

MUSCATATUCK SCRIPT - **WHERE WILDLIFE COMES NATURALLY**

5/13/98

WILDLIFE COMES NATURALLY TO MUSCATATUCK.
WHY DOES IT COME HERE? WHY DOES IT
THRIVE HERE? SIT BACK AND WE'LL GIVE YOU AN UNUSUAL BIRDS-EYE
PERSPECTIVE OF THIS REFUGE TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND
THIS UNIQUE AND BEAUTIFUL PLACE.

TITLE: **MUSCATATUCK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE:
WHERE WILDLIFE COMES NATURALLY**

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF MUSCATATUCK IS THE ONE
SEEN BY THE REFUGE'S MOST NUMEROUS VISITORS –
WILDLIFE VISITORS. TWICE A YEAR, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS
OF MIGRATING BIRDS FLY OVER INDIANA ON THEIR WAY
TO SUMMER NESTING SITES HERE AND FURTHER NORTH...OR WINTER
RESTING AND FEEDING GROUNDS FURTHER SOUTH.

AFTER LONG HOURS OF FLYING OVER FARMLANDS AND CITIES, SUDDENLY
THE BIRDS' SHARP EYES SEE 1,500 ACRES OF SHINING
WETLANDS AND SPARKLING LAKES, FRINGED BY OPEN
MEADOWS AND NEARLY 4,000 ACRES OF THICK WOODLANDS
- A PATCHWORK OASIS OF WELCOMING HABITATS.

200 YEARS AGO THE BIRD'S EYE VIEW ALONG THE ROUTE
WAS VERY DIFFERENT. ENDLESS WOODLANDS COVERED THE TERRAIN
AND LUSH WETLANDS FRINGED THE NETWORK OF RIVERS THAT CROSS THE
CENTRAL STATES. BUT THE SCENERY WAS ABOUT TO CHANGE.

AS SETTLERS ARRIVED, THEY CLEARED THE LAND FOR
CROPS. IN MOST PARTS OF INDIANA, FARMERS
THRIVED, AND THE NATURAL AREAS GREW FURTHER AND
FURTHER APART, UNTIL 75% OF THE FORESTS HAD
BEEN FELLED AND 85% OF THE WETLANDS DRAINED.

BUT MUSCATATUCK WAS DIFFERENT. HERE FARMING
WAS OFTEN DIFFICULT. THE LOW-LYING FIELDS
WERE HARD TO DRAIN AND THE FARMS WERE OFTEN
FLOODED.

THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE
SERVICE RECOGNIZED A DIFFERENT POTENTIAL IN
THIS LAND, AND, IN 1966, THEY WERE ABLE TO
OPEN INDIANA'S FIRST NATIONAL REFUGE HERE. TODAY IT

STRETCHES NEARLY OVER 8,000 ACRES – 5 MILES LONG BY 3 MILES WIDE.

TODAY THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE HAS OVER 500 NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES NATIONWIDE, AND MORE ARE ADDED EACH YEAR.

OUR MISSION HERE IS TO CONSERVE, PROTECT AND ENHANCE FISH AND WILDLIFE AND THEIR HABITAT FOR THE CONTINUING BENEFIT OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM IS THE ONLY NETWORK OF FEDERAL LANDS SPECIFICALLY DEDICATED TO WILDLIFE AND HABITAT CONSERVATION.

MUSIC AND WILDSOUND TRANSITION

EARLY SPRING IN MUSCATATUCK. THE FLYWAY OVER THE REFUGE IS BUSY WITH BIRDS ON THEIR LONG MIGRATIONS TO THEIR NESTING GROUNDS HERE TO CANADA AND ALASKA. SOME HAVE COME FROM AS FAR AWAY AS SOUTH AMERICA. MUSCATATUCK PUTS OUT A WELCOME MAT WITH ITS WETLANDS, MEADOWS AND WOODLANDS, JUST GREENING UP FOR SPRING. WATER HAS BEEN MOVED AROUND THE REFUGE THROUGH PIPES AND CONTROL STRUCTURES TO PROVIDE IDEAL HABITATS FOR THE WEARY MIGRANTS.

