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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

Congratulations to Scott Lanier, Department of the Interior Meritorious Service Award



Deputy Project Leader Scott Lanier and Regional Chief David Viker; credit USFWS

Scott Lanier, Deputy Project Leader for North Carolina Coastal Refuges Complex and Refuge Manager for Alligator River and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges, was honored on August 30 for outstanding leadership and contributions to Coastal North Carolina Refuges with the Department of the Interior’s Meritorious Service Award.

The Meritorious Service Award is the second highest career honor an employee can receive from the Department of the Interior. Lanier began his career in 1985 as a student trainee at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, which was followed by his first full-time position as an assistant manager at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. He has subsequently served at refuges across the southeast, including Alligator River, Tensas River, Wheeler Complex, and Carolina Sandhills and Pee Dee Complex. Lanier returned to eastern North Carolina in 2006 where he has played an

integral role in navigating numerous and complex challenges.

“Lanier has been pro-active in the establishment of exemplary partner relationships and a driving force in the successful leadership of refuges in eastern North Carolina,” read the award. “This has been especially evident in the building of partner relationships with agencies and organizations in the conservation community and with private landowners.” Lanier’s efforts were instrumental in the approval of a minor expansion of Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge that will help achieve the vision of connectivity between hundreds of thousands of acres of conservation land on the Albemarle Peninsula. “For his outstanding leadership and contributions to conservation through building relationships and working with other, Mr. Lanier is granted the Meritorious Service Award of the U.S. Department of the Interior.”

Deputy Refuge Manager Greg Boling Retires from U.S. Navy Reserve

Deputy Refuge Manager Greg Boling retired from the U.S. Navy Reserve on July 14, after 27 years of active and reserve service.

Senior Chief Boling’s duty stations during his career included the USS George Washington CVN-73, Naval Logistics and Support Group Forward, serving in Iraq and Kuwait in 2008, and most recently as Command Senior Enlisted Adviser of Operational Health Support Unit Camp Lejeune. Boling’s retirement ceremony was held at Navy Operational Support Center Charlotte, where he and his family were recognized for their service.

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Chris Trimmel, RV Volunteer, Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge

Chris is a retired Registered Nurse and has been full time RVer since the summer of 2016. In 2017, she started to Volunteer at state parks in Pennsylvania, New Mexico, Texas, and Delaware. Chris is enjoying seeing the United States while, giving back, meeting many different people, visiting places and learning new things every day. She enjoys doing crafts in her spare time.



Credit USFWS

Viewing Platform Installed on Pea Island

A platform that overlooks the two southernmost impoundments (New Field and South Ponds) was installed near Highway 12 on Pea Island. This will provide viewing/photography opportunities to areas that have historically been closed to the public. Visitors are reminded not to block gates while parking on the refuge and to follow all Area Closed signs.

Ken and Janice Merritt, RV Volunteers, Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge

Ken and Janice Merritt lived most recently in Mission, Texas. They are now full time RVers who volunteer at various wildlife refuges.

Ken worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for 30 years. His last posting was Project Leader for the South Texas Refuge Complex. Over his career, he served in wildlife biologist and refuge manager positions throughout the country. Janice worked as an elementary school teacher, primarily 4th grade, for over 20 years. She specialized in math and science.

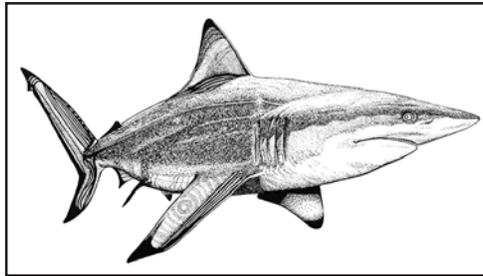
They have four grown daughters who live in Texas, Colorado, Massachusetts, and Mississippi. Ken and Janice like to hike, kayak, read, and bird.



Wings Over Water Art Exhibit and Reception

The Wings Over Water Art Exhibit Reception will be held Friday, October 19, from 5 to 8 pm at The National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center on Roanoke Island.

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 of the Visitor Center until January 2019. Artists interested in participating in future shows should send five images of their work or a link to their website that displays examples of their work, along with their biography to mary_grindlay@fws.gov or call Mary Grindlay at 252-473-1132 ext. 226 for more information.



Top left: Pen and Ink, Anne-Morgan Rice; top right: Photography, Michael Haggerty; left: Pen and Ink, Watercolor; Gordon Lewis

2018 WINGS OVER WATER WILDLIFE FESTIVAL



WHEN
October 16 thru 21
December 7 thru 9

WHERE
6 National Wildlife Refuges & 6
Northeastern North Carolina
Counties

FEATURING • Keynote speaker • George Armistead • Great trip & program leaders • Birds, bears, gators & more • Wildlife & Wildlands • Reasonable trip fees • Over 90 programs!

WWW.WINGSOVERWATER.ORG
252-216-9464

REGISTRATION ON-LINE - OPENS IN MAY

EAST COAST'S PREMIER WILD-LIFE FESTIVAL

Birding
Paddling
Photography
Natural History
Art



PARTNERS

U.S. Fish & Wildlife
Carolina Bird Club
National Park Service
Kitty Hawk Kayaks & Surf
School
Coastal Wildlife Refuge
Society

BENEFITING

Annual Fundraising Event
in Support of Regional
National Wildlife Refuges

Bird photo-Eve Turek
Bear photo-Jackie Orsulak

Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival and Encore

Wings Over Water is scheduled for October 16-21. The Encore Session is scheduled for December 7-9. Many trips are already full, but there are still a few waiting for you to join them! Visit www.wingsoverwater.org for more information and to register for trips.

