

Bayou Sauvage

National Wildlife Refuge



photo: USFWS



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Refuge Facts

- Established: 1990. Authorized under the Emergency Wetland Act in 1986 by President Ronald Reagan.
- Approximately 25,000 acres.
- Location: The Refuge is located in New Orleans East, about 20 minutes from downtown. It is entirely within the city limits of New Orleans and is the second largest urban refuge. Bayou Sauvage can be accessed from I-10, U.S. 90, and U.S. 11.

Natural History

- The Refuge was formed by the abandoned St. Bernard delta of the Mississippi River and consists of silt and sediments deposited by the river.
- The Refuge provides habitat for an abundance of waterfowl, raptors, wading birds, shorebirds, and alligators.
- Includes approximately 13,000 acres of freshwater marsh contained within hurricane and flood-protection levees, 11,000 acres of brackish marsh, and 200 acres of forested lands on low ridges.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- Approximately 80,000 annual visitors.

Refuge Purposes

- To enhance the population of migratory, shore and wading birds.
- To encourage natural diversity of fish and wildlife species.
- To protect endangered and threatened plants and animals.
- To fulfill the international treaty obligations of the nation with respect to fish and wildlife.
- To protect archaeological resources.
- To provide for scientific research and environmental education with emphasis on wetlands.

- To provide opportunities for fish and wildlife-oriented recreation in an urban setting.

Management Tools

- Water management is conducted through gravity flow structures and water pumps. This type of management benefits waterfowl, wading birds and shorebirds; it is also used for marsh restoration and noxious plant control.
- Habitat restoration.
- Trapping of exotic wildlife, feral hog and nutria.

- Environmental education.

- Law enforcement.

- Partnerships.

Public Use Opportunities

- Interpretive trails and boardwalks.
- Fishing.
- Bird watching.
- Canoeing.
- Photography.
- Crawfishing and crabbing.
- Wildlife observation.
- Boating and launch.
- Youth waterfowl hunting.

Questions and Answers

When is the Refuge open to fishing?
Sportfishing and shell fishing are permitted year-round inside the Hurricane Protection Levee and only after 12 p.m. outside the Hurricane Protection Levee from November 1 through January 31, and during the state teal season.

Can you hunt on Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge?
Limited to youth waterfowl hunting. See hunting permit regulations for more details.

Can you crab and crawfish on the Refuge?

Yes! Recreational crawfishing and crabbing are allowed on the refuge. Crawfish can be taken with wire nets up to 20 inches in diameter, with a 100 pound per person limit. Recreational crabbing is allowed with a limit of 12 dozen per person. Fishing, crabbing and crawfishing equipment must be attended at all times. Commercial crabbing is not allowed.

Can you come to my school and conduct an environmental education program or can I bring a school group to the Refuge?

The answer to both parts of this question is yes. Refuge staff are ready to conduct programs in the schools or welcome the schools to the refuge.

For further details visit our website at https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Bayou_Sauvage/visit/educators.html

To schedule a school program at Bayou Sauvage please call 985/882 2021.