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August 2009



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Eastern Neck

National Wildlife Refuge



Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge, located at the mouth of the Chester River in Kent County, Maryland, was established in December 1962. This 2,285-acre island refuge is a major feeding and resting place for migratory and wintering waterfowl on Maryland's famed "Eastern Shore." The refuge is also home to the southern bald eagle and the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel.

Sunset/USFWS

cover photo: Swans/Heather Davidson

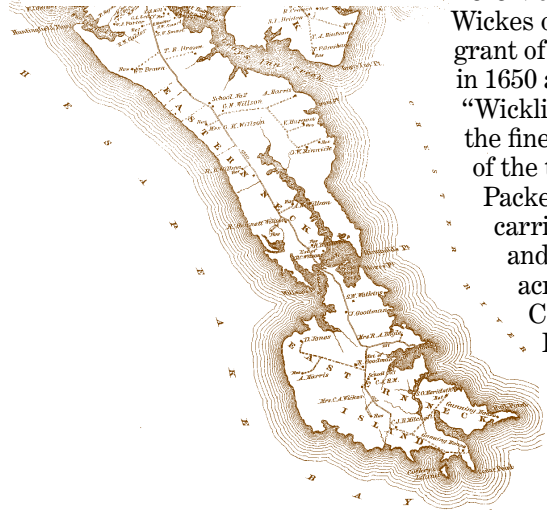
Settlers and Packet Ships

Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), an island strategically located at the confluence of river and bay, has a long and varied history. The island was among the first settled areas in the New World.

Here Major Joseph Wickes obtained a grant of 800 acres in 1650 and built "Wickliffe," one of the finest mansions of the time.

Packet ships that carried goods and passengers across the Chesapeake Bay made regular stops at Bogles Wharf on the east side of the

island from colonial days until 1924. Farming and waterfowl hunting were the most important land uses prior to the establishment of the refuge. The island was known as one of the best hunting grounds on the bay and was a favorite with gunning clubs.



Terry Willis

Wildlife

The varied habitats on Eastern Neck NWR, including brackish tidal marsh, forest, cropland, grassland, and open water impoundments, provide a home for a variety of wildlife species. Over 240 species of birds, and a variety of mammals, amphibians and reptiles inhabit the island.



T. Goettel

Diamondback terrapin

Birds

Between October and March, thousands of migratory waterfowl winter in the Chesapeake Bay. Refuge staff have documented peaks of more than 50,000 waterfowl of 33 different species on and near the refuge. The most common species include Canada geese, tundra swans, lesser scaup, and mallards. Other waterfowl species often found on the refuge include American black ducks, canvasbacks, buffleheads, northern pintails, green- and blue-winged teal, American wigeons, ruddy ducks, long-tailed ducks and other sea ducks.

The fall and spring months are the best times to view migratory songbirds as colorful warblers, tanagers, flycatchers and vireos utilize refuge woodlands to fuel their migration.

Southern bald eagles, our national symbol, are also found on the refuge and have nested and successfully fledged eaglets every year since 1986. Refuge staff continue to monitor and protect these majestic birds, which



Dave Sorflaten

Canvasbacks

were removed from the Endangered Species List in June, 2007.

Great blue herons, green herons, and great and snowy egrets are commonly found in the tidal flats and marshes of the refuge. Numerous shorebirds including killdeer, greater and lesser yellowlegs, least, spotted, and semipalmated sandpipers and woodcock can be observed at various times throughout the year.

The refuge woodlands, hedgerows, open fields, and other habitats provide excellent opportunities to observe a variety of bird life, including raptors, woodpeckers, swallows, and wild turkeys. A bird list is available at the Visitor Contact Station.



Matt Buckingham

Eastern screech owl

Mammals

The refuge is home to a diversity of mammals including white-tailed deer, beaver, red fox, raccoon, muskrat, opossum, woodchuck, eastern gray squirrel and the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel. The abundance of wildlife offers high quality wildlife viewing opportunities for the attentive visitor.



Delmarva Fox Squirrel

The refuge is one of several sites where remnant populations of the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel exist. This species of squirrel once occurred throughout the Delmarva Peninsula and into southeastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey. Today, it persists naturally only in portions of four counties on the eastern shore of Maryland. Visitors are unlikely to spot one of these endangered squirrels as they are extremely rare on Eastern Neck NWR.

Refuge Management Waterfowl

Management activities to enhance refuge habitat for wintering and migratory waterfowl include upland and wetland management practices. A cooperative farming program provides a variety of browse and grain crops for wintering waterfowl. Managing water levels in impoundments encourages the production of moist soil plants, which provides valuable food for migratory waterfowl. Manipulating water levels in five green tree reservoirs, or winter-flooded woodlands, allows wood ducks, black ducks and other species to forage for mast and invertebrates in the leaf litter on the forest floor.

