

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**

# Join Us for Free, Fun, Programs!

## *Parker River National Wildlife Refuge*

### **July & August, 2021**



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

### **Meet the Manager!**

***Friday, July 23 at 1:00 p.m.***

Come meet the refuge manager, Matt Hillman, at the newly re-opened visitor center. Learn of updates and ongoing initiatives by staff and partners at the refuge and throughout the Great Marsh. If interested in volunteering in any capacity, this is a great chance to discuss the endless opportunities we offer. Light refreshments will be provided. This program will take place in the visitor center auditorium. **NO preregistration for this program.**

### **Bicycle Tour of Great Bay NWR**

***Wednesday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, & Wednesday, August 25<sup>th</sup> – ALL sessions 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.***

Join a refuge ranger for a **behind the scenes tour, by bicycle**, of Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge, located in Newington, NH. Participants will have an opportunity to visit areas of the refuge that are not normally open to the public. See a diversity of habitats and learn how the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is managing this very special landscape for wildlife. Cyclists will travel over generally level terrain on a combination of paved and unpaved surfaces. The distance covered will depend on how many stops are made and how much time is spent at each stop. Tour duration will be about 2 hours. Appropriate for adults and children age 16 or older. **Each participant must provide a either a hybrid or mountain bike, helmet, and water bottle.** Insect repellent, sun block, binoculars and/or a camera are optional (provided these items can be safely stowed while biking). Meet the ranger in the Great Bay NWR parking lot 15 minutes before the tour start time. Limited to 10 participants. **Preregistration required.** For directions to the refuge, click on this link:

[https://www.fws.gov/uploadedFiles/greatbay\\_directions.pdf](https://www.fws.gov/uploadedFiles/greatbay_directions.pdf)

## Smartphone Camera Academy

*Friday, July 30<sup>th</sup> & Thursday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.*

You may not know it, but that smart phone you carry around in your pocket is also a great camera, capable of taking photos that you'd be proud to print, frame and hang on your living room wall. "But wait," you say, "my images never look good enough for that!" Well, here's your chance to move from snapshots to great shots! In this informative, informal program, Ranger Poole will provide all the tips and tools necessary for you to create your own wall art. Meet in the refuge visitor center auditorium. **NO preregistration for this program.**

## Plum Island by Boat

*Thursday August 5 - 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.*

*Friday August 20 - 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.*

*Monday August 30 – 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.*

Pristine beauty, wide open space, gorgeous views, and the chance to float up and down the peaceful, winding creeks of the world's second most productive ecosystem. Learn how Plum Island and the Great Marsh were formed and how important they are. Boat tours are offered through a private outfitter. More information can be found by visiting the Yankee Clipper Harbor Tours website or by sending an email to [info@harbortours.com](mailto:info@harbortours.com).

## Tide Pool Discoveries

*Friday, August 13<sup>th</sup> @ AND Friday, August 27<sup>th</sup>: Both programs begin at 9:00 a.m.*

For generations children have enjoyed exploring tide pools and discovering the fascinating plants and animals that live in this realm between the tides. A refuge ranger will guide this hands-on program. Appropriate for children age 5 – 10. Each session is limited to 15 children. Each session is 90 minutes long, allowing time for travel to and from the beach. Meet the ranger at the visitor contact station at parking lot 1. **Parent/guardian must remain with his/her child for the entire duration of this program. Preregistration is required for this program.**

## Whip-poor-will Walk

*Saturday, August 14<sup>th</sup> & Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup> – both sessions at 7:30 p.m.*

*(Rain dates are August 15<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> – same start time)*

Have you ever heard a strange bird singing in the background while watching a movie and wondered what it was? You may have been hearing the song of the Whip-poor-will. Join Nancy Landry, refuge volunteer and avid birder, for an evening of listening to the Whip-poor-will's song and other nighttime birds. Participants will meet at the Hellcat Parking Lot of the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge (see times above). Please dress appropriately for weather conditions. **Preregistration is required; enrollment limited to 15 people.**

## Guided Birding Walk along Hellcat Boardwalk Trail

*Saturday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 9:00-11:00 a.m.*

Join a refuge ranger for a birding walk along a section of the Hellcat Boardwalk Trail. Learn about the habits and habitats of birds that can be seen and heard on the refuge at this time of year. Bring bug spray and binoculars. The "new and improved" boardwalk is completely wheelchair accessible. Meet at the Hellcat Parking Lot (Lot 4). **Preregistration is required; enrollment limited to 15 people.**

## Stories in the Garden

*Thursday, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 a.m. – 12 p.m.*

Come catch the reading bug! Join us in the visitor center pollinator garden for a children's story hour, in partnership with the Newburyport Public Library. A selection of pollinator-themed picture books will be read aloud by our local children's librarians, followed by a hands-on craft activity. The garden features a

large stone seating area, but please feel free to bring your own picnic blanket or lawn chairs. **NO preregistration for this program.**

### **Miraculous Migrants: Shorebirds at the Salt Pannes**

***Saturday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (Rain date is Sunday, August 15<sup>th</sup>)***

Shorebirds are on the move! Some of these incredible endurance athletes migrate thousands of miles in just a few days. How? Shorebirds rest and feed extensively on beaches and mudflats, storing up fat so they can fly non-stop. Swing by the Salt Pannes to view some of our local migrants as they fuel up before heading south. Learn more about their incredible adaptations, tips for identification, and what we can do to help them! Bring binoculars or borrow our scopes. This program will take place at the Salt Pannes (the pull-off located between Lots 2 & 3). Drop by any time between 10 and 4! **NO preregistration for this program.**

### **Special Pop-up Program: Swallow Spectacular**

This July and August, keep an eye out for one of the most spectacular natural phenomena in New England! Tree swallows will be migrating through the refuge on their way south, swarming by the thousands! While the tree swallows are “staging”—fueling up en route to the southern U.S. and Central America—staff members will host pop-up programs to view the swallows and discuss their migration and life history. Program dates and times in July and August will depend on tree swallow activity. These programs will be announced via the refuge Facebook page, in the lobby of the visitor center, and on a conspicuous sign placed outside the refuge entrance station. **NO preregistration for this program.**