



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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.

- More than 93 million acres of land and water.

- More than 500 refuges, several thousand Waterfowl Production Areas, and 51 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.

- The Refuge System provides habitat for 180 threatened and endangered animal species and 78 threatened and endangered plant species, with 56 refuges established under the authority of the Endangered Species Act.

The Refuge System attracts more than 34 million visits annually to engage in wildlife-dependent recreation:

- Approximately 98 percent of the land in the Refuge System is open to the public.

- The Refuge System offers environmental education programs on 230 field stations.

- Over 40 percent of refuge visits occur on 10 refuges, including Chincoteague, VA; Wichita Mountains, OK; and Ding Darling, FL.

- The Refuge System offers hunting programs on more than 290 refuges and fishing on more than 260 refuges.

Refuge visitors come to:

- Observe and photograph wildlife (16 million visits).

- Hunt (1.6 million visits).

- Fish (5.5 million visits).

- Participate in environmental education/interpretation programs (11 million visits).

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

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

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