

Fall In Wisconsin Means Spectacular Colors, Wildlife Watching

(NAPSA)—Fall in Wisconsin is a season of breathtaking beauty. Brilliant colors sweep the state from north to south, the leaves becoming a kaleidoscope of fiery red, yellow, orange and bronze. Not only is fall a season of magnificent hues, but it is also the time to see another one of Wisconsin's annual spectacles. The fall migration brings impressive numbers of birds to Wisconsin as they follow the Mississippi River and Lake Michigan flyways. Marshes, wetlands and nature preserves statewide are resting stops for hundreds of thousands of migrating waterfowl.

The 32,000-acre **Horicon Marsh** in Horicon is a popular fall stop for 250,000 migrating Canada geese. In addition to being the largest freshwater marsh of its kind in the United States, the wetlands area is also home to more than 265 species of birds, including egrets, blue herons, sandhill cranes and tundra swans, as well as deer, coyote, fox and mink. Hikers and bicyclists won't want to miss the 34-mile **Wild Goose State Trail**, which skirts the western edge of the marsh.

Wisconsin's Mississippi River Valley "flyway" passes directly through Alma, bringing between 1,000 and 5,000 migrating tundra swans and other waterfowl to **Rieck's Lake Park** in the fall. Visitors can view the swans from an observation platform, where volunteers provide binoculars as well as information about the birds.

Wisconsin's wildlife refuges are also wonderful places to marvel at fall colors and see nature up-close. Once part of a vast glacial lake, the 44,000-acre **Necedah National**



Hundreds of thousands of birds stop in Wisconsin during their fall migration.

Wildlife Refuge in Necedah is now a favorite home for various wildlife. Visitors can spot geese, ducks and more than 220 other bird species, as well as deer, wolves, porcupines, bears and badgers. Hiking trails and observation towers are accessible to those wanting to catch a glimpse of the wildlife against a scenic backdrop of fall colors.

Currently underway at the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge is an innovative program designed to reintroduce whooping crane populations into the wild. The program aims to help a flock of 10 young whooping cranes learn a migration route. The whooping cranes are led by an ultralight aircraft from Wisconsin to Florida for the winter, then expected to return to Wisconsin on their own in the spring to nest. If the birds adopt the migration route, they will comprise only the second flock of migratory whooping cranes in the world.

Bordered by the Mississippi and Trempealeau rivers, the **Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge** in Trempealeau is a perfect resting area for migrating ducks, geese and American white pelicans. This 6,200-acre refuge is complete with a barrier-free observation deck and a five-mile drive that showcases the different habitats at the refuge.

More than 20,000 Canada geese descend from the autumn skies to make **Theresa Marsh Wildlife Area** in Theresa their seasonal home. Visitors can view a wide array of waterfowl and other birds, including egrets, ducks, hawks and blue herons.

For more information about fall travel opportunities in Wisconsin, including free travel-planning guides and updates on fall color, call the 24-hour, live-operated hot line at 1-800-432-TRIP (8747) or visit the Wisconsin Department of Tourism's Web site (travelwisconsin.com).