IF YOU'RE A SHOREBIRD, THE MUDFLATS WILL CATCH YOUR EYE. LOOKS LIKE THERE'LL BE PLENTY OF PROBING SPOTS THERE. THE MUDFLATS ARE CREATED BY DRAINING LOW, OPEN AREAS SURROUNDED BY DIKES AND COME FALL, THEY'LL SERVE A VERY DIFFERENT PURPOSE.

IF YOU'RE A MIGRANT GOOSE OR A DUCK, YOU'LL MOST LIKELY HEAD FOR THE SHALLOW WATER OF MARSHES. IT MIGHT BE A LITTLE CROWDED - UP TO 15,000 BIRDS AT PEAK TIMES - BUT THERE'S PLENTY OF FOOD FOR EVERYBODY. ONCE YOU'VE RESTED AND FED FOR A FEW DAYS, YOU'LL BE READY TO FLY ON FURTHER NORTH.

AN OCCASIONAL TUNDRA SWAN MIGHT GLIDE IN ON BROAD, STRONG WINGS AND SHARE YOUR FEEDING MARSH.

OR, IF YOU'RE A GREAT BLUE HERON, THE AWESOMENESS OF A BALD EAGLE CROSSING YOUR FISHING SPOT MIGHT CAUSE A MOMENT OF ALARM.

ALL THROUGH THE MARSHES IS LUSH VEGETATION WHICH PROVIDES GOOD NESTING SITES, SO YOU MIGHT DECIDE TO STAY ON FOR THE SUMMER.

IF YOU DO, YOU'LL HAVE PLENTY OF NOISY NEIGHBORS, AND SOME NOSY ONES TOO. RIVER OTTERS ARE MAKING A COME-BACK AT MUSCATATUCK THANKS TO A RE-INTRODUCTION PROGRAM LAUNCHED HERE IN 1995 BY THE INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES. MUSCATATUCK'S EXPANSIVE WETLANDS AND ABUNDANT FISH MADE IT A PERFECT SITE. ONCE COMMON IN INDIANA, RIVER OTTERS WERE WIPED OUT BY OVER-TRAPPING AND THE DRAINING OF MOST OF THE STATE'S WETLANDS.

[THUNDER CRACK]

WATER IS ABUNDANT HERE AND THE KEY TO ATTRACTING WILDLIFE IS WATER. YOU KNOW, THAT HYDROGEN AND OXYGEN STUFF THAT FALLS FROM THE SKY.

WATER WINDS DOWN CREEKS, COLLECTS IN MARSHES, AND EVENTUALLY, MAKES BIG RIVERS.

THE REFUGE RIGHTLY TAKES ITS NAME FROM THE RIVER WHICH FORMS ITS SOUTHERN BOUNDARY. A PLANKESHAW INDIAN WORD, MUSCATATUCK MEANS "LAND OF WINDING WATERS" AND THOSE WINDING WATERS AND THE CREEKS LEADING TO IT ARE TODAY THE LIFEblood OF THE REFUGE.

ONE OF THE REFUGE'S MOST COLORFUL BIRDS IS THE WOOD DUCK. IF YOU WERE A WOOD DUCK WHAT SORT OF REAL ESTATE WOULD MAKE YOU CHOOSE MUSCATATUCK FOR YOUR YEAR-ROUND HOME? YOU'RE A CUT ABOVE THOSE OTHER DUCKS WHO LIKE TO NEST ON THE GROUND. YOU'RE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING WITH A VIEW, SOMETHING A LITTLE HISTORICAL.

IF YOU'RE A WOOD DUCK THAT MEANS A HOLE IN AN OLD TREE. AND DO WE HAVE A DEAL FOR YOU!

AREAS OF LOWLAND WOODS ON THE REFUGE ARE FLOODED AND DRAINED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR SO THAT THE TREES STAY HEALTHY AND PROVIDE WOOD DUCKS WITH THE NESTING HABITAT THEY NEED. WITH SO LITTLE BOTTOM LAND FOREST LEFT ELSEWHERE IN THE STATE, MUSCATATUCK IS VITAL TO THE WOOD DUCK POPULATION.

