



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge

P.O. Box 576, 1020 Ranch Road, Loleta, CA 95551

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Web: www.fws.gov/refuge/humboldt_bay/

PHOTO BLIND GUIDELINES

The refuge offers a photo blind just off the Shorebird Loop Trail near the Visitor Center. Please see photo blind map for location. The best time of year for photography generally occurs from November through May, depending on water/habitat conditions. This is also when a greater variety of waterfowl and shorebirds are present. The photo blind is available November through May, Monday - Sunday except Federal Holidays. The following regulations are necessary to minimize disturbance to sensitive wildlife species and to ensure a quality wildlife photography experience for you.

To use the photo blind, complete the following steps.

1. Request a Reservation

Reservations are recommended. Reservation times are 1 hour before sunrise to 12pm and 12:30pm to 4:45pm. Photographers may check availability on any given day by contacting staff at the Visitor Center or by calling 707- 733-5406. If the photo blind is available, staff will confirm use. We will need your name, address, phone and email, plus the date(s) and times(s) you are requesting. Photographers may reserve the blind a maximum of two days out of the seven days per week. Blind reservations may be made in person, at the Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex-Richard J. Guadagno Headquarters and Visitor Center, 1020 Ranch Road in Loleta or by calling 707-733-5406 or by email to denise_seeger@fws.gov. Reservations should be made at least 5 days prior to intended use. Refuge staff will contact the photographer to confirm reservation(s). If you need to cancel your request, contact the Visitor Center as soon as possible so that others may schedule the blind. We highly recommended photographers call before their reservation date to check on blind access and weather conditions.

2. Receive your Confirmation of Reservation

Photographers must receive:

- 1) A "Confirmation of Reservation" letter, which will include your date(s) of access and combinations to the entrance gate and photo blind. *Please note:* the confirmation letter grants permission to access the Refuge, to park at the Richard J. Guadagno Headquarters & Visitor Center and to access the photo blind for the date(s) specified *only*.
- 2) A "Vehicle Placard" to be placed on the dash of your car prior to going out to the blind. (if Visitor Center is not open)
- 3) A "Photography Blind Report" form to be turned in at the Visitor Center prior to leaving.

3. Proceed to Blind

Photographers are allowed to enter the blind anytime during their reservation period. If arriving before sunrise, photographers must park at the Visitor Center and proceed directly

to the blind on foot. Photographers need to leave the blind by 4:45 pm so they can exit the Refuge before the gate locks at 5:00 pm. The trail to the photo blind is a short walk off the Shorebird Loop Trail. From the Visitor Center, walk down the boardwalk and proceed along the trail and over the canal. You will see Area Closed signage and the Photo Blind by Permit Only sign. Follow the trail straight past these signs for approx. 1/8 mile and look for a trail on your right that leads directly to the photo blind.

4. Blind Description, Use, and Access

The blind was built in 2005 by Refuge volunteers and is made out of gray, recycled plastic boards and wood. It is in a restricted access area. Please do not go anywhere off trail. Blind dimensions: five feet deep by six feet wide. The ceiling is six feet high at the front, sloping to five feet high at the back. It has three sets of openings on each side and the front with removable, sliding panels. The blind can accommodate one person comfortably; however, two people at a time are allowed. There are two chairs in the blind. The blind is not wheelchair accessible. Smoking is not permitted inside the blind. Photographers may leave the blind at any time, but should keep movement outside the blind to a minimum. When exiting the blind, please clean up and close all the panels and shut the door and lock the lock. To open the lock, dial in the combination and then squeeze the U-shaped piece in to pop the lock open.

5. Check In/Out at the Office

If the Visitor Center is open, please check in with staff before proceeding to the blind. Photographers must check out of the blind by returning the "Photography Blind Report" form to the Visitor Center before leaving.

Refuge reserves the right to revoke photography privileges

Anyone found to be in violation of any conditions in these guidelines will have their photography blind privileges immediately revoked and will be asked to leave the area.

Reducing Disturbance to Wildlife/Tips for a Good Photography Experience

Please conduct your activities so as to keep disturbance to wildlife at a minimum. Such actions will not only benefit wildlife but will help ensure continued, high quality photographic opportunities. It is a good idea to check a tide table before reserving the blind. High tide on the bay usually results in more birds on the refuge ponds.

Checklist of suggested items to bring to the blind:

<input type="checkbox"/> flashlight	<input type="checkbox"/> warm clothes	<input type="checkbox"/> insect repellent
<input type="checkbox"/> field guides	<input type="checkbox"/> binoculars	<input type="checkbox"/> sack for garbage (pack it in, pack it out)
<input type="checkbox"/> water	<input type="checkbox"/> food and snacks	<input type="checkbox"/> bean bag camera rest/tripod

Please leave the area and the blind the way you found it.

ENJOY YOUR DAY!