

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Cache River

*National Wildlife Refuge*



*Cache River National Wildlife Refuge is one of over 500 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to preserve a network of lands and waters for the conservation and management of fish, wildlife and plant resources for the benefit of present and future generations.*



### **Introduction**

Cache River National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1986 to protect significant wetland habitats and provide feeding and resting areas for migrating waterfowl.

*photo: The Nature Conservancy*



As one of the few remaining areas in the Lower Mississippi River Valley not drastically altered by channelization and drainage, the Cache River basin contains a variety of wetland communities including some of the most intact and least disturbed bottomland hardwood forests in the Mississippi Valley region. These unique and valuable wetlands have been protected by the RAMSAR Convention as “Wetlands of International Importance”.

The refuge currently encompasses 40,000 acres located in numerous tracts in Jackson, Woodruff, Monroe and Prairie counties in east central Arkansas. The boundary of this new refuge changes frequently as land acquisition continues along the Cache, White and Bayou DeView Rivers. Access to refuge lands is limited and few facilities have been developed.

*cover photo:  
David Knier*



### **The Refuge System**

Unmatched anywhere in the world, the National Wildlife Refuge System is an extensive network of lands and waters protected and managed especially for wildlife and its habitat and for people to enjoy.

This unique system encompasses over 92 million acres of lands and waters from above the Arctic Circle in Alaska to the subtropical waters of the Florida Keys and beyond to the Caribbean and South Pacific.

### **Habitat/Wildlife**

Characterized by rivers, cypress-tupelo swamps, oxbow lakes and bottomland hardwood forests, the Cache River wetlands support a tremendous array of wildlife species.

*photo: David Knier*



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Although most often noted as wintering grounds for tens of thousands of mallards, many other wildlife species make the refuge their home for all or part of the year. Waterfowl, wadingbirds and songbirds may be seen seasonally while deer, coyote and beaver are found year-round. During the warmer months, reptiles and amphibians are often observed.

*photo on right:  
Nature Conservancy*



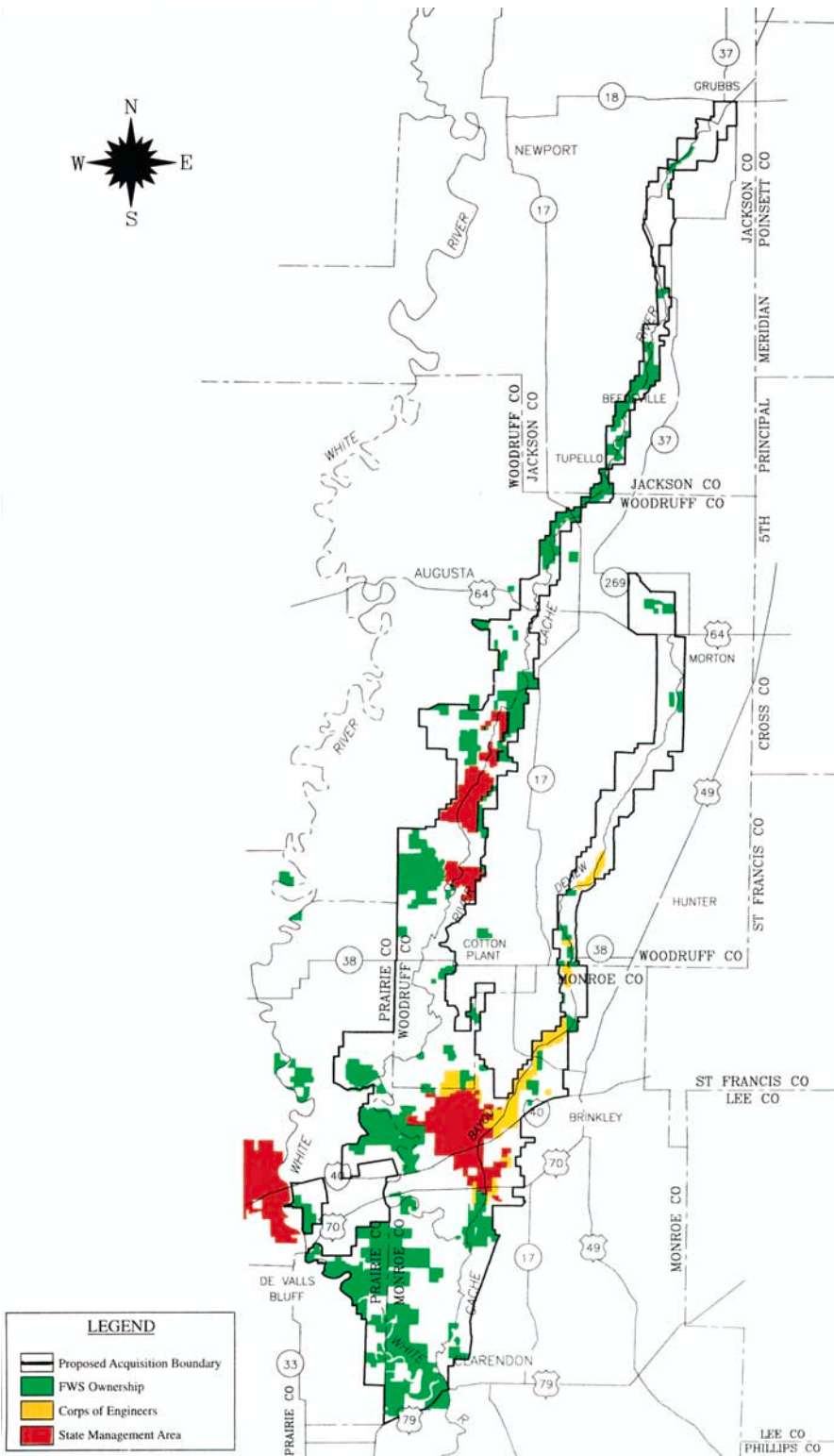


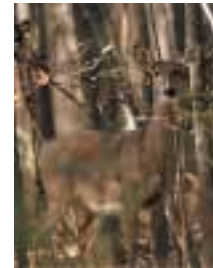


photo: David Knier

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**Reforestation**  
Two centuries ago the Lower Mississippi River Valley contained over 24 million acres of bottomland hardwood and swamp forests. Today, only 4.4 million acres of wetland forests remain, most as islands in a sea of agriculture lands.

In efforts to re-link these fragmented forests and improve habitat, the refuge conducts an aggressive reforestation program. Many agricultural tracts purchased by the refuge are planted with the hardwood trees that once covered the land before man's intervention. The native oaks, cypress, gum and pecan trees planted will enhance wildlife diversity and prevent soil loss from erosion.

photo: David Knier

photo on left:  
Nature Conservancy



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photo: The Nature Conservancy



## Enjoy the Refuge

The public is encouraged to visit the refuge year-round. Hunting and fishing opportunities attract many outdoor enthusiasts. As a significant wintering area for mallards, duck hunting can be excellent. Other refuge hunting seasons include deer, turkey, squirrel, rabbit, quail, and raccoon.

Anglers find good sport fishing on the refuge with bass, catfish, crappie and bream making up the principle game fish. Other activities include canoeing, hiking and wildlife observation.

photo on left page:  
David Knier

**Cache River National Wildlife Refuge**  
**Route 2, Box 126-T**  
**Augusta, AR 72006**  
**870/347 2614**

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**  
**1 800/344 WILD**  
**<http://www.fws.gov/~r4eao>**

**October 1997**