SOON AFTER YOU'VE CHOSEN YOUR NESTING HOLE AND BUILT YOUR NEST, THE WOODS AROUND YOU FILL WITH SONG, AS MIGRATING WARBLERS AND OTHER SONGBIRDS PASS THROUGH OR FIND THEMSELVES A SAFE NESTING SPOT. FOR MANY ENDANGERED OR THREATENED SPECIES, NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES, SUCH AS MUSCATATUCK, ARE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SURVIVAL AND EXTINCTION. AS WETLANDS HAVE BEEN DRAINED AND FORESTS FELLED, NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES PLAY AN INCREASINGLY VITAL ROLE IN PRESERVING THE DIVERSITY OF OUR WILDLIFE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS. BY PROTECTING AND MAINTAINING RARE AND BIOLOGICALLY RICH ECOSYSTEMS, THE U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE PROVIDES HABITATS FOR MIGRATORY AND RESIDENT WILDLIFE SPECIES THAT NOW HAVE FEW PLACES TO GO.

BY MAY, YOUR EGGS HAVE HATCHED AND YOU'RE OUT EARLY IN THE MORNING WITH A FLOTILLA OF DUCKLINGS FOLLOWING YOU. YOU'LL PASS STATELY GREAT EGRETS, WHO HAVE RECENTLY ARRIVED ON THE REFUGE, AND YOU MIGHT RUN INTO ONE OF MUSCATATUCK'S OTHER FULL-TIME RESIDENTS, THE COPPER-BELLIED WATER SNAKE. IT'S NO THREAT TO YOUR YOUNGSTERS, THOUGH. THIS BEAUTIFUL AND HARMLESS SNAKE IS COMMON ON THE REFUGE BUT RARE ELSEWHERE BECAUSE OF THE LOSS OF WETLAND HABITATS NATIONALLY. IN OTHER PARTS OF ITS RANGE, THE COPPER-BELLIED WATER SNAKE IS ON THE FEDERAL THREATENED SPECIES LIST.

OTHER FULL-TIME RESIDENTS OF THE REFUGE WILL ALSO CROSS YOUR PATH. RACCOONS AND WHITETAIL DEER, GREAT BLUE HERONS AND TURKEYS ARE ALL PART OF MUSCATATUCK'S VARIED ECOSYSTEM.

AS THE HEAT AND HUMIDITY OF SUMMER BEGIN TO BEAR DOWN ON THE LAND, YOUR YOUNGSTERS WILL BE LEARNING TO FLY. IN THE EVENINGS THEY MIGHT SHARE THE AIRSPACE WITH THE ENDANGERED INDIANA BAT WHICH COMES TO MUSCATATUCK IN THE SUMMER TO FEED ON THE ABUNDANT INSECT-LIFE OVER THE WETLANDS.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE BLUE-WING TEAL ANNOUNCES THE BEGINNING OF FALL. SOON, OTHER MIGRANTS WILL PASS OVER THE REFUGE ON THEIR WAY SOUTH FOR THE WINTER. NOW, INSTEAD OF MUDFLATS THEY WILL SEE EXPANSIVE MARSHES, WHICH HAVE BEEN CREATED TO PROVIDE RESTING AND FEEDING AREAS FOR WATERFOWL, HERONS AND EGRETS.

OSPREY, CORMORANTS AND SANDHILL CRANES MAY ALSO CHOOSE TO BREAK THEIR JOURNEYS IN THESE HOSPITABLE WETLANDS, WHILE THE WOODLANDS WELCOME AGAIN THE TINY SONG BIRDS. THEY WILL REST HERE TO GAIN STRENGTH FOR THEIR AMAZINGLY LONG MIGRATIONS ACROSS THE GULF OF MEXICO TO CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA.

