

## **Happy Birthday to the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge!**

On December 21<sup>st</sup> 2014 The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge celebrated its 13<sup>th</sup> year as a wildlife refuge. To celebrate, 25 visitors took to the trail with Master Frontline Interpreter and Fish and Wildlife volunteer, Dorothy McLeer (A.K.A Humbug Marsha) to discover the “*Gifts of the Season*” on a brisk winter morning. The Humbug Marsh unit of the refuge was the location for celebration. The calls of Black-capped Chickadees and Goldfinches grasped our ears from the shrubbery on the Green Trail as we meandered through the woods, walnut grove and beside the Detroit River.

The gifts of the season of which Dorothy spoke were winter fruits and berries gobbled up and stashed by birds and other woodland critters. Fallen antlers from white-tailed deer are significant to rodents searching for a source of calcium. She spoke of the winter coats mammals don when the temperatures drop, much appreciated by the animals as they hunt, scavenge and sleep in frosty woods.

While the gifts of the season are abundantly scattered throughout the woods at Humbug, one can't help but to reflect on the great gifts nature brings to us humans each and every season. The sound of a songbird singing, oak leaves rustling and waterfowl calling may be taken for granted at times but they are truly extraordinary gifts. Protected areas are not only important for wildlife but for us as well. Nature can heal our spirits as we run ourselves ragged in our everyday lives. As naturalist Rachel Carson said, “*Those who dwell among the beauties and mysteries of the earth are never alone or weary of life*”. Someday in the near future Humbug Marsh will be open to visitors daily. Until that day comes we would like to invite you to mark your calendars for these open houses and plan to come and discover Humbug's gifts for yourself!

May 2: Open House at Humbug Marsh- Special International Migratory Bird Day celebration. Two hikes in the morning (times TBD) Open house- 12pm-3pm

June 6: Open House at Humbug Marsh- 1pm-4pm

July 15: Open House at Humbug Marsh- 1pm-4pm

August 1: Open House at Humbug Marsh- 1pm-4pm

September 26: Open House at Humbug Marsh- 1pm-4pm

For more information about events on the refuge contact [jennifer\\_braatz@fws.gov](mailto:jennifer_braatz@fws.gov) or 734-362-7736.



Volunteer, Dorothy McLeer interprets a the gifts of the seasons