

October 2017
Volume XX
No. 4



News from the Coastal North Carolina National Wildlife Refuges Complex

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

Coastal North Carolina Refuges Recognized by Department of the Interior Secretary for Community Support

In September, Acting Southeast Regional Director Michael Oetker presented the Secretary’s Commendation Award to local refuge staff, Art Beyer, Rebekah Martin, Becky Harrison, and Scott Lanier, on behalf of U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary, Ryan Zinke. These individuals led the refuge effort to expedite permissions for needed work to restore power to Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands.

In a recent email to all Department of the Interior employees, Zinke said the following:

“Today, I would like to shine the spotlight on a team from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that helped save the economy of North Carolina’s Outer Banks. That probably seems like an overstatement, but it is true.

In late July of this year, power to Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands was accidentally cut during a construction mishap. Cables that connect mainland power to island customers were severed in such a way that it would likely take weeks—possibly months—to repair.

For Outer Banks islands just hitting the peak of the tourism season, this accident was crippling. Just two weeks without power could put some out of business. After a mandatory evacuation order, 50,000 visitors were resigned to take their business elsewhere. Our own Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, just below Oregon Inlet, was only open to local bird watchers and outdoor enthusiasts.



(Left to right) Michael Oetker; Becky Harrison, Rebekah Martin, Scott Lanier and Art Beyer

Fortunately, employees of the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge Complex (the administrative grouping for Pea Island Refuge) took quick action to work with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative, returning power to the Outer Banks in just a few days. They figured out what needed to be done quickly and cleared the way for construction and repairs to get started immediately.

On August 3, power was restored, prompting visitors to return and area tourist attractions, including the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, to reopen.

This is an excellent example of how we can be good neighbors to the communities that surround public lands. When the Alligator River staff stepped up to help the people of North Carolina, they did more than restore electricity. They restored hope to a community that would surely have suffered without their aid.

In light of these actions, I have presented the Secretary’s Commendation Award to the following Department employees: Art Beyer, Assistant Refuge Manager, Pea Island Refuge; Rebekah Martin, Project Leader, Alligator River Refuge Complex; Rebecca Harrison, Supervisory Wildlife Biologist, Alligator River Refuge Complex; and Scott Lanier, Deputy Complex Manager, Alligator River Refuge.”

Inside this Issue:

RV Volunteer Update	2
Red Wolf Caretaker Intern	2
Pocosin Lakes NWR Scavenger Hunt ...	3
DeHoog Road Enhancement	3
Are you Ready to be WOWed?.....	3
Support Your National Wildlife Refuges ...	4
Connecting People with Nature	4
Refuge Interpretive Programs	5

RV Volunteer Update



*Bill Harrison (Alligator River)
November 2017 through January 2018*

Bill worked for a land surveyor in Windsor, North Carolina for four years mainly as a survey crew leader and also spent many years in insurance. After retiring, he spent two years in Wyoming and then returned to North Carolina to go back to work before retiring again in 2012. He then became a full-time RVer and has worked in North Carolina, Arizona, and North Dakota. Bill also served 21 years in the Army National Guard before retiring with the rank of Major.



*George and Lauren Radesky (Pea Island)
September 2017 through January 2018*

George and Lauren have returned for another season to volunteer at Pea Island. George recently shared that he, “has been an IBEW Electrician for over 40 years and had been in charge of all phases of electrical construction and maintenance on many multi-million dollar projects. In our spare time as a family, we became Living Historians for the American Revolution time period and did that for over 30 years up and down the original 13 Colonies and Canada. During that time, I became the Commander of our Unit the 6th PA Regiment and the Mid Atlantic Coordinator for our Region. I was the Chairman of the Continental Line, an Umbrella Organization of living historians that helped organize large re-enactments for the time period. I had also

volunteered for 15 years as part of ArtsQuest, an Organization that presented Musikfest, a 10-day Music Festival that in the 10 days would see a million and a half patrons pass through. As part of our duties we were part of the food and beverage committee, and I was the Chairman for the Sign committee and Lauren was Chairman of the Merchandise committee. ArtsQuest also sponsored many other programs in the Bethlehem, Pennsylvania area to bring the arts

back to the area. We have done many school programs in many varied subjects from Revolutionary War programs to Birding and Homesteading.”

