

Bayou Teche

National Wildlife Refuge



photo: Steven Reagan



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Refuge Facts

- Established: 2001
- Acres: 9,028, located in St. Mary Parish, LA.
- Location: The refuge is located at the south edge of Franklin, LA. Franklin is approximately 55 miles from Lafayette, LA and 108 miles from New Orleans, LA. The refuge is accessible by vehicle, boat, and foot.

Natural History

- Louisiana black bears are relatively abundant throughout the refuge. Other wildlife includes alligators, wading birds, ducks and bald eagles.
- The area is forested with bottomland hardwoods and cypress-gum forests.
- Oil and gas wells, and canals are important features in the area.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- Managed by Mandalay NWR staff (two person staff).

Refuge Objectives

- Provide habitat and refuge for the 'threatened' Louisiana black bear.
- Provide the highest quality migratory bird habitat possible.
- Allow compatible public use such as nature trails, recreational boating, fishing, hunting, wildlife observation and photography.
- Promote research and restoration of the Louisiana black bear.
- Provide opportunity for environmental education and interpretation.

Management Tools

- Habitat management.
- Management of black bears.
- Law enforcement.
- Environmental education.

Public Use Opportunities

- Wildlife observation.
- Boating.
- Photography.
- Fishing.
- Hunting.

Calendar of Events

January - December: fishing, wildlife observation, photography and boating.

Questions and Answers

Where is the Bayou Teche NWR?

Bayou Teche NWR is located approximately two miles south of Franklin, Louisiana and adjacent to Highway 90 (Future Interstate 49). Access is by vehicle, boat and foot.

Can I hunt on Bayou Teche NWR?

Yes, hunting is allowed on the refuge. This 538th National Wildlife Refuge offers archery deer, gun deer, gun deer for youths only, small game and waterfowl hunting. All hunters must apply for lottery permits to be issued by a random computer drawing each year. Refer to the refuge's Hunting, Fishing and Public Use Brochure for details and an application.

Is fishing allowed on Bayou Teche National Wildlife Refuge?

Yes, recreational fishing is allowed on the refuge during daylight hours. Fishing lines must be attended at all times. Commercial fishing is not allowed. Fishing is allowed from shore and from boat in open waterways. Fisherman are required to possess a signed Public Use permit, available free of charge and located in the front of the Hunting, Fishing and Public Use Brochure, and follow all State of Louisiana regulations.

Are there boating opportunities on Bayou Teche NWR?

Yes, boating is allowed on the refuge during daylight hours. Motorized boaters and paddlers can enjoy scenery and wildlife observation opportunities. A three mile non-motorized-boat-only trail is a popular destination for paddlers looking to get off busy waterways. Boaters should obtain a free Public Use permit and review refuge rules in the Hunting, Fishing and Public Use Brochure.

Where can I see a Louisiana black bear?

Bayou Teche NWR is the only National Wildlife Refuge with the specific mission of managing bears. This uniquely adapted subspecies of the American black bear currently occupies much of the refuge. Although shy and most active near dusk and dawn, visitors may see individual bears at any time during their visit to the refuge.