

# Nisqually

## National Wildlife Refuge

Olympia, Washington



Great Blue Heron

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# Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge — A Diversity of Habitats

## A Home for Wildlife

The Nisqually River Delta is a biologically rich and diverse area at the southern end of Puget Sound that supports a variety of habitats including woodlands and fresh- and saltwater marshes. Together with McAllister and Red Salmon Creeks, the Nisqually River forms one of the largest remaining undisturbed estuaries in Washington.

The Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1974 to protect the delta and its diversity of fish and wildlife habitats. The wetlands are particularly important to the many species of waterfowl that winter in the delta. There they find an abundance of food and shelter from storms.

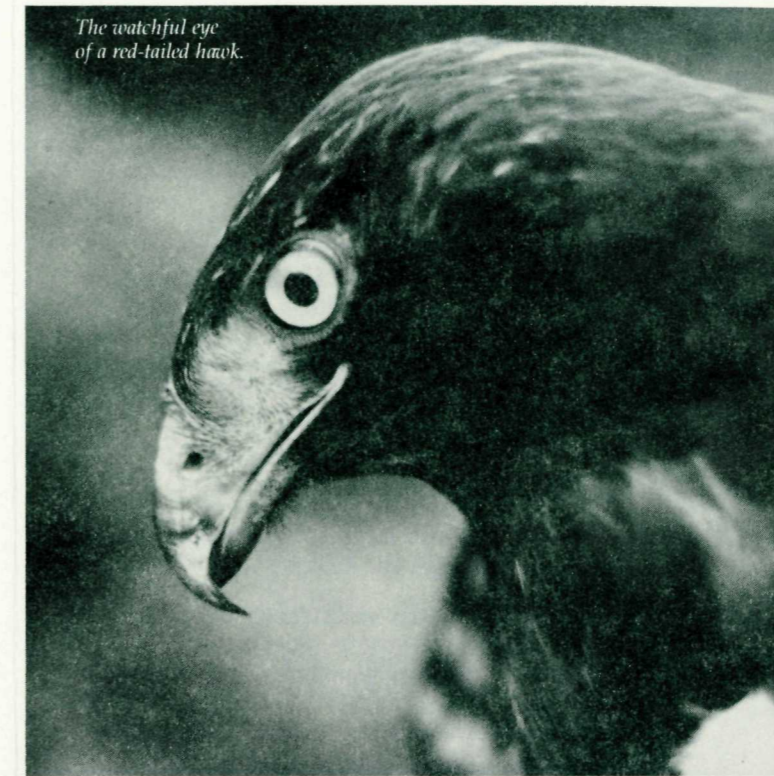
Ducks feed, rest, and nest on the freshwater ponds and marshes. Shorebirds feed on the estuarine mud flats but also use the marshes and ponds. Salmon and steelhead use the estuary for passage to upriver areas. Songbirds, woodpeckers, hawks, and small mammals are found in the dense woodlands, croplands, and

grasslands. Mixed conifer forests on the bluffs above the delta provide perches for bald eagles, osprey, and other birds of prey, as well as the nesting site for a colony of great blue herons.

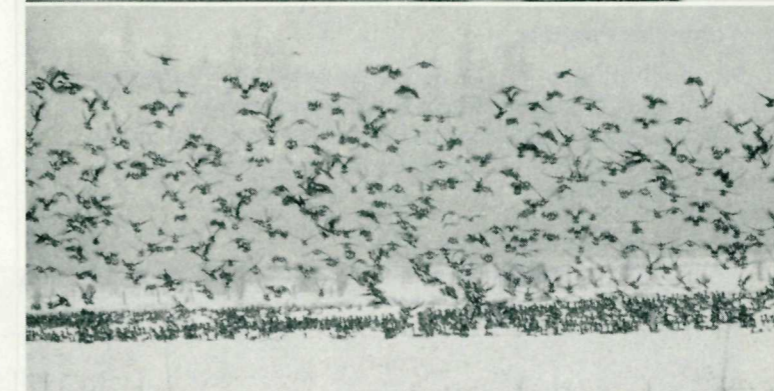
## A Stop for Migratory Birds

As surrounding wildlife habitat is lost to development, Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge has become increasingly important to migratory birds. For some birds, Nisqually is a place to feed and rest before continuing on, while for others it is the end of their journey for the season. During the fall and winter months, up to 20,000 wigeon, mallards, green-winged teal, and other ducks flock to the marshes and mudflats. In November, short-eared owls, and occasionally a peregrine falcon, arrive to search for mice and voles in the open fields. Spring brings flocks of goldfinches, warblers, and tree swallows to nest in the forests and fields.