Lauren started her career as a secretary for a large medical company and worked her way up to Executive Secretary to the Vice President of another medical firm. She mentions, “When we moved to Pennsylvania, I went into my own business as a Licensed Massage Therapist for over 20 years until retiring. I am still a Reiki Master-Teacher. Now we are starting our new Journey in our RV with our three cats and our tank-full of tropical fish. We are now enjoying ourselves as Volunteers for U. S. Fish and Wildlife. Who knows what lies ahead?”

Red Wolf Caretaker Intern September 2017 through December 2017

Tessa Nester graduated from James Madison University (JMU) with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology. Her passion for biology and the wildlife sciences began while she attended high school in Northern Virginia. During her time at JMU, Tessa learned quickly that she wanted to pursue a career involving the conservation of endangered species.

She has conducted research on Gray Wolves in the Northern Rocky States and quickly became intrigued by wolf conservation. She is incredibly thrilled to be working here on the refuge, doing what she loves, and working with one of the most endangered species on the planet!



Intern Tessa Nester

Wings

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
http://www.fws.gov/refuge/alligator_river/

Follow us on Facebook:
Friends of Alligator River and
Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges and
USFWS North Carolina



Pocosin Lakes Refuge Scavenger Hunt

Children have been enjoying the scavenger hunts at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center and the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center for many years. Now, there's a scavenger hunt available for children at Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center in Columbia! This free activity is great for helping children and adults learn about the refuge while exploring the exhibit area, front porch, and interpretive boardwalk. The visitor center is located just off Highway 64, next to the Tyrrell County Visitors Center. Hours vary by season and volunteer availability. Call 252/796 3004 X 234 for more information.

Gracie and Bella Kelly, along with Emma Tyler, recently enjoyed learning about the refuge during a recent stop at the visitor center with their grandmother, refuge volunteer Peggy Eubank, credit USFWS/Mizzelle.



Pocosin Lakes Refuge DeHoog Road Enhancement Project to Begin in October

The southern end of DeHoog Road will be closed starting in October, 2017 so that we can raise the elevation of the road. The project will take several months to complete. Evans Road and the D-15 headland road (which connects Evans and DeHoog Roads on the south side of the Refuge) will be opened to vehicles as an alternative route **WHEN CONDITIONS ALLOW**. These sections of road are not rockered and can become impassible when wet. Contact the Refuge at 252/796 3004 extension 226 for more information, photo credit: USFWS.



Are You Ready to be WOWed?

It's time for Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival, the annual national wildlife refuge support fundraising festival, with over 90 programs, including birding, paddling photography, art and natural history.

The festival takes place on the Outer Banks, in six national wildlife refuges and throughout six northeast North Carolina counties. October 17-22 and December 8-10.

Keynote speaker, Noah Strycker, 2015 Big Year Birding World Record holder, will sign copies of his just-released book, *Birding Without Borders*.

Details and registration on-line: <https://www.wingsoverwater.org/> or call 252/216 9464.

Support Your National Wildlife Refuges Donate to Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society

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

Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society supports local K-12 schools by assisting with educational programs and funding transportation grants for students and teachers to visit the refuges and the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center. Donated funds also help maintain refuge land and water trails, provide refuge visitor services staff, assist with the annual Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival, and support dozens of refuge projects and programs.

Please support your national wildlife refuges by donating \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100 or more. Send check or money order to, Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society, P.O. Box 1808, Manteo, NC 27954. You can also use a credit card by calling 252/216 9464 or visiting <http://www.coastalwildliferefuge.com/donate.html>.

Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society (CWRS) is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. Your contribution may be tax deductible as a charitable contribution. You will receive a receipt for each contribution and an annual CWRS membership card to use for savings in CWRS gift shops.



