

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Tualatin River

*National Wildlife
Refuge*



*Just a few short miles
from the center of
Oregon's largest city,
the honking of geese
replaces the honking
of cars. This special
place is a refuge,
a haven for wildlife
and people. Born of
a community's dream,
and made possible
by their support,
a wildlife refuge
now thrives in
the backyard
of a growing
metropolis.*



Welcome!

Located on the outskirts of Portland, Oregon, Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge is one of only a handful of urban national wildlife refuges in the country. Situated within the floodplain of the Tualatin River, the Refuge comprises less than 1% of the 712 square mile watershed. Yet, due to its richness and diversity of habitats, the Refuge supports some of the most abundant and varied wildlife in the watershed.



Since the Refuge's establishment in 1992, wildlife managers have been restoring and protecting lands and waters for the benefit of native wildlife and their habitats. These habitats include rivers and streams, seasonal and forested wetlands, riparian areas, grasslands, and forested uplands.

Common yellowthroats creep and hop through brushy thickets, feeding on insects, spiders and caterpillars.

The Refuge is now home to nearly 200 species of birds, over 50 species of mammals, 25 species of reptiles and amphibians, and a wide variety of insects, fish and plants. The Refuge has also become a place where people can experience and learn about wildlife and the places they call home.

Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge is one of over 540 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System—a network of lands and waters set aside specifically for wildlife. Managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the System is a living heritage, conserving fish, wildlife and their habitats for future generations.

Showy plumes of Douglas spirea flowers provide summer color to wet meadow prairies.

Wildlife Viewing Tips

The patient observer will be rewarded with many wildlife viewing opportunities. Every season brings a new wealth of discoveries. Use the following tips to observe and enjoy the varied wildlife found here.

Use Binoculars

Binoculars and spotting scopes allow you an up close look that does not affect wildlife behavior.

Come Early Stay Late

Early morning and dusk are the best times of the day to view wildlife. Please note that the Refuge is open from dawn to dusk.

Use Identification Guides

Use field guides to help you identify species of plants and animals. A wildlife list is available from the Refuge.

Be Patient & Respectful

Move slowly. Quick movements and loud noises will frighten most wildlife away. Try sitting quietly in one location. Animals that have hidden may reappear after a short while. Walk quietly. Be aware of sounds and smells. Often you will hear more than you will see. Teach children quiet observation. Other visitors will appreciate your consideration.

Look for animal signs. Tracks, scat, feathers, and chewed plants left behind often tell interesting stories. Remember to leave these discoveries where you find them.

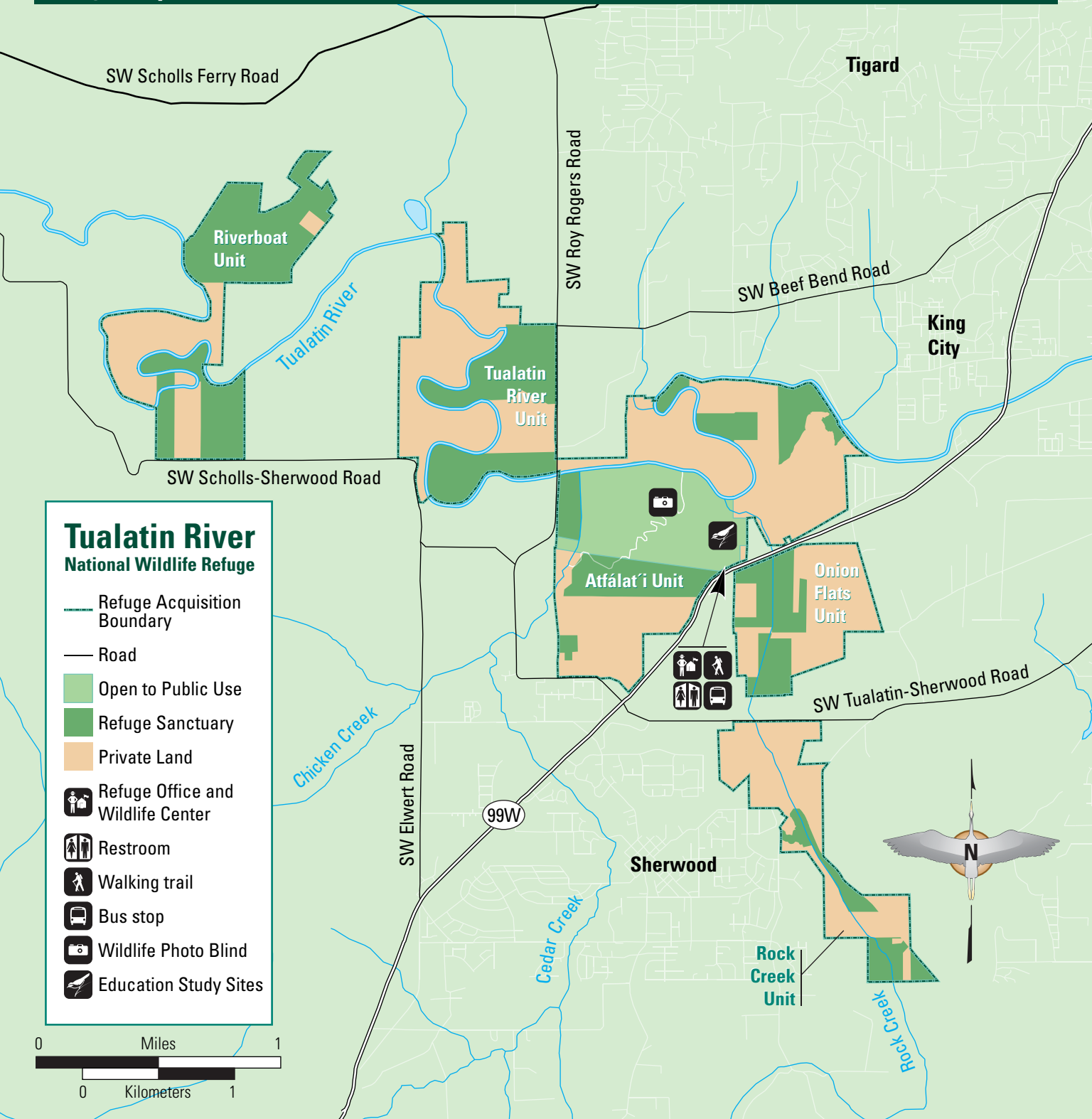
Please be considerate. For the protection of wildlife, visitors must stay on maintained trails and in designated areas. No off trail use.

