

# WILD NEWS

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge

Nature Program Calendar

July - September 2006



## Public Input

### We Want To Hear From You

Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR is your refuge and the public has an important role in refuge planning. On a recurring basis, the refuge staff prepares plans and other documents to guide our wildlife, habitat and public use programs. This is your refuge and your programs. We want to know what you think about how we are doing.

Visit the Refuge website at <http://rockymountainarsenal.fws.gov> and click on "Public Comment." There you will find any draft documents such as management plans, environmental assessments and compatibility determinations that are available for public review. You can respond via e-mail directly to the website or write with your comments or questions.

Let us know what you think. Check the website often, ask questions, make comments and get involved in your refuge.

## PELICANS on the REFUGE

By Jessie Yale

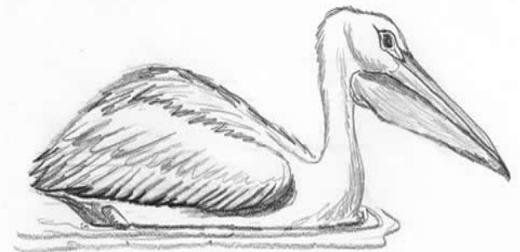
Each spring and summer, Refuge visitors have the opportunity to see one of North America's largest birds, the American white pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*). These huge water birds are approximately four feet in length and have a wingspan of eight to nine feet! They are all white except for black tipped wings that typically only show when in flight.

American white pelicans have a vertebra in their necks that prevent them from ever raising their heads. They have orange webbed feet and long orange bills fitted with a large pouch, which can hold up to three gallons of water. During mating season the males' beak color changes to a brighter orange and they develop a flat vertical fibrous plate on their bills. More buoyant than their cousin the brown pelican, American white pelicans do not dive for fish, they simply scoop them up while swimming and allow the water to drain out by pointing their bills downward.

These pelicans usually live in large family groups, where both males and females are in charge of feeding and raising their young. They can live up to 14 years in the wild. Risks to these birds include disturbance of breeding grounds, loss of water and shooting by poachers. American white pelicans are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1972.

American white pelicans presently do not nest at the Refuge. The birds that do migrate here during the spring and summer months are non-breeding adults. They migrate to the Refuge from the Gulf of Mexico and the southern Pacific

coast to feed on an abundance of small fish found in the Refuge's lakes. Visit the Refuge soon to search for these grand birds!



Free Fishing on National Public Lands Day — Saturday, September 30, 2006  
6:00 am - 3:30 pm Call 303-289-0930 for more information

## Wild Rides

*Saturdays and Sundays*  
9:00 - 11:00 am

Enjoy the sights and sounds of the Refuge on this "wild" two-hour trolley-tram wildlife viewing tour. Reservations required.

## Wild Treks Drop-in Program

*Saturdays and Sundays*  
6:00 am - 4:00 pm

Anglers, birders, hikers and photographers take advantage of the Refuge's *new* early morning hours and beat the summer heat! Reservations not required to hike the trails and explore the learning lab.

## Scout Packs

*Calling all scouts!* Visit the Refuge during drop-in hours and earn merits toward your wildlife badges by checking out a backpack filled with field study guides, binoculars and activities. Then hike the trails for some wildlife fun!

## Fishing News *Go Fish!*

The 2006 Refuge public fishing season is here and continues through October 15, 2006. Catch-and-release fishing is offered at the Refuge lakes each weekend from **6:00 am - 3:30 pm**. A recreation fishing fee of \$3.00 per person is required along with a State of Colorado Fishing License for anglers 16 years and older. Anglers must attend a one-time, 15 minute orientation before fishing. This orientation is offered every Saturday and Sunday at 7:00 am in the Visitor Center. Check our website for additional rules and regulations.

## Nature Programs

*JULY - SEPTEMBER 2006*

Reservations are required for these FREE popular programs. Space is limited. **Call 303-289-0930 to register.** Please dress for the weather. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Assistance dogs are welcome.

### JULY

#### Photography for Beginners

*Saturday July 1*  
4:00 - 7:00 pm

Calling all amateur photographers! Learn the basics of wildlife photography and put your skills to the test on this unique evening opportunity. Remember your camera and lots of film!

#### Family Fishing Fun

*Sunday July 2*  
8:00 - 11:00 am

Looking for some family fun? Grab your fishin' pole and head out to Lake Mary to see if you can hook the "big one"! Experienced anglers will be on hand to help you get started.

#### Summer Raptors

*Saturday July 8*  
1:00 - 3:00 pm

What raptors soar the Refuge summer skies? Learn basic raptor identification techniques before heading out to put your new skills to the test.

