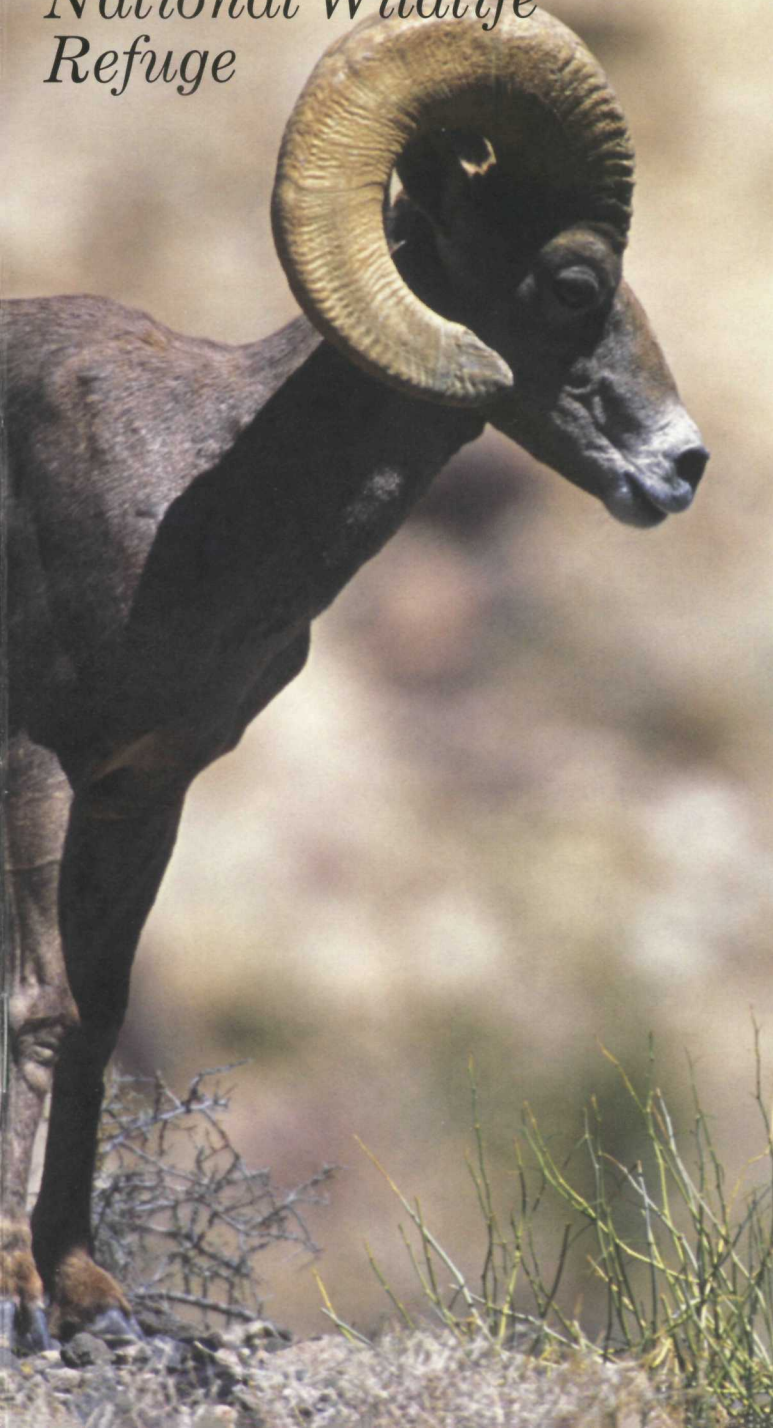


Kofa

*National Wildlife
Refuge*



Introduction



This blue goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

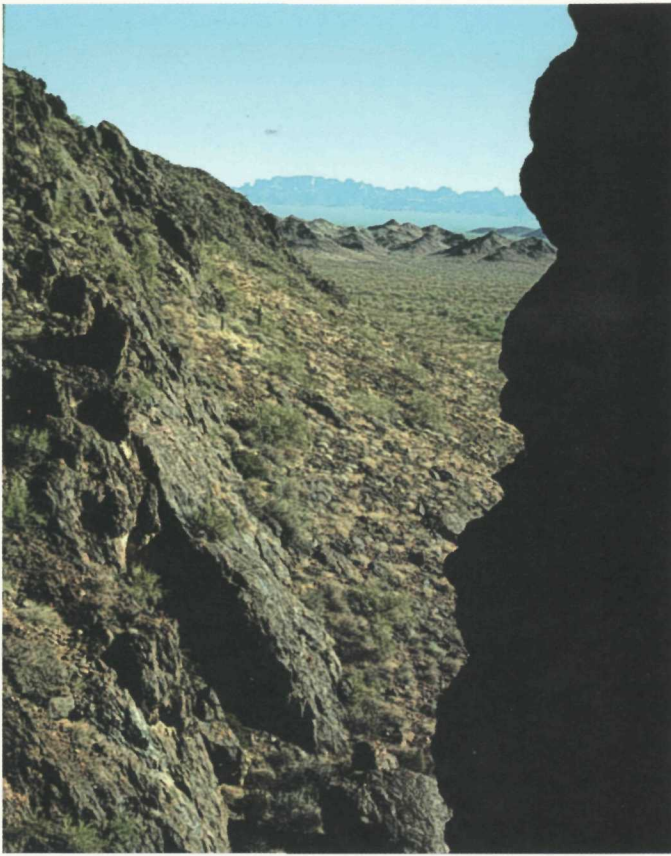
Kofa National Wildlife Refuge is a pristine desert environment home to the unique desert bighorn sheep and the California fan palm, the only native palm in Arizona. Kofa Mountain barberry (a rare plant found only in Southwest Arizona) also occurs on the refuge. Other notable wildlife species found in the area include the white-winged dove, desert tortoise, and desert kit fox.

Bighorn sheep are found primarily in the two mountain ranges that dominate the refuge landscape—the Kofa and Castle Dome Mountains. Although these mountains are not especially high, they are extremely rugged and rise sharply from the surrounding desert plains, providing excellent bighorn sheep habitat. A wide variety of plant life is found throughout the refuge.

Water is always scarce in a desert. Natural water sources are highly variable and may not last until seasonal changes can replenish the supply. By enlarging natural water holes, shading them to reduce evaporation, and creating artificial basins in areas previously without a water supply, refuge managers have greatly increased the availability and reliability of water.



Palm Canyon. Greg Knadle / USFWS



Chain Tank Canyon, Castle Dome Mountains.
Susanna Henry / USFWS

