

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Explore America's Trails

*Visit Your National
Wildlife Refuges*



Discover the National Wildlife Refuge System

Trails are key to discovering the beauty, history and natural heritage of the National Wildlife Refuge System, America's only network of lands dedicated primarily to wildlife conservation. We invite you to reconnect with our natural world as you hike or paddle on refuges located all over the country, from Alaska to Florida, Maine to California, on Caribbean and Pacific Islands, and in other places.

Learn about our country's first national wildlife refuge, a national historic landmark, while walking along the Centennial Trail at Pelican Island Refuge (FL).

Experience the wonders of nature on your national wildlife refuges. More than 491 refuges and wetland management districts are open to visitors. Many are located within an hour's drive from major cities. Visit, explore and have a *wild* experience—it's part of your heritage.



Takako Hashimoto, USFWS



Nancy Henke, USFWS



Jackie Jacobson, USFWS

The planned route of the North Country National Scenic Trail passes through the Audubon Refuge (ND) and Tamarac Refuge (MN) where hikers observe wildlife, and enjoy vistas of marshlands, uplands, and forests.



Melanie Hans, USFWS

Top: Boating and camping along the 223-mile-long Nowitna River, a National Wild and Scenic River and an Alaskan State water trail, takes adventurers through the heart of the 1.5 million acres of the Nowitna Refuge (AK).



Gary Zahn, USFWS

Right: See wintering flocks of snow geese from trails and wildlife viewing areas at refuges in Louisiana, New Mexico and California

Healthy Communities, Healthy Refuges

Each season brings its own splendors on refuges. Whether watching the spring bird migration or alligators sunning themselves, wildlife viewing opportunities are abundant along the Refuge System's 2,500 miles of land and water trails.

Refuges are closely linked to local communities as places to partake in family outings, learn about history, take a healthful walk to view nature up close, or perhaps just to seek solitude from today's hectic world. Each refuge is a special place and our extensive network of land and water trails will lead you to truly *wild* experiences.

Refuges Offer Excellent Wildlife Viewing Opportunities

National wildlife refuges protect the full range of America's natural communities and are premier places to experience wildlife. Listen to the calls of cranes, feel the ground shudder as bison stampede, or smell the spring and summer wildflowers.

Many refuges also protect nationally designated historic sites and trails and offer education and interpretive programs about our heritage and natural world.



USFWS

Above: The water route of The Trail of Tears National Historic Trail passes through White River Refuge (AR) and five other national wildlife refuges in Alabama, Tennessee and Arkansas.



Elizabeth Herland, USFWS

Right: The Appalachian National Scenic Trail traverses Wallkill River Refuge linking New Jersey and New York. Floating the river gives visitors the best view of the refuge.



Kevin S. Holcomb, USFWS

The National Wildlife Refuge System is Globally Recognized

Wildlife watchers and photographers from around the country and world come to see the large variety of birds, mammals and other wildlife on America's national wildlife refuges. Refuge trails offer visitors the chance to escape our modern world and experience new adventures.

Whether you are interested in bird watching or endangered species conservation, refuges are great places to slow down and reconnect with nature.

Over 3.5 miles of trails are available at the Balcones Canyonlands Refuge (TX). A short hike from the parking area takes you to the Shin Oak observation deck where you see the endangered black-capped vireos in their native habitat during the summer.



Charles Sexton, USFWS



John and Karen Hollingsworth, USFWS

The Tidelands National Recreation Trail at the Don Edwards Refuge (CA) takes you through the tidal marshlands of South San Francisco Bay.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
<http://www.fws.gov>

August 2004



For further information on refuges, go to the National Wildlife Refuge System web site at <http://refuges.fws.gov>.

For information on the National Trail System, go to the National Park Service web site at <http://www.nps.gov/nts/index.html>.



For information on the Federal Highway Administration's National Recreational Trails Program, visit the web site at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/index.htm>.