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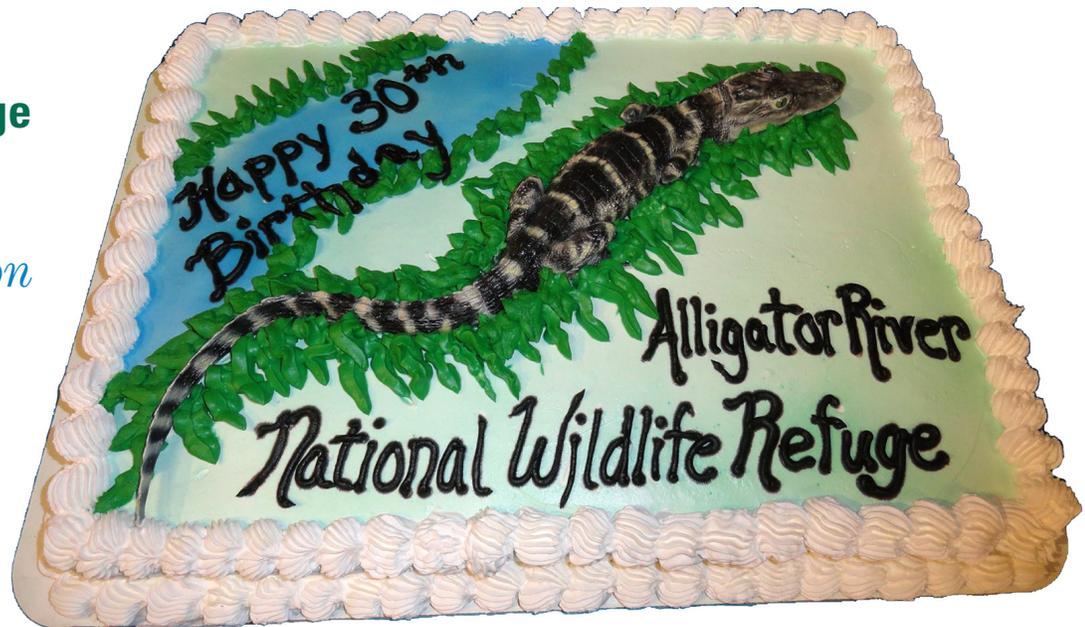


News from the Coastal North Carolina National Wildlife Refuges Complex

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

Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge Celebrates 30 Year Anniversary

In 1984, a large section of Mainland Dare County in North Carolina was set aside as Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. While many refuges are set aside as habitat for specific species of wildlife, Alligator River refuge was set aside to conserve and protect the pocosin habitat which is so vital to many types of plant and animal communities.



Two years later, this land would become the site for re-establishment of a red wolf population in the wild – the first wild population of red wolves since the late 70s. (See article on page 5 for related story.)

On Friday, March 28, 2014 folks gathered at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center auditorium to hear tales about life in Buffalo City, a legendary logging community located on present-day refuge property. After an introduction by Visitor Services Manager Bonnie Strawser, author Suzanne Tate and two former residents of Buffalo City entertained a crowd of 50+ people with “tales of Buffalo City.” Tate wrote *Logs and Moonshine: Tales of Buffalo City, NC* which includes interviews with many former Buffalo City residents.

Former residents Julia Haywood and Coy Ambrose took the audience back to the early 1930s with stories of childhood games and a community that depended on each other during a time before television and computers. Mr. Ambrose brought his father’s album full of historic, annotated photos of days gone by.

Afterward, local Stumpy Point resident Sandy Semans shared her more recent tales of living in one of the refuge’s neighboring communities. One of her most memorable stories involved a tourist driving by and stopping to ask to use the phone to call 911. He thought a black bear had escaped and wanted to report it to the authorities. The evening included a birthday cake, complete with an alligator on top.

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Spotlight on Ken Wynne

Kenneth Raynor Wynne Jr. was a teacher from 1957 to 1964 and a School Principal in Chesterfield County, Virginia from 1964 until August 1993. He and his wife Beth moved to the Outer Banks of North Carolina in October of 1993. Ken first volunteered at the Baum Senior Center with Senior Olympics, and he and Beth volunteered delivering meals to seniors with the Nutrition program until 1998. It was then, reports Beth, that Ken read an article in the local newspaper indicating that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service needed volunteers, and he “answered the call,” as Beth puts it, and began volunteering at the Pea Island Visitor Center.

In 1999, Ken and Beth served on a mission for their church for two years in Las Vegas, Nevada. Shortly after returning to the Outer Banks, Ken resumed his volunteer service with the refuge. Several years later Ken and Beth served on another church mission for a year and a half but as soon as they returned, he was right back to volunteering for the refuge.

