

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

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NEW BIRD REFUGE ESTABLISHED AT MOUTH OF SAVANNAH RIVER

An important breeding and resting area for migratory birds, known as the Tybee Migratory Bird Refuge, has been established at the mouth of the Savannah river in Georgia. This refuge, approximately 130 acres in extent, lies about 12 miles below the city of Savannah.

Tybee is a man-made island of low sand dunes which began as a small shoal at the mouth of the Savannah. Subsequent dredging operations, to improve the harbor, raised the shoal, and created the island. Later spoilwork along the river channel extended it.

Tybee is a famous nesting spot for black skimmers. Least terns, oyster catchers, Wilson's plovers, willets, and royal and gull-billed terns also nest here. Herons, egrets, and other birds frequent the area. In the shallows around this island, ducks raft during the spring and fall migrations. On its eastern side, facing the ocean, huge sea turtles come out of the deep to deposit their eggs.

The War Department and the Department of Commerce will retain supervision over the tract, but it will be under secondary supervision of the U. S. Biological Survey by the President's Executive Order dated May 9, 1938.

"This island is a valuable acquisition for certain shore birds that nest in the area," says Ira N. Gabrielson, Chief of the Survey. "It lies within 20 miles of the Savannah River Refuge and serves a select group of the species which the Biological Survey is endeavoring to restore and protect."