

TARGET ROCK NATIONAL WILDLIFE
REFUGE
Huntington, New York

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT
Calendar Year 1983

U.S. Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM

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Personnel

1. Roger A. Spaulding, Refuge Manager, GS - 12 PFT, EOD 7/27/80
2. Thomas W. Stewart, Assistant Refuge Manager, GS - 9 PFT EOD 5/16/83
3. Mark L. Lindvall, Outdoor Recreation Planner, GS - 9 PFT EOD 12/15/80
4. John R. Phillips, Assistant Manager (Trainee) GS - 5 PFT EOD 3/20/83
Stationed at Morton NWR.
5. Patricia J. Walsh, Secretary, GS - 4 PFT EOD 8/8/83
6. Bruce Marto, Maintenance Worker, WG - 8 PFT EOD 4/4/71
7. Terry Walsh, Park Aide, GS - 3 Summer Employee EOD 7/10/83 Term.
9/1/83, Stationed at Morton NWR.
8. Terry Schreiner, Assistant Refuge Manager, GS - 7 ,stationed at
Morton NWR, transferred to Iroquois NWR 1/83.

SCA Volunteers

1. Clara Weloth - Terminated 7/8/83 , Completed Program
2. Joel Duling - Terminated 6/15/83
3. Brian Greytak - Terminated 8/15/83

Review and Approval

Mark Lindvall
Submitted By Date

Roger A. Spaulding 2/27/84
Complex Office Review Date

Suzanne Meyer 4-27-84
Regional Office Review Date

Ya... R.S. SUP. 4-2-84

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
A. <u>HIGHLIGHTS</u>	1
B. <u>CLIMATIC CONDITIONS</u>	1
C. <u>LAND ACQUISITION</u>	
1. Fee Title.....	NTR
2. Easements.....	NTR
3. Other.....	NTR
D. <u>PLANNING</u>	
1. Master Plan.....	1
2. Management Plan.....	NTR
3. Public Participation.....	NTR
4. Compliance with Environmental Mandates.....	NTR
5. Research and Investigations.....	NTR
E. <u>ADMINISTRATION</u>	
1. Personnel.....	1
2. Youth Programs.....	1
3. Other Manpower Programs.....	NTR
4. Volunteers Program.....	2
5. Funding.....	3
6. Safety.....	3
7. Technical Assistance.....	NTR
8. Other Items.....	NTR
F. <u>HABITAT MANAGEMENT</u>	
1. General.....	3
2. Wetlands.....	3
3. Forests.....	4
4. Croplands.....	NTR
5. Grasslands.....	NTR
6. Other Habitats.....	4
7. Grazing.....	NTR
8. Haying.....	NTR
9. Fire Management.....	4
10. Pest Control.....	NTR
11. Water Rights.....	NTR
12. Wilderness and Special Areas.....	NTR
13. WPA Easement Monitoring.....	NTR

G. WILDLIFE

1. Wildlife Diversity.....	4
2. Endangered and/or Threatened Species.....	4
3. Waterfowl.....	NTR
4. Marsh and Water Birds.....	NTR
5. Shorebirds, Gulls, Terns and Allied Species.....	NTR
6. Raptors.....	NTR
7. Other Migratory Birds.....	5
8. Game Mammals.....	5
9. Marine Mammals.....	NTR
10. Other Resident Wildlife.....	NTR
11. Fisheries Resources.....	NTR
12. Wildlife Propagation and Stocking.....	NTR
13. Surplus Animal Disposal.....	NTR
14. Scientific Collections.....	NTR
15. Animal Control.....	NTR
16. Marking and Banding.....	NTR
17. Disease Prevention and Control.....	NTR

H. PUBLIC USE

1. General.....	5
2. Outdoor Classrooms - Students.....	5
3. Outdoor Classrooms - Teachers.....	5
4. Interpretive Foot Trails.....	6
5. Interpretive Tour Routes.....	NTR
6. Interpretive Exhibits/Demonstrations.....	NTR
7. Other Interpretive Programs.....	6
8. Hunting.....	NTR
9. Fishing.....	7
10. Trapping.....	NTR
11. Wildlife Observation.....	7
12. Other Wildlife Oriented Recreation.....	NTR
13. Camping.....	NTR
14. Picnicking.....	7
15. Off-Road Vehicling.....	NTR
16. Other Non-Wildlife Oriented Recreation.....	NTR
17. Law Enforcement.....	7
18. Cooperating Associations.....	NTR
19. Concessions.....	NTR

I. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

1. New Construction.....	NTR
2. Rehabilitation.....	7
3. Major Maintenance.....	8
4. Equipment Utilization and Replacement.....	8
5. Communications Systems.....	NTR
6. Energy Conservation.....	8
7. Other.....	8

