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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

The Legend… the Legacy: Bruce Creef

After more than 42 years of government service, Alligator River Maintenance Supervisor Bruce Creef retired as 2014 rolled in. Bruce graduated from Manteo High School and joined the U.S. Coast Guard in 1970, and, but for a short break in 1974, has been a public servant since that time. He began work for the USFWS at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge in April, 1975.

In those days, refuge employees did it all.

Bruce managed the ponds, banded the ducks, built the dikes and sheds, patrolled for sea turtle nests, and talked with school groups. He reported for work daily at Pea Island for ten years. When Alligator River was established in the mid-80's, he was able to merge his two loves: Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge and the Dare County mainland, where he had grown up deer hunting, fishing, and adventuring into areas tourists never even knew existed.

Bruce was a professional in every sense of the word.

He was a leader, not just on refuges in eastern North Carolina, but in the USFWS across the region and the country. He led, not only with experience, but with a deep wisdom that was well-recognized. He had the ear of Refuge supervisors, Regional Directors and even the Director of the USFWS. Bruce was instrumental in bringing refuge maintenance programs into the technological era and helping the agency view maintenance workers as the true professionals they are. He led the nation in training and safety improvements for refuge employees. In general, Bruce is well-respected – the USFWS icon for a Maintenance Professional, and his counsel has been coveted by many.

Since retirement, Bruce has enjoyed time with his family, especially his dad and his grandchildren. He works 4-5 days a month as a contractor for Ducks Unlimited, mostly on refuge projects, but some on work they are doing on state gamelands. He continues to keep watch over the refuges he loves as a refuge volunteer, helping where he can.

Angela Elmore (now Noffsinger), Biotech; Bonnie Woodall (now Strawser), Outdoor Recreation Planner; and Bruce Creef, Maintenance worker at Pea Island banding ducks – early 1980s, credit USFWS

Staff photo from the 1978 Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge Annual Narrative Report

Bruce Creef with his current focus: granddaughters Rylie and Bailey (and others!), credit USFWS

The USFWS and the National Wildlife Refuge System were blessed to have Bruce Creef as an employee. He leaves a legacy of wildlife conservation in eastern North Carolina.

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Volunteer: Spotlight on Gail Dreis

Gail Dreis, President of the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society and resident of Roanoke Island, has served on the board for more than six years. This recently-retired middle school teacher from the Dare County Schools has chaired the Grant Proposal Committee and has encouraged teachers from Dare and surrounding counties to apply for educational grants awarded by the Society. Leading by example, Dreis founded and hosted **The Environmental Club: Junior Friends of the Refuge** at First Flight Middle School. For more than seven years, the club was dedicated to familiarizing students with Alligator River and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges. The club hosted refuge interpreters who educated the youth about the wildlife found at each refuge and their environments. October's meeting was always a canoe paddle at Sawyer Lake with members and their families.

When asked why she joined the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society, Dreis commented, "I have enjoyed paddling the waters of each refuge, and walking the trails with my family. I want to make sure that children of Dare County have the opportunity to discover these unique resources for themselves and their families."

If you happen to be on the north end of Roanoke Island on a Wednesday afternoon stop by the Coastal North Carolina National Wildlife Refuges Gateway Visitor Center and get the grand tour from one of our most enthusiastic volunteers. Gail Dreis has a history in education and in sharing her knowledge and passion for wildlife and their habitats with the students of Dare County and she would love to share it with you. We are blessed to have her volunteering with us, credit: USFWS.

Welcome Red Wolf Recovery Program Intern Jeremy Martin, May – August 2014

Credit Jeremy Martin/USFWS

The Red Wolf Recovery Program Intern is responsible for a variety of duties related to the Red Wolf Recovery Program. In addition to those duties, the intern assists with refuge programs and maintenance needs.

Jeremy Martin was born and raised in Saint Louis, Missouri. Always having a fascination and love for animals, he began volunteering in the Saint Louis Zoo's teen volunteer program, Zoo ALIVE, when he was sixteen. This volunteer work soon led to a paid position in the education department at the Zoo, which he worked in for six years. He wrote, planned, and instructed various programs, from summer camp and overnights to holiday puppet shows and scout days. More recently, he is a seasonal keeper in the carnivore unit. In this position he worked with bears, otters, red pandas, bush dogs, and other species.

