

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Patuxent Research Refuge  
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
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<http://www.fws.gov>

February 2008



# Patuxent

## *Research Refuge*

### *South Tract Trail Map*

### *National Wildlife*

### *Visitor Center*



## Welcome



This goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Patuxent Research Refuge, established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936, was America's first and only refuge devoted to support wildlife research. Patuxent's mission is "to help protect and conserve the nation's wildlife and habitat through research on critical environmental problems and issues." Its 12,750 acres of forest, meadow, and wetland habitats are managed to promote biological diversity and the protection of native and migratory bird species. The refuge staff encourage compatible public uses in designated areas.

### Loop Trail

*0.5 km/0.3 mi*  
(wheel chair accessible)

Loop Trail is the refuge's only paved trail. It starts at the visitor center's gallery door and offers views of Lake Redington and Cash Lake. Plantings along the trail highlight a power company's right-of-way management program, a meadow and a created wetland. This trail also provides access to other trails and to a boardwalk with an accessible wildlife observation blind.

### Goose Pond Trail

*0.3 km/0.2 mi*

This trail parallels the woods' edge as it wanders through a forested wetland to a pond where one may observe waterfowl and waterfowl management. An outdoor environmental area is available to educational groups. Access to the Cash Lake and Laurel trails begins here.



*Male hooded  
merganser*

*Buck*



### Cash Lake Trail

*2.3 km/1.4 mi*



Cash Lake trail loops around the 53-acre Cash Lake, the refuge's largest water impoundment. This trail connects to Valley Trail. Floating walkways provide access to a grassy peninsula on the south side of Cash Lake. This south portion of the trail is closed seasonally to avoid disturbance to nesting and wintering waterfowl. Visitors have many opportunities to observe a variety of wildlife from this trail. Beavers swim and play in the lake. Visitors may view waterbirds from an accessible wildlife viewing blind located near the lake's headwaters.

