



NEWS

from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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TAKE A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE DURING NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE WEEK

America's fascinating array of wild animals and plants call more than 500 national wildlife refuges home. You're welcome to visit these refuges anytime but if you drop by during National Wildlife Refuge Week, October 5-13, 1996, you'll enjoy an even closer look into the natural world we all share.

National Wildlife Refuge Week is timed to coincide with the annual fall migration, so millions of birds are sure to fly in to most refuges in the lower 48 states on their way south. Birdwatching should be at its best. Other special wildlife-dependent recreational events planned for the week include birdwatching walks led by some of the Nation's leading naturalists, wildlife art displays, photography exhibits and slide shows, nature demonstrations, and more.

No matter where you live in the United States, you're likely to be within a short drive of a national wildlife refuge. Some refuges, such as Bayou Sauvage just outside of New Orleans and John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum at the edge of Philadelphia, are literally a stone's throw from major urban areas. Others, such as Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, are located in some of the country's wildest, most remote locales. All of them are carefully maintained so that these priceless portions of our natural heritage can be passed along for future generations to enjoy.

The varied panorama of landscapes and constantly changing seasons combine to make a visit to one of the refuges in the system a rewarding experience most any time of year. Still, National Wildlife Refuge Week is one of the best times novices and avid naturalists alike can get acquainted with these little-known conservation treasures.

For additional information on National Wildlife Refuge Week and a brochure with a complete map of the refuge system and basic visitor's information for every refuge, call 1-800-344-WILD.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency with responsibility for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages 508 national wildlife refuges covering 92 million acres, as well as 72 national fish hatcheries.

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The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, manages migratory bird populations, stocks recreational fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, administers the Endangered Species Act, and assists foreign governments in their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that funnels Federal excise taxes on angling and hunting equipment to state wildlife agencies. This program is a cornerstone of the Nation's wildlife management efforts, funding fish and wildlife restoration, boating access, hunter education, shooting ranges, and related projects across America.