

Join Us for Free, Fun, Programs!

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

October, 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.

Walk along the North Pool Dike as the refuge celebrates National Wildlife Refuge Week! That's right, from Saturday, October 7th thru Sunday, October 15th, refuge visitors will be able to walk along the North Pool Dike (between the North Pool Overlook and Hellcat). Enjoy this rare opportunity to view wildlife and their habitats in area of the refuge that is normally closed. Spread the word!

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge - Behind the Scenes Tour!

Held on the following days: Sunday, 10/1 @ 1:00 pm; Sunday, 10/8 @ 1:00 pm; Saturday, 10/14 @ 9:30 am; Sunday, 10/15 @ 1:00 pm; Tuesday, 10/17 @ 9:30 am; Saturday, 10/21 @ 9:30 am; Sunday, 10/22 @ 1:00 pm; Saturday, 10/28 @ 9:30 am; and Sunday, 10/29 @ 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.**

Kids' Nature Programs - Explore the Refuge

On these Mondays in October: 2nd, 16th, 23rd & 30th; each session from 10:00 - 11:30 am

Take your 3-5 year old youngster on a good old fashioned nature discovery walk. Meet at the refuge visitor center before driving together to the head of the day's trail on the refuge (no parking fee charged).

Each session will include a fall-themed walk on the refuge, for example: migration, cranberry bog, survival strategies, and fall foliage and seeds. Come dressed for the weather. If the weather is completely unsuitable for outdoor enjoyment, an indoor program comprised of crafts, games, and a story will be held instead. Enrollment is limited to 12 children. The parent or guardian must remain for the entire program. **Preregistration is required for this program. Registration can be for a single session or all four.**

Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge - Behind the Scenes Tour!

Held on the following days: Tuesday, 10/3; Saturday, 10/7; Friday, 10/13; & Friday, 10/27 – all from 9:00 am – 12:30 pm

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 14 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

Special Evening Film Screening: *The Million Dollar Duck*

Friday, October 6th, 7:00 – 8:30 pm

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. This film explores the eccentric nature of the contestants who enter each year for a chance at wildlife art stardom, while also reflecting upon the history and challenges facing the continued existence of this successful conservation program. This screening is being conducted as part of the refuge's celebration of National Wildlife Refuge Week. Film will start promptly at 7:00 pm in the refuge visitor center auditorium. **NO preregistration for this program.**

Special Guided Walk: Natural and Cultural History of Stage Island

Tuesday, October 10, 2-4pm (Rain date: Friday, October 13, 10 to 12am)

Join a refuge biologist and volunteer geologist/historian for an exploration of the newly opened Stage Island Trail. This 0.7 mile trail runs through six habitats, unique geological formations and is rich in human history. We will discuss barrier island formation, habitat management, human settlement history, and any wildlife and plants of interest. Time permitting, we will walk out to the beach at Lot 6. This will be a round trip hike of about 2 miles and is not suitable for young children. With a limited capacity of 12 participants, **preregistration is required.** Meet on the refuge at parking lot 6.

Plum Island Sunrise Photo Shoot

Saturday, October 14th @ 6:15 am

With the shorter days of autumn, it becomes a lot easier to get up "early" in order to photograph a Plum Island sunrise from the refuge beach! Join Ranger Poole and other members of the refuge's Photographic Society for this first-of-the-season organized effort to capture unique and compelling sunrise images. We'll meet on the deck of the visitor contact station at parking lot 1 (on the refuge). Note: In the event that the weather forecast looks particularly "unsupportive," cancellation will be communicated

through the refuge's Facebook page no later than **10:00 pm** on Friday, October 13th. **Preregistration is NOT required.**

Digital Photography 101 for Beginners!

Saturday, October 14th, 9:00 – 11:30 am

This free presentation is for the person who owns a digital camera (of any variety), but either doesn't know how to use it, or has been frustrated with their results. The presentation will provide a broad overview of the entire "digital workflow" – from taking the picture to editing images on a computer. Practical tips for achieving compelling images of nature and wildlife will be shared during the session. The presentation will occur in the refuge's visitor center auditorium. **Preregistration is NOT required.**

Special Photography Program: *The Lives of Loons*

Saturday, October 14th @ 1:30 pm

Our featured speaker is a photographer from southern NH named Kevin Talbot. Kevin has a wonderful presentation featuring his images of loons. In the past he's delivered his presentation at the NH Audubon Society and Exeter Town Hall. The show features about 150 images along with his "non-expert knowledge" of the birds. His goal is to pass along information pertaining to the different calls and signs of stress which we often unwittingly cause these animals, as well as their family life and common habits. By helping people to understand these birds better, Kevin hopes to help protect and preserve them for future generations. This should be a GREAT presentation.

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.**

NEW! Blue Mindfulness: Enjoy the Calming Impacts of Salt Marsh and Surf

Sunday, October 15th, 9:00 – 11:00 am

Our multi-tasking screen culture wearies and stresses us. A healing antidote, however, is as close as nature and your senses. Researchers have measured the healthful impacts of walking mindfully in natural settings (i.e., not just being outside, but being fully present in the moment), ranging from reduced blood pressure and lowered stress hormones to enhanced cognitive function. You may have heard of the Japanese practice of "Shin-rin Yoku" (literally translated as "forest bathing"). There is also a substantial body of research documenting the ways "blue mind"-- being on or near water -- amplifies well-being and provides a deep feeling of connection with nature. Come relax your mind and open your senses to the sounds, aromas, colors, textures, and movements of the blues and greens of salt marsh and ocean. Try "salt marsh bathing" (don't worry: no one has to get wet!), and learn simple sensory and mindfulness activities to calm and relax your mind whenever you visit the refuge. We will meet on the refuge – on the deck of the visitor contact station, which is located at parking lot 1. From there, we will caravan by car to Hellcat for a visit to the salt marsh and then to a nearby boardwalk for a gentle hike down to the beach. A maximum enrollment of 12. Appropriate for ages 16 and up. If the weather is inclement, the event will be cancelled. **Preregistration is required.**

Nelson Island Tour

Monday, October 16th, from 10:00 – 11:30 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. 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. **Preregistration is required.**

Introduction to Birding

Thursday, October 19th, 7:00 – 8:00 pm

Interested in birding? The Parker River National Wildlife Refuge is situated along the Atlantic Flyway and offers a world-famous location for birders. Help us celebrate the refuge's 75th year by becoming a birder, or if already a birder, hone your skills with tips from a recognized expert!

Bill Gette, former Director of Mass Audubon's Joppa Flats Education Center, has led natural history field trips for more than thirty years. In this lecture, he will describe why birding is so popular; review basic information every new birder should know to get started; outline a method for working through the identification process most effectively; explain why a sense of place and time is so important; and outline aids to bird identification, both physical and behavioral. Bill's lecture is co-sponsored by Friends of Parker River National Refuge, Inc. and Parker River NWR and is free to the public. This program will take place in the refuge visitor center auditorium. **No preregistration for this program.**

History Walk Across Stage Island

Saturday, October 28th, 10:00 am – Noon

Join refuge volunteer Ellie Bailey for a walk into the past on beautiful Stage Island. We'll meet on the refuge at Parking Lot 6. From there we'll hike along the island, stopping at historic sites to learn how human uses changed over time and what impact they had on the natural world. This is an "out and back" hike of about 1.5 miles along a dirt road, so please dress comfortably and safely for walking and for the weather. This guided 2 hour program is most appropriate for older teens and adults. Binoculars and/or a camera are recommended, but not required. Each session is limited to 12 participants, so **preregistration is required.**

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.