

Bogue Chitto

National Wildlife Refuge



photo: USFWS



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Refuge Facts

- Established: 1981.
- Acres: 37,600 (Saint Tammany and Washington parishes in Louisiana and in Pearl River County, Mississippi). Established because thousands of bottomland hardwood acres were being cleared in the Mississippi River Delta.
- Location: the refuge is located nine miles north of Slidell, LA. Most of the refuge is accessible only by watercraft. However, the refuge has many access points.

Natural History

- The refuge's bottomland forests contain sweetgum-water oak stands interspersed with bald cypress-tupelo brakes and overcup oak-water hickory stands. The unspoiled scenery of the ecosystem includes large meandering unchannelized rivers, home for the threatened ringed sawback turtle.
- Many of these waterways have high bluffs and large sand bars, providing scenic and unspoiled vistas. There are 860 acres of upland areas containing loblolly and slash pine. Some of these uplands house the threatened Gopher Tortoise.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- 43,000 visitors annually.
- Big Branch Marsh, Bogue Chitto, Breton, Delta, Bayou Sauvage, Bayou Teche, Mandalay and Atchafalaya NWRs are administered under the Southeast Louisiana Complex with a total O&M budget for FY06 of \$2,325,000 and 20.6 employees.

Refuge Objectives

- Provide habitat and protection for indigenous wildlife listed as endangered or threatened.

- Provide habitat for waterfowl and other migratory birds.
- Provide, enhance, and maintain habitat meeting the requirements of all indigenous wildlife.
- Provide compatible recreation, environmental education, and interpretive/demonstration activities.

Management Tools

- Forest habitat management improving the plant community for wildlife.
- Prescribed fire.
- Chemical control of noxious plants.
- Law enforcement.
- Deer and feral hog management through public hunting.
- Partnerships.

Public Use Opportunities

- Fishing, including youth rodeo events.
- Wildlife observation.
- Photography.
- Hunting, including youth hunts.
- Primitive camping.
- Canoeing.

Calendar of Events

March-April: turkey hunting.

April: Earth Day.

May: Migratory Bird Day.

June: Youth Fishing Rodeo.

October: National Wildlife Refuge Week.

October-January: archery deer hunting.

October-February: squirrel hunting, rabbit hunting, hog hunting.

November-December: deer gun hunting.

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December-January: waterfowl hunting, woodcock hunting.

January-February: raccoon hunting.

Note: All hunting and camping is closed when the Pearl River Gauge reaches 15.5 feet or above.

Questions and Answers

Where is the refuge and how do I access it?

The refuge is in the Pearl River Basin in St. Tammany and Washington Parishes, Louisiana, and Pearl River County, Mississippi. There are only two road access points; one from Interstate 59 at the Louisiana/Mississippi border, and one west of Mississippi Highway 43 on Dumas Wise Road. The road access avails the user to a very limited amount of the refuge. Access to most of the refuge is by boat at Walkiah Bluff Water Park northwest of Picayune, Mississippi, from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Boat ramps at Lock 1 (Louisiana Highway 41 north of Slidell, Louisiana) and at Lock 3 (Louisiana Highway 21 south of Bogalusa, Louisiana).

What is available at the refuge?

The refuge has hunting, fishing, primitive streamside camping, birdwatching, and boating.

What types of fishing are available?

Freshwater riverine and oxbow lake fishing for largemouth bass, spotted bass, crappie, catfish, and bluegill.

What types of hunting are available?

Small game hunting for gray squirrel, swamp rabbit, raccoon, woodcock, and migratory waterfowl is available as per refuge regulations. Big game hunting for white-tailed deer, and eastern wild turkey (spring) is available. Feral hogs may be taken as specified in the refuge permit. Hunters must obtain a refuge permit.