

Happenings at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

Refuge Reporter

Volume 13, Issue 3

Summer 2010

Join Us for Kids' Free Fishing Day on Saturday, June 12

By Becky Goche, Visitor Services Manager

Grab your fishing poles! The annual Kids' Free Fishing Day is Saturday, June 12, 2010, at Ojibway Island in Saginaw. This will mark the thirtieth year of the contest on the Island! The fishing contest is for children aged 3- to 15-years-old and runs from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Anglers can register from 7:30 a.m. through 9:30 a.m. The day coincides with Michigan's Free Fishing Weekend when a license is not needed to fish.

All children who register receive a small prize. In addition, children can win rods and reels, tackle boxes and other fishing supplies with every fish they catch.

Partnering with the refuge to hold this event are the City of Saginaw, Dow Chemical Michigan Operations Fishing Club, Friends

of Shiawassee NWR, Saginaw County Parks and Recreation, U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps—H.R. Doud Division and Walt's Crawlers, Inc.

Interested in Helping?

We need several kid-friendly volunteers who can help out during the morning. Set up begins at 6:30 a.m. which is when we need folks with muscles to set up tables and a small tent. We need smiling and friendly faces to help with registration and to help with the awards ceremony which usually ends by 11:30 a.m. If you're more interested in working with the fish that the young, proud anglers will catch, we can use hands to help in the fish return and release area. Email me at Becky_Goche@fws.gov or call me (989) 759-1669 if you can help for an hour or two or would like more information.

Green Point Is Now Open on Weekends

Green Point has added weekend hours during the summer months. The center is now open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on weekends. These summer hours began on May 1 and will continue through September 12. Week day hours will remain 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., closed all federal holidays.

Several guides hikes and other programs are planned throughout the summer all over the refuge on weekends. Please note that the building may be closed while staff are doing these programs elsewhere on the refuge. Be sure to check out the calendar to see what programs interest you!

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Special Points:

- *The Center Road bridge over the Tittabawassee River is to be completed by mid-July. Once it's done, it will be much easier to access the Woodland Trail again.*
- *Green Point offers a fishing pole loan program on weekend afternoons for youth to use in pond. We practice catch and release.*

Junior Duck Stamp Winners Recognized at Ceremony on May 1

By Becky Goche, State Junior Duck Stamp Coordinator

Nearly a record number of entries received in Michigan's Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest this year. Students in grades K-12 submitted 405 pieces. The Best of Show artwork was drawn by Qianchi Zhang, age 13 of Ann Arbor. Her artwork featured a colored pencil drawing of Cinnamon teal. Each state's Best of Show artwork competed in the national contest on April 23 at the Science Museum of Minnesota in St. Paul.

Michigan's artwork was judged by a panel of 5 judges on March 25 at Green Point. Contest judges included Lucetia Manwaring, Constituent Services Representative for Congressman Dale Kildee; Barb Avers, Waterfowl and Wetland Specialist with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment; Mike Kelly with the Conservation Fund; Dr. Eugene Beckham, Professor and Chair of Mathematics and Natural Resources Department at Northwood University; and Daniel Golner, Regional Biologist with Ducks Unlimited.

On Saturday, May 1, all first through third place winners were honored at an awards ceremony held at Green Point. Over half of the 36 winners participated

in the ceremony with their friends and families. Friends of Shiawassee NWR provided a cake decorated with the Qianchi's artwork.

You can view the first place winners' artwork and a list of all the other winners on the refuge website.



A pair of Cinnamon teal by 2010 Michigan Best of Show winner, Qianchi Zhang, age 13.

Bring Your Toddler to Green Point's "Stories from Nature" Program

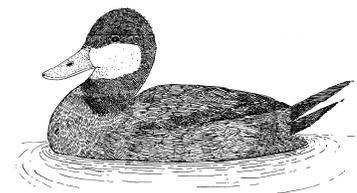
By Becky Goche, Visitor Services Manager

Come enjoy an hour of stories and fun once a month at Green Point. **Stories from Nature** is for young children and their parents, grandparents and/or caregivers. Each month will feature a different animal and/or nature theme. We will read our stories under the shade trees near the small waterfall or indoors if the weather is too hot or inclement. Of course we will do other fun stuff like scavenger hunts, hikes and maybe even a craft.

Stories from Nature is free and begins at 10:00 a.m. and lasts for one hour. Be sure to bring your own blanket to sit upon. Dates are:

- Wednesday, June 16
- Wednesday, July 7
- Wednesday, August 4

After the story hour, children and adults are welcome to explore Green Point on their own or even bring a sack lunch to enjoy on your blanket. Come on down for some summertime fun! If you have questions, please call Green Point at (989) 759-1669.



A Walk in the Woods

By Joanna Rogers

Hello again! Some of you may remember me from last summer as one of the CIP interns working at the refuge. I had such a great time helping out at Green Point Environmental Learning Center last summer, that Becky and Tom haven't been able to get me to leave yet!

I have been volunteering to do a series of walks at the refuge over the course of the winter and spring, and I would like to tell you some of the highlights of those walks.

First, you never know what to expect. At least I don't! One time I arrived to find about 30 boy scouts bringing their adults along for the hike, as well as several hard core outdoors-men wanting doctorate level information and the correct spelling of the Latin names for the different things we saw. Okay, that might be a slight exaggeration, but it was a very diverse group! Other times I have had as few as one or two people show up, which is fantastic in it's own right, because then I can format the walk directly to their needs and wants.

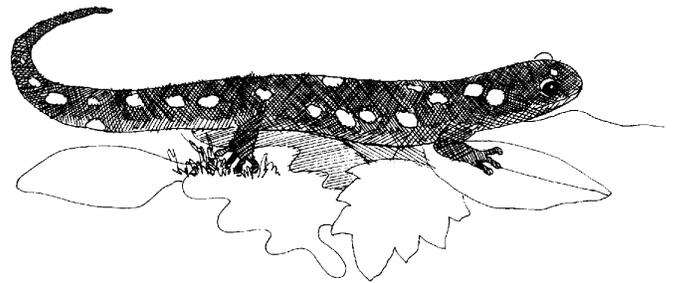
A young couple with two kids attended one walk I hosted last fall, and the son was very interested in salamanders. Seeing that this was the most important thing in the world to him at the moment, the walk quickly became a "lets find every rotting log and roll it over to have a look" adventure. Unfortunately, it was late in the season for salamander hunting, but we did find ants, centipedes, millipedes, grubs, beetles, snakes, worms, acorns, shells, and a host of other creepy crawlers! They also gained the knowledge of where and how to look for salamanders, and learned how important it is to put the logs back in place to maintain the habitat for the host of other critters that use them. I truly hope the family will come back and look again this summer.

One of my favorite things about hosting these walks is I always have the opportunity to learn something new. I have learned about the blue beech (a tree that has smooth rippling bark, that looks like muscles running up and down it's trunk), you can make jelly out of Queen Ann's Lace flower petals, the ins and outs of working at a barber shop, you can keep chickens inside

Saginaw, and the caps that come off acorns can keep almost every child occupied for hours.

I have had a wonderful time on every walk that I have hosted, and none of them ever turn out the same. There have been deer, geese, swans, sandhill cranes, turkey vultures, woodpeckers, a list of small birds too long for me to write down here, snakes, turtles, raccoons, frogs, crayfish, poison ivy and more that I have been able to show people, but most of those things won't stay in place so I can show them off the next week. I guess you never know what you will run into when you take a walk in the woods!

If you can't attend a hosted walk, you can always enjoy the trails on your own. The trails at Green Point Environmental Center are