

Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys  
National Wildlife Refuges  
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# News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
1 March 2021

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## Public Notice:

- 1. Snake Key, Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge, Island and Beaches Closed until 1 July.**
- 2. Seahorse Key, Cedar Key National Wildlife Refuge Beaches and Waters Conditionally Open.**

### Seasonal Closure to Protect Nesting Colonial Wading and Other Seabirds in the Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge

The Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge's (Refuge) nearshore 100 yard water buffer and the beach on Snake Key are closed from 1 March to 30 June to protect colonial nesting birds. Additionally, the nearshore waters and beaches of Seahorse Key will be conditionally open to public entry.

Please be mindful of this seasonal restriction and support the conservation of our local nesting colony. The public is encouraged to view the bird nesting which becomes very active in April from outside the 100 yard buffer zone. Vessels can motor around Snake Key and view the birds; bring your binoculars and see the sight! Birds are disturbed by loud noise and fast moving vessels. It is illegal to disturb migratory birds. Kindly respect the closed area around Snake Key.

Seahorse Key's nesting birds have not returned from when they catastrophically abandoned that island's nesting colony in mid-April 2015. The island's beaches and nearshore waters are conditionally open. Should birds return to nest the Refuge will act to protect them from disturbance. The Cedar Key Light Station and Seahorse Key Marine Lab are closed to public entry. Trespass violations will be issued to violators. Public open houses will resume when the Refuge will be allowed to resume such events due to the Covid virus pandemic restrictions.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) mission is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate,

restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans. The purposes for establishing the refuges are provided on the first page of the draft compatibility determination.

**If you have any questions, concerns, or to report violations, contact Andrew Gude, Refuge Manager, directly at cell phone 703.622.3896.**