



Join Us for Free, Fun, Programs! *Parker River National Wildlife Refuge* **May, 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.

Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge - Behind the Scenes Tour!

Friday, May 4th; Monday, May 7th; Friday, May 18th, Monday, May 21st; all programs are 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Join a refuge ranger for a behind the scenes tour 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 wildlife habitats while learning how the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is managing this very special landscape for conservation. Consider bringing along binoculars and a camera. **The tour is limited to 8 participants;** no more than 4 individuals per sign-up. This is a vehicle-based tour, with limited stops on the refuge. This guided program is most appropriate for older teens and adults. Meet the ranger in the lobby of the Parker River NWR visitor center in Newburyport no later than 9:00 am OR in the Great Bay NWR parking lot in Newington, NH no later than 9:45 am. (Indicate location you prefer at time of registration.) 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. **Preregistration required.** For directions to the refuge, click on this link: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Great_Bay/visit/plan_your_visit.html

Behind the Scenes Refuge Tour of Parker River NWR

Held on the following days: Saturday, May 5th @ 9:30 a.m.; Sunday, May 6th @ 1:00 p.m.; Saturday, May 12th @ 9:30 a.m.; Saturday, May 19th @ 9:30 a.m.; Sunday, May 20th @ 1:00 p.m.; Saturday, May 26th @ 9:30 a.m.; and Sunday, May 27th @ 1:00 p.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. **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.

Woodcock Walk at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, May 5th @ 7:30 p.m.

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 on the deck of the visitor contact station at parking lot 1. Bring binoculars and a flashlight. Program is limited to 15 participants. Please plan to arrive 15 minutes prior to the program start time. **Preregistration required.**

Long Lasting Gardeners: An Ergonomic Approach

Tuesday, May 8th @ 6:30 p.m.

Susan Guest is an avid gardener, movement educator and fitness coach. With some simple landscape modifications, ergonomic tools and easy exercise techniques, you can retain strength and stability, improve fitness, and avoid injuries while gardening. This program will take place in the refuge visitor center auditorium. **NO preregistration for this program.** Sponsored by the Newburyport Horticultural Society.

Evening Program: State of the Monarch Butterfly

Thursday, May 10th from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

This special evening program will start with a wonderful film featurette about the charismatic monarch. Then, local monarch educator Katie Hone (*The Monarch Gardener*), will provide a presentation about the monarch's biology, their migration, threats and the current state of its population and conservation efforts that are underway. This program will take place at the refuge visitor center.

NO preregistration for this program.

Whip-poor-will Walk at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Friday, May 11th @ 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, May 12th @ 7:30 p.m.; Friday, May 18th @ 7:45 p.m.; Saturday, May 19th @ 7:45 p.m.; Saturday, May 26th @ 7:45 p.m.; and Sunday, May 27th @ 7:45 p.m.

Have you ever heard a strange bird singing in the background of 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 for the song of the whip-poor-will and other nighttime birds. Participants should meet Nancy in the Hellcat Parking Lot (on the refuge) 15 minutes before the program start time (see date-specific start times, above). Dress appropriately for weather conditions. **Preregistration is required;** enrollment limited to 15 people.

Photo Safari to Maudslay State Park

Saturday, May 12th @ 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

"April showers bring May (wild)flowers" or so goes the saying! Spend a couple of hours wandering along trails at this little jewel of a state park, located on the bank of the Merrimack River in Newburyport. We'll search for native wildflowers and other signs of spring. Meet in the park's parking lot. Note: Attendees are responsible for paying their own parking fee at Maudslay. **NO preregistration for this program.**

Special Photo Society Program: Wildlife & Nature Photography Presentation

Saturday, May 12th @ 1:30 p.m.

Massachusetts-based photographer Cynthia Rand will be "in the house" to lead a presentation featuring her wonderful images of wildlife and nature. Because she has spent considerable time there, her presentation is almost certain to include images taken on the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge! Not so long ago, Cynthia's images were featured in the refuge's popular "Artist of the Month" gallery in the visitor center – an exhibit that garnered quite a few "oohs and aahs" from refuge visitors.

The refuge's 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.**

What Do We Know About Whales?

Thursday, May 17th, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. at the refuge visitor center

During this fun, hands-on program we will learn all about whales. We will use different tools to help us understand how big adult whales get. Each participant will choose their own special whale. After coloring-in their whale, they will place it on the particular ocean it calls home. There will be a fun activity for each child to make and take home. "Friends of Whales" certificates will be given out at the end of the program. This program is appropriate for home-schooled and other children in grades K-3. Parent or adult chaperone must stay with their child during the program. Children and accompanying adults will find themselves joining in the fun activities. This program is limited to 15 children. Meet the program leader in the visitor center classroom. **Preregistration is required for this program.**

Great Bay Shoreline Cleanup

Saturday, May 19th, from 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

With the help of community volunteers, we can keep our bay clean. Volunteers will be guided by USFWS personnel to closed areas of the refuge where they will remove garbage and debris from the shoreline. Let's promote clean water and a healthy environment for wildlife and people! Groups and families are welcome. We advise wearing long pants, long sleeve shirts, and sturdy boots. Bring sunscreen, bug spray, a light snack and water. Supplies provided include trash bags, gloves, and data tracking sheets. Meet at the parking lot at Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge. **Sign up online at: <https://naturegroupie.org>.**

Endangered Species Day Celebration

Saturday, May 19th from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Celebrate Endangered Species Day with Parker River National Wildlife Refuge! Join us for fun crafts and games that teach about endangered species which live in our area. Planned activities include: build your own plover, Jeopardy! trivia game, beach sand discovery, and much more. Special events include:

- **Youth Beach Art Contest Presentation:** Artwork from the Youth Beach Art Contest will be on display. At 3pm, winners of the contest will be announced, and we will travel to Lot 1 Beach to install the winning signs.

- **Live Blandings Turtles:** Students from River Valley Charter School will present information about the Blandings turtles they have been raising in their classroom; and why these local turtles need our help.
- **Whales of the Gulf of Maine:** Two presentations discussing the whales of the Gulf of Maine, with special emphasis on right whales. Model whales will be available after the presentation for demonstration.
 - 1:00 p.m.: Targeted to adults
 - 2:00 p.m.: Targeted to young children
 - Both sessions suitable for all ages.

NO preregistration needed for this program. All activities will take place at the visitor center.

NEW! – Bicycle Tour of Great Bay NWR

Friday, May 25th 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:

http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Great_Bay/visit/plan_your_visit.htm

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.