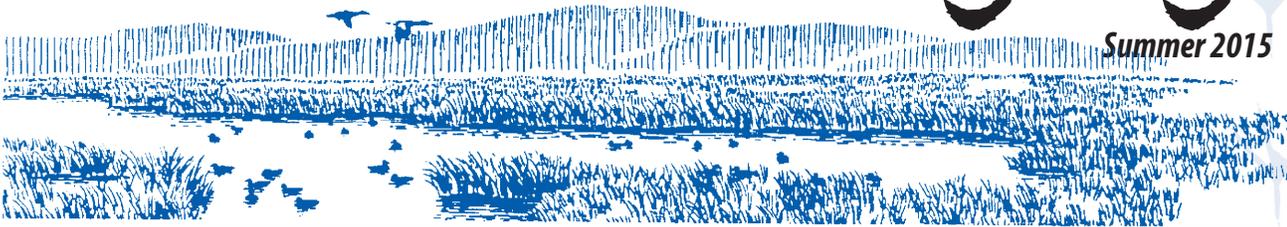


The Flyway

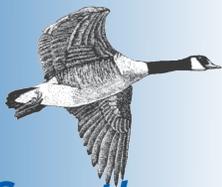
Summer 2015



Quarterly newsletter for Nisqually and Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuges

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Save the date!

Nisqually Watershed Festival will be held Saturday, September 26th at Nisqually NWR.

The Amazing Wood Duck, King of Summer Waterfowl

by Michael Schramm

The wetlands throughout the Refuge are known for their waterfowl. During the winter months, thousands of birds can be found covering every spot of water: Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler. Their colorful splendor is a ray of light during the cold, gray, rainy months. As sunny weather returns each spring and summer, the waterfowl move on to lands further north...

or so one might think. Though the seasonal wetlands dry up and water becomes scarce, some species come here explicitly for the summer months, and they are some of the most striking species. Fiery Cinnamon Teal and the more subdued Blue-winged Teal are fairly common. The Ruddy Duck, with its cyanic blue beak, is an occasional presence out amongst the cattails. But when it comes to the ornateness and elegance of plumage, experienced birders and those new to birding will both generally agree that the Wood Duck is king.

Wood Ducks arrive mid-spring, making a ruckus as they loop in and out of

the forest and fly in wide arcs over the Visitor Center pond. They are already paired up from the previous fall, so from the moment of their arrival they are looking for a nesting spot. While most duck species nest down at ground level amongst reeds and grass, the wood duck removes itself from the wetland to nest in trees. As they careen through the forest, they are searching for a hollowed out cavity to use: the rotting core of an old tree,



Wood Duck, photo by i'ina van Lawick

with the sort of opening left by a fallen limb. An old forest near a wetland is therefore a habitat requirement for Wood Ducks, and it has put them at odds with human-

ity. People, it turns out, also like to live near lakes and ponds. But, because the Refuge has a stand of rotund, old maple trees, Wood Ducks are naturally drawn to this place. They use claws on their feet to grab hold of the wood as they hang out on tree limbs or as they enter and exit the nest.

In addition to the many ideal trees, the Refuge has for many years main-

Continued on page 2

Wood Ducks

From page 1

tained a number of nest boxes. We have about 25 nest boxes on the Refuge, which visitors notice and often ask about. The boxes are located about 10 feet above the ground, have a large circular opening, and are affixed to the trunks of trees near some of the permanent waters adjacent to the Twin Barns Loop Trail. There is an art to the placement of nest boxes: Wood ducks have a natural tendency to lay their own eggs in the nests of other Wood Ducks, which in nature is advantageous as an insurance policy, guaranteeing successful reproduction even if one's own nest is predated by opportunistic scavengers like raccoons. But when nest boxes are placed too close together wood ducks become overzealous, overburdening each other's nests in a behavior called "nest dumping." If the number of eggs in a nest becomes too excessive to incubate, the entire clutch is lost. It is important to ensure nest dumping is kept to a minimum. Every year a group of our volunteers monitor how the boxes have been used while also performing maintenance, braving the occasional run in with a possum to fix damage, clean the interiors, and supply fresh wood chips.

