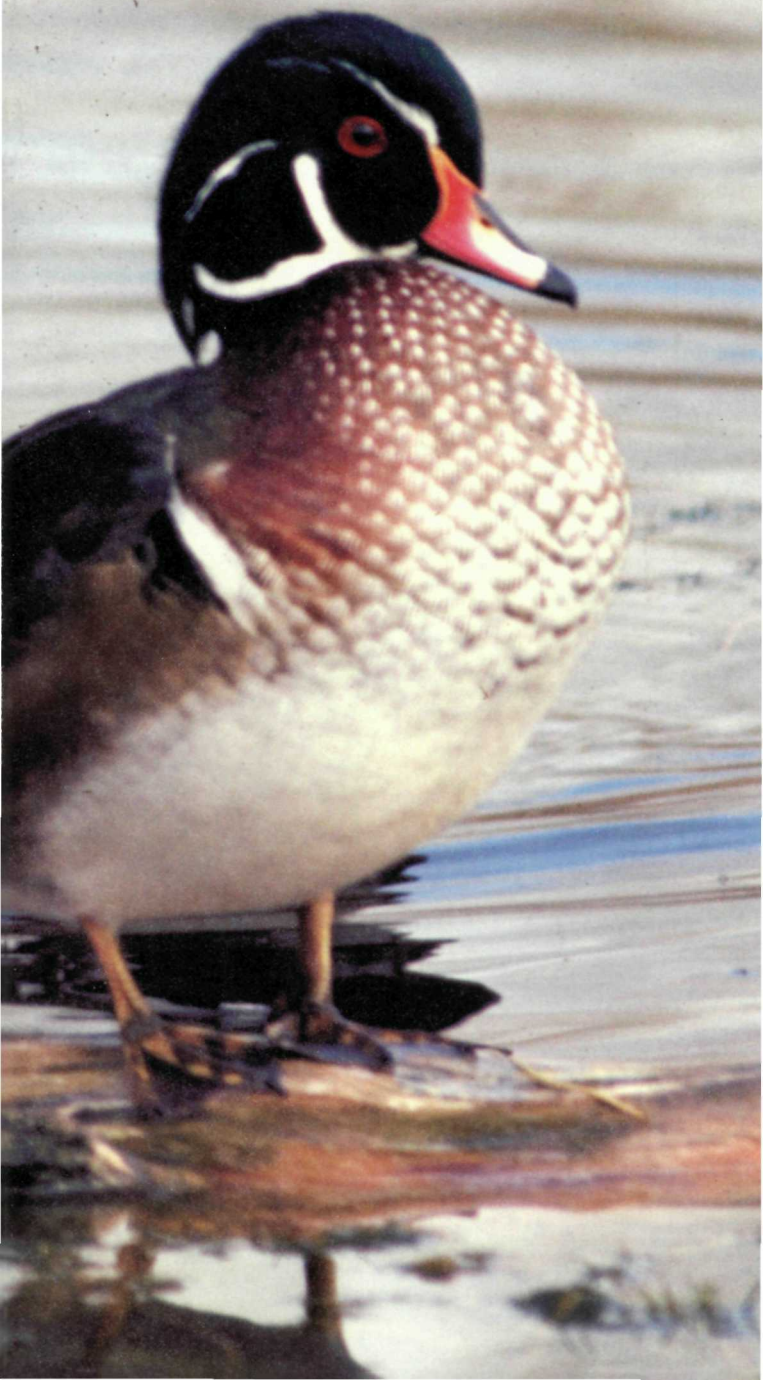


U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Muscatatuck

National Wildlife Refuge



“Muscatatuck,” a native American word meaning “land of winding waters,” was established as a refuge to provide resting and feeding areas for waterfowl during their annual migrations.

"Land of Winding Waters"

Water bodies of many kinds – the Muscatatuck River, the flood-prone creeks feeding the river, and pristine natural springs – attracted wildlife and Native Americans to this area long before white settlers arrived. The dense hardwood forest that once blanketed the land was cleared by settlers who often had difficulty farming the wet ground.

In 1966, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, used monies earned from the sale of federal “duck stamps” to purchase and set aside wetlands for wildlife, and Muscatatuck became Indiana’s first National Wildlife Refuge. It is one of over 500 refuges that comprise the National Wildlife Refuge System, an extensive network of lands and waters protected and managed especially for wildlife and its habitat. Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge includes 7,724 acres near Seymour, and a 78-acre parcel, known as the Restle Unit, near Bloomington.

