

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Alligator River/Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge
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News Release

First Flight Middle School's Junior Refuge Friends Group to Visit Pea Island

The Junior Refuge Friends group at First Flight Middle School has had quite an exciting year! Back in September, they visited Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge to try their hands at paddling canoes, and they explored the blackwater swamps of the refuge. At their monthly meetings during the school year, they've learned about refuges across the country, bears, red wolves, adaptations, sea turtles, fire, and lots of other things from a variety of refuge staff, volunteers, and Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society members. At their most recent meeting, Abbey Reibel had them out in the school yard, identifying tracks (that mysteriously appeared all over the school yard!!) and making casts of the tracks.

Their grand finale for the year will be a trip to Pea Island on May 25 to establish three bird feeder stations, including a watering station with bird bath and drip system. While they're on the refuge, they'll learn what poisonous plants occur and identify and mark them on the wildlife trail. Afterwards, refuge staff will either cut the plants or treat them with herbicide for public safety.

The Junior Refuge Friends group at First Flight Middle School is completing its second year. For the 2008-2009 school year, the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society is partnering with the refuge to expand this program to include all middle schools in both Dare and Tyrrell Counties.

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Volunteer Coordinator Abbey Reibel and Intern Willy Thompson taught students at First Flight Middle School how to identify animals by their tracks.



Though the students didn't actually see the deer, red wolves, otters, bobcats, and other wildlife in the school yard, they were able to identify them by the tracks they found!