Invasive Species

Non-native, invasive species threaten the biological diversity and integrity of all habitats on Eastern Neck NWR. Invasive plants typically grow in dense stands, displacing native plant communities and reducing the value of habitats for wildlife.



Wood duck

Wetland Restoration

Phragmites and mile-a-minute are just two examples of invasive plant species found on Eastern Neck NWR. Management activities to control invasive species involve the use of fire, herbicides and mechanical manipulation.

Shoreline erosion and wetland loss threatens critical habitat at Eastern Neck NWR. Management activities to restore tidal marsh habitat include shoreline and shallow water habitat protection. Off-shore breakwaters and the use of clean on-site dredge material have proven beneficial in restoring and protecting tidal marsh wetlands and submerged aquatic vegetation.

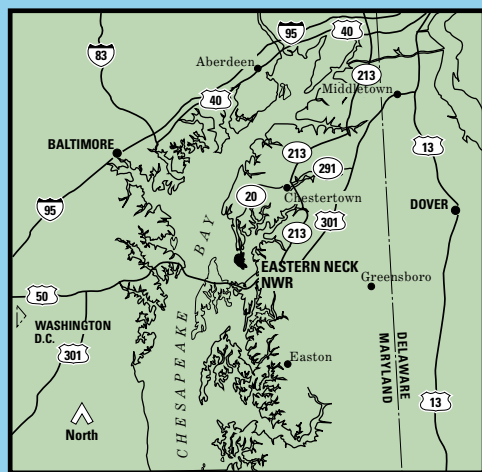


Red Fox

Eastern Neck

National Wildlife Refuge

Chesapeake Bay



Ingleside Recreation Area
open April 1-Sept. 30

Bayview Butterfly Trail
Residence

Residence

Maintenance Compound

Residence

Tidal Marsh Overlook Trail

Baybush Point

Tundra Swan Boardwalk

Tubby Cove

Boxes Point Trail

Tubby Cove Boardwalk

Duck Inn Trail

Bogles Wharf Road

Bogles Wharf Landing

Refuge Office & Visitor Contact Station

Wickes Historic Site

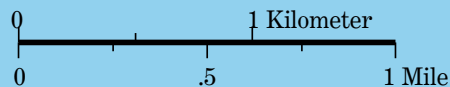
Panhandle Point

Narrows Point

Cedar Point

Hail Point

Legend	
	Refuge Office & Visitor Contact Station
	Parking Area
	Restroom
	Wildlife Viewing Area
	Public Fishing Access
	Boat Launch
	Accessible Area
	Marsh
	Refuge Boundary
	Buildings
	Gate
	Refuge Roads (Public)
	Refuge Roads (Restricted)
	Refuge Hiking Trails



Wildlife Calendar

Spring

By the middle of March, most ducks, swans and geese have departed for northern breeding grounds. Osprey return from southern wintering grounds in mid-March and begin constructing nests. Resident ducks begin incubating eggs in April. Songbird migration peaks in late April and early May. Woodcock chicks and deer fawns are born in May.

Summer

Young eagles and great horned owls are learning to fly in June. Blue birds fledge in July. In August, osprey may start their migration south while blue-winged teal, the earliest waterfowl migrants, begin to arrive from northern breeding grounds.

Fall

Songbird southern migration peaks in late September and early October. Great horned owls begin to establish territories in October. Waterfowl populations gradually increase and peak in November. Between the last week in October and the second week in November, migrating tundra swans stage on the refuge.

Winter

Waterfowl are abundant throughout the winter months. Bald eagles establish territories and start nest building in December and January, laying eggs through February. Great horned owls begin nest building in January, and hatching may begin in late February. Woodcock may be seen performing their courtship displays in February.



Bald eagle

Dr. Thomas G. Barnes/USFWS



Common goldeneye

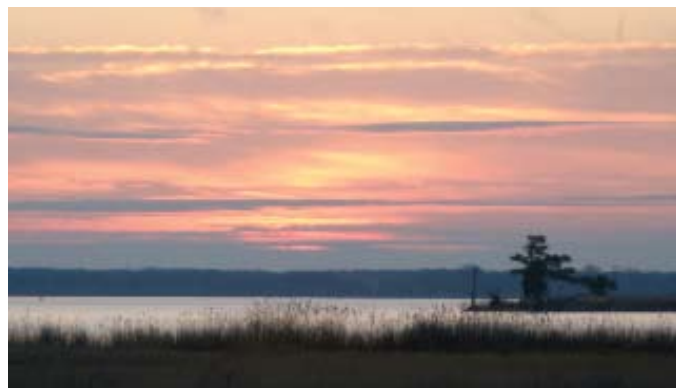
Heather Davidson

Visitor Opportunities Hours

Designated areas north of the entrance gate at Bogles Wharf Road are open from sunrise to sunset daily. Areas south of the gate are open from 7:30 a.m. until sunset. Bogles Wharf is open from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily. Please contact the refuge office for current Visitor Contact Station hours.