The Nisqually Delta



The watchful eye of a red-tailed hawk.



An uncommon snowfall greets these migrating wigeon.

## A Protected Estuary

Although most of the major estuaries in Washington have been filled, dredged, and developed, the estuary of the Nisqually River has been set aside especially for wildlife. Here the fresh water of the Nisqually River combines with the salt water of Puget Sound to form an environment that is rich in nutrients and detritus. These nutrients support a web of sea life that includes clams, crabs, shrimp, and fish. The benefits of this estuary extend throughout Puget Sound and far out to sea.

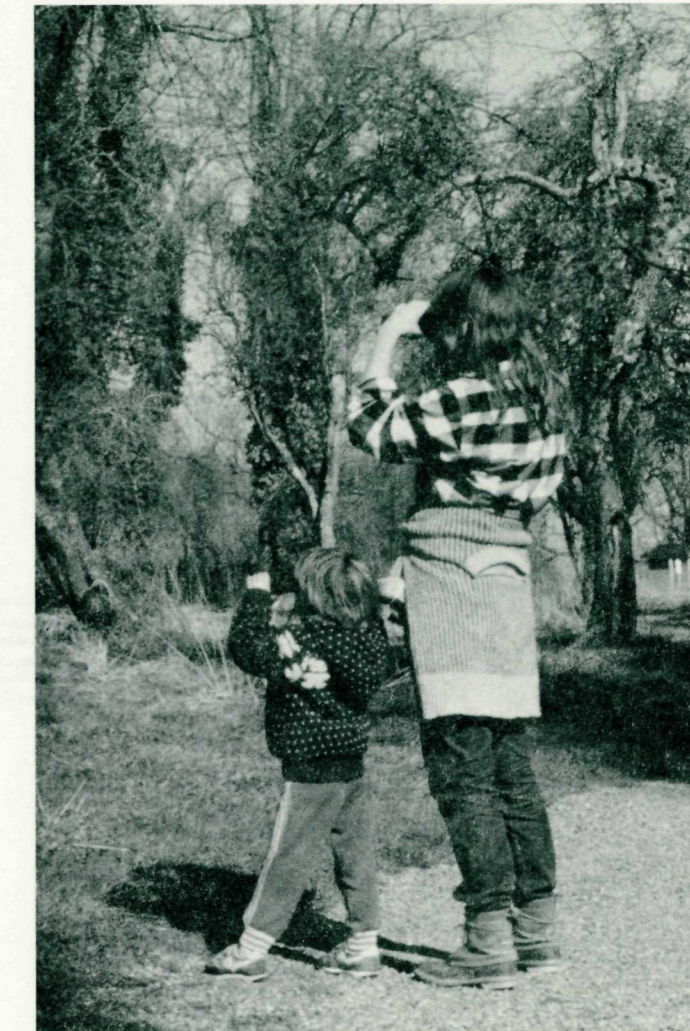
## For More Information Contact:

Refuge Manager  
Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge  
100 Brown Farm Road  
Olympia, Washington 98506  
(206) 753-9467



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The refuge's great variety of birds attracts many bird watchers.





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Olympia, Washington 98506

# How to Visit Nisqually Refuge

## General Information

**Hours** — The refuge is open daily during daylight hours. The office is open Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 pm.

