

April 2016  
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No. 2



# News from the Coastal North Carolina National Wildlife Refuges Complex

Alligator River, Pea Island, Pocosin Lakes, Roanoke River, Mackay Island, and Currituck

## North Carolina Coastal Plain Refuges Complex: Teamwork Gets the Mission Accomplished

Under the leadership of Project Leader Mike Bryant, the staff at Alligator River, Pea Island, Pocosin Lakes, Currituck/Mackay Island, and Roanoke River National Wildlife Refuges have always worked together to get things done in the Complex. Over the past few months, a number of projects have been happening that might not have been possible without that teamwork. Employees from the Ecological Services Office located at the Roanoke Island refuge office also continue to be a part of the team.

Whether it's bat surveys, environmental education, prescribed fire, maintenance, or administrative duties, the our folks know that teamwork is the most efficient, and sometimes fun, way to get things done.

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*Cindy Heffley (Alligator River and Pea Island Refuges) provided a program about Red Wolves to a school group at Pocosin Lakes Refuge, credit: L. Chambers.*



*Firefighters from Alligator River, Pocosin Lakes, and Mackay Island Refuges and Washington, DC worked together to successfully burn over 250 acres on Mackay Island National Wildlife Refuge, credit USFWS.*

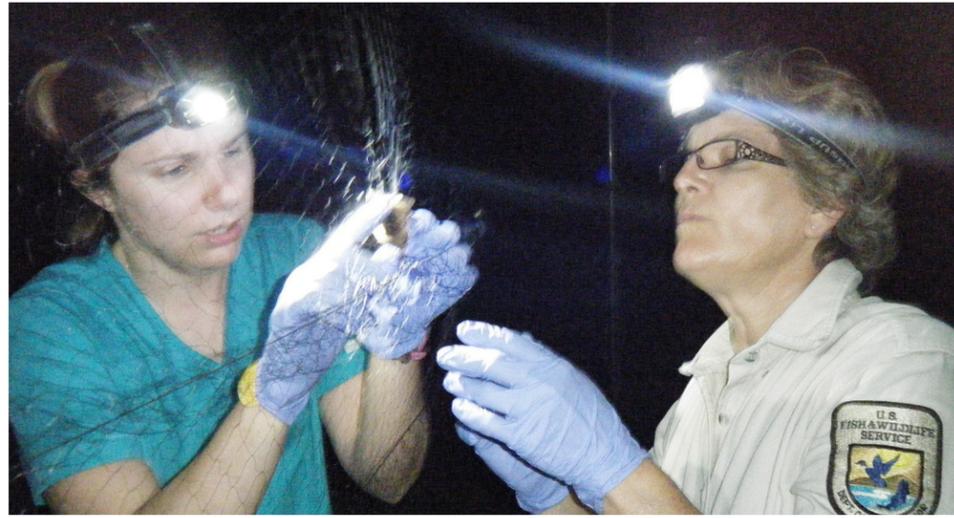
*Marshmaster being used during a prescribed burn on Mackay Island, credit USFWS.*



## North Carolina Coastal Plain Refuges Complex: Teamwork Gets the Mission Accomplished *(continued)*



One of the bats captured during mist-netting, credit USFWS.



Elaine Barr (Pocosin Lakes Refuge) and Jean Richter (Roanoke River Refuge) working together during a recent bat project, credit USFWS.



Ryan Nordsvén, Michel Morse, and Shaun Olson (USFWS Ecological Services) documenting captured bats on the Refuges, credit USFWS.



A prescribed burn at Mackay Island National Wildlife Refuge, credit USFWS.

## Welcome Summer Interns!



**Sidney Burleson**  
*Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge*  
Sidney is from Winchester, Virginia and earned a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Conservation from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. She enjoys being outside and exploring nature. Over the past three years, she has become an avid rock climber, mountaineer, and has recently gotten into whitewater kayaking.



