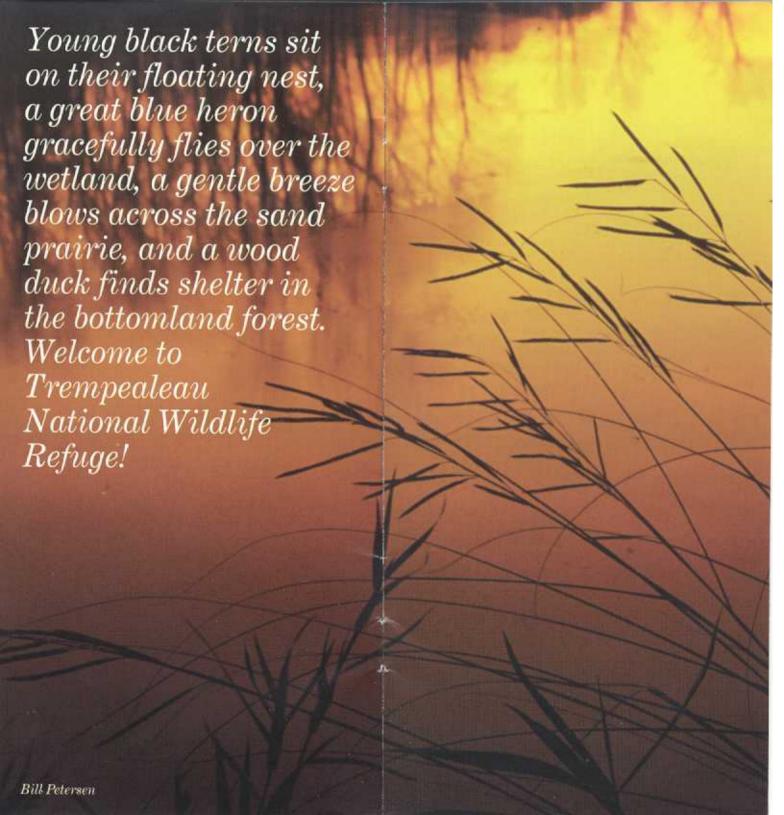
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge Trempealeau W28488 Refuge Road Trempealeau, WI 54661 National Wildlife 608/539 2311 Website address: Refuge http://midwest.fws.gov/trempealeau U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 1 800/344 WILD http://www.fws.gov Individuals with hearing impairments may reach Trempealeau NWR through the Federal Relay System at 1 800/877 8339. Available in alternative formats upon request. Black tern chicks, Jack Barthomal Printed 2001





This "Blue Goose," designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become a symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System. This 6,200 acre refuge lies within the Mississippi River flyway. The refuge's rolling prairies, rich wetlands and bottomland forests support a variety of wildlife species. Established in 1936 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the refuge is a breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife. It is an isolated backwater, cut off from the Mississippi and the Trempealeau Rivers by dikes, providing needed resting and feeding areas for waterfowl and other birds.

Rolling Sand Prairies

The refuge is situated in a unique geological formation known as the driftless area. Thousands of years ago glaciers surrounded but did not pass over the land. Blown into mounds, sand and silt from melting glaciers formed the rolling sand prairies of the refuge.

Usually it's Wet; Sometimes it's Mud

Wetlands are a prominent feature of the refuge. Before the railroads arrived or the lock and dams were built, the lands within the refuge were part of the Mississippi River. As such, these backwaters experienced floods and droughts. This cycle of wet and dry is necessary for plants to flourish in a river habitat. Today, using dikes and control structures, managers can mimic this natural cycle of lowering the water to expose mudflats and allow plants to germinate. When water levels rise, aquatic insects, fish, and waterfowl, thrive on the abundant food supplies.

Bottomland Forests

River birch, swamp white oak and silver maple meet at the water's edge. Large cottonwoods stand tall. A healthy forest needs a variety of species and ages of trees. Refuge staff and volunteers plant seedlings to improve the hardwood stands. Birds, from warblers to wood ducks, benefit from these efforts.

Visiting the Refuge

People can visit the refuge year round, during daylight hours. There are plenty of opportunities for hiking, bicycling, snowshoeing, or cross-country skiing. Come back and visit during each season to see the variety of wildlife at the refuge. Accessible trails lead to the observation deck and through a loop of the Prairie View Trail.

Hunting

Details about programs for disabled hunters and hunting permits are available at the refuge office.

Fishing

Bullheads, northern pike, panfish and yellow perch are caught in the refuge waters. Hand powered craft and boats with electric motors can be launched at the landing near Kiep's Island.

Watching Wildlife

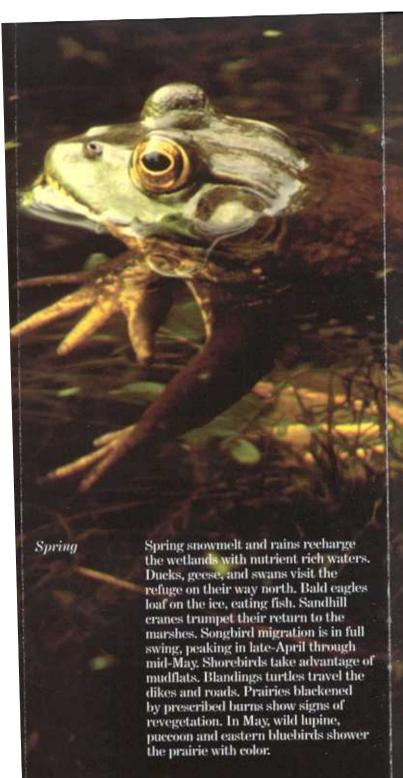
Early morning and dusk provide the best times to view wildlife on the four mile self-guided wildlife drive. The road winds through the rolling sand prairies, marshes, and hardwood forest.

A popular way to see wildlife is by hiking, biking or skiing. The Prairie View Trail, observation deck and various dikes provide different opportunities to catch a glimpse of the flying, sliding, scurrying, or burrowing wildlife.

Volunteering

Do you want to help collect biological data, paint, mow, greet visitors, or work with school groups? If you're interested in volunteering or want to know more about the Friends group, please contact the refuge.





Summer

During summer most wildlife quiet down as they raise their young without drawing attention to predators. Broods of wood ducks, mallards, and Canada geese paddle among the lily pads, pickerelweed, lotus, and arrowhead. Black terns nesting on floating vegetation mats are one exception to the quiet rule. They can be seen and heard calling as they fly along looking for insects and fish.

In early July, young eagles and osprey fly from their nests while pelicans gather in large groups herding fish and taking turns getting their fill. Muskrats gather food for their young. Coneflowers, bergamot, blazing star, and partridge pea begin blooming in the prairie. Mosquitoes and deer flies pester visitors.

The sound of chainsaws and the swish of sweep nets tells you that the refuge staff is working to improve the habitat. By cutting locust or catching and releasing beetles to eat invasive purple loosestrife and leafy spurge, the prairies and wetlands will grow healthy and strong.

Green Frog, Bill Petersen

Great Blue Heron, Bill Petersen