

# Blackwater

## National Wildlife Refuge

### Chesapeake Marshlands National Wildlife Refuge Complex



#### Represented by Members of Congress:

Senator Benjamin L. Cardin  
Senator Christopher Van Hollen, Jr.  
Rep. Andrew P. Harris (1st)

#### Profile

Established: 1933  
Current acres: 28,894  
FTEs: 16  
Blackwater Land  
Acquisition: \$2,223,000  
FY2016 volunteer hours: 9,370  
FY2016 visitation: 170,000

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is administered by the Chesapeake Marshlands National Wildlife Refuge Complex, which also administers Eastern Neck, Martin and Susquehanna NWRs.

FY 2016 Chesapeake Marshlands NWR Complex budget:

\*Salaries/ops. \$1,821,485  
Complex Fees \$65,517

\*Includes annual maintenance, utilities, contracts, etc.

#### Purpose

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge was established to protect and manage habitat for migratory birds, threatened and endangered plants and animals, and other native species.

#### Visitor Services

- Visitor center and bookstore
- Interpretive auto and foot trails
- Hunting (deer, waterfowl, turkey)
- Environmental education programs
- Tidal fishing
- Paddling trails

#### Management Activities

- Protecting land through acquisition and easements
- Enhancing forest conditions for Delmarva fox squirrels, bats and forest-interior dwelling birds
- Controlling non-native, invasive species
- Administering prescribed burns on 13,000 acres to improve refuge marsh and woodland habitats
- Managing 350 acres of croplands to diversify wildlife habitat
- Managing 27 freshwater impoundments covering 434 acres to provide feeding and resting areas for migrating birds
- Administering trapping programs to manage furbearer populations
- Conducting scientific research to improve management decisions
- Restoring and protecting wetlands
- Maintaining five management units in the Chesapeake Bay and four management units along the Nanticoke River basin

#### Contact

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USFWS

Kayaking on Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge

#### Highlights

- The refuge is recognized as an internationally important birding area and a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention.
- Blackwater hosts one of the largest nesting populations of bald eagles on the Atlantic coast, and has the largest protected population of the once endangered Delmarva Peninsula fox squirrels.
- More than 170,000 people visit the refuge each year, adding millions to the local economy.
- The refuge partners with the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State and National Parks to help preserve and convey the Tubman story.
- Utilizing Hurricane Sandy Resiliency funds, “thin layering” marsh restoration techniques have been implemented as part of the Climate Adaptation Strategy with Audubon and The Conservation Fund.