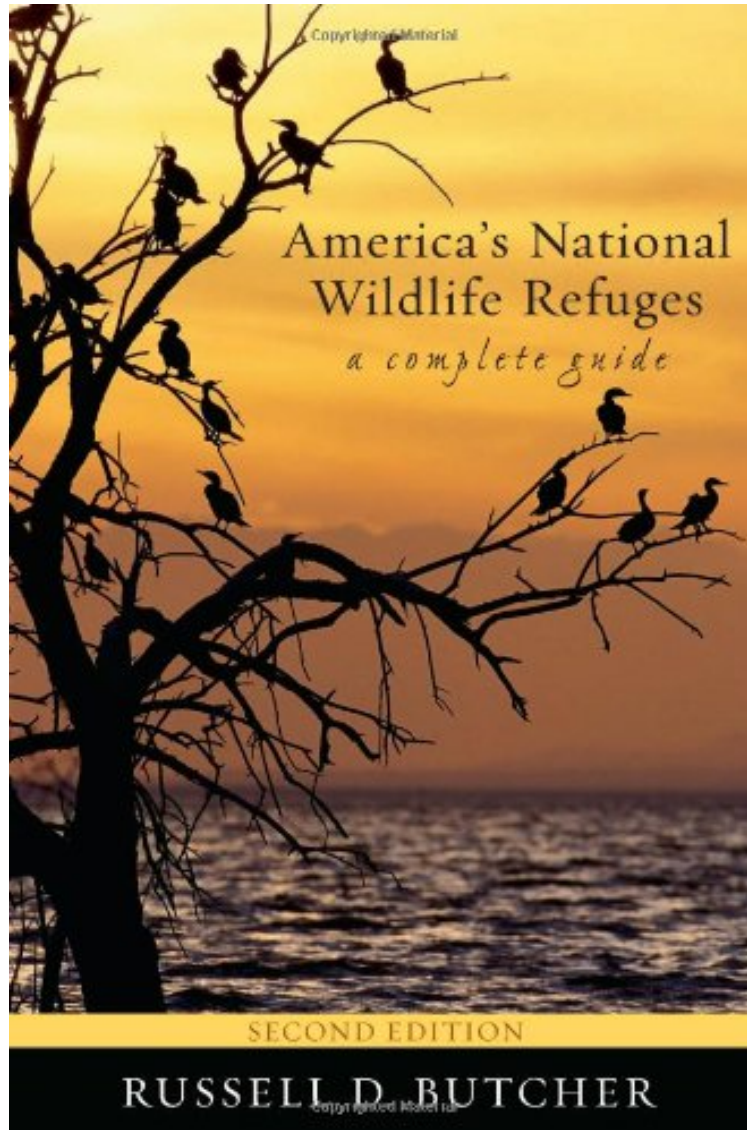


(Read free) America's National Wildlife Refuges: A Complete Guide

America's National Wildlife Refuges: A Complete Guide

Russell D. Butcher

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Russell D. Butcher : America's National Wildlife Refuges: A Complete Guide before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised America's National Wildlife Refuges: A Complete Guide:

17 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Not "a complete guide" By Jim Feet The title of this book is America's National Wildlife Refuges, 2nd Edition: A Complete Guide. Unfortunately, this latest edition is by no stretch of the imagination a complete guide. I ordered this book after browsing a copy of the first edition -- which

probably WAS a complete guide and consisted of over 700 pages of detailed and worthwhile information covering 530 units of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Assuming the 2nd edition would, if anything, be even more comprehensive I was astonished to discover the book of the same title, including the subtitle, "a complete guide", is actually 300 FEWER pages, slightly more than 400 pages -- more than 40% reduction! Well, these are difficult times. Perhaps the refuge system has shrunk due to federal budget cuts. No, the author's note in the 2nd edition says there are now 20 more units and two million more acres. So where did those 300 pages go? Scanning the Author's Note, the Acknowledgments and the Forward offered no insights regarding where or how 700 pages had been cut to 400. Well, I live in Utah so it took but a minute to find out that while the first edition describes our two large refuges in 6-1/2 pages, Utah now lists just one refuge. The largest at 74,000 acres, Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, is no longer even mentioned and the Fish Springs refuge at 18,000 acres has shrunk from 3-1/2 pages to less than 1/2 page. I have to assume the remaining 296+ missing pages suffered the same unfortunate fate as the missing 6 pages from Utah -- deemed unimportant. If you want to explore America's National Wildlife Refuges, you would do well to skip this book and look for a copy of the first edition. I'm returning my copy.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Lots of Detail, but NOT a Complete Guide By M. J. Gibson

