

## Happenings at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

# Refuge Reporter

Volume 11, Issue 3

Summer 2008

## Yi Li of Ann Arbor Wins Junior Duck Stamp Best of Show

By Becky Goche, State JDS Coordinator



Yi Li is Michigan's Best of Show winner in the Junior Duck Stamp contest held on March 27, 2008, at the Green Point Environmental Learning Center in Saginaw. Her piece entitled "Where the Sky and Water Meet," was done in colored pencil and acrylic and featured a pair of Red-

breasted mergansers. Li is the daughter of Zhong and Julee Li of Ann Arbor. She is a junior at Huron High School in Ann Arbor. Li has been drawing since about age 9 and received a third place award in last year's Junior Duck Stamp contest. Li's artwork went against the rest of the country's Best of Shows in the national competition held at the San Diego Zoo in California on April 17. Seokkyun Hong of Texas won first place in the national competition. Her artwork will be made into the Federal Junior Duck Stamp for 2008-2009.

Three hundred and twenty-one students in grades K-12 entered this year's contest. Entries came from all parts of the state and included students from public schools, private schools, art schools, and home schools. Russ Terry of Ducks Unlimited, one of the five judges who selected winning artwork said, "Ducks Unlimited is proud

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Green Point Is Now Open on Weekends through the Summer

By Becky Goche, Visitor Services Manager

Green Point is now open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on weekends. These summer hours began on May 3 and will continue through September 28. Week day hours will remain 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., closed all federal holidays.

Tom Horb was hired to help with the visitor services program for the summer and will staff Green Point on weekends. Tom is a retired school teacher and former principal so he has lots of experience working with children. He has several family hikes and guided bicycle tours planned throughout the summer. Be sure to check out the calendar for more information.

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### Special Points:

- Information about the 2008 refuge deer hunts will be available on-line in June.
- The annual Refuge Open House Weekend is September 6 and 7, 2008. During daylight hours on these two days, visitors can hike, bicycle and scout deer anywhere on refuge lands.

## Yi Li of Ann Arbor Wins Junior Duck Stamp Best of Show Continued

to be a partner again in this year's Junior Duck Stamp Contest. It is so important to foster an appreciation for habitat conservation in our youth, and the Junior Duck Stamp Program is a great way to do it. Plus, the proceeds from the sale of the stamp support conservation education."

On April 26 an awards ceremony was held for all first through third place winners at Green Point. Sixteen of the winners attended, along with their families and teachers. Altogether 70 people enjoyed viewing the winners artwork and eating cake afterwards. Each winner received a refuge backpack, personalized magnet of their artwork, duck call, drawing paper, colored pencils, 2007-2008 Junior Duck Stamp, ribbon, and a plaque. Five teachers were honored for their exceptional efforts in this year's contest. They were Lois Ege of Grand Rapids, Lisa Gabriel of Birch Run, Anne Keller of Ada, Karlene King of Sturgis and Shawna Richardson of Ishpeming. Each teacher received an \$80 gift certificate to purchase art supplies from Dick Blick.

Winners were selected in each of the four age groups; first place, second place, third place and honorable mention (HM). Group I (Grades K-3) winners: Sophia Marie Abusamra, Grand Blanc – 1st, Celeste Pan, Ann Arbor – 1st, Roy Toscano, Wyoming – 1st, Holly Holtzclaw, Grand Rapids – 2nd, Madeleine Dutra, Burt – 2nd, Jacob Madar, Flint – 2nd, Kassandra Schwartz, Sturgis – 3rd, Emily Nelson, Grand Rapids – 3rd, Austin Fetting, Birch Run – 3rd, Devon Burns, Livonia – HM, Matalynn Cook, Birch Run – HM, Lucy Hernandez, Detroit – HM, Tara Boggs, Birch Run – HM, Michael Edozie, Grand Rapids – HM, Richard Reed, Birch Run – HM, Jordan Lienau, Montrose – HM, Gabriele Fronce, Sturgis – HM, Jose Galvan, Detroit – HM, Jonathan Medendorp, Grand Rapids – HM, Jeffrey Dunst, Grand Rapids – HM, Hanna Jones, Clio – HM, Makenzie Stafford, Birch Run – HM, Christopher Rasschaert, Birch Run – HM, Nicole Wykes, Burt – HM, and Larkin Heidel, Swartz Creek – HM.

