

National Wildlife Refuges in Indiana

Big Oaks, Muscatatuck and Patoka River



National Wildlife Refuges in the United States. The Great Lakes-Big Rivers Region is shown in gray.



President Theodore Roosevelt

The National Wildlife Refuge System

President Theodore Roosevelt created the National Wildlife Refuge System in 1903 when he set aside tiny Pelican Island on Florida's east coast as a refuge for birds. The System has grown to over 545 refuges and thousands of waterfowl production areas, spanning nearly 100 million acres across the U.S. and its territories.



Paul Kroegel, Pelican Island refuge manager

Most National Wildlife Refuges were established to protect and enhance wetlands for the conservation of migratory birds and to provide habitat for endangered species. Indiana refuges preserve and manage diverse habitats for wildlife that are fast disappearing.

Refuges for Wildlife and People!

Wildlife comes first on national wildlife refuges. All human activities must be compatible with the needs of wildlife. Six uses are encouraged when appropriate: hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education and interpretation. ***The refuges in Indiana offer all of these and more!***

Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge
1661 W. JPG Niblo Road
Madison, IN 47250
812/273 0783
<http://midwest.fws.gov/bigoaks>

Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge
12985 E. U.S. Highway 50
Seymour, IN 47274
812/522 4352
<http://midwest.fws.gov/muscatatuck>

Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge
510 W. Morton Box 217
Oakland City, IN 47660
812/749 3199
<http://midwest.fws.gov/patokariver>

Persons with hearing impairments may contact these refuges through the Federal Information Relay System at 1 800/877 8339.

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



River Otter, Mark Trabue



Turkey, M. Trabue



Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge

Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge, established in 2000, is located in Jefferson, Ripley and Jennings counties in southeastern Indiana. The refuge consists of approximately 50,000 acres. Big Oaks was created under a joint agreement with the U.S. Army and Air Force, through a 25-year real estate permit. The Army retains ownership of the land (the closed Jefferson Proving Grounds). Big Oaks provides habitat for over 120 bird species and 46 state rare and endangered plants. Because of its value to migratory birds, Big Oaks has been designated as a *Globally Important Bird Area*. Refuge habitat includes large expanses of grassland, early successional shrublands and forest. Habitat management includes prescribed burning to promote habitat continuity and diversity.

Hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, environmental education and interpretation. Open Monday and Friday, and the second and fourth Saturday of each month from April-November. Hours are 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m. A safety orientation and access permit are required.



Bass Fishing!
E. Hester, USFWS

Public Use
at Big Oaks



Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge

Muscatatuck is Indiana's first national wildlife refuge and was established in 1966 in Jackson and Jennings counties in southern Indiana.

Muscatatuck was purchased with funds from the sale of Federal "Duck Stamps." It includes 7,724 acres near Seymour and a 78-acre parcel, known as the Restle Unit, near Bloomington, IN. Muscatatuck is a Native American word for "winding waters" in reference to the river along its southern boundary. Its mission is to restore, preserve, and manage a mix of forest, wetland and grassland habitat for fish, wildlife and people. Over 280 species of birds have been seen at Muscatatuck, making the refuge a *Continental Important Bird Area*.

Hunting, fishing, environmental education, interpretation, wildlife observation and photography, hiking, visitor center/bookstore, auto tour, log cabin historic site, special events throughout the year. Open sunrise to sunset every day.

Public Use at
Muscatatuck



"What's that?"
B. Angus, USFWS



Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge and Management Area

Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge and Management Area was established in 1994 in Gibson and Pike counties, along the Patoka River in southwest Indiana. To date 5,211 acres, with a goal of 22,765 acres, have been acquired. The focus of the refuge is restoration of bottomland hardwood forest habitats.

As home to the largest nesting colony of the endangered interior least tern east of the Mississippi River, the Cane Ridge Unit is recognized as a *Globally Important Bird Area*. Over 380 species of wildlife, including a new species of burrowing crayfish verified in 2002, have been observed on the refuge.

Hunting, fishing, environmental education, wildlife observation, photography, hiking and canoeing. Open sunrise to sunset every day.



Interior least tern, USFWS

Public Use
at Patoka