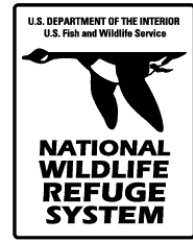


U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Join Us for Free, Fun, Programs! *Parker River National Wildlife Refuge* **March, 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, March 5th at 9:30 am; Sunday, March 6th at 1:00 pm; Thursday, March 10th at 9:30 am; Saturday, March 12th at 9:30 am; Sunday, March 13th at 1:00 pm; Saturday, March 19th at 9:30 am and Sunday, March 20th at 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.**

Nelson Island Tour

Held on the following days: Sunday, March 13th at 10:00 am, Monday, March 21st at 9:30 am; and Sunday, March 27th at 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.**

Merrimack River Eagle Festival

Saturday, March 5th 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

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 activities that include making an eagle magnet, 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! **Preregistration is NOT required for Eagle Fest activities.** Additional information about the Festival can be found here: <http://www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/wildlife-sanctuaries/joppa-flats/news-events/the-merrimack-river-eagle-festival>

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 March:

Sunday, March 6th at 1:30 pm: *Once Upon a Forest*: In this rousing, magical adventure filled with whimsy, laughter and charm, a host of fun-loving characters takes you on an unforgettable journey in a land called Dapplewood. Three friends, Abigail the wood mouse, Edgar the mole and Russell the hedgehog, find their tranquil lives disrupted when a chemical spill destroys Dapplewood. When the toxic spill causes their best friend to fall ill, the three pals set off on an extraordinary journey to save both their friend and their home. (1992; Rated G; run time: 71 mins.)

Sunday, March 20th at 1:30 pm: *Winged Migration*: This documentary presents an epic portrait of winter bird migration. Filmed on all seven continents over four years, the footage is brought together into one portrait of a journey that's uniformly arduous for all kinds of different birds. Rather than concentrating on statistics and facts, the film near-wordlessly portrays the sheer physical effort demanded of the birds on their disparate routes. Along the way, we see the many dangers they face, from man-made waste to a group of hungry crabs. (2003; Rated G; run time: 89 mins.)

Special Free Photographic Presentation:

Photographing Water in All Its Magical Forms

Saturday, March 12th at 1:30 pm

Think about all the different forms of water that can be captured with a digital camera: ice, raging rapids, ocean surf, fog, sea smoke, driving rain, dew on a spider web, spray from a whale's blowhole – even the exhaled breath of a wild animal on a cold winter day. What wonderful variety! This presentation, delivered by professional photographer Otha Sonnie, will address different techniques for shooting water, whether indoors or outside. He will explore various water subjects to look for; the equipment needed and shooting options.

Otha Sonnie has been a professional photographer for 40 years and has significant experience as a portraitist, photojournalist, and event photographer. He serves as the Education Coordinator and Series Lecturer at Hunt's Photo & Video.

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.

Kids' Story Hour

Monday, March 14th at 10:00 am and Monday, March 28 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. Please call (978) 465-5753; to register.**

Open House: Meet the Refuge Manager

Tuesday, March 29th at 7:00 pm

Come find out about what is happening at your local national wildlife refuge! Attend this free public program at the visitor center, during which the refuge manager, Bill Peterson, will provide an overview of the broad range of research, management activities, public programming, and special events that will occur at the refuge over the next year. Following the presentation, the manager and his senior staff will answer your questions. **No preregistration for this free program.** Auditorium capacity is limited to 85 people.

Monthly Book Club

March's Book Selection: *The Narrow Edge* by Deborah Cramer

Thursday, March 17th 6:30 – 7:30 pm, and Saturday, March 19th from 1:30 – 2:30pm

Discussion groups will meet on Thursday, March 17th from 6:30 – 7:30pm, and on March 19th 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.

Plover Warden Orientation at Parker River NWR

Saturday, March 19th, 11:00am – 1:00 pm

A Plover Warden orientation will be held on Saturday March 19th from 11 am to 1 pm at Refuge Headquarters, 6 Plum Island Turnpike. Plover wardens are posted at each end of the refuge beach to inform visitors about beach closure. They play an important role in minimizing disturbance to this threatened shorebird. The public is welcome to attend this meeting with no obligation to volunteer. **No preregistration required.** Call Refuge headquarters and ask for Jean Adams at ext. 208 if you want any further information or just show up to the orientation.

Beach Clean Up at Parker River NWR

Saturday, March 26th 9 am – 3 pm

A beach clean-up will be on Saturday, March 26 from 9 am to 3pm. 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 am and 3 pm. The event will be held rain or shine. Participants should wear warm clothes, sturdy shoes, and bring work or rubber gloves. Trash bags are 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 ext 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.