Observe from the sidelines and do not approach wildlife too closely. Don't offer snacks; your lunch could disrupt wild digestive systems.



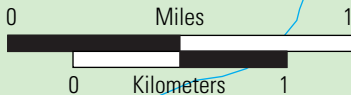
Greater yellowlegs

Refuge Map



Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge

- Refuge Acquisition Boundary
- Road
- Open to Public Use
- Refuge Sanctuary
- Private Land
- Refuge Office and Wildlife Center
- Restroom
- Walking trail
- Bus stop
- Wildlife Photo Blind
- Education Study Sites



Enjoying the Refuge

Tualatin River NWR is a place where wildlife comes first. When visiting, always remember, you are a guest in their home.

Refuge Hours

The Refuge is open from dawn to dusk throughout the year.

Wildlife Center & Environmental Education

The Wildlife Center is open Tuesday through Sunday and features exhibits, a nature store, and viewing overlooks. Call for hours and holiday closures. Teacher workshops are offered to educators who would like to bring their students on a field trip.

Walking Trails

A one-mile long nature trail meanders through a variety of habitats past wildlife viewpoints and ends at the wetland overlook. The nature trail is open year round. From May 1 through September 30, visitors are permitted to walk on 3 miles of gravel service roads. From October 1 to April 30, these roads are closed to all public entry to provide sanctuary for wildlife. No other refuge lands are open to the public.

Wildlife Photography Blind

The blind is open on a reservation basis. Call 503/625 5944 to make arrangements.

Accessibility

Visitor service facilities, including trails and overlooks, have been designed to accommodate visitors needing special assistance. Please contact Refuge staff if you would like further information.

Pied-billed grebes eat their feathers and also feed some to their chicks to help protect stomachs from fish bones and crustacean shells.

Volunteering



Do you want to help collect biological data, maintain habitats, greet visitors or work with school groups? If you are interested in volunteering or want to learn more about the Friends of the Refuge, call the Refuge or go to www.friendsoftualatinrefuge.org.

Walking Only

Trails are for walking only. To minimize disturbance to animals, no biking, jogging, or running.

Pets

Pets are not allowed. They disturb wildlife and will scare animals away before you get a chance to see them.

Collecting

Please leave plants and animals where they are. No collecting of any kind. Do not pick up wildlife. While you think that a young animal has been abandoned, chances are it has a parent watching anxiously nearby.

Prohibited Activities

No fires, firearms, fireworks, fishing or hunting. Camping or overnight parking is not permitted.

There is a lot to discover here—from the patterns of leaves to the colors of delicate dragonfly wings.



A Year of Wildlife

Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge is a place to discover an ever-changing panorama of wildlife. As the seasons change, so does wildlife viewing. Located on the Pacific Flyway, the Refuge is an important stopover where migratory waterfowl, songbirds, and shorebirds stop to rest, refuel, and raise their young.

Spring

Spring is the time to enjoy the bright colors and singing chorus of migratory songbirds. Many species of songbirds arrive in the spring and use the Refuge as a place to breed and nest.

As seasonal wetlands dry out in the spring, mudflats are left behind. These provide a rich source of invertebrates for migrating shorebirds that are on their journey to their breeding grounds further north.



Summer

As migration slows, Refuge wildlife focus on raising their young. Broods of wood ducks and hooded mergansers are commonly seen in the wetlands. Also in summer, wetland plants such as plantain and smartweed grow and become the perfect food for migrating waterfowl that arrive on the Refuge later in the year.



Female wood ducks use high pitched calls to gather and lead their broods, sometimes up to 15 ducklings.

Fall



Northern pintails make a winter meal for hungry bald eagles.

As fall rains begin and temperatures cool, Arctic-nesting birds begin to arrive from their northern breeding grounds. In search of open water, food and shelter, waterfowl find what they need on the Refuge. At the same time, bald eagles become a regular visitor to the Refuge, hunting the increasing numbers of waterfowl found here.



Winter

After a long, grey winter; yellow-rumped warblers (at left) give us a first glimpse of spring color.

Winter is a spectacular time to visit. Large numbers of waterfowl such as cackling Canada geese, northern pintails, and mallards blanket the Refuge as they eat the rich source of seeds and plants grown in summer. The Refuge boasts an average of 20,000 waterfowl during mid-winter, and in some years, over 50,000 have been observed in a single day.

Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge
19255 SW Pacific Hwy
Sherwood, Oregon 97140
Telephone: 503/625 5944
Fax: 503/625 5947
<http://www.fws.gov/tualatinriver/>

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

Refuge Information
1 800/344 WILD

Oregon Relay Service
TTY 1 800/735 2900
Voice 1 800/735 1232

Cover photo white-crowned sparrow
All photographs © Ed Bustya

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