

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**

**Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge**  
17076 293rd Avenue  
Zimmerman, MN 55398

**763/389 3323**

**TTY users may reach Sherburne through the Federal  
Information Relay System at 1-800-877-8339.**

**Sherburne website address:**

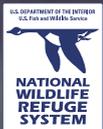
**<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/sherburne/>**

**Sherburne e:mail address:**

**sherburne@fws.gov**

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**

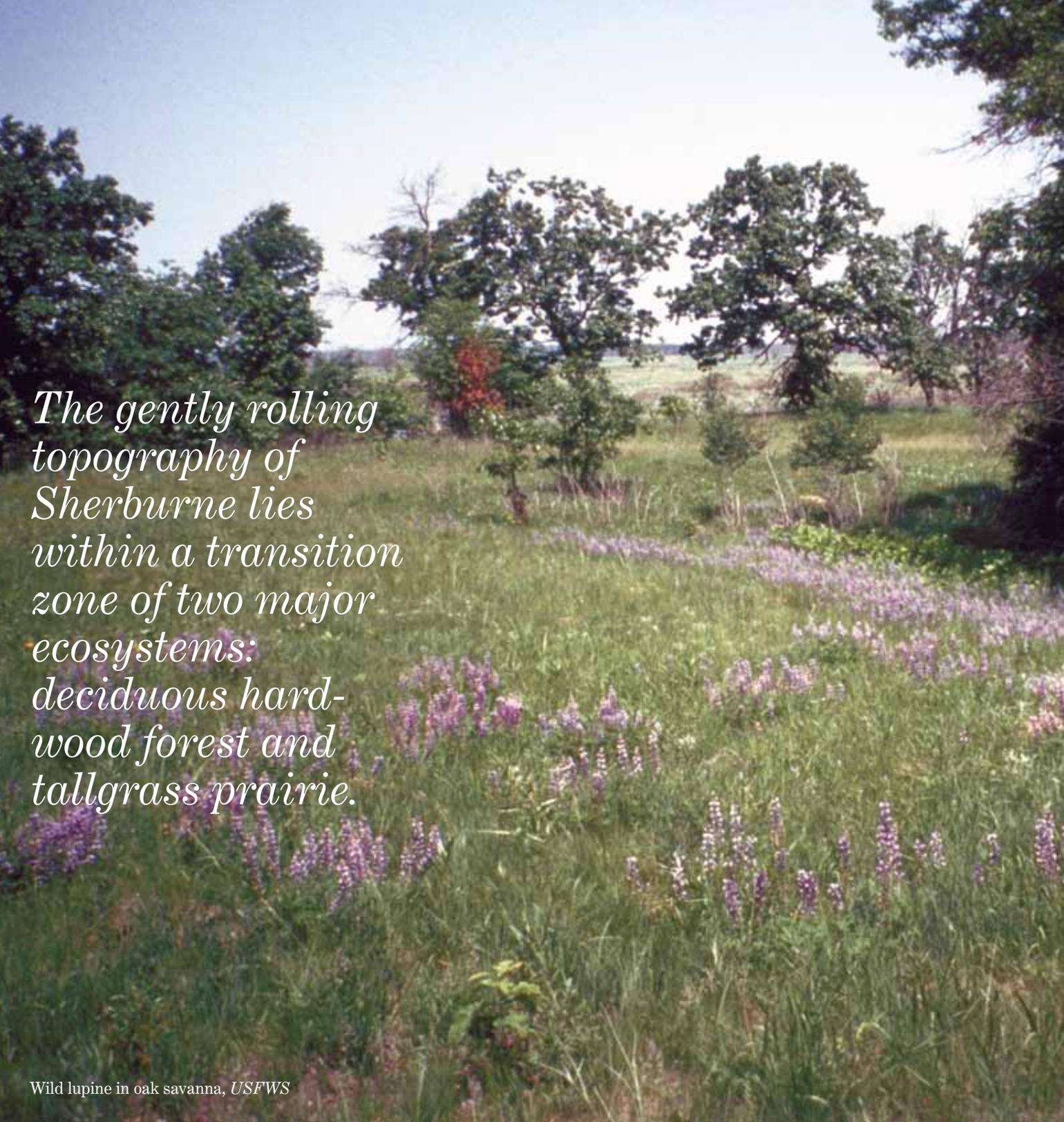
**1 800/344 WILD**



# **Sherburne**

*National Wildlife Refuge*



A landscape photograph showing a gently rolling topography. The foreground is dominated by a field of tall green grasses and numerous purple wild lupine flowers. In the middle ground, there are several large, mature oak trees with dense green foliage. The background shows a continuation of the rolling hills under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is a mix of open prairie and wooded areas.

