

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Waubay

*National Wildlife Refuge
and Wetland
Management
District*





This blue goose, designed by J.N. “Ding” Darling, is the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

About the Refuge

Waubay National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is one of over 565 refuges and 38 wetland management districts in the National Wildlife Refuge System – a network of lands set aside specifically for wildlife. The Refuge System is a living heritage, conserving wildlife and habitat for people today and for generations to come.

Waubay NWR was established in 1935 as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife. The Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, comprised of the Isanti or Santee Dakota (Sioux) people, called the area that is now Waubay NWR, “Wabe” (WAH beh) – a waterfowl nesting place. Waterfowl, including ducks and geese, use the small wetlands here as breeding habitat and a place to raise their young, while the grasslands provide nesting cover.

The Refuge is open year-round during daylight hours. The headquarters building, which includes the office and visitor center, is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, except Federal holidays.

Wildlife and Habitat

The Refuge has 4,650 acres of forest, grassland, and wetland habitats. You can observe 245 bird species – 100 of which nest here.

Forest

The deciduous forest here has basswood, bur oak, and green ash trees. Plants such as jack-in-the-pulpit, false solomon’s seal, wild raspberry, and woodland phlox grow in the understory. You can see Baltimore orioles, red-eyed vireos, rose-breasted grosbeaks, wood pewees, and yellow warblers using the forest during migration, breeding, or nesting. A variety of woodpeckers – downy, hairy, northern flicker, and red-bellied – make their year-round home here.

Grasslands



A regal fritillary sips nectar from a coneflower.

Prairie grasslands surround the forest. Here, colorful wildflowers such as maximilian sunflower, prairie coneflower, purple coneflower, and Rocky Mountain bee plant are interspersed in the big bluestem, porcupine grass, and switchgrass. Watch and listen for grassland nesting birds such as bobolinks, dickcissels, grasshopper sparrows, and western meadowlarks.

Wetlands

Wetlands nurture a variety of insects and plants that attract songbirds, shorebirds, wading birds, and waterfowl. Blue-winged teal are the most abundant duck species here, and other common ducks include gadwalls, mallards, northern shovelers, and redheads.

Opportunities for Recreation

We invite you to discover and explore Waubay National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge is home to a variety of wildlife, which can be viewed while hiking or when using paddlecraft or non-motorized boats that are launched at boat access points.

Spring Lake Overlook Trail









Take a short walk on the Spring Lake Overlook Trail to view colorful grasses and blooming wildflowers during spring, summer, and fall. As you view the nearby wetland, watch for duck pairs or hens with their broods. American white pelicans and double-crested cormorants are also commonly seen on Spring Lake.

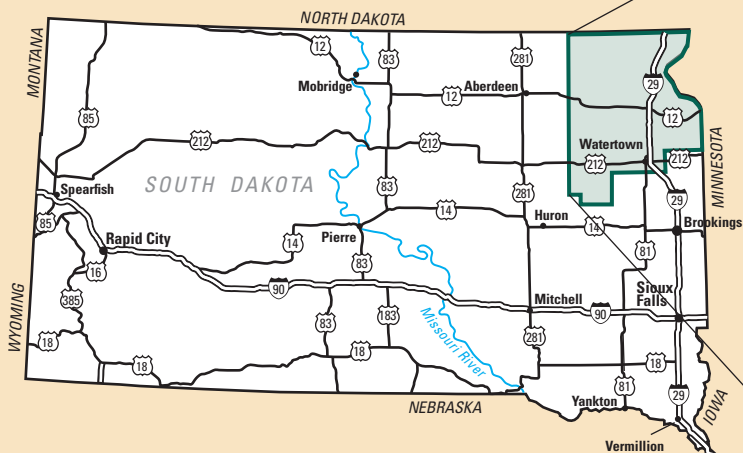
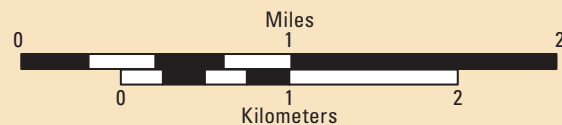
Headquarters Island Trail

As you walk the Headquarters Island Trail, you will encounter forest, grassland, and wetland habitats that provide food and cover for birds and other wildlife. Watch for signs that feature names of wildlife in the Dakota language, spoken by indigenous peoples.

