on US 41. Indeed, the park has many features starting with the John J. Audubon Museum which has an outstanding collection of original Audubon paintings and engravings. Also, there is a nature center, camping facilities, cottages, golf, picnicking, swimming, fishing and hiking. All of these features along with mild climate, make Audubon State Park a very popular attraction.

Footnote pertaining to tree list: *There are some species of trees found in Audubon State Park which were not included because they were planted as ornamentals. These trees are as follows: White Pine, Virginia Pine, White Spruce, Norway Spruce, Baldcypress, Red Cedar, American Holly and Chinese Chestnut.*

Kentucky State Parks
"the nation's finest"

Trees, Shrubs & Ferns

OF AUDUBON STATE PARK
AND WOLF HILLS

Compiled by Naturalists:
KING BENSON
and
TOM WESTFALL

Audubon
JOHN JAMES AUDUBON STATE PARK
Henderson, Kentucky

TREES OF AUDUBON STATE PARK

One of the most beautiful features of Audubon State Park is the trees; not only for their graceful character and brilliant colors in the fall, but for their ecological importance. Many of the animals and small plants depend on the trees for their survival.

Throughout the Wolf Hills area, which includes Audubon State Park, there are different tree associations forming tree communities. In the park, there are basically two tree communities: a Beech-Sugar Maple-Basswood association which occupies mainly the moist, rich Northern portion of the park; and an Oak-Sugar Maple-Tuliptree association which occupies the drier Southern portion of the park.

The Beech-Sugar Maple woods is the most beautiful and well known part of the park because most of the birds and wild flowers inhabit this area. The area is made up entirely of mixed hardwoods and is classed as a "Climax Forest" due to the large size of the trees. Many of the large Beech trees are over 200 years old. Other large trees include Sugar Maple, Basswood, Oak, Tuliptree, White Ash, Elm, Hackberry, Sycamore, Honeylocust, and Kentucky Coffeetree. Some of the smaller trees include Sassafras, Dogwood, Redbud and American Hornbeam.

Audubon State Park is noted for its large Beech trees, but there are other prize trees worth noting: The largest tree in the park is a Tuliptree, which is over 120 ft. tall with a girth of 15 ft.; the tree with the largest girth is a giant White Oak, which measures 18 ft. around; and perhaps the most rugged tree is a large Bur Oak with a magnificent crown over 100 ft. wide.

There are 61 species of trees found in Audubon State Park, which covers 692 acres, and the Wolf Hills area. Rare trees are indicated by (R). Trees which have been introduced and escaped into the wilds are indicated by (I). The same applies to shrubs and ferns.

Ailanthus or Tree-of-Heaven (I)
Ash, Red (R)
Ash, White
Basswood, American (Linden)
Beech, American
Birch, River (R)
Boxelder
Buttonbush, Common
Catalpa, Northern (R)
Cherry, Black
Coffeetree, Kentucky
Cottonwood, Eastern
Crab Apple, Sweet
Devil's-walkingstick
Dogwood, Flowering
Elm, American
Elm, Slippery
Elm, Winged (R)
Hackberry
Hawthorn (3 species)
Hickory, Bitternut
Hickory, Shagbark
Hickory, Shellbark (R)
Hickory, Sweet Pignut
Honeylocust
Hornbeam, American (Blue Beech)
Locust, Black
Maple, Red
Maple, Silver (R)
Maple, Sugar
Mulberry, Red
Mulberry, White (I)
Oak, Black
Oak, Bur
Oak, Chinkapin
Oak, Northern Red
Oak, Overcup (R)
Oak, Pin
Oak, Shingle (R)
Oak, Shumard
Oak, Southern Red (Cherry-bark variety)
Oak, White
Osage-orange (I)
Pawpaw
Pecan
Persimmon, Common
Plum, American (R)
Princess Tree or Paulownia (I)
Redbud, Eastern
Sassafras
Sugarberry
Sumac, Smooth
Sumac, Winged or Shining (R)
Sweetgum
Sycamore, American
Tuliptree or Yellow-poplar
Tupelo (R)
Walnut, Black
Willow, Black
Willow, Sandbar

SHRUBS

The shrubs of Audubon State Park are somewhat scattered through the wooded area, with only a few dense sections. This may be due to the tight canopy the trees form, allowing very little sunlight to reach the ground. Like the trees, the shrubs need a certain amount of sunlight to survive.

Basically there are two types of shrubs: The erect bushy shrubs, which usually have several branches extending from the ground; and the woody vines, which have creeping or climbing characteristics, often using the trees for support. Trees may become so entangled and smothered with vines they eventually die.

The most common shrubs found in the woods are: Spicebush, Pawpaw, Wild Hydrangea, Arrowwood, Honeysuckle, Poison-ivy, Virginia Creeper and Wild Grape. Shrubs found along the edge of the woods or clearings are: Sumac, Blackberry, Wild Rose, Trumpet Creeper and Virgin's Bower. Two unique shrubs are: Buttonbush, which is found only in or near water; and Mistletoe, which is a parasitic shrub found high on the branches of trees in the winter.

The following list of shrubs are found in Audubon State Park and Wolf Hills area.

Ampelopsis, Heart-leaved
Arrowwood (Viburnum)
Barberry (I)(R)
Bittersweet, American
Bittersweet, Asiatic (I)
Blackberry, Highbush
Bladdernut, American
Buckthorn, Common (I)
Buttonbush, Common
Cedar, Red
Coralberry
Cranberry, Highbush (Viburnum)(I)
Creeper, Virginia
Devil's-walkingstick
Dogwood, Roughleaf
Dogwood, Silky (R)
Elderberry, Common
Grape, Frost
Grape, Riverbank
Grape, Summer
Grape, Sweet Winter
Greenbrier, Bristly or Hispid
Greenbrier, Common
Hazelnut, American
Honeysuckle, Japanese (I)
Hydrangea, Wild
Mistletoe, American
Moonseed, Canada
Pawpaw
Poison-ivy
Possum-haw or Deciduous Holly
Privet, European (I)
Raspberry, Black
Rose, Multiflora (I)
Rose, Prairie
Rose, Swamp
Spicebush, Common
Sumac, Smooth
Sumac, Winged or Shining (R)
Trumpet Creeper
Virgin's Bower

FERNS

Ferns are not closely related to trees and shrubs, but they are worth noting, because they are some of the most beautiful plants with their delicate and arching fronds covering large areas of the woodland floor. Since ferns are non-flowering plants, they reproduce from powdery spores which are encased either on the lower surface of the frond or on a spike.

The ferns are abundant in Audubon State Park, because the soil is rich and moist. Some of the most common ones are: Fragile Fern, Christmas Fern, Gladefern, Rattlesnake Fern and Grape Fern.

Adder's-tongue Fern
Beech Fern, Broad
Christmas Fern
Fragile Fern
Gladefern
Gladefern, Silvery (R)
Grape Fern, Common (variety)
Grape Fern, Cut-leaf (R)
Maidenhair Fern (R)
Rattlesnake Fern
Sensitive Fern
Spleenwort, Ebony
Woodsia, Blunt-lobed