

Join Us for Free, Fun, Programs!

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

February, 2018



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, Feb. 3 @ 9:30 a.m.; Saturday, Feb. 10th @ 9:30 a.m.; Sunday, Feb. 11th @ 1:00 p.m.; Monday, Feb. 12th @ 9:30 a.m.; Saturday, Feb. 24th @ 9:30 a.m.; Sunday, Feb. 25th @ 1:00 p.m.; and Monday, Feb. 26th @ 9:30 a.m.

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. ****Please note: When snow and ice prevents access to the regular "behind the scenes" segments of the tour, the tour leader will, instead, include a loop to the northern end of Plum Island.**

****Focus on Birds: Special Behind the Scenes Tour of Parker River NWR**

Monday, Feb. 5th & Tuesday, Feb. 27, both beginning at 1:00 p.m.

This special edition of the refuge's Behind the Scenes (BTS) tour will be led by veteran birder, and refuge volunteer, Bill Gette. While the tour will follow the usual BTS route, the leader will place a special emphasis on the birds that are typically found on the refuge in late fall. Participants are encouraged to bring binoculars, if they have them. Tour is limited to 14 participants. Meet the tour leader in the refuge visitor center lobby 15 minutes before the program start time. This program is most appropriate for teens and adults. **Preregistration required. **Please note: When snow and ice prevents access to**

the regular “behind the scenes” segments of the refuge tour, the tour leader will, instead, take the group to other locations on the island and mainland where birds are more likely to be seen.

FFFFF! – Free, Fun Family Films in February!

Enjoy top-rated and otherwise GREAT “Hollywood” movies on the visitor center’s BIG SCREEN, featuring our state-of-the art laser projection and surround sound system. Here’s what we have planned for YOU:

Sunday, Feb. 4th at 1:30 p.m.: *Pete’s Dragon*: The adventures of an orphaned boy named Pete and his best friend Elliot, who just so happens to be a dragon. (2016; PG; Runtime: 1 hr, 42 mins.)

Sunday, Feb. 18th at 1:30 pm: *Moana*: In Ancient Polynesia, when a terrible curse incurred by the Demigod Maui reaches Moana's island, she answers the Ocean's call to seek out the Demigod to set things right. (2016; PG; Runtime: 1 hr, 47 mins.)

Practice Your Close-up Photography Skills – A Hands-on Session

Saturday, February 10th, 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Winter provides a great excuse to do indoor photography! Bring a camera and join us in the visitor center classroom for an opportunity to photograph a VERY INTERESTING array of cool objects and still lives. The theme for this photo shoot will be “macro” or close-up photography. More than a repeat of last winter’s similarly themed workshop, this time we’ll have even “way cooler” things for you to photograph. A number of experienced photographers will be on hand to provide tips and answer questions. It doesn’t matter what type of camera you have. **NO preregistration required.**

Special Photography Presentation: A Trip to the Galapagos Islands!

Saturday, February 10th @ 1:30 p.m.

Professional wildlife photographer Christopher Ciccone will be “in the house” to share his amazing photographic images captured during a recent trip to the Galapagos Islands. Chris is a superb photographer – both technically and creatively. (He also just happens to be a very nice guy!) Take a peek at his outstanding images here: <http://www.cicconephoto.com/>. This program will take place in the visitor center auditorium. **NO preregistration required.**

The Photographic 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.

Merrimack River Eagle Festival

Saturday, February 17th, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Once again, the refuge is partnering with the Massachusetts Audubon Society at Joppa Flats to celebrate the local presence of wintering American bald eagles. The refuge visitor center will host a variety of fun, hands-on, eagle-themed craft activities that will include dissecting owl pellets, and other cool stuff! In addition to these fun activities, visitors will be able to view two live owls from Drumlin Farm. Everything is FREE! NO preregistration for this event. For a complete rundown of all Eagle Fest activities, visit this web site: <https://www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/wildlife-sanctuaries/joppa-flats/news-events/eagle-festival>

Program Title: Winter Raptors: Eagles, Hawks, Owls, and Falcons

Tuesday, February 27th, 7:00 – 8:00 pm

Some of the most sought-after birds in New England are the many species of winter raptors. Some of these amazing birds are permanent residents in our area. Others move south out of their northern breeding grounds during the late fall and winter to hunt over area forests, fields, and salt marshes. During this PowerPoint presentation, Bill Gette will describe the different feeding strategies employed by the various species and review the many aids to field identification. Did you know that female raptors are bigger than their male counterparts? Did you know that some species of owls hunt in the daytime? This program, which will take place in the refuge visitor center auditorium, is being co-sponsored by the refuge and the Friends of Parker River NWR, Inc. **Preregistration is NOT required for this program.**

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.