



Bill Buchanan/USFWS

Volunteers

Volunteers help welcome visitors, maintain the trails, staff the visitor center and gift shop, conduct nature walks, assist school groups, help with biology programs, and many other vital tasks. If you would like to help out, call the visitor center for more information.

US Fish and Wildlife Service

John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum is one of more than 544 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The National Wildlife Refuge System is a network of lands and waters managed specifically for the protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat and represents the most comprehensive wildlife management program in the world. Units of the system stretch across the United States from northern Alaska to the Florida Keys and include small islands in the Caribbean and South Pacific. The characters of the refuges are as diverse as the nation itself. The Service also manages national fish hatcheries and provides leadership and technical assistance in fish and wildlife research, habitat protection, and the conservation and protection of migratory birds, certain marine mammals, and threatened and endangered species.

For further information, contact:

John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum
Cusano Environmental Education Center
8601 Lindbergh Boulevard
Philadelphia, PA 19153
215/365 3118
215/365 2846 FAX
<http://heinz.fws.gov>

Federal Relay Service
for the deaf and hard-of-hearing
1 800/877 8339

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

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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

John Heinz

National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum



Philadelphia skyline with the refuge in the foreground
John and Karen Hollingsworth

*“Those who dwell
among the beauties
and mysteries of the
earth are never alone
or weary of life.”*

Rachel Carson



Great Blue Heron



Ned Connelly/USFWS

The refuge is an outdoor class room for thousands of students each year.

Welcome



This goose, designed by J.N. “Ding” Darling, has become the symbol of the National Refuge System.

The John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum protects the largest remaining fresh water tidal marsh in Pennsylvania. This marsh is a vital feeding and resting place for birds migrating along the Atlantic Flyway. The refuge also provides diverse habitats for a wide range of wildlife, from deer to butterflies and fish to eagles.

The refuge is a welcome break from the busy urban setting of the metropolitan Philadelphia area and provides environmental education opportunities to thousands of area students.



*Swallowtail
butterfly feeding
on milkweed.*

Jean Diehl/USFWS



Bill Buchanan/USFWS

A restored section of Tinicum Marsh.

The Past, the Present, and the Future

Marshes as far as the eye could see, nearly 6000 acres, supported generations of Lenape Indians. They found plentiful food, water, and shelter here, living comfortably by fishing, hunting, and gathering. They called this place Tennakon Minquas. The name was condensed over time to "Tinicum", roughly meaning, "islands of the marsh".

The marshes were drained and filled in to provide grazing and farming land as European settlers arrived beginning in the mid 1600s. As the years passed, more and more marsh was drained and filled to provide space for a growing Philadelphia region. By the 1950s, thousands of acres of marsh had dwindled to only 200 acres. When this last remaining piece was threatened by the construction of Interstate 95 in the 1960s, local citizens, who cherished the marsh and appreciated its beauty and ecological importance, said, "Enough!" They began a campaign to save Tinicum Marsh. The fight took them all the way to Washington, DC. There, with the help of several members of Congress, they were successful in having I-95 rerouted. In 1972, the area was declared a National Wildlife Refuge, to preserve, restore, and protect Tinicum Marsh, to provide environmental education for students, and to provide the public

The late Senator John Heinz was instrumental in protecting parts of Tinicum Marsh. In 1992, the refuge was renamed in his honor.



Bill Buchanan/USFWS

with an area to view and study native wildlife in its natural habitat. The refuge was named after Senator John Heinz in 1992 to honor his commitment to the refuge.

Today, the refuge's nearly 1000 acres of woods, pond, marsh, and meadow are dedicated to wildlife conservation and the environment. Refuge lands provide habitat for many species, especially migratory birds. In addition to the many wildlife species that benefit from the living marsh lands, we also benefit from this healthier environment.

Education is a key component to the future of the birds and other wildlife. Thousands of local school children come to the refuge each year to explore nature in their neighborhood. Countless other visitors come to learn about the natural world as well as to find relaxation, peaceful surroundings, and a sense of well being.

All of us play vital roles in the preservation of places like this for future generations to enjoy. Human interest in providing homes for wildlife is evident by the creation and protection of refuges such as John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum, part of our larger National Wildlife Refuge System.

Celebrating grassroots efforts to save vital wetlands.



