

# Chincoteague

## National Wildlife Refuge

### Represented by the following Members of Congress:

Senator John W. Warner (R)  
Senator George F. Allen (R)  
Rep. Thelma Drake (R-2nd)

### Contact

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The Eastern Shore of Virginia and Fisherman Island National Wildlife Refuges are managed under the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge cluster.

### Purpose

Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge was established to conserve, manage and restore migratory bird populations.

### Public Use Notes

- Platforms for wildlife observation and photography
- Fishing/shellfishing
- Curriculum-based environmental education/interpretive programs
- Accessible hiking and biking trails (15 miles)
- Herbert H. Bateman Educational and Administrative Center
- Hunting (white-tailed deer, exotic sika elk and migratory birds)

### Management Activities

- Protecting and managing habitat for the threatened piping plover and other shorebirds
- Managing water and soil moisture to provide habitat for various migratory birds throughout the year
- Enhancing upland areas for the endangered Delmarva Peninsula fox squirrel, neotropical migrants and other species
- Controlling exotic/invasive species
- Conducting wildlife surveys
- Managing nesting structures for Delmarva Peninsula fox squirrels, peregrine falcons, wood ducks and other migratory birds

### Highlights

One of the nation's most visited national wildlife refuges with a new state-of-the-art visitor facility

Considered an Audubon Society "birding hot spot," hosting more than 320 different species

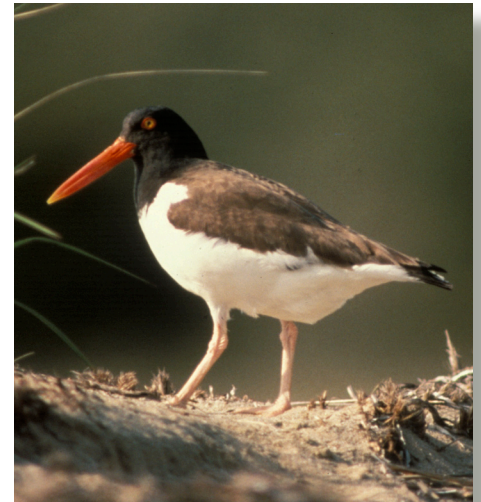
Designated a Globally Important Bird Area by the American Bird Conservancy

Home to the historic Assateague Lighthouse

Pristine barrier beaches, wetlands and maritime forest habitat protect threatened and endangered species and native plants and animals.

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

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*American oystercatcher*

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### Issues

Refuge staff work with community leaders to address beach parking and access issues resulting from the barrier island's westward migration.

Management for threatened piping plover and other shorebirds may conflict with public uses.

Chincoteague ponies graze on the refuge under a special use permit.

The refuge faces the potential for conflict between recreational beach use and the Service's mission.

Movement of barrier island complicates refuge management.