Ken’s wife Beth jokes that he has worked so faithfully and often at the Pea Island Visitor Center that at one time she contemplated suing the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for “alienation of affection.”

“Ken loves working with all of you guys,” reports Beth. “He comes home telling me about the visitors that he has met. When the new National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center opened in Manteo, he was stopping people all over the place and telling them that it was a must-stop while they were here on the Outer Banks. It didn’t matter whether they were locals or visitors; he wanted to share his excitement.”



Project Leader Mike Bryant presents Ken Wynne with the Volunteer of the Year Award.

We have all grown to love Ken, who has long been a loyal and enthusiastic member of our volunteer team, accumulating over 4000 hours of service. We can never thank him enough for his devotion to the refuge.



Visit to Eastern North Carolina by the Okefenokee Wildlife League

by Bob Glennon

The Okefenokee Wildlife League is the Friends’ group that supports Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge just as the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society assists Alligator River and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges.

Each year for the last few years, members of the League have visited other refuges to develop an appreciation of their volunteer recruitment and coordination, visitor center management, and education and interpretive programs. They visited Eastern North Carolina during the week of February 17.

They met with the staff of the refuges and the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society on Wednesday to discuss how we manage our operations here in North Carolina. The Society Board of Directors hosted them at a dinner on Wednesday evening at which time they met and discussed the activities of the Society.

At Pea Island they saw the beach and dune ecosystems, walked North Pond Trail through the maritime shrub community and viewed the

moist soil vegetation management areas from the trail. They were especially impressed with the variety, organization, and arrangement of products for sale in the visitor center’s gift shop. At Alligator River, they followed the Wildlife Drive and saw the moist soil vegetation management areas, tundra swans and a variety of ducks, the maintenance area and specialized equipment for fighting fires and conducting tram tours, the helicopter landing pad, the filter strips and crop fields, and the OnCell posts. They walked the Sandy Ridge Trail.

Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Services Specialist Sherryreed Robinson opened the visitor center for the League members, and they viewed the exhibits before walking the boardwalk along the Scuppernong River. At Mattamuskeet, they took a long, slow ride around the impoundment near the entrance road and watched the tundra swans and took lots of photos. They visited the office and exhibit area and the grounds around the Mattamuskeet Lodge.

Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge provided their large van for the tours. The group was happy with every local restaurant where they ate! The League members stayed at the intern bunkhouse in South Nags Head and were pleased with the accommodations. It was a very informative and productive trip for the Okefenokee Wildlife League.

Message from Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society: We Need Help!

You've read and heard about it on the news: the budget for the federal government is tight. Since last year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service budget is no exception.

Help from Friends' groups such as the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society is more vital than ever to maintain our refuges. The Society funds transportation grants to get children out onto the refuge and involved with wildlife. Interpretive programs, such as Red Wolf Howlings, Bear Necessities, refuge tram and canoe tours, and the new refuge tour by van need funding to support interns and equipment.

You can help out by donating to the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society! Any amount you can spare is appreciated. Send a check or go on-line 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, as well as refuge volunteers, a 10% off discount when shopping at our refuges' gift shops. Shopping at the gift shops at the refuge Visitor Centers is another great way to support refuges. Both gift shops are fully-stocked with great wildlife-related books, field guides, hats, t-shirts, puzzles, puppets, jewelry and much more.

Thank you for your support!

Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society
P.O. Box 1808
Manteo, NC 27954
252/216 9464
<http://coastalwildliferefuge.com/index.html>



Young Naturalist Program participants from First Flight and Manteo Middle Schools



The best way to learn about sea turtles and their shells is to wear one!



Digital Camera Scavenger Hunt on Creef Cut Trail

Education and Outreach Update

Visitor Services staff and volunteers were busy over the winter providing educational and entertaining activities for the Young Naturalist Programs. The refuge focuses on three specific age groups: preschool, kindergarten, and sixth-grade. The preschool program is held on Friday mornings at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center. Each week, children and their caretakers spend an hour learning about wildlife. The program includes a story, craft, and nature trail walk.

The "Kindergarten Clubs" are based in Dare County Schools. All kindergarteners at elementary schools in Manteo, Nags Head, and Kitty Hawk welcome staff and volunteers each month as they learn about specific critters and their habitats. Programs include a lesson, a craft activity and some sort of hands-on wildlife-related experience.

The 6th Grade Young Naturalist Program is also club-based and takes place at First Flight and Manteo Middle Schools during the school day. Each month, staff visits the two schools and shares time with the club members who have chosen to spend their enrichment period learning about wildlife.

As part of the Program, students from both schools join together for a field trip in April. Teams of students, which consist of a mix of both schools, are given digital cameras to conduct a photo-scavenger hunt. This is done to show students how to document wildlife and natural objects. The students enjoy interacting with their peers from the other school and learning about the refuge. The second part of the field trip is conducted at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center where students explore the exhibits and the nature trail.