Though Wood Ducks lay their eggs at the rate of one a day, the eggs all hatch simultaneously on the same day. They are born into a tree cavity lined with down plucked from their own mother's chest. It is a warm and safe environment, and you'd think the ducks would want to keep their young there as long as possible. Instead, after

The recovery of Wood Duck is considered one of the great examples of successful wildlife management. In the early 20th century, habitat loss in conjunction with unregulated hunting had driven Wood Ducks to the brink of extinction.

Published quarterly by the Friends for Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

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www.fws.gov/refuge/nisqually

www.fws.gov/refuge/grays_harbor

Volume 8, Number 2

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Save trees, think green.

To receive *The Flyway* electronically, email nisqually@fws.gov

only one day in the nest, the chicks are led by the calls of their mother to leap out into the forest below. Though they cannot fly, they weigh so little that they fall gently to earth. (They can fall over fifty feet without any problem). They scurry across the ground to the closest water, and from that moment on, their life is essentially a race to mature before being eaten.

The ponds behind the Visitor Center are complex and dynamic, nowhere near as peaceful or serene as they might appear to the human eye. While the Wood Duck chicks stay close to the shore, foraging on small plant

life and bugs, larger creatures lurk in shadows, waiting to eat the chicks. Bull frogs seek to swallow chicks from below and other birds take advantage of opportunities from above. Some of the

most beloved species on the Refuge, like Great Blue Herons, won't hesitate to eat a wood duck chick for a quick snack. For the creatures that live in the water, below the surface, the tables will soon be turned: as Wood Ducks mature, they become excellent divers and swimmers. Like Hooded Mergansers, Wood Ducks have a third, transparent eye lid that functions as a goggle beneath the surface. Consequently, they have no problem chasing down and catching the same creatures that used to be their predators. Vengeance is sweet!

The recovery of Wood Duck is considered one of the great examples of successful wildlife management. In the early 20th century, habitat loss in conjunction with unregulated hunting had driven Wood Ducks to the brink of extinction. Since conservation measures were implemented and perfected in the mid-twentieth century, their numbers have been consistently increasing (Wood Ducks have benefited from conservation efforts directed at other species as well: for example, the recovery of the beaver is credited with the creation of much Wood Duck habitat). This is great news for everyone who admires the beauty of this unique species. You can see Wood Ducks at the Refuge April through October. ✎

Following us on Facebook is a great way to keep your finger on the pulse of the Refuge! See beautiful wildlife photos, find out in real time about rare birds or new arrivals, and be the first to be notified about upcoming events, all in your newsfeed! Avoid impostor pages: to access our official Facebook page, be sure to click on the blue Facebook icon on our website.



Summer Programs

July

Sunday, July 5

Birds of a Feather: Take Flight on a Bird Walk

10am – 12 noon

Many species of bird, from the tiny Rufous Hummingbird to the majestic Bald Eagle, nest on the Refuge. Join experienced birder Nathanael Swecker for a guided walk full of the sights and sounds of one of the Refuge's largest treasures – the birds! Meet at the landing overlooking the pond at the Visitor Center.

Sunday, July 5

The Nisqually and Medicine Creek: Where Nature, Culture and History Converge

1pm – 2:30pm

Learn about the events surrounding the signing of the Medicine Creek Treaty; explore how the Nisqually people came to the Nisqually delta and how their lives changed with the settlement of Europeans. Lynn Corliss leads you down history's winding path, where you will discover important things about the people who enjoyed this land before you did. Meet at the flagpole in front of the Visitor Center.

Saturday, July 11

The Magical Forest

10:30am – 12 noon

The forest is teeming with life and magic, and there is always something new to see and hear: a surprise every day! This family-friendly walk explores the relationships that exist between plants, animals and other organisms, fostering a sense of value for nature and a desire to protect it. Embrace the beauty and wonder of the forest and its inhabitants! Meet at the Visitor Center.

Saturday, July 11

Raptors of the Delta

11am – 12 noon

The Peregrine Falcon, the Bald Eagle, the Northern Harrier, the Great Horned Owl: a variety of amazing raptors can be found on the delta, and each has a story to tell. Experienced birder Richard Cormier will reveal unique aspects of a raptor's journey through life in this short, illustrated program. Meet in the Visitor Center Auditorium.

Saturday, July 11

Water, Water Everywhere

1pm – 2:30pm

The Refuge is home to an amazing diversity of plant and animal communities. From the ancient maple trees in the riparian forest to the pickleweed growing out on the mudflats...what grows where is all about the type of water, the amount of water, and about how often water is found there. How does it affect everything else? Find out with Kim Gale Adelson. Meet at the Visitor Center.