**Kaitlyn Yates**  
*Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge*  
Kaitlyn will graduate in May 2016 from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas, with a Bachelor's degree in Forestry, majoring in Forest Wildlife Management. While back home in Cleburne, Texas, she and her family take four-wheelers out and explore the creek beds looking for fossils.



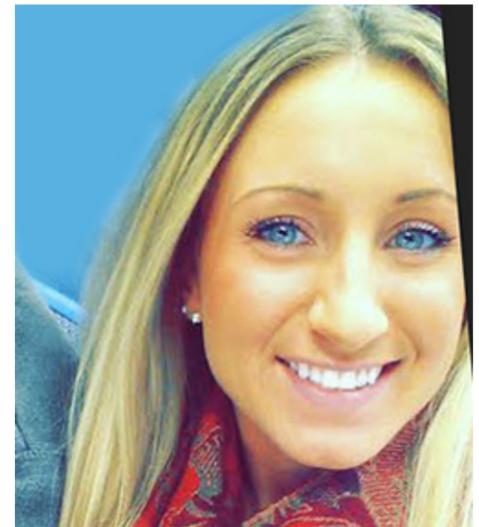
**Rachel Grether**  
*Red Wolf Caretaker Intern*  
Rachel is a native Floridian who grew up on a small farm surrounded by wildlife. She graduated from Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, North Carolina with a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Biology in May 2015 and plans to attend graduate school to attain an M.S. degree in Conservation Research or Environmental Biology.



**Kyra Pruitt**  
*Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge*  
Kyra is originally from Alexandria, Virginia but has been living in Raleigh, North Carolina as a student for the past few years. She is in the Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology Program at NC State with a minor in Zoology. Outside of school and work, she likes to do anything that involves the outdoors including hiking, backpacking, biking, and rock climbing.



**Kayleigh Cook**  
*Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge*  
Kayleigh is a senior at the University of South Carolina majoring in Biology. She was born in Pennsylvania but grew up in Raleigh, North Carolina and loves visiting new places and going on adventures.



**Allyssa Calvo**  
*Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge*  
Allyssa is a student at University of Connecticut focusing on Conservation Biology and Behavioral Ecology. In her spare time she likes to visit museums, look for neat things in the forest, write poetry, spend time with family and friends, cook, bake, practice yoga, and try new things.

## Welcome Summer Interns! (continued)



**David Tilson**  
*Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge*  
David grew up in Rockbridge County, Virginia. He attends Virginia Tech and the College of Natural Resources and Environment with a major in Wildlife Conservation and a minor in Forestry. This year he has been the Camera Trapping Chair for the Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society where he teaches underclassmen how to use game cameras as a means of noninvasive wildlife sampling.



**Nick Poss**  
*Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge*  
Nick is a wildlife conservation student at Virginia Tech and has been fortunate to have the opportunity to study black bears at the Blacksburg Black Bear Research Center. Outside of his studies, he is an avid SCUBA diver and has spent the last several summers as an instructor and is becoming certified as a technical rebreather diver. He also enjoys hiking, camping, fishing, and hunting.



**Kelcie Severs**  
*Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge*  
Kelcie is an undergraduate from the University of Rio Grande with a Bachelor's degree in Fish and Wildlife Conservation and Management. She has had a love for nature since childhood and looks forward to being a part of the team at the refuge.



## Resident Volunteer Update

**Steve and Jodi Kellis**  
*Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge*  
February - October, 2016

Steve and Jodi have been full time RVers for the past two years and have loved every minute of it.

Steve retired in 2012 from Dow Jones & Company, publishers of *The Wall Street Journal*, after 23 years in various aspects of IT. He enjoys golf, baseball, classic motorcycles, and nature observation.

Jodi retired from Dow Jones & Co. in 2013 after 22 years in Customer Support in Chicopee, MA and Finance in Brunswick, NJ. She enjoys reading, beading, baseball, and nature. This is their first experience volunteering at a National Wildlife Refuge and are looking forward to it. They decided to take one assignment for a longer period to witness as much of the yearly cycle of the refuge as they can.

