



## Volunteer Opportunities

Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge  
5437 West Jefferson Ave., Trenton, MI 48183  
Telephone: 734-365-0219

The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge represents a new model for conservation, one that restores fish and wildlife habitats in an urban area through innovative public-private partnerships, while serving as a model for bringing conservation to cities across the nation. We welcome and work with many dedicated volunteers to achieve our mission. The following is a list of current opportunities. Which positions appeal to you?!

**To apply:** Contact Volunteer Coordinator, Aleigha Estep, at [driwr\\_volunteer@fws.gov](mailto:driwr_volunteer@fws.gov) or (734) - 365 - 0219 (For email put your name and the position you are applying for in the subject line)

1. **Visitor Center Greeter and Nature Store Volunteer** – Become a refuge ambassador as you cheerfully greet visitors; provide recreation information; give orientations on the work of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; assist visitors with refuge rules and regulations; answer telephones and questions; distribute brochures; respond to visitor correspondences; and sell and tend to items in the Canvasback Nature Store.
2. **Nature Navigator Volunteer** – Do you love nature so much you want to share it with others? Navigators lead guided hikes and nature education programs and assist with school groups. Training includes an overview of the refuge and all necessary material to present programs. Once trained, volunteers commit to leading programs out of the visitor center and in the community. No prior experience necessary!
3. **Event Volunteer** – The Refuge hosts a variety of events throughout the year varying in themes and activities. As an event volunteer you will educate the public about the refuge, nature, wildlife conservation, and recreational opportunities. Main duties include staffing a variety of educational booths, children's craft activities, and informational tables at acquaint event attendees with the refuge. They also may include set up and take down of event space.
4. **Fishing Pier Host Volunteer** - The refuge fishing pier extends over 700 feet into the Detroit River and connects to a 150-foot-long pier. If you love to fish, tell your fish stories, and get others interested in fishing, this position is for you! You can be fishing while you volunteer!
5. **Stewardship Crew Volunteer** – Assist with a variety of habitat management activities including forest rehabilitation and invasive species control. This type of work requires heavy physical labor in natural areas and in challenging environments. Stewardship crews may also assist with trail maintenance, kiosk construction and interpretive sign repairs. Participants must be in good physical condition. All necessary tools are provided.

6. **Volunteer Photographer** – Using your own equipment, take photographs of native flora and fauna, special events, refuge staff, and volunteers working in the field. Close up and macro photographs preferred. Photos are credited to photographer and become property of the refuge. Images may be used in outreach materials.
7. **Speakers Bureau Volunteer** – Help share information about U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Wildlife Refuge System, refuge history, local wildlife, nature topics, and opportunities of recreation to the public. You will shadow refuge park ranger at speaking locations until ready to present programs independently. There is a preexisting PowerPoint that you will use once you present independently.
8. **Trail Upkeep Volunteer** – Perform all aspects of trail maintenance and construction including clearing brush and fallen logs; picking up litter; and constructing new segments of trail. Volunteers may work alone or in groups and must be in good physical condition.
9. **Detroit River Hawk Watch Raptor Volunteer** – In the fall, the lower Detroit River becomes a corridor for the passage of hundreds of thousands of migrating hawks, eagles, falcons, and vultures. Trained volunteers conduct a standardized count of this spectacular migration of raptors on the lower Detroit River. Come learn the skills to become a seasoned counter! Position available September through November of each year.
10. **Detroit River Hawk Watch Raptor OUTREACH Volunteer** – If you are excited about raptors and enjoy sharing your enthusiasm, join the Hawk Watch counters above as an outreach volunteer. Learn about counters' sightings and survey methods and share this information with the array of visitors that stop by.



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## Group Opportunities

There are various group volunteer opportunities available to get involved in. These opportunities may vary based on weather conditions and staff availability. Here are the options for groups to consider:

Roadside/Trash Clean up: This activity can be a couple hours up to half a day. The location of the pickup will depend on which refuge unit needs it the most.

Stewardship crew: Some of these activities can take the full day, or it could be a morning project and an afternoon project with a lunch break.

All these activities will take place outside. Shade will be variable, restrooms almost non-existent, and with exposure to sun, wind, and possibly light rain. Bringing a water bottle and snacks/a meal is recommended. DRIWR will provide all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), sunscreen, and insect repellent, and can provide a five-gallon water cooler with advance notice. If participants have their own personal gear (gloves, waders, muck boots, sunscreen, insect repellent), they are allowed to bring them.

### **May-Early June**

1. Mustards hand pull- Refuge staff would find a large population of dame's rocket and garlic mustard and crew would hand pull plants from the ground. Involves kneeling, bending, lifting large trash bags, hand shovels. There is also an option to Can hand-pull small woody invasive species (<1' tall).
2. Clearing dead brush from Orange Trail- using loppers and hand saws to cut down small shrubs from a previous year's chemical treatment. Involves hand tools, some bending or kneeling.

### **June-End of July**

1. Frogbit hand pulling. Involves waders or muck boots, maybe unmotorized watercraft, carrying a small bucket. Scooping small floating plants from wetlands.
2. Seed head clipping of teasel and thistle species. Involves small hand tools and carrying a small bucket.

### **August-December**

1. Woody invasive species treatment. Crew members will use handsaws and loppers to cut down small shrubby trees, staff to follow with herbicide to kill root system. Involves bending, kneeling, hand tools. Species involves are autumn olive, common and glossy buckthorns, common privet, and Amur, Tatarian and Japanese honeysuckles.



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