Sunday, July 12

Home Sweet Home

11am – noon

Enjoy a short walk through the various habitats of the Refuge, exploring all there is to see! Along the way, hear some tales of the Squalli Absch natives, farmer Brown, and the events surrounding the Medicine Creek Treaty. Meet Sue Stone at the flagpole in front of the Visitor Center.

Sunday, July 12

Bugs on the Brain

1pm – 2:30pm

The richness and diversity of insects is an oft overlooked wonder of the Refuge, and it's easy to miss out on the wonders of their world! The nature walk will look at everything the Refuge has to offer, but with an emphasis on the evidence of insects and how they interact with the plants around us. Meet naturalist Sally Vogel at the Visitor Center.

Saturday, July 18

Amazing Animal Adaptations!

10:30am – 12:30pm

Through adaptations, animals have found ways to inhabit every environment on earth! Looking closely at the incredible traits animals have developed brings us to a deeper appreciation of the natural world. Visit our Critter Cart to see pelts and other artifacts up close, hear about these fascinating creatures, and ask questions; the perfect way to begin a visit to the Refuge! You can find the cart in front of the Visitor Center.

Sunday, July 19

Birds of a Feather: Take Flight on a Bird Walk

10am – 12 noon

Many species of bird, from the tiny Rufous Hummingbird to the majestic Bald Eagle, nest on the Refuge. Join experienced birder Nathanael Swecker for a guided walk

full of the sights and sounds of one of the Refuge's largest treasures – the birds! Meet at the landing overlooking the pond at the Visitor Center.

Sunday, July 19

Our Amazing Plant World

1pm – 2:30pm

Summer is the perfect time to experience the Refuge plant life is all its diversity! Join Dave Zink on a nature walk through the Refuge—all the while learning about plant-insect interactions, adaptations for survival and other interesting facts. You only live once: Stop to smell the flowers! Meet at the flagpole in front of the Visitor Center.

Saturday, July 25

Raptors of the Delta

11am – 12 noon

The Peregrine Falcon, the Bald Eagle, the Northern Harrier, the Great Horned Owl: a variety of amazing raptors can be found on the delta, and each has a story to tell. Experienced birder Richard Cormier will reveal unique aspects of a raptor's journey through life in this short, illustrated program. Meet in the Visitor Center Auditorium.

Saturday, July 25

The Magical Forest

1pm – 2:30pm

The forest is teeming with life and magic, and there is always something new to see and hear: a surprise every day! This family-friendly walk explores the relationships that exist between plants, animals and other organisms, fostering a sense of value for nature and a desire to protect it. Embrace the beauty and wonder of the forest and its inhabitants! Meet at the Visitor Center.

Sunday, July 26

Our Amazing Plant World

1pm – 2:30pm

Summer is the perfect time to experience the Refuge plant life is all its diversity! Join Dave Zink on a nature walk through the Refuge—all the while learning about plant-insect interactions, adaptations for survival and other interesting facts. You only live once: Stop to smell the flowers! Meet at the flagpole in front of the Visitor Center.

August

Saturday, August 1

Birds of a Feather: Take Flight on a Bird Walk

8:30am – 12 noon

Experience the thrill of seeing a Peregrine Falcon (the world's fastest bird) or of hearing a woodpecker pecking away (up to 20 pecks per second)! Join experienced birder David Richardson for a guided walk full of the sights

and sounds of one of the Refuge's largest treasures -- the birds! Meet at the landing overlooking the pond at the Visitor Center.

Saturday, August 1

Amazing Animal Adaptations!

1 pm – 3 pm

Through adaptations, animals have found ways to inhabit every environment on earth! Looking closely at the incredible traits animals have developed brings us to a deeper appreciation of the natural world. Visit our Critter Cart to see pelts and other artifacts up close, hear about these fascinating creatures, and ask questions; the perfect way to begin a visit to the Refuge! You can find the cart in front of the Visitor Center.

Sunday, August 2

Birds of a Feather: Take Flight on a Bird Walk

10am – 12 noon

Many species of bird, from the tiny Rufous Hummingbird to the majestic Bald Eagle, nest on the Refuge. Join experienced birder Nathanael Swecker for a guided walk full of the sights and sounds of one of the Refuge's largest treasures – the birds! Meet at the landing overlooking the pond at the Visitor Center.