*Peggy and George Harrison, John Jennings, and Doug and Diane Taylor are back for another round of volunteering for us!*

## Nags Head Bunkhouse Gets a Facelift



Volunteers John Jennings, Doug Dibble, Shirley Wood, Kelly Conklin, Marilyn Kircus, and Frank Armstrong worked with Volunteer Coordinator Tracey Rock for several days to paint the interior of the two-story Nags Head bunkhouse. This house is used mainly for interns and sometimes visiting staff from other refuges, credit USFWS.

## Kaden Ramos Receives Second Place in 2016 Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest



Sherrie Jager, Office Assistant at Roanoke River National Wildlife Refuge and Junior Duck Stamp Coordinator for North Carolina would like to recognize Kaden Ramos on his achievement in the 2016 Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest.

Kaden, the son of Keith and Tabitha Ramos, is eight years old and is homeschooled. He was a Second Place Winner for his age group (K-3) with a colored pencil drawing of a Northern Pintail, entitled "Paddling By." All of us would like to congratulate Kaden on this accomplishment! Kaden's father is Assistant Refuge Manager at Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge, credit USFWS.



## Pea Island Native Plant Garden Update

Staff and volunteers spent a few days maintaining the Native Plant Garden in front of the Pea Island Visitor Center. Under direction of Volunteer Bob Glennon, everyone worked together to thin out some of the native plants while getting many weeds under control.

Thanks to Tracey Rock, Marilyn Kircus, Kelly Conklin, and Kali Bush for all of the help! Credit USFWS.

### Where Are They Now?

Submitted by Cindy Heffley

Soon after I started working at the refuges in 2008, I made it a point to keep up with interns as they moved on to other adventures. Most interns are general interns, gaining experience in most of our program areas. We also have a Red Wolf Caretaker Intern year-round. At various times, we've had specialized interns working on climate adaptation, Black Bear surveys relating to the eventual widening of Highway 64, and the Fire Program.

This is the first in a series catching up with some of the former interns to see where they are and what they have been doing since leaving our area. I'm proud of the professional and personal accomplishments they young folks have made! Quite a few have found employment with the Department of Interior, so we'll feature them in this edition.



**Jacob Mills**  
*Biological Science Technician  
National Wildlife Refuge System*



**Gary Peeples (Public Affairs in Asheville and former intern) with Jess Sutt**



**Whitney Wallett**  
*Firefighter  
National Wildlife Refuge System*



**Ryan Rose**  
*Biological Science Technician  
National Wildlife Refuge System*



**Kelly Goodale**  
*Field Biologist  
National Park Service*



**Zoe Carroll**  
*Biological Science Technician  
National Wildlife Refuge System*



**Jared Strawdman**  
*Volunteer Coordinator  
National Wildlife Refuge System*



**Brice Sweeney**  
*Biological Science Technician  
National Park Service*



**Will Thompson (left)**  
*Lead Biological Science Technician  
National Park Service*

Even after completion of their internships, many continue to wear their volunteer hats to help spread the word about the refuges! Here are just a few faded hats:



*General Pea Island Intern Ashley Smith*



*Climate Adaptation Intern  
Marson Nance*



Alligator River/Pea Island  
National Wildlife Refuges  
PO Box 1969 (mailing)  
100 Conservation Way (physical)  
Manteo, NC 27954  
Phone: 252/473 1131  
Fax: 252/473 1668  
E-mail: [alligatorriver@fws.gov](mailto:alligatorriver@fws.gov)  
[http://www.fws.gov/refuge/alligator\\_river/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/alligator_river/)

Follow us on Facebook:  
Friends of Alligator River and  
Pea Island National Wildlife




