

# Archie Carr

## National Wildlife Refuge



photo: USFWS



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photo: Paul Tritaik

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### Refuge Facts

- Established: 1991.
- Acres: 248.
- Located: Brevard and Indian River counties, Florida.
- Other management: lease with state of Florida for management of 125 acres. Four segments totaling 9.3 miles were targeted for acquisition. Three northern segments are located in Brevard County and one in Indian River County.
- Location: the refuge is located between Melbourne Beach and Wabasso Beach.
- Administered by Pelican Island NWR.

### Natural History

- Refuge provides nesting habitat for approximately one-fourth of all sea turtles nesting in the United States.
- 15,000-20,000 sea turtle nests are laid annually, mostly loggerheads (threatened), green sea turtles (endangered), and some leatherbacks (endangered).
- Provides habitat for several other threatened and endangered species.

### Financial Impacts of Refuge

- Currently no public facilities.
- Shared staff with Pelican Island NWR.
- 40,000 annual visitors, by foot.

### Refuge Objectives

- Protect nesting habitat for sea turtles.
- Protect, enhance, and restore barrier island habitats for threatened and endangered species.
- Increase public understanding through outreach, environmental education, and compatible recreation.

- Enhance habitat protection and management through partnerships.

### Management Tools

- Partnerships through Archie Carr Working Group.
- Monitoring nesting activity.
- Predator control to protect turtle nests.
- Law enforcement.
- Mechanical/chemical control of exotic plants.
- Volunteer activities through Friends of the Carr Refuge.
- Prescribed fire.

### Public Use Opportunities

- Daytime beach activities: swimming, surfing, and fishing.
- Interpretive programs (seasonal turtle watches).
- Education/interpretation/outreach.

### Calendar of Events

**June & July:** Turtle Watch and interpretive programs.

### Questions and Answers

#### *Where is it?*

Located five miles south of Melbourne Beach off A1A. The refuge is 20 miles long. Within this area, four segments have been identified for acquisition totaling about nine miles. The lands are being purchased with several partners including the state of Florida, Brevard and Indian River counties, and the Richard King Mellon Foundation. Signs have been posted at the north and south ends of the refuge which helps to delineate the boundaries.

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### *Is the refuge open to the public?*

Although no public facilities are currently available, several refuge tracts are adjacent to county or state parks, and therefore people visit by foot.

Some parcels are open to daytime use such as swimming, fishing, and surfing. Nighttime activities during the sea turtle nesting season (May-September) are not allowed. The refuge has no improved public access areas, but there are numerous public crossovers along A1A including several county parks and Sebastian Inlet State Park.

### *Can I go there to see a turtle nest?*

We advise people not to walk on the beach at night to look for sea turtles. This activity can cause sea turtles to abort their nesting attempts. Because this beach is so important to sea turtles, it is advised to go out with an organized group led by a permitted turtle guide. Several organizations provide guided turtle watches. These programs are very popular and fill up quickly. It is advised that you make reservations well in advance. Call or e-mail the refuge or visit <http://www.state.fl.us/fwc/psm/turtles/walk.htm> to locate a guided sea turtle walk.