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11am – 12 noon

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Sunday, August 2

The Magical Forest

1pm – 2:30pm

The forest is teeming with life and magic, and there is always something new to see and hear: a surprise every day! This family-friendly walk explores the relationships that exist between plants, animals and other organisms, fostering a sense of value for nature and a desire to protect it. Embrace the beauty and wonder of the forest and its inhabitants! Meet at the Visitor Center.

Saturday, August 8

The Magical Forest

10:30am – noon

The forest is teeming with life and magic, and there is always something new to see and hear: a surprise every day! This family-friendly walk explores the relationships that exist between plants, animals and other organisms,

fostering a sense of value for nature and a desire to protect it. Embrace the beauty and wonder of the forest and its inhabitants! Meet at the Visitor Center.

Saturday, August 8

Water, Water Everywhere

1pm – 2:30pm

The Refuge is home to an amazing diversity of plant and animal communities. From the ancient maple trees in the riparian forest to the pickleweed growing out on the mudflats...what grows where is all about the type of water, the amount of water, and about how often water is found there. How does it affect everything else? Find out with Kim Gale Adelson. Meet at the Visitor Center.

Sunday, August 9

Home Sweet Home

11am – 12 noon

Enjoy a short walk through the various habitats of the Refuge, exploring all there is to see! Along the way, hear some tales of the Squalli Absch natives, farmer Brown, and the events surrounding the Medicine Creek Treaty. Meet Sue Stone at the flagpole in front of the Visitor Center.

Sunday, August 9

Our Amazing Plant World

1pm – 2:30pm

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Saturday, August 15

Birds of a Feather: Take Flight on a Bird Walk

8:30am – noon

Experience the thrill of seeing a Peregrine Falcon (the world's fastest bird) or of hearing a woodpecker pecking away (up to 20 pecks per second)! Join experienced birder David Richardson for a guided walk full of the sights and sounds of one of the Refuge's largest treasures: The birds! Meet at the landing overlooking the pond at the Visitor Center.

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The Magical Forest

1pm – 2:30pm

The forest is teeming with life and magic, and there is always something new to see and hear: a surprise every day! This family-friendly walk explores the relationships that exist between plants, animals and other organisms, fostering a sense of value for nature and a desire to protect it. Embrace the beauty and wonder of the forest and its inhabitants! Meet at the Visitor Center.

Sunday, August 16

Birds of a Feather: Take Flight on a Bird Walk

10am – 12 noon

Many species of bird, from the tiny Rufous Hummingbird to the majestic Bald Eagle, nest on the Refuge. Join experienced birder Nathanael Swecker for a guided walk full of the sights and sounds of one of the Refuge's largest treasures – the birds! Meet at the landing overlooking the pond at the Visitor Center.

Sunday, August 16

The Nisqually and Medicine Creek: Where Nature, Culture and History Converge

1pm – 2:30pm

Learn about the events surrounding the signing of the Medicine Creek Treaty; explore how the Nisqually people came to the Nisqually delta and how their lives changed with the settlement of Europeans. Lynn Corliss leads you down history's winding path, where you will discover important things about the people who enjoyed this land before you did. Meet at the flagpole in front of the Visitor Center.

Saturday, August 22

Raptors of the Delta

11am – 12 noon

The Peregrine Falcon, the Bald Eagle, the Northern Harrier, the Great Horned Owl: a variety of amazing raptors can be found on the delta, and each has a story to tell. Experienced birder Richard Cormier will reveal unique aspects of a raptor's journey through life in this short, illustrated program. Meet in the Visitor Center Auditorium.

Saturday, August 22

The Magical Forest

1pm – 2:30pm

The forest is teeming with life and magic, and there is always something new to see and hear: a surprise every day! This family-friendly walk explores the relationships that exist between plants, animals and other organisms, fostering a sense of value for nature and a desire to protect it. Embrace the beauty and wonder of the forest and its inhabitants! Meet at the Visitor Center.

Sunday, August 23

Our Amazing Plant World

1pm – 2:30pm

Summer is the perfect time to experience the Refuge plant life is all its diversity! Join Dave Zink on a nature walk through the Refuge—all the while learning about plant-insect interactions, adaptations for survival and other interesting facts. You only live once: Stop to smell the flowers! Meet at the flagpole in front of the Visitor Center.