*General Pea Island Intern  
Whitney Wallett*

## Dennis Stewart Has Left the Building!

*On a wintry evening in January, friends, family, and co-workers gathered at Pamlico Jack's Restaurant in Nags Head to celebrate Dennis' retirement. Although many of the guests shared humorous stories of times with Dennis, everyone was sure to let him know how much he was appreciated for his service to conservation and wildlife and to his country as a Vietnam Veteran. We wish Dennis well in retirement!*



*Dennis receives a plaque from Complex Project Leader Mike Bryant and Assistant Refuge Manager Scott Lanier, credit USFWS.*



*Above: Dennis enjoying being a grandpa; right: Dennis in the early days of his career in 1998, both credit USFWS.*



## Support Your National Wildlife Refuges

Coastal Wildlife Refuges Society exists to support the interpretive, educational and volunteer programs of several national wildlife refuges, with a focus on Alligator River and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges. Your contributions to the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society help make it possible to provide that assistance.

The Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society provides specific support for local K-12 schools by providing educational programs as well as transportation grants

for students and teachers to visit the refuges and National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center. Donations and fees also help maintain refuge ground and water trails, pay for refuge visitor services staff, assist with the annual Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival, and support dozens of other refuge programs and projects.

Please support your national wildlife refuges by donating \$10, \$50, \$100 or more. You may send check or money order to, Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society, PO Box 1808, Manteo, NC 27954.

Or, to use your credit card you may call or go online: 252/473 9464, <http://www.coastalwildliferefuge.com/>

*Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. Tax ID #56-1649348. Your contribution may be deductible as a charitable contribution on your federal taxes. We will send you a receipt for each contribution, as well as a Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society membership card to print and cut out to use for savings in our refuge gift shops.*

**WINGS OVER WATER**  
Wildlife Festival  
October 18-23, 2016  
Outer Banks, NC

**20TH ANNIVERSARY**  
Art • Birding • Natural History • Paddling • Photography  
To register, visit [wingsoverwater.org](http://wingsoverwater.org) or call 252-216-9464  
Plus don't miss WOW Encore: A Winter Weekend Dec 9-11

Photo courtesy of Eve Turck

## Wings Over Water Goes Artsy

*Submitted by Steve Brumfield*

The 2016, 20th anniversary Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival has added several new nature art programs taught by amazing artists. All of Wings Over Water art classes are geared for the beginner who wants to learn or brush up on the basics.



### Painting Watercolor Wetlands with Susan Van Gieson

Learn to paint a beautiful wetland landscapes with artist Susan Van Gieson. Participants can be of all skill levels, ranging from the person who wants to enhance their abilities, to the beginner exploring the gentle process of working with watercolors. The class will focus on the subtle beauty of wetlands and capturing their essence in a painting. Students will gain knowledge of techniques to use in future painting with watercolors. Susan's hope is that you'll leave the class excited by the process of painting and will look at wetlands in a new way.

### Bird Drawing with John Sill

If you have ever wanted to learn to draw and sketch birds this is the class for you! John Sill is one of the country's top nature artists. You will enjoy your time learning to draw with John. Besides being a nature artist, John is the illustrator of over two dozen nature books written



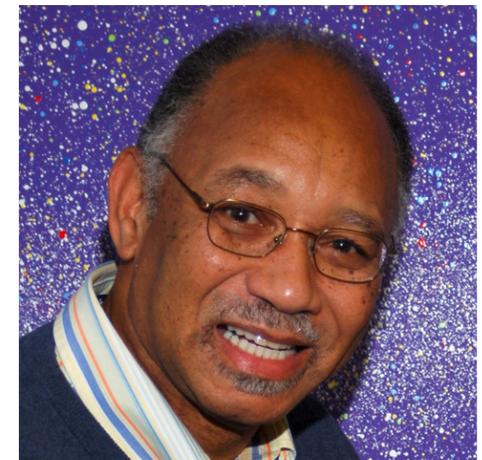
by his wife, Cathryn. John was the 2012 Wings Over Water keynote speaker. This year John returns to teach a basic class in bird sketching. This class will focus on waterfowl, shorebirds and songbirds. Using an overhead projector, John will demonstrate how to outline and draw what you see. By the end of class you will have a good idea of how to draw basic birds and maybe more. If you are beyond the basic level, John will help you refine and develop your skills.