J. OTHER ITEMS

1. Cooperative Programs.....	NTR
2. Items of Interest.....	8
3. Credits.....	9

K. FEEDBACK

YCC PROGRAM

WERTHEIM NWR

1. James Greenwood - Terminated - 9/2/83, Completed Program
2. Regina Goode - Terminated - 8/26/83
3. Beatrice Fuller - Terminated - 7/20/83
4. Stanley Hughes - Terminated - 8/1/83
5. Aubrey Hill - Terminated - 7/28/83

MORTON NWR

1. Jacqueline Parker - Terminated - 7/11/83
2. Kevin Duchemin - Terminated - 8/26/83, Completed Program
3. Eric Heckert - Terminated - 8/26/83, Completed Program

SEATUCK NWR

1. Steven Zaleski - Terminated - 9/2/83, Completed Program
2. Anthony Grasse - Terminated - 9/2/83, Completed Program

A. HIGHLIGHTS

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Jantzen visited the refuge. (Section J.2)

An environmental education workshop was held for area teachers. (Section H.3)

The reservation system for refuge visitors was dropped and visitation increased. (Section H.11)

B. CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

Record rainfall fell on Long Island this year. A record set in the early 1800's was broken. On February 11 and 12 a total of 2 feet of snow fell. The snow stopped most activity on Long Island. The snow melted quickly and little impact on wildlife was noted. Cold temperatures in late December resulted in frozen water lines. The lines froze in the pump house which was in the process of being re-built.

D. PLANNING

1. Master Plan

Master Planning for the Long Island Refuges was initiated in 1983. This year the cover type mapping of Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge was completed. The mapping was done under contract by Doug Norton of Seatuck Research Program, Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology. Mary Parkin, Regional Office Master Planning, visited Target Rock in January.

E. ADMINISTRATION

1. Personnel

Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge is part of the eight refuge Long Island Complex. The complex headquarters is located about 35 miles away. Bruce Marto, Maintenance Worker WG-8, is stationed at Target Rock. He also travelled to and worked on the other refuges on Long Island.

2. Youth Programs

Two YCC positions were allocated to Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge, however the two persons selected did not show up on the first day of work. All alternates were contacted but none wanted the job. The two positions were then filled by hiring two additional people at Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge. The crew from Wertheim travelled to Target Rock to work. They cleared the beach of litter, trimmed the brush along the nature trail, and repaired the fence and steps along the bluff.

4. Volunteers Program

Three different groups expressed interest in volunteering at Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge. All three groups were interested in using vacant buildings on the refuge and taking over some management responsibilities.

On January 25th, Manager Spaulding met with the Executive Board of the Suffolk County Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). The board showed a strong interest in taking over management and maintenance of Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge. They would use the refuge for environmental education and the mansion for office and classroom space. As has happened with BOCES before, a strong interest never developed into any concrete plan or action.

The Huntington Chapter of the Audubon Society has also expressed an interest in using the buildings and managing the refuge. The President of the Huntington Audubon Society contacted Manager Spaulding and the regional office on this. They expressed an interest in operating the refuge as a wildlife sanctuary open to the public with interpretive programs, guided walks, environmental education programs, and other activities. Their request is pending Master Planning.

In August and again in November Deputy Regional Director William Ashe met with George Toumanoff concerning a volunteer program at the refuge. Manager Spaulding met with Mr. Toumanoff again in December. Mr. Toumanoff is interested in forming a volunteer group to manage, maintain, and raise funds for Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge.



The mansion at Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge
(TR-1-3, Gage)

5. Funding

There are no separate funds for Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge. Money to operate this refuge comes from funds for Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge.

6. Safety

The Safety Officer distributed monthly safety tips to all Long Island Refuge workers. On December 1st, Maintenance Worker Bruce Marto injured his elbow while unloading a snow plow from a pickup truck. He required medical attention and missed three weeks of work.

F. HABITAT MANAGEMENT

1. General

The 80-acre Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge has a wide variety of habitats for such a small area. The variety attracts different types of wildlife and facilitates the environmental education program. Salt marsh, brackish pond, fresh marsh, forest, old field, beach and grassland are found on the refuge.

2. Wetlands

The refuge has one acre of salt marsh that is part of a much larger marsh. The Village of Lloyd Harbor, Town of Huntington, and New York State are preserving most of the remainder. They also own adjacent uplands. A seminary also has extensive marsh and land holdings here. There is still a possibility that the seminary will sell part of their land for development to defray rising costs, but no action has been taken to date.

There is a small brackish pond. Small fish and grass shrimp found in the pond attract herons, egrets, terns and yellowlegs.



Brackish Pond. (TR-2-3, Gage)

3. Forests

The forested area at Target Rock is primarily oak-hickory. This year gypsy moth populations were much lower than the previous three years. Many oaks produced acorns for the first time in three years. Some oaks have died as a result of several years of complete defoliation by gypsy moths.

