

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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## News Release

October 8, 2010

### **Outer Banks of North Carolina offers photography, birding, paddling, and more**

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. 9 through 14.

As always, the festival includes a wide variety of programs and this year -- due to popular demand -- there are an increased number of photography programs to be taught by professionals. Classes have been designed for both the skilled and not-so-practiced, as well as some programs for children and/or families.

Birding, natural history, and paddling are just some of the other types of programs planned for the festival which spans Veteran's Day weekend.

The regions 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.

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.

Nature photographers who want to improve their skills can join Mark Buckler, winner of several prestigious nature photography awards. Buckler, also a professional photographer, will show participants how to catch the morning light while exploring for wading birds, fall migrant songbirds,

waterfowl and shorebirds.

Award winning photographer Mike Halminski will welcome participants into his gallery before taking them on a field trip to the beach to look for flocks of shorebirds. Focus will be on feeding and flight behavior of individual and flocks of birds.

Families wanting to make photography a family activity will enjoy a photo workshop with Lori Cash who will go through the basic techniques of digital nature photography. One of Lori's programs will be held at the historic Island Farm on Roanoke Island. And these programs are priced so that families can have a great time without breaking the bank.

This year's keynote dinner will be held in the North Carolina Aquarium on Roanoke Island. Catered by Kelly's Restaurant, the keynote address will be presented by Bill Thompson, a guitarist with The Swinging Orangutangs and an author of several birding and nature books. The cost of the keynote dinner is \$35 and registration is required. Dinner includes beer, wine and non-alcohol beverages.

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 252-216-9464 or go to [www.wingsoverwater.org](http://www.wingsoverwater.org).



The Island Farm allows visitors to step back in time to more than a 150 years ago. The history of the restored site is a snap shot that provides a unique perspective of island life in the mid-1800s.  
Photo by Melodie Leckie.