Many species of wildlife have benefitted from these water developments, particularly bighorn sheep. The refuge provides habitat for approximately 400-800 sheep. This prolific herd has provided animals for transplanting throughout Arizona and neighboring states.

Palm Canyon, in the west end of the Kofa Mountains, is well known for its native palms. These palm trees are probably remnants from a period of time when this area was wetter and cooler. Though less than 100 in number, this handful of trees plus one or two other groves around the state are likely the only native palms in Arizona.

Things to Do at the Refuge

*Hiking,
Sightseeing,
Photography,
and Nature
Observation*



In the early part of the 20th Century, numerous mines were established in mountainous areas throughout the refuge. One of the most notable mines was the “King of Arizona Mine.” It gave the Kofa Mountains their name—“Kofa” which is shortened from “King of Arizona.”

Many outdoor recreational activities are permitted on the refuge with a few restrictions.

These activities are permitted in all areas of the refuge except on patented mining claims and other private inholdings. Use of remotely-controlled cameras is prohibited.



Bighorn sheep. Ron Kearns / USFWS



Gold poppies in Burro Canyon. Gale Monson / USFWS

Cautionary Note

Entering any mine (or cave) on any National Wildlife Refuge is prohibited. This regulation is in effect for public safety and to reduce the spread of White-nose Syndrome, a deadly fungus affecting bats (50 CFR 26.21(a)). Abandoned mines are extremely dangerous due to the possibility of collapse.

