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News from the Coastal North Carolina National Wildlife Refuges Complex

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

Celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week October 11-17, 2015

Join refuge staff and volunteers as we celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week. The celebration begins on Saturday, October 10, with a refuge tram tour at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. That day will also be the first day of the weekend event, The Big Sit. On Saturday, volunteers will be “sitting” on the North Pond Trail Observation Tower at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge from 6 am - 6 pm. On Sunday, volunteers will be “sitting” at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge from 6 am - 6 pm; look for the volunteers atop a pickup truck at the intersection of Milltail and Sawyer Lake Roads. The Big Sit is an international event where participants gather together to document the species they hear and see in a set time period. No birding experience is necessary to help out with this event nor do you have to “sit” for the whole 12 hours.

On Wednesday, October 14, from 9 am - 2 pm, second graders from schools all over the area will converge upon the College of the Albemarle Roanoke Island Campus for the annual Wildfest event. This event features environmental educators from various public and private agencies who come together to help children learn about the wildlife and wild lands in the area. The public is also encouraged to come and bring families! It’s a great event for homeschoolers, since it happens during the school day.

To end the week, be sure to stop by the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center on Roanoke Island on Friday, October 16, from 6 - 7 pm for a performance called “Cry Wolf.” (See sidebar for more information.) From 7 - 8: pm, visit the classroom and get a hands-on look at various items used in the Red Wolf Recovery Program. As with all programs during National Wildlife Refuge Week, this program is free.

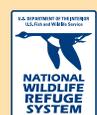


Terri Bockland, credit USFWS

CRY WOLF! is a one-hour live music and multi-media performance that reveals the amazing and ancient story of the relationship between humans and wolves. *Maryland-based singer/songwriter and devoted naturalist Terri Bocklund brings a passion for wolf conservation to fuel her exciting and interactive event combining music, story-telling, video, and the latest in wolf research (details on page 2).*

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Lost and Found (Mostly Found)

Many of us have lost our wallet, camera, or cell phone. While those items may be valuable in and of themselves, the contents are usually more important. In August, Federal Wildlife Officer Jay Eddy was on patrol at Pea Island Refuge when he found a GoPro camera and suction cup mount on the beach. Officer Eddy believed that it had come in with the last tide. There was no identification on the camera, no one around, and Eddy had not observed anyone surfing.

Eddy's sleuthing skills kicked in. He searched the Internet and social media for any "lost GoPro" posts, but he did not find any posts that matched.

Eddy next began looking at videos stored on the camera. He was able to make out a graduation shot from Cape Hatteras High School. He sent a text to the School Resource Officer with a picture of a young man holding a diploma (from the GoPro), and the young man was identified. The camera belonged to the young man's uncle who had been surfing near the village of Waves when he lost the camera (approximately 12 miles away from where it was found).

Eddy met the camera owner who was ecstatic to get his camera back, as well as the footage stored on the memory card. The camera owner gave Eddy a handwritten "Thank-you" note and requested that Eddy take a picture with him so that he could share the story.



The GoPro owner's face says it all as he stands with Federal Wildlife Officer Jay Eddy.

CRY WOLF! (continued from page 1)

- A one-hour program appropriate for audiences of all ages;
- A lively and entertaining visual presentation with video, audio, and more;
- Stunning video footage featuring wolves and interviews with wolf researchers;
- Exciting and accurate live story-telling about the 40,000-year relationship between humans and wolves;
- The science behind the story;
- The research behind the science;
- Live music;
- Drum-along and sing-along moments; and
- Reasons to gasp in horror, reasons to laugh in delight, and reasons to be hushed in wonder.

Heavy Equipment Training

Heavy Equipment Operator Bobby Govan (Alligator River) and Fire Equipment Operator Melvin Walston (Pocosin Lakes) recently held Heavy Equipment Training for six trainees at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. The trainees included staff and volunteers from area Refuges.

Right: Trainees learned how to attach implements to the tractor, credit USFWS/Jennings.

A Night at the Museum: Refuge Style

Volunteer John Jennings enjoys working at the information desk and Wild Things Gift Shop at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center. He loves interacting with visitors and staff.

