

Patuxent *Research Refuge*

Represented by the following Members of Congress:

Senator Paul S. Sarbanes (D)
Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D)
Rep. Benjamin L. Cardin (D-3rd)
Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-5th)

Contact

Brad Knudsen, Refuge Manager
Patuxent Research Refuge
12100 Beech Forest Road
Laurel, MD 20708
Phone: 301/497 5582
Fax: 301/497 5765
TDD: 301/497 5779
E-mail: brad_knudsen@fws.gov
<http://patuxent.fws.gov>

Purpose

Patuxent Research Refuge was established to provide opportunities for fish and wildlife research and to conserve animals, plants and their habitats.

Public Use Notes

- National Wildlife Visitor Center: trails, exhibits and programs; tram tours (fee); bookstore and art gallery; auditorium; conference center
- Visitor contact station (North Tract)
- Self-guided trails
- Youth Conservation Corps
- Hunting, fishing, environmental education, nature photography, interpretation, wildlife observation

Management Activities

- Creating and managing wetland habitats for waterbirds
- Managing meadows for native species through mowing and prescribed burns
- Partnering with utility companies to manage power line corridors to benefit wildlife
- Providing nest boxes
- Invasive species control
- Managing gypsy moth

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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<http://www.fws.gov>

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Highlights

The refuge is part of the largest green space in the Baltimore-Washington area, providing significant habitat for migratory neotropical songbirds and waterfowl.

The National Wildlife Visitor Center is a major tourist attraction.

At the U.S. Geological Survey's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, located on the refuge, biologists study endangered species, environmental contamination and other conservation and resource management topics.

The refuge provides habitat for bald eagles, a great blue heron rookery and several rare dragonfly species.

Issues

Former Department of Defense lands have unexploded ordnance.

Contaminants may be leaching from former landfills.

Development threatens neotropical bird habitat.



Great blue heron on nestbox

Steve Hillebrand/USFWS

A proposed high-speed commuter train route (MAGLEV) may impact habitat along the refuge's eastern boundary.

Overpopulation of white-tailed deer impacts refuge habitat.

An adjacent community landfill presents the potential for ground water leachate, visual impact and sedimentation.

Acquisition of several adjacent properties would enhance resource management potential and secure the refuge boundary.

Several major facilities are in a state of significant disrepair. For some facilities, repair cost exceeds replacement cost. Facilities include historic Snowden Hall and several laboratory and office buildings.

