

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Santee

National Wildlife Refuge



Santee National Wildlife Refuge established in 1942, is located in Clarendon County, South Carolina. The 15,000 acre refuge lies within the Atlantic Coastal Plain and consists of mixed hardwoods, mixed pine-hardwoods, pine plantations, marsh, croplands, old fields, ponds, impoundments and open water. This tremendous diversity of habitat supports many kinds of wildlife. The four management units of the refuge stretch over 18 miles along the northern side of Santee Cooper's Lake Marion. The office/visitor center offers many interesting displays for public viewing and is located off U.S. Highway 301/15, seven miles south of Summerton and four miles north of Santee.



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

We Need This Refuge

To provide food, water and shelter for migrating ducks, geese and swans during the months of November through February.

To provide food, water, and shelter for many other migratory and residents birds.

To provide habitat and protection for endangered and threatened species including the bald eagle, and American alligator.

To provide opportunities for environmental education, interpretation and wildlife-oriented recreation for refuge visitors.



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Wildlife

A myriad of wildlife species inhabit the varied landscape of Santee. During the winter months, the threatened bald eagle and occasionally the endangered peregrine falcon can be seen. From November through February migrating waterfowl such as mallards, pintails, teal and wood ducks along with Canada geese are a major attraction. Throughout the year red-tailed and red-shouldered hawks can be viewed soaring

Cover Photo:USFWS

overhead, as can a variety of songbirds in the trees, and wild turkey.



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Birds are not the only residents of Santee. The forest provides a home for white-tailed deer and other woodland creatures such as raccoons, squirrels and bobcats. The ponds and marshes provide a home for alligators plus a number of other reptiles and amphibians.

Habitat Management

To support a large variety of wildlife species, intensive habitat management is a must. The habitat management programs at Santee range from the very basic to complex.

One of the basic programs is the wood duck nest box program, where nesting boxes are provided in areas that are lacking in available tree cavities, thus “adding to” the natural habitat.

The water and marsh management program is more complex. Water levels are adjusted to provide maximum benefits for wildlife. In the impoundments and marshes different



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levels are used to help some types of vegetation to grow while controlling unwanted “pest plants”.

Periodically flooded woodlands containing nut-producing hardwoods are food-rich and very beneficial to waterfowl.



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The management of forest and croplands are also critical. Private farmers are contracted who plant corn, wheat, millet and soybeans. These crops attract many species of wildlife. The refuge receives a share of the crops at no cost to the government.

Habitat management is a complicated process but well worth the effort since it provides an abundant amount of food, cover and shelter for a wide range of animals.

Enjoy Your Visit

Santee offers a variety of outdoor recreation activities for the refuge visitor. The refuge Visitor Center presents a general overview of what there is to do and see at Santee.

Trails for hiking, wildlife observation and photography are available. An auto tour route is available on the Cuddo Unit. Boating, fishing and hunting are also permitted.

Boating

Lake Marion is open year-round to boating, except Cantey Bay, Savannah Branch and Black Bottom, which is closed from November 1 through February 29.



Fishing

All areas open to boating are also open to fishing, as well as the Scott's Lake Public Fishing Beach. These areas produce largemouth bass, catfish and bream. Remember, all Federal and State regulations are in effect.

Hunting

Permitted on the refuge during designated seasons. Deer, small game, and dove seasons are scheduled yearly. A refuge permit is required for hunting. Consult the hunt brochure for additional details.

We Recommend

Check with the refuge office for current information on portions of the refuge that are closed during parts of the year.

Layered clothing during cool months and the use of insect repellent during warm months are recommended.

Binoculars, spotting scopes, and field guides are also highly recommended.

Prohibited Activities

All government property including natural, historic, and archaeological features are protected by Federal Law. Searching for or removal of objects of antiquity or other value is strictly prohibited.



Please do not pick flowers or remove other vegetation.

Fires, camping, swimming and ATV's are prohibited.



Firearms are prohibited unless specifically authorized by the Refuge Manager. Firearms transported in vehicles during hunts must be unloaded and encased or dismantled.



Wildlife Calendar

This calendar is meant to provide visitors with a general guide to seasonal wildlife events.

Weather may cause slight variations. The best times to observe wildlife are generally early morning and late afternoon.