A new development is going up adjacent to the refuge. The Village of Lloyd Harbor set up a buffer zone around the refuge in which no vegetation is to be disturbed. One homeowner, however, cleared vegetation making a path up to the refuge. The Village was notified and subsequently told the landowner that the area must be replanted.

6. Other Habitats

Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge has several acres of old formal gardens planted when the area was a private estate. The New York Botanical Society has removed many of these plants for propagation at the Bronx Botanical Gardens and the Carey Arboretum in Millbrook. No plants were taken this year. The exotic plants, mostly azaleas and rhododendrons, require cultivation and are not competing well with the native plants. In the last few years the formal garden has lost much of its former splendor. The area is, however, now more valuable to wildlife

9. Fire Management

A new fire management plan was prepared. The plan rates the fire hazard at the refuge as low and recommends no prescribed burning. A new Memorandum of Understanding was prepared and presented to the Town of Huntington Fire Department. The Huntington Fire Department will lead fire suppression efforts.

G. WILDLIFE

1. Wildlife Diversity

The variety of habitats found on this small refuge support many kinds of wildlife. Over 200 species of birds have been seen on the 80 acre refuge, of these, 38 have nested. The most common nesters are rufous-sided towhee and catbird.

2. Endangered and/or Threatened Species

No federally listed endangered or threatened species were recorded.

New York State released a new list of state endangered, threatened, and special concern species this year. The least tern was listed as endangered and it is found on the refuge. It does not nest on the refuge, but does nest nearby. The harrier, piping plover and common tern were listed as threatened and are visitors to the refuge. New York defines special concern species as those native species which are not yet recognized as endangered or threatened, but for which documented concern exists for their continued welfare in New York State.

The following are special concern species which are found at Target Rock; black tern, common nighthawk, and eastern bluebird.

7. Other Migratory Birds

Each year large numbers of bank swallows nest in the bluffs adjacent to the beach. They feed along the beach and over nearby marshes. This year about 100 nests were active. Kingfishers also nest here.

8. Game Mammals

Grey squirrel numbers are low. Only a few can be seen around the office. Perhaps this year's fair acorn crop will allow numbers to increase. Cottontail rabbits are numerous. Red fox and racoon seem to adapt to suburbia and are doing well on and off the refuge.

H. PUBLIC USE

1. General

This was the first full year for which a reservation was not necessary to visit the refuge. Visits were 7,340 in 1981 and 10,600 in 1982. In 1982 the reservation system was in effect for part of the year. This year an estimated 12,780 people visited the refuge. The near doubling of visits has resulted in some increase in vandalism. The paper and phone work that went with the reservation system is gone. The inconvenience for the visitor in making a reservation is also gone.

2. Outdoor Classrooms - Students

This year only 902 students visited the refuge for environmental education programs. This is a drop from the 1,500 students who came in 1981 and 1982. In 1982 the Outdoor Recreation Planner position was moved from Target Rock to Wertheim. Many teachers want a refuge led program. The teachers who did come are those who have attended teachers workshops in the past and are willing and able to lead their own programs. Besides scheduling and providing some information and materials, these teachers run their own programs.

3. Outdoor Classrooms - Teachers

An environmental education workshop was held for area teachers on June 18th. Thirteen teachers attended the five hour program. The teachers were given a refuge tour, refuge history, and information for bringing their classes to the refuge. The teachers then censused beach organisms using a transect method. The teachers learned to identify, census, and generalize on habitat preferences of tidal organisms. A second workshop was scheduled in the fall but cancelled when only four teachers registered.

4. Interpretive Foot Trails

There is a self-guiding nature trail on the refuge. Leaflets explaining the refuge's history, ecology, and points of interest are available at a dispenser at the start of the trail. The trail passes by a blind where people can observe and photograph birds.

7. Other Interpretive Programs

In November, Outdoor Recreation Planner Lindvall met with representatives of Suffolk County 4-H and Cornell University. Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge will be used as a study site for the Sea Grant Marine Summer Camp to be held next summer.

A radio spot on the history of Target Rock was aired on seventeen area radio stations. The spot was aired a total of 280 times between August 2nd and 9th. The spot was part of Grumman's "About Long Island" series. Literally millions of people heard the message which follows:

"Target Rock: target of legend and lore. Located at the tip of Lloyd Neck in Huntington Harbor, this large boulder once had a bold target painted upon it. According to one tale, a visiting Navy captain had the target painted to demonstrate his accurate marksmanship. Another account dates from the War of 1812--when the rock was used for target practice by a British warship fleet. Still other accounts relate such target practice on the part of the British Navy as occurring during the Revolutionary War. Today, Target Rock gives its name to the Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge, of which it is a part. Though its history is shadowed in legend, Target Rock--standing about 15 feet high--is a conspicuous visual landmark to boaters--whether the tide is in or out...about Long Island"



Target Rock, (TR-3-3, O'Shea)

9. Fishing

Fishermen try for flounder, blackfish, and striped bass from the beach at Target Rock. This year the fishing for striped bass improved on the north shore of Long Island. Many small bass were taken. This year the size limit was also raised from 16 to 24 inches and a season put on striped bass. Flounder are abundant in the spring, but most are too small to keep.

