

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Erie

*National Wildlife
Refuge*





Erie National Wildlife Refuge, one of over 500 national wildlife refuges in the United States, is a haven for migratory birds.

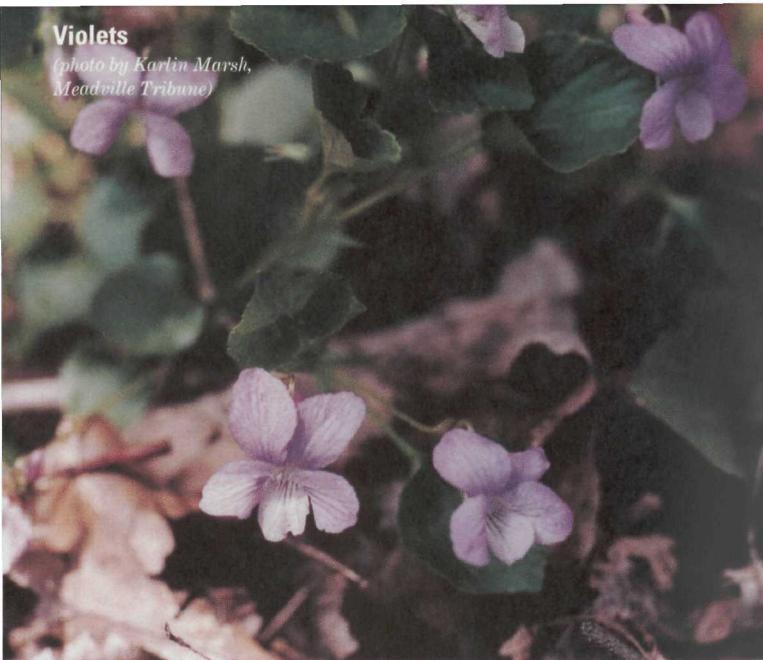
The refuge is not on the shores of Lake Erie, but lies in Crawford County, 35 miles south of the city of Erie and Lake Erie. The refuge is a namesake of the Erie Indians, a Native American tribe that resided in the area.

Painted trillium

(photo by Karlin Marsh, Meadville Tribune)

Violets

(photo by Karlin Marsh,
Meadville Tribune)



Welcome

Erie Refuge consists of two separate land divisions. Sugar Lake Division, the more intensely managed portion, lies 10 miles east of Meadville on the outskirts of Guys Mills village. It contains 5,206 acres lying in a narrow valley which includes Woodcock Creek draining to the north and Lake Creek draining to the south. Beaver ponds, pools, and marshland along the creeks are bounded by forested slopes interspersed with croplands, grasslands, and wet meadows.

The Seneca Division is about 10 miles north of Sugar Lake Division or four miles southeast of Cambridge Springs. It consists of 3,571 acres situated in a forested valley where Muddy Creek and Dead Creek provide most of the wetland habitat.

Management

Erie Refuge was established in 1959. The land was purchased with funds provided from the sale of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps (also known as Duck Stamps). A management objective is to provide waterfowl and other migratory birds with nesting, feeding, brooding, and resting habitat. Other objectives are to provide habitat to support a diversity of other wildlife species and to enhance opportunities for wildlife-oriented public recreation and environmental education. Over 2,500 acres of wetlands, including beaver floodings, marshes, swamps, man-made impoundments, creeks and wet meadows, provide desirable waterfowl habitat. Water control structures on refuge impoundments permit the manipulation of water levels to encourage the growth of waterfowl food and cover plants such as smartweeds and bulrushes.

Grasslands are being developed near wetlands to provide dense nesting cover for ground-nesting waterfowl and other birds. Improved nesting cover provides more natural protection from predators and can be just as important to waterfowl production as quality marsh habitat.

A cooperative farming program permits farmers to cultivate crops on refuge lands. Farmers agree to raise certain crops such as oats, grass, clover and corn. In return for using the land, farmers leave the refuge a share of the crops. These refuge shares are usually left in the field as supplemental food for wildlife.



Wildlife

Birds

Waterfowl migrations occur from March to early April and again from September to November. The peak migrating waterfowl population on any given day has been 2,500 ducks and 4,500 Canada geese. Bird enthusiasts may readily see Canada geese, wood ducks, mallards, blue-winged teal, and hooded mergansers. Some less numerous migrants are pintail, green-winged teal, American wigeon, scaup, bufflehead, golden-eye, ring-necked ducks, and black ducks.

Wood ducks are the most prolific waterfowl nesters on the refuge. Their annual production is significantly increased by the placement of nesting boxes on refuge wetlands. Hooded mergansers, mallards, blue-winged teal and Canada geese are other common resident nesting waterfowl.

Bald eagles nest on the refuge and osprey visit in search of food. Red-tailed hawks and American kestrels are common raptors that nest here.

During the summer shorebirds such as sandpipers and yellowlegs appear in small flocks, feeding on the mudflats. The most noticeable marsh birds are great blue herons, which nest in rookeries on the refuge.

The diverse habitat types found on Erie Refuge attract 237 species of birds. The refuge provides nesting habitat for 113 bird species. A detailed refuge bird brochure may be obtained from the refuge office.

Mammals

Some 47 species of mammals are present on the refuge. The most commonly seen are white-tailed deer, beaver, muskrat and woodchucks.

Great blue heron

(photo by Lee Kuhn,
Cornell Lab of Ornithology)



Hooded Merganser

(photo by Lang Elliot,
Cornell Lab of Ornithology)



Fish

Common warm water fish occurring in refuge waters include black crappie, yellow perch, largemouth bass, bluegills, sunfish and bullheads. Common cold water species include trout and white suckers, found in Woodcock Creek.

