

Lacassine

National Wildlife Refuge



photo: Chris Simon



photo: Paul Yakupczak



photo: Charlotte D. Parker



photo: USFWS

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Refuge Facts

- Established: 1937.
- Acres: 34,886 in units located in Cameron and Evangeline Parishes, Louisiana.
- Location: the refuge office is located at the end of Highway 3056. From Interstate 10, take exit 64 (Jennings) and travel south on Highway 26 to Highway 14 in Lake Arthur, go west on Highway 14 for 7 miles to Highway 3056, then south 4.5 miles.
- Responsible for a 3,345 acre wilderness area.
- Wintering populations of ducks and geese are among the largest in the national wildlife refuge system.
- Responsible for managing a 20,000-acre private lands mini-refuge program for migrating waterfowl in six parishes.
- Responsible for negotiating with oil and gas industry for mineral exploration/extraction.
- Responsible for establishing prairie restoration program.
- Responsible for exotic Chinese tallow tree control program.
- Responsible for wetland easements in Jefferson Davis Parish.

Natural History

- Over 500,000 ducks and 150,000 geese at peak populations during the winter months.
- A 16,000-acre freshwater pool is a primary attraction.
- Provides nesting and feeding areas for up to 40,000 marsh and water birds during the spring and summer months.
- Refuge is bisected by Lacassine Bayou and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

- Marsh/wetlands 30,700 acres; croplands 2,093 acres; open water 1,048 acres; forested wetlands 352 acres; shrub wetlands 348 acres; and prairie 345 acres.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- Six-person staff.
- 38,500 visitors annually.
- Current year budget (FY 06) \$676,000.

Refuge Objectives

- Protect and enhance refuge habitat for rare, endangered and threatened species.
- Provide food, water, and cover for migratory waterfowl, especially pintails.
- Provide habitat for other migrating and resident wildlife.
- Provide wildlife oriented recreation.
- Provide interpretive and environmental educational opportunities.

Management Tools

- Moist soil management.
- Cooperative farming.
- Coastal prairie restoration/management.
- Marsh restoration/management.
- Water level/water quality programs.
- Prescribed burning.
- Mechanical/chemical control of exotic and noxious plants.
- Alligator management with quota trapping program.
- Partnerships/challenge grants.
- Law enforcement.
- Education/interpretation.
- Research program.
- Volunteer/student intern program.

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Public Use Opportunities

- Fishing.
- Hunting.
- Wildlife observation.
- Environmental education.
- Hiking/bicycling trails.
- Photography.
- Wildlife auto drive.
- Observation towers.

Calendar of Events

January: youth waterfowl hunt.

March 15-October 15: refuge fishing season.

April: Southwest Louisiana Migration Sensation Birding Festival.

May: Migratory Bird Day.

June: National Fishing Week.

October: archery deer hunting, National Wildlife Refuge Week.

November-January: waterfowl hunting.

December: Christmas Bird Count.

Questions and Answers

When does the refuge fishing season open/close?

Open March 15 through October 15 every year.

What is the horsepower limitation?

25 HP in Lacassine Pool. No motors allowed in marsh and no HP restriction in open waterways outside of pool.

Does the refuge issue Golden Age Passports?

Yes.

Why do we allow oil and gas exploration on public land?

Some lands were purchased without mineral rights; therefore, the private mineral owners have the legal right to explore and drill for oil and gas.

What kinds of hunting/camping are permitted on the refuge?

Camping is not permitted on the refuge. Permits are available for waterfowl hunting during the state duck seasons and archery deer hunting is permitted during the month of October. Youth and Senior waterfowl hunts are available by applying for the lottery drawing.