Wings

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

Interpretive Programs Update



Credit: Orsulak/USFWS

Monthly Saturday Tram Tours continue throughout the fall and winter. Although the weather may be cooler, there is still a lot to see on the Alligator River Refuge. As migrating waterfowl begin to appear, the tram tours are a great way to sit back and relax while learning about the refuge and viewing hundreds of birds as they rest in the farm fields. Raptors are often seen soaring over the fields looking for their next meal. Sometimes visitors are treated to seeing a raptor snatch up a mouse or other critter. We never know what we'll see on the tour, but you're sure to enjoy being out in the open air. Tours are 9 am - 12 noon.

Saturday Red Wolf Howlings are a great way to learn about the Red Wolf Recovery Program and possibly get to hear the captive red wolves howl.

From fall through spring there is no fee for the Howling Program! This is a great opportunity for scouts and other organized youth groups to learn about the refuge and red wolves. After a short introduction, participants follow the guide to a closed area of the refuge and attempt to howl up the captive red wolves. Times vary due to changing of sunset times.

Friday morning bird walks are offered year-round at Pea Island. This is a great time to see a variety of birds while walking the North Pond Trail with an expert birder. Bird walks begin at 8 am and last approximately 90 minutes.

For more information, check out our program schedule at <https://www.fws.gov/ncgatewayvc/images/interp-schedule.pdf>.

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.

Your donation helps support local K-12 schools by assisting with educational programs and funding transportation grants for students and teachers to visit refuges and the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center. They also help to 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
PO Box 1808
Manteo, NC 27954

You may 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.

Summer Fun at Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge

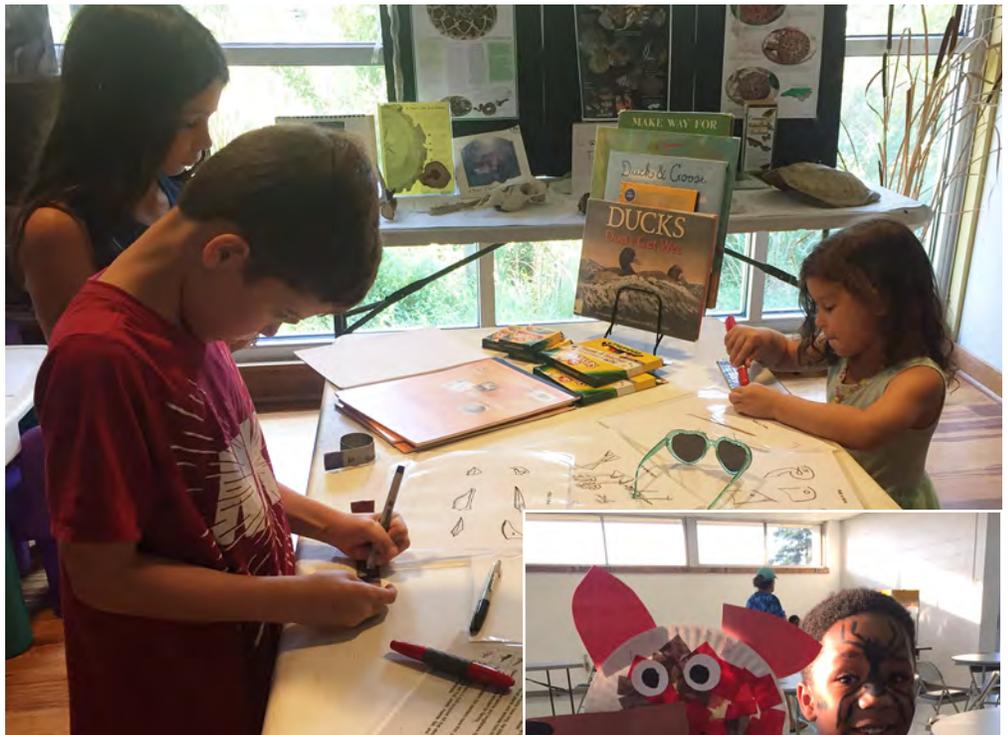
Submitted by Sarah Watts, Refuge Volunteer & Program Coordinator, North Carolina Wildlife Federation

It was certainly an exciting summer season this year at Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge! Thanks to a partnership with the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, the National Wildlife Refuge Association, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, new educational programs provided ways to learn about the refuge, its native wildlife, and the chance to see a red wolf up close.

Weekly red wolf programs were offered and held at the Red Wolf Education and Health Center in Columbia, NC. There, visitors are able to learn about what makes endangered red wolves so special, the species recovery efforts, and are given the chance to see the red wolves that are in residence.

There were also several special Saturday programs offered this summer as well. The “Pop-in Programs,” as they were called, covered a variety of topics and wildlife species from big black bears to tiny frogs. Visitors were invited to ask questions, interact with special demonstration items, and to participate in kid’s crafts and science experiments. The most popular program, Reptiles and Amphibians, even had a live corn snake visitors could touch. Staff also participated in a local “National Night Out” community event, where kids and families learned about red wolves and made red wolf masks to take home with them. What fun times we had!

June through September bustled with activity as over 6,000 people came to the refuge visitor center and over 400 people participated in refuge educational programs. Fall and winter are anticipated to be just as exciting, as we welcome in the migratory waterfowl and the change of seasons. So be sure to come out and visit Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge all year long!



Above: Children learn about waterfowl banding while doing a craft; right: Participant with a red wolf mask during National Night Out in Columbia; below: Visitors learn about reptiles and amphibians including a live corn snake, all credit: S. Watts