Jeremy previously interned at the Endangered Wolf Center in Saint Louis County, a facility that houses Mexican gray wolves, African painted dogs, maned wolves, swift foxes, and of course red wolves! He was very eager to work with red wolves again at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge! After interning at the Refuge, Jeremy will go back to zookeeping at the Saint Louis Zoo.

Eventually, he would like to volunteer with the Cheetah Conservation Fund and the Andean Bear Conservation Project as well. Following these adventures he plans to return to school to earn his Master's degree. Jeremy graduated from the University of Missouri-Saint Louis in May of 2013 with a Bachelor of Science in biology and a certificate in conservation biology. In his free time, Jeremy enjoys bird watching, hiking, reading books, and, being from the Millennial generation, of course watching some TV and perusing the internet.

Welcome to our new Visitor Center and Gift Shops Manager Tammy Batschelet! During one of her first few weeks here, she participated in pelican banding with John Weske and others. They banded over 1500 birds! Credit: USFWS

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, receive 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

Crews moved the fire along a path on Cape Hatteras National Seashore land near Bodie Island.

Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge Fire Crew Assists Cape Hatteras National Seashore with Prescribed Burn

According the Fire Management Officer Bert Plante, a cooperative burn in South Nags Head went very well on April 27.

"The National Park Service agrees that our success is directly related to the interagency cooperation provided during the burn. The burn could not have been done without the pair of marshmasters and crew supplied by the USFWS."

Maintenance staff and Fire Crew also participated in an extensive clearing on National Park Service land to create fire lanes on nearby land.

Susie Kowlok has migrated to the National Park Service. It was a very sad day when Susie decided to move across the street and wear the Smokey Bear hat of the National Park Service. We miss her very much! Susie is pictured here with her grandson Luke, credit: Lauren Romack.

Welcome Summer General Refuge Interns at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge

General Interns at Alligator River refuge are exposed to all program areas. These interns conduct guided interpretive programs, provide general maintenance, and conduct a variety of biological surveys/duties. This gives the interns a true taste of what all is involved in managing a refuge.

Jacob Mills

I am 22-years-old and my hometown is Mooresville, NC. I graduated from Appalachian State University with a BS degree in Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Biology. I have always had an interest in the environment and animals and am looking forward to this opportunity. I have a dog named Tucker (part Basset hound and Lab). I enjoy working out at the gym, watching movies, reading and playing video games. I have a laid back personality and am very easy to get along with. I look forward to meeting everyone and appreciate this chance to start my career.

Anton Joubert

Anton Joubert enjoys what nature has to offer and aspires to become a Wildlife Biologist. I graduated from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with a Bachelor's of Science in Biology, and a concentration in environmental. I have always had a passion for the outdoors and am proud to be an Eagle Scout. Over the years I have participated in many adventures including backpacking, fishing, kayaking, and camping activities. There is nothing more satisfying than hiking an extra mile or two to take in a spectacular view. Having completed my Biology degree, and a diploma in Wildlife and Forestry Conservation through Penn Foster, I wish to further expand my knowledge through education and experience in the related fields. The conservation and management of wildlife and the environment have always been important to me. Being a valuable employee at Ard Vista Animal Hospital, I have assisted veterinarians in various practices in the care of both domestic and wild animals. In my opinion, all cats should be considered wildlife because they are highly unpredictable and one must always be on their toes when handling them. I recently had the privilege of completing an externship at the Wildlife Center of Virginia, where I worked alongside fellow rehabbers to assist in the development and rehabilitation of orphaned and injured wildlife with the ultimate goal of returning them to the wild. I was able to directly interact with a wide variety of animals ranging from larger raptors such as the Bald Eagle to aggressive alligator snapping turtles. Catching, restraining, and releasing those massive birds was truly a once in a lifetime experience. They are so strong and powerful that I have acquired a newfound respect for our Nation's national bird. I look forward to many more wonderful experiences working with people and animals to preserve nature's fragile ecosystems.

Summer interns enjoy a day of training with Visitor Services Specialist Cindy Heffley, credit: USFWS.

Welcome Summer General Refuge Interns at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge

General Interns at Pea Island refuge are exposed to all program areas. These interns conduct guided interpretive programs, provide general maintenance, and conduct a variety of biological surveys/duties. This gives the interns a true taste of what all is involved in managing a refuge.

