



National Wildlife Refuge System

Profile of the Refuge System

Wild Things

The Refuge System includes:

- The only diverse national network of public lands set aside for the conservation of fish, wildlife and plants.
- Over 92 million acres of land and water.
- Over 500 refuges, several thousand Waterfowl Production Areas, and 50 Coordination Areas.
- A wide variety of "special management areas" such as Wilderness, Research Natural Areas, Wetlands of International Importance, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Natural Landmarks.
- 21 refuges designated as Class I Areas under the Clean Air Act, meaning they receive the highest levels of protection, including Cape Romain, SC; Okefenokee, GA; and Moosehorn, ME.
- Important habitat for over 700 bird species, 220 mammal species, 250 reptiles and amphibians species, and over 200 species of fish.
- Hundreds of national wildlife refuges are located along the four major migration corridors, or "flyways," for waterfowl and other birds (Atlantic, Mississippi, Central, and Pacific). These refuges serve as vital "stepping stones" for millions of birds on their long annual migrations.
- 17 refuges have provided suitable habitat or the historic range for transplanted or reintroduced threatened and endangered species.
- 356 refuges conduct habitat management for threatened and endangered species.
- 425 refuges have active migratory bird management programs.

- Habitat for 168 threatened and endangered species on over 400 refuge with 58 refuges established under authority of the Endangered Species Act

The Refuge System attracts nearly 29.5 million visits annually to engage in wildlife-dependent recreation:

- Approximately 98 percent of the land the Refuge System is open to the public
- Wildlife-dependent recreation programs are conducted on 371 refuge including environmental education programs on 191 refuges.
- Over 40 percent of refuge visits occur on 10 refuges, including Chincoteague, VA; Wichita Mountains, OK; and Merritt Island, FL.

Refuge visitors come to:

- Observe and photograph wildlife (18 million visits).
- Hunt (1.5 million visits).
- Fish (5.2 million visits).
- Participate in environmental education/interpretation programs (8.5 million visits).

Want more? Call—better yet, visit—your local refuge!

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
National Wildlife Refuge System
1-800-344-WILD
<http://refuges.fws.gov>**