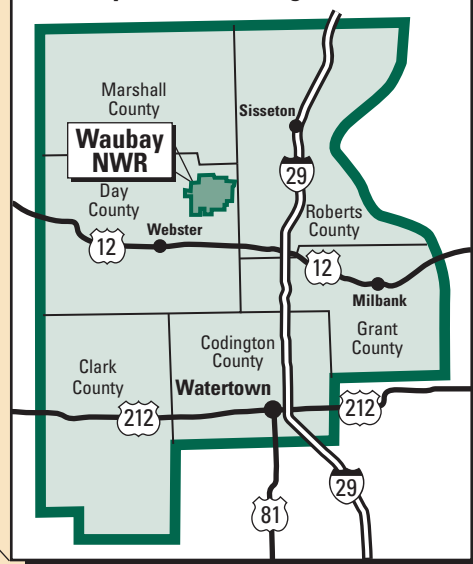
Waubay

National Wildlife Refuge

-  Refuge boundary
-  Public refuge road
-  Refuge headquarters
-  Recreation area
-  Observation tower
-  Headquarters Island Nature Trail
-  Spring Lake Overlook Trail
-  Fieldstone shelter



Waubay Wetland Management District



*Observation
Tower*

Climb the observation tower that was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1935. The tower originally served as a vantage point where Refuge staff watched for wildfires. Today, you can climb 133 steps to reach the top, which is 110 feet above ground, for a view of the Refuge and surrounding area.

*Fieldstone
Shelter*

Relax and watch birds near the fieldstone shelter that is nestled along the shore of Hillebrand's Lake. The shelter was constructed by members of the Works Progress Administration during 1937 and 1938.

*Hunting and
Fishing*

Portions of the Refuge are open to deer hunting and fishing. The *Hunting and Fishing Information* brochure provides detailed information, regulations, and a map.

*Protecting the
Refuge*

To help protect people, wildlife, and habitat, please observe the following:

- Vehicle travel is restricted to public roads.
- Animals, artifacts, and plants must not be disturbed.
- Non-motorized boats and paddlecraft must be launched at boat access points.
- Pets must be on a leash controlled by the handler or inside a vehicle or fish house.
- Littering is prohibited.
- Camping is prohibited.

**Wetland
Management
District**

The Waubay Wetland Management District (District) includes waterfowl production areas (WPA) across six counties in northeast South Dakota. In 1959, McCarlson WPA, located in Day County, was the first land purchased as a WPA. Since then, over 40,000 acres of waterfowl production areas have been purchased in Clark, Codington, Day, Grant, Marshall, and Roberts counties. WPAs are open to hunting,

fishing, trapping, wildlife observation, and photography.

Duck Stamps

Funds to purchase WPAs come from the sale of Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation stamps, also known as Duck Stamps. Hunters who are 16 years of age or older are required to purchase these stamps prior to hunting waterfowl. Nationwide, over 6 million acres of habitat have been protected with funds from Duck Stamp sales.

Conservation Easements

Refuge staff partner with private landowners to protect habitat. More than 100,000 acres of wetlands and 200,000 acres of grasslands in the District are protected through wetland easement and grassland easement agreements with private landowners.

Firearms

Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuge System lands must comply with all provisions of State and local law. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations (50 CFR 27.42 and specific refuge regulations in 50 CFR Part 32.)

Accessibility

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of physical or mental ability. For more information, please contact the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, www.doi.gov/accessibility.

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Mallard pair
Sandra Uecker / USFWS