Muscatatuck's mission is simple: to *restore, preserve, and manage* a mix of forest, wetland, and grassland habitat for fish, wildlife, and people. Managing for wildlife is Muscatatuck's top priority, with special emphasis given to waterfowl, other migratory birds, and endangered species. Over 280 species of birds have been seen at Muscatatuck, and today the refuge is recognized as a "Continently Important" bird area.



1966-67 Migratory
Bird Hunting
Stamp by Stanley
Stearns



R. Berger, USFWS

Changing Seasons - Changing Species!

Wildlife abounds at Muscatatuck, and some animals, like white-tailed deer, raccoon, and turkey, can be seen throughout the year. But most other wildlife mirror the changes in the seasons.

Winter

Winter attracts a variety of ducks to the refuge, and birds like tundra swans and bald eagles occasionally visit.

Spring

Come springtime, wood ducks, Canada geese, and mallards begin nesting, while most other migratory waterfowl depart on their annual spring migration. In April, great blue herons nest in a rookery in the Moss Lake area and great egrets visit the refuge. Migrating warblers pass through in May.

Summer

Geese and wood duck broods are common in June. By August, the young birds of summer are flying, and early migrant blue-wing teal arrive to mark the beginning of the fall migration.

Fall

Ospreys and cormorants appear over the big lakes, sandhill cranes fly over the refuge on their way south, and the winter songbirds return.

Copperbelly Water Snake

The rare copperbelly water snake also lives here. This beautiful, totally harmless snake is common on the refuge, but rare nationwide, because of the loss of the snake's wetland habitat. Remember, snakes and other animals and plants on the refuge are protected and should not be harmed!

River Otters

Muscatatuck is also home to river otters, once common in Indiana but then wiped out because of overtrapping and loss of habitat. Muscatatuck became the first otter reintroduction site in Indiana in 1995.



White-tail Deer
Dave Menke, USFWS



Blue-wing Teal
J. Mattson, USFWS



Copperbelly Water Snake
©J.R. McGregor

Regulating Water Levels

Managing Habitat for Wildlife

Water manipulation is an important management tool at Muscatatuck. Many wetland units are connected by pipes and water control structures so that water can be moved between units at different times of the year. Muscatatuck's *moist soil units*, low open areas surrounded by dikes, are filled with water in the fall and drained in the spring to provide feeding areas for waterfowl and shorebirds. Similarly, *green tree units*, diked lowland forests, are flooded with water in the fall for waterfowl and drained in the spring to keep the trees healthy. These units provide feeding and nesting areas for the wood duck, a bird that naturally nests in tree cavities in wetland areas.

One result of this water manipulation is the creation of *permanent marshes* – swampy areas of lush vegetation interspersed with pockets of shallow open water, which are ideal homes for ducks and geese to raise their young.

Land Management Practices

Farming is used to provide food and cover for wildlife, and prescribed burning is used in selected areas to hold back the growth of woody plants and provide openings on the land for wildlife. Trees are also planted to reduce forest fragmentation and provide even more diverse habitats for wildlife.



