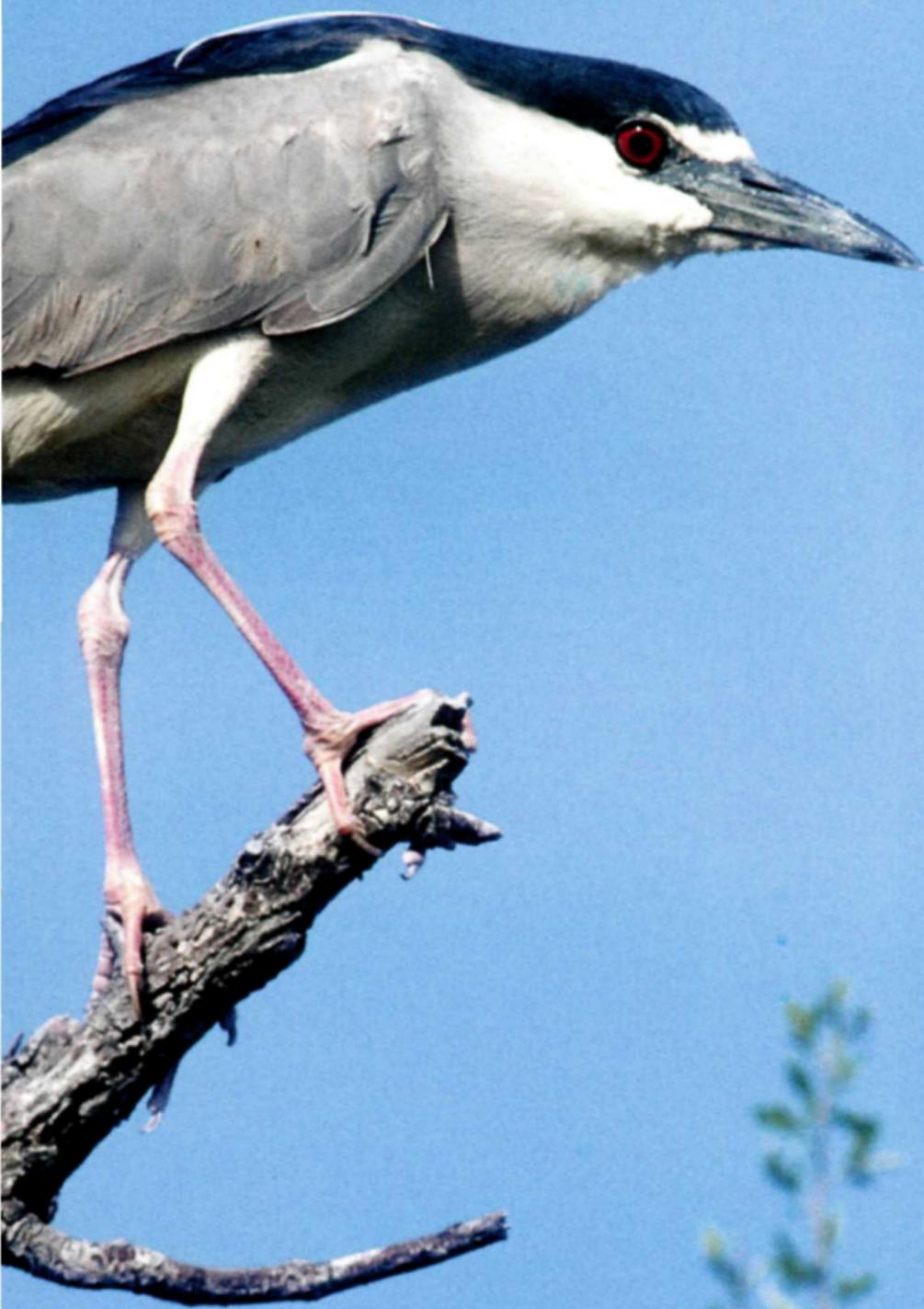


U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Two Ponds

*National Wildlife
Refuge*



Welcome



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

Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is located in Arvada, Colorado, 13 miles northwest of downtown Denver and 10 miles east of the Rocky Mountain foothills. The setting was once characterized by plant communities of the High Plains - shortgrass and mixed-grass prairie. Livestock grazing and plowing of prairie sod for crops by European settlers altered the native plant and animal communities. More recently, housing developments and urbanization have also decreased the land available for native wildlife. In 1990, a local citizen's group was instrumental in saving this site from development. Their efforts contributed to the establishment of Two Ponds NWR in 1992.

