

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Alligator River/Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge
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[Back to News Home Page](#)

News Release

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Record Numbers of Waterfowl Wintering on Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge

A recent waterfowl survey documented almost 42,000 waterfowl in the farmfields of Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. Among the birds, over 32,000 were Northern Pintails and 5,800 were Tundra Swans. Other species included American Black Duck, Gadwall, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, American Widgeon, Wood Duck, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Ruddy Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, and American Coot.

Deputy Refuge Manager Scott Lanier said, "That's more ducks than I've ever heard of on this refuge. And, the fact that over 30,000 are pintails makes it even greater!"

Bruce Creef, Maintenance Supervisor for the refuge, described the areas being used by the birds as "mostly flooded cropland, some moist soil areas, and some permanent pond. The birds are all over the farming units." Almost 10 miles of designated "wildlife drive" border these fields, providing a comfortable way to view these birds and other wildlife on the refuge.

The public is invited to visit the refuge to enjoy seeing these large numbers of waterfowl. "What a great way to spend some quality time with family and friends over the Christmas holidays," added Lanier. "An hour or so on the wildlife drive any day during daylight hours should provide a show of wildlife that will leave folks talking about it for years! Black bear are seen regularly, sometimes several at a time. And, having these numbers of waterfowl around to observe would be a real treat for anyone!"

The refuge is open seven days a week, daylight hours only. For information about the best places to go to observe wildlife, visit <http://www.fws.gov/alligatorriver> or call 252-473-1131.



Northern Pintails by the thousands are wintering on Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge Wildlife Drive is a perfect place to take a group of family or friends to view waterfowl, black bears, and other refuge wildlife. Photo credit: USFWS