Jessica Miller

I grew up in rural Georgia playing outside and looking for critters in the woods, so I went to college to continue doing that! I graduated from Georgia Regents University in May 2013 with a Bachelor's degree in Biology. As a student I was able to participate in undergraduate research using trail cameras to monitor wildlife and visit barrier islands to assist with fish sampling. After graduating I studied abroad in Australia where I snorkeled with sea turtles and hiked in the rainforest. While serving as a naturalist intern on Fripp Island I took guests kayaking, birding, and crabbing. I absolutely love getting outdoors and getting hands-on with nature! I hope to eventually get my master's degree and get a career doing what I love while contributing to research and conservation. In my spare time I enjoy tennis, volleyball, and cooking vegan delights. I love photographing wildlife, especially birds. I'm looking forward to having a great time at Pea Island and Alligator River.

Emily Vann

I will start my biography by introducing myself, my name is Emily Vann, I am 23 and I am a senior at Chowan University. I will graduate May 2014 with a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Biology. I hope to return to graduate school and receive a Masters degree in Zoological Sciences. My career goal is to become a zoologist or wildlife biologist. I am a member of the Delta Rho chapter of the Alpha Sigma Tau sorority at Chowan. I live in Franklin, Virginia, with my parents and brother. I have two four-legged family members, a cat and a horse. I have been riding since I was eight and have loved animals since I could remember. Currently I work two jobs – one as a merchandiser for Nabisco and the other as a barista in Starbucks for a local grocery store. Some of my favorite things to do in my free time are: spending time with family, riding my horse, spending time with my sorority sisters, and giving back to others. I am beyond excited about this opportunity to intern at Alligator River NWF and Pea Island!

Matthew Borders

My name is Matthew Borders, and I am a 21 year-old nature enthusiast with a love for wild places and the residents therein. I recently graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Biology from Armstrong Atlantic State University. My specialty is ornithology, particularly with respect to the crow family (corvidae), but I am also interested in wolf biology, ecology, and conservation. I have worked with bird banding and migration monitoring in the Canadian wilderness at the Thunder Cape Bird Observatory and on Jekyll Island, Georgia. I have also assisted with the Tybee Island Sea Turtle Project. I have been an avid bird watcher for nearly 12 years and have traveled the world from the Middle East to western Europe to Haiti.

I worked in the field banding birds and as a general employee at a Wild Birds Unlimited. I enjoy teaching others about the environment, particularly as it relates to birds and ecology, and I find satisfaction in helping to preserve wild places. I am hoping this experience will lead to an eventual permanent position working in the field with the Fish and Wildlife Service or Department of Natural Resources. When not working, I do enjoy making music, philosophy, exploring the outdoors, and writing.

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 devise! For information on any of our programs, contact Cindy Heffley at cindy_heffley@fws.gov or 252/475 4180.

Chicamacomico Volunteer Fire Department responded to a fire at the North Pond Pump Station, credit: Corey Smith/NPS.

Pump House Burns on Pea Island NWR

At approximately 7 pm on Monday, June 9, Dare Central dispatched the Chicamacomico Volunteer Fire Department to a fire on the west side of the North Pond dike on Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, employees from the National Park Service, NC Forest Service, and US Fish and Wildlife Service responded to the fire. According to National Park Service Ranger Corey Smith, three fire engines and a total of 12 personnel responded to the incident, which was the pump house for the North Pond Pumping Station.

Deputy Refuge Manager Scott Lanier commented, "The pump at this location was destroyed during Hurricane Irene. It had recently been replaced by Ducks Unlimited under contract with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at a cost of over $400,000. Since installation, we have been having problems with the pump's operation. It's disappointing to loose pumping capabilities in this pond again. Migratory birds like shorebirds and waterfowl will continue to suffer without water management capabilities at Pea Island."

Pea Island Crabbing and Fishing Rodeo Back on the Calendar!

After a three-year hiatus due to storm damage from Hurricane Irene, the annual crabbing and fishing rodeo was held on June 14.

Over 75 adults and children spent three hours at the North Pond pulling in hundreds of blue crabs.

The weather was warm and a bit breezy which helped keep the biting insects away. Over a quarter of the participants were first-time visitors for the Rodeo while the rest have been coming for quite a number of years. A handful remember coming as children and are now bringing their children. The Rodeo is the only time of the year that visitors are permitted to crab and/or fish in the North Pond. Mark your calendar for the 2015 Rodeo which will be held on June 13, 2015.

