

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Detroit River

*International
Wildlife Refuge*





“I love nature because there is so much to do. For instance, you can cloud watch or bird watch.”

6th grade student from Bunche Academy, Detroit Public Schools Community District.



*Above: Fox squirrel. Mike Grosso/USFWS Volunteer
Right: Common tern. Jerry Jourdan/USFWS Volunteer.
Middle: Students. USFWS
Bottom: Monarch butterfly. Nancy Gilliland/USFWS Volunteer.*



*Enjoy
Nature
where
you are!*

Tandem/USFWS

Welcome to your Refuge



House wren.

Jerry Jourdan/USFWS
Volunteer



*Local citizens after
successfully protecting
Humbug Marsh.* USFWS



*School students discuss
different ways they connect
to nature.* USFWS



Refuge visitors.

Tandem/USFWS

“Save Humbug Marsh!” That was the message developers received from 1,000 rain-soaked citizens who converged in a high school in the down river community of Gibraltar, Michigan in September, 1998. The citizens gathered to oppose a development that would have destroyed the last remaining mile of natural shoreline on the U.S. side of the Detroit River. It would fill Humbug Marsh and convert more than 400 acres of coastal wetlands, oak-hickory forest, and vernal pools into condominiums, businesses, a golf course, and a marina.

The citizens saved the marsh. This success story stands as a shining example of how a group of concerned citizens has the power to make positive changes in their community.

The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge is the only international wildlife refuge in North America. The Humbug Marsh unit is only one of the many areas that make up the refuge. The refuge includes islands, coastal wetlands, marshes, shoals, and waterfront lands along 48 miles of Detroit River and Western Lake Erie shorelines.

From marsh to old-growth forest you will find a spot on the refuge that makes you feel at home. Make the refuge a special place you can visit throughout the year and watch how the view changes.

Enjoy your time in Nature

Practice being a Naturalist



Eastern chipmunk

Jerry Jourdan/USFWS
Volunteer

Looking for some advice on how to better your naturalist skills? These guidelines below were developed by students at Detroit Public Schools Community District Ralph J. Bunche Academy in Detroit.

Be Observant: Use tools when possible to help you observe nature. Binoculars allow you to get an up close look at wildlife without disturbing them. Check out a pair at the visitor center front desk.



Be Prepared: It's not just for Boy Scouts. If you really want to enjoy your time in nature make sure you are comfortable. Dress for the weather and bring water to drink.



Be Patient and Respectful: Unlike a zoo, the animals found at a wildlife refuge can come and go as they please, so be patient! Visit when you have time to sit and wait a little bit, keeping in mind that wildlife usually don't like loud noises. Other visitors will appreciate your consideration as you lead by example.



Be in the Moment: Leave your phone at home or on silent in your pocket. You will be amazed at what you see when you are fully aware of your natural surroundings.

Stay Full of Wonder: Look at nature with fresh eyes and an open mind.



All photos unless otherwise listed.
Tandem/USFWS



Least weasel.
Jake Bonello/USFWS



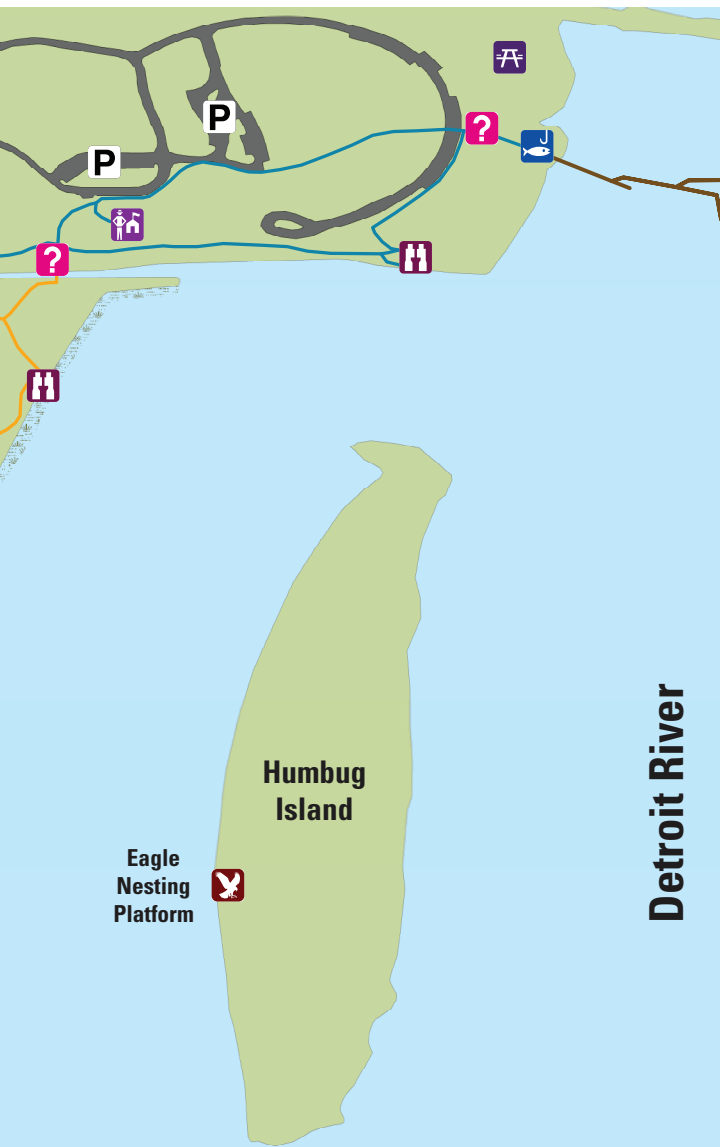
West Jefferson Avenue

Vreeland Road

Monguagon Delta

Old Growth Forest





Detroit River

Humbug Island

Eagle Nesting Platform



Legend

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
|  Education Shelter |  Fishing Pier |  General Trails |
|  Observation Deck |  Visitor Center |  Orange Trail |
|  Refuge Information |  Picnic Area |  Green Trail |
|  Parking Lot |  Roads and Parking | |

See yourself in nature all year round!