### Entrance Fee

Daily Fee — \$2.00 per family  
Annual Passes — Federal Duck Stamp or Golden Eagle, Age, or Access Passports — admits family  
Children under 16 — enter free

**Prohibited** — Pets, bicycles, fires, camping, and firearms are not allowed on the refuge.

## Education Program

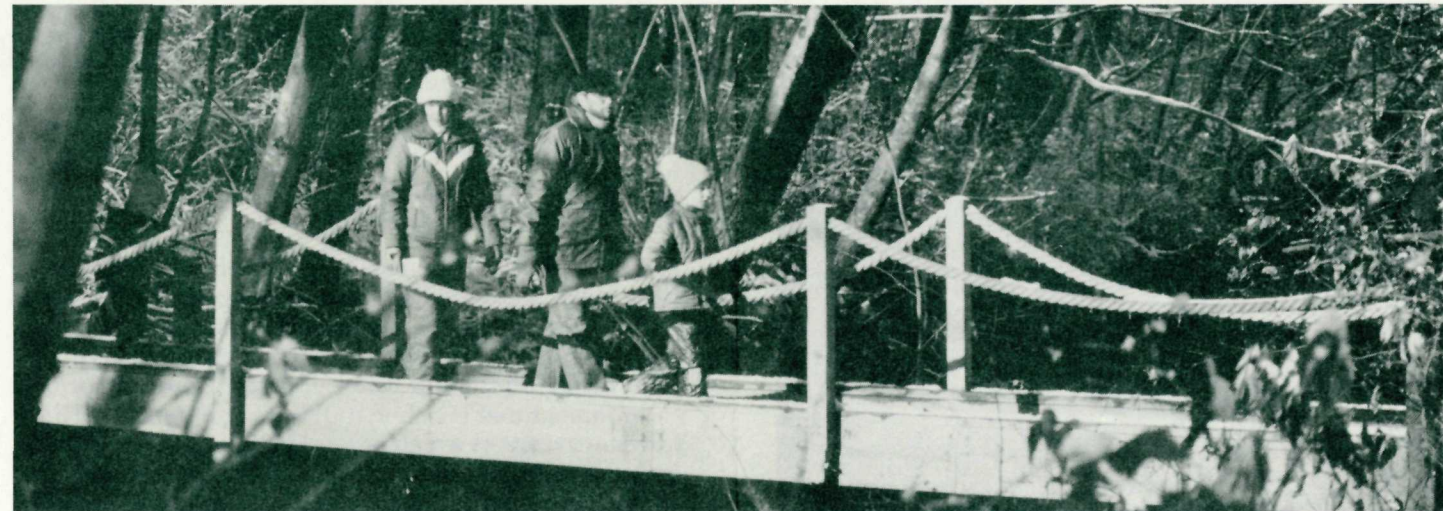
**Reservations** — Schools and large groups must make a reservation to visit the refuge.

**Twin Barns Education Center** — Provides exhibits about the refuge and classroom space for schools.  
— Open to public on weekends, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
— Open to schools and education groups by reservation only throughout the week

### Volunteer Program

Nisqually Refuge has an active program of volunteers helping with wildlife studies, public information, education, maintenance, and more. If you would like to help too, just call the Refuge Volunteer Coordinator at (206) 753-9467.

