

Blackwater

*National Wildlife Refuge
Fishing, Crabbing and
Boating Regulations*



Season

Sport fishing, crabbing and boating on Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge are permitted within refuge boundaries from April 1 - September 30, dawn till dusk. The refuge is closed to boating and canoeing at all other times of the year to prevent impacts to refuge wildlife. Airboat use is not permitted.

Waters Open to Fishing and Crabbing

Fishing and crabbing are restricted to boats and the Key Wallace roadway across the Little Blackwater River. No fishing or crabbing is permitted along the Refuge shoreline or the Wildlife Drive. Blackwater NWR waters include the Blackwater and Little Blackwater Rivers and the associated expansive shallow water marsh areas. Navigation can be difficult due to submerged mudflats, a meandering unmarked channel, and shallow water tidal changes. Boat launching is not permitted from the refuge. A public launching ramp is available at Shorter's Wharf.

All fishing and crab lines must be attended.

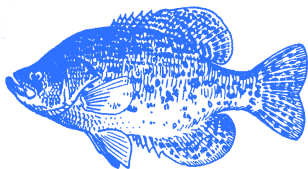
Permit

No special refuge permits are required, however, a valid State sport fishing license is required to fish in the Blackwater River and the Little Blackwater River. State regulations apply while fishing and crabbing on the refuge.

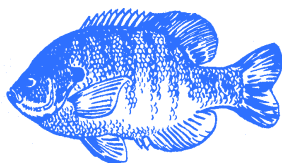
Species

Fishing on the Refuge is poor to fair in the Blackwater River for tidal largemouth bass (black bass), striped bass (rockfish), white and yellow perch, black crappie, and bullhead and channel catfish. The Little Blackwater River is a very popular spot for the spring run of white perch. Other species available in the waters of the refuge are carp, bluegill and pickerel.

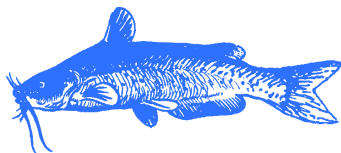
black crappie



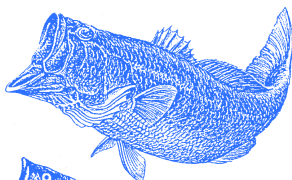
bluegill



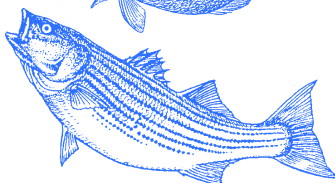
channel catfish.



