

# Archie Carr

## National Wildlife Refuge



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Blair Witherington



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### Refuge Facts

- Established: 1991.
- Acres: 252.
- Located: Brevard and Indian River counties, Florida.
- Other management: The refuge is a unique partnership of multi-agency land owners and managers including U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, State of Florida, Brevard County, Indian River County and Hubbs SeaWorld Research Institute.
- Location: the refuge is located on central Florida's Atlantic coast between Melbourne Beach and Wabasso Beach and spans both Brevard and Indian River Counties.
- Administered as a staffed satellite refuge of Merritt Island NWR Complex. Pelican Island NWR Complex has a shared staff with and manages Archie Carr and Lake Wales Ridge NWR's.

### Natural History

- Refuge is the most important nesting area for threatened loggerhead sea turtles in the Western Hemisphere.
- Refuge is the most important nesting area for endangered green sea turtles in the U.S.
- Refuge is also an important nesting area for endangered leatherback sea turtles.
- Provides habitat for several other threatened and endangered species, including southeastern beach mice and Florida scrub jays.

### Financial Impacts of Refuge

- All public facilities are on partner owned lands.
- Shared funding and staff for Pelican Island NWR also support Archie Carr and Lake Wales Ridge NWR's.

### Refuge Objectives

- Protect nesting habitat for sea turtles.
- Protect, enhance, and restore barrier island habitats for threatened and endangered species.
- Increase public understanding through outreach, environmental education, and compatible recreation.
- Enhance habitat protection and management through partnerships.

### Management Tools

- Partnerships through Archie Carr Working Group.
- Sea turtle nest monitoring.
- Sea turtle research through the University of Central Florida's Marine Turtle Research Group.
- Predator control to protect sea turtle nests.
- Law enforcement.
- Mechanical/chemical control of exotic plants.
- Volunteer program.
- Prescribed fire.
- Financial support through Friends of the Carr Refuge.

### Public Use Opportunities

- Beach access and surf fishing through county managed parks and Sebastian Inlet State Park.
- Four interpretive trails on county and state park owned lands.
- Fishing by jetty, catwalk, bank and boat through Sebastian Inlet State Park.
- Seasonal sea turtle watch programs.
- Wildlife observation and photography.
- Interpretation/Outreach/Environmental Education.

### Questions and Answers

*Where is it?*

The refuge spans 20 miles on central Florida's Atlantic coast from Melbourne Beach in Brevard County to Wabasso Beach in Indian River County. Within this area, four segments have been identified for acquisition totaling 9.3 miles. Signs have been posted at the north and south ends of the refuge which helps to delineate the boundaries.

*Is the refuge open to the public?*

Yes. Indian River County, Brevard County and the State of Florida manage all public access within the refuge. There are no public access facilities on Service owned lands within the refuge. In 2008, the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program dedicated a new Visitor Center, the Barrier Island Sanctuary Management and Education Center. Although owned and operated by Brevard County, this center will serve as the main visitor contact point for the Archie Carr NWR. The center is open Tuesdays - Sundays. Both Indian River and Brevard County Parks and Recreation Departments manage beach accesses within the refuge that are open during daytime hours. Sebastian Inlet State Park is also within the refuge boundary and is open 24 hours a day. Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program and Sebastian Inlet State Park manage a total of four interpretive foot trails and seven miles of mountain bike trails on the west side of Highway A1A in Brevard County.

*Does the refuge have a Visitor Center?*

Yes. The Barrier Island Sanctuary Management and Education Center, opened in 2008, serves as the main visitor contact point for the refuge. The Center is owned and operated by Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program and features exhibits, environmental education programs and tours on sea turtles and other wildlife and habitats of the barrier island ecosystem. The Center is closed on Mondays and is located on Highway A1A in south Brevard County, just three miles north of Sebastian Inlet.