OVER 250 DIFFERENT SPECIES OF BIRDS USE MUSCATATUCK REFUGE, AND THIS IS A COMMON SIGHT FOR THEM. BIRD-WATCHERS. FLOCKS OF BIRDS COME TO SEE THE FLOCKS OF BIRDS AND IT'S AN ARRANGEMENT THAT WORKS WELL FOR EVERYBODY.

THE REFUGE IS OPEN EVERY DAY FROM SUNRISE TO SUNSET, SO THAT OUR HUMAN VISITORS CAN SEE THE WILDLIFE VISITORS WHEN THEY'RE MOST ACTIVE - IN THE EARLY MORNING AND EVENING.

HERE, AS IN EVERY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, ALL THE PLANTS AND ANIMALS ARE PROTECTED AND SHOULD NOT BE HARMED.

IN THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE REFUGE, 10 PERCENT OF OUR LAND AREA IS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC AND MAINTAINED AS A WATERFOWL SANCTUARY. THIS AREA IS CLEARLY MARKED BY SIGNS.

THE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF VISITORS WHO COME EACH YEAR TO ENJOY THE WILDLIFE AND SCENERY OF MUSCATATUCK, ARE AS MUCH A PART OF THE REFUGE ECOSYSTEM AS ALL THE ANIMALS AND PLANTS. IN A WAY, WE'VE CREATED IDEAL HABITATS FOR YOUR NEEDS, TOO.

THERE ARE EIGHT HIKING TRAILS OF VARIOUS LENGTHS. ONE STARTS JUST BEHIND THE VISITOR CENTER AND INCLUDES A BOARD WALK OVER THE MARSH WHERE YOU AND THE WILDLIFE CAN WATCH EACH OTHER.

THE CHESTNUT RIDGE INTERPRETATIVE TRAIL, IS ACCESSIBLE TO THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED, AND ON RICHART LAKE HIKING TRAIL, THE HACKMAN OVERLOOK PROVIDES AN EXCELLENT VIEW OF THE LAKE, WITH ALL ITS VARIED BIRDLIFE, AND SHELTER FROM THE ELEMENTS.

IF YOU PREFER TO DRIVE, THERE ARE NINE MILES OF REFUGE ROAD INCLUDING A THREE-MILE SELF-GUIDED TOUR.

HUNTING AND FISHING ARE PERMITTED AT CERTAIN TIMES OF YEAR, INCLUDING AN ANNUAL "TAKE A KID FISHING DAY" IN MAY WHICH IS LOTS OF FUN.

WHILE HUNTING AND FISHING, FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY AND PLEASURE PLEASE OBEY ALL THE REGULATIONS AND POSTED SIGNS. FOR INSTANCE, BOATING IS RESTRICTED TO STANFIELD LAKE AT SPECIFIC TIMES AND NO MOTORS ARE ALLOWED.

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO WANT TO SEE HOW THE EARLY SETTLERS LIVED, A VISIT TO MYERS CABIN AND BARN IS A MUST. BUILT ON THE REFUGE BETWEEN 1870 AND 1900, THESE STRUCTURES HAVE BEEN RESTORED AND FURNISHED BY VOLUNTEERS.

THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE WELCOMES VOLUNTEERS WHO WANT TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THIS REFUGE. WE HAVE PEOPLE WORKING ON BIOLOGICAL, PUBLIC USE, AND MAINTENANCE PROJECTS.

VOLUNTEERS ALSO OPERATE OUR WILDLIFE BOOKSTORE, WHERE YOU CAN BUY WILDLIFE GUIDES, HOW-TO BOOKS, AND OTHER INTERESTING LITERATURE.

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM OR ANY OTHER ASPECT OF THE REFUGE, PLEASE STOP AT OUR INFORMATION DESK IN THE VISITOR CENTER OR THE REFUGE OFFICE.

EDUCATION IS ONE OF OUR HIGH PRIORITIES AND OUR STAFF IS DELIGHTED TO ASSIST GROUPS VISITING THE REFUGE.

AS PART OF THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM, MUSCATATUCK IS YOUR REFUGE. PLEASE TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY ABOUT THIS SPECIAL PLACE, AND EXPLORE SOME OF THE OTHER REFUGES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY PLACES LIKE MUSCATATUCK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE "WHERE WILDLIFE COMES NATURALLY".