*The gently rolling  
topography of  
Sherburne lies  
within a transition  
zone of two major  
ecosystems:  
deciduous hard-  
wood forest and  
tallgrass prairie.*



This "Blue Goose" symbolizes the National Wildlife Refuge System, a network of over 540 refuges protected and managed for wildlife, habitat, and people.

## Welcome to Sherburne

Established in 1965 to help protect and restore the wildlife of the St. Francis River Valley, this 30,700 acre refuge now encompasses oak savanna, wetland, and big woods habitats which are home to an astounding array of wildlife. Wildlife dependent recreation is encouraged where it is compatible with the wildlife and the land. The refuge is open during daylight hours within the guidelines listed in this leaflet.

## History

The St. Francis River Valley was formed as the last glacier retreated 12,000 years ago leaving behind a large sandy lakeplain dotted with wetlands, called the Anoka Sandplain. The earliest evidence of humans in this area dates back nearly 7,000 years. American Indian village sites were here as early as 1300 A.D. In the 1870s the St. Francis River Valley was settled under

St. Francis River,  
USFWS

Photos (from top):  
Scarlet tanager,  
*S. Maslowski*

Young briders,  
*N. Haugen,*  
*USFWS*



the Homestead Act. Approval for the establishment of Sherburne Refuge was received on May 18, 1965 from the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission to purchase the land with Federal Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp funds.

## Wildlife On The Refuge

Each season of the year brings a different variety of wildlife viewing opportunities. The refuge is a migratory stopover for many birds and a breeding ground for others. Over 200 species of birds, 50 mammals, 30 fish, 20 reptiles and amphibians, and thousands of insects and other invertebrates are found on the refuge.

The best opportunities for seeing wildlife are early in the morning or just before dusk, times when they often feed and drink. Please observe wildlife from a distance using binoculars, spotting scopes, or camera zoom lenses to get that close-up look or photograph.





### Important Species

Bald Eagles use the refuge for nesting and raising young, and as a rest stop during migration. The restored wetlands throughout the refuge provide ideal habitat.



Greater sandhill cranes use the wetlands to nest and raise young. In the fall they are joined by migrating cranes that stop here to feed during their journey to their wintering grounds in north-central Florida.

### Spring



### Wildlife Calendar

The northward bird migration during April and May brings an array of songbirds and waterfowl which includes the white-throated sparrow, yellow-rumped warbler, northern shovelers, bufflehead, and gadwall. The warbler migration peaks in mid-May. Among the returning residents are the bald eagle, blue-winged teal, trumpeter swan, ring-necked duck, red-winged blackbird, meadowlark, sandhill crane, and yellow warbler.



Photos (from top): bald eagle, *USFWS*, sandhill crane, *J. Mattsson, USFWS*, meadowlark, *J. Java, USFWS*, black tern, *J. Sogaard*, white-tailed deer, *B. Angus, USFWS*

### Summer



Wildlife that nest and breed on Sherburne include the mallard, Canada goose, green heron, black tern, pied-billed grebe, red-tailed hawk, gopher snake, and Blanding's turtle. Other animals, such as the great blue heron, common egret, and white pelican come to feed in wetland areas. A continually changing display of native wildflowers can be seen from late May through September. Wild lupine, hairy puccoon, large-flowered penstemon, butterfly weed, prairie rose, and blazing star are a few of the jewels observed during this time.

