

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Eufaula

National Wildlife Refuge



Established in 1964, Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge is located on both banks of the Chattahoochee River in southeast Alabama and southwest Georgia. Named after the city of Eufaula, the 11,184 acre refuge offers a variety of wetland and upland habitats for a diverse fauna. Prominent among the abundant wetlands is the impounded Lake Eufaula and several tributaries. The refuge is located about seven miles north of Eufaula.



This blue goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become a symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Introduction

Eufaula Refuge was established through community support and in cooperation with the Corps of Engineers to provide habitat for wintering waterfowl and other migratory and resident species. It provides habitat and protection for endangered and threatened species such as the bald eagle, wood stork, American alligator and the occasional peregrine falcon. The refuge landscape offers a diverse contrast to adjacent land uses. A mixture of wetlands, croplands, woodlands and grasslands creates a mosaic of wildlife-rich habitats.



Eufaula Refuge belongs to a system of over 500 refuges throughout the country, each providing a unique piece of puzzle securing the necessary habitats needed to protect plants and animals and providing outdoor recreational opportunities for people. Eufaula Refuge provides valuable winter habitat for migrating waterfowl. Another valuable role in the system of national refuges, Eufaula Refuge provides resting and nesting habitat for numerous neotropical migrant birds (song birds) that make their way to and from North, Central and South America.

*Cover: Wood ducks.
Photos: USFWS.*

Past to Present

Prior to settlers arriving, the Chattahoochee Valley was home to the Creek Indians. They hunted, fished and trapped along the old channels of the river, often settling along the shoreline in areas now inundated by the Walter F. George Reservoir. Evidences of this past history are still found throughout the area.

Settlers slowly cleared forests for agricultural purposes during the

1800s and well into the 1900s. Much of the cleared plantations were planted to short rotation pine after World War II as the timber business became a major industry in

the South. Gone are the large tracts of old growth hardwood and mixed hardwood/pine that once provided valuable habitat for many migrating songbirds.



Migratory Birds



Endangered Species



Wildlife











Eufaula Refuge lies on the eastern edge of the Mississippi Flyway, one of four recognized major migration corridors in the U.S. Many species of waterfowl, waterbirds, shorebirds, neotropical songbirds and birds of prey follow these loosely defined corridors as they migrate through, over-winter or nest in the Chattahoochee Valley and on Eufaula Refuge. Numerous species of waterfowl arrive in the fall and remain in the area into early spring. The spring and fall are busy times for neotropical migrant songbird visitors as they complete their long migration flights between North American and South America. Some of these species nest on the refuge and neighboring tracts of timber. Eufaula Refuge manages wetland habitats for several rookeries where great blue herons, little blue herons, great egrets, snowy egrets and anhingas nest. Eufaula Refuge also serves as the summer home to wood storks and a winter stop for sandhill cranes. The refuge bird list has almost 300 species documented.

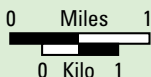
The Southern bald eagle is commonly sighted throughout most of the year. Several nests are located in the area and the future for this magnificent national symbol appears to be good. The refuge staff cooperates with the Alabama and Georgia conservation agencies and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in monitoring the progress of the bald eagle in the Chattahoochee Valley.

The wood stork historically nested in south Alabama, but there are no current records of active nestings. Efforts are under way to provide optimum habitat for the less than 100 birds that visit Eufaula Refuge June through September. Hopefully, these unusual "mud-feeders" will some day nest on the refuge.

Eufaula

National Wildlife Refuge

-  Closed to All Entry
-  Refuge Headquarters
-  Observation Platform
-  Boat Ramp
-  Wildlife Drive
-  Walking Trail
-  Refuge Boundary
-  Paved Road
-  Road and Levee
-  Unpaved Road





Alligators are commonly seen, especially on cool sunny days. Current population estimates exceed 1000 individuals; nesting does occur. Some “gators” may reach fourteen feet in length. Although technically not endangered, they are still protected under the Endangered Species Act. Observe these creatures from a distance, watch your pets and do not feed alligators.

Other Wildlife

The refuge habitat provides for diverse and sometimes abundant populations of other species. A visitors’ ability to observe wildlife depends on the time of year, time of day and duration of visit.



In addition to the species already mentioned, a visitor could expect to see deer, turkey, quail, dove, hawks, owls, rabbits, armadillos, squirrel, raccoon, opossum, otter, coyotes, bobcats and beaver. There are numerous other species of shorebirds, waterbirds, wading birds, songbirds and resident mammals. We cannot forget large populations of reptiles, amphibians, insects and fishes. Visitors should be aware of several species of poisonous snakes and the seasonal irritation of mosquitos, horse-flies and deer flies.