On a recent weekend, he heard a loud crash inside the Gift Shop. A large stained-glass piece had fallen from the window and onto the floor. Fortunately, no damage occurred to the stained-glass.

But as it fell, it bounced off a display of miniature critters called *Good Luck Minis*. When John entered the Gift Shop, he encountered the multitude of critters appearing to be escaping!

It was reminiscent of a scene from "A Night at the Museum," where the people and critters come to life at night. After sorting them, he tucked them into their individual spaces and continued with his day.



Above: *Good Luck Minis*. at right: *Miniature critters appear to be escaping from their holder after toppling to the floor, credit USFWS.*



Visitor Center After-dark Educational Program to Begin

Visitor Services Specialist Cindy Heffley will be conducting a pilot program this fall which will be held in the exhibit hall at the National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. The exciting part about the program is that it will be held after dark! Participants will learn about nocturnal wildlife and have a chance to experience the exhibit hall with the lights out. Using flashlights, they will glimpse various animals and learn about their unique adaptations. More information about this program will be announced after the pilot is completed.





Boating and Lightning Safety! (Lesson to be Learned...)

The day started just like any boating day trip does in “downeast” North Carolina. Crossing the Pamlico Sound, Federal Wildlife Officers Justin Mulligan and Jerry (Donnie) Dance were on their way back across after a day of patrolling the waters adjacent to Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge.

What they didn't know? Storms were quickly approaching their direction. Zone Officer Frank Simms sent a warning text alerting the officers that storms would likely hit their location at approximately 3 pm. They started their 27-mile crossing well ahead of the anticipated storm's arrival.

At approximately 1 pm, while underway and in the middle of their crossing, a severe storm unleashed high winds and lightning on the officers. Suddenly they found themselves in 5-foot seas, high winds, and heavy rain. Officer Dance was standing in the back of the 25-foot Riddick Bay Rider when lightning struck. Dance stated he remembers reaching for the back of the leaning post when he saw a flash. The electricity passed through his body where he witnessed the electrical discharge leave his hand and go into the back of the seat. Officer Mulligan also saw electricity leave his hands and travel into the steering wheel.

To make matters worse, the Garmin chart-plotter quit working and wouldn't pick up any satellites. With no immediate GPS and only a compass at hand, Officers Mulligan and Dance navigated in rough seas and rain by compass back to the boat ramp. Neither sustained any injuries from the incident.

This article was written for one reason: To provide a real-life testimony and a reminder that conditions can change in an instant. Good job Justin and Donnie!!

Below are a couple tips if you find yourself in the same type of situation.

- Lower all antennas and downriggers.
- Disconnect all power, antenna, and interconnection cables to the electronics and electrical gear.
- Do not touch two metal surfaces at the same time (engine controls, a railing, helm, etc.).
- Be prepared to deploy an anchor to maintain the bow pointed into the wind/waves if power is lost.
- Move out of the area and head for the closest shore or safe area.

Stay safe! Stay alert! Stay alive!



Nags Head Elementary kindergartners learn about River Otters, credit: K. Morgan.

Local School Programs Underway

Schools are back in session in the area, and that can only mean one thing! Young Naturalist Clubs have begun. In addition to the year-round Preschool program at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center, Refuge staff and volunteers conduct programs for kindergartners and sixth-graders in area schools. A new after-school program started last year at the Stumpy Point Community Center and will continue again this year. Still in the planning stage, Refuge staff will be offering an after-school program for high school youth at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center in the near future. Volunteers are always welcome to help with these programs. If interested, contact 252/475 4180 or cindy_heffley@fws.gov.

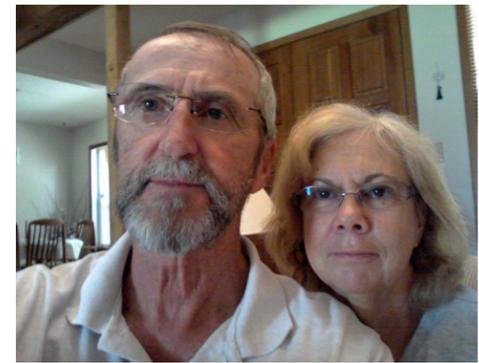
Wild Things Gift Shop

Looking for a unique gift that's sure to become a treasure? Trying to decide which field guide to purchase for your next trip?

