

Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Photography Blinds

Two photo blinds are now available to the general public. One is located near Corvallis at William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) off Finley Refuge Road near Muddy Creek. The other is located near Jefferson at Ankeny NWR off Wintel Road on Frog Pond. The best time of year to photograph wildlife is generally from November through April. Wading birds, ducks, geese, and raptors are usually present in large numbers throughout the winter. Photographers may also catch a glimpse of other resident wildlife including beaver, Roosevelt elk, black tail deer, fox, and squirrels. All seasons will provide a wide variety of opportunities for nature photography enthusiasts.

Scheduling

- **By web, phone or email:** Advance reservations are accepted by sending an email to willamettevalley@fws.gov, by mailing a written request to the refuge at the address below, or by calling during normal business hours. Include your name, address, phone number, email address which blind you wish to reserve (Finley or Ankeny) and the date(s) and time(s) you wish to schedule. If corresponding by email, please enter “Wildlife Photo Blind” in the subject line.
- **Reservations should be made no later than two business days prior to requested date.** You must receive confirmation of your reservation prior to using the blind.
- Refuge staff will notify you to by email to confirm your reservation. Print this confirmation and leave on dashboard of vehicle at trail head on the reserved day. If the date you have requested is unavailable, you will be given the option to choose another date.
- The blinds are available year-round, subject to the following provisions:
 - **Reservations required during the winter closure season (November 1 – March 31 at Finley NWR and October 1 – March 31 at Ankeny NWR)**
 - Blinds are available for use without reservations during the remainder of the year. However, other visitors may be encountered in the general vicinity of the blinds during this time.
- Reservations are for the entire day. Blinds may be accessed during normal refuge hours, which are sunrise until sunset.
- Please contact the refuge if you must cancel your reservation, so that others may schedule the blind.
- Reservations are taken on a first-come, first-served basis. Up to 4 advance reservations can be made up to two months ahead of time.
- You may schedule only 2 weekend days per blind in any given month.
- Walk-up reservations may be made during normal business hours, if the blinds are available. All reservations are handled out of William L. Finley NWR headquarters, just south of Corvallis off Hwy. 99W. Office hours are Monday through Friday from 8am until 4pm. The office is closed on Federal holidays.
- There are no fees to use the blinds. However donations for maintenance are appreciated and may be made to: The Friends of Willamette Valley NWR Complex, PO Box 20328, Keizer, OR 97307.

Using the Blinds—things you need to know

- Photographers must use the established trails to access the blind during winter closure season.
- Approach the blind quietly and slowly. You will minimize wildlife disturbance and maximize your wildlife photography opportunities.
- Walking only—no jogging, driving, or bicycling. Pets are not allowed on refuge trails.
- Staff, volunteers, or other persons may need access to the general area of the blinds. We will try to minimize our impact as much as possible to the photographer.
- Blinds are not handicap accessible. Please contact the refuge for assistance.

- There are no restrooms along the trail. Please plan accordingly. If you take a break, please leave and return to the blind quietly to minimize wildlife disturbance.
- Blinds are built to comfortably accommodate two persons. Chairs are not provided.
- Smoking is not permitted in the blinds.
- When exiting the blinds, please secure all windows and door.
- Accessing Finley Photo Blind:
 - Park in designated lot just west of Muddy Creek and on the north side of the road. During winter closure, use the trail just to the east of the parking lot that leads through the wooded area for about ¼ mile. This trail can be very wet during winter. Boots are recommended. During open season, the dike trail may be used.
- Accessing Ankeny Photo Blind:
 - Park in designated parking lot north of Wintel Road and west of Pintail Marsh Parking Lot. Walk a short distance along the base of the dike to the rear access door of the blind.
- All refuge regulations must be observed.

Additional Information

- Refuge reserves the right to revoke photography privileges. Anyone found to be in violation of any conditions in these guidelines will have their photography blind privileges immediately revoked and will be asked to leave the area.
- Checklist of helpful items to bring to the blind:
 - Flashlight
 - Binoculars
 - Field guides
 - Bean bag camera rest/tripod
 - Warm clothes
 - Insect repellent
 - Food, snacks, water
 - Bag for garbage (pack it in, pack it out)
- Please leave the area and the blind the way you found it.
- ENJOY YOUR DAY!

Send correspondence to:
 Wildlife Photography Blind
 Willamette Valley NWR Complex
 26208 Finley Refuge Road
 Corvallis, OR 97333
 Phone: 541-757-7236
 Fax: 541-757-4450
willamettevalley@fws.gov

Office hours: Monday – Friday from 8am – 4pm
 (closed Federal holidays)