

# Bon Secour

## National Wildlife Refuge



photo: USFWS



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### Refuge Facts

- Established: 1980.
- Acres: 6816 including 510 leased from the State of Alabama.
- Four units on the Ft. Morgan Peninsula and Little Dauphin Island.

### Natural History

- Refuge is home to the endangered Alabama beach mouse.
- Refuge serves as an important stop over point for neotropical migratory birds.
- Refuge beaches serve as nesting sites for green and loggerhead sea turtles.
- Habitats include beaches and sand dunes, scrub forest, fresh and salt water marshes, fresh water swamps, and uplands.

### Financial Impact of Refuge

- Five-person staff.
- Over 50,000 visitors annually.
- Current year budget (FY 05): \$404,000.

### Refuge Purposes

- To conserve fish, wildlife and plants which are listed as endangered or threatened species.
- To conserve an undisturbed beach/dune ecosystem which includes a diversity of fish and wildlife.
- To serve as a living laboratory for scientists and students.
- To provide wildlife oriented recreation for the public.
- For the development, advancement, management, conservation and protection of fish and wildlife resources.

### Management Tools

- Habitat restoration (dune protection and stabilization).
- Prescribed fire.
- Law enforcement.

### Public Use Opportunities

- Interpretive hiking trails.
- Bird and wildlife observation.
- Fresh and saltwater fishing.
- Volunteer Program.

### Questions and Answers

*What kind of wildlife can I expect to see on the refuge?*

During mid-March through mid-May, and again from mid-August till the end of October migration of neotropical birds occur. Many species of birds can be seen on the refuge. Foxes, coyotes, bobcats, and more common residents such as alligators, squirrels, opossums and armadillos may be seen throughout the year.

*When do sea turtles nest on the refuge?*

Sea turtles nest on the beaches from mid-May through mid-August. Turtles nest at night, usually on moonless or dark nights. You are likely to see their large tracks to and from the water come daybreak.

*Why are there houses on the beach at the end of Mobile Street?*

The houses at the end of Mobile Street belong to private landowners who owned the land before the Refuge was established. These landowners have decided to keep these "inholdings" rather than sell them to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

*Why are some people allowed to drive on Pine Beach Trail?*

There are a few private "inholdings" within the refuge off this trail. These landowners have legal access to their property by way of the trail. Only refuge staff and these landowners are allowed to drive a vehicle on the trail.

*Do you give guided tours?*

No. The two hiking trails are self-guided. Maps, interpretive brochures, and signs are located at the beginning of each trail.