

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Audubon

*National Wildlife
Refuge*





“Wild beasts and birds are by right not the property merely of the people who are alive today, but are the property of unknown generations, whose belongings we have no right to squander.”

Theodore Roosevelt

Welcome to Audubon National Wildlife Refuge



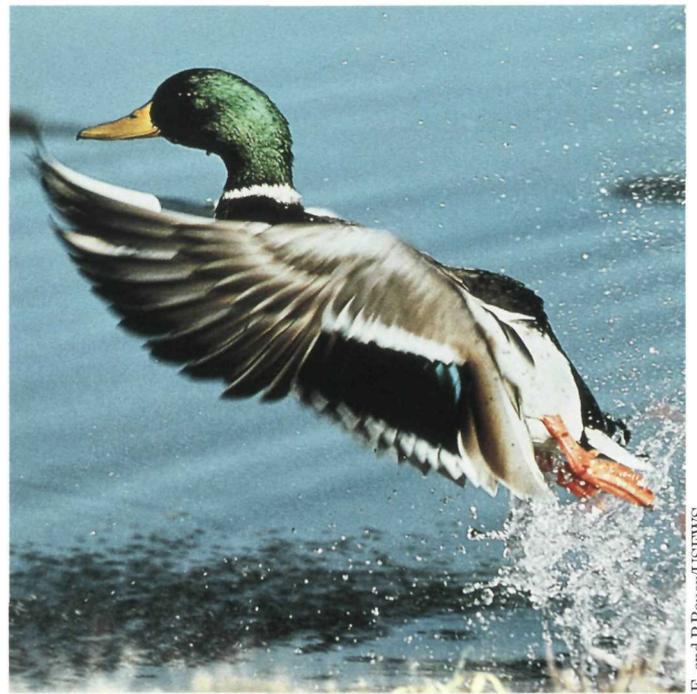
This blue goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Pasque flower (crocus)



Audubon National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is located in central North Dakota and is part of a landscape that is marked by numerous wetlands called potholes. These land depressions are what remained after glaciers melted from the area over 10,000 years ago. This landscape, commonly called the prairie pothole region, extends from North Dakota into Canada, Minnesota, western Iowa, South Dakota, and eastern Montana.

The Refuge encompasses 14,735 acres of native prairie, planted grasslands, and wetlands. These lands are managed to meet the needs of many species of wildlife. Audubon NWR is one of over 540 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System – a network of lands set aside and managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service specifically for wildlife. The Refuge System is a living heritage, conserving wildlife and habitat for people today and generations to come.



E. and P. Bauer/USFWS

History

Drake mallard (above)

On May 25, 1956, Snake Creek NWR was established after construction of Garrison Dam was completed across the Missouri River. This 2½-mile long dam created a huge reservoir named Lake Sakakawea, which is 368,000 acres in size. Snake Creek NWR replaced some of the important wildlife habitat that was lost when Lake Sakakawea was filled. In 1967, Snake Creek NWR was renamed Audubon NWR to honor John James Audubon, one of the great naturalists and wildlife painters of the 19th century. Audubon spent the summer of 1843 near this area collecting bird specimens and painting pictures of northern plains wildlife.

Refuge Purpose

Audubon NWR provides food, water, shelter, and space for a variety of wildlife species. Refuge managers focus their efforts on managing the land to meet the needs of waterfowl and other migratory birds, threatened and endangered species, and resident wildlife.



A Place for Wildlife

Sharp-tailed grouse (above)

The majestic flights of thousands of waterfowl, sandhill cranes, and shorebirds are visible on the Refuge during spring and fall migration. Endangered whooping cranes are often seen migrating in small groups or with sandhill cranes. Piping plovers, a threatened species, nest in the area each summer. Giant Canada geese, in addition to ducks such as mallards, gadwalls, blue-winged teal, northern pintails, and lesser scaup, are common nesters on the Refuge.

Other birds you may see include northern harriers, marbled godwits, upland sandpipers, western meadowlarks, bobolinks, and more than 200 other species.

Audubon NWR also provides habitat for wildlife that make the prairie their year-round home. White-tailed deer, coyote, red fox, sharp-tailed grouse, and gray partridge are some of the hardier species that are adapted to North Dakota's climate. The ring-necked pheasant is also a Refuge resident whose numbers often decline during severe winters.