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A Home for Wildlife



The refuge's marshes, creeks, ponds, fields, and woods are home to a wide variety of plants, birds, fish, and other animals.

Tidal marshes are the heart of the refuge. Fish such as striped bass and shad lay their eggs here and the young grow in the protected shallow waters. Yellowlegs, plovers, and other shorebirds feed on wide expanses of mud flats at low tide. Ducks and geese dine on seeds and roots of wild rice, cattails, and other marsh plants. Red-winged blackbirds, rails, bitterns, and other birds nest in the marsh grasses. In addition to helping to clean the water, the marsh also helps to protect surrounding towns by slowing down and absorbing floods like a gigantic sponge.

Darby Creek and several of its tributaries flow through the refuge, changing height with the tides. In warm weather, the banks and logs provide dry ground for turtles basking in the sun. Belted kingfishers, tree swallows, and ducks frequent the creek.

The 145-acre impoundment, a shallow managed pond, provides habitat for many fish and birds as well as plants and insects. Refuge biologists adjust water levels to attract migrating birds in the spring and fall. Eagles and osprey soar overhead in search of their next meal. Hundreds of tree swallows - nature's mosquito controllers - nest in the impoundment's bird boxes each summer.



Bullfrogs are common throughout the refuge wetlands.

“All the flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today.”

Chinese Proverb



In late summer, thousands of marsh mallow bloom.

The fields and woods of the refuge are home to many species including deer, fox, raccoons, butterflies, and many birds. Native wildflowers such as bee balms, brown-eyed susans, and milkweeds attract butterflies throughout the summer and fall. Juncos and sparrows feed on the seeds throughout the winter.

The refuge staff manages the land to benefit wildlife. Projects include restoring wetlands, removing invasive species, planting native species, mowing fields, and adjusting the water level in the impoundment. Many species are monitored, allowing the refuge staff to make biological decisions about management efforts. Ongoing research on the birds, mammals, plants, and other species help biologists best manage the refuge's resources for the future.



Ron Holmes/USFWS

Things To Do

The refuge trails are open daily from sunrise to sunset; the Cusano Environmental Education Center is open daily from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM except for federal holidays.

You can find many wildlife oriented recreational opportunities on the refuge. Hike on the ten miles of trails. Birdwatch on your own or join a scheduled bird walk led by a knowledgeable volunteer. You can fish in Darby Creek, and other parts of the refuge, for bass, catfish, carp, bluegills, and other fish. Catch and release is highly recommended. Pennsylvania fishing licenses are required and regulations are enforced. Explore the marshes of Darby Creek in a canoe or kayak around high tide. Check at the visitor center for a tide chart. The refuge offers photographers fantastic opportunities to capture nature at its finest. Bicycling is permitted on service roads. The refuge is a part of the Tincum-Fort Mifflin Trail- East Coast Greenway Bike Trail.



Frank Doyle/USFWS

Special events, including Darby Creek Clean Up Day (April), International Migratory Bird Day (May), Pathways to Fishing (May or June), and the Cradle of Birding Festival (Sept.) are exciting times to visit and learn more about the refuge and our environment.

Nature walks, family programs, evening hikes, photo walks and workshops, and summer evening conservation programs are also offered. Check out the visitor center exhibits and gift shop. For a calendar of events, ask at the visitor center, look on the website, or give us a call.

Enjoy your visit to the refuge, and remember - this is home to the wildlife first. Please help us help wildlife and stay on designated trails, keep your dog on a leash, and especially - clean up after your pets and yourself. Collecting plants or animals, hunting, camping, littering, setting fires, possessing firearms, weapons, fireworks, and swimming are prohibited. Help us keep the wild in wildlife - don't feed or approach birds or other animals.