Group II (Grades 4-6) winners: Hannah Xu, Northville – 1st, Artemis Eyster, Chelsea – 1st, Sophia May, Grand Rapids – 1st, Amanda Roth, Grand Rapids – 2nd, Gabriella Dyke, Grand Rapids – 2nd, Sasha Rouvillois, Ada – 2nd, Sienna Cumings, Ada – 3rd, Ellyn Stasiak, Ada – 3rd, Liam Hanlon, Ada – 3rd, Anna Hu, Ann Arbor – HM, Noah Messner, Ada – HM, Effie Dipulos, Garden City – HM, Courtney Furmaga,

Grand Rapids – HM, Levi Madar, Flint – HM, Ashley Bailey, Grand Rapids – HM, Ben Eastburg, Grand Rapids – HM, Arthur Yang, Ann Arbor – HM, Francesca Grace Abusamra, Grand Blanc – HM, Johnathan Swartzentruber, Sturgis – HM, Carl Herdegen, Grand Rapids – HM, Joshua Kliewer, Grand Rapids – HM, Kyle Forness, Ada – HM, Elizabeth Ellinger, Ada – HM, Isabel Hart, Ada – HM, and Jared Eichorn, Sturgis – HM.

Group III (Grades 7-9) winners: Laura (Qi) Wu, Ann Arbor – 1st, Daniel Wang, Canton – 1st, Harold Eyster, Chelsea – 1st, Melissa Wang, Canton – 2nd, Brooke Madar, Flint – 2nd, Kirsten Warner, Midland – 2nd, Rebekah Thomas, Shelby Township – 3rd, Justin Miller, Centreville – 3rd, Rita Mulford, Midland – 3rd, Lauren Kasperlik, Grand Rapids – HM, Kaisa Erickson, Carney – HM, September Brawley, Ishpeming – HM, Linda Kool, Sturgis – HM, Phillip Miller, Grand Rapids – HM, Brendan Butler, Grand Rapids – HM, Joseph Kohane, Grand Rapids – HM, Drew Martz, Macomb – HM, Ben Paxson, Grand Rapids – HM, Brandon Yoder, Centreville – HM, Katelyn Rice, Sturgis – HM, Sherese Miller, Sturgis – HM, Christopher Augdahl, Grand Rapids – HM, Marie Burchi, Macomb – HM, Renee Walker, Grand Rapids – HM, and Jessica Hauschild, Macomb – HM.

Group IV (Grades 10-12) winners: Yi Li, Ann Arbor – 1st, Savannah Krigbaum, Ishpeming – 1st, Denise Soulliere, Attica – 1st, Colleen Vierk, Lapeer – 2nd, Catherine Cieslinsk, Midland – 2nd, Erica Henriksen, Midland – 2nd, Caleb Jay, Ishpeming – 3rd, Ashlea Foran, Ishpeming – 3rd, Alannah Arseneault, Ishpeming – 3rd, Gabriel Davis, Detroit – HM, Victoria Pendred, Midland – HM, Olga Bogert, Lapeer – HM, Brandon St. Pierre, Ishpeming – HM, Ashley Billings, Ishpeming – HM, Lauren Rautio, Ishpeming – HM, Mallory Tonkin, Ishpeming – HM, Anna Riutta, Ishpeming – HM, and Ronda Johnson, Ishpeming – HM.

This year's partners are the Friends of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, Ducks Unlimited, Delta Waterfowl, Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division, Chippewa Nature Center, Ella Sharp Museum, U.S. Postal Service, Michigan Private Lands Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Bird Office, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Challenge Cost Share.

# Junior Refuge Manager Academy Returns to Green Point on June 26 and 27

*By Becky Goche, Visitor Services Manager*

After a few years absence, the Junior Refuge Manager Academy is returning to the refuge at Green Point Environmental Learning Center, 3010 Maple Street in Saginaw on June 26 and 27, 2008. The Academy is both days from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and is geared for children in grades 3 through 5, roughly ages 8 to 11.

The theme for this year's Junior Refuge Manager Academy is "Insect Adventures." Junior Managers will study the mind boggling world of bugs through lots of fun, hands-on activities. They will build bugs, collect and study bugs, learn about insect camouflage, learn why bees "dance," and build an ant farm. All activities are designed to spark wonder and enthusiasm for the natural world while learning how to humanely treat insects as we study them.