### Fall



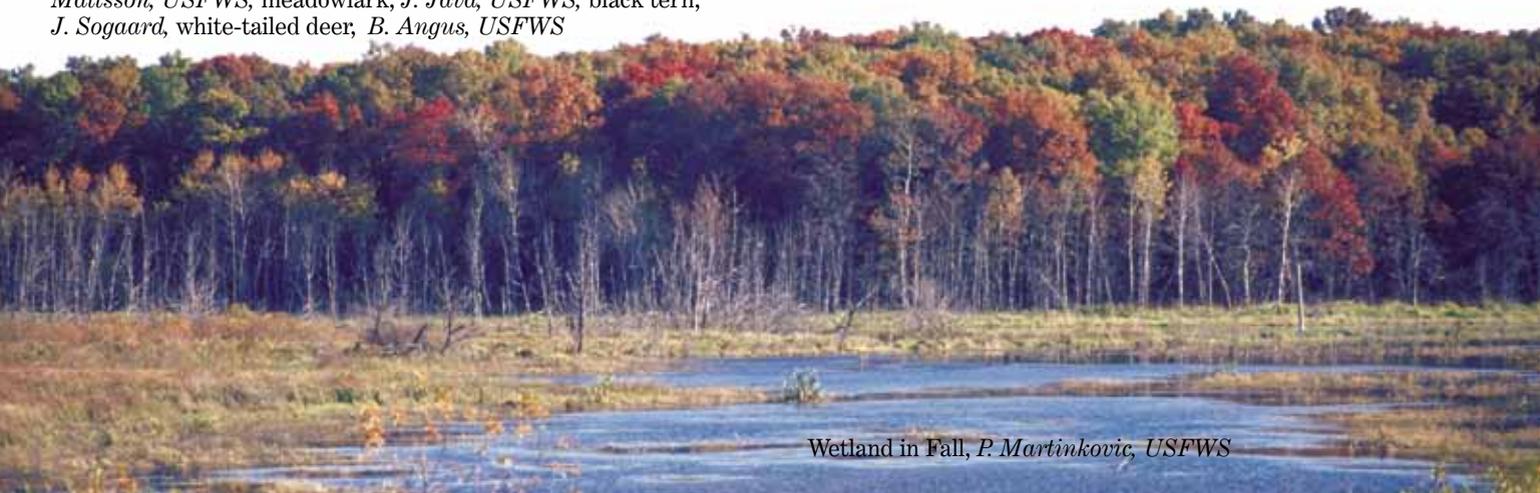
The southward bird migration peaks in October. Hooded merganser, American coot, wigeon, scaup, northern pintail, rough-legged hawk and yellow-shafted flicker are a few of the many species that use the refuge as a place to rest and feed during their journey.

### Winter



Winter residents include the blue jay, pileated woodpecker, black-capped chickadee, red fox, river otter and white-tailed deer. Animals that come to Sherburne to spend the winter months include the snow bunting, redpoll, northern shrike and occasionally the snowy owl and great grey owl.

Photos (from top): Blandings turtle, *B. Ehlers, USFWS*, prairie rose, *USFWS*, hooded merganser, *G. Moss*, pileated woodpecker, *USFWS*



