

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Audubon

*National Wildlife
Refuge*



“A true conservationist is a man who knows that the world is not given by his fathers, but borrowed from his children.”

*– John James Audubon,
19th century naturalist
and wildlife artist*

**Welcome to
Audubon National
Wildlife Refuge**



*This blue goose,
designed by J.N.
“Ding” Darling,
is the symbol
of the National
Wildlife Refuge
System.*

Audubon National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is one of over 550 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.

Located in central North Dakota, Audubon NWR encompasses 14,735 acres of native prairie, planted grasslands, and wetlands. The Refuge lies within the heart of the Prairie Pothole Region, which is named for its many small wetlands that resemble potholes. These wetlands and surrounding grasslands provide food, shelter, and nesting sites for waterfowl and other birds.

Known as the “Duck Factory” of North America, the Prairie Pothole Region produces more than half of the continent’s waterfowl. For hundreds of other species of migratory birds, it also provides the most productive breeding habitat on the continent. This unique Region includes portions of the Dakotas, Montana, Minnesota, Iowa, and Canada.



USFWS

*Prairie wetlands
and grasslands
in the Prairie
Pothole Region*

History

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.



Blue-winged teal

A Place for Wildlife

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.



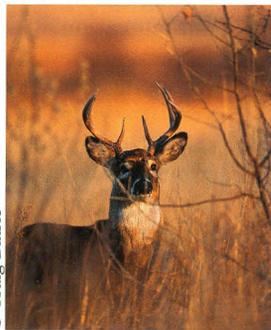
Jackie Jacobson / USFWS

Concentration of migrating ducks

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



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. Livestock grazing and haying of grasslands help remove dead plant material to produce taller, thicker grass for improved bird nesting habitat. Another important management tool is prescribed burning, which helps to control weeds, stimulate plant growth, and increase soil nutrients.

Water management is important for many species of 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.



Sharp-tailed grouse

A Place for People

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

Office and Visitor Center



Brian Rotert / USFWS

The visitor center is fully accessible and features exhibits on prairie wetland and grassland habitat, migratory birds, night life of the Refuge, John James Audubon, and Refuge history. Visitors may enhance their visit by purchasing wildlife-related

educational materials and items in the Prairie Pond Store. The visitor center is located 3 miles north of Coleharbor, North Dakota, on U.S. Highway 83 and 1 mile east of the highway. It is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm year-round, except Federal holidays. The visitor center is also open on Saturdays and Sundays from 10:00 am to 4:30 pm during June, July, and August.

Prairie Nature Trail

A 1-mile, self-guided nature trail begins on the north side of the visitor center. This gravel trail winds through grasslands and along wetlands, allowing visitors to observe many species of native grasses and wildflowers, birds, and other animals. Early mornings and evenings are best for viewing wildlife. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on the nature trail.

South Shore Auto Tour Route

An 8-mile gravel auto tour 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 opportunities to observe many species of birds, mammals, and

plants. Spring and fall migration are peak times to observe large concentrations of birds on Lake Audubon and in adjacent wetlands.

Visitors are welcome to leave their vehicle and stroll through the prairie or along the wind-blown shoreline of Lake Audubon. An auto tour route brochure interprets signs along the way.

Wildlife Observation and Photography Blind

Enjoy peaceful moments observing or photographing waterfowl and shorebirds on a quiet bay of Lake Audubon. A westerly view from the blind offers glimpses of beautiful sunsets over Lake Audubon.

Hunting

The Refuge is open to hunting for deer, pheasant, grouse, and partridge. Please see the Hunting and Ice Fishing brochure for more information and regulations.

Ice Fishing

Walleye, perch, and northern pike are popular game fish in Lake Audubon. Ice fishing is permitted while ice covers the water. There is no open-water fishing on the Refuge portion of Lake Audubon. Please see the Hunting and Ice Fishing brochure for more information and regulations.