Parents are welcome to drop off their children or spend the day with them. Each Junior Manager will need to bring a sack lunch each day. They should wear

## "Habitat Detectives" Day Camp

*By Becky Goche, Visitor Services Manager*



Attention all young nature explorers! Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge has partnered with MSU Extension 4-H to host a day camp for children aged 5 to 8 years. This camp will be held at the Green Point Environmental Learning Center, 3010 Maple Street in Saginaw, from 10:00 a.m.

to 2:00 p.m. on August 6, 2008. Children will turn into Habitat Detectives as they investigate different habitats including forest, grassland and pond, through a variety of activities and crafts.

Lunch will be provided. Children should wear clothes and shoes that can get dirty. NO sandals, please. Cost for the camp will be about \$5 per child. Registration will be handled by MSU Extension 4-H. For more information contact Green Point at (989) 759-1669.

clothes and shoes that can get dirty. No sandals, please. We also recommend mosquito repellent, sun screen and a hat.

The cost for the Junior Refuge Manager Academy is \$10, payable on the first day either by cash or check to the Friends of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. **Class size is limited to 12 children.** Register before June 20 by calling Green Point at (989) 759-1669.

## 2008 Refuge Deer Hunts

*By Becky Goche, Visitor Services Manager*

The refuge will accept applications for its 2008 deer hunting season beginning June 1. Hunters can either apply online or by mailing a 3" x 5" card to the refuge. Applications must be postmarked by August 1, 2008, to be eligible for the drawing and associated priority points.

The refuge is offering 18 hunts including four archery, two non-ambulatory (wheelchair hunters only), four shotgun, and six muzzleloader. There is no special youth hunt this year. Youth are encouraged to apply as a partner with an adult.

More information about each hunt can be found on the hunter information sheets. This information and maps of the various hunt areas are on our website. People may also pick up information sheets at the refuge headquarters, Green Point Environmental Learning Center and at select licensing outlets and other sites around the state.

Please note that the refuge has new selection rules regarding partners. This year partners will be selected based upon the one with the least points. For example if someone with 6 points partners with someone with 1 point, their application will be selected at the one point level, not the six point level. More information about this can be found on our website.

# Engineering Underway for New Auto Tour Route on Refuge

by Steve Kahl, Refuge Manager

The design and engineering phase for a new auto tour route at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge is underway. This phase should be complete in time for the refuge to begin construction in FY2009. Currently, visitors mainly have access to four trails situated on the edges of the refuge and few get to see the wildlife spectacle that makes the refuge unique. The 7.5-mile Wildlife Drive will meander past forests, grasslands, marshes, open water pools, and the Shiawassee River and will enhance the ability of visitors to see waterfowl, herons, eagles and a great diversity of other wildlife. Further, visitors will be able to see the management practices the refuge uses to attract this abundance of wildlife.

The Wildlife Drive is funded via \$2M from the Federal Highway Administration, \$620K from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) Deferred Maintenance account, and \$200K from FWS Visitor Facility Enhancement funds. Construction will include elevating low roads, improving the gravel road surface, and rounding out restrictive corners. Other important amenities include a new observation platform on the Shiawassee, a new parking area for visitors to access the 4.5-mile Ferguson Bayou Trail, and a new fishing and canoe access site along the Spaulding Drain.

The new route should increase the refuge's visitor numbers substantially and provide a boost to the local economy. Recreational use at the refuge generated approximately \$1 million in economic activity during fiscal year 2006, according to a report by FWS entitled "Banking on Nature 2006: The Economic Benefits to Local Communities of National Wildlife Refuge Visitation." Approximately 60,000 people visited Shiawassee Refuge in 2006, with non-residents accounting for 63 percent of the total expenditure. The Wildlife Drive will conservatively attract 30,000 new visitors annually. In fact, this facility is by far the most requested improvement to the refuge's visitor services program made by the public.

An important challenge in developing the Wildlife Drive is the poor condition of adjacent county roads. In fact, Curtis and Ambrose Roads are so eroded that the refuge will only be able to open the tour route during the most optimum road conditions to prevent visitors

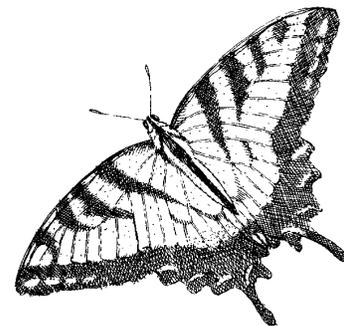
from becoming stuck. The refuge is working with the Friends of Shiawassee NWR, the Saginaw County Road Commission, Spaulding Township, Saginaw Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau, Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce, and the Saginaw County Drain Commission to obtain federal Public Lands Highway Discretionary Program funds to rehabilitate these county roads. This repair will enable the refuge to keep the tour route open for much greater periods.