Many families were smiling during the rodeo due to the great size of the crabs, credit: Heffley/USFWS.

Large Alligator Struck and Killed on US 64 on Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge

For the many people who ask, "Are there really alligators at the Alligator River refuge," a recent news article surely helped answer that question.

In early June, an alligator initially estimated to be greater than 12' and over 800 pounds was struck and killed by a minivan heading west on US 64 near East Lake, North Carolina.

Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge lost one of its larger alligators to a traffic accident. For many years, a large alligator has been regularly seen in a canal nearby during May and early June. Biologist Dennis Stewart says there is no way to confirm if this is the same alligator at this time, but it appears to be similar in size, credit: Jay Eddy/ USFWS.

Dare County Sheriff's Department and Refuge Law Enforcement Officer Jay Eddy responded to the accident. The alligator was removed from the highway and stored on the refuge for Refuge Biologist Dennis Stewart and NC Wildlife Resources Commission District Biologist Chris Turner to evaluate. The alligator weighed in at approximately 672 pounds and measured 11' 11.75".

Stewart said, "The refuge has no way to confirm this was the large alligator that has been regularly observed in the nearby canal for years during May and early June. It wasn't tagged or marked in any way, so we'll just have to watch and see. This alligator was a male. The age of any alligator is difficult to estimate. A femur was removed that will be examined for an estimation of age at a later time."

New Launch Site for Pea Island Canoe Tours

Due to construction on Highway 12 near the New Inlet, N.C. Department of Transportation has temporarily requested to use the New Inlet parking lot to stage equipment. In anticipation of this happening, the Visitor Services staff was sent on a mission to find an alternative canoe launch site on the refuge.

The new site is on the west side of the North Pond near the pump house (see related article about the current state of the pump house). This new location is a bit of a challenge logistically for the participants, but

once in the canoes, they are treated to more shallow areas where skates, hermit crabs, and many other aquatic critters can be seen up close.

If you're looking for a fun time of exploration on the Pamlico Sound, sign up for a canoe tour, credit: Heffley/USFWS.

Due to the sometimes shallow water, the canoes have to be pulled at times, but everyone seems to enjoy the additional time in the water. In addition to the canoe tours, the Soundside Adventure program has also been relocated. The National Park Service has been gracious to offer us the landing on the Croatan Sound at the base of the Old Manns Harbor Bridge on Roanoke Island. Check out the back page of the newsletter for the program schedule.

Volunteer Bob Glennon helps a young girl with the butterfly craft at the pollinator table during the Coastal Gardening Festival sponsored by the Dare County Master Gardeners in Kill Devil Hills, credit: Heffley/USFWS.

Environmental Education and Outreach Update

Kindergarten and sixth-grade Young Naturalist Clubs have ended with the end of the school year. It was a great year for over 300 children. The Preschool Young Naturalist Program continues through the summer and has been a big hit with locals as well as tourists. As a reminder, although the Program is geared towards children five and under, all children are welcome to participate. This is especially helpful during the summer months when families with older children are visiting the area. Don't forget to bring your grandchildren or other young visitors to this great program. In addition to a story and craft, we spend time out on the nature trail behind the Visitor Center. Recent findings included a box turtle and a few bird species.

A few schools took advantage of the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society's Transportation Grant and visited the refuges in the spring. One of the largest groups was from Bertie County Elementary School. The students enjoyed the scavenger hunts inside and out on the trail. Another large group was the second grade class of Manteo Elementary School who rotated through the visitor center, wildlife trail, classroom, and the Elizabethan Gardens. It's been wonderful seeing so many young people learning about wildlife in the new visitor center.

The end of the school year also brings all sorts of community programs. Recently, Visitor Services Specialist Cindy Heffley and Volunteer Bob Glennon participated in the Coastal Gardening Festival at the Baum Center in Kill Devil Hills. As with many outreach events this season, the theme used was pollinators. Over 1000 people attended the event and many children stopped by to make a pipe cleaner and bead butterfly. Other events attended included the Outdoor Days program at the Outdoor Education Center in Corolla and the Earth Fair at Coastal Studies Institute in Skyco. Upcoming events include the Hyde County 4H Summer Camp at Lake Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge and the Mount Olivet Methodist Church Vacation Bible School where the children are learning about animals.

