



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

All Refuges

# Sacramento River

National Wildlife Refuge | California



A UNIT OF THE  
National Wildlife  
Refuge System

Visit

Wildlife & Habitat

About the Refuge

## About the Refuge



*The **Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge** is part of the **Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Complex**. It is located along a 80-mile stretch of the Sacramento River between Red Bluff and Princeton, in Tehama, Butte, Glenn and Colusa Counties. The refuge's 30 properties or Units total 10,353 acres, and consist primarily of restored and remnant riparian habitats, but also include grasslands and some orchards.*

The Sacramento River NWR was established 1989 by the authority provided under the Endangered Species Act, Emergency Wetlands Resources Act, and the Fish and Wildlife Act. Units are located along both sides of the river and serve to protect and provide a wide variety of riparian habitats for birds, fish, and other wildlife.

The Sacramento Valley is an extensive agricultural area that was once characterized by diverse types of natural vegetation that provided habitat for a great number of plant and animal species. There has been an 85 percent reduction of riparian vegetation throughout the Sacramento Valley and foothills region, and probably in excess of a 95 percent reduction along this area. The refuge is one of many partners protecting and restoring riparian habitat along the Sacramento River and its watershed.



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### WHAT WE DO

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*Partnerships*



## Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle

*This threatened species is*

The refuge is managed to maintain, enhance and restore habitats. Refuge lands comprise 10,353 acres of riparian habitat, wetlands, uplands, and intensively managed walnut orchards. Many of the units have been restored by converting flood-prone agricultural lands into riparian habitats in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, River Partners, and many other cooperating partners. Riparian habitats on the refuge can be broken down into several different specific types including grassland/savannahs, forests, scrub, oxbow wetlands, and gravel bars.

The riparian habitat along the Sacramento River is critically important for fish, migratory birds, plants, and river system health. It provides shelter for many songbirds and water-associated animals, including the river otter, turtles, beaver, American pelicans, ospreys, and migratory songbirds. Several threatened, endangered, and sensitive species can be found on the refuge including Chinook salmon, Valley elderberry longhorn beetle, yellow-billed cuckoos, Swainson's hawks, and bank swallows.

Twenty-three of the units are partially or entirely open for the public. Each unit has various public access and recreational uses. Check the unit's brochure or specific boundaries, rules, and regulations. Seven of the units have access from parking areas and hiking trails (Rio Vista, Pine Creek, Capay, Ord Bend, Sul Norte, Drumheller, and Packer). One unit (Bogg's Bend) has access via a parking area on adjacent California Department of Fish and Wildlife property. During the spring (March, April, and May), riparian areas can be abundant with migratory songbirds. Twenty-one of the units are open for hunting. The Packer Unit has an access point for bank fishing and small boat access to Packer Lake.

Each of the refuge's 30 units varies in its visitor opportunities. Seven units are accessible by vehicle and offer maintained hiking trails, fourteen units are accessible only by boat, and seven units are closed to public use. Those units that are open to public use are for day use only, and are open 2 hours before sunrise to 1 1/2 hours after sunset. Hunting and fishing are permitted under specific regulations on some of the units. Click here for [Maps and Visitor Information on the Sacramento River NWR Units](#).

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#### Learn More About Visitor Opportunities on Sacramento River NWR:

- [Visitor Activities](#)

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#### Learn More About Visitor Opportunities on the Complex:

- [Visitor Activities](#)  
- [Wildlife and Habitat](#)  
- [Photography](#)  
- [Hunting](#)

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#### About Other Watchable Wildlife Areas in California:

Sacramento River NWR is part of a network of wildlife viewing areas dedicated to celebrating the State of California's wildlife and diverse habitats by acknowledging and elevating the value of wildlife viewing to benefit individuals, families, communities, and industries while fostering awareness and support for conservation and protection of wildlife and habitats. To visit the California Watchable Wildlife website and learn about

*native to the riparian forests of the Central Valley. The Sacramento River NWR is a very important home for it due to the large number of elderberry bushes which they feed on, lay eggs in, and the larvae mature inside of. The adults live for only a few weeks and can emerge between March - June.*

other wildlife viewing areas, [click here](#).

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