Wings Over Water Keynote Speaker Announced

On Saturday, October 25th at 6 pm, *Wings Over Water* will host the Keynote reception and dinner at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center on Roanoke Island. Associate Editor of *Birding Magazine* Noah Strycker will provide the keynote presentation entitled, *Bird World: Insights for Humans From the Amazing Lives of Birds*.

Birds aren't people, but just how different are they from us?

They have the same basic requirements we do: food, shelter, reproduction.

And they can do some amazing things! Approaching bird behavior from new and surprising angles, Strycker explores the astonishing homing abilities of pigeons, extraordinary memories of nutcrackers, self-image in magpies, life-long loves of albatrosses, particle physics of starling flocks, and other mysteries - revealing why birds do what they do, and how we can relate. With humor and wit, and drawing deep from cutting-edge science and anecdotes from the field, Strycker's presentation will leave you with renewed inspiration about our close connections with birds. You won't want to miss this fascinating talk. Dinner and drinks will be provided by Kelly's Restaurant.

Strycker, 28, is a well-known writer and 'bird man.' His photography and articles have appeared in many major birding magazines, as well as in books and other media. He writes regularly for the American Birding Association's blog. Strycker has studied birds on six continents with field seasons in Panama,



Birdman, Noah Strycker among Adelie Penguins, Antarctica

Costa Rica, Ecuador, Hawaii, Maine, Michigan, Australia, Antarctica, the Galapagos Islands, and the Farallon Islands. His "life list" is approaching 2,500 species. He also works as a naturalist/guide on expedition cruises to Antarctica and Norway's Svalbard archipelago, literally spreading the inspiration of birds from pole to pole.

His first book, *Among Penguins: A Bird Man in Antarctica*, was published in 2011 (Oregon State University Press). Strycker's latest project, *The Thing with Feathers: The Surprising Lives of Birds and What They Reveal About Being Human*, is a book about the fascinating behaviors of birds and was released March 20, 2014 (Riverhead Books).

Strycker is also a competitive tennis player, has run five marathons, and, in 2011, hiked the entire 2,650 mile Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada. He is based in Oregon, where his backyard has hosted more than 100 species of birds.

More Programs with Noah Strycker

Besides his keynote presentation, Strycker will be leading two other programs. On Wednesday October 22 from 8-11 am, Noah will be leading a field trip entitled, *Bare-naked Birding with Noah Strycker*. Leave your binoculars and field guide at home! 'Bare-naked birding' — birding without gear or even a car — is gaining in popularity among birders who are discovering the rewards of relying on their own eyes, ears, and other senses to watch and identify birds.

Join this bird walk for an introduction to the world of intuitive birding. By focusing on features such as behavior, vocalizations, posture, habitat, and position in the habitat, you will learn to really see and appreciate the birds around you.

Also on Wednesday October 22, from 6-7:30 pm, Strycker will be in the auditorium at the beautiful National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center on Roanoke Island, presenting a program suitable for the entire family entitled, *Among Penguins: A Birdman in Antarctica*. What is it like to spend three months in a colony of 300,000 penguins - with no fresh food or shower, living in a tiny tent in Antarctica? Noah Strycker spins tales from the end of the world in this lively presentation, delving into the things you don't typically see on nature documentaries: thousand-year-old penguin mummies, how to catch a baby penguin, and the wonders of the pee bottle.

Months after graduating with his undergraduate degree, Strycker was helicoptered into a remote Antarctic field camp as part of a long-term research study on Adélie Penguins. He became an authority on these personable birds, and soon found himself caught by the great allure of Antarctica - where life is distilled into necessities and incredible moments. Even if you never visit the coldest continent, Strycker's stories will pique your senses of curiosity and adventure, and, by the end of this talk, you'll be a cocktail expert on penguins.

You may register for any or all of these programs plus nearly 95 others at the Wings Over Water website: <http://wingsoverwater.org> Registration opens the end of April.

New Public Interpretive Programs Scheduled for Summer!

Come out and learn about tracking wildlife in our new program, “Who Goes There?” If you are interested in pollinators, maybe you’d like to check out, “Bees, Bats, and Butterflies.” Both are being offered at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center on Roanoke Island.

Due to the New Inlet being closed by NC DOT while the new “short bridge” is being constructed, a few of our programs have been relocated. The Pea Island Canoe Tours will be leaving from the west side of North Pond (meet at the Pea Island Visitor Center). The “Soundside Adventure” program will be conducted on National Park Service land at the Roanoke Island side of the Old Manns Harbor Bridge (near the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center US Highway 64).