## Free Native Plant Workshop

By Michelle Vander Haar, Private Lands Biologist

Shiawassee NWR has partnered with the Saginaw County Conservation District to offer a series of **Backyard Wildlife Habitat** workshops to landowners. In an effort to attract local wildlife to your property, these workshops will help you incorporate all the most important aspects of a native habitat into your own backyard. Two workshops covering forest management and wetlands have already been held. The final workshop will provide information on using native plants on your land. On **June 9**, from 6:00—7:00 p.m., Designs by Nature will present information on the importance of using native plants for landscaping. From 7:00—8:00 p.m. they will offer native plants for sale to anyone who might be interested. This workshop is free and will be held at Green Point Environmental Learning Center, 3010 Maple Street in Saginaw.

Promoting conservation to private landowners is a priority for the Conservation District and the refuge. In a world where the majority of land is privately owned, it is important that we provide the knowledge and information to landowners to assist with wildlife and habitat conservation.



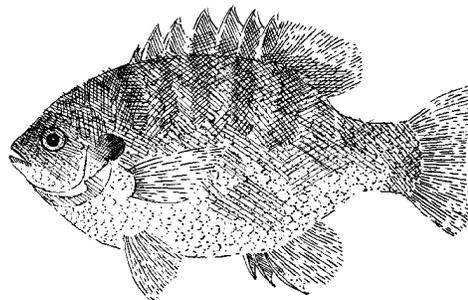
# Volunteers Needed for Kids' Free Fishing Day on June 7

by *Becky Goche, Volunteer Coordinator*

The annual Kids' Free Fishing Day is Saturday, June 7, 2008, at Ojibway Island in Saginaw. The fishing contest is for children aged 3- to 15-years-old and runs from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Anglers can register from 7:30 a.m. through 9:30 a.m.

We need several kid-friendly volunteers who can help out during the morning. Set up begins at 6:30 a.m. which is when we need folks with muscles to set up tables and a small tent. We need several smiling and friendly faces to help with registration and to help with the awards ceremony which usually ends by 11:30 a.m. If you're more interested in working with the fish that the young, proud anglers will catch, we need several

hands to help in the fish return and release area along the bank of the Saginaw River. Contact me either by email me at [Becky\\_Goche@fws.gov](mailto:Becky_Goche@fws.gov) or call me (989) 759-1669 if you can help or would like more information.



## 2007 Volunteer of Year

by *Becky Goche, Volunteer Coordinator*

The refuge held its annual volunteer appreciation dinner on the evening of May 21 at Old Country Buffet in Saginaw. At this event the refuge recognized all the volunteers and Friends of Shiawassee NWR Board members who donated their time and energy to the refuge over the past year. Tom Horb was awarded the 2007 Volunteer of the Year Award for his dedicated service in helping with the refuge's public use program, mostly at Green Point Environmental Learning Center.

In FY2007, 120 volunteers donated 5,038 hours. Much of the time was spent on wildlife-dependent recreation such as the non-ambulatory hunt, Kids' Free Fishing Day, guided tours, and other special events. Volunteers also conducted wildlife surveys, helped maintain trails, provided environmental education programs, and studied the archaeological resources found on the refuge.

Thank you to all our volunteers for everything they do!

### REFUGE REPORTER

Published quarterly by the Friends of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge for the refuge.

Volume 11, Issue 3

Editor: Becky Goche

#### Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

Established in October, 1953 and administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Shiawassee NWR provides resting, nesting and feeding habitat for waterfowl and other birds. Its mission is to preserve or manage an undeveloped expanse of floodplain forest, marshes, rivers, and associated habitat within an agricultural and urban landscape through habitat management, encouraging public stewardship, educational programs, and private lands activities.

Refuge Manager—Steve Kahl

Assistant Refuge Manager—Ed DeVries

Biologist—Jim Dastyck

Private Lands Biologist—Michelle Vander Haar

Visitor Services Manager—Becky Goche

Administrative Officer—Mary Ann Gillette

Maintenance Staff—David Peters

#### Friends of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

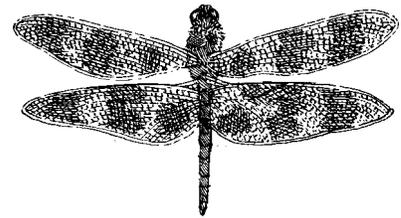
A nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization established in 1999 to promote the preservation of the natural and historical resources of the Refuge, foster its use and enjoyment by the public consistent with the protection and preservation of its environment, and engage in such educational, scientific and civic activities as will assist the management of the Refuge in carrying out its mandates.

