

**United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Chesapeake Marshlands NWR Complex
BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**INFORMATION: Joshua Hopkins
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Weekend Trail Walk Come enjoy a morning of nature

Cambridge, MD-Enjoy a morning filled with the beauty of the outdoors, wildlife, and learning about Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. On Saturday morning July 4th, at 8 a.m. Blackwater will hold a free nature walk along the Tubman Road Hiking Trail. We will meet at 7:45 in the parking lot, at the entrance of the trail. The walk will last about an hour and a half. This experience will be guided by Refuge Intern, Josh Hopkins, a senior Environmental Science major at The University of Maryland, College Park.

During the hike many different species of animals will be seen. These may include Sika deer, Wild Turkey, Bald Eagle, and many amphibians including tree frogs and salamanders. On the walk, the management aspect of Blackwater will also be addressed, as the Tubman Road Trail is being managed to conserve the endangered Delmarva Fox Squirrel.

Blackwater was established in 1933 as a refuge for Migratory Birds under the Migratory Bird Conservation Act. The refuge consists of over 27,000 acres, all which are used for different practices. About one third of the refuge is composed of forested habitat, mainly loblolly pine which is ideal for Bald Eagle nesting and the endangered Delmarva Fox Squirrel. Also, the Refuge has between 400 and 600 acres of field for crops, such as corn, milo, clover, and wheat, which migrating waterfowl love to eat.

Tens of thousands of migrating ducks and geese stop yearly at the Refuge on their winter migration to their southern nesting grounds. The use of man made freshwater impoundments and planting of crops provide the necessary food these waterfowl seek. With the presence of fields, trees, and water other birds also call Blackwater home including ospreys, herons, egrets, and many songbirds.

Bald Eagles are also abundant on the refuge due to the forest stands, which are suitable for nesting, and the proximity of open water, which is favorable for Eagles hunting styles. Due to the ideal habitat, the refuge has over 25 Eagle nests and over 100 Bald Eagles.

From Cambridge, MD take Route 16 south, make a right on Hip Roof Rd, six miles past Key Wallace

Drive, and park on the right hand side in the parking lot. If you have any questions call Josh Hopkins at 410-228-2677 or visit the Blackwater website at www.fws.gov/blackwater/.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.