MUSCATATUCK DRAFT SCRIPT B- **WHERE WILDLIFE COMES NATURALLY**

5/13/98

IMAGINE INDIANA IN THE YEAR 1800. AS FAR AS Forests
THE EYE CAN SEE IS AN UNTAMED LANDSCAPE THAT
HASN'T CHANGED FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. THICK,
OLD-GROWTH FORESTS SPREAD THEIR SHADE OVER THE
TERRAIN. RIVERS AND CREEKS FORM A NETWORK Rivers, etc.
ACROSS THE STATE, FRINGED BY SWAMPS AND WETLANDS.

NOW THINK OF THE INDIANA YOU DROVE THROUGH ON Farmlands
YOUR JOURNEY HERE TODAY. FARMLANDS STRETCH IN
EVERY DIRECTION, CROSSED BY ROADS AND DOTTED
WITH TOWNS AND CITIES.

SINCE SETTLERS ARRIVED IN THE EARLY 1800S, Cabin
INDIANA HAS CHANGED BEYOND RECOGNITION. 75% Fields
OF ITS FORESTS HAVE BEEN FELLED AND 85% OF ITS
WETLANDS DRAINED. BUT THE NEEDS OF ITS WILDLIFE Wildlife
HAVE REMAINED THE SAME. MIGRATING BIRDS STILL
NEED PLACES TO FEED AND SHELTER ON THEIR LONG
JOURNEYS. OUR RESIDENT WILDLIFE SPECIES STILL NEED
NATURAL AREAS TO LIVE AND RAISE THEIR YOUNG. FOR
MANY OF THESE CREATURES, MUSCATATUCK IS A NOAH'S
ARK IN A STORMY MODERN WORLD.

THE 1,500 ACRES OF SHINING WETLANDS AND SPARKLING Habitats
LAKES, THE WIDE MEADOWS AND THE NEARLY 4,000 ACRES
OF WOODLANDS FORM A PATCHWORK QUILT OF WELCOMING
HABITATS FOR WILDLIFE OF MANY VARIETIES.

AT ONE TIME, MUSCATATUCK WAS ALSO TURNED OVER TO Cabin, old
FARMING, BUT THE LOW-LYING FIELDS WERE HARD TO photos
DRAIN AND THE FARMS WERE OFTEN FLOODED.

IN THE 1950'S THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE Wildlife
SERVICE RECOGNIZED A DIFFERENT POTENTIAL IN
THIS LAND, AND, IN 1966, THEY WERE ABLE TO Old Photos
OPEN INDIANA'S FIRST REFUGE HERE. TODAY IT

STRETCHES OVER 8,000 VARIED ACRES.

TODAY THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE HAS OVER 500 NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES, AND MORE ARE ADDED NATIONWIDE EACH YEAR.

Map

OUR MISSION IS TO CONSERVE, PROTECT AND ENHANCE FISH AND WILDLIFE AND THEIR HABITAT FOR THE CONTINUING BENEFIT OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

Refuge
shots and
workers

ONLY IN REFUGES LIKE MUSCATATUCK ARE FEDERAL LANDS DEDICATED SPECIFICALLY TO WILDLIFE AND HABITAT CONSERVATION.

MUSIC AND WILDSOUND TRANSITION

IT'S EARLY SPRING IN MUSCATATUCK. THE FLYWAY OVER THE REFUGE IS BUSY WITH BIRDS ON THEIR LONG MIGRATIONS TO THEIR BREEDING GROUNDS IN CANADA AND ALASKA. SOME HAVE COME FROM AS FAR AWAY AS SOUTH AMERICA. MUSCATATUCK PUTS OUT A WELCOME MAT FOR THEM, WITH ITS WETLANDS AND WOODLANDS, JUST GREENING UP FOR SPRING. WATER HAS BEEN MOVED AROUND THE REFUGE THROUGH PIPES AND CONTROL STRUCTURES TO PROVIDE IDEAL HABITATS FOR THE VISITING MIGRANTS.