Connecting People With Nature

What does it mean to be connected with nature? The feel of grass beneath your feet, the rain on your face or even the sensation of beach sand running through your fingers - all of these things are part of our relationship with nature. When was the last time you went outside to simply sit and listen to a morning chorus of birds or to the steady rumble of wood frogs in some distant forest pool?

For many of us these experiences are simply brief escapes, moments of peace in an otherwise busy and stressful day, but for our children these moments are the world. Taking the time to introduce our children to nature and to educate them about the wonders of the environment they live in allows them to develop a sense of place, an understanding of the natural world that will continue to teach and inspire them for a lifetime.

At Alligator River and Pea Island refuges, staff and volunteers help connect people with nature through a weekly preschool program at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center and monthly kindergarten and sixth-grade programs at area schools. Many schools plan field trips to the refuges and/or Visitor Center to learn about nature.

Photo credit: USFWS

Noah Strycker is the 21st Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival guest speaker this year. Noah's newly released book, *Birding Without Borders*, where he traveled across forty-one countries, seven continents for 365 days and spotted 6,042 different species of birds is available in our Gateway and Pea Island gift shops.



Virtual tour:
National Wildlife
Refuges Visitor Center



Scan to store this
schedule on your
phone!

Or visit: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/alligator_river/visit/guided_programs.html

Or call 252/216 9464

Refuge Interpretation and Education Programs

Saturday Tram Tour

Fee Program

October 14, November 11 and December 16
9 am - 12 noon all dates

Join us for a trip around the refuge and learn about the wild lands and wildlife. Bring your binoculars and camera! Drinking water is also recommended. Snacks are permitted. Tram seating is limited. To guarantee your tram seats, you may register ahead of time.

Cost: \$10 per person age 13 and up. Children 12 and under free with one or more paying adults.

The program will occur except with lightning, inclement weather, or impassable road conditions. Dress for the weather! During the fall and winter months, it can be very cold. Dress in layers. Bring a blanket and a cushion.

Yes, we do see plenty of wildlife in the colder months since we go into a closed area where migratory waterfowl are resting. Raptors are also often seen in colder months.

Call 252/216 9464 for reservations. Co-sponsored by the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society. Meet at Creef Cut Trail parking lot (Milltail Road and Highway 64 west of Manns Harbor).

Red Wolf Howling

Free

October 14 6-7:30 pm
November 18 4:30-6 pm
December 9 4:30-6 pm

No reservations required.

Refuge staff and volunteers offer you the experience of a lifetime! Come and learn about the endangered red wolf during a short presentation and journey to the heart of the refuge for an adventurous attempt to hear our captive red wolves produce their haunting sounds.

The program will occur except with lightning, inclement weather, or impassable road conditions. Please do not bring pets to this program. Meet at Creef Cut Wildlife Trail parking lot (Milltail Rd. and Highway 64 west of Manns Harbor).



Photo credit: USFWS/Grubbs.

Preschool Young Naturalist Program

Free

Fridays 10-11am - Year-round

National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center Roanoke Island
100 Conservation Way

“Miss Cindy” offers a special treat each week especially designed for preschoolers - but all are welcome. Each week, we read a book about wildlife or habitat, have an activity related to the topic, and then explore our Nature Trail out the back door.

Call 252/475 4180 for more information.

School and Group Programs

Refuge-led learning programs are offered free of charge to preschool through college classes, including topics such as Turtles, Black Bears, Red Wolves, Tracking, Birds, Wildlife Photography, and more. Visits can be two to four hours.

Arrangements for programming must be made several weeks in advance by calling Cindy Heffley at 252/475 4180.

Scavenger hunt materials are available at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center on Roanoke Island and at Pea Island Visitor Center to provide a great educator-led learning experience.

Groups not requesting a guided program are asked to contact prior to your visit to avoid overcrowding of the facility.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to providing access to programs for all participants. Please direct all requests for sign language interpreting services, close captioning, or other accommodation needs by calling 252/216 9464, TTY 800/877 8339, at least two weeks prior to the program.