

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Wheeler

## *Junior Refuge Ranger Activity Booklet*



*Wheeler  
National  
Wildlife Refuge  
Decatur,  
Alabama*

*America's  
National  
Wildlife  
Refuges...  
Where Wildlife  
Comes Naturally*



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## **How to Become A Junior Refuge Ranger**

To become a Junior Refuge Ranger, you must complete the activities in the booklet for your age group. When you are finished, take the booklet to the Refuge Visitor Center. The staff person will sign your certificate and make you an official Junior Refuge Ranger.

## **About Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge**

Wheeler NWR was established in 1938 as an area for ducks, geese, and other migratory birds to spend the winter. Today, Wheeler Refuge is one of over 500 refuges in the National Wildlife

Refuge System administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



*Marsh Scene*

*cover photo:  
Wood duck by  
J. Greene*

The 34,500 acre refuge supports a wide range of plant and animal life. Some of the plants and animals found on Wheeler Refuge are listed on the endangered or threatened species lists.

Look at the National Wildlife Refuge System Map in the Visitor Center. What Refuges are located in the State you live?

*State in which you live*

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*Refuges in your state*

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*Refuge closest to you*

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*Observation Trail*

**Trail Descriptions**

(200 yards)-walking, wheelchair accessible

*Atkeson Cypress Trail*

(0.5 miles)-walking, wheelchair accessible

*Environmental Trail*

(1.5 miles)-walking, wheelchair accessible

*Dancybottom Trail*

(2 miles)-walking

*Beaverdam Boardwalk*

(0.75 miles)-walking, wheelchair accessible

*Bald Eagle*



**Orientation Video Information (all ages)**

Watch the orientation video and have your booklet signed by the person at the front desk.

*Signature*

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*Date*

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**Questions About The Video**

*Canada Geese*



List 3 types of waterfowl shown in the video.

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*Canvasback Duck*



List 2 types of endangered or threatened species shown in the video.

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*Pitcher Plant*



List 2 other types of wildlife found on the Refuge.

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*Prairie Warbler*



Name 2 ways Refuge staff help wildlife.

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Name 2 activities people can do for fun on the Refuge.

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*Raccoon*



**Museum Exhibits (ages 5 - 7)**

Name something Canada geese eat.

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Name a poisonous snake displayed in the exhibits.

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*Orchard*



Name a non-poisonous snake displayed in the exhibits.

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How many fish are in the aquarium?

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**Draw one of the fish**



**Museum Exhibits (ages 8 -10)**

Take a good look at the “Wetlands for Wildlife Display”.

Draw one of the birds in the Display.



*Rabbit*



Name 2 types of fish in the aquarium.

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*Mud Salamander*



What are the 4 requirements for an animal's habitat?

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*Wood ducks*



Which flyway is Wheeler Refuge in?

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*Butterfly*



**Museum Exhibits (ages 11 -13)**

Whom was the Visitor Center named after?

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Name two ways a refuge helps preserve the natural habitat of waterfowl.

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Which flyway is Wheeler included in?

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What is the number one reason for the decline in waterfowl populations?

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*Barred Owl*



Which duck has a strangely shaped bill?

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Which bird has a red tip on its wing?

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What formation do Canada geese fly in?

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After reading and looking over the Woodduck Exhibit, explain about the "Success Story".

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*Alligator*



*Tundra Swans*

USFWS



**Tree Discovery (ages 5 - 7)**

Find a tree. Look at your tree. Look around your tree (on the ground, in the sky, everywhere).

Describe your tree. What colors do you see?

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Name some of the shapes the tree has on it.

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How tall do you think your tree is?