Students from Bertie Elementary School stop to learn about native plants on the nature trial during a field trip, credit: Heffley/USFWS.

Wings Over Water Update

Noah is the author of two books, his first, *Among Penguins: a Birdman in Antarctica* is the subject of Noah's program entitled, *Among the Penguins-Life Down South...Way Down South!*

This is a fascinating look at penguin life and behavior on our most southern continent.

Don't limit your interests to just the birds you see around your region, expand your horizons and your bird knowledge. The program is designated as 'Family Friendly.' This means you can bring up to two children 12 or under for free with a paying, supervising adult. Noah will talk, show photographs and answer question in the beautiful auditorium of the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center.

We have expanded the eBird 101 program this year to include a birding field trip.

Participants will take their birding results into the classroom to record their sightings and view the collected data, using the most popular electronic bird data system in the world, the eBird system. Program leader Nathan Swick is an eBird expert and a regional eBird reporting official. For those who want to learn how to keep track of their birding by entering their daily species and compare them with those of birders in your area and around the world, this is a program you won't want to miss.

There is a fascinating new trip called the Currituck Banks Reserve Maritime Forest Hike.

This walk through the Currituck Maritime Forest is located at the northernmost section of the Outer Banks to which you can go without requiring a 4-wheel drive vehicle. The trip leader, Scott Crocker is the Northern Site Manager for the North Carolina Coastal Reserve. Prior to this position, Scott was a park ranger with the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation. The hike will involve identifying plants, reptiles, mammals as well as birds. Scott will help make your tour both fun and educational. This will be a great way to tour a fascinating, often overlooked site with a great tour leader.

Two programs led by The Nature Conservancy's Northeast Region Steward, Aaron McCall are very interesting.

The Nags Head Woods Preserve Exploration offers an opportunity to see an older maritime forest and become familiar with a variety of wildlife and habitats.

Our keynote speaker, Noah Strycker, leads a program called, Bare-naked birding with Noah Strycker. This program offers an opportunity to hone your birding chops without binoculars, scopes, cell phones or handheld devices--using just your eyes and ears. Noah will give you tips on how to enhance your vision and hearing for the most basic birding possible.

Coastal maritime forests are becoming rarer as the years go by. Aaron knows Nags Head Woods well and you'll find the time with him well-worth the registration. Aaron also leads a program that has been updated over years past. This year it is entitled, *Helping Coastal Carolina Adapt to Rising Seas*. The Nature Conservancy has taken the lead in monitoring the effects of the rising sea on the coastal and regional habitat. Aaron will lead registrants out to a monitoring station on the mainland that will show how our rising sea level is encroaching on the soundside ecosystems and is disturbing both the biology and ecology of the region.

Beginning Archery - here's an opportunity to learn the basics of archery, safety and skill building in a beautiful setting across from the Whalehead Club in Corolla. You'll be on the lawn area of the Outer Banks Center for Wildlife Education (well worth your visit just to see this beautiful facility).

Archery is a fun, often forgotten activity.

If you enjoy outdoor sports and working on your back-to-the-basic skills, this will be a fun beginning class.

Ocean-watching at Jennette's Pier for Casual Birders has been split from the same program for advanced birders so that we now have two Jennette's Pier ocean-watching birding programs.

Not only will you go out on the pier to watch ocean-going and shorebirds, but you will keep an eye out for whale, dolphins, seals, whatever else might surface in the area.

It's a fun and great overall look at wildlife along the ocean shore area. Leader Audrey Whitlock is knowledgeable, energetic and a load of fun. If time permits, the program might move from the pier down to the sandy shoreline for further exploration.

Birding 101 has been a popular classroom beginning course over the years. But this year we're expanding this beginning birding class to get you out of the classroom and into the field to observe and then back into the classroom to discuss birding basics. Instructor and birder, Lena Gallitano is a wonderful teacher with a lifetime of experience. She will share her knowledge of birding for those who want to get started, or who want to jump-start their elementary knowledge of birds and birding.

Birding is one of America's fastest growing hobbies and this class is a great way to be a part of it.

A program that we're extra-excited about is *Young Birder's Introduction to Birding (Ages 9-14).* Nine to fouteen is a great age range to get involved in birding. And, we're hoping to show young people that birding isn't just for old-timers. We have two enthusiastic, young program leaders, Nathan Swick and Scott Winton, who have been birding for years, but who are young enough to relate to those who are 9-14 years old.

