

Navassa

National Wildlife Refuge



photo: NOAA



photo: USFWS/Felix López



photo: USFWS/Jorge Saliva

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Refuge Facts

- Established: 1999.
- Acres: The island covers 1,344 acres. The refuge includes a 12 mile radius of marine habitat around the island.
- Location: Navassa Island is located 35 miles west of the Tiburon Peninsula of Haiti.
- Administered under Caribbean Islands NWR complex.

Natural History

- Over 1 million tons of bird guano was removed from the island between 1865-1901.
- The U.S. Coast Guard built a 162 foot lighthouse in 1917.
- Large seabird colonies present including over 5,000 nesting red-footed booby.
- Home to four endemic lizard species.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- No staff.
- Closed to the public.

Refuge Objectives

- To preserve and protect coral reef ecosystems and the marine environment.
- To restore and enhance native wildlife and plants.
- To provide opportunities for scientific research.

Management Tools

- Wildlife surveys.
- Scientific research.
- Coral reef monitoring.
- Vegetation monitoring.

Public Use

Closed to the public.

Questions and Answers

What type of research has been conducted at Navassa?

The Center for Marine Conservation (CMC) has funded three expeditions to the island to date. Investigations and inventories by personnel from the: Smithsonian, American Museum of Natural History, NOAA, USGS, USFWS, John G. Shedd Aquarium, and Avila College have discovered several new species of marine fish in the waters around Navassa as well as several new species of spider from the island. Over 240 species of fish have been documented in the waters around the island which are rich in sponges, algae and coral.

For what purpose was the refuge established?

The refuge was established to preserve and protect the biodiversity, health, heritage, and social and economic value of U.S. coral reef ecosystems and the marine environment.

Why is the refuge closed to the public?

There are no beaches on Navassa. The island rises abruptly from the sea with cliffs reaching heights of 20 meters or more. Access is extremely hazardous.