Managing Habitat

Habitat management generally falls into four major habitat types—wetlands, croplands, woodlands, and grasslands. Management practices include enhancement of natural events including prescribed fire and seasonal flooding of vegetation to provide wetlands for waterfowl and other species. Agricultural practices also provide added wildlife food and habitat.




These practices are carried out with wildlife goals in mind, never as an economic benefit. Cropland shares of corn, peanuts and small grains are left for waterfowl, resident species and other migrant birds. Woodlands are managed primarily for resident species

and migrant songbirds. Grasslands and early succession old fields are maintained as diversity for almost all refuge species.



Wetland management, other than the scheduled fluctuation of the reservoir by the Corps of Engineers, requires considerable effort to dewater impounded areas during spring and summer and to reflood them during late fall and winter. Intense control efforts for exotic plants and other undesirable woody species also requires special equipment and many man-hours.

	<p>Visitor Information</p> <p>The refuge office/visitor station is located eight miles north of Eufaula, east of U.S. Highway 431, just off Alabama Highway 165. It is adjacent to the State of Alabama's Lakepoint State Park. The office is staffed 7:30 am–4:00 pm (central time), Monday through Friday. The office offers viewing of mounted animals and has materials about Eufaula Refuge and the National Wildlife Refuge System. The refuge is open daily during daylight hours. For details on Refuge opportunities contact the refuge office.</p>	<p><i>Hiking</i></p> <p>Several walking trails and dikes are available for walking during daylight hours. Visitors interested in walking other areas are cautioned to check refuge hunting schedules for their safety.</p>	
<p><i>Headquarters</i></p>		<p><i>Swimming</i></p> <p>Swimming is not allowed in refuge waters.</p>	
<p><i>Wildlife Drive/Observation</i></p>	<p>The Eufaula Refuge is a year-round classroom for visitors. A seven-mile auto tour route, two observation platforms, a one-third mile walking trail and other areas of interest are available daily during daylight hours.</p>	<p><i>Camping</i></p> <p>Camping is not permitted on Eufaula Refuge, but is available at nearby Lakepoint State Park (Alabama) and Florence Marina State Park (Georgia).</p>	
<p><i>Environmental Education</i></p>		<p>Environmental education is a primary goal of Eufaula Refuge. Groups are welcome. On-site and off-site programs may be arranged by calling the refuge office.</p>	
<p><i>Hunting</i></p>	<p>Hunting of dove, squirrel, rabbit, waterfowl and deer is provided. Permits are required.</p>	<p><i>Fires</i></p> <p>Fires are prohibited.</p>	
<p><i>Fishing</i></p>	<p>Fishing is allowed year-round. State regulations apply. Check with refuge office for regulations.</p>	<p><i>Horseback Riding</i></p> <p>Permitted on graveled roads only in areas not closed to entry.</p>	
<p><i>Boating</i></p>	<p>Boating in the reservoir is regulated by the Corps of Engineers; operation in refuge impoundments is regulated by Eufaula Refuge. Jetski, water skiing and airboat activity is restricted. Boat ramps are available throughout the refuge vicinity.</p>	<p><i>Bicycles</i></p> <p>Non-motorized bicycles are permitted on graveled roads only. Hunters, fishermen and wildlife observers are encouraged to use bikes to gain access to remote areas.</p>	<p><i>Vehicles</i></p> <p>Only licensed vehicles and operators permitted. Access is limited to graveled roads only, some roads are closed seasonally. ATVs are prohibited.</p> <p><i>Firearms</i></p> <p>Firearms and other weapons are prohibited throughout the refuge except during authorized hunts.</p> <p><i>Other Refuge Regulations</i></p> <p>Portions of Eufaula Refuge are closed seasonally to public entry to provide waterfowl sanctuary. These areas are signed.</p> <p>Disturbing, feeding or collecting wildlife or plants is prohibited.</p> <p>Pets on a leash are permitted.</p> <p>Surface collecting or digging for archaeological, historical or Native American artifacts is prohibited.</p> <p>Possession of illegal drugs, controlled substances or alcohol is prohibited.</p>

Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge
509 Old Highway 165
Eufaula, AL 36027
334/687 4065 voice
334/687 5906 fax
FW4_RW_Eufaula@fws.gov

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD

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CELEBRATING A
CENTURY
of CONSERVATION

