

Collector's Journal

A SERVICE OF COLLECTORS ALLIANCE

2018 Block Island National Wildlife Refuge - Rhode Island

Forty-Fifth in the America the Beautiful Quarters Collection

The fifth and final America the Beautiful Quarter issued in 2018 honors Block Island National Wildlife Refuge in Rhode Island. The coin was also the 45th in the series and completes the ninth year of the collection. Eventually, the series will feature a National Park or other national site in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the five overseas U.S. territories.

Five new coins are issued each year, and the series will continue in 2019 with coins for Lowell National Historical Park in Massachusetts, American Memorial Park in the Northern Mariana Islands, War in the Pacific National Historical Park in Guam, San Antonio Missions National Historical Park in Texas, and Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness in Idaho. Five additional coins will be issued in 2020, and the final coin will be issued in 2021.

Each Quarter is struck for circulation in a limited edition of about 10 weeks at both the Philadelphia and Denver Mints. The two different coins are identified by a small "P" (Philadelphia) or "D" (Denver) mint mark on the obverse under "In God We Trust."

Block Island National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1973 on the northern end of Block Island, which is located about 12 miles off the coast of Rhode Island in the Atlantic Ocean. It is one of five component parts of the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex, but it is the only one that is located offshore. The only way to reach the island is by boat or airplane; ferries run from Newport and Point Judith, Rhode Island, and Montauk, New York.

The Block Island refuge covers 133 acres and is a critical link in the Atlantic Flyway bird migration route. One of the East Coast's most important migratory bird habitats, it attracts more than 250 species of birds who stop there throughout the year – including more than 70 species of migratory songbirds in the fall –



making it internationally renowned for spectacular bird-watching opportunities. In addition, the refuge protects 15 rare and endangered species, most notably the American burying beetle and the piping plover shorebird, and it is home to the largest gull colony in Rhode Island.

The most famous sight on Block Island is the historic North Light lighthouse at Sandy Point, which dates to 1867. The lighthouse was built of granite with an iron tower, and it stands 55 feet high.

The reverse of the 2018 Block Island National Wildlife Refuge Quarter features a black-crowned night-heron flying over Cow Cove, with a view towards Sandy Point and the North Light lighthouse in the background.

In addition to the selected design, the U.S. Mint submitted 11 additional designs for consideration. Appropriately, all of the designs featured birds – including piping plovers, American oystercatchers, and common yellowthroat warblers – and all but two also featured the North Light lighthouse in the background.

The Block Island National Wildlife Refuge Quarter was released by the U.S. Mint in November 2018.

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