

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Alligator River/Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge  
P. O. Box 1969  
Manteo, North Carolina 27954

Contact: Bonnie Strawser - 252-473-1131



[Back to News Home Page](#)

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## News Release

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Explore the wild side of the Outer Banks of North Carolina

The Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival, a six-day celebration of the wild side of the Outer Banks region of North Carolina, is set for Nov. 6 through Nov. 11. Birding, natural history, decoy carving, photography and paddling are just some of the events planned for the festival which spans Veteran's Day weekend. The region offers some of the country's best paddling for canoe and kayak enthusiasts. From tannin-fed cypress swamps to endless marsh mazes, it is possible to paddle the region for a lifetime yet still study charts at night, discovering unexplored areas.

Registration currently is open for an assortment of water trips escorted by leaders who are familiar with the various areas. Physical demands range from open water with wind exposure, to short distances with excellent wind protection.

Several different paddling trips are planned and include the Kitty Hawk Bay Sunset Kayak Tour that will allow participants to enjoy a classic Carolina sunset over the bay while navigating through tall cord grass fields and listening for the mysterious sounds of the night marsh.

For the adventurous, The Maze is the perfect choice. Slip silently through the labyrinth of marsh creeks and search for rails, ibis, herons, egrets, raccoons, and other salt marsh wildlife.

The Backcountry Expedition combines "off-road" four-wheel-drive and kayaking into an eco-tour that explores 30 miles of beach and backcountry lanes by SUV to paddle the northern Currituck waterways from inside the Spanish Mustang Reserve. Trained naturalists discuss local ecology, history and shore life.

Upper Miltail Creek Canoe Trip allows canoeists to explore the narrow, winding creek through the heart of Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. Sheltered paddling gives participants a close look at the wildlife that calls the Refuge home, including Pileated Woodpeckers, river otter, and a variety of reptiles and amphibians.

And the Scuppernon River Canoe Trip, led by a ranger from Pettigrew State Park, allows participants the opportunity to learn

about the features of this unique water body that is home to a variety of rare species, including Atlantic white cedar and Red-cockaded woodpeckers.

This festival is traditionally set during the "shoulder season" when rates are lower for accommodations, traffic is light and the weather is mild.

To learn more about the Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival call 252-441-8144 or go to [www.wingsoverwater.org](http://www.wingsoverwater.org).