Wetland in Fall, *P. Martinkovic, USFWS*

# Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge

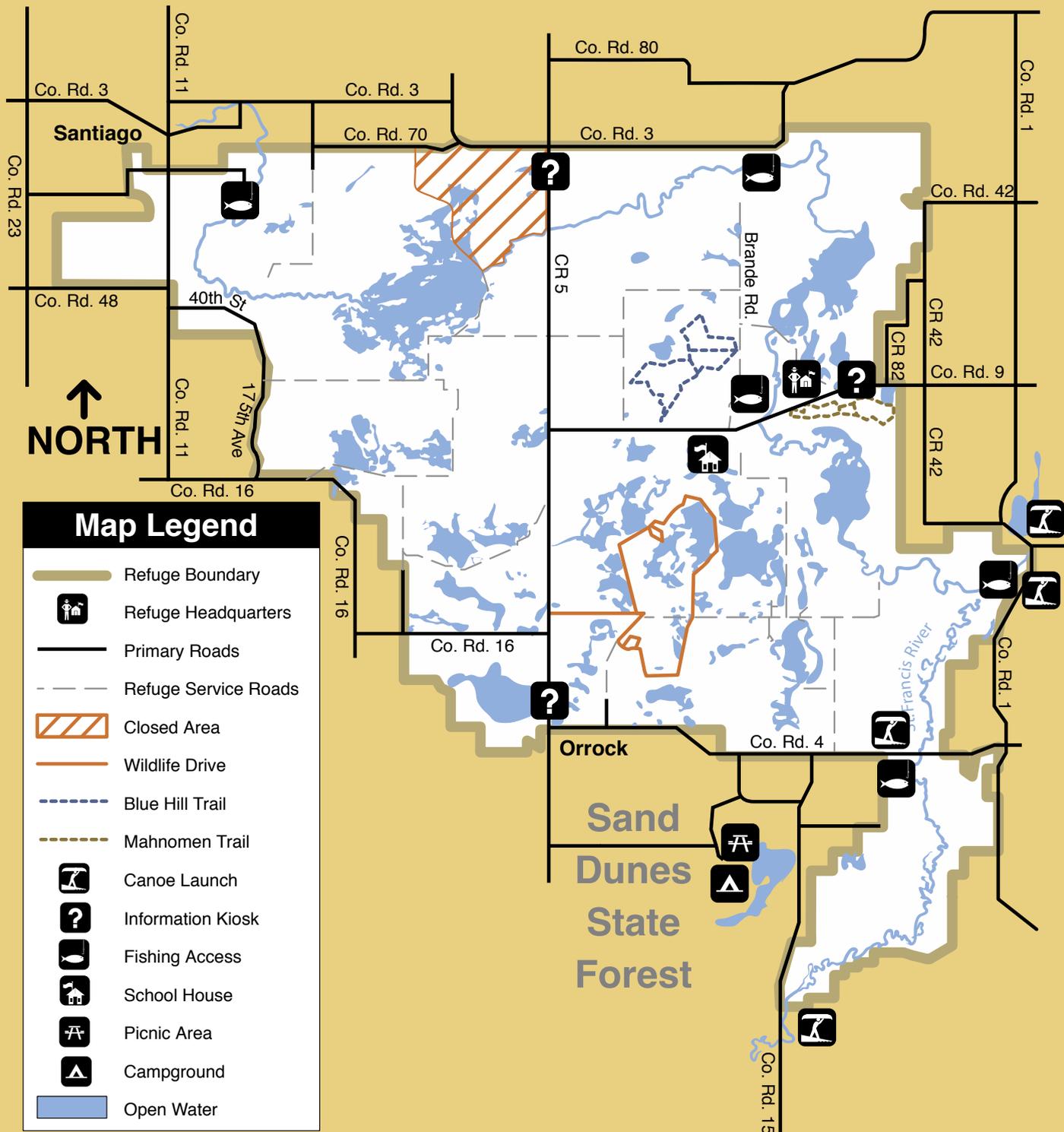


Photo (right):  
Wild lupine in oak  
savanna, *USFWS*



### **Habitat Management**

Wildlife needs for food and cover are achieved through habitat management activities. At Sherburne these activities focus on the restoration or maintenance of three major native habitat types: oak savanna, wetlands, and big woods.

Oak Savanna is a rare, fire dependent upland habitat where prairie grasses and wildflowers grow under and around scattered oak trees. The refuge is restoring this plant community with native grasses and wildflowers, using prescribed burns as a management tool.

Wetlands on the refuge consist of four natural lakes, numerous natural marshes, and twenty-two restored wetlands, or pools, constructed to allow the water level to be raised and lowered to create a variety of wetland types for wildlife.

Big Woods is a maple-basswood forest type that historically existed along the northeastern boundary of the refuge. This area is now managed to preserve native trees and restore a big woods habitat.

### **Wildlife Sanctuary**

The majority of the refuge is designated a wildlife sanctuary and closed to all public access from March 1 to August 31 to allow wildlife to breed and raise their young free from human disturbance. During the sanctuary period, the Blue Hill and Mahnomen hiking trails, the wildlife drive, the St. Francis River canoe route, and fishing access points remain open for public use.