Be sure to stop by the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society's gift shops. Wild Things is located at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center on Roanoke Island. There is also a gift shop at the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. The Shops offer a wide variety of nature-themed jewelry, clothing, books, games, toys, puzzles, and gift items. Your purchase helps support refuges.

Welcome RV Volunteers Roy and Wendy Gatewood

According to Roy and Wendy, "Wendy is from Kesgrave, Suffolk, United Kingdom (UK), and Roy is from Indiana. We met while Roy was stationed in the UK with the U.S. Air Force. We moved to Indiana after serving. In 1967, we were married in the UK. We have two children, both of whom are teachers - one high school and the other a middle school STEM teacher. We have three grandchildren - one in college, one in high school, and the third soon to be in middle school."



Roy retired from AT&T in 1998 and went to work for a small software firm which was acquired by HP. Roy retired from HP in 2012 and started an independent consulting firm.

Wendy has been a certified tax preparer for H&R Block since 1984. Roy was the Referee Liaison for the '94 World Cup and Results Manager for '96 Atlanta Olympics at the Orlando soccer venue. Wendy was a results coordinator for the '96 Olympics. We are currently semi-retired and enjoy traveling in our RV and have just begun our volunteering efforts."



Wildlife and Wildlands of Eastern North Carolina Art EXPO

Join us at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center on Friday, November 13, from 5 - 8 pm for the opening reception of the Fall Art EXPO. Refuge Manager Mike Bryant says he's proud to see the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "stepping out of the box." Bryant explained, "These Art Expos are a great example of partnership between a federal agency and the local community. Everyone benefits."



Bullfrog by Jason Rizzo

The reception, Art Expo, and admission to the Visitor Center are free and open to the public. Artwork will be exhibited in the 100-seat auditorium.

Artists for this show include photographers Mark East, Jason Rizzo, and Pat Draisey.

Artists interested in participating in future shows should contact Tammy Batschelet@fws.gov or call 252/473 1132 X 226 for more information.



Don't forget about a t-shirt for the kids and more treasures from our Wild Things Gift Shop!



Juvenile skimmer by Pat Draisey



Welcome Red Wolf Caretaker Intern Austin Merical

I was born on February 24, 1994, in Knoxville Tennessee. Ever since I can remember, I've been interested in large carnivores, particularly wolves and other Canids. So when I was offered the chance to come to the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge to work with the Red Wolf Recovery Program, I knew I couldn't pass it up. When I was a sophomore at Farragut High School, I began volunteering at the Knoxville Zoo mainly helping out at the Zoo's bird show. As soon as I found out about Zoo's Red Wolves and their incredible story, I became fascinated by them. So in order to increase public awareness, I set up an education station and began talking to Zoo guests about the wolves and their story. I was a volunteer throughout high school and continue to this day.

When I started my first year at Pellissippi State Community College, I did a study abroad in the Galapagos Islands and discovered that I loved travelling. Ever since that first trip out of the country, I have spent at least a month of every summer traveling to different parts of the world. My second trip out the country was on an African Wildlife Dog and Cheetah research trip in Namibia where I got to see some incredible things. I even got licked in the face by a cheetah! After my trip to Namibia, I came home and worked as an Intern in the Knoxville Zoo's Elephant Department where I worked with three African Elephants one of whom, Tonka, is the largest African Elephant in the United States! Last but not least, I recently spent a month and a half in Belize doing another study helping with Jaguar Research for Virginia Tech.

As of today, when I'm not traveling the world, back home in Knoxville I am a full-time student at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville studying Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences with a Management Concentration. Additionally, I work at the Animal Emergency, Critical Care, and Specialty Center as a Veterinary Technician in my home town of Farragut. Even though I have had a lot of incredible experiences and have gotten to see some unbelievable things, I never lost my fascination for Red Wolves and I am extremely grateful to be given the chance to work with these incredible animals in the wild!



Austin Merical, credit USFWS

Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society

Help from our Friends group, the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society, is more vital than ever to maintain our refuges. The Society funds transportation grants to bring children out onto the refuges and involve them with wildlife. Your donations help support these grants, as well as trail and sign maintenance and assistance for refuge staff.