Saturday, August 29
***It's in Your Nature:
Exploring the Wild***

10am – 12 noon

From bitterns to butterflies, salmonberries to salmon fish, nature on the Refuge takes many forms. Join naturalists Art Pavay, Jan Kramer, and Cheri Greenwood on this nature walk that is sure to teach you something new about the natural splendor of the Refuge. Meet in the Visitor Center.

Sunday, August 30
***Birds of a Feather:
Take Flight on a Bird Walk***

10am – 12 noon

Many species of bird, from the tiny Rufous Hummingbird to the majestic Bald Eagle, nest on the Refuge. Join experienced birder Nathanael Swecker for a guided walk full of the sights and sounds of one of the Refuge's largest treasures – the birds! Meet at the landing overlooking the pond at the Visitor Center.

Sunday, August 30
Bugs on the Brain

1pm – 2:30pm

The richness and diversity of insects is an oft overlooked wonder of the Refuge, and it's easy to miss out on the wonders of their world! The nature walk will look at everything the Refuge has to offer, but with an emphasis on the evidence of insects and how they interact with the plants around us. Meet naturalist Sally Vogel at the Visitor Center.

September

Saturday, September 5
***Birds of a Feather:
Take Flight on a Bird Walk***

8:30am – 12 noon

Experience the thrill of seeing a Peregrine Falcon (the world's fastest bird) or of hearing a woodpecker pecking away (up to 20 pecks per second)! Join experienced birder David Richardson for a guided walk full of the sights and sounds of one of the Refuge's largest treasures—the birds! Meet at the landing overlooking the pond at the Visitor Center.

Saturday, September 5
***It's in Your Nature:
Exploring the Wild***

10am – 11:30am

The estuary is radiant with complex natural beauty; home to a multitude of insects, plants, amphibians, birds, and animals, all of them linked inextricably to create a single natural wonder! Learn about the big picture with naturalist Donna Snow. Meet in the Visitor Center.

Sunday, September 6
Our Amazing Plant World

1pm – 2:30pm

Summer is the perfect time to experience the Refuge plant life is all its diversity! Join Dave Zink on a nature walk through the Refuge—all the while learning about plant-insect interactions, adaptations for survival and other interesting facts. You only live once: Stop to smell the flowers! Meet at the flagpole in front of the Visitor Center.

Sunday, September 13
***Birds of a Feather:
Take Flight on a Bird Walk***

10am – 12 noon

Many species of bird, from the tiny Rufous Hummingbird to the majestic Bald Eagle, nest on the Refuge. Join experienced birder Nathanael Swecker for a guided walk full of the sights and sounds of one of the Refuge's largest treasures – the birds! Meet at the landing overlooking the pond at the Visitor Center.

Sunday, September 13
Home Sweet Home

11 am – 12 noon

Enjoy a short walk through the various habitats of the Refuge, exploring all there is to see! Along the way, hear some tales of the Squalli Absch natives, farmer Brown, and the events surrounding the Medicine Creek Treaty. Meet Sue Stone at the flagpole in front of the Visitor Center.

Sunday, September 13
***The Nisqually and Medicine
Creek: Where Nature, Culture
and History Converge***

1pm – 2:30pm

Learn about the events surrounding the signing of the Medicine Creek Treaty; explore how the Nisqually people came to the Nisqually delta and how their lives changed with the settlement of Europeans. Lynn Corliss leads you down history's winding path, where you will discover important things about the people who enjoyed this land before you did. Meet at the flagpole in front of the Visitor Center.

Saturday, September 19
The Magical Forest

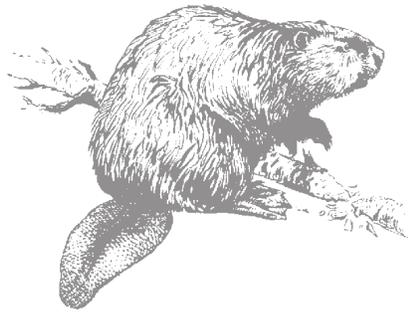
10:30am – noon

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Saturday, September 19 **Amazing Animal Adaptations!**

1 pm – 3 pm

Through adaptations, animals have found ways to inhabit every environment on earth! Looking closely at the incredible traits animals have developed brings us to a deeper appreciation of the natural world. Visit our Critter Cart to see pelts and other artifacts up close, hear about these fascinating creatures, and ask questions; the perfect way to begin a visit to the Refuge! You can find the cart in front of the Visitor Center.