*A family explores the Nisqually River Trail.*



## Wildlife-Oriented Recreation

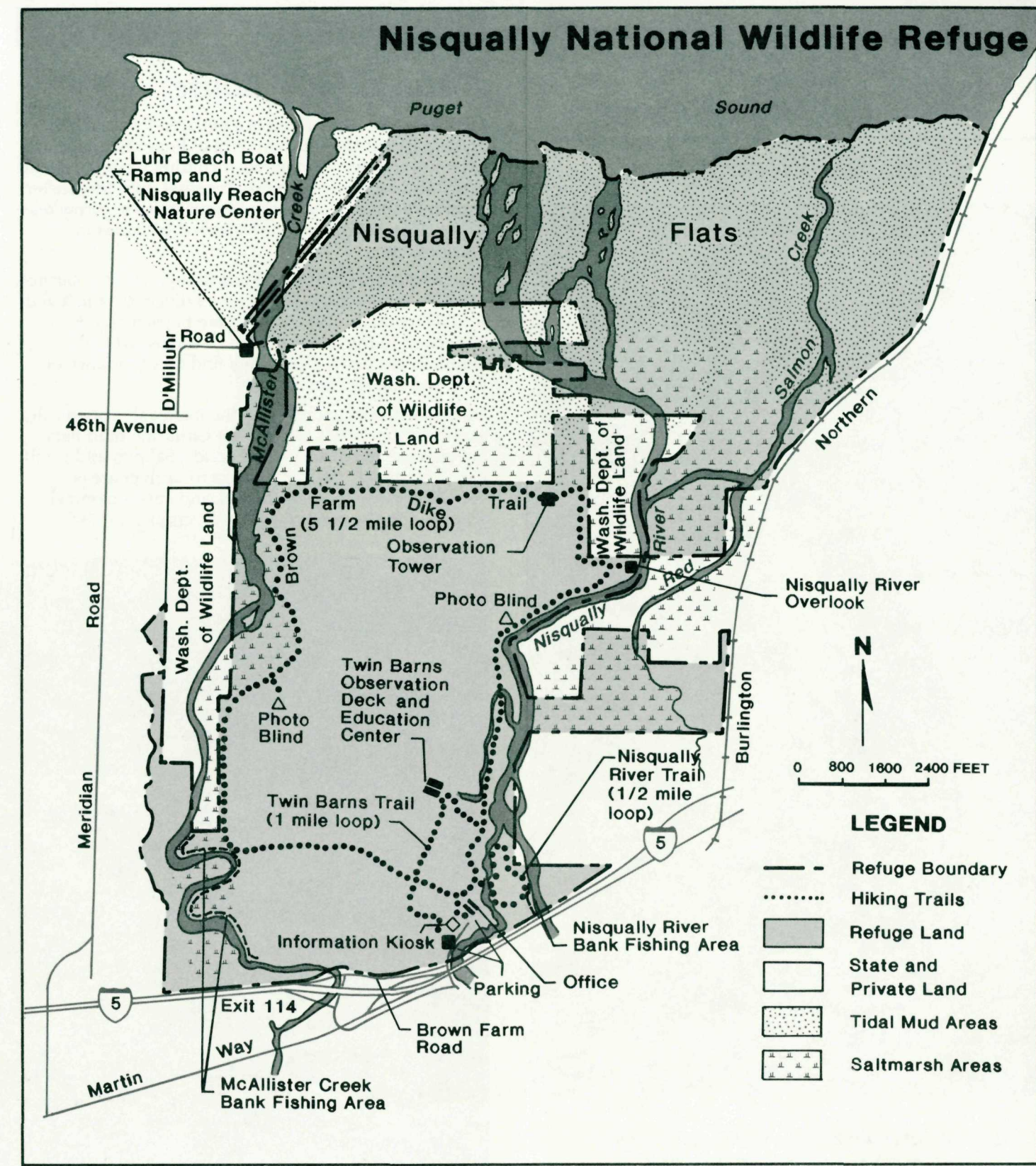
**Trails** — Easy 1/2-mile, 1-mile, and 5-1/2-mile loop trails provide views of wildlife habitats and access to observation decks, photo blinds, and the Twin Barns Education Center. Please stay on the trails.

**Boating** — Boating is permitted in waters outside the Brown Farm Dike. Canoeists, kayakers, and small boaters should beware of hazardous tides, shallow waters, wind, and weather conditions around the Nisqually Delta. The nearest public boat ramp is at Luhr Beach.

**Fishing** — Fishing from boats is permitted in waters outside the Brown Farm Dike. Fishing from the river banks is permitted only in the designated Nisqually River and McAllister Creek Bank Fishing Areas. Washington State regulations apply.

**Hunting** — Waterfowl hunting is allowed on the Washington Department of Wildlife's Nisqually Wildlife Area. Posted areas of Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge are closed to hunting. Washington State regulations apply, and access is by boat.

**Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge Is Not A Park** — Sports such as jogging, bicycling, frisbee throwing, kite flying, and jet skiing are disturbing to wildlife and to other visitors and should be done elsewhere. Pets are not permitted on the refuge. Please bring binoculars, spotting scopes, and telephoto lenses to help you observe and photograph wildlife.



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