Two Ponds NWR is one of over 540 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System — a network of lands set aside specifically for wildlife. Managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Refuge System is a living heritage, conserving wildlife and habitat for people today and generations to come.

About the Refuge

Century-old irrigation canals, which still provide water for Front Range farmers, divide this 72-acre Refuge into three tracts. Mature cottonwood trees line the canals and the edges of three small ponds. Nine acres of wetlands contain cattails, milkweed, rushes, and willows. Brome grass dominates the treeless uplands, but it is interspersed with native plants such as needle-and-thread grass, yucca, prickly pear cactus, and rabbitbrush. An old apple orchard, ornamental trees, and shrubs are reminders of past human occupation of the land.

Amidst the growing metropolis of Denver, Colorado, Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge preserves and enhances habitat for a variety of wildlife. The Refuge also provides people with a natural oasis where they can explore the wonders of nature.



David Jammie/USFWS

Throughout the Year

As the seasons change, so does the landscape and its plant and animal inhabitants. Two Ponds NWR is used by more than 112 bird species, 11 mammal species, and 6 reptile and amphibian species.

As spring arrives, the ice melts off the ponds and the vegetation greens. Watch for waterfowl visiting the ponds as they make their way north to their breeding grounds. Bullock's orioles gather grasses to make their hanging nests high in the trees.

Throughout the summer, deer move quietly through the woodlands and grasslands. Butterflies are attracted to wild roses and other blooming plants. Painted turtles sunbathe on partially submerged logs. Look for young kestrels practicing their flying skills. The air is abuzz with the sounds of dragonflies, the chatter of jays and kingfishers, and the reedy trill of red-winged blackbirds.

Cooler weather ushers in fall. As the days shorten, the leaves on the trees and shrubs turn shades of red and gold. Ducks, geese, and blackbirds stop to rest at Two Ponds NWR during their journey south. White-crowned sparrows, juncos, and warblers search for seeds and insects. Ripened apples and plums provide a banquet for raccoons, foxes, blue jays, and magpies.

Mule deer (above); fall at Two Ponds NWR (below)



© Robert E. Barber

Tracks in the winter snow reveal animal activity in the seemingly quiet landscape. Raccoons, red fox, small voles, and mule deer criss-cross the Refuge in search of food. The elevated points of the Refuge provide breath-taking views of the Rocky Mountains.

Managing the Refuge for People and Wildlife

Exotic tree, shrub, and grass species have replaced most of the native vegetation at the Refuge; this is a result of 130 years of agricultural activity. Refuge staff use a variety of mechanical, biological, and limited chemical methods to control the spread of these plants until native plant communities can be re-established.

Visitor Opportunities

Refuge trails meander through prairie meadows, wetlands, and riparian woodlands and are open from dawn to dusk. Free tours and environmental education classes are available for groups of ten or more and can be tailored to the age and interest level of the group. Scouting programs to help fulfill badge requirements are available by reservation. Please call to schedule programs or make special arrangements. The first Saturday in June marks the celebration of National Trails Week. During this event, exhibitors provide wildlife-oriented educational displays and activities for the entire family.

A place for parent and child to make connections.

