

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT *YOUR* LOCAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES



Wednesday, March 14th – The National Wildlife Refuge System Celebrates Its 109th Birthday! Visit a refuge on this special day and see how magnificent these public lands are. Visit <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/> and check out this child-friendly video <http://www.archive.org/details/gov.fws.aws.2.2> to learn more.

ASSABET RIVER NWR

Visitor Center at 680 Hudson Road, Sudbury, MA.

Tours of the Visitor Center, every Saturday at 11am & Sunday at 2pm Take a guided tour of the building and exhibits and learn about our programs. Bring a friend or family that might never have been to the refuge or inside the visitor center.

Legislative Evening led by State Senator Jamie Eldridge: Wednesday, February 29th at 7pm Join us on leap day for a discussion with State Senator Eldridge of issues that concern the Assabet River NWR and neighboring open spaces. Of special concern is the act relative to land taking regulations (SB 1854), to be heard by the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture on July 21st. This legislation would severely impact the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act, one of the most important and effective environmental laws in the state. If you are a FARNWR member, an abutter of the Refuge, live in the local community, or interested in other NWRs in the area and have a question or a shared issue please bring them to the forum. (Inside the Visitor Center)

Waiting for Spring: Every Thursday and Friday in March at 10am Take a walk along our trails with Ranger Bill and search for signs of Spring. All ages are welcome; walks will begin at 10am and we'll travel appx. 1.5 miles total; we will return to the visitor center before noon time, weather permitting. Please wear appropriate clothing to be on hiking trails.

Refuge Fledgling Hour: Friday, March 23rd at 10:30am Nature themed program series that will include crafts, stories, and games that will relate to a different topic each month. **Programs will be held the 4th Friday of every month 10:30am – 11:30am for 2 to 5 year olds;** siblings welcome.

How Local is Native?: Wednesday, March 28th at 7pm Native plants are used more frequently from small backyard gardens to large-scale restoration of landscapes. How exactly do we define "native" ? Hear from Debbi Edelstein, Executive Director of the New England Wildflower Society as to the redefinition of what "native" means in terms of new insights provided by ecological science, plant genetics, and recent experiments. She will talk about the Society's plan to conserve and promote the regions native plants to ensure healthy, biologically diverse landscapes, the brand new "Flora of New England "and predictions about the effects of climate change on New England's plants and habitats present new challenges.

Introduction to Vernal Pools for Kids: Friday, March 30th from 3-4:30pm Kids will learn about what is so special about vernal pools and who lives in a vernal pool. After the indoors portion, we will go for a short explorative walk to a nearby vernal pool. Program will be open to 5 year olds and older; siblings welcome. Program will happen even with rain!

Save the Date! Nature Hike for Families Sunday, April 15th at 1:30pm (Rain Date Saturday, April 21st) Join refuge staff and one of our youth volunteer's for a 1.5 mile walk to explore the refuge and learn about local animals and habitats. This walk is being created and led by Arnav Mehra (co-founder of Supreme Animal League & refuge volunteer). It will include a presentation about the refuge, a light hike and followed by a social with light refreshments. Program geared towards 5-10 yr olds, siblings are welcome. Meet at the visitor center. There will be a small fee for registrants \$8 per a family – all proceeds go to the Friends to provide refuge support. Please pre-register by contacting Susan_J_Russo@fws.gov. Co-sponsored by the Friends of the Assabet River NWR.

(PLEASE TURN PAGE OVER FOR MORE PROGRAMMING INFORMATION)

Spring Historical Bus Tour: Sunday, May 20th at Noon Join Maynard Historian Paul Boothroyd for our popular bus tour of the historical sites of the Assabet River NWR. Visit sites dating back to Native Americans, Washington and the War of Independence, and World War II for many entertaining stories and anecdotes. Tickets at \$9.00 per person in advance only. Reserve your space early by calling Paul Boothroyd at (978) 835-4515. Tickets go on sale March 1, 2012.

OXBOW NWR

Entrance: Still River Depot parking lot (at end of Depot Road in Harvard, MA)

For questions about programs, contact Rona Balco, President of Friends of Oxbow NWR, 978-779-2259 or Ada at awoolston1@yahoo.com

Birds of Prey at Ayer Town Hall: Saturday, March 3rd at 10am Tom Ricardi, a wildlife biologist and licensed rehabilitator, will bring live birds from his Massachusetts Birds of Prey Rehabilitation Facility. The program will focus on the birds being presented, the rehabilitation of injured or sick raptors, and their breeding. Adults and children are encouraged to come. Donations are strongly recommended. Located at Ayer Town Hall, 1 Main St, Ayer, MA

Whose tracks are these?: Sunday, March 4th at 1pm How can you spot mammals in winter? Nashaway Trackers members, Susan Fly and Donna Mackie, are experts at reading all kinds of signs. They will give you the chance to become a mammal detective. Looking at clues in the snow. Mud or elsewhere, we analyze what we see and make the most educated guesses, taking into account the habitat and location as well. Clues include tracks, scat, hair, broken or gnawed branches and other telling facts. Dress warmly; we will be walking slowly. Bring a snack, some water, and snowshoes if there is deep enough snow. Children are welcome. *To make a reservation, please contact Rona or Ada. Sponsored by Friends of the Oxbow NWR.*

Vernal Pools: Thursday, March 8th at 6:30pm There will be two vernal pool programs which will be free and open to people of all ages. The first one will take place at the **Shirley Public Library** and the second one, a field trip, will be at an appropriate vernal pool somewhere nearby yet to be finalized. Since what happens in vernal pools depends on the weather, and the winter has been mild so far, we cannot predict when **Big Night** will take place and what day would be good to explore the pools. Events sponsored by The Friends of the Oxbow NWR, co-sponsored by the Shirley Conservation Commission. Shirley Library is located at 3 Keady Way, Shirley, MA

GREAT MEADOWS NWR

Concord Impoundments on Monsen Road, off Rte. 62 in Concord, MA

Nature Walk: A Sense of Place at Great Meadows NWR (Concord): Sunday, March 18th from 3-5pm A continuing series of monthly walks exploring the landscape, plants, and seasonal wonders of Great Meadows NWR in Concord. March brings the water element back to Great Meadows and the Concord landscape. Muskrats emerge, redwings return, birdsong fills the air, and fattening maple buds bring a red haze to the floodplain forest. Join us in an exploration of spring's early awakening. *No pre-registration required. A \$5/person voluntary donation will be gratefully accepted.* Led by Cherrie Corey, local naturalist and photographer; *Co-sponsored by Musketaquid Arts and Environment Program and Friends of Assabet River NWR.* For questions, email cherrie.corey@verizon.net or call 978-760-1933 <http://sense-of-place-concord.blogspot.com/>

REMINDER: PETS ARE NOT ALLOWED ON THE REFUGES

Contact Us:

680 Hudson Road Sudbury, MA 01776 978-562-3527

Facebook: Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge and Twitter.com/assabetrivernwr

<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/easternmanwrcomplex>

Friends of Assabet River: <http://www.farnwr.org/>

Friends of Oxbow: <http://www.friendsoftheoxbownwr.org/>