Wilson's phalarope

Protecting the Refuge



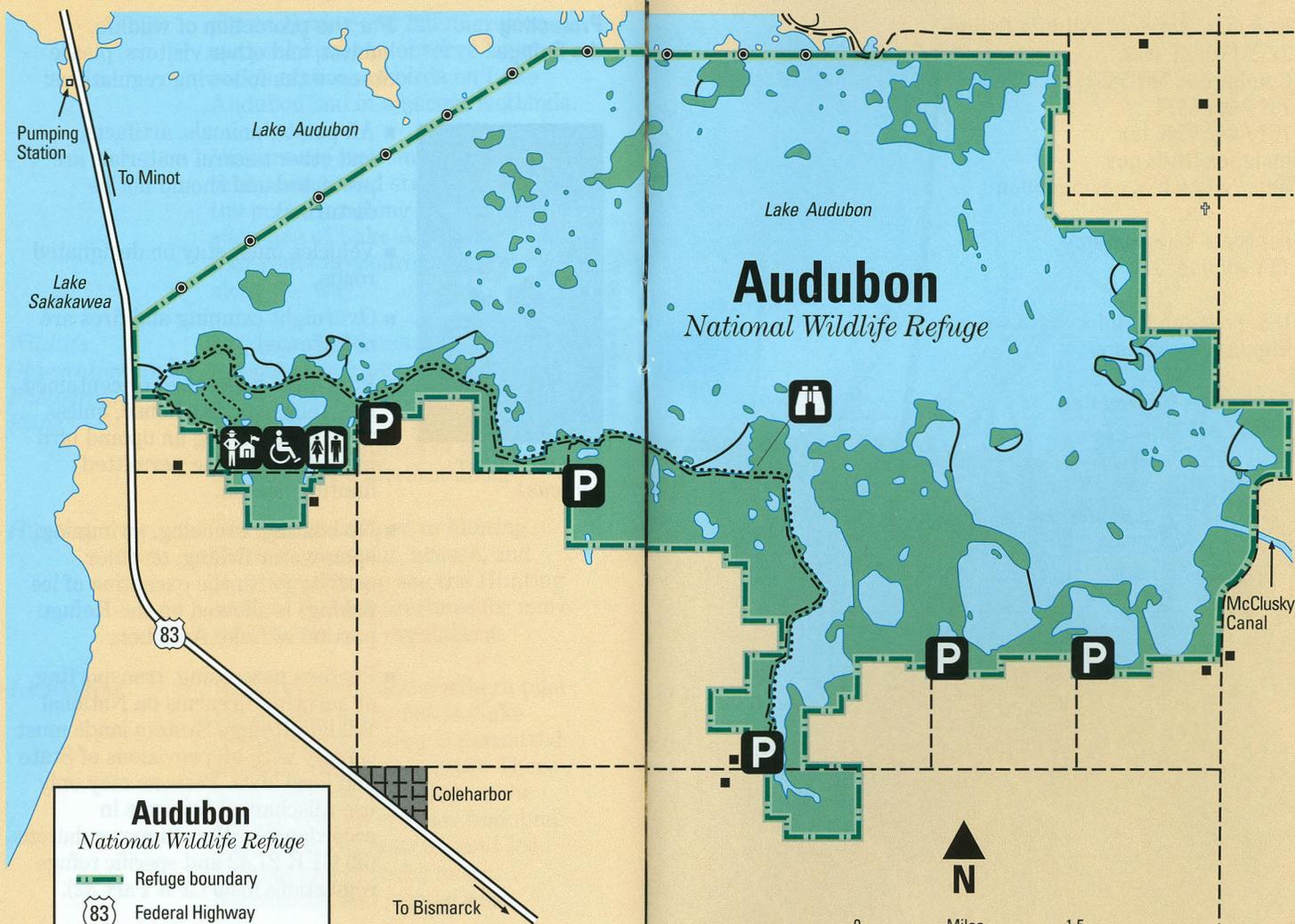
Pasque flower (crocus)

For the protection of wildlife, habitat, and other visitors, please observe the following regulations:

- All plants, animals, artifacts, and other natural materials are protected and should not be disturbed.
- Vehicles must stay on designated roads.
- Overnight camping and fires are not allowed.
- Pets must be leashed or contained in a vehicle or fish house, unless they are assisting an upland bird hunter during the permitted hunting season.
- No boating, canoeing, swimming, open-water fishing, or other activity (with the exception of ice fishing) is allowed on the Refuge portion of Lake Audubon.
- Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuge System lands must comply with all provisions of State and local laws. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations (50 CFR 27.42 and specific refuge regulations in 59 CFR Part 32).

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 711 for a free connection to the State 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, DC 20240.



Audubon National Wildlife Refuge

— Refuge boundary

83 Federal Highway

● Boundary buoy

- - - Gravel road

⋯ Auto tour route

⋯ Prairie nature trail

■ Farm buildings

— Dikes

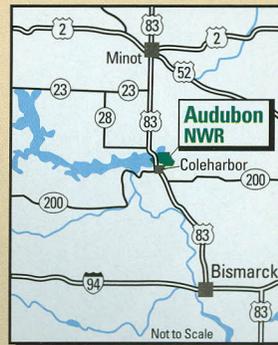
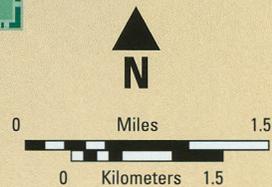
🏠 Office and visitor center

🔭 Wildlife observation and photography blind

♿ Linked symbols designate accessible features

🚻 Restrooms

P Visitor parking area



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audubon@fws.gov
<http://www.fws.gov/audubon>

For State relay service
TTY / Voice: 711

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

For Refuge Information
1 800 / 344 WILD

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