Amphibians/ Reptiles

The refuge is home to 37 species of amphibians and reptiles.

**Visitor
Opportunities**
Visitor Center

Visitors can view displays, obtain information brochures and talk with personnel at the refuge headquarters/visitor center building Monday through Friday, 8:00 am. til 4:30 pm. Headquarters is located off Route 198, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile east of Guys Mills and 10 miles east of Meadville.

*Outdoor
Facilities*

Facilities are open daily, $\frac{1}{2}$ hour before sunrise to sunset, unless otherwise posted.

Beaver Run Trail

Two half-mile long paths (a loop and a spur) wind through natural surroundings where visitors can observe a variety of plant and animal life. Trail is located on Hanks Road.

*Tsuga Nature
Trail*

This two-loop trail follows a 1.2 or 1.6 mile route through a variety of habitats. A boardwalk traverses a beaver pond. During winter, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are permitted. Trail is located near headquarters/visitor center.

Deer Run Trail

Animal tracks in the snow or chips beneath a tree where a woodpecker is working can be seen along this three-mile trail which is open during winter for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Trail is located on Boland Road.

*Muddy Creek
Holly Trail*

Winterberry holly, also called black alder, with bright red berries can be seen along the one-mile trail. Trail is located on Johnstown Road, Seneca Division.

*Observation
Blind*

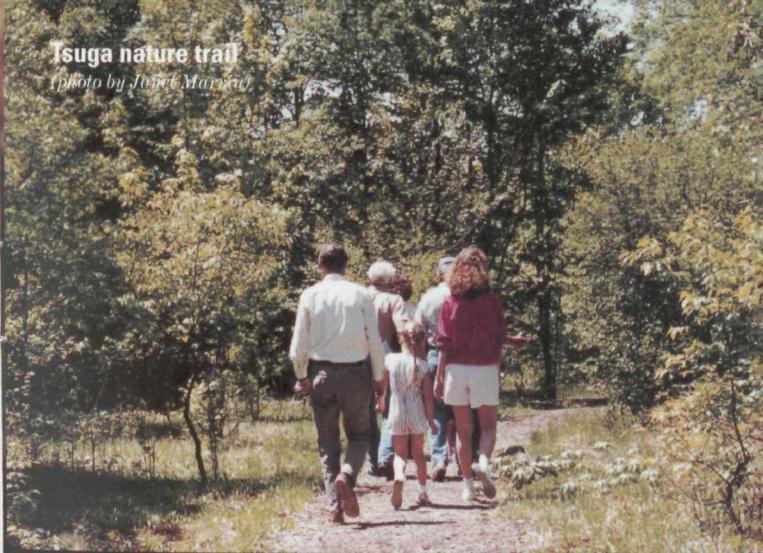
An ideal spot to observe and photograph wildlife. A short path leads to the blind which overlooks Reitz's Pond. Blind is located on Boland/Ritchie Road.

*Deer Run
Overlook*

Eagles can often be observed flying overhead from this high point above the 130-acre Pool 9. Overlook is located on Allen Road.

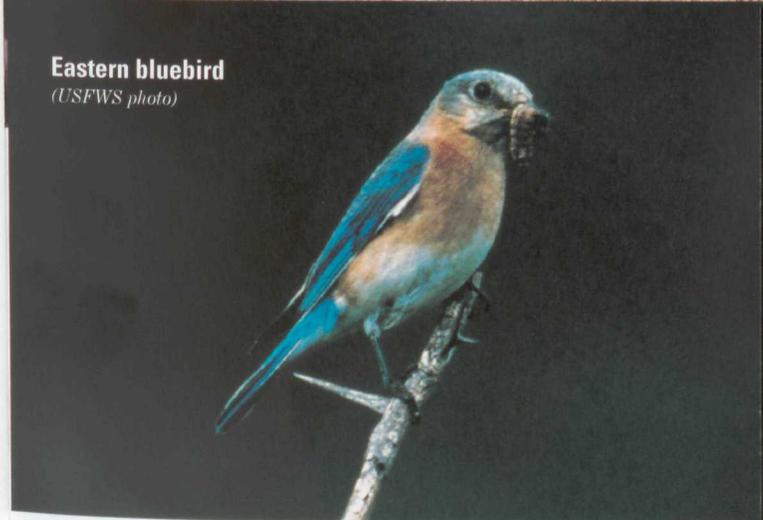
Tsuga nature trail

(photo by Janet Marston)



Eastern bluebird

(USFWS photo)



Wooded Drive

This section of gravel township road is especially scenic and a good spot to observe white-tailed deer and other wildlife.

*Hunting and
Fishing*

Specific regulations and maps are available at headquarters/visitor center. A universally accessible fishing pier is located at pool K.

*Environmental
Education*

Organized school, civic and professional groups may reserve dates for slide talks, movies, management tours, and outdoor classrooms. Teacher workshops are offered. Write or call for additional information.

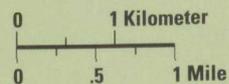
Erie

National Wildlife Refuge



Legend

- Refuge Headquarters
- Refuge Boundary
- Wildlife Observation Area
- Refuge Trail
- Stream and body of water
- Road
- Marsh



Erie National Wildlife Refuge
11296 Wood Duck Lane
Guys Mills, PA 16327
Telephone: 814/789 3585
Hearing impaired visitors may call the Pennsylvania
Relay Center at 800/654 5984 TDD, 800/654 5988 voice.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
<http://www.fws.gov>

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Wood ducks

(photo by Bill Marchel, Cornell Lab of Ornithology)