Managing For Wildlife



© Craig Bihrie

White-tailed deer

Although Audubon NWR is managed primarily for waterfowl, resident wildlife species also benefit from the food and cover produced through habitat management techniques. Neighboring landowners plant crops on the Refuge, leaving a portion for wildlife. Livestock grazing and grassland haying help remove dead plant material to produce taller, thicker grass for improved bird nesting habitat. Another important management tool is prescribed burning. Burning helps control weeds, stimulate plant growth, and increase soil nutrients.

Water management is important for Refuge wildlife. Using pumps and siphons, water is moved from Lake Audubon to fill wetlands that would otherwise be dry in drought years. These wetlands provide habitat for waterfowl broods, shorebirds, and other water birds, as well as various mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and insects.

Wilson's phalarope



© Harold C. Hultberg

A Place for People

National wildlife refuges are wonderful places to see and learn more about wildlife. The following opportunities exist for Audubon NWR visitors:

- **Refuge Office and Visitor Center** - This is an ideal place to begin your visit. Displays and exhibits feature wetlands, native prairie, and wildlife that can be observed on the Refuge. Brochures are available to provide information on Refuge management, recreational activities, and wildlife. Refuge staff are available to answer questions to make your visit safe and enjoyable. The Refuge office and visitor center is located 3 miles north of Coleharbor, North Dakota, on U.S. Highway 83 and 1 mile east. Hours are from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays.
- **Interpretive Walking Trail** - A 1-mile, self-guided trail begins near the entrance of the auto tour route. The trail winds through grasslands and along wetlands, allowing visitors to observe many species of plants, birds, and other animals.
- **Auto Tour Route** - The 7½-mile route begins near the visitor center and winds along the scenic south shoreline of Lake Audubon. Highlights include views of the lake, prairie wetlands, grasslands, and a chance to observe many species of animals and plants. You are welcome to leave your vehicle and stroll through the prairie or along the wind-blown shoreline of Lake Audubon. An auto tour route brochure corresponds with numbered signs along the route.
- **Wildlife Observation** - Spring and fall migration are peak times to observe many species and concentrations of birds. Early mornings and evenings are best for viewing wildlife. Please see the wildlife list for information on species found on the Refuge.

Jackie Jacobson/USFWS



Releasing a banded Canada goose.