You may help by donating to the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society. Any amount you can spare is appreciated. Send a check or go online to donate \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100 or more. If you prefer to make your tax-deductible donation over the phone, call us with your credit card information. Donors to the Society receive a 10% discount when shopping at our Refuges' gift shops.

Shopping in the Refuge gift shops is another great way to provide support. Both gift shops are fully-stocked with great wildlife-related books, field guides, hats, t-shirts, puzzles, puppets, jewelry, and much more. We thank you for your support!

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Wings

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



Wings Over Water October 20-25 and December 4-6, 2015

Register online <http://wingsoverwater.org/> or call 252-216-9464.

Here is a sampling of programs being offered. Registration is required.

Wildlife Sketching with John Sill

Wings Over Water offers wildlife sketching classes with nationally-known nature artist John Sill, and his wife and children's nature book author Cathryn Sill. Together they have co-authored and illustrated over

21 nature books including *About Mammals*, *About Birds*, *About Fish*, *About Wetlands* and others in the *About Habitats* series. John is a prize-winning wildlife artist and illustrator who won the American Birding Association's 2014 Artist of the Year for his illustration of the Rufous Hummingbird <http://johnsill.com>.

If you're a beginner, you'll learn the basics. If you're already an artist, John can help hone

your skills and craft. Friday, October 24 or Saturday, October 25, 2-4 pm National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center. Pencils, erasers, and sketchpads are provided.

Adapting to Natural Changes at Alligator River Refuge (NEW!)

Wings Over Water offers an important and fascinating local look at climate change. From saltwater intrusion to

increasing storm surge, the impacts of a changing climate are felt throughout Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. The Nature Conservancy, in partnership with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, is developing strategies to adapt to these impacts while helping maintain the natural beauty and function of the refuge. Come join Dr. Christine Pickens of The Nature Conservancy to learn about these adaptation strategies and see them in action first-hand at our joint Point Peter climate adaptation station.

This program, while focusing on Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, has practical application to any coastal community and for anyone interested in climate change and sea level rise information. Thursday, October 22, 9-10:30 am National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center.

Exploring Pine Island Audubon Sanctuary
The Pine Island Audubon Sanctuary is one of the gems of the region. Wings

Over Water offers special access to the various habitats of the 2600-acre Audubon Sanctuary. This guided walk, although focused on bird watching, will feature all the nature and history that the Pine Island Audubon Sanctuary has to offer. It's a 2-mile walk on solid terrain. Your leader, Robbie Fearn, is the Center Director at Pine Island Audubon Sanctuary. Wednesday, October 21st



Wild Turkey illustration by John Sill



WINGS OVER WATER
WILDLIFE FESTIVAL | OCT 20-25 2015
OUTER BANKS, NORTH CAROLINA

Wings Over Water t-shirts are available at the Refuge Gift Shops.

or Friday October 23, 8-11:00 am. Pine Island Audubon Sanctuary.

Pocosin Lakes Refuge Interpretive Boardwalk Plant Hike (NEW!)

Many plants are considered to be weeds by humans, but wildlife rely on them to survive. Join leader Bob Glennon to discover the importance of these plants. At first glance, the area along the Scuppernong River appears to be just a bottomland hardwood forest. Discover the importance of this diverse plant community. You'll learn about grasses, wildflowers, sedges, rushes, woody vines, and shrubs. This habitat supports a large number of species of waterfowl, songbirds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, bees, and butterflies. Wednesday, October 21, 10-12 noon. Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center.

2015 Fall/Winter 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 Pea Island Bird Walk 8-9:30 am

Year-round Fridays (except October 23)
May - September Wednesdays

Free Saturday Red Wolf Howling

November 7: 4:30-6 pm
December 5: 4:30-6 pm
Meet at Creef Cut Trail parking lot
(Milltail Road and Highway 64 west of Manns Harbor).

Saturday Tram Tours 9 am - 12 noon

October 10 November 14 December 12

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 and pay \$10 per person. Children 12 and under may register for free with one or more paying adults. Unreserved seats will be filled at no charge on a first-come/first-served basis on the morning of the tour. The program will occur except with lightning, heavy wind or rain, or impassable road conditions. Dress for the weather! 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 Mann Harbor).