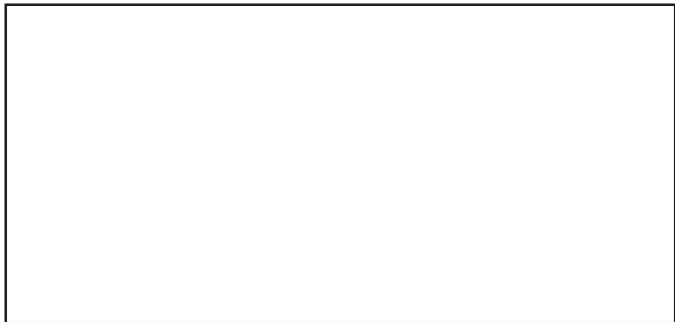
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Make a bark rubbing of your tree.

To make a rubbing, lay the paper against the bark of the tree and rub the pencil over it.



Draw a leaf from your tree.



*Turkey Vulture*

Nick Milam





*Gadwall*



Nick Milam

What could live in your tree?

\_\_\_\_\_

What could live on your tree?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Red-headed Woodpecker*



Nick Milam

**Tree Activity (ages 8 - 10)**

Solve the riddles below and discover just a few of the important parts of a tree.

I'm dead on the outside, but alive on the inside.

I come in many colors. Protection is my job. Some would say I am the tree's skin. Dogs always have this. What am I? \_\_\_\_\_

I am not fond of heights. I am often not visible. I have "hair." I help keep the tree standing. I am very thirsty. What am I? \_\_\_\_\_

The tree needs me and I need the tree. I am a factory. I help feed the tree both when I am alive and when I am dead. My job is photosynthesis. Check me out this fall. What am I? \_\_\_\_\_

*White-tailed Deer*



USFWS



**Tree Activity (ages 11 13)**

A deciduous tree loses its leaves in the winter. The leaves are generally broad and rounded.

An evergreen tree keeps its leaves all year. The leaves are long and pointed. They are generally called needles.

List 2 types of deciduous trees found on the Refuge.

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Draw a leaf of a deciduous tree.

Make a bark rubbing of a deciduous tree.

List 2 types of evergreen trees found on the Refuge.

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Draw a leaf of an evergreen tree.



Make a bark rubbing of an evergreen.



*Swallowtail Butterfly*



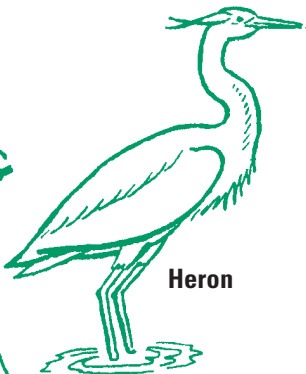
### Animal Activity (ages 5 - 7)

Sometimes we divide people into groups. The groups may be boys and girls. Groups could also be children and adults. All animals can be divided into five groups. These are mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, or reptiles.

In each group circle one animal that does not belong with the others.



