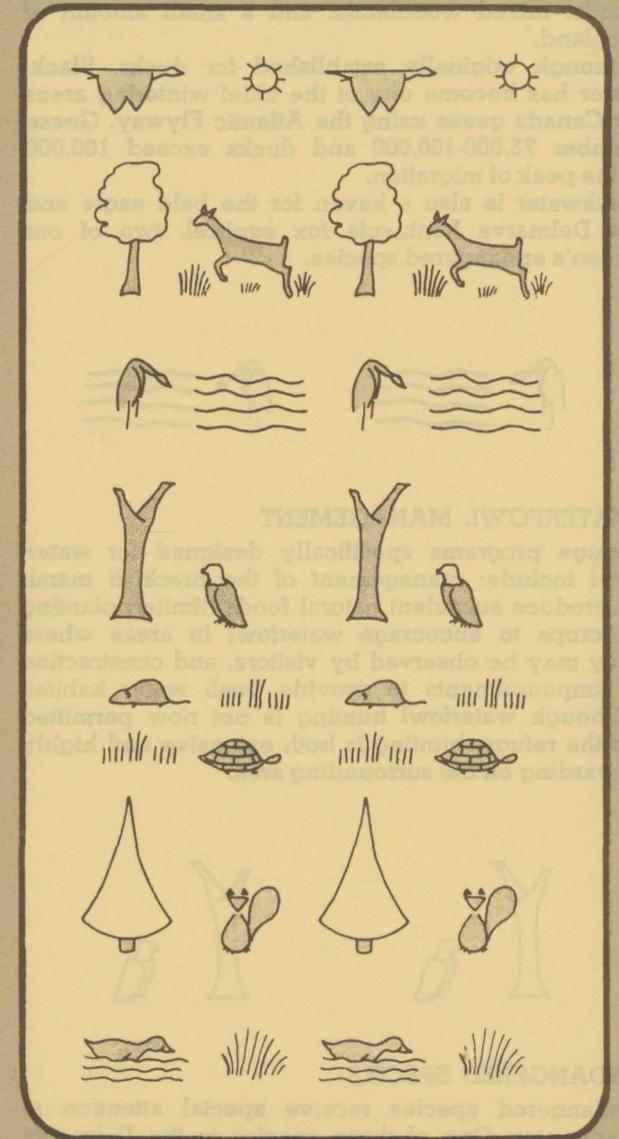
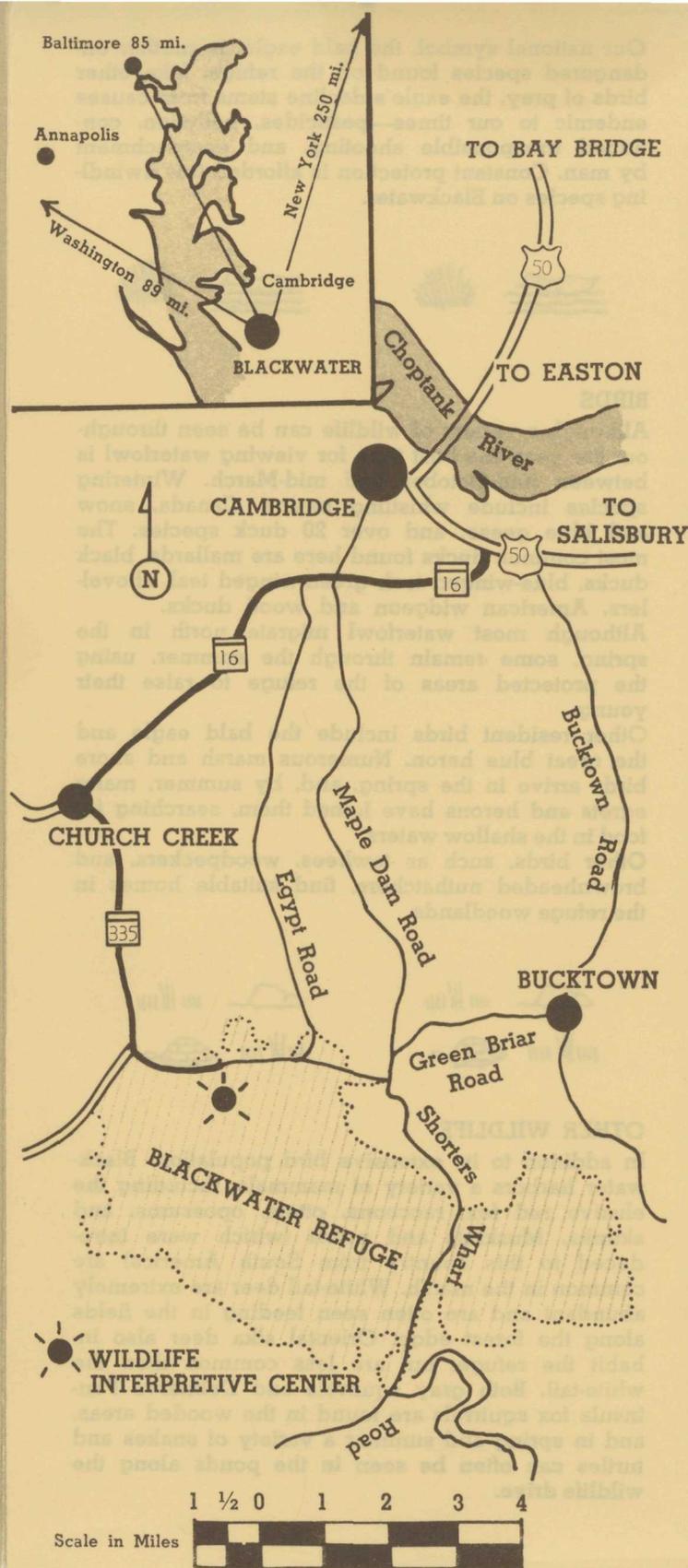


BLACKWATER



NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

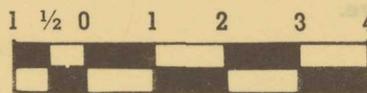


As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources."

