

Hobe Sound

National Wildlife Refuge



photo: USFWS



photo: USFWS



photo: D. Fritz-Quincy



photo: Willlocks

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Refuge Facts

- Established: 1969.
- Acres: 1,035 (Florida).
- Located in Martin County, FL.
- Location: the refuge headquarters is located 2 miles south of SR 708 (Bridge Road) on U.S. 1. The refuge beach is located 1.5 miles north of Bridge Road on North Beach Road, Jupiter Island.
- Administered by Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee NWR, Sylvia Pelizza, Project Leader.

Natural History

- Refuge occupies some of the most productive sea turtle nesting areas on Florida east coast.
- Protects part of imperiled, unique sand pine-scrub-oak habitat remaining in Florida.
- Provides habitat for nearly 40 rare protected species including the scrub jay and gopher tortoise.
- Sand pine-scrub oak forest, 300 acres; coastal dune and mangrove swamp, 735 acres.
- National Natural Landmark - Reed Wilderness Seashore Sanctuary 173 acres.

Financial Impact on Refuge

- Three-person staff.
- 110,000 visitors annually.

Refuge Objectives

- Maintain and restore diverse habitats designed to achieve refuge purposes and wildlife population objectives.
- Maintain viable diverse populations of native flora and fauna consistent with sound biological principles.
- Manage the natural and cultural resources through land protection and partnership.

- Develop and implement wildlife dependent recreation and environmental education that leads to enjoyable recreation experiences and a greater understanding of fish and wildlife resources, with minimal impact to the resources.

Management Tools

- Monitor sea turtle nesting as part of Index Beach Program sponsored by Florida Department of Environmental Protection.
- Mechanical/chemical/biological control of exotic pest plants.
- Beach renourishment.
- Sand pine scrub habitat management.
- Education/interpretation.
- Law enforcement.

Public Use Opportunities

- Nature trails.
- Environmental education.
- Interpretive museum.
- Surf fishing.
- Beach use.
- Observation platform.
- Wildlife observation.
- Photography.

Calendar of Events

May: International Migratory Bird Day.

June: weekly children's summer camp.

June-July: sea turtle walks.

October: National Wildlife Refuge Week.

October-April: evening program series/field trips to local natural areas.

Questions and Answers

Are they catching any fish? Can you fish here?

Yes, you can fish here, and depending on the day, yes, others are catching fish.

What do we do? Are there any hiking trails and are the trails open? How far is it to Peck Lake?

The refuge offers wildlife observation, hiking, photography, fishing and beach use. The beach trail travels north up the beach to Peck Lake. Peck Lake is 2.5 miles north of the refuge beach parking lot. The mainland Sand Pine-Scrub Oak Trail is a .4-mile, self interpreted trail through this scrub community.

What kind of wildlife is at this refuge? Will I see a scrub jay?

Wildlife in the sand pine-scrub oak community is numerous. Scrub jays find habitat in the scrub community, especially since recent habitat improvement practices by staff and partners. Gopher tortoises, indigo snakes, scrub lizards and bobcats can be sighted at the mainland tract of the refuge. Brown pelicans, gannets and other pelagic birds can be sighted at the beach tract of the refuge. Manatees have been seen in the Intracoastal Waterway near the refuge.

When can I go on a turtle walk? Do I have to register for these walks?

The Hobe Sound Nature Center, Inc. is a cooperating association with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is located at the Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge. They offer summer time sea turtle walks during June and July. State regulations only allow 25 participants per walk so you must register for the walk in advance. The walk will start with an introductory slide show in the auditorium before going to the beach where “turtle scouts” will be looking for nesting female turtles. Once a female turtle has been spotted, the group is encouraged to approach and gather around. There is no flash photography allowed and the walk can last for three to four hours, depending on the evening. Please call 772/546 2067.

How can I get a Golden Age Passport?

You will need to go either to the refuge headquarters office on U.S. 1 or to the fee booth at the beach at the end of North Beach Road. Please be prepared to show your driver’s license and proof of citizenship (like a voter’s registration). The processing fee for this passport is a one-time fee of \$10.00. Other passes are available, including a yearly Hobe Sound Refuge pass for \$12.00.