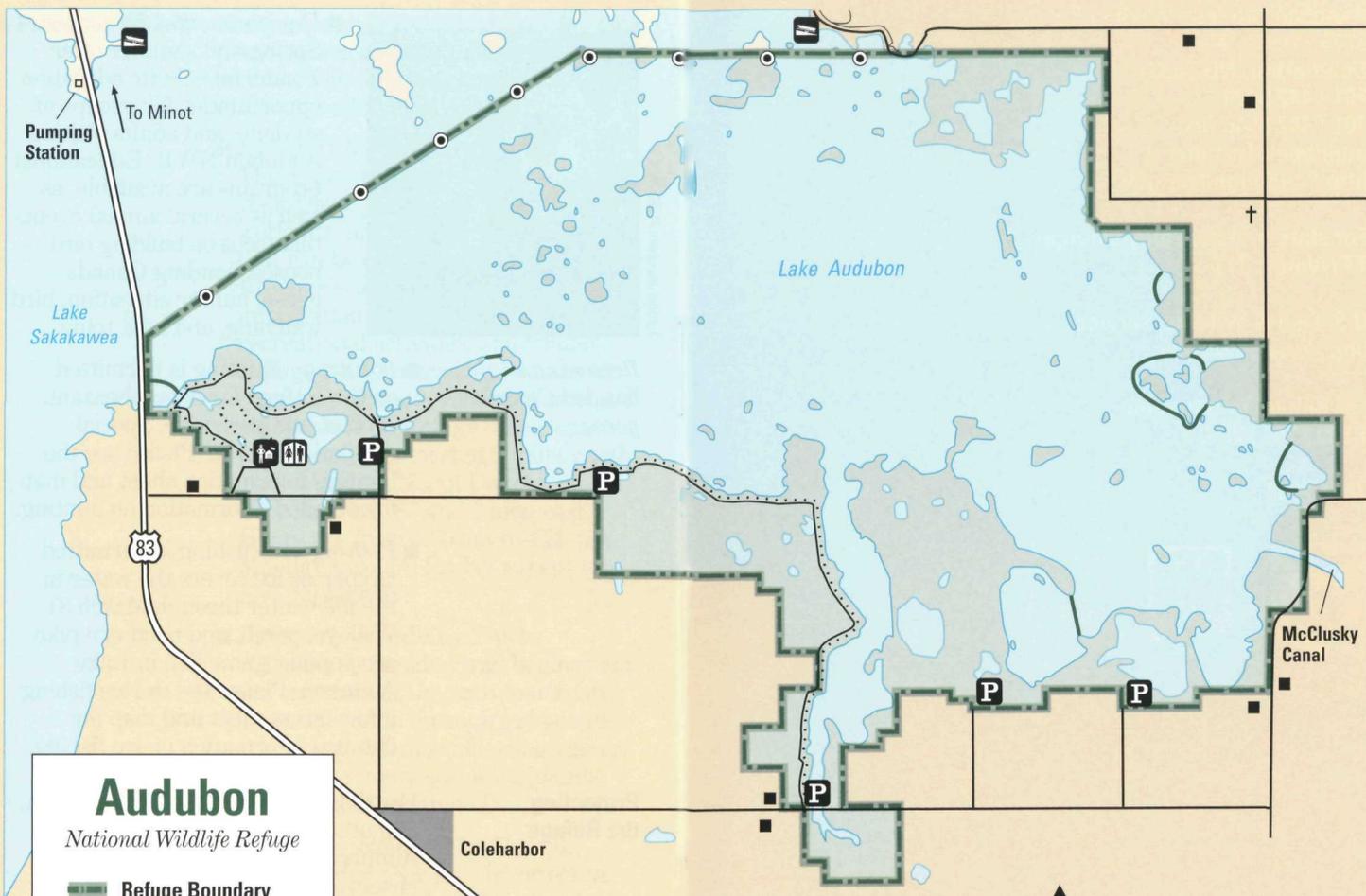
- **Environmental Education** - Spring and summer offer wonderful wildlife education opportunities for groups of students and adults visiting Audubon NWR. Educational programs are available, as well as several annual events that focus on building bird houses, banding Canada geese, hunter education, bird watching, and boat tours.

- **Hunting** - Hunting is permitted on the Refuge for deer, pheasant, grouse, and partridge. Special regulations apply. Please see the hunting information sheet and map for detailed information on hunting.
- **Fishing** - Ice fishing is permitted as soon as ice covers the water in the fall/winter through March 31. Walleye, perch, and northern pike are popular game fish in Lake Audubon. Please see the ice fishing information sheet and map for detailed information on ice fishing.

Protecting the Refuge

For the protection of wildlife, habitat, and other visitors, please make Audubon NWR a better place by observing the following regulations:

- All plants, animals, and artifacts are protected and should not be disturbed.
- Vehicles must stay on designated roads.
- Overnight camping and fires are not allowed.
- Pets must be leashed unless they are assisting an upland bird hunter during the permitted season.
- No boating, canoeing, swimming, or open-water fishing is allowed.
- Firearms are prohibited except during appropriate hunting seasons.



Audubon

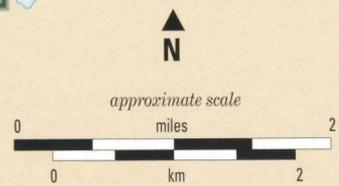
National Wildlife Refuge

- Refuge Boundary
- Boundary Buoy
- Dikes
- Auto Tour Route
- Walking Trail
- Road
- Refuge Office & Visitor Center
- Visitor Parking Area
- Rest Rooms
- Boat Ramp
- Farm Buildings



Coleharbor

To Bismarck



Accessibility Information

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of physical or mental ability. Dial 7-1-1 for a free connection to the state transfer relay service for TTY and voice calls to and from the speech and hearing impaired. For more information or to address accessibility needs, please contact the Refuge staff at 701 / 442 5474, or the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Coleharbor, ND 58531
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audubon@fws.gov
<http://audubon.fws.gov>

For state transfer relay service
TTY/Voice: 711

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

For Refuge Information
1 800 / 344 WILD

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CELEBRATING A
CENTURY
of CONSERVATION

Audubon

National Wildlife Refuge