If you enter old buildings and/or historical structures on Kofa NWR, you do so at your own risk. Exposure to airborne disease-causing pathogens is possible.

Kofa NWR was included in the desert military training exercises conducted by General Patton during World War II. Unexploded ordnance may be encountered on Kofa NWR. **DO NOT PICK UP** anything that appears to be military hardware. Note the location of the object and report it to refuge headquarters.

Rock climbing is hazardous and is generally discouraged. If you choose to rock climb, you do so at your own risk. Remember that your safety on Kofa NWR is your responsibility. Kofa NWR is not and will not be responsible for injuries caused by engaging in negligent and/or risky activities.

Occasional storms on the refuge will cause flash flooding in low lying areas and washes, please use **caution** when crossing.



Red Hill, Castle Dome Mountains.
Robert J. Vandenberg / USFWS



Wildlife Watching Tips

Dawn and dusk are the best times to see wildlife.

In warmer climates, little is moving on hot summer afternoons or on windy days.

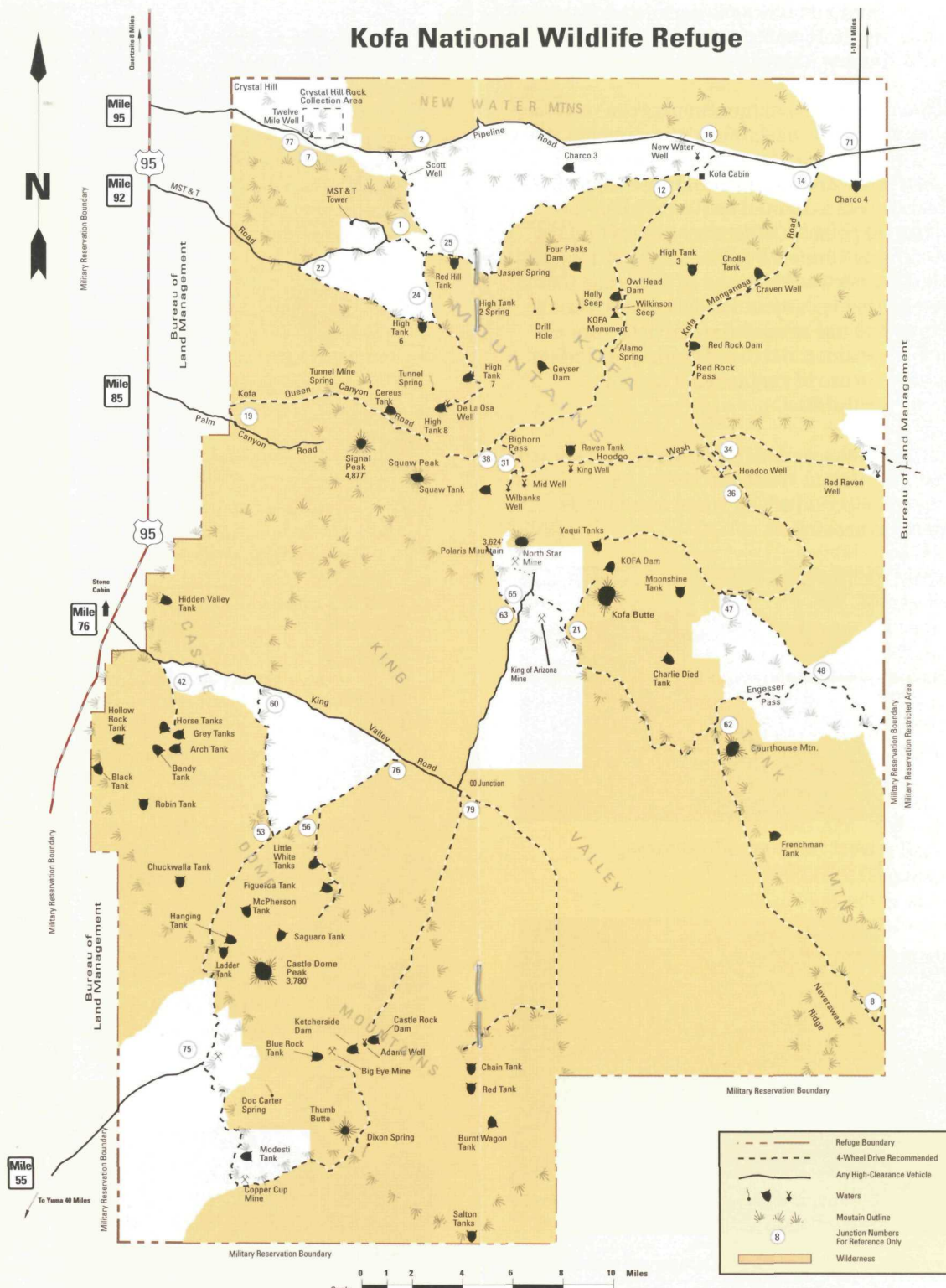
Observe from the sidelines. Leave “abandoned” young animals alone. A parent is probably close by waiting for you to leave. Don’t offer snacks; your lunch could disrupt wild digestive systems.

