

Join Us for Free, Fun, Programs! *Parker River National Wildlife Refuge* February, 2016



REGISTRATION & CAPACITY:

All refuge programs are FREE, but space may be limited. Preregistration is required for all programs, unless otherwise indicated. Please call (978) 465-5753. **Please Note:** If a program requires preregistration, your registration is not confirmed unless and until you receive a phone call or voice mail message from a member of the refuge staff.

Programs conducted in the auditorium are limited to 85 attendees. Seats are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Admission of additional attendees will stop when capacity has been reached.

Please note that outdoor programs may be cancelled if there is inclement weather and/or insufficient registration. Visit us on the web for more information:

http://www.fws.gov/refuge/parker_river/ or call Refuge Headquarters. The refuge visitor center is located at 6 Plum Island Turnpike, Newburyport, MA.

Behind the Scenes Refuge Tour of Parker River NWR

Held on the following days: Saturday, February 6th @9:30 am; Sunday, February 7th @1:00 pm; Saturday, February 13th @ 9:30 am; Sunday, February 14th @ 1:00 pm; Saturday, February 20th @ 9:30 am Sunday, February 21st @ 1:00 pm and Saturday, February 27th @ 9:30 am Sunday, and February 28th @ 1:00 pm.

Join a refuge ranger for a behind the scenes tour of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge. Tour will be conducted via refuge van, with several brief "drive by" stops along the way. The tour will present an "up close and personal" look at the refuge through the multiple lenses of the cultural history of Plum Island and the Great Marsh, native wildlife and their habitats, and the role of refuge management in the conservation of these precious natural resources. Participants may be driven along areas on the refuge otherwise closed to the public. This guided two hour program is most appropriate for older teens and adults. Binoculars and/or a camera are recommended, but not required. Meet the ranger in the lobby of the Refuge visitor center 15 minutes prior to the program start time. Each session is limited to 14 participants; no more than 4 individuals per sign-up. Again, this is a vehicle - based tour, with limited stops on the Refuge. Advance registration is required for this program, as enrollment is limited. Be advised that individual tours may be subject to cancellation. *Please note: Those who call and leave messages after hours, your registration is not confirmed until you receive a confirmation call from a refuge staff member. Please call (978) 465-5753; to register for this program.

NEW! FREE! Kids' Conservation Cinema

On alternating Sunday afternoons through March, the refuge will be screening FREE, family-friendly films that feature a wildlife and/or environmental theme. All films will be projected on the big screen in the refuge visitor center's awesome auditorium. **No preregistration; simply show up!** All movies begin at 1:30 pm. Here is what we have scheduled for the month of February:

Sunday, February 7th at 1:30 pm: *Over the Hedge*: A scheming raccoon fools a mismatched family of forest creatures into helping him repay a debt of food, by invading the new suburban sprawl that popped up while they were hibernating...and learns a lesson about family himself. (2006; rated PG; run time: 83 min.)

Sunday, February 21st at 1:30 pm: *Free Willy*: Captured at sea and confined in a small tank at an aquatic park, Will (an Orca whale) is an unhappy and unpredictable attraction. No one understands Willy – except a scruffy street kid named Jess – who knows what it’s like to be without a family. Together these two form a special bond...one so strong that they’re willing to risk it all to find a way home! (1993; rated PG; run time 112 min.)

NEW! Kids’ Story Hour

Monday, February 8th at 10:00 am and Monday, February 22 at 10:00 am

Bring your 3-5 year old youngster to the refuge visitor center for a good old-fashioned story hour. For each session, a refuge volunteer will read a story about an animal or some other interesting aspect of nature. The kids will then complete a related craft to take home. Enrollment is limited to 12 children. The parent or guardian must remain for the entire program. **Preregistration is required for this program.**

Special Free Photographic Presentation:

The Power of Simplicity and Expression

Saturday, February 13th @ 1:30 pm

What are you trying to say with your photography? Since photography is a form of visual communication, all photographers should strive for simplicity in their photographs. With a complicated image, the message may not be obvious to the viewer. Simplicity and clarity in thought, process and technique can lead to expressive images that evoke emotion. In this presentation, professional nature and wildlife photographer Nikhil Bahl will discuss the inherent connection between simplicity and expression, share ideas on how photographers can make their images more meaningful and convey their message in a distinct style.

