

Coldwater River

National Wildlife Refuge



photo: Fred Broerman



photo: Fred Broerman



photo: Fred Broerman

Stephen W. Gard, Project Leader
Coldwater River NWR
P.O. Box 1070
2776 Sunset Drive
Grenada, MS 38901
Phone: 662/226 8286
Fax: 662/226 8488
E-mail:
FW4RWNorthMSRefuges@fws.gov

Refuge Facts

- Established: 1991.
- Acres: 2,508 acres in Tallahatchie and Quitman counties, Mississippi.
- Refuge is unstaffed and managed by North Mississippi Refuges Complex in Grenada, MS.
- Location: Coldwater River National Wildlife Refuge is located 4.5 miles south of Crowder, Mississippi; much of the refuge is inaccessible during the winter months due to backwater flooding of the Tallahatchie River.

Natural History

- All refuge lands were agricultural lands upon acquisition. One thousand acres of the property was planted in hardwood seedlings in 2000.
- The refuge has a complex of 25 old catfish ponds (10 to 21 acres in size) which are now managed for waterfowl, shorebirds and wading birds.
- Very impressive numbers of shorebird occur from July through September. Large concentrations of migratory waterfowl use the catfish ponds and flooded portions of the Refuge in winter. Wading birds feed in shallow pools of the old catfish ponds during summer and large groups of waders congregate to roost in willow thickets at night.
- Two hundred and ninety acres of the refuge is managed in fallow fields for grassland birds and moist soil habitat for wintering waterfowl.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- Currently unstaffed; development is conducted by North Mississippi Refuges Complex.
- Presently closed to public use due to intensity of management efforts and small size.
- Current budget (FY 02) included in the North Mississippi Refuges Complex.

Refuge Objectives

- Provide habitat for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds and wadingbirds.
- Converting marginal agriculture land to hardwood forests.
- Provide fallow field habitat for wintering grassland birds.

Management Tools

- Pumping water, discing and drawing down water on the 25 old catfish ponds for wading birds and shorebirds in the summer.
- Bottomland hardwood forest management and reforestation.
- Partnerships.

Public Use Opportunities

Bird watching, nature photography and non-consumptive use is allowed on a limited basis through a Special Use Permit which can be obtained at the Complex office.

Calendar of Events

May: Migratory Bird Day.

October: National Wildlife Refuge Week.

Coldwater River National Wildlife Refuge

Questions and Answers

Is Coldwater River National Wildlife Refuge open to public use including waterfowl hunting?

No. The refuge is too small, has no access roads, and is intensively managed for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl. The large concentrations of waterfowl and shorebirds which use the refuge decline when frequently disturbed.

Will the Service condemn land to expand the size of the refuge?

No. While the Service has an ongoing acquisition program, all lands acquired have been and will continue to be on a willing seller basis.