Beauty shots
Birds

Water control
structures

MUDFLATS HAVE BEEN CREATED BY DRAINING LOW, OPEN AREAS SURROUNDED BY DIKES AND THEY ARE ACTIVE WITH SHOREBIRDS FEEDING.

Mudflats and
birds

THE MARSHES ARE FULL OF DUCKS AND GEESE, DABBLING AND DIVING IN THE SHALLOW WATER. AT PEAK TIMES THERE MAY BE UP TO 15,000 BIRDS, BUT THERE'S PLENTY OF FOOD FOR EVERYBODY.

Marshes and birds

AN OCCASIONAL TUNDRA SWAN MIGHT GLIDE IN ON BROAD, STRONG WINGS -
OR THE SHADOW OF A BALD EAGLE MIGHT CAUSE A MOMENT OF ALARM AMONGST THE SMALLER BIRDS.

Tundra swan

Eagle flying

SOME OF THE DUCKS AND GEESE WILL STAY ON AT MUSCATATUCK TO BREED IN THE LUSH SWAMP VEGETATION AROUND THE MARSH PONDS.

marsh shots
nesting birds

IN RECENT YEARS, SOME PLAYFUL NEIGHBORS HAVE JOINED THEM. RIVER OTTERS HAVE BEEN RE-INTRODUCED TO THE REFUGE AS PART OF A PROGRAM LAUNCHED BY THE INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES. MUSCATATUCK'S EXPANSIVE WETLANDS AND ABUNDANT FISH MADE IT A PERFECT SITE FOR THIS PROGRAM. ONCE COMMON IN INDIANA, RIVER OTTERS WERE WIPED OUT BY OVER-TRAPPING AND THE DRAINING OF THE STATE'S WETLANDS.

WATER IS THE KEY TO ALL THE ACTIVITY HERE AND THE REFUGE RIGHTLY TAKES ITS NAME FROM THE RIVER WHICH FORMS ITS SOUTHERN BOUNDARY. A PLANKESHAW INDIAN WORD, MUSCATATUCK MEANS "LAND OF WINDING WATERS" AND THOSE WINDING WATERS AND THE CREEKS LEADING TO IT ARE TODAY THE LIFEBLOOD OF THE REFUGE.

ONE OF THE REFUGE'S MOST COLORFUL BIRDS IS THE WOOD-DUCK. PARTS OF THE REFUGE ARE TAILORED TO THE WOOD-DUCK'S VERY SPECIAL NEEDS. UNLIKE OTHER DUCKS, WOOD-DUCKS NEST IN HOLES IN OLD-GROWTH TREES.

Wood-ducks swim
Wood-duck nests

AREAS OF LOWLAND WOODS ON THE REFUGE ARE FLOODED AND DRAINED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR SO THAT THE TREES STAY HEALTHY AND PROVIDE WOODDUCKS WITH THE NESTING HABITAT THEY NEED. WITH SO LITTLE OLD GROWTH FOREST LEFT ELSEWHERE IN THE STATE, MUSCATATUCK IS VITAL TO THE WOOD DUCK POPULATION.

Wood-ducks

AS SPRING PROGRESSES, THE WOODS FILL WITH THE SONGS OF MIGRATING WARBLERS AND OTHER SONGBIRDS. DEFORESTATION IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA WHERE THEY OVER-WINTER, AND IN THE U.S. WHERE THEY NEST, HAS DRIVEN SOME OF THE SONGBIRD SPECIES TO THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION. FOR ALL OUR ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES, NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES, SUCH AS MUSCATATUCK, ARE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SURVIVAL AND EXTINCTION. AS WETLANDS HAVE BEEN DRAINED AND FORESTS FELLED, NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES PLAY

Neo-tropicals

AN INCREASINGLY VITAL ROLE IN PRESERVING THE DIVERSITY OF OUR WILDLIFE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS. BY PROTECTING AND MAINTAINING RARE AND BIOLOGICALLY RICH ECOSYSTEMS, THE U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE PROVIDES HABITATS FOR MIGRATORY AND RESIDENT WILDLIFE SPECIES THAT NOW HAVE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.