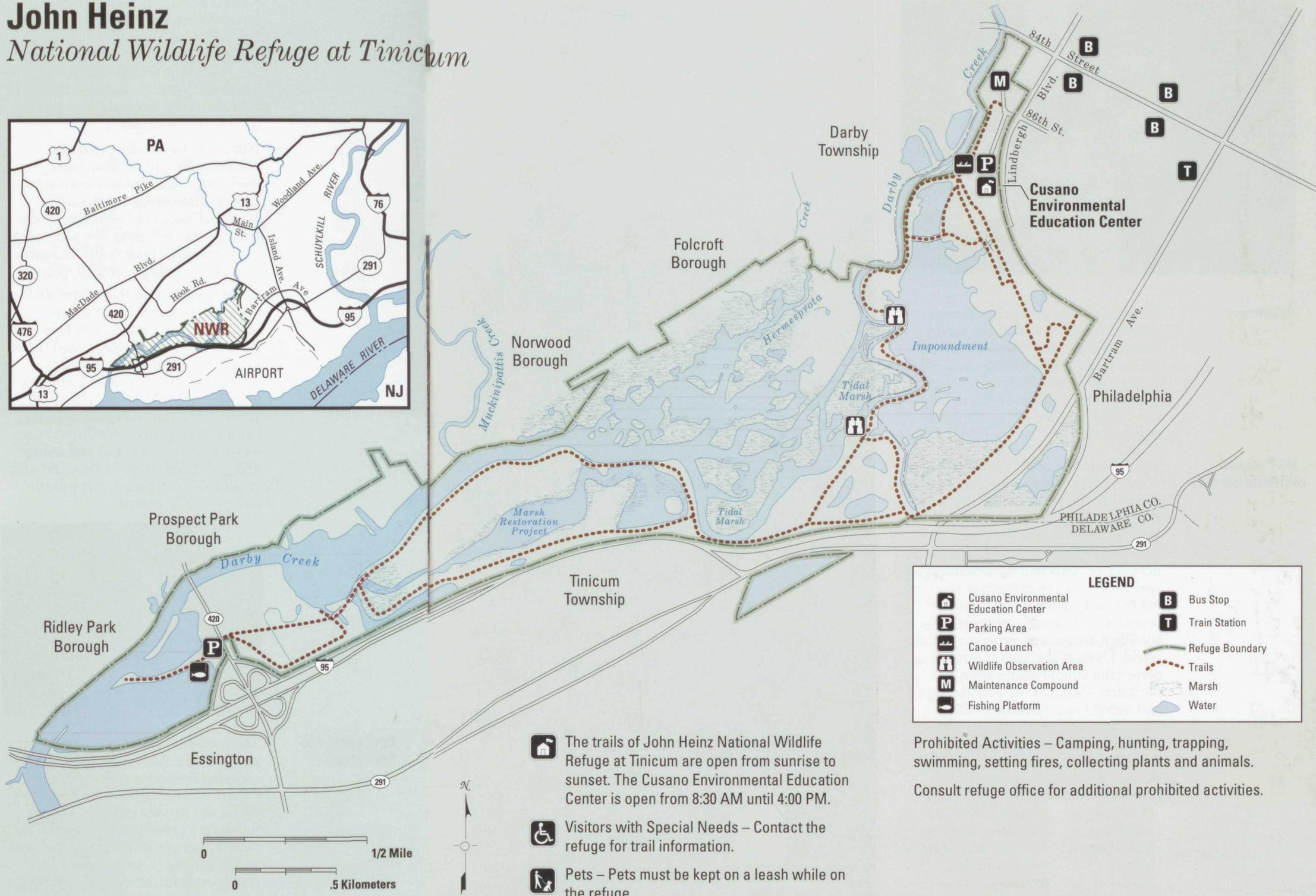


Frank Doyle/USFWS

Environmental Education

Thousands of students experience the wonders of nature and science while enjoying field trips to the refuge. Programs to help teachers plan their visits, and use the resource to the fullest, are scheduled throughout the year. These programs are accredited by PA and NJ. Check at the visitor center, website, or call for a current schedule of educator courses.

John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum



LEGEND

Cusano Environmental Education Center	Bus Stop
Parking Area	Train Station
Canoe Launch	Refuge Boundary
Wildlife Observation Area	Trails
Maintenance Compound	Marsh
Fishing Platform	Water

- The trails of John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum are open from sunrise to sunset. The Cusano Environmental Education Center is open from 8:30 AM until 4:00 PM.
- Visitors with Special Needs – Contact the refuge for trail information.
- Pets – Pets must be kept on a leash while on the refuge.

Prohibited Activities – Camping, hunting, trapping, swimming, setting fires, collecting plants and animals.
Consult refuge office for additional prohibited activities.