#### Owls Underground

*Saturday July 15*  
8:00 - 10:00 am

Join a Refuge wildlife biologist on this investigation and learn more about the small, spindly-legged burrowing owls that visit the Refuge each summer.



#### Bike the Refuge

*Sunday July 16*  
8:00 - 10:00 am

Pedal your way through wetland, woodland, and prairie landscape. This ride is intended for experienced riders. Be prepared with water, sunscreen, and fat, puncture-proof tires. Helmets are required.

#### Early Birders

*Saturday July 22*  
6:00 - 10:00 am

The early bird gets the worm! Grab your binoculars, field guides, and even your camera for this morning expedition.

#### Aquatic Wonderland

*Sunday July 23*  
1:00 - 3:00 pm

Explore the Refuge with waders! See the "aqueous" side of the Refuge and discover the abundance of aquatic residents!

### AUGUST

#### Evening Hayride

*Saturday August 5*  
5:00 - 7:00 pm

Relax and cool off from the dog days of summer during this slow and easy evening hayride.

#### Photo Tour

*Sunday August 6*  
7:00 - 10:00 am

Photographers rejoice! Bring your camera, film and explore the sun-kissed beauty of the Refuge for that perfect summer shot!

#### Animals of the Marsh

*Saturday August 12*  
1:00 - 3:00 pm

Discover the diversity of the marsh zone. Look for invertebrates as well as ducks and many song birds. Expect the unexpected! Waders will be provided.

### **Prairie Dog Tails**

*Saturday August 19*  
9:00 - 11:00 am

This presentation and outdoor field exploration will help you discover why prairie dogs are “key” to the shortgrass prairie. Binoculars are a must for close up eavesdropping on family gossip and observing unique prairie dog behaviors.

### **Refuge Campfire**

*Sunday August 20*  
6:00 - 8:00 pm

Back by popular demand! Warm up those vocal chords for some oldies but goodies and participate in games and nature stories.

### **Birding Basics**

*Saturday August 26*  
6:30 - 10:30 am

Novice birders unite! Learn to identify some common Refuge bird species by sight and sound before heading out into the field to try your newly acquired skills.

### **Kids Photo Basics**

*Sunday August 27*  
8:00 - 10:00 am

Kids! Join us for this hands-on Refuge exploration to learn about wildlife photography. Don't forget your cameras.

## **SEPTEMBER**

### **Song Dogs**

*Sunday September 2*  
5:00 - 7:00 pm

The coyote's howl is called the *Song of the West*. Listen for howls, barks and yelps during this evening hayride.

### **Family Bike the Refuge**

*Saturday September 9*  
8:00 - 10:00 am

This naturalist led, slow and easy bike ride will take you past prairie dog towns, and alongside waterfowl-filled wetlands. Helmets are required. Fat, puncture-proof tires and water bottles are strongly recommended.

### **Going Sky High**

*Sunday*  
*September 10*  
8:00 - 10:00 am

Eyes to the sky! Search for the Refuge's fast flyers and learn some helpful raptor identification techniques.

### **Froggy Night Out**

*Sunday September 17*  
5:00 - 7:00 pm

Observe the beginning of nature's night shift and listen to the sounds of an evening frog chorus during this adventure. Wear old shoes, you might just get wet!

### **Early Birders**

*Saturday September 23*  
7:00 - 11:00 am

The early bird gets the worm! Grab your binoculars, field guides, and even your camera for this morning expedition.