The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.



Scale in Miles

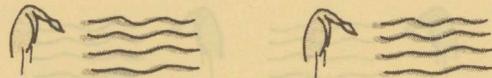




Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, located 12 miles south of Cambridge, Maryland, was established in 1932 as a refuge for migratory waterfowl. Most of its 11,216 acres is composed of rich, tidal marsh. Other habitat types include fresh water ponds, mixed woodlands, and a small amount of cropland.

Although originally established for ducks, Blackwater has become one of the chief wintering areas for Canada geese using the Atlantic Flyway. Geese number 75,000-100,000 and ducks exceed 100,000 at the peak of migration.

Blackwater is also a haven for the bald eagle and the Delmarva Peninsula fox squirrel, two of our nation's endangered species.



WATERFOWL MANAGEMENT

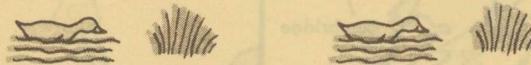
Refuge programs specifically designed for waterfowl include: management of the brackish marsh to produce succulent natural foods, limited planting of crops to encourage waterfowl in areas where they may be observed by visitors, and construction of impoundments to provide fresh water habitat. Although waterfowl hunting is not now permitted on the refuge, hunting is both extensive and highly rewarding on the surrounding area.



ENDANGERED SPECIES

Endangered species receive special attention at Blackwater. One of these species is the Delmarva Peninsula fox squirrel. Once native to most of the Eastern Shore, this large, light-gray squirrel now exists in only a few Maryland counties. The loss of suitable woodlands (due primarily to the demands of a growing society) is a major factor in its decline. Forest management programs at Blackwater are oriented toward the perpetuation of this handsome squirrel.

Our national symbol, the bald eagle, is another endangered species found on the refuge. Like other birds of prey, the eagle's decline stems from causes endemic to our times—pesticides, pollution, continued irresponsible shooting, and encroachment by man. Constant protection is afforded this dwindling species on Blackwater.



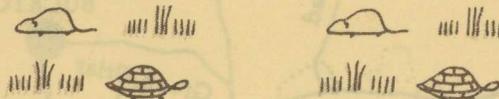
BIRDS

Although a variety of wildlife can be seen throughout the year, the best time for viewing waterfowl is between mid-October and mid-March. Wintering species include whistling swans, Canada, snow and blue geese, and over 20 duck species. The most common ducks found here are mallards, black ducks, blue-winged teal, green-winged teal, shovelers, American widgeon and wood ducks.

Although most waterfowl migrate north in the spring, some remain through the summer, using the protected areas of the refuge to raise their young.

Other resident birds include the bald eagle and the great blue heron. Numerous marsh and shore birds arrive in the spring, and, by summer, many egrets and herons have joined them, searching for food in the shallow waters.

Other birds, such as towhees, woodpeckers, and brownheaded nuthatchers, find suitable homes in the refuge woodlands.



OTHER WILDLIFE

In addition to its extensive bird population, Blackwater harbors a variety of mammals, including the elusive red fox, raccoons, otters, opossums, and skunks. Muskrats and nutria (which were introduced to this country from South America) are common in the marsh. White-tail deer are extremely abundant and are often seen feeding in the fields along the forest edge. Oriental sika deer also inhabit the refuge, but are less common than the white-tail. Both gray squirrels and Delmarva Peninsula fox squirrels are found in the wooded areas, and in spring and summer a variety of snakes and turtles can often be seen in the ponds along the wildlife drive.



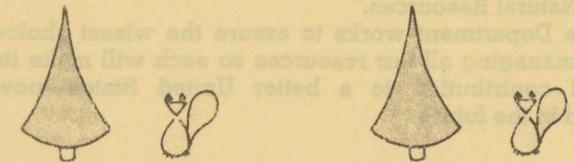
RECREATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Wildlife Interpretive Center—exhibits and auditorium for special programs

Scenic Wildlife Drive—2½ miles along fresh water ponds, woods, fields and marsh

Observation Tower—overlooks Blackwater River and its marshlands

Woodland Walking Trails—ideal for bird watching, nature study or relaxation located along the wildlife drive and at the picnic area



Hours—The public use areas of the refuge are open daily from dawn to dusk, except for the Wildlife Interpretive Center, which closes at 4:30 p.m. (and Christmas Day)

Movies, slide programs, and lectures can be arranged for groups with advance notice

For more information, contact:

Refuge Manager
Blackwater N.W.R.
Rt. 1, Box 121
Cambridge, Maryland 21613
Phone A.C. 301, 228-2677

We hope that your visit to Blackwater is an enjoyable one.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

RL 53536001

October 1973