

U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge  
1730 Eastern Neck Road  
Rock Hall, Maryland 21661  
410/639-7056  
410/639 2516 FAX  
E-mail: r5rw\_ennwr@fws.gov

Federal Relay Service  
for the deaf and hard-of-hearing  
1 800/877 8339

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
1 800/344 WILD  
<http://www.fws.gov/>

November 2000



# Eastern Neck

## *National Wildlife Refuge*





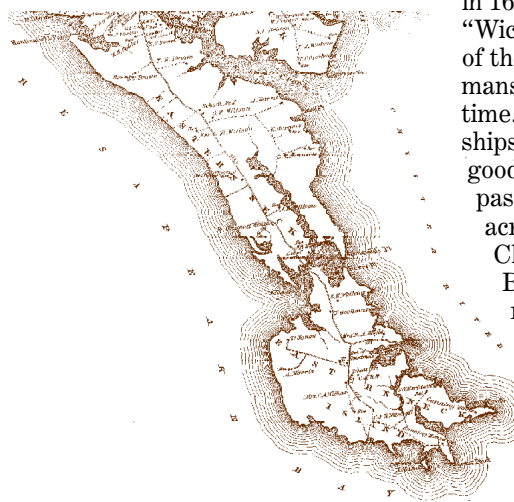
*Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge, located at the mouth of the Chester River in Kent County, Maryland, was established in December 1962. This 2,285-acre island refuge is a major feeding and resting place for migratory and wintering waterfowl on Maryland's famed "Eastern Shore." The refuge is also home to the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel and the threatened southern bald eagle.*

*Sunset, photo M.C. Kaehny*

*cover photo: Swans, Heather Davidson*

### **Settlers and Packet Ships**

Eastern Neck, strategically located at the confluence of river and bay, has a long and varied history. The island was among the first settled areas in the New World. Here Major Joseph Wickes obtained a grant of 800 acres



in 1650 and built "Wickliffe," one of the finest mansions of the time. Packet ships that carried goods and passengers across the Chesapeake Bay made regular stops at Bogle's Wharf on the east side of the island from colonial days until

1924. Farming and waterfowl hunting were the most important land uses prior to the establishment of the refuge. The island was known as one of the best hunting grounds on the bay and was a favorite with gunning clubs.



USFWS

## Wildlife

The varied habitats on Eastern Neck, including 1,000 acres of brackish tidal marsh, 600 acres of cropland, 500 acres of forest, 100 acres of grassland and 40 acres of open water impoundments, provide a home for a variety of wildlife species. Three threatened and/or endangered species, 243 species of birds, and a variety of mammals, amphibians and reptiles inhabit the island.



*Diamondback terrapin*

T. Goettel

## Birds

The fall and spring months are the best times to view migratory song birds with October through mid-March the best time for viewing the thousands of migratory waterfowl that winter in the Chesapeake Bay. The refuge staff has documented peaks of 40,000+ waterfowl on the refuge and 33 different species have been reported. The most common



Dave Sorflaten

*Canvasback duck*



USFWS

*Great blue heron*



© National Wildlife Federation

*Woodpecker*

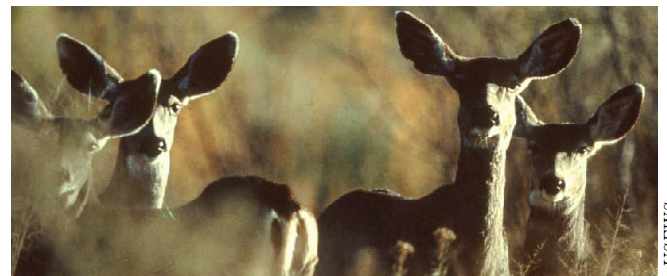
## Mammals

species include Canada geese (20,000+), tundra swans (7,000+), canvasbacks (15,000+), mallards, widgeons, ruddy ducks, black ducks, lesser scaups, buffleheads, pintails, green- and blue-winged teal, oldsquaw and scoters and other sea ducks provides for an interesting diversity of species.

Great blue and green-backed herons and great and snowy egrets are common sites in the marshes and mud tidal flats of the refuge. Numerous marsh and shore birds including killdeer, greater and lesser yellowlegs, least, spotted, and semipalmated sandpipers and woodcock arrive in the spring and can be observed through the fall.

The refuge woodlands, hedgerows, open fields, and other habitats provide excellent opportunities to observe woodpeckers, hawks, falcons, vultures, flycatchers, swallows, chickadees, wrens, kinglets, eastern bluebirds, warblers, finches and many other colorful species. A bird list is available upon request.

The refuge is home to a variety of mammals including white-tailed deer, beaver, red fox, raccoon, muskrat, opossum, woodchuck, eastern gray squirrel and the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel. The abundance of wildlife offers high quality wildlife observation opportunities for the attentive visitor.