Refuge Website: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/shiawassee>

Shiawassee NWR  
6975 Mower Rd.  
Saginaw, MI 48601  
Phone: 989-777-5930  
Fax: 989-777-9200  
Hours: M - F, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

We're on the web!

[Http://www.fws.gov/midwest/shiawassee](http://www.fws.gov/midwest/shiawassee)



**Green Point is Now Open Weekends from May 3 through September 28**

## Summer Sunday Strolls and Guided Mountain Bike Tours for Families

*By Tom Horb*

Looking for a way to exercise with your family and enjoy nature at the same time? Join me at Green Point this summer for our new **Summer Sunday Strolls** guided walks. There will be two walks each month from June to September. On these guided walks we will explore Green Point's trails as we search for wildlife that lives here. The dates and times are as follows:

- June 8, 2 to 4 p.m.
- June 29, 9 to 11 a.m.
- July 13, 9 to 11 a.m.
- July 27, 9 to 11 a.m.
- August 10, 9 to 11 a.m.
- August 24, 9 to 11 a.m.
- September 7, 9 to 11 a.m.

- September 21, 2 to 4 p.m.

There will also be guided bicycle tours at the Woodland Trail off of Center and Stroebel Roads each month. We will explore the history, wildlife and plant life of the area. A mountain bike works best on these trails. Bring your binoculars, bug spray, and water. The dates and times are as follow:

- June 21, 9 to 11 a.m.
- July 19, 9 to 11 a.m.
- August 16, 9 to 11 a.m.

For more information, call Tom Horb at Green Point at (989) 759-1669.

## **Nurturing Nature Wednesday Series**

- All programs begin at 7:00 p.m. and last 60 – 90 minutes
- Held at the Green Point Environmental Learning Center, 3010 Maple Street, Saginaw
- Admission: \$2 for individuals and FREE for members of the Friends of the Shiawassee NWR

### **Valuable Wetlands**

**June 18, 2008**

Michigan has lost more than 70 percent of its wetlands. In this presentation by the Michigan United Conservation Clubs, live wetland mammals, birds and reptiles are used to illustrate the tremendous value and importance of wetlands to both wildlife and people. Possible animals possible in the show are the Eastern fox snake, wood duck, mink, snapping turtle and red shouldered hawk.

**July – No Program**

**August – No Program**

## **Ferguson Bayou Trail Night Hike**

**June 20, 2008, 7:00 p.m.**

**Ferguson Bayou Trail at Curtis Road**

Refuge volunteer Steve Gasser will lead you on a 5-mile hike on refuge trails in search of wildlife. Dress for the weather and bring binoculars, bug spray and water.

## **Woodland Trail Night Hike**

**August 1, 2008, 7:00 p.m.**

**Woodland Trail at Stroebel Road**

Refuge volunteer Steve Gasser will lead you on a hike at the refuge's most used trail. Dress for the weather and bring binoculars, bug spray and water.

# **Calendar of Events**

## **Summer Sunday Strolls for Families**

**Green Point ELC**

Join Tom Horb for a guided hike of Green Point as you learn about the wildlife that lives there. Bring bug spray.

June 8, 2 to 4 p.m.

June 29, 9 to 11 a.m.

July 13, 9 to 11 a.m.

July 27, 9 to 11 a.m.

August 10, 9 to 11 a.m.

August 24, 9 to 11 a.m.

September 7, 9 to 11 a.m.

September 21, 2 to 4 p.m.

## **Guided Mountain Bike Tours**

**June 21, July 19 and August 16, 2008**

**Meet at 9:00 a.m. each date**

**Woodland Trail at Stroebel Road**

Tom Horb will lead you on a guided tour of the Woodland Trail beginning at 9:00 a.m. each day. You will learn about the area's history and its wildlife. Dress for the weather and bring binoculars, bug spray and water.

## **Butterfly Walk**

**July 26, 2008, 10:00 a.m.**

**Green Point ELC**

Stan Lilley, a butterfly expert, will take you on a guided walk to investigate the species of butterflies found at Green Point. Bring binoculars.

For more information, contact Green Point Environmental Learning Center at (989) 759-1669.