Great Egret
D. Stanley, USFWS

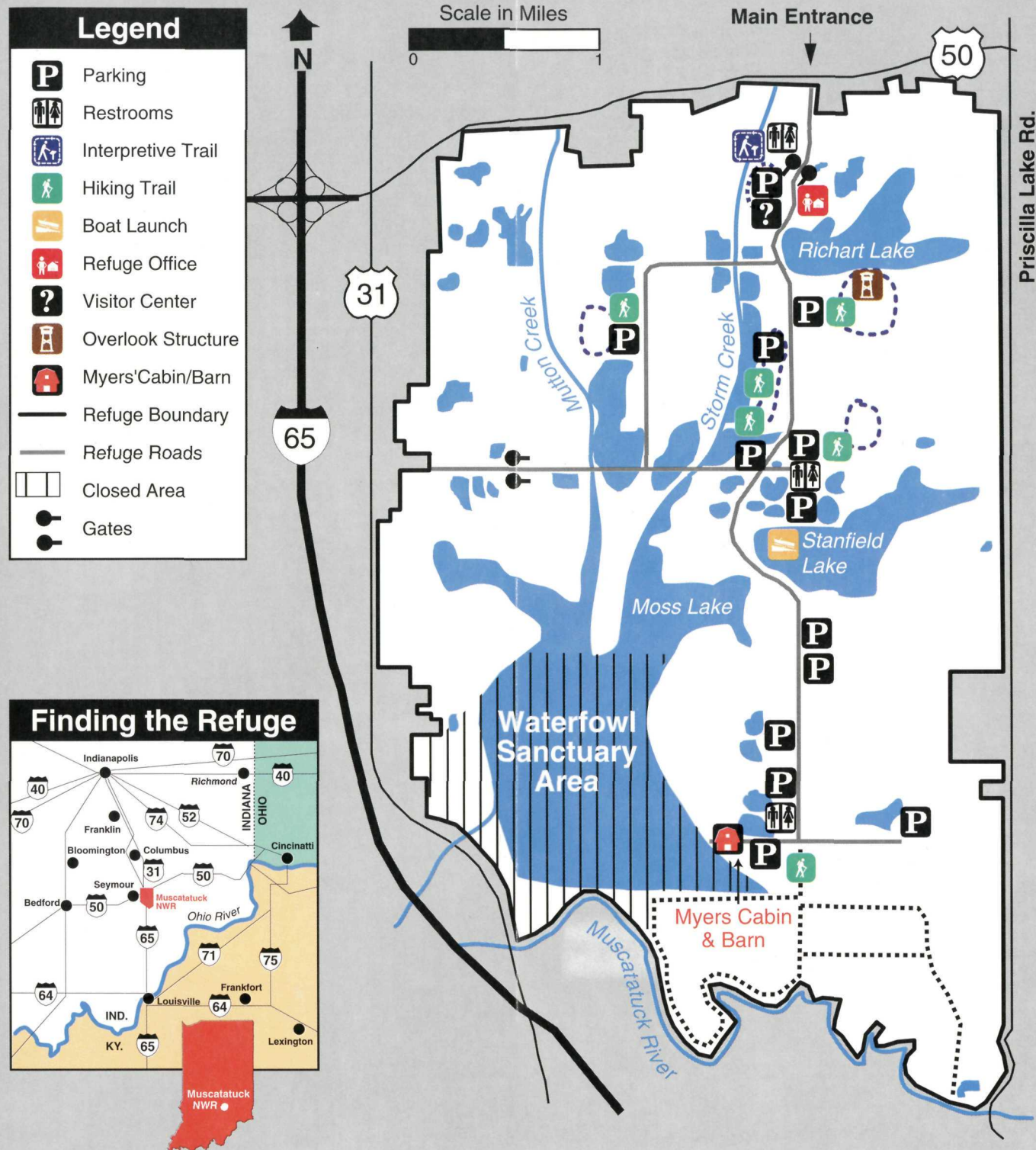


D. Stanley, USFWS

Muscatatuck is for People, Too!

Muscatatuck is open seven days a week, sunrise to sunset. Nine miles of refuge road, which includes a self-guided tour route, are open to visitors year-round. In addition, there are eight hiking trails of various lengths and the **Chestnut Ridge Interpretive Trail** is accessible to the physically challenged. The Hackman Overlook on **Richart Lake Hiking Trail** provides a breathtaking view of Richart Lake.

Wildlife observation and hiking are the most popular activities at Muscatatuck. *Remember, early morning is the best time to view wildlife!* Rabbit, quail and deer hunting, as well as fishing, are permitted in certain areas on the refuge. **Myers' Cabin and Barn**, structures built on the refuge around 1900, have been restored by volunteers and give visitors a glimpse of life on the refuge at that time. Education is important at Muscatatuck, and refuge staff are happy to work with groups visiting the refuge.



Muscatatuck

National Wildlife Refuge

Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge
12985 E. U.S. Highway 50
Seymour, IN 47274
812/522 4352
Fax 812/522 6826
R3RW_MSC@mail.fws.gov

V/TTY Users may reach Muscatatuck
through Indiana's State Relay System
at 1-800/743 3333

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



Rules & Regulations

Hours
The refuge is open sunrise to sunset year-round, except during the refuge deer hunts in December and January, when hours are 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Fishing and Hunting

Only areas marked by refuge signs are open to fishing and hunting activities. (See hunting/fishing leaflets)

Collecting

The collection of edible mushrooms, nuts, fruits, and berries is permitted for *personal use only*.

The collection of shed deer antlers is for *personal use only*.

Horseback Riding/Bicycling

Horseback riding and bicycling is permitted except on hiking trails.

Firearms

Firearms are permitted only during refuge hunting seasons and must be unloaded and cased while in a vehicle.

Other Refuge Regulations

The sale of any materials obtained from the refuge is prohibited.

Spotlighting deer, even without weapons, is prohibited.

Camping, fires, swimming, dumping, and off-road vehicle use is prohibited.

For additional information:
Refuge Manager
Muscatatuck NWR
12985 E. U.S. Highway 50
Seymour, IN 47274
Phone: 812/522 4352
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