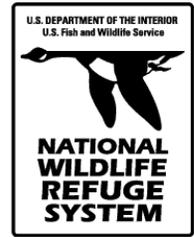


U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Join Us for Free, Fun, Programs! *Parker River National Wildlife Refuge* **March, 2017**



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.

3rd Annual Conservation Film Festival

Friday, March 3rd – Sunday, March 5th

The refuge's third annual Conservation Film Festival is primed and ready to go for the first weekend in March. And it's all FREE! Films that will be screened during the festival focus on a broad range of local, national and international conservation topics. Here's a quick rundown of just some of the films that are on this year's schedule:

The Million Dollar Duck is a documentary that focuses on the strange and wonderful world of the Federal Duck Stamp Contest, the only juried, art competition run by the U.S. government. *Ribbon of Sand*, narrated by Meryl Streep, profiles the famed Outer Banks of the Carolina coast – a fragile environment not unlike the barrier beach on Plum Island. *Return of the River* follows a group of strong-minded, committed people as they attempt the impossible: to change public opinion of a town, and eventually the nation, to bring a dam down. *Sonic Sea* is about protecting life in our waters from the destructive effects of oceanic noise pollution. *Shored Up* is a documentary that takes a look at how development of our coastlines has put us in a tough predicament, and shows why it's time to start looking for innovative solutions. *Love Thy Nature*, an award-winning film narrated by Liam Neeson, shows how deeply we've lost touch with nature and takes viewers on a cinematic journey through the beauty and intimacy of our relationship with the natural world. *Of Ants and Men* is a film about the life and extraordinary scientific odyssey of one of America's greatest living thinkers, E.O. Wilson. A number of "critter pictures," providing rare windows into the fascinating lives of wild animals, are sprinkled across the festival schedule.

All film screenings are FREE and will take place in the refuge visitor center's comfortable, 85 seat auditorium (filled on a first come, first served basis). A complete film festival schedule is available on the refuge web site: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/parker_river/. For further information, please contact the refuge at (978) 465-5753.

Special Program: *Bird Nest Botany*

Thursday, March 2nd at 7:00 pm

Bird nests are the architectural wonders of the animal kingdom, constructed mostly of plant materials. In Judith Sumner's slide-illustrated lecture, we will explore various types of nests and the botanical materials used in their construction. When incorporated into nest structure, stems, leaves, and fibers have anatomical and structural properties that defy harsh weather and rigorous use. We will also examine the biologically active plant material used to line nests, which may have antibiotic and insecticidal properties. For a fascinating look at nest form and function, she will pay particular attention to plant structures and their adaptive re-use in nest construction.

Judith Sumner is a botanist who specializes in ethnobotany, flowering plants, plant adaptations, and garden history. She has taught extensively both at the college level and at botanical gardens, including the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University and Garden in the Woods. She has been a guest on the *Martha Stewart Living* television show, the PBS program *Cultivating Life*, the Annenberg Channel, and various other PBS and educational programs.

This program, which is being sponsored by the Newburyport Horticultural Society, will take place in the refuge visitor center auditorium. Spaces in the 85 seat auditorium will be filled on a first come, first served basis. **There is NO preregistration for this program.**

****Behind the Scenes Refuge Tour of Parker River NWR**

Held on the following days: Sunday, March 5th @ 1:00 pm; Friday, March 10th @ 9:30 am; Saturday, March 11th @ 9:30 am; Sunday, March 12th @ 1:00 pm; Saturday, March 18th @ 9:30 am; Sunday, March 19th @ 1:00 pm; Friday, March 24th @ 9:30 am; Saturday, March 25th @ 9:30 am; and Sunday, March 26th @ 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. **Preregistration 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 precludes access to the regular "behind the scenes" segments of the tour, the tour leader will, instead, include a loop to the northern tip of Plum Island.**

Kids' Story & Activity Hour

On these Mondays in March: 6, 13, 20, & 27 - each session beginning 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.**

Image Editing for the Beginner

Saturday, March 11th, 9:00 – 11:30 am

So, you've managed to fill up your digital camera's memory card with images. "Now what?" you ask yourself. For many people, half the fun is yet to come – time spent editing images on a computer. For the novice, the idea of editing digital photos on a computer can be a little intimidating. But that need not be the case. This presentation will introduce a basic "digital workflow" – a series of simple steps that will move your photos from good to great! (Note: This is a presentation, not a hands-on workshop with computers.) Meet the instructor in the visitor center auditorium at least 10 minutes prior to the session start time. **Preregistration is NOT required.**

The Photographic Society of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Next Meeting: Saturday, March 11th @ 1:30 pm

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. Venue capacity is limited to 85 attendees (first-come, first-served). Admission to this program is free and **preregistration is NOT required.**

Nelson Island Tour

Monday, March 13th @ 10:00 am & Sunday, March 19th @ 10:00 am

Explore another part of the refuge – this time, on the mainland. Join a ranger for a tour of a beautiful spot that few people visit: Nelson Island. If we're lucky, we might catch a glimpse of a nesting osprey. Learn about the history of this little known refuge jewel. If weather and tide permits, we'll take a very short walk along the marsh. (Muddy, wet areas are possible so rubber boots are recommended.) Consider bringing binoculars and/or a camera. *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.**

Monthly Book Club:

March's Book Selection: The Snow Leopard, By Peter Matthiessen

Thursday, March 16th from 6:30 – 8:00 pm

The discussion group is limited to 15 participants and will take place at the refuge visitor center. **Pre-registration IS required for the session. 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.**

Woodcock Walk at Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Friday, March 17th from 6:30 – 7:30 pm

Each spring American woodcocks engage in one of nature's most fascinating courtship displays. Here's your chance to witness this "sky dance" up close and in-person! This program is appropriate for ages 8 and older. Meet the ranger in front of the Great Bay office, just opposite the parking lot, 15 minutes prior to start time. Bring binoculars and a flashlight. Program is limited to 15 participants. **Preregistration required.** (Directions: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Great_Bay/visit/plan_your_visit.html)

Special Film Presentation: A Sea Change

Thursday, March 23rd, from 2:00 – 4:00 pm.

Following the screening, a facilitated group discussion will take place. This program is part of Essex County Greenbelt's winter lecture and film series "The State of Our Oceans." This five part series explores

the importance of different ocean ecosystems, the current health and stability challenges they face, and what can be done to protect and enhance these systems for future generations. Free admission.

Preregistration is required. Contact andrew@ecga.org or call (978) 768-7241, ext. 22.

Beach Clean Up at Parker River NWR

Saturday, March 25th from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

This is a community effort to help clean up the refuge beach and raise awareness about beach litter. Anyone wanting to participate should show up at Lot 1 between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm. This event will be held rain or shine. Participants should wear warm clothes, sturdy shoes, and bring work or rubber gloves. Trash bags will be provided. Litter grabbers are available in limited quantities. Individuals, companies and clubs are encouraged to get together and volunteer their time for this worthy cause. For more information please call refuge staff member Jean Adams at (978) 465-5753 extension 208.

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.