

# Lower Hatchie

## National Wildlife Refuge



photo: USFWS



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### Refuge Facts

- Established: 1980.
- Acres: 10,331.
- Located in Lauderdale and Tipton counties, TN.
- Location: The refuge headquarters is located 18 miles west of Highway 51 on Highway 87.

### Natural History

- Refuge lies adjacent to the Mississippi River along the scenic Hatchie River.
- Concentrations of ducks, geese, raptors, shorebirds, wading birds and neo-tropical migrants.
- Refuge also administers the Tennessee Department of Conservation owned Sunk Lake.
- Habitat acreage:
 

Bottomland hardwood forest .....	5,280
Cropland .....	1,278
Open water .....	75
Upland forest .....	922
Grassland .....	665
Marsh .....	887

### Financial Impact of Refuge

- Two-person staff.
- 120,000 visitors annually.
- Base funding is from Reelfoot NWR Complex.

### Refuge Objectives

- Protect, enhance, and manage habitat for migratory birds and endangered species.
- Maintain and enhance bottomland hardwood forest.
- Provide compatible consumptive and non-consumptive public use opportunities.

### Management Tools

- Water management for waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds.
- Cooperative farming.
- Mechanical/chemical control of noxious weeds.

- Silvicultural techniques for resident and migratory wildlife.
- Education/interpretation.
- Law enforcement.
- Cooperative partnerships.
- Sanctuary for waterfowl.
- Wood duck nest box program.

### Public Use Opportunities

- Hunting, including youth hunts.
- Fishing year-round in Mississippi and Hatchie rivers and associated oxbows, and Champion Lake.
- Fishing seasonal at Sunk Lake, Teal, and Shoaf Ponds.
- Eight miles of gravel roads for refuge access.
- Logging trails for hiking/hunter access.
- Wildlife observation.
- Photography.

### Calendar of Events

**March-June:** Crappie and bass fishing peak.

Wildflowers are abundant.

Northern snowmelt swells Mississippi River.

Birds migrating north.

Excellent wildlife viewing opportunities.

**July-September:** Catfishing still good.

Habitat management programs busy.

Heat, humidity, and bugs can be extreme.

**September-December:** Squirrel hunting begins.

Other hunts follow through end of year.

National Wildlife Refuge Week in October.

Excellent wildlife viewing opportunities.

**January-March:** Small Mississippi river rises can inundate refuge.

Hunting closes end of February.

Wintering waterfowl use peaks.