### **Harvest Hayride**

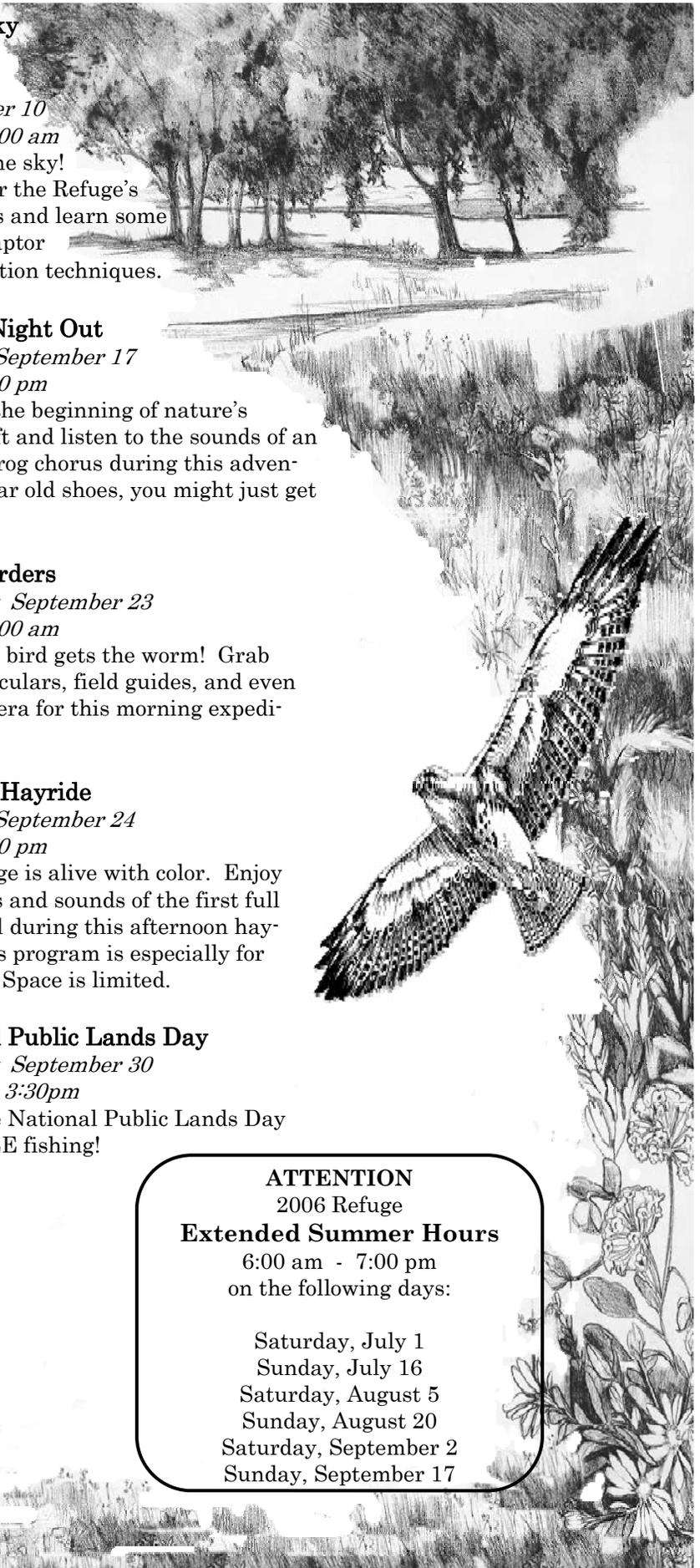
*Sunday September 24*  
1:00 - 3:00 pm

The Refuge is alive with color. Enjoy the sights and sounds of the first full day of fall during this afternoon hayride. This program is especially for families. Space is limited.

### **National Public Lands Day**

*Saturday September 30*  
6:00 am - 3:30 pm

Celebrate National Public Lands Day with FREE fishing!



### **ATTENTION** 2006 Refuge **Extended Summer Hours**

6:00 am - 7:00 pm  
on the following days:

Saturday, July 1  
Sunday, July 16  
Saturday, August 5  
Sunday, August 20  
Saturday, September 2  
Sunday, September 17

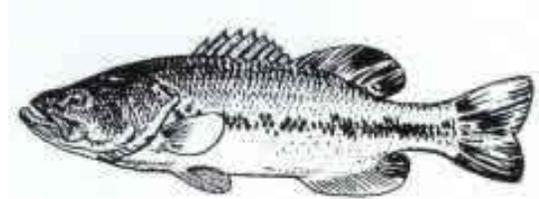
## Junior Ranger Day at Bass Pro Shops

Calling all kids ages 6-12! Become a Junior Ranger at this FREE, new, action-packed program sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge and Bass Pro Shops at Stapleton North Field. Parents can get their shopping done or just relax in the store while the kids have fun!

**Date:** Friday - July 7, 2006

**Time:** 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

**Where:** Bass Pro Shops in the Frying Pan Lodge



Junior Ranger Day includes:

- \* Fill the Bill Bird Activity
- \* Animal Charades
- \* Animal Mask Craft
- \* In-store Scavenger Hunt with a special prize from the Mystery Department
- \* An official Junior Ranger badge and certificate

An optional family fishing trip at Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge will be offered from 1:00 - 3:00 pm with help from some expert Bass Pro Shops anglers.

Reservations are required. Call (303) 289-0930 to sign-up! Spaces are limited.



PRSRT STD  
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Wildlife Service  
PERMIT G-77

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge  
Commerce City, CO 80022-1748

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

### DIRECTIONS TO THE REFUGE:

*Enter the Refuge at 56th Avenue and  
Havana Street. Proceed 1.5 miles to the  
Visitor Center to check-in.*



Visit our website at <http://rockymountainarsenal.fws.gov> or call 303-289-0930  
Printed on recycled paper