U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Discover Nature's Best Hunting and Fishing:

The National Wildlife Refuge System

The National Wildlife Refuge System is one of America's greatest conservation success stories. In its first hundred years, it helped save our national symbol, the American bald eagle, from extinction and has protected hundreds of other wild species—including—fish, migratory birds, and many other plants and animals and the habitats that support them.

CELEBRATING A CENTURY of CONSERVATION

Hunting and fishing are American traditions that date back long before the Revolutionary War. Today, hunting and fishing are enjoyed by millions of Americans who cherish this traditional connection with wildlife, as did their ancestors. In addition, hunting and fishing serve as an important wildlife management tool in many locations.

Today, with more than 535 wildlife refuges nationwide, hunters and anglers can enjoy the outdoors from the salt marshes of the Chesapeake Bay to the tundra of Alaska, and everywhere in between. Whether hunting waterfowl at Prime Hook Refuge or fishing for bass on the lakes of Tishomingo Refuge, these special places offer hunters and anglers the best of the American outdoors. For a complete list of refuges that welcome hunters and anglers, visit *http://refuges.fws.gov* or call 1-800-344-WILD.

Hunting

Hunters get a warm welcome at more than 300 wildlife refuges and 3,000 small wetlands known as waterfowl production areas. Whether stalking an elusive 6x6 bull elk, following their bird dogs in pursuit of upland birds, or setting a decoy spread for plentiful ducks and geese, hunters find challenges and rewards on wildlife refuges across the country. Following are just a few of the hunting opportunities that abound on wildlife refuges around the nation.

Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge, located on the Texas-Oklahoma border, is an excellent place for hunting deer, dove, squirrel, and rabbit. In addition, anglers catch striped bass, crappie, and channel catfish in man-made Lake Texoma. Just last year, one persistent bowhunter arrowed a potential world-record whitetailed deer on this wildlife refuge.

Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge encompasses 1.4 million acres in north-central Alaska. Moose are the most popular quarry here, but hunters also come in search of black and brown bear, and caribou. Visitors braving the harsh winter are often rewarded with a stunning display of the Northern Lights, and during the summer, the sun never sets.

Modoc National Wildlife Refuge, near Alturas, California, has dozens of lakes and ponds attracting 20,000 ducks and 15,000 geese each year. More than 7,000 acres of wetlands provide an expansive setting for fall waterfowl hunts, especially for Canada geese.

White River National Wildlife Refuge in central Arkansas is the mallard capital of the world, home to a million ducks each winter. Steeped in duck hunting history, the bottomland hardwoods and the perennial mallard chattering over this river remind hunters of the days gone by. Whether in pursuit of deer, ducks, or squirrels, hunting the bottomland hardwood forests on these 155,000 spectacular acres is the consummate outdoor experience.

Fishing

For Americans who like to fish, the National Wildlife Refuge System's waters teem with opportunities. Anglers are welcome on more than 260 wildlife refuges around the country.

Freshwater fishing has been a popular activity on wildlife refuges for many years, and an increasing number of visitors are discovering saltwater

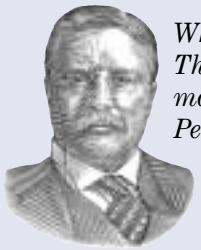
fishing opportunities as well. In all, over six million anglers visit wildlife refuges annually. In addition to the thrill of landing the "big one, " anglers enjoy spending time with family and friends and escaping the everyday hustle of modern life on wildlife refuges. Here are a few examples of wildlife refuges where the fishing is fantastic. Many also offer hunting opportunities and breathtaking scenery.

Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge, near New Orleans, offers urban anglers a pristine setting for both fresh and saltwater fishing. The marsh landscape supports a wide variety of graceful birds, waterfowl, and other creatures, making the spectacular views one of the many joys of fishing here.

Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge encompasses more than a million acres in north-central Montana. Fort Peck Reservoir provides an abundance of walleye, northern pike, smallmouth bass, and chinook salmon. The prehistoric paddlefish found in this refuge's 40 miles of pristine Missouri River grow to an angler-challenging 130 pounds.

John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum, where one can fish year-round amid the towers of downtown Philadelphia, is among a growing number of wildlife refuges with facilities accessible to the disabled. Anglers catch largemouth bass and tiger muskie, as well as catfish and panfish.

America's Best Kept Secret



When President Theodore Roosevelt made Florida's tiny Pelican Island a refuge for birds in 1903, he wrote the first chapter of a great American conservation success story. And the story of safeguarding America's migratory birds, endangered species, and other wildlife keeps getting better and better. Entering its second century, the National Wildlife Refuge System comprises 95 million acres, protected within more than 535 refuges and thousands of small prairie wetlands that serve as waterfowl breeding and nesting areas. There are wildlife refuges in every state, and at least one within an hour's drive of every major American city, providing much-needed refuge for people as well as wildlife.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is a Federal agency whose mission, working with others, is to conserve fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. Under the management of fish and wildlife professionals, the National Wildlife Refuge System has become the world's premier network of wildlife habitats.

Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, located in North Carolina's famous Outer Banks, has more than 12 miles of pristine Atlantic beach for surf fishing, where anglers can reel in red drum, bluefish, striped bass, and speckled trout. This wildlife refuge stretches from the ocean to Pamlico Sound, where the flounder fishing is excellent.

A Tradition of Support

Since the 19th century, hunters and anglers concerned about the future of wildlife have made countless contributions to conserving the nation's wildlife resources. Hunters have helped buy land for the National Wildlife Refuge System for nearly 70 years through their purchases of Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps—also known as Federal Duck Stamps.

More than one half of a billion dollars have been collected from the sale of Duck Stamps since 1934. Ninety-eight percent of the money is deposited in the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund and used to purchase wetland habitat—some 5 million acres so far—for the National Wildlife Refuge System. As the nation's first conservationists, hunters and anglers have provided more than $3 billion for state conservation programs through a hunting and fishing equipment excise tax known as the Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program. With their support, the future of wildlife is secure.

U.S. Department of the Interior
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Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge | John and Karen Hollingsworth | USFWS