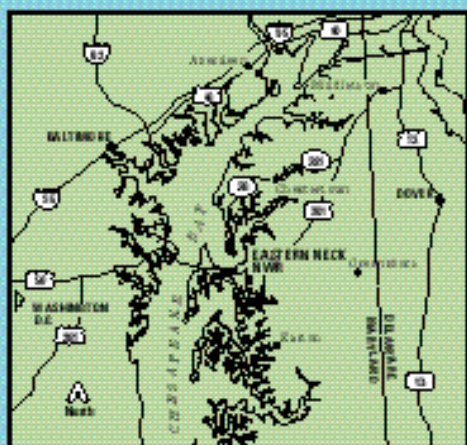


*White-tailed deer*

USFWS



# Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge



**Refuge Management**  
*Endangered and/or Threatened Species*



*Delmarva Fox Squirrel*

The refuge is one of seven benchmark sites where remnant populations of the endangered Delmarva squirrel exist. This species of squirrel that once occurred throughout the Delmarva Peninsula and into southeastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey, now persists naturally only in portions of four counties on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Management activities to enhance the refuge population of this species include a nest box program and live trapping survey, reforestation, prescribed burning and timber stand improvement to maintain the preferred habitat of this species.

Threatened southern bald eagles, our national symbol, are also found on the refuge and have nested and successfully fledged eaglets every year since 1986. Management includes monitoring and providing constant protection for these majestic birds.

Management activities to enhance refuge habitat for nesting and migratory waterfowl include upland and water level management practices. A cooperative farming program provides a variety of browse and grain crops for wintering waterfowl and planting native grasses provides nesting cover. Managing fresh water levels in impoundments encourages the production of moist soil plants, while brackish marsh management encourages the growth of native marsh grasses. Water level manipulation in five green tree reservoirs, or winter flooded woodlands, allows wood ducks, black ducks and other species to forage for mast and the invertebrates in the leaf litter on the forest floor.

*Waterfowl*



*Wood duck*

**Wildlife Calendar**  
*January-April*

Waterfowl are abundant through the month of March. Bald eagles are nest building in January and laying eggs through February. The eaglets begin hatching in April. Great horned owls begin nest building in January and lay eggs through mid-April. Hatching may begin in late February. Woodcock may be seen performing their courtship displays in February and egg hatching begins in April. Blue- and green-winged teal migrate through the area in April, and resident ducks begin incubating their eggs.

*May-August*

Songbird northern migration peaks in late April-early May. Woodcock chicks and deer fawns are born and osprey eggs begin to hatch in May. In June young eagles and great horned owls are learning to fly. Eagles and blue birds fledge in July. In August ospreys may start their migration south while blue-winged teal, the earliest waterfowl migrants, begin to arrive from their northern breeding grounds.

*September-December*

Songbird southern migration peaks in late September-October. Waterfowl numbers gradually increase and great horned owls begin to establish territories in October. Between the last week in October and the second week in November, depending on the weather, tundra swans stage on the refuge. Arriving by the thousands from the Great Lakes area, it is a spectacular sight. Waterfowl populations peak in November. Bald eagles establish territories and start nest building in December.



**Visitor Opportunities**  
*Hiking/Wildlife Observation*

Nearly six miles of roads and trails are open to visitors most of the year. Four wildlife trails and a handicap-accessible boardwalk and observation tower are available for those wishing to observe the varied habitats of the refuge.

*Note:* Ticks, chiggers and mosquitoes are abundant. The use of a repellent is highly recommended.



K. Bucklew

*Boating/Fishing and Crabbing*

Kent County operates the Ingleside Recreation Area and Bogle's Wharf landing within the refuge. The Ingleside Recreation Area, on the northwest side of the refuge, has facilities for crabbing and car-top boat launching from April 1 to September 30. Picnic tables are available for use during these months.

Bogle's Wharf landing is located on the east side of the refuge and offers trailered boat launching facilities (county permit required—not available at the refuge office).

Additionally, fishing opportunities are available at the refuge entrance from the bridge that spans the Eastern Neck Narrows.

**Protect Your Wildlife**

In order to protect wildlife and habitat, certain restrictions are in effect on the refuge. Camping, off-road vehicles, fires and firearms (except under permit during the refuge hunting season) are prohibited. Pets must be on a hand-held leash. Other restrictions may apply; contact the refuge manager for further information.



USFWS

*Bloodroot*

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

Eastern Neck is one of over 500 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The National Wildlife Refuge System is a network of lands and waters managed specifically for the protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat and represents the most comprehensive wildlife management program in the world. Units of the system stretch across the United States from Northern Alaska to the Florida Keys and include small islands in the Caribbean and South Pacific. The character of the refuges is as diverse as the nation itself.

The Service also manages national fish hatcheries, and provides federal leadership in habitat protection, technical assistance, and the conservation and protection of migratory birds, certain marine mammals and threatened and endangered species.