The second edition is a disappointment. I have the first edition as well, and was hoping to have a new and improved version with additional refuges added along with better-organized descriptions. Instead I got a pared-down version with worse organization. In trying to make it more concise, the writer and editor missed the boat (this edition is little more than half the thickness of the first). I prefer the first edition content and format, but will now need to refer to both in order to have the updates along with as much information as possible for each refuge. Instead of listing all the refuges together for each state as in the first edition, now there are two alphabetical state sections, of the "featured" and "other" refuges. What a silly concept. It just makes it harder on the reader to find what is in each state. There are two indexes as well (the NWR system site names and a very incomplete general index). Plus, as other reviewers have pointed out, the lack of a map for each state (at least) is a glaring omission. If I were to use this in a totally unfamiliar region, it would have to be supplemented by a refuge system map or another guide. When I am on the road, I want to be able to see what refuges are nearby. This book needs a major overhaul to improve the writing (take out the repetitive and extraneous deadwood), add a map at the beginning of each state, organize the information consistently for each refuge with topic headers, include a more detailed location or refuge map (or a link to one), change the structure to include ALL refuges in ONE listing by state, insert the Friends group information along with the related refuge listing, and put back the detail in the "other" refuges. It also should have ONE complete and useful index that includes NWRs, topics, people, plus locations and species (which are missing entirely). For example, if I want to see a specific rare or featured species such as a sage grouse, which refuge should I visit? A darker, more readable type face would help too. I would love to have such a book. I would buy a whole series if it got too big. The areas where this book does shine are in descriptive detail, historical background, refuge size and wildlife numbers statistics, and management issues for the refuges. Read it ahead for an overview and lots of interesting background information; there is a lot of research here. To be fair, there is also a pretty good amount of practical information for some of the refuges, but it is not consistent and is buried in paragraphs (and screams for a yellow highlighter on the gray drab pages). It should also include online resources. How many people write to the refuge office for information using snail mail any more? That's slow and expensive at both ends. This doesn't even have websites for the refuges themselves, let alone any links to other online resources such as GORP or the USFWS or the National Wildlife Refuge Association or Friends groups or maps or events or species lists. Many of these change frequently, but websites for at least the refuges and Friends would be very helpful in the contact information. It does include an appendix in the back for Friends groups with their land addresses, as well as a short list of eight national conservation associations with websites (that's the only place I found any reference to the Internet). The Audubon Guides to the National Wildlife Refuges (a nine-book series), and even the outdated Guide to the National Wildlife Refuges, by Laura and William Riley, are all superior to this for practical information on the highlights of each refuge and for use on the road. I will use this guide (both editions) for reference and research, but on a trip I will continue to rely on the Audubon series guides, which are full of maps and visuals and natural history information that is far more useful for finding and visiting the refuges, instead of just reading about them. This book is an encyclopedic reference directory with lots of information, but it needs to be supplemented by other guides, maps, and internet searches, and as such it is not even close to being "a complete guide" as it claims.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Paul Gamer

I had no problems with the order

An all-in-one guide to the more than 500 sites in the National Wildlife Refuge system, this book lists each refuge alphabetically by state, providing basic information about accessibility, facilities, and type of habitat. More in-depth descriptions are provided for significant or popular refuges, detailing flora and fauna to be found there as well as information on the best time of year to view migrating species. Ideal for the casual wildlife watcher or hunting enthusiast, this guide will also be a welcome companion for anyone wishing to create his or her own "eco-tour."

"If the outdoors is your getaway, this could be the source of trip ideas for the next couple of decades." --Dallas

Morning News "Butcher's book is far more than a guide; it is an invitation to come to know and cherish the [over 530] units across the entire range of the National Wildlife Refuge System. It mingles history, anecdotes and perspective to give us the best assessment yet of these national treasures." "Russell Butcher's America's National Wildlife Refuges: A Complete Guide is a grand invitation to visit the country's more than 530 refuges."