Saturday, September 19 **Water, Water Everywhere**

1pm – 2:30pm

The Refuge is home to an amazing diversity of plant and animal communities. From the ancient maple trees in the riparian forest to the pickleweed growing out on the mudflats ... what grows where is all about the type of water, the amount of water, and about how often water is found there. How does it affect everything else? Find out with Kim Gale Adelson. Meet at the Visitor Center.

Sunday, September 20 **Our Amazing Plant World**

1pm – 2:30pm

Spring is the perfect time to experience the Refuge plant life is all its diversity! Join Dave Zink on a nature walk through the Refuge—all the while learning about plant-insect interactions, adaptations for survival and other interesting facts. You only live once: Stop to smell the flowers! Meet at the flagpole in front of the Visitor Center. ✨

Junior Duck Stamp Contest Yields Wonderful Art!

On March 25th, the Refuge hosted the 2015 Federal Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest for the state of Washington. The Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest is the culmination of the Junior Duck Stamp educational program. After studying waterfowl anatomy and habitat, students may articulate their new found knowledge by drawing, painting or sketching a picture of an eligible North American waterfowl species.

This year's contest for Washington, held at the Refuge, received 125 entries from across the state. The high quality artwork from all the young artists made for a very competitive contest. The judging panel consisted of five judges: Robyn Thorson (Regional Director, US Fish & Wildlife Service Northwest Region), Nate Pamplin (Assistant Director, WA Department of Fish & Wildlife), Shelley Carr (local artist), Dale Thompson (retired Chief Naturalist at Mt. Rainier National Park and local wildlife artist) and Ryan Perry (local wildlife artist and former two-time WA Junior Duck Stamp Best of Show winner).

Judges selected three 1st place, three 2nd place, three 3rd place, and up to sixteen Honorable Mention winners from four groups based on grade level (K-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12th grade). Out of all the 1st place winners in from each group, a Best of Show has been selected to represent Washington at the national competition held April 19 at the National Conservation Training Center in

Shepherdstown, West Virginia. This year's 1st place winners were Katie Beuhl, Vincent Li, Ryan Wang, Emma Carag, Hannah Ferdows, Jean Lin, Donna Ferdows, Ayaka Hicks, Sophie Tsai, Maria Schaljo, Kris Ahn, and Alina Bogachuk. The Best of Show winner selected from among these artists depicted a Wood Duck and was



Painted by Maria Schaljo, 16 years old, of Vancouver. In the national contest, her painting went on to rank in the top ten, which is an achievement to be very proud of! Congratulations to Maria and all the winners in this year's Washington Federal Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest!

The Federal Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest would not be possible without the efforts of volunteers, who assist both with the contest itself and with all the year-round program publicity and outreach throughout the state. A huge debt of gratitude is also owed to the Friends of Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge for their generous financial support.

The exhibit of this year's winners is now on display in the Visitor Center at Nisqually NWR. A traveling exhibit will travel throughout Washington State to colleges, libraries, and education centers, art galleries/museums, festivals, and fairs. If interested, contact Byrn Watson at (360)736-1082. ✨

Summer Lecture Series

The 28th Summer Lecture Series at Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge will be held the last four Wednesday evenings in July and every Wednesday evening in August.

Location: All lectures will be held in the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. Take I-5 exit 114 and follow signs to the Refuge.

July 8 The Other Bees

Sally Vogel
Naturalist, Educator
Nisqually NWR Volunteer
Peruvian Adventures

August 5 Working for Earth: How Climate Change is Affecting Us

Judy Todd
Writer, Poet, Founder
Nature Connect Northwest

July 15 Pelicans of Washington

Derek Stinson
Fish and Wildlife Biologist
Wildlife Diversity Division,
Washington Department of
Fish and Wildlife

August 12 The Life and Legacy of Billy Frank, Jr.