Visitor Contact Station

The Visitor Contact Station features refuge information and exhibits depicting the history of Eastern Neck Island and refuge wildlife and habitats. The Visitor Contact Station also houses a bookstore managed by the Friends of Eastern Neck and staffed by refuge volunteers.



Sunrise

Richard C. Pagella, Sr.

*Wildlife
Observation*

Nearly nine miles of roads and trails are open to visitors much of the year. Seven foot trails and boardwalks, four of which are universally-accessible, are available for those wishing to observe the varied habitats and wildlife of the refuge. In order to protect wildlife and their habitats, visitors must stay on designated trails or roads. Please be aware that ticks, chiggers and mosquitoes are abundant, especially during the summer months.

*Tundra Swan
Boardwalk
(140 feet)*



This accessible boardwalk is an excellent location in which to view tundra swans and other waterfowl in the winter; and a great place to fish and crab in the summer months.

*Tubby Cove
Boardwalk
($< \frac{1}{4}$ mile)*



Great views of Calfpasture Cove, Tubby Cove and the Chesapeake Bay can be seen from the observation platform and viewing blind located at the end of this wooden boardwalk.

*Boxes Point
Trail
(1.2 miles)*

This mostly forested trail ends at the Chester River; an excellent location to view wintering waterfowl and bald eagles.



Kayaking



Zebra swallowtail

USFWS

*Duck Inn
Trail
(1 mile)*

Look for migratory songbirds in spring and fall along the forested stretches of this trail. Waterfowl are often visible in late fall and winter in the Chester River at the trail's end.

*Wildlife
Trail
($\frac{1}{2}$ mile)*

Songbirds are plentiful along this wooded trail, particularly during spring and fall migration.

*Bayview
Butterfly
Trail
($\frac{1}{3}$ mile)*



This loop trail meanders through a restored grassland and young forest, offering great views of the Chesapeake Bay. Butterflies are sure to be seen in the summer months. Be sure to investigate the bayscape garden located adjacent to the Cape Chester House.

*Tidal Marsh
Overlook Trail
(260 feet)*



This short trail located behind the Visitor Contact Station leads to a viewing blind overlooking the Chester River and Kent Island. Look for waterfowl and other water birds in the pond just beyond the blind.

*Paddling
Trail*

The Eastern Neck Island Water Trail encircles the refuge and connects scenic, historic and wetland restoration sites. Launch at Bogles Wharf or Ingleside Recreation Area.

Boating/Fishing and Crabbing

Kent County operates the Ingleside Recreation Area and Bogles Wharf landing within the refuge. The Ingleside Recreation Area, on the northwest side of the refuge, has facilities for crabbing and car-top boat launching from April 1 to September 30. Picnic tables are available for use during these months.

Bogles Wharf landing is located on the east side of the refuge and offers trailered boat launching facilities (county trailer permit required – not available at the refuge office).

Additionally, fishing opportunities are available at the Tundra Swan Boardwalk, Ingleside Recreation Area, Bogles Wharf, and the bridge spanning the Eastern Neck Narrows.

Hunting

Seasonal hunting opportunities are available for deer and turkey. Deer hunts are conducted on designated days throughout October and November to help control the deer population. Turkey hunts take place in April or May for youths 10 to 15 years of age. During the hunts, all or portions of the refuge will be closed. Contact the refuge office to obtain current hunting regulations, permits, and information on refuge closures.



Great blue heron

USFWS

Protecting Wildlife

In order to protect wildlife and their habitats, certain restrictions are in effect on the refuge.

Visitors must stay on designated roads and trails.

Pets must be on a hand-held leash.

Camping, off-road vehicles and fires are prohibited. All firearm possession and transport on the refuge are governed by state law. Firearm use is allowed by refuge hunt permit holders during special refuge hunts only.

Collection of plants or animals, or feeding or disturbing wildlife, is prohibited.

Other restrictions may apply; contact the refuge manager for further information.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Eastern Neck NWR is one of more than 550 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.



Bogles wharf

USFWS