Cars make good observation blinds. Drive slowly, stopping to scan places wildlife might hide. Use binoculars or a long lens for a closer look.

Try sitting quietly in one good location. Let wildlife get used to your presence. Many animals that have hidden will reappear once they think you are gone. Walk quietly in designated areas, being aware of sounds and smells. Often you will hear more than you will see. Teach children quiet observation. Other wildlife watchers will appreciate your consideration.

Look for animal signs. Tracks, scat, feathers, and nests left behind often tell interesting stories.

Kofa National Wildlife Refuge



	Refuge Boundary
	4-Wheel Drive Recommended
	Any High-Clearance Vehicle
	Waters
	Mountain Outline
	Junction Numbers For Reference Only
	Wilderness



Hunting



Rockhounding and Rock Collecting

Limited hunting is permitted. Contact the Refuge Manager for additional information and current regulations.

Recreational (noncommercial) rock or mineral collecting is **restricted** to the designated tract known as **Crystal Hill Area** (see map). Possession of rocks is limited to 10 specimens or 10 pounds (whichever occurs first) in any 12-month period. Rock or mineral collection is limited to materials that are exposed and collectable **without the use of tools** (metal detectors are considered tools). **Digging**, including the use of simple hand tools, is **prohibited**.

On the remainder of the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge the collection of any rocks or minerals is prohibited.



Sunset on Kofa Mountains.
George Morrison / USFWS



Western diamondback. Tom Cloud / USFWS

Camping



Campers may select their own campsites. However, camping within 1/4-mile of a water hole is prohibited. Vehicles must remain within 100 feet of designated roads. Camping is limited to 14 days in any 12-month period.

Fires



Campfires are permitted, but only dead, down, and detached wood may be used. Dead wood may only be collected from areas on the refuge which are not designated as wilderness (see map). **Collecting wood from wilderness lands is prohibited.** No wood may be removed from the refuge. Wood is very scarce, please use it sparingly, or bring your own supply.

Roads



Most refuge roads are unmaintained and many of them are passable only by four-wheel drive vehicles. Some roads may be passable by two-wheel drive, high-clearance vehicles (see map). Vehicles may be damaged by brush or rocks, or may become stuck in sandy areas. Before traveling on the refuge, visitors should contact refuge headquarters to learn of current conditions. There are no facilities on the refuge for towing, gasoline, sanitation, or drinking water.

Wilderness

Passage of the 1990 Arizona Desert Wilderness Act included well over 500,000 acres of the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge (see map). Wilderness status acknowledges the relatively pristine character of the refuge



Three bighorn rams. USFWS

and dictates some management restrictions. No vehicular travel, including bicycles, is permitted into wilderness areas. Only foot or horseback travel is permitted.