We're suggesting that parents encourage their kids to get out and learn about nature and the world. If your children are fans of wildlife, this a great program in which they can begin to discover the wild, winged world around them.

The 2014 Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival registration officially opened May 7th and response has been great. Wings Over Water is one of the premier wildlife festivals in the country and offers nearly 100 programs and trips for those interested in paddling, birding, art, photography, local history and more.

This is the largest annual fundraising event sponsored by The Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society, the Friends group who provide staff, materials, equipment and grants in support of the refuges. And, your Wings Over Water fees go directly to that support.

You still have plenty of time and lots of options to choose from if you'd like to take part in the 2014 Wings Over Water. There are tram trips, van trips, nature hikes, canoe and kayak trips, birding programs and classroom sessions—something for everyone. This year Wings Over Water offers 12 new, or newly revised programs.

Look at the at http://wingsoverwater.org and you'll see a whole bevy of paddling trips.

We paddle in the refuge at night to watch the stars and hear the sights and sounds of the darkened refuge (when no one is normally allowed in the refuge).

If that sounds good to you, then sign up for, *Alligator River Refuge Night Canoe Tour*, and/or *Alligator River Refuge Sunset and Stargazing Tour*.

And, another fun evening paddling trip is the *Maritime Forest Sunset Kayak Tour,* which launches out of Kitty Hawk and is led by one of our sponsors, the fine staff of Kitty Hawk Kayaks and Surf School. This same staff also guides our stand-up paddleboarding trip, which is currently one of the hottest sports. Take that hot sport and combine it with a cool morning and come to Kitty Hawk where we have the, *Maritime Forest Stand-up Eco Paddle.* This combines learning stand-up paddleboarding with a tour of the landscape and wildlife of the area.

What a fun way to start your day!

Contributed by Steve Brumfield

Pocosin Lakes Fun Day. A good time was had by all, credit: Doris Morris.

Friends of Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge-Pocosin Lakes Fun Day

The Friends of Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge hosted our third nature fun day event on Saturday on May 24, 2014, from 10 am – 2 pm at the Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters in Columbia.

Hundreds of folks from neighboring areas enjoyed a picture-perfect day with their friends and family at the Friends' "Pocosin Lakes Fun Day" filled with a variety of activities and events for all ages, opened free to the public.

The day started off with the youth taking a journey back in time building a bamboo fishing cane pole and walking out on the boardwalk trying their luck fishing with their new cane pole. Several fish were caught, lines broken, even a few poles broken (& quickly replaced), as the "big one" would grab the fishing worm and tease the youth with their nibbles as they got away.

Many participants took advantage of a peaceful tour of the Scuppernong River as they were told a brief history of the waters. The Scuppernong River was so inviting, you could almost hear it calling your name as many couldn't resist the temptation of taking a canoe ride on the water.

And we can't forget the sweet sounds of nature as our nature friends created their bird feeders to take home to help feed our feather friends.

For those who were ready to sit back, you could step inside the Pocosin Lakes Refuge Visitor Center to enjoy watching the documentary of the Pocosin Lakes Refuge and meet the producer of the film, Mr. Blake Scott of STRS Production of Washington, NC.

Other attractions included special visitor, Smokey the Bear; Marble Painting; Archery; Tours of the new Red Wolf Education & Healthcare Facility; Crafts;

Educational booths along with other wildlife attractions. The Friends of Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge would like to thank NC Forest Service, NC Marine Fisheries, Pocosin Arts, Partnership for the Sounds, Buckridge Coastal Reserve, Red Wolf Coalition, STRS Production, Pamlico Tar River Foundation and Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. Pocosin Lakes Refuge is located in Hyde, Tyrrell, and Washington Counties and consists of 110,106 acres of land.

The goal of the event was to educate and share with the people of the Albemarle/ Pamlico peninsula how blessed this region is to have such an abundance of nature and wildlife that offer peace and beauty to all for a Pocosin Lakes Fun Day.

For additional information, visit www.pocosinlakesfriends.org or Doris Morris, Chair, at doris.morris@noolf.com or 252/793 9756 or 252/809 2724. Friends of Pocosin Lakes Refuge is a non-profit organization established in 2008. The purpose of the Friends is to protect, help and promote Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge by providing volunteers and funds to support projects, programs and activities of the refuge.

