



Wood Duck

The floodplain forest habitats in the refuge provide an ideal home for wood ducks. They are cavity nesters, preferring abandoned holes in cottonwoods, maples, oaks, and ash trees. Wood ducks typically choose a tree 2 feet in diameter, with a cavity anywhere from 6 to 60 feet high.



River Otter

River otters thrive on the refuge where there is high quality water and abundant food supply. River otters settle in areas with significant coverage, usually vegetation or physical structures such as rock piles. They do not dig their own homes, instead they use naturally occurring shelters or abandoned burrows and dens.



Prairie Skink

The prairie skink is the only lizard found on the refuge. Restoration of prairie and oak savannas on the refuge has created high quality habitat for this sandy soil burrower. Look for them basking on top of rocks or logs and actively foraging for crickets, grasshoppers and spiders.

Floodplain Forest



Floodplain forests historically dominated much of the floodplain along the Minnesota River. Today, this plant community continues to provide migration and nesting habitat for several significant birds that are a priority for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These include the red-headed woodpecker, red-shouldered hawk and wood duck. Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge monitors and restores the forest community to include cottonwood, silver maple, American elm, green ash, and wood nettle. Several floodplain forest areas on the refuge are closed to protect bald eagle nests and heron and egret nesting colonies from human disturbance throughout the breeding season. Make sure to observe posted closed areas.

Wetlands



Refuge units contain a variety of wetlands, ranging from shallow wet meadows and calcareous fens to permanently flooded, mixed vegetation marshes. Nearly all of the wetlands are spring-fed, and most of the larger wetlands are surrounded by mature cottonwoods, willow, silver maple, and box elder. Water control structures have been installed on many of the refuge's wetlands, and refuge staff are able to manipulate water levels to improve the health and productivity of these aquatic communities.

Welcome to the April MaxaMom Event at the Minnesota Valley Wildlife Refuge! I started MaxaMom in October of last year when I saw my friends turning into zombies. Work-home-kid-bed-repeat. I put together a comprehensive list of activities and events to plan fun activities after work to break the zombie takeover with ease.

Now MaxaMom has some really great discounts available from Stages Theater Company, Old Log Theater, Valley Girl Coffee, ArtiCulture, Skateville, the MN Historical Society, and a handful of other locations.

AND we can't forget about the adult exclusives. The discounts available at Bill's Gun Range or West Side Skydiving are meant for adults only.

This is the first event in our summer adventure and it is non-competitive and hope that parents will participate too.

Here are your myteneraries. Let's go over them quick. The Parentineraries started their day way earlier when they woke up and started their daily adventure! Let's find the route your parents took to get here! Mark it with a pen!

So now it's noon and time to play. The maps on the Kidtineraries are the section of this park we're playing at. There are 4 numbered markers along the trail. Mark them on your map when you find them. There are also purple pointers. Stay within the purple pointers and be sure to pick up ribbons at each station, just to prove you were there. Let's go see what we can find, and lets be sure to make notes in our heads or on paper