Laws and Regulations



Mechanized, vehicular traffic is limited to designated roads (see map). Bicycles are considered vehicles on the refuge. **Off-road vehicle travel is prohibited.** All motorized vehicles, including ATCs, ATVs, quadtracs and motorcycles and all operators, must be **licensed, and insured** for **highway** driving. Speed is limited to 25 MPH unless otherwise posted.

Animal and Plant Life

Collecting, possessing, molesting, disturbing, injuring, destroying, removing, or transporting any plant or animal or part thereof (alive or dead) is prohibited, except for legally taken game.

Firearms and Explosives



Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuges must comply with all provisions of state and local law. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations (50 CFR 27.42 and specific refuge regulations in 50 CFR Part 32).

Weapons Other than Firearms

Possession or use of crossbows, bow and arrows, air guns, or other weapons is prohibited except when they are used for approved hunting.

Disposal of Waste

Dumping of litter, sewage, or liquid wastes on the refuge is prohibited. Please do not bury trash - wildlife will dig it up. Pack out your trash.

Government Property

Destruction, injury, defacement, disturbance, or removal of any government property is prohibited.

Commercial Mineral Activity



The refuge is closed to mineral entry. Prospecting, removal, or disturbance of sand, rock, gravel, or minerals is prohibited. (Exceptions are valid mining claims existing prior to 1974.)

Disturbance of the Peace

Disturbance of the peace or other disorderly conduct on the refuge is prohibited. No person who is intoxicated shall enter or remain upon the refuge.



Pets

Pets are permitted only if they are confined. (Except the use of dogs when participating in a legal hunt.)

Treasure Hunting

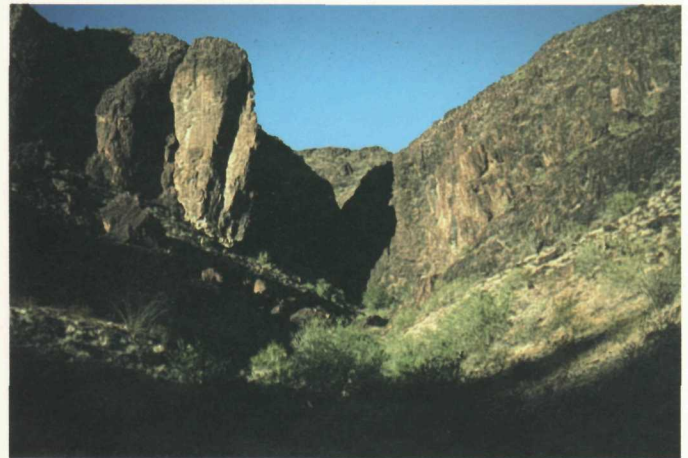
Persons are prohibited from searching for or removing objects of antiquity, Indian artifacts, or paleontological objects.

For additional information



Please contact the refuge headquarters for additional information and to report accidents or any unusual incidents or observations.

Kofa National Wildlife Refuge
9300 East 28th Street
Yuma, AZ 85365
928/783-7861
928/783-8611 Fax
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



View of the Castle Dome Mountains. Susanna Henry / USFWS



Barrel cactus. USFWS

Kofa NWR Facts

Where is it?

The Refuge is located 40 miles north of Yuma, Arizona, on the east side of U.S. Highway 95.

When was it established?

1939

How big is it?

Refuge: 665,400 acres.
Wilderness: 547,700 acres

Why is it here?

Executive Order 8039, signed January 25, 1939, by Franklin D. Roosevelt, states that Kofa was established "for the conservation and development of natural wildlife resources."



Desert Tortoise. Martin Heinrich / USFWS

Kofa National Wildlife Refuge
9300 East 28th Street
Yuma, Arizona 85365
928/783-7861
928/783-8611 Fax

Visit us on our social media websites
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
www.fws.gov/southwest/

For Refuge Information
1 800/344-9453 (WILD)

For relay service, please dial 711

Bighorn. USFWS

September 2011



Kofa

National Wildlife Refuge

