The Santee National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1941 as a migratory bird sanctuary. The refuge houses nearly 300 bird species recorded on the refuge. Mammal species found on the refuge include white-tailed deer, beaver, river otter, short-tailed weasel (gray skunk), and gray fox. Reptiles include the American alligator, snapping turtle, and over 30 species of snakes. You can find signs of animals here and learn about local South Carolina wildlife. The refuge is located off of Log Jam Road, the 7.5 mile Wildlife Drive provides many stops along the way to view wildlife, hike or bicycle a trail, and observe different wildlife. The refuge during the summer months (featured on the cover of the refuge bird list!). Visitors may walk or bicycle the approximately 7.6 miles of dirt roads on the West Side of the Cuddo Unit from March 1 - Nov 1 where you may observe different species of animals and plants that may be fire dependent (long leaf pine, red-cockaded woodpecker, etc.).

1. Santee National Wildlife Refuge

1. Cuddo Unit parking area

Located off of Log Jam Road, the 7.5 mile Wildlife Drive provides many stops along the way to view wildlife, hike or bicycle a trail, and learn about local South Carolina wildlife. Along the drive, look for numbered posts that correspond to numbers in the brochure for directional and interpretive information.

2. Forested Wetlands

Wildlife Drive – straight ahead

Woods Road–ONE WAY DO NOT ENTER

The Woods Road is a wetlands preserve with many species of wood ducks. (Great Blue Herons, Egrets, and others wading birds and waterfowl.) In addition, forested wetlands provide nesting habitat for the Prothonotary warbler, an abundant nestler on the refuge during the summer months (featured on the cover of the refuge bird list!).

3. Cuddo West Bank Tidewater/Habitat Management

Visitors may walk or bicycle the approximately 7.6 miles of dirt roads on the West Side of the Cuddo Unit from March 1 - Nov 1 where you may observe different habitat management techniques used by the refuge. Farming provides habitat and a food source for resident and migratory animals. Prescribed burning is used to minimize fuel loads, maintain habitat type, and manage for specific species of plants and animals that may be fire dependent (long leaf pine, red-cockaded woodpecker, etc.).

4. Interior Forest Trail

This 2 mile network of trail meanders through a canal connecting two ponds and a wetland site before connecting to the Plantation Islands Canoe Trail on Potato Creek. The Plantation Islands Canoe Trail is approximately 7 miles long and is marked with numbered canoe markers 1-15. To continue down the Wildlife Drive, turn RIGHT at this intersection.

5. Wildlife Drive

Other Trail (trail to get hiking trails)

6. Red Bank Field Parking Area

Park here and take a short walk down the trail in front of you to find a nice cove with wetland areas on each side. This is a great place to photograph wetland plants and wildlife. The wildlife along the back of the parking area is known for because of the red clay soils found there. The refuge is located on the edge of the coastal plain and midland region of South Carolina and has a variety of wetland types from sandy to clay soils.

7. Blueberry bays

Wood bays are located on posts along the edge of the road are nesting boxes for eastern bluebirds (Sialia sialis), which nest in the refuge along forest and field edge habitats. Bluebirds are secondary cavity nesters, using cavities that are made by other bird species. Eastern bluebirds are a good indicator of habitat loss, and have rebounded with the establishment of bluebird box sites and various other bluebird box programs.

8. Eastern Alligator (Alligator mississippiensis)

Alligators are observed here basking in the sun or swimming in the water. The American alligator is ectothermic (cold Blooded) temperature (body temperature) than its surroundings. Alligators that now common throughout their range, are found as far north as North Carolina. Please remember to never feed wild animals, including alligators! Feeding alligators makes them dangerous to humans.

9. American Alligator (Alligator mississippiensis)

Alligators are observed here basking in the sun or swimming in the water. The American alligator is ectothermic (cold Blooded) temperature (body temperature) than its surroundings. Alligators that now common throughout their range, are found as far north as North Carolina. Please remember to never feed wild animals, including alligators! Feeding alligators makes them dangerous to humans.

10. Wildlife Drive. Other Trail

To continue down the Wildlife Drive, turn RIGHT at this intersection.

11. Plantation Islands Canoe Launch

Parking & launch sites for North and South Canoe Launch. The Plantation Islands Canoe Trail begins on the Plantation Islands Canoe Trail. The Plantation Islands Canoe Trail begins on Potato Creek Hiking Trail begins on the right side of the road across from the parking area.

National Wildlife Refuge System

The Mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

12. Vernal Pools

A short hike down this trail brings visitors to a dike with small ponds on each side. Look for wood ducks, ring-necked ducks, mallards, and coots as common waterfowl in winter, great blue- herons, anhingas, prothonotary warblers and other migratory songbirds in spring, summer, and fall. Moist (hydric) soils are found in wetlands and are known as vernal pools. Breeding habitat and sanctuary for a number of reptiles and amphibians. Since the ponds are Carolina. Please remember to never feed wild animals, including alligators! Feeding alligators makes them dangerous to humans.

13. Greenbees Reservoirs

A short hike down this trail brings visitors to a dike with small ponds on each side. Look for wood ducks, ring-necked ducks, mallards, and coots as common waterfowl in winter, great blue- herons, anhingas, prothonotary warblers and other migratory songbirds in spring, summer, and fall. Moist (hydric) soils are found in wetlands and are known as vernal pools. Breeding habitat and sanctuary for a number of reptiles and amphibians. Since the ponds are Carolina. Please remember to never feed wild animals, including alligators! Feeding alligators makes them dangerous to humans.

Wildlife Watching Tips

Dawn and dusk are the best times to view wildlife.

Vehicular make good observation blinds. Drive slowly, stopping often to scan places where wildlife might be hiding.

Drive with your windows down. Often just will hear more than you see.

Look for signs of animals. Tracks, scat, feathers, and nests often tell interesting stories.

Starting at the Cuddo Unit parking area, located off of Log Jam Road, the 7.5 mile Wildlife Drive provides many stops along the way to view wildlife, hike or bicycle a trail, and learn about local South Carolina wildlife. Along the drive, look for numbered posts that correspond to numbers in the brochure for directional and interpretive information.

Tips

Along the drive, look for numbered posts that correspond to numbers in the brochure for directional and interpretive information.

http://www.fws.gov/santee

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