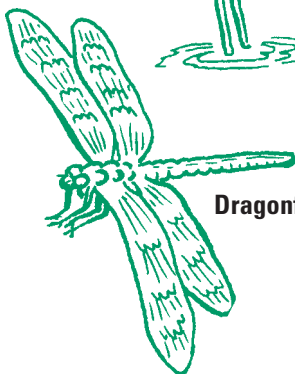
**Duck**



**Heron**



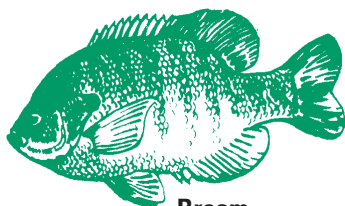
**Eagle**



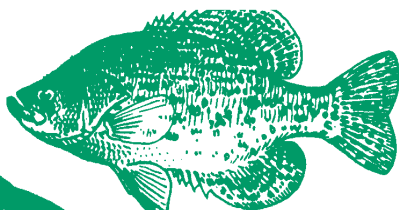
**Dragonfly**



**Opossum**



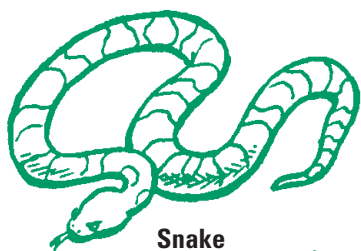
**Bream**



**Crappie**



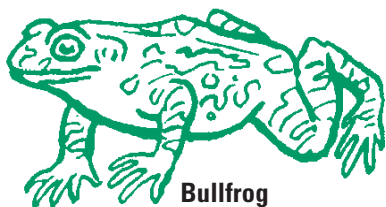
**Bass**



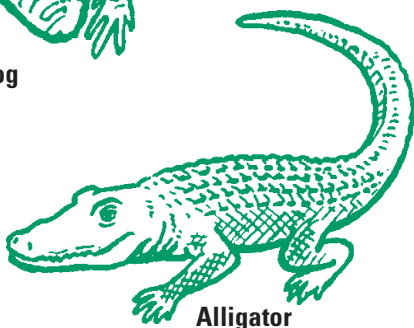
**Snake**



**Lizard**



**Bullfrog**



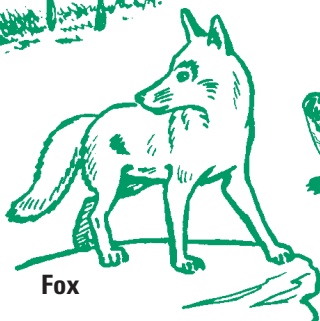
**Alligator**



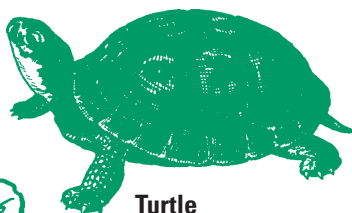
**Deer**



**Muskrat**



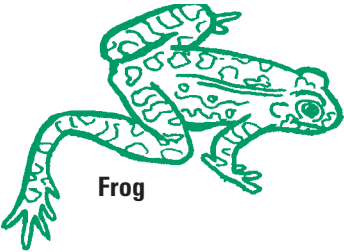
**Fox**



**Turtle**

**Animal Activity (Ages 8 -10 )**

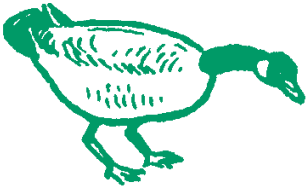
Baby wildlife sometimes have different names than their adult parents. On the left side of the page is an adult wildlife. On the right side of the page are their young, but the pictures are all mixed up. Can you match the young with their parents?



**Frog**



**Fry**



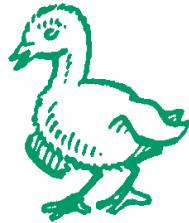
**Goose**



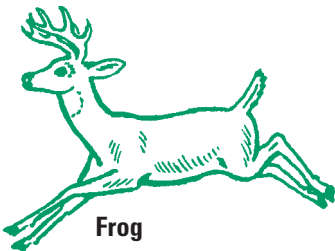
**Tadpole**



**Dragonfly**



**Gosling**



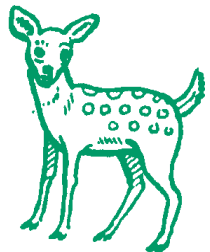
**Frog**



**Nymph**



**Fish**



**Fawn**

### Animal Acitivity (ages 11 - 13)

The words below are all names of wildlife found on the Refuge, but they are scrambled. Can you unscramble the letters to correctly spell the names? Then draw a line from the wildlife's name to its picture.

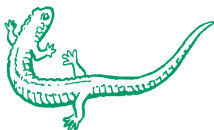
carcono \_\_\_\_\_



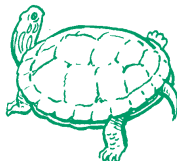
tbiarb \_\_\_\_\_



frgollub \_\_\_\_\_



shif \_\_\_\_\_



urtlet \_\_\_\_\_



veraeb \_\_\_\_\_



lfytetubr \_\_\_\_\_



mansalader \_\_\_\_\_



## Endangered and Threatened Species (all ages)

If a living thing is called an endangered species, that means not many of them are left. Without proper management and protection, they are “in danger” of becoming extinct. A threatened species can become endangered if not carefully supervised. If a plant or animal becomes extinct, that means that none are left in the entire world, and they are gone forever.

