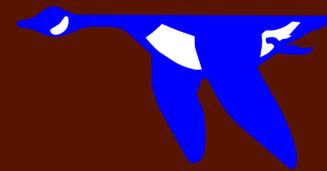
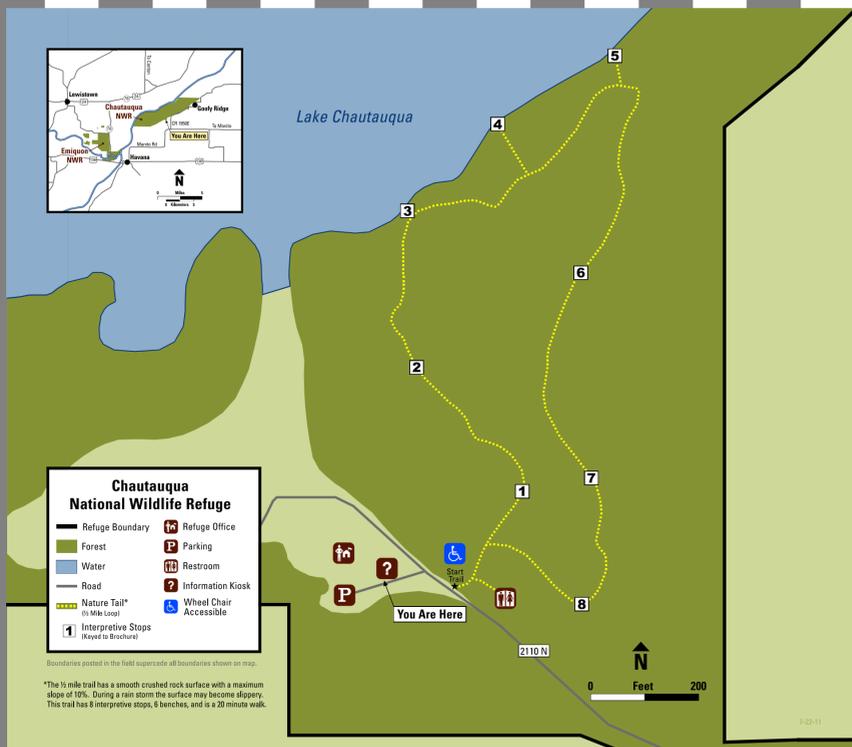


Headquarters



12 x 66



28 x 32

Wildlife Observation Tips

The ultimate wildlife observation experience is watching undisturbed animals in their natural environment. It takes time and patience to be able to watch wildlife.

Here are some helpful tips:

- Dawn and dusk are the best times to see wildlife.
- Leave your pets at home.
- Use binoculars or a telephoto lens for a closer look.
- Observe from the sidelines. Walk slowly and quietly. Often you will hear more than you see.
- Look for animal signs, tracks, scat, feathers, and nests that are left behind, often they tell interesting stories.
- Do not feed wildlife; your snack could disrupt wild digestive systems.



28 x 32

Lending a Helping Eye or Hand

With a spotting scope and binoculars Dr. Richard and Sigurd Bjorklund go to 'work' on the refuge. These volunteers have conducted weekly waterbird surveys for the refuge for nearly 16 years. Other volunteers help with removing invasive plants and assisting at special events. What ever your talent, it may be needed at the refuge.



"I enjoy doing surveys because the surveys combine something that I enjoy doing, birding and gathering long-term data. I enjoy the anticipation of the unexpected, to see different birds or other wildlife every week."
Sig Bjorklund

You Can Help...

Volunteers support the refuge by:

- Bird and butterfly counts
- Assisting with biological surveys/activities
- Planning and working at festivals and special events
- Removing invasive plants and bird banding
- Maintaining hiking trails
- And so much more...



28 x 32

Once a Wetland, is Wet Again

Extensive wetlands once covered the Illinois River Valley. The waters teemed with life as generations of ducks, fish, and other wildlife thrived on the bounty. And so the wetland remained until agriculture encroached in the 1920s with the construction of levees altering the course of the water and our history. It wasn't long before the Illinois River reclaimed the wetland again. The river reached out over the levees and flooded the agricultural land. This flooding was too much for the Chautauqua Drainage and Levee District to manage. In 1936 the land was sold to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Chautauqua National Wildlife Refuge was born. Restoration of the wetlands began.

As water took center stage over the land again, refuge managers began manipulating water levels to recreate the wetlands, calling back the millions of ducks and geese to play out their breeding rituals, rest for migration, and feast on native vegetation.

The original levees used to keep water off the land have been modified to restore the wetlands. Water control structures allow the refuge staff to mimic natural river flow and manage wetlands.



28 x 32