### Painting Marshlands with Fay Davis Edwards

The focus is on painting marshlands. We will be making one or two small watercolor/mixed media paintings of the marshes. After a brief orientation and materials discussion, the class will start



with a short walk along the docks over to Festival Park (weather permitting) to make notes of the colors and structure of the marshland environment, and observe any wildlife. At the studio, we will bring our observations to life using watercolors, acrylic, and graphite. Everyone should go home with at least one 8"x10" painting.



### Wading Birds in Pastel with James Melvin

Award-winning Outer Banks artist and illustrator, James Melvin will teach you the basics of drawing with pastels. Through years of painting and hundreds of illustrations, James has developed basic pastel techniques that he will share with you to help you draw a wading bird of his choice.

*Don't miss out on your chance to participate in one or more of these four great art classes being held during the October session of the 2016 Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival.*

**2016 Winter/Spring Interpretive Programs**

**Alligator River and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges**

**Free Preschool Young Naturalist Program 10 - 11 am**

Year-round Fridays  
National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, Roanoke Island

**Free Saturday Red Wolf Howling**

April 9: 7 - 8:30 pm  
May 14: 7:30 - 9 pm  
Meet at Creef Cut Trail parking lot  
(Milltail Road and Highway 64 west of Manns Harbor).  
No reservation needed.

**Free Pea Island Bird Walk 8 - 9:30 am**

Year-round Fridays  
May - September Wednesdays

**Saturday Tram Tours 9 am - 12 noon**

**March 12      April 9      May 14**

Join us for a trip around the refuge and learn about the wild lands and wildlife.

Bring your binoculars and camera!  
Drinking water and insect repellent are also recommended.

Tram seating is limited. To guarantee your tram seats, you may register ahead of time.  
Those 13 years of age and older must pay \$10 per person.  
Children 12 and under may register for free with one or more paying adults.  
Call 252/216 9464 for reservations.

The program will occur except with lightning, heavy wind or rain, or impassable road conditions.  
Dress for the weather!

Co-sponsored by the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society.

Meet at Creef Cut Trail parking lot (Milltail Road and Highway 64 west of Mann Harbor).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to providing access for all participants.  
Persons needing reasonable accommodations in order to attend and participate should contact 252/216 9464.  
In order to allow sufficient time to process requests, please contact us at least two weeks prior to the event.

**Summer Programs**

**Weekly June, July and August**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Meeting Location</b>
Refuge/Wildlife Movies	9:30-3:30	9:30-3:30	9:30-3:30	9:30-3:30	National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center Roanoke Island
Turtle Talk	2:30-3:30 pm				Pea Island NWR Visitor Center
AR Canoe Tour (\$)(R)		9 am-noon	9-11 am	9 am-noon	Alligator River NWR Buffalo City Boat Launch
AR Van Tour (\$)(R)	7-9 am	7-9 am			Alligator River NWR Creef Cut Trail Parking Lot
PI Bird Walk		8-9:30 am		8-9:30 am	Pea Island NWR Visitor Center
PI Canoe Tour (\$)(R)		9-11 am	9-11 am	9-11 am	Pea Island NWR Visitor Center
Bird Adaptations		2:30-3:30 pm			Pea Island NWR Visitor Center
Bear Necessities		5:30-7 pm			Alligator River NWR Creef Cut Trail Parking Lot
Red Wolf Howling (\$)		7:30-9 pm			Alligator River NWR Creef Cut Trail Parking Lot
Bees, Bats, and Butterflies			2:30-3:30 pm		Pea Island NWR Visitor Center
Open-air Tram Tour (\$)(R)			8:30-11 am		Alligator River NWR Creef Cut Trail Parking Lot