White-tailed deer.
Mike Grosso/USFWS
Volunteer

Each day of the year offers an opportunity to connect with nature.

Winter

The Detroit River in winter is a stopover spot for waterfowl that pass through the area when temperatures are frigid.

Fun Fact: On average more than 300,000 diving ducks stop over each year to rest and feed on beds of wild celery in the lower Detroit River. Can you find any?

Spring

The protected habitats of the refuge are safe spots for birds migrating north in the spring to rest, eat, and find mates on their ways to their breeding grounds.

Birds aren't the only ones who can enjoy a meal at the refuge. You can pack up a meal and bring your family and friends to the refuge for a picnic. After you eat, use that energy to take a walk and explore the trails.

Fun Fact: Some birds travel from as far as South America and end up in the Arctic. How far did you travel today to visit the refuge?



Red-winged blackbird.
Jake Bonello/USFWS



Tandem/USFWS

Summer

Walk along the riverbank and listen for a “plunk!” as a turtle slides off a log into the water. They sun themselves on logs and slip away when they sense danger. If you’re really quiet you can sneak up on a turtle and watch them as they bask in the warmth.



Turtles. USFWS

Nothing says summer like sitting by the water with a fishing pole in your hands. Even if you’ve never fished before, we encourage you to head out to our fishing pier to give it a try. Don’t have a pole? Just stop by our visitor center front desk to borrow one.

Fun Fact: Wetlands and shoals on the refuge serve as critical spawning and nursery grounds for fish. Can you imagine what a nursery with baby fish might look like?

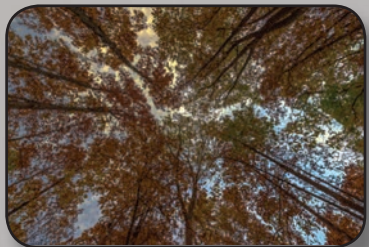


Fishing for walleye.
Stacy Cash

Autumn

The leaves are changing color before they drop to the ground in preparation for winter. The refuge is home to many types of trees, some of which have the most brilliant colored leaves in the fall. Check out a tree ID book from the visitor center to take with you on the trails.

Fun Fact: Trees that lose all of their leaves during part of the year are called deciduous trees.



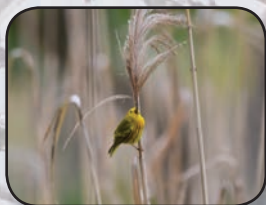
Autumn leaves.
Michael Sisinger/USFWS Volunteer



Snowy marsh.
Mike Grosso/USFWS Volunteer

*Naturalist Tip for
a Winter visit*

Go for walk in the snowy woods or give snowshoeing a try. This is a great way to see winter wildlife. Look for signs in the snow that animals have left behind.



Yellow warbler.
Jake Bonello/USFWS

*Naturalist Tip for
a Spring visit*

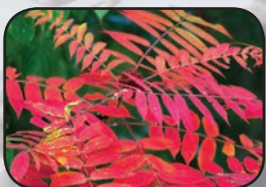
Sight isn't the only sense you can use to find birds. Open your ears and listen for their calls and songs. Especially in spring many birds are singing to attract a mate. Listen for the call of this yellow warbler, it seems to be saying "Sweet sweet sweet I'm so sweet!"



Monarch butterfly.
Nancy Gilliland/USFWS

*Naturalist Tip for
a Summer visit*

Late summer is a great time to find evidence of monarch butterfly life! Identify a milkweed plant and look for monarch butterfly caterpillars and their frass, a.k.a. scat.



Sumac.
Jerry Jourdan/USFWS

*Naturalist Tip for
a Fall visit*

Keep a reminder of your time at the refuge by making a leaf rubbing. Place a leaf under a plain piece of paper and rub a crayon or pencil across the top. How many different leaves can you identify?

Did your visit inspire you to get involved?

Do you like breaking a sweat and getting dirty?

Join the Stewardship Crew

Do you enjoy talking to people?

Become a front desk volunteer

Are you passionate about connecting children to nature?

Assist in environmental education

Is gardening your hobby?

Help us make our refuge gardens beautiful



Environmental education volunteer:
USFWS

There are many ways you can get involved at the refuge!

- Special Event / Community Outreach
- Trail maintenance
- Marketing Assistance
- Front Desk
- Fishing pier maintenance
- Speakers Bureau
- HawkWatch
- Photographer

Learn how you can volunteer!

www.fws.gov/refuge/Detroit_River/what_we_do/get_involved.html



Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge
5437 West Jefferson Avenue
Trenton, Michigan 48183
734/365-0219

www.fws.gov/refuge/detroit_river/
Facebook: DetroitRiverIWR

www.fws.gov/

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD

Osprey adult with osprey young.

Mike Grosso/USFWS Volunteer

February 2020