### Valley Trail

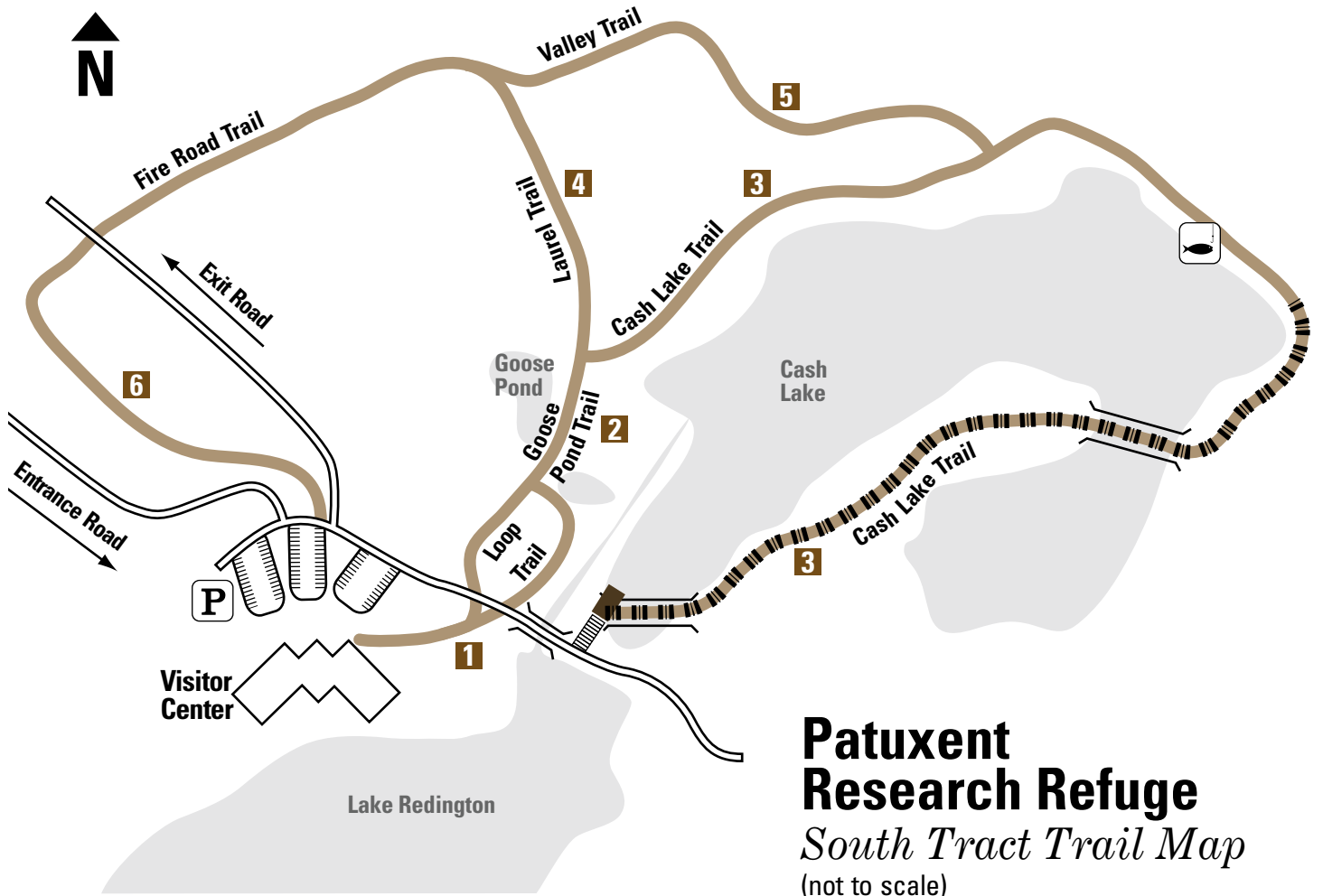
*0.9km/0.6 mi*










This trail connects Cash Lake Trail and Laurel Trail. It follows a gully through a woodland valley. Along this trail, visitors will see features of a predominantly oak and beech hardwood forest.




### Fire Road Trail

*1.5 km/0.9 mi*

This trail begins at the edge of the visitor center parking lot near the exit road and leads to the intersection of the Valley and Laurel trails. This trail follows an old fire road through a pine and hardwood forest that was formerly a forestry research area.



-  Trail
-  Floating Walkways 
-  Boardwalk 
-  Road bridge
-  Parking
-  Fishing pier (Permit only) 

- 1** Loop Trail  .3 mi/.5 km
  - 2** Goose Pond Trail .2 mi/.3 km
  - 3** Cash Lake Trail 1.4 mi/2.3 km
  - 4** Laurel Trail .4 mi/.6 km
  - 5** Valley Trail .6 mi/.9 km
  - 6** Fire Road Trail .9 mi/1.5 km
-  Closed seasonally
  -  Viewing blind



*Wood ducks with nest box*



**Laurel Trail**  
*0.6 km/0.4 mi*

This woodland trail connects Goose Pond Trail to Valley Trail and Fire Road Trail. It is named for the mountain laurel lining the trail. This trail is dedicated to Chandler S. Robbins, a researcher at the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center who has spent more than 50 years studying migratory birds and their environment.

**Other wildlife viewing opportunities**

Guided electric tram tours are offered seasonally through woodlands and wetland areas. A variety of wildlife and research activities may be seen along the way. Tickets can be purchased in the bookstore. Hiking or driving on the tram route is not permitted.



*Great blue heron*  
© Julien Beauregard

**Regulations**

To better protect our wildlife and its habitat and to prevent disturbance to ongoing research, we ask visitors to remain on marked trails and to respect posted signs and regulations.

*Canada goose*



Removal of wildlife or plants from the refuge or introduction of new species is prohibited.

Non-wildlife related recreational activities such as picnicking, ball playing, camping and sunbathing are not permitted.

Possession of alcohol is not permitted.

The trails are designed for foot traffic only. Bicycles are not permitted. Dogs are permitted on the trails but must be kept on a leash no longer than 10 feet and must be under control at all times.

If you have any questions, refuge staff and volunteers will be happy to assist you. Enjoy your National Wildlife Refuge System experience at Patuxent Research Refuge.

National Wildlife Visitor Center and all trails close at 4:30 pm unless otherwise posted.