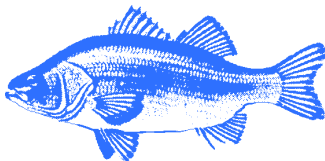
*largemouth bass
(black bass)*



*striped bass
(rockfish)*

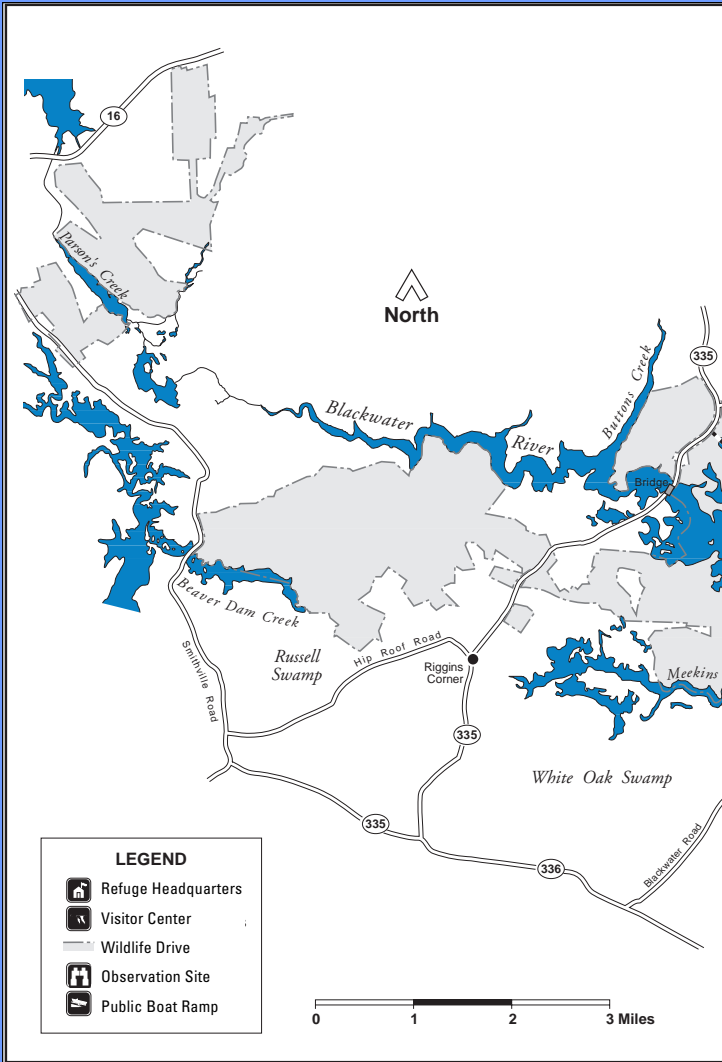


white perch








yellow perch





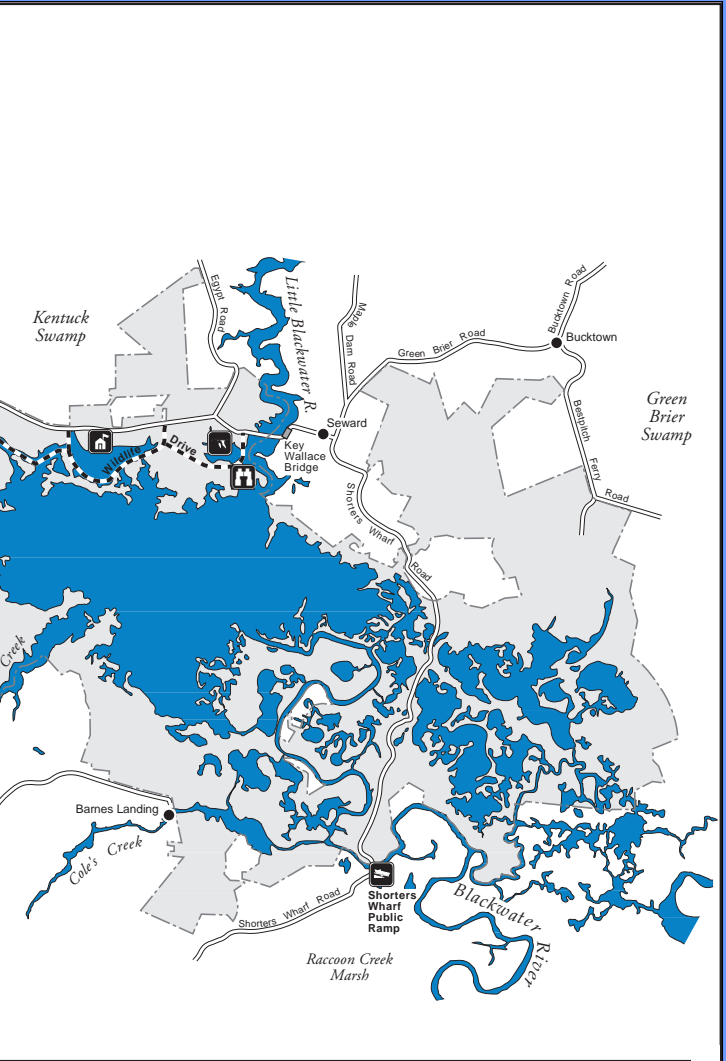
LEGEND

-  Refuge Headquarters
-  Visitor Center
-  Wildlife Drive
-  Observation Site
-  Public Boat Ramp

0 1 2 3 Miles

Blackwater

National Wildlife Refuge



Fishing Near the Refuge

The most popular fishing areas are located near the bridges over the Little Blackwater River on Key Wallace Drive and the Blackwater River on Route 335. Visitors should check with the Maryland Department of Transportation and Dorchester County Highway Administration regulations regarding fishing from bridges since regulations are subject to change. Key Wallace Drive has no road shoulders on which to park near the bridge. Although there are no parking areas, visitors with small boats or canoes often carry them from their vehicles to the water near the bridges.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Blackwater is one of more than 510 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The National Wildlife Refuge System is a network of lands and waters managed specifically for the protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat and represents the most comprehensive wildlife management program in the world. Units of the system stretch across the United States from northern Alaska to the Florida Keys and include small islands in the Caribbean and South Pacific. The character of refuges is as diverse as the nation itself. The Service also manages National Fish Hatcheries, and provides Federal leadership in habitat protection, fish and wildlife research, technical assistance and the conservation and protection of migratory birds, certain marine mammals, and threatened and endangered species.

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge
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Hearing impaired visitors may call the
Maryland Relay Service at TDD/800 735 2258 voice

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

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