National Wildlife Refuges help endangered and threatened species by protecting their habitats.

Below are descriptions of endangered or threatened species found on the Refuge. Guess who.

This bird is our national symbol. Earlier this century, a pesticide called DDT weakened the eggshells so that baby birds couldn't hatch.



*Bald Eagle*

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This animal is the only true flying mammal. This particular species lives in local caves. They eat great quantities of night-flying insects.

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List some things you can do to help protect endangered and threatened species.

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## Wetlands (all ages)

Wetlands are special places that are habitat for many different animals. Wheeler Refuge has a variety of freshwater wetlands. The wetlands are managed to provide food and resting areas for migratory birds and other wildlife.

## Why Are Wetlands Wonderful?

*Flood Reducers*

Wetlands store flood waters.

*Nurseries*

Wetlands are nurseries for many fish, crabs, and other shellfish.

*Water Banks*

Some wetlands store water in the wet time of year to release later.

*Nature's Filters*

Wetlands help to purify water.

*Homes for Wildlife*

Wetlands are home to many animals and vacation spots for others.

*Fun*

Wetlands offer a place to hunt, fish, and to explore nature.

*Buffers*

Wetlands protect shore areas from waves and storms.

*Food*

We use wetlands for some of our fish, shellfish, and cranberries.



*Southern  
Leopard Frog*

Take a walk down the Atkeson Cypress trail. While on the boardwalk, close your eyes for 2 minutes. Listen to the sounds of the swamp.

Name 3 sounds you heard.

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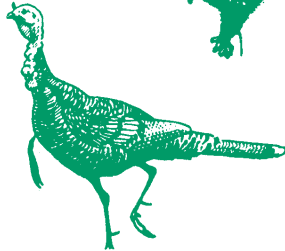
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**Tracks (all ages)**

Have you ever seen animal tracks? All land animals and birds make tracks. People who spend time outdoors learn to know which tracks go with each animal.

Draw a line from the track to the animal that made it.



As you are walking the trails on the Refuge or around your home, check muddy areas for animal tracks that may be present.

### **Scavenger Hunt (all ages)**

Using your keen senses of sight, hearing, touch, and smell, explore the Refuge. Try to find one example of each of the objects listed below.

Please remember to leave the natural object in place. Instead, draw a picture or write its name.

Something that smells good.

Something that feels cool.

Something an animal lives in.

Something high in the air.

Something older than you.

Something younger than you.

Something growing on something else.

Something that makes you happy.

Something that is noisy.

Something that is pretty.

# United States Department of the Interior



Fish and Wildlife Service

## This Certificate

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*has successfully*  
*Junior Refuge Road*  
*Wheeler National*

---

Signed

Department of the Interior

Wildlife Service



ifies That

---

*y completed the  
anger Program at  
al Wildlife Refuge.*

---

Date



photo: USFWS



*This blue goose, designed by "Ding Darling," has become a symbol of the Refuge System.*

### **Wildlife Jokes**

How do bees go to school? By buzz.

What do snakes do after they fight? Hiss and makeup.

What kind of rabbit can fix a flat? Jack rabbit.

Why are frogs such liars? They are amFIBians.

What do you call five toads stacked on top of each other? A toadem pole.

What hot cereal do ducks like best? Quacker Oats.

What do birds like to do in the park?  
Go on a PECKnic.

What kind of people do deer like  
best? vegetarians.

What animals live in computers?  
CHIPmunks.

What did the beaver say when it  
heard a chain saw? They're playing  
my song.

*Southern Fishing Scene*



**Wheeler  
National Wildlife Refuge  
2700 Refuge Headquarters Road  
Decatur, Alabama 35603  
256/350 6639  
<http://www.fws.gov/~r4eao>**

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
1 800/344 WILD**

**November 1998**