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January

Waterfowl concentrations peak with Canada geese abundant on wheat fields and ducks and coots in the impoundments and bays. "Winter" sparrows, juncos and finches are here in good numbers for the winter. Striped bass are schooling.

February

Waterfowl numbers begin to drop with shovelers becoming prevalent. Crappie begin to move into the creeks. Wood ducks, purple martins and bluebirds are beginning to look over the nesting boxes.

March

Raptors are plentiful. Alligators may be seen sunning on canal and pond edges. Largemouth bass begin to move into the shallows.

April

Butterflies and dragonflies are everywhere. Buntings, orioles, tanagers, vireos and blue grosbeaks have returned and warblers are migrating. Productive fishing for most species.

May

Spring migration continues. Nesting activities are evident. Excellent fishing for all species.

June

Fish begin to seek out cooler waters. White bass begin schooling.

July

Shorebirds begin to return from their nesting grounds and can be seen on pond and lake edges. Young of the year are out practicing their skills and learning to survive. Bass, crappie and catfish have moved to deep water.

August

Summer warblers begin to migrate south. Redbugs, biting flies and mosquitoes are voracious. Fishing is generally poor.

September

Fall songbird migration peaks. Terns are leaving as kestrels, blue-winged teal and gulls are arriving.

October

Raptors, cormorants, white-throated and song sparrows, and waterfowl are arriving in numbers. Ruby-crowned kinglets and yellow-rumped warblers are prevalent. Catfishing is excellent.

November

Bald eagles are frequently sighted around waterfowl concentrations. Striped bass are schooling.

December

Large concentrations of waterfowl. Whistling swans may be observed on Bluff Unit. Excellent fishing for largemouth bass, striped bass and catfish.



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Visitor Center

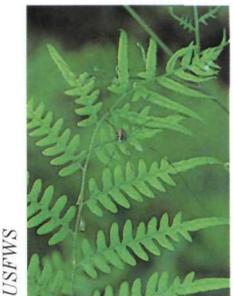
The Santee Visitor Center is currently open Tuesday through Sunday, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm. It contains a number of displays describing refuge wildlife and habitats. The Center provides an excellent opportunity for the visitor to become acquainted with the refuge before venturing out and is highly recommended, especially for the first time visitor.



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Wildlife Observation

Trails are open for wildlife observation, photography and hiking. For history buffs the Ft. Watson/Santee Indian Mound is a must. Wading birds, song birds and wintering migratory waterfowl may be observed from the observation tower along the Wright's Bluff Nature Trail, which is open year-round.



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The National Wildlife Refuge System

Santee National Wildlife Refuge is one of over 514 refuges in the National Wildlife refuge System. The mission of the system is to preserve a national network of lands and waters for the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, and plant resources of the United States for the benefit of present and future generations. The Refuge System encompasses over 92 million acres

administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, an agency of the Department of the Interior.