BY MAY, WILDLIFE YOUNGSTERS ARE HATCHING OUT ALL OVER THE REFUGE. IN THE EARLY MORNING FLOTILLAS OF CHICKS PADDLE AFTER THEIR PARENTS, WHILE STATELY GREAT EGRETS, RECENTLY ARRIVED ON THE REFUGE, FISH PATIENTLY IN THE MARSHES.

Chicks

Egrets

ONE OF MUSCATATUCK'S FULL-TIME RESIDENTS, THE SNAKE COPPER-BELLIED WATER SNAKE, IS ALSO BECOMING MORE ACTIVE AS THE WEATHER WARMS ITS COLD BLOOD. IT'S NO THREAT TO THE HATCHLINGS, THOUGH. IT EATS ONLY COLD-BLOODED PREY. THIS BEAUTIFUL AND HARMLESS SNAKE IS COMMON ON THE REFUGE BUT RARE ELSEWHERE BECAUSE OF THE LOSS OF WETLAND HABITATS NATIONALLY. IN OTHER PARTS OF ITS RANGE, THE COPPER-BELLIED WATER SNAKE IS ON THE FEDERAL THREATENED SPECIES LIST.

Snake
water snake

OTHER FULL-TIME RESIDENTS OF THE REFUGE ARE ALSO OUT AND ABOUT. RACCOONS AND WHITETAIL DEER, GREAT BLUE HERONS AND TURKEYS ARE ALL PART OF MUSCATATUCK'S VARIED ECOSYSTEM.

Deer, raccoons,
etc.

AS THE HEAT AND HUMIDITY OF SUMMER BEGIN TO BEAR DOWN ON THE LAND, FLEDGLINGS ARE TAKING TO THE AIR.

Young birds
flying

IN THE EVENINGS THEY MIGHT SHARE THE SKIES WITH THE ENDANGERED INDIANA BAT WHICH COMES TO MUSCATATUCK IN THE SUMMER TO FEED ON THE ABUNDANT INSECT-LIFE OVER THE WETLANDS.

bats

THE ARRIVAL OF THE BLUE-WING TEAL ANNOUNCES THE BEGINNING OF FALL. SOON, OTHER MIGRANTS WILL PASS OVER THE REFUGE ON THEIR WAY SOUTH FOR THE

Teal
Fall aerals/
flocks

WINTER. NOW INSTEAD OF MUDFLATS THEY WILL SEE
EXPANSIVE PONDS, WHICH HAVE BEEN CREATED TO Waterfowl
PROVIDE RESTING AND FEEDING AREAS FOR WATERFOWL, feeding
HERONS AND EGRETS.

OSPREY, CORMORANTS AND SANDHILL CRANES MAY ALSO Osprey, etc.
CHOOSE TO BREAK THEIR JOURNEYS IN THESE
HOSPITABLE WETLANDS, WHILE THE WOODLANDS WELCOME Neo-tropicals
AGAIN THE TINY SONG BIRDS. THEY WILL REST HERE TO
GAIN STRENGTH FOR THEIR AMAZINGLY LONG MIGRATIONS
ACROSS THE GULF OF MEXICO TO CENTRAL AND SOUTH
AMERICA.

OVER 250 DIFFERENT SPECIES OF BIRDS USE Bird-watchers
MUSCATATUCK REFUGE, MAKING IT A PARADISE FOR
BIRDWATCHERS.

THE REFUGE IS OPEN EVERY DAY FROM SUNRISE TO Refuge visitors
SUNSET, SO THAT YOU CAN SEE THE WILDLIFE WHEN Dawn and dusk
IT IS MOST ACTIVE - IN THE EARLY MORNING AND
LATE EVENING.

HERE, AS IN EVERY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, ALL Wildlife and
THE PLANTS AND ANIMALS ARE PROTECTED AND SHOULD plants
NOT BE HARMED.

IN THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE REFUGE, 10 PERCENT OF Sanctuary
OUR LAND AREA IS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC AND MAINTAINED
AS A WATERFOWL SANCTUARY. THIS AREA IS CLEARLY
MARKED BY SIGNS.