11. Wildlife Observation

Most people visit the refuge to escape the city and suburbs, bird watch, and enjoy a peaceful walk. Many people consider Target Rock as their special place. The refuge is small by country standards but not by city standards. The old formal gardens, forests, fields, and beach offer the visitor a chance to observe wildlife in a variety of habitats.

14. Picknicking

The regulation prohibiting picknicking was dropped. It was an inconvenience to visitors and an unpopular rule.

17. Law Enforcement

The mansion was broken into twice this year. On the night of June 22nd, thieves entered and stole several sea turtle shells, one crocodile skin, and two fire extinguishers. On August 6th, the mansion was again burglarized. Seven pieces of art and a scale model of the mansion were stolen. These were part of the property left from the estate of the family that donated the refuge. On September 19th, another attempted break-in was discovered. Entry was not made. The Lloyd Harbor Police and Suffolk County Police have investigated but have no suspects and have recovered no property. A simple burglar alarm has been installed.

Sometime between August 31st and September 1st the shop was broken into. A chain saw and two outboard motors were stolen. The gate to the refuge was locked so the burglars must have carried the items about a half mile to the main road.

This year three persons were cited for motor vehicle trespass and one for illegal parking. One juvenile was sent a warning letter for operating a vehicle in a careless manner.

I. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

2. Rehabilitation

The list of buildings at Target Rock includes a mansion, two large homes, a barn, a chicken coop, a garage, and a building that contains two apartments, an office, and a shop. One of the homes and the combination building are in use. All of the buildings require upkeep which is expensive and of questionable value as most are not in use. Only the buildings that are in use are heated.

3. Major Maintenance

The pump house was rebuilt. The above ground portion had rotted. The walls and roof were replaced with a small building of the same type as the old one.

4. Equipment Utilization and Replacement

A pick-up truck rented from GSA was returned. The rental was more expensive than using a Service owned vehicle which was acquired from fire funding. The 1952 military jeep used for snow plowing was moved to Morton National Wildlife Refuge. It will be used for beach patrol and cleanup. One of the new Chevy 4 X 4 trucks received this year was fitted with a plow and will be used at Target Rock during winter months. A Chevy Chevette rented from GSA will be turned back next year as it is also excess to our needs now.

6. Energy Conservation

Buildings not in use were not heated and the restrooms were closed in the winter to save on costs and energy.

7. Other

The mansion was given a cleanup in May. Many truckloads of junk were hauled to the dump. The things left over from the estate were moved into several rooms and organized. The items include furniture, books, stuffed fish, a tractor, fine china, old fire pumpers, and assorted odds and ends. Last year all items were again inventoried by Area Office personnel. It was hoped that a sale could be arranged. No sale took place in 1982 or 1983. In the meantime some items were stolen and all are deteriorating. Hopefully a sale can take place in 1984. The original inventory and the 1982 inventory do not agree and this discrepancy must be accounted for first. All of the items were left to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service when the refuge was donated in 1970.

J. OTHER ITEMS

2. Items of Interest

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Jantzen visited Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge in March. He was accompanied by Dave Smith, Regional Office Realty and Suzanne Mayer, ARW for Wildlife Resources in Region Five.

Ed Moses, Walt Quist, and Dick Nugent conducted an evaluation of Long Island Refuges from June 20th through 22nd.

Target Rock Maintenance Worker Bruce Marto was appointed to serve on the Lloyd Harbor Conservation Committee starting in October. The committee meets regularly to consider and advise on conservation issues in the village. The main issue this year has been the dumping of dredge spoil in Long Island Sound adjacent to the village.

Coastwatch, New York Oiled Bird Rescue, stores equipment for oiled bird cleanup and rehabilitation at Target Rock. In June, these volunteers cleaned and organized their equipment. They have sufficient supplies to treat approximately 100 birds should the need arise. In October, the group held a workshop at the refuge to familiarize members with equipment set-up and use.

The Assistant Manager for the Complex, Thomas W. Stewart, moved into the larger apartment at Target Rock. He will commute to Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge. Housing costs on Long Island have always been high and have increased dramatically over the past year. Finding an affordable and desirable place to live is very hard. Refuge housing is needed now more than ever.

3. Credits

This narrative was written by Mark Lindvall, edited by Roger Spaulding and typed by Patty Walsh.