

Not Just for the Birds!

LONE STAR RALLY



RIDE MAP

We know that we aren't all just motorcycle riders... we have other hobbies. This month we treat the bird watchers, hunters, and nature lovers by highlighting the Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge (BNWR). It's not so much of a ride, as a destination. But inside the refuge, they have an "auto tour" – which we've renamed a "ride tour" – of course!

The Refuge is a haven for a variety of different types of birds, mammals, reptiles – well just about all forms of wildlife. The feature on the ride is the Big Slough. Slough is simply another term for a swamp. In the winter, the area draws one of the highest Audubon Christmas bird counts in the nation, with more than 200 species. Now, I'm not a birder, so I had to look this one up! During the winter months for more than 100 years, volunteers across the nation traverse nature preserves, refuges, and other areas where birds congregate to do counts. The data collected is used to assess the health of bird populations and to help guide conservation efforts. Now you know, too!

With more than 43,000 acres, the BNWR is a "sensory banquet" with experiences described as "the thunder of 40,000 snow geese taking flight, the salty breeze off the Texas Gulf, or the site of a 12-foot alligator loafing on a muddy bank".

While a "refuge", hunting and fishing is allowed on the grounds. There are public boat ramps, hiking trails covered shelters and observation platforms for sitting and enjoying the scenery, and interpretive stops and displays. In the Big Slough area, you'll also find a "Discovery Complex" complete with walking tour, discovery center, and information center (not to mention restrooms).

The BNWR is just a hop, skip and a jump away from the Lone Star Rally (Galveston, November 3-6). We encourage you to take a couple hours away from the hectic rally scene to enjoy some peaceful nature not far away.