Check our website for the new program calendar and directions: www.fws.gov/alligatorriver/spec.html. You may print it, or scan the QR code and save it on your portable device! For information on any of our programs, contact Cindy Heffley at cindy_heffley@fws.gov or 252/475 4180.

Enjoy your National Wildlife Refuges!

Over 400 species of birds live on or pass through Alligator River and Pea Island Refuges. The wildlife abundance and diversity attracts thousands of birding enthusiasts, photographers, and artists each year.

The refuges also have a wide variety of other wildlife. Critters you may see include alligators, raccoons, wood ducks, deer, and one of the most visible populations of black bear east of the Mississippi River.

Red Wolf Recovery Program Update

Background: In March 1984, a large parcel of land in Dare County was set aside to become Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. Included in that parcel was land formerly of Buffalo City, an old lumber town once inhabited by 900+ people. Alligator River Refuge is the location of the initial restoration efforts for the Red Wolf Recovery Program.

In 1987—just three years after the refuge was established—four breeding pairs of red wolves were released onto the refuge. As a sign of early success in the program, the first pups were born in the wild the following spring. Additional releases (facilitated by successful captive breeding efforts across the country), intensive monitoring, and the establishment of partnerships in the local community have allowed the restored population of red wolves to expand west from this refuge to include approximately 110 wolves occurring over a five-county area in eastern North Carolina. Collaboration between the refuge and the Red Wolf Recovery Program has served as a model for restoration of other controversial endangered carnivores including gray wolves, African wild dogs, and black-footed ferrets.

In addition to the wild red wolves, there is also a captive breeding facility on the refuge. This facility currently has four full-time captive residents: one breeding pair, and two adult females. The three females were transferred from Virginia Living Museum (Newport News, VA) in 2007 (one born in 2006, and two sisters born in 2007). The breeding male was born at Henson Robinson Zoo (Springfield, IL) in 2007 and transferred from North Carolina Zoo (Asheboro, NC) in 2010. The breeding pair had their first litter of pups in 2013 (one of which was fostered into the wild). We’re hoping for more pups this year—stay tuned!



A collared red wolf soon after being released during a recent health check up.

Reopening of Visitor Center at Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge

Come on out! We would love to see you! The Walter B. Jones Sr. Center for the Sounds will be opening its doors again on Friday, April 4th after a long, cold winter. We welcome visitors to come see this hidden gem in small town Columbia, North Carolina and experience one of the most fascinating and beautiful parts of eastern North Carolina. Take a look at our unique exhibits, watch our 12-minute refuge video, or take a stroll along our Interpretive Boardwalk for wildlife viewing along the Scuppernong River. The Visitor Center will be open from 9 am to 4 pm on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from April through November.

The Visitor Center has a newly established gift shop with fun and educational items to help you remember your visit or to take home for someone special as a souvenir. Drop by and see all the new items!

As always, we are seeking friendly faces to volunteer at the Visitor Center. If you enjoy people and have a few hours to contribute now and then, we’ll provide everything else you need. Contact Tracey Rock at tracey_rock@fws.gov or call 252/473 1131 X 227.

Wings over Water October 21-26

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
www.fws.gov/alligatorriver

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



The Spring Wildlife/Wildlands Art Expo at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center on Roanoke Island features varied artists from the Raleigh/Durham Chapter of the Colored Pencil Society of America. For more information, contact Susie Kowlok at 252/473 1131 ext 226 or susan_kowlok@fws.gov.

Looking Ahead April-June 2014

\$=fee R=reservation required

Program	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Meeting Location
Open-air Tram Tour \$(R)	8:30-11 am				Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge Creef Cut Trail Parking Lot
Bees, Bats, and Butterflies	2:30-3:30 pm				National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center Roanoke Island
Turtle Talk	2:30-3:30 pm				Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center
PI Bird Walk		8-9:30 am		8-9:30 am	Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center
AR Van Tour \$(R)		Sunrise-10 am			Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge Creef Cut Trail Parking Lot
AR Canoe Tour \$(R)		9 am-noon	10 am-noon	9 am-noon	Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge Buffalo City Boat Launch
PI Canoe Tour \$(R)		10 am-noon	9 am-noon	10 am-noon	Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center
Bird Adaptations		2:30-3:30 pm			Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center
Bear Necessities		5:30-7 pm			Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge Creef Cut Trail Parking Lot
Red Wolf Howling (\$)		7:30-9 pm			Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge Creef Cut Trail Parking Lot
Who Goes There?			2:30-3:30 pm		National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center Roanoke Island
Soundside Adventure			2:30-3:30 pm		Parking Lot at the foot of the Umstead Bridge (Old Manns Harbor Bridge) on Roanoke Island
Preschool Young Naturalist Program				10-11 am	National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center Roanoke Island

Call 252/216 9464 for reservations and more information