Nikhil Bahl is a full time professional photographer, author, educator, workshop instructor and environmentalist residing in the Washington D.C. area. An offshoot of Nikhil's fine art photography and love of nature is his documentation of wildlife behaviors and habitats. As a volunteer with the National Park Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, his goal is to portray environmental stories with an artistic appeal, so his photographs educate and motivate about the imperative of conservation.

This free public program will occur during the regular monthly meeting of the Photographic Society of Parker River NWR. The Society welcomes anyone who has an interest in nature, wildlife, and/or photography - whether you are a total novice or earn a living by taking pictures! The club meets every month, generally on the second Saturday afternoon. Club activities include special presentations, slide shows (of members’ work), intra-club mentoring and training, photo shoots, on-line photo sharing, and involvement in the refuge’s various photography-related programs, events, and outreach activities. The program will take place in the refuge visitor center’s auditorium. Capacity is limited to 85 attendees (first come, first served). **Admission is free and preregistration is NOT required.** This free public program is made possible with the generous support of Hunt’s Photo & Video.

“Making Tracks” at Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge!

Friday, February 19th, 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Winter can be a challenging time to see wildlife. Many species have migrated south, others are sleeping (hibernating), and still others may only be active during the twilight hours. But with a little detective work, and a little bit of luck, it is often possible to identify the animals that have been active in a given area by looking at the “sign” they leave behind. Animal signs include tracks, scat, and other visible clues. Join a refuge ranger at the Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Newington, NH for a brief introduction to “animal sign detective work,” followed by a brief discovery walk on one of Great Bay’s trails. Participants should dress for the weather, including warm/waterproof boots. This program is appropriate for adults and older children (minimum age of 10). **Program is by preregistration only; to register, please call (978) 465-5753.** Meet the ranger in the Great Bay NWR parking lot. For directions to the refuge, click on this link: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Great_Bay/visit/plan_your_visit.html. (*Please note: Those who call and leave messages after hours, your registration is not confirmed until you receive a confirmation call from a refuge staff member. **Preregistration required.**)

“Making Tracks” at Parker River- Learning to Read Wildlife Clues

Saturday, February 20th, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm

If you have ever seen tracks in the snow, sand, or soil and were curious about what made them, then this is the program for you! Refuge staff will lead you through the basics of identifying common animals through the clues that they leave behind. A brief introduction to animal tracks and other sign in the visitor center classroom will be followed by a trip to the refuge where we will look for tracks and attempt to determine their owner’s identity. This is a program for beginners, so parents are encouraged to bring their children 10 and older. Please dress appropriately for cold and damp weather. Meet in the lobby of the visitor center ten minutes prior to the program start time. Registration is limited to 10 people. **Program is by preregistration only; to register, please call (978) 465-5753.**

NEW! Monthly Book Club:

February’s Book Selection: *Refuge by Terry Tempest Williams*

Thursday, Feb. 18th from 6:30 – 7:30 pm, and on Saturday, Feb. 20th from 1:30 – 2:30pm

Discussion groups will meet on Thursday, Feb. 18th from 6:30 – 7:30pm, and on Feb. 20th from 1:30 – 2:30pm. Discussions are limited to 15 participants and will take place at the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. **Pre-registration IS required for all meetings. Please call our headquarters at (978) 465-5753 to register. *Note: Those who call and leave a message after hours, your registration is not confirmed until you receive a confirmation call from a Refuge staff member.**

These Visitor Center Exhibits Change Monthly:

Artist of the Month Gallery: Each month a different photographer or artist displays their nature and/or wildlife-related fine art in the refuge visitor center auditorium.

Photographic Society Slide Show: Just inside the visitor center’s front door is a large video monitor that displays the latest nature and wildlife-themed slide show that was produced by members of the refuge’s very own photo club. A new slide show, set to music, and focusing on a unique theme, is produced each month.