



San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Pacific Southwest Region

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Recreation and Activities

Hours

The refuge is open year-round during daylight hours. Check with the refuge office for the latest update on trail closures, wildlife concerns, maintenance, and management activities.

Fishing

Boat access to the open water and navigable sloughs of San Pablo Bay provides opportunities for fishing on the refuge. Fishing by boat is allowed in the open bay and navigable sloughs of the refuge.

Boat launching is not available on the refuge, but boat ramps are available at the Vallejo public marina near Brinkmans Marine and at Port Sonoma near the Petaluma River. Fishing from shore is not allowed. Please contact the refuge for additional information.

Hunting

Hunting is allowed on designated areas of the refuge during respective seasons subject to both State and Federal regulations. Boat access to the open water and navigable sloughs of San Pablo Bay provides opportunities for hunting on the refuge.

Boat launching is not available on the refuge, but boat ramps are available at the Vallejo public marina near Brinkmans Marine and at Port Sonoma near the Petaluma River. Please contact the refuge for additional information.

Interpretation

All visitors are invited to enjoy interpretive activities at the refuge, which include scheduled events and self-guided walks at Toley Creek and Cullinan Ranch. Call the refuge at 707-769-4200 for information.

Wildlife Observation and Photography

Fall, winter, and spring offer the best opportunities to observe concentrations of migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, and raptors. One of the best places to see wildlife is the Lower Tubbs Island Trail, which provides a spectacular view of San Pablo Bay, its wildlife habitat, and numerous tidal marsh species.

Starting in September, waterbirds begin to arrive from their northern breeding grounds. From November through January, peak numbers of diving ducks and shorebirds, including canvasback, scaup, scoter, bufflehead, ruddy duck, goldeneyes, sandpipers, plovers, dowitchers, willets, godwits, and curlews, can be seen using the bay's wetlands.

Raptors, such as red-tailed hawks, white-tailed kites, northern harriers, and American kestrels, are abundant from November through January. They can be seen hunting over the refuge's marshes and on adjacent agricultural fields. A sharp observer may spot a peregrine falcon pursuing a shorebird on the edge of the bay. By May, most of these migrants move north to nest, while residents and visitors from the south nest on the refuge.

Nesting species on the refuge include black-necked stilt, mallard, and gadwall. Migrant nesters from the south include Caspian terns and barn swallows. A variety of resident gulls, herons, egrets, and perching birds can be seen year-round nesting on or adjacent to the refuge. Non-breeding white pelicans are commonly observed during summer and stay into the fall. Established trails at the Tolay Creek and Cullinan Ranch units provide the best wildlife observation and photography opportunities during these seasons. Restrooms and drinking water are available at the refuge office during regular office hours. No restrooms, picnic areas, campgrounds, drinking water, or other facilities are available at the Tolay Creek or Cullinan Ranch Units. Due to the sensitive nature of the wildlife living on the refuge, and for protection of endangered species, pets are not allowed.

[Click here for a bird list of the area >>](#)

For more information, contact:
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