Submitted by Doris Morris, Vice President Friends of Pocosin Lakes

An Evening at Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge

A tour of the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge was well received by interested nature-lovers from across our state, with the prospect to see the black bears and other wildlife in their natural habitat. Friends of Pocosin Lakes Refuge supported the tour by handling registration. The tour took place on the evening of Saturday, May 24th, 2014 lead by biologist Kelly Davis.

Volunteer Biologist Kelly Davis shows off a bear skull, credit Doris Morris.

The tourists were all energized and excited at the potential of visually seeing the legendary black bears.

After a quick introduction, we were off to an evening of breath-taking delight. And what a delight, as the evening couldn't have been more incredible with no disappointments, more like a story book fairy tale.

We had barely left the Pungo Refuge shop, when off to the left out in the corn field was a beautiful black bear, feeding in the field without a care in the world. Kelly, our tour guide and driver of the van stopped, as we all watched in wonder. As we continued to be entertained by the bear, we quickly discovered this was definitely a mama bear, as one of her small cubs stood up. That's right, one of her small cubs, as we watched, another baby cub stood up. If this was not speculate enough, a third baby cub stood up. Here we were in breath-taking wonder and astonishment, watching the bears in pure pleasure, walking and feeding along. And then, as if commanded, mama bear and all three cubs stood up tall on their hind legs stopped, turned around and looked at us, as if to put on a show for all.

Even with the incredible start, the journey was far from being over. We saw a variety of birds, along with numerous other bears, tree markings, a variety of foot prints along the road and on the trail to the lake, turtles in the ditches, and a very impressive educational lesson of the Pungo Lake and other habitats of the refuge from our incredible tour guide Kelly Davis. The refuge tour was enjoyed by tourists from different areas of our beautiful state on a picture perfect evening. It was a day of nature for all to appreciate and treasure.

Submitted by Doris Morris, Vice President Friends of Pocosin Lakes

This time of year, there are always bears to see, credit Doris Morris.

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

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Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges

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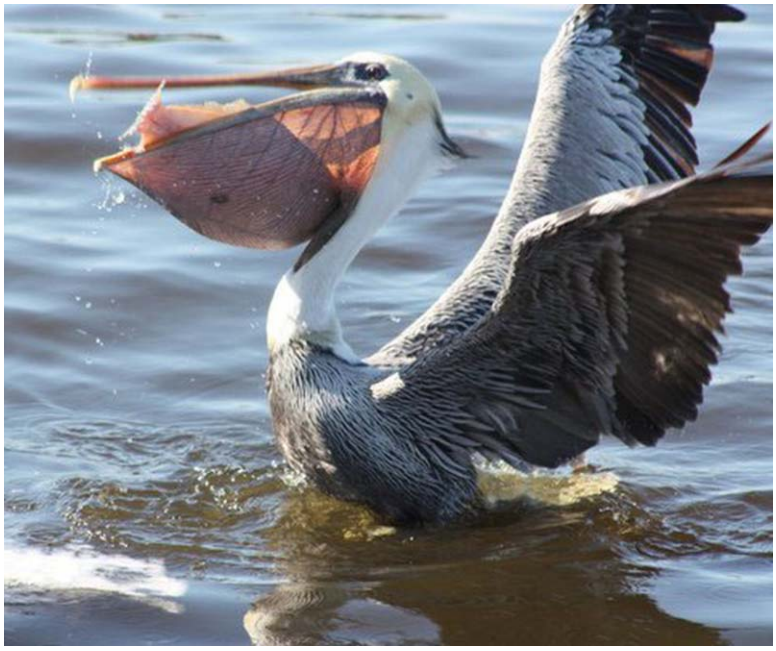

The National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center on Roanoke Island has quarterly art shows. Each quarter we have a selection of artists displaying their work to enhance your visual experience. The art work is for sale. And the sale benefits both the artist and the refuges. The summer art show opened July 11th and will display the work of local artists Jonny Springfield (Photography), Frances Harris (Colored Pencil), Dan Waters (Photography), Julia Dillon (Arcylic/mixed media) and June Irmischer (mixed media) through the end of September. Support the arts — Support your local refuges. Above photo was taken by Jonny Springfield and is one of the pieces currently on display.

Looking Ahead
July-September 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