### *Prairie's Edge Wildlife Drive*



### **Refuge Activities**

The Prairie's Edge Wildlife Drive, a 7.3-mile loop road, provides vehicle access for wildlife viewing in wetlands, oak savanna, prairie openings, and woodlands. The drive is open from late April through October, or as weather dictates.

### *Hiking Trails*



Two scenic hiking trails, the Blue Hill and the Mahnomens, provide a total of nearly eight miles of easy walking. Each trail is designed with three loops which pass through oak woodlands and prairie openings, skirting nearby wetlands.

### *Cross country skiing and snowshoeing*



Cross country skiing and snowshoeing are permitted on most of the refuge from September 1 to February 28. The Blue Hill and Mahnomens trails (un-groomed) are open for cross country skiing over flat to moderate terrain. Snowshoeing and walking are permitted to the side of ski tracks on the Mahnomens Trail.

### *Fishing*



Fishing is permitted on the St. Francis River at designated access points (see refuge map). State regulations apply.

### *Hunting*



Hunting for small game, waterfowl, and big game is permitted on the refuge for certain species, in designated areas, in accordance with state and federal laws. Consult the refuge hunting leaflet for current regulations and a map of open areas. Blinds for hunters with disabilities are available by reservation during waterfowl and firearms deer seasons.

### *Canoeing*



Canoeing is permitted on Battle Brook, and on the St. Francis River south from Battle Brook.

### *Biking*



Bicyclers are welcome on the Wildlife Drive from late April through October, and on refuge service roads from September 1 to February 28. Hiking trails are closed to bicyclists. Off-road travel is not permitted.



*Snowshoers, N. Haugen, USFWS*

### *Mushroom and berry picking*



Mushroom and berry picking are permitted for personal consumption within 100 feet of trails or public right of ways.

### *Environmental Education*

Educational programs are available for organized groups and the public to learn about the refuge. Contact the refuge office for more information.

### **General Regulations**

- Public use of refuge lands is permitted during daylight hours.
- Camping, overnight parking, and campfires are not permitted.
- Horses, dog sleds, skijoring, snow mobiles, trail bikes, and all other off-road vehicles are not permitted.
- Dogs and other pets must be kept on a leash at all times.
- Firearms and bows are not permitted in Closed Areas and No Hunting Zones. (See hunting leaflet)
- Target shooting is not permitted.



*Columbine,  
G. Swanson,  
USFWS*



Pasque flowers,  
*G. Swanson,*  
*USFWS*

### **Sand Dunes State Forest**

Located south of the refuge, the Sand Dunes State Forest offers a campground, horse trails, and other recreational opportunities. Regulations differ from those on the refuge. For more information, contact the Lake Maria State Park at (763) 878-2325.

### **Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge**

Located near Little Falls, MN, this refuge is managed as part of the Sherburne complex. Established in 1992 to preserve a large, natural wetland complex, Crane Meadows presently exists as scattered parcels totaling 2,000 acres. Visitors are invited to experience the refuge from the scenic, 3-mile, Platte River Hiking Trail. The trailhead is located just south of Little Falls, MN on County Road 35, 4.5 miles east of U.S. Highway 10. For more information visit their website at: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/crane>



Sedge wren,  
*J. Holler, USFWS*



Pintail, *G. Moss*



Green heron, *N. Haugen, USFWS*

*Volunteers  
Make it  
Possible!*

### **Volunteers**

The refuge offers a wide variety of volunteer opportunities. To receive an application form, call the refuge office.

### **Friends of Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge**

The Friends of Sherburne are a non-profit group formed to give assistance and support for refuge projects and educational programs. For more information on their activities, or on becoming a member, check their website at: <http://www.exploresherburne.org> or call the refuge office.



Birder and  
volunteer,  
*N. Haugen, USFWS*

### **For More Information**

The Sherburne office is located between Princeton and Zimmerman, MN on County Road 9 (293rd Ave.), five miles west of Hwy 169. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Butterfly weed,  
*USFWS*