THE THOUSANDS OF VISITORS WHO COME EACH YEAR TO Hikers, etc.
ENJOY THE WILDLIFE AND SCENERY OF MUSCATATUCK,
ARE AS MUCH A PART OF THE REFUGE ECOSYSTEM AS ALL
THE ANIMALS AND PLANTS. IN A WAY, WE'VE CREATED THE
IDEAL HABITATS FOR YOUR NEEDS TOO.

THERE ARE EIGHT HIKING TRAILS OF VARIOUS LENGTHS.
ONE STARTS JUST BEHIND THE VISITOR CENTER AND
INCLUDES A BOARD WALK OVER THE MARSH WHERE YOU
CAN ENJOY WATCHING THE WATERFOWL.

THE CHESTNUT RIDGE INTERPRETATIVE TRAIL, IS ACCESSIBLE TO THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED.

AND ON RICHART LAKE HIKING TRAIL, THE HACKMAN OVERLOOK PROVIDES AN EXCELLENT VIEW OF THE LAKE, AND SHELTER FROM THE ELEMENTS.

IF YOU PREFER TO DRIVE, THERE ARE NINE MILES OF ROAD INCLUDING A THREE-MILE SELF-GUIDED TOUR. Driving shot REFUGE

THE REFUGE ALSO PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

HUNTING AND FISHING ARE PERMITTED AT CERTAIN TIMES OF YEAR, INCLUDING AN ANNUAL "KID'S FISHING DAY" IN MAY WHICH IS LOTS OF FUN. Kids day

WHILE HUNTING AND FISHING, FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY AND PLEASURE PLEASE OBEY ALL THE REGULATIONS AND POSTED SIGNS. FOR INSTANCE, BOATING IS RESTRICTED TO SPECIFIC TIMES AND NO MOTORS ARE ALLOWED. People fishing, boating, etc.

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO WANT TO SEE HOW THE EARLY SETTLERS LIVED, A VISIT TO MYERS CABIN AND BARN IS A MUST. BUILT ON THE REFUGE BETWEEN 1870 AND 1900, THESE STRUCTURES HAVE BEEN RESTORED AND FURNISHED BY VOLUNTEERS. Cabin / barn

THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE WELCOMES VOLUNTEERS WHO WANT TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THIS REFUGE. WE HAVE PEOPLE WORKING ON BIOLOGICAL, PUBLIC USE AND MAINTENANCE PROJECTS. Volunteers

VOLUNTEERS ALSO OPERATE OUR WILDLIFE BOOKSTORE, WHERE YOU CAN BUY WILDLIFE GUIDES, HOW-TO BOOKS AND OTHER INTERESTING LITERATURE.

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM OR ANY OTHER ASPECT OF THE REFUGE, PLEASE STOP AT OUR Visitors' Center

INFORMATION DESK IN THE VISITOR CENTER OR THE REFUGE OFFICE. EDUCATION IS ONE OF OUR HIGH PRIORITIES AND OUR STAFF IS DELIGHTED TO WORK WITH GROUPS VISITING THE REFUGE. Ranger at work

THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE IS PROUD OF ITS ITS RECORD OF ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP. INSPIRED BY SOME OF THE NATION'S GREAT LEADERS IN IN THIS AREA, SUCH AS TEDDY ROOSEVELT AND RACHEL CARSON, WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROVIDING LEADERSHIP IN CONSERVATION ISSUES AND TO PROTECTING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR WILDLIFE, FOR YOU AND FOR YOUR CHILDREN. Beauty shots Roosevelt/ Carson Beauty shots

AS PART OF THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM, MUSCATATUCK IS YOUR REFUGE. PLEASE TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY ABOUT THIS SPECIAL PLACE, VISIT US AGAIN AND EXPLORE SOME OF THE OTHER REFUGES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES. Beauty Shots

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY PLACES LIKE MUSCATATUCK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE "WHERE WILDLIFE COMES NATURALLY".