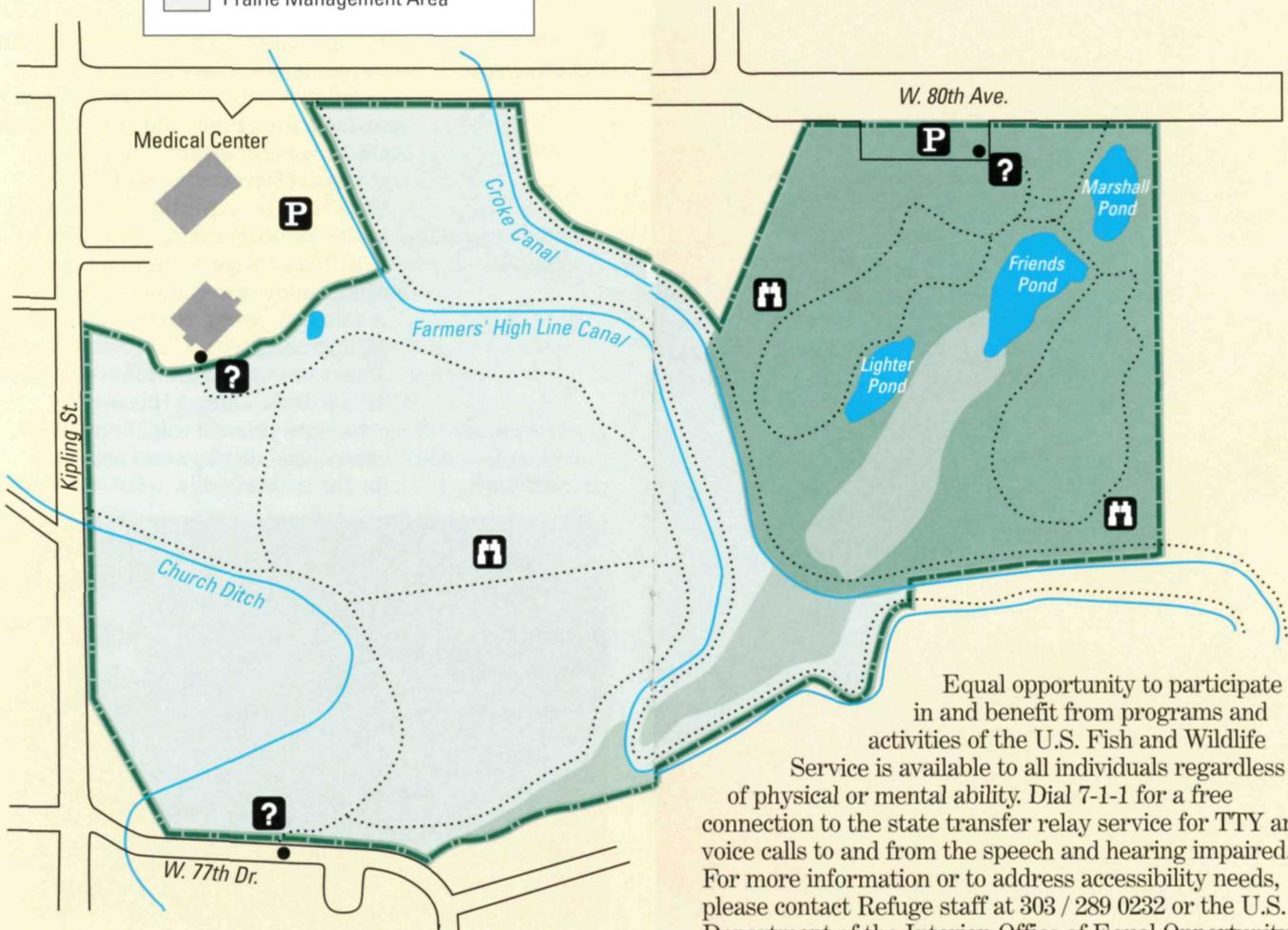
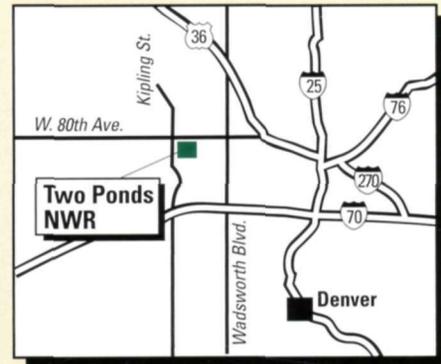


Irv Cohen/USFWS

Two Ponds

National Wildlife Refuge

-  Refuge Boundary
-  Nature Trails
-  Parking
-  Access Points
-  Wildlife Viewing Areas/Overlooks
-  Visitor Information Kiosks
-  Major Water Bodies
-  Cattail Wetlands
-  Environmental Education Area
-  Prairie Management Area



Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of physical or mental ability. Dial 7-1-1 for a free connection to the state transfer relay service for TTY and voice calls to and from the speech and hearing impaired. For more information or to address accessibility needs, please contact Refuge staff at 303 / 289 0232 or the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Two Ponds

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Refuge*

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<http://www.fws.gov>

For Refuge Information
1 800 / 344 WILD

June 2003



CELEBRATING A
CENTURY
of CONSERVATION



Black-crowned night heron
© Wendy Shattil/Bob Rozinski