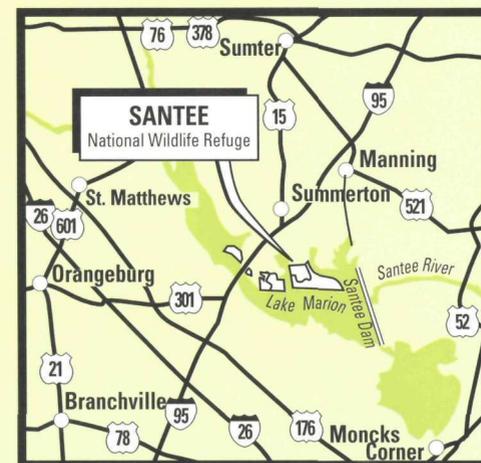
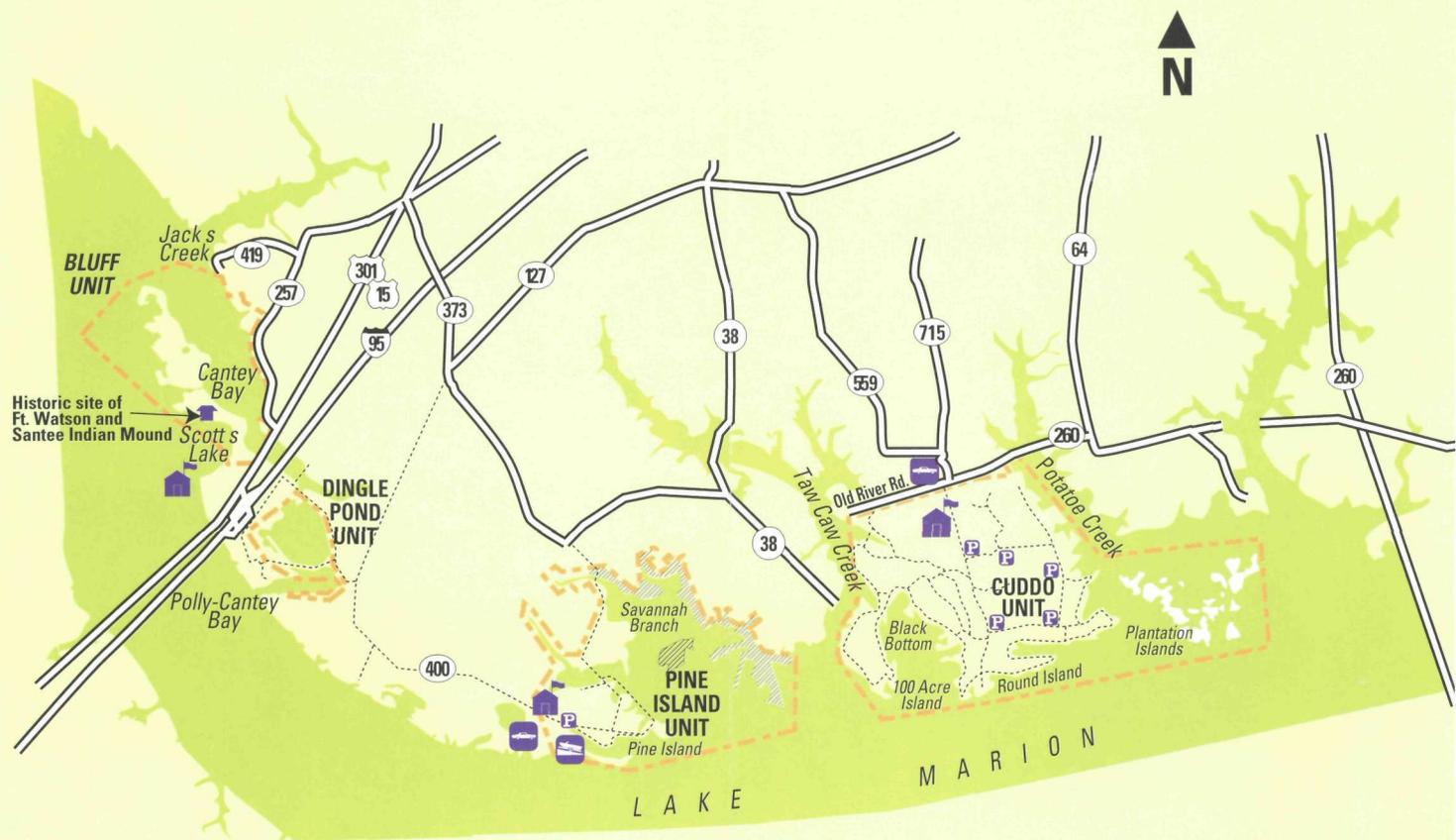
In addition to the Refuge System, the Fish and Wildlife Service is responsible for the endangered species program, National Fish Hatcheries, certain marine mammals and migratory birds as well as other wildlife programs.



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For more information contact:

Refuge Manager
Santee
National Wildlife Refuge
Route 2, Box 370
Summerton, SC 29148
Phone: 803/478 2217



Santee National Wildlife Refuge

LEGEND	
	Refuge Boundary
	Roads
	Vehicle Entry Point
	Vehicle Parking Area
	Check Station
	Boat Ramp
	Area Closed to Hunting

Santee National Wildlife Refuge
Route 2, Box 370
Summerton, SC 29148
803/478 2217
<http://www.fws.gov/r4eao/wildlife/nwrsnt.html>

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
<http://www.fws.gov/~r4eao>

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