Trova Hefferman
Author; Director of The Legacy Project
Washington State Heritage Center

July 22 Ocean Acidification on the West Coast

Jay Manning
Former Director, Department of Ecology
Partner, Cascadia Law Group

August 19 Geologic History of the Nisqually Reach

Tim Walsh
Geologist, Washington Department of
Natural Resources

July 29 Polar Bears of the Chukchi Sea

Dr. Erik Regehr
Wildlife Biologist
Marine Mammal Management Program
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

August 26 Caspian Terns of Puget Sound

Joe Meche
Naturalist, Educator
North Cascades Audubon Society

Time: The lectures start at 7pm and will last approximately one hour followed by questions. Doors open at 6pm.

Entrance Fee: The Refuge entrance fee is waived for those attending the lectures. All lectures are free.

Special Accommodations: Persons with disabilities who require accommodations should contact the Refuge at (360)753-9467.

Limited Seating: The Visitor Center auditorium seats 100 people. Attendance is limited to seats available. Seating will be issued starting at 6pm on a first come basis, and you must be present. If there are not seats available when you arrive, you will not be able to attend the lecture.

The trails are open until sunset.

Additional Notes: On lecture nights, the Visitor Center will be open until 7pm and after the lecture. Thanks to Friends of Nisqually NWR for their support of the Summer Lecture Series. ✨

A Shorebird Festival Ideal in Every Way

By Alex Mesick and Davy Clark

In early May, there is one group that needs no invitation to Grays Harbor—the hundreds of thousands of shorebirds that bring people together from all over the region for the annual Grays Harbor Shorebird and Nature Festival! This year's Festival, held May 1-3, coincided perfectly with the spring shorebird migration, which peaked on May 3 when 51,917 shorebirds were counted at Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge.

Festivities at Hoquiam High School and festival headquarters included a variety of vendors, food, and great activities for kids and families. A wonderful sight to behold is the procession of the shorebirds, when masked and winged children make their way through the school celebrating this seasonal migration.

Keynote speaker and recipient of the 2012 National Marine Educators Award Alan Rammer delivered an enthralling talk about the beautiful and unusual creatures that call the waters and beaches of Puget Sound home. From sea cucumbers to moon snails, Alan's passion left no audience member unconvinced; our marine community is one full of marvelous and wondrous life forms. Alan takes his passion the extra mile and has spent his career connecting with communities and audiences usually unreached by marine educators. This is where Alan stands apart, he has a contagious passion for his work that he combines with an unwavering drive to connect with those that are all too often under served.

Congressman Derek Kilmer was on hand during the Saturday social and annual dinner to lend support and words of encouragement to those working on behalf of the Festival and the environment in Grays Harbor County. After the dinner, participants donated over \$3000

to the Grays Harbor NWR education fund managed by Grays Harbor Audubon Society. This money will be used to directly support classroom presentations and field trips to Grays Harbor NWR for local students. Thanks to all who contributed to this important effort in our community.

It is no small understatement to say that a group effort was needed to orchestrate this year's Festival, attended by over 1,350 visitors. Thank you to all the volunteers who came out for the weekend to support the event and make it possible each year. Also,

a big thanks to the Festival's sponsors including the City of Hoquiam, the Grays Harbor Audubon Society,

Nisqually and Grays Harbor NWRs, the Washington Conservation Corps, and the Washington Service Corps/AmeriCorps, the Port of Grays Harbor, and many others!

More details on the 2015 festival can be found at www.shorebirdfestival.com. This fall the shorebirds can be seen

on their incredible journey south from mid-July through September. ✎



The 2015 Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival Poster Contest Best of Show Winner, "Horizon Sunset," by 4th grade Simpson Elementary School student Graycen Grinols.



Congressman Derek Kilmer with AmeriCorps members Trinity Davis and Danika Didur-Tate at the Festival.

2015 Nisqually Watershed Festival Poster Contest

The Tenth Annual Nisqually Watershed Festival Poster Contest received over 100 entries from six local schools. The student's posters depicted the theme "Water and Wildlife".

The judges chose a 1st through 3rd place winner in each grade; a Best of Show was then selected from the 1st place winners. Congratulations to Best of Show winner Yuri Berebitsky, a fourth grade student from Olympia Waldorf School. His entry is entitled "The Eagle" and will be used on posters and fliers for the 2015 Nisqually Watershed Festival.



This year's Festival will take place on Saturday, September 26, 2015 at Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. This annual event celebrates the environmental, cultural, historical, and economic stories of this unique river basin in South Puget Sound. The poster contest is a great opportunity for local students to learn about their watershed, flex their creativity and take pride in seeing their original artwork on display for the public. On the day of the festival, students can take part in the Poster Contest Awards Ceremony as well as enjoy free nature walks, fun activities and live entertainment at the Refuge. ✎

These numbers tell one kind of story about the "Eye On Nature" program but another kind of story is best captured by the voices of the student participants. At the end of each field trip students were asked a number of reflection questions. One prompt that generated many thoughtful responses was "I strongly believe..." Responses to this prompt included:

Eye On Nature Field Studies: Looking Back on a Season of Field Trips

by Davy Clark

This spring season 650 students ranging from 3rd-10th grade participated in "Eye On Nature". This program is made possible through a partnership between the Refuge, the Friends of Nisqually NWR, the Nisqually River Education Project, The Chehalis Basin Education Consortium, and the Nisqually Reach Nature Center. Participating students visit the refuge and take part in citizen science activities as they learn about the diverse habitats and wildlife of the area.

Over 40 volunteers contributed 370 hours of time assisting 14 visiting school groups. This high level of volunteer engagement meant that students were consistently working in very small groups with a trained guide as they collected data to be uploaded to eBird. This online checklist program created by the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is a powerful tool that gives citizen scientists the opportunity to gener-

ate data that is used by land managers, ornithologists, and conservation biologists around the world. Between April and June students observed 94 species of birds and counted 6,375 individual birds!



"This place should be protected forever."
"I feel like this is the most important work I've done in school all year."
"I want to live at this Refuge." ✎

New and Renewing Friends Membership, Spring 2015

Senior/Student (\$15)

Ralph Norris
Ashton Howe

Individual (\$25)

Nicole B. de Recat
Karen Fraser
Belva Fisher
Alaka Lindsley
Susan E. Stone
Shirley Elliott
Wilfred P. Romalho
Mary Frey
Suna Todd

Family (\$50)

Brian Sullivan & Anna Leon-Guerrero
Karen Lewis
Nancy Stevens & Charles Davis
John & Elly Walkowiak
Charleen Ward

Ralph L. Kendall & Carol Wray Sturgill
Dave & Dolly Yates
Susan & Rob Ahlschwede
Karen R. Fraser

Supporting (\$100)

John Tubbs
Mary Goodsell

Friends of Nisqually NWR
is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
established in 1998 to promote
conservation of the natural and
cultural resources and fund
educational and outreach programs at
**Nisqually National Wildlife
Refuge Complex.**

Join Friends of Nisqually NWRC!

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

- Please send information on making Friends of Nisqually NWRC a beneficiary of my estate.
- Check here to receive an electronic version of *The Flyway* newsletter by email.

Individual/Family Memberships

- \$15 Student/Senior
- \$25 Individual
- \$50 Family
- \$100 Supporting
- \$250 Partner
- \$500 Patron
- \$1000 Benefactor

Corporate/Business Memberships

- \$250 Business Sponsor
- \$500 Community Partner
- \$1000 Sustaining Business
- \$2500 Corporate Patron
- \$5000 + Corporate Benefactor

Please make checks payable to: Friends of Nisqually NWRC, 100 Brown Farm Rd, Olympia, WA 98516

Your tax deductible contribution will help preserve the unique habitats, fish, and wildlife of the Nisqually Delta and the Grays Harbor Tideflats.

OFFICE USE Rec'd _____ Mo _____ New _____ Renew _____ Ent _____ Mld _____

**Friends of Nisqually
National Wildlife Refuge**

100 Brown Farm Road
Olympia WA 98516

Non-Profit Org
US Postage

PAID

Olympia WA
Permit #206

Return Service Requested

... conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people...

You are invited to the 26th Annual

Nisqually Watershed Festival!

Great fun for the Whole Family:

- ▶ Music and live animal presentations
- ▶ Tours and guided walks throughout the day
- ▶ Great educational displays from around the area
- ▶ Red Salmon tent, storytelling, and critters parades
- ▶ Marine touch tank
- ▶ Check out the Nature Explore Area for children
- ▶ And of course, the yummy food!

**Saturday, September 26
at Nisqually NWR
from 10am–4pm
All events are free
(except the food!)**

Join us and celebrate the cultural, economic, and natural resources of the Nisqually Watershed!

For more information, go to www.nisquallyriver.org
or call (360) 753-9467