

Lower Hatchie

National Wildlife Refuge



photo: USFWS



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Refuge Facts

- Established: 1980.
- Acres: 10,331.
- Located in Lauderdale and Tipton counties, TN.
- Location: The refuge headquarters is located 18 miles west of Highway 51 on Highway 87.

Natural History

- Refuge lies adjacent to the Mississippi River along the scenic Hatchie River.
- Concentrations of ducks, geese, raptors, shorebirds, wading birds and neo-tropical migrants.
- Refuge also administers the Tennessee Department of Conservation owned Sunk Lake.
- Habitat acreage:

Bottomland hardwood forest..	5,280
Cropland.....	1,278
Open water.....	75
Upland forest.....	922
Grassland	665
Marsh.....	887

Financial Impact of Refuge

- Two-person staff.
- 120,000 visitors annually.

Refuge Objectives

- Protect, enhance, and manage habitat for migratory birds and endangered species.
- Maintain and enhance bottomland hardwood forest.
- Provide compatible consumptive and non-consumptive public use opportunities.

Management Tools

- Water management for waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds.
- Cooperative farming.
- Mechanical/chemical control of noxious weeds.

- Silvicultural techniques for resident and migratory wildlife.
- Education/interpretation.
- Law enforcement.
- Cooperative partnerships.
- Sanctuary for waterfowl.
- Wood duck nest box program.

Public Use Opportunities

- Hunting, including youth hunts.
- Fishing year-round in Mississippi and Hatchie rivers and associated oxbows, and Champion Lake.
- Fishing seasonal at Sunk Lake, Teal, and Shoaf Ponds.
- Eight miles of gravel roads for refuge access.
- Logging trails for hiking/hunter access.
- Wildlife observation.
- Photography.

Calendar of Events

March-June: Crappie and bass fishing peak. Wildflowers are abundant. Northern snowmelt swells Mississippi River. Birds migrating north. Excellent wildlife viewing opportunities.

July-September: Catfishing still good. Habitat management programs busy. Heat, humidity, and bugs can be extreme.

September-December: Squirrel hunting begins. Other hunts follow through end of year. National Wildlife Refuge Week in October. Excellent wildlife viewing opportunities.

January-March: Small Mississippi river rises can inundate refuge. Hunting closes end of February. Wintering waterfowl use peaks.