

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Bald Knob

National Wildlife Refuge



Bald Knob 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 administer a national network of lands for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.



This blue goose, designed by Ding Darling, has become a symbol of the Refuge System.

Introduction

Bald Knob National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) was established in 1993 to protect and provide feeding and resting areas for migrating waterfowl. Acquired as part of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, this refuge provides a winter home for large concentrations of a number of species of ducks and geese.



photo: USFWS



photo: Larry Richardson

Located south of the town of Bald Knob in White County, Arkansas, Bald Knob NWR encompasses approximately 15,000 acres of forested wetlands and croplands. Lying along the Little Red River and adjacent to the Henry Gray/Hurricane Lake State Wildlife Management Area this refuge is an important link in protecting wildlife and its habitat.

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 north of the Arctic Circle in Alaska to the subtropical waters of the Florida Keys and beyond to the Caribbean and South Pacific.

Habitat

Bounded on the south and east by the Little Red River and characterized by Overflow Creek which winds through its middle, Bald Knob NWR is a cross section of cypress-tupelo brakes, oxbow lakes, bottomland hardwoods and agricultural fields. This variety of habitats supports a tremendous array of plants and animals throughout the year.

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.



photo: USFWS

In order to re-link these fragmented forest and improve habitat, the refuge conducts an aggressive reforestation program. Many agricultural

fields on the refuge are being 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.

Agriculture

Agricultural lands that have not been replanted with bottomland hardwood species are still farmed to support wildlife. Through cooperative farming efforts with local farmers, the refuge is able to provide an excellent food source and habitat for wintering waterfowl. Farmers plant rice, milo, millet, and other crops. As part of the refuge cooperative farming agreement, the farmers leave 25% of the crops unharvested for wildlife and harvest and market the rest.

Wildlife

Due to its diversity of habitats Bald Knob NWR supports a tremendous array of wildlife species. Visitors may

see large mammals such as white-tailed deer, raccoons, bobcat, coyote, river otters and beaver year round or a wide range of smaller species such as reptiles and amphibians in the warmer months.



photo: Tom Smylie

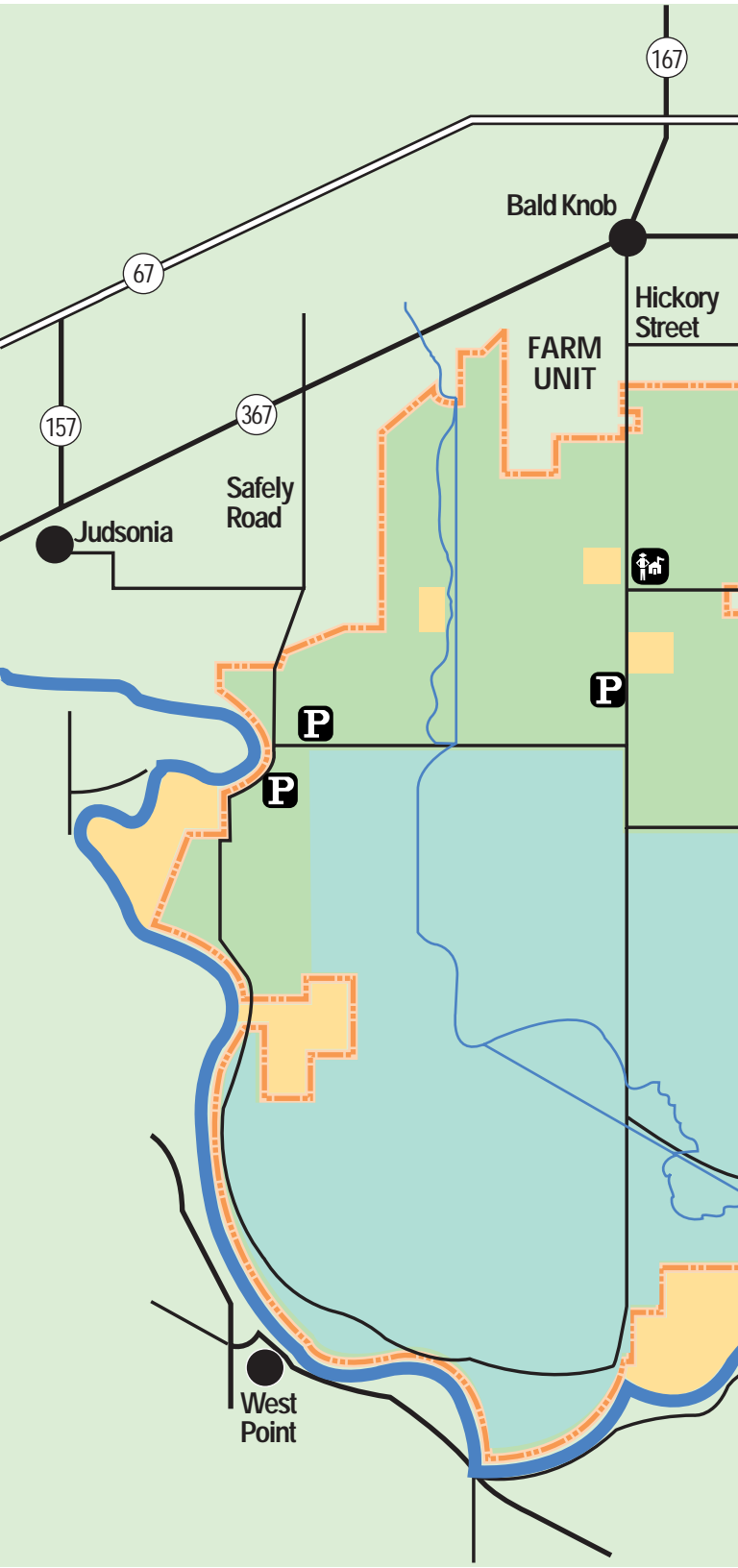


photo: Bruce Eilerts

Waterfowl and other bird life are abundant. Since the refuge was established to benefit waterfowl they are the most numerous type of bird species found at Bald Knob NWR. During the late fall and through winter large concentrations of blue, snow, Canada, and white fronted geese can be seen often feeding in the stubble left from farming. In addition, mallards, pintails, blue and green wing teal and wood ducks can



photo: USFWS



167

Bald Knob

Hickory Street

FARM UNIT

67

367

157

Safely Road

Judsonia












P

P

P

West Point

Bald Knob National Wildlife Refuge

-  Refuge boundary
-  Private property
-  Waterfowl sanctuary
-  Interstates
-  Paved roads
-  Unpaved roads
-  Trails
-  Refuge headquarters
-  Parking



Liberty
Valley
Road

Hurricane
Lake Road

Lone Star Road

MINGO CREEK UNIT



photo: S. Maslowski



be found swimming and feeding in the wetter areas. The refuge annually hosts one of the largest wintering pintail populations in Arkansas and serves as a staging area for pintails migrating to the coastal areas of west Louisiana and eastern Texas.

photo: Mike Boylan



Long-legged wading birds such as herons and egrets can be found stalking their prey in shallow waters. Songbirds such as prothonotary warblers, common yellowthroats and bluebirds

can be seen both year round and seasonally darting among the trees.

Endangered and Threatened Species

Bald Knob NWR is home to two species that fall into this category— bald eagles and peregrine falcons. Both of these species have recovered

significantly after being at perilously low populations. During the winter months, up to twenty bald eagles may be seen at a time perched high above the refuge. Eagles have attempted to nest on the refuge, but with no success. Peregrine falcons are also present during the winter, but only seen occasionally.

photo: Ron Singer





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, squirrel, rabbit, quail, and raccoon. The waterfowl sanctuary is closed to all public use November 15 - February 28.

Access

Access to the refuge is limited due to unimproved roads and few facilities have been developed. All-terrain vehicle (ATV) trails provide the only access to the Mingo Creek Unit of the refuge year round and to the Farm Unit from November 15 to February 28. These trails are also opened for foot traffic. All vehicles must stay on established roads and trails.



Hunting

The refuge is open to hunting for waterfowl, small game, and white-tailed deer. Hunting is permitted for small game and deer in designated areas during specific times. A permit is required. Contact the refuge headquarters for more information.

Fishing

The refuge is open for fishing although opportunities are limited. State seasons are in effect. Contact refuge headquarters for more information. Anglers find good sport fishing on the refuge with bass, catfish, crappie and bream making up the principle game fish.





Wildlife Observation/Photography
There are roads and trails open throughout the refuge, see the map for locations. Stay on the trails to avoid disturbing wildlife. Some areas of the refuge are closed, see map for more information.



Hiking
All ATV trails are open to foot traffic, please stay on the trails. Some areas of the refuge are closed during certain times of the year, see map for more information.



Fires
Fires are prohibited at all times.

Firearms
Firearms are prohibited except during hunting seasons, see hunt brochure for more information.



Camping
Camping is not allowed on the refuge.

Collecting
Disturbing, feeding or collecting wildlife or plants and searching for or removing any object of antiquity including arrowheads and pottery shards is prohibited.



Alcoholic Beverages
It is illegal to operate a motor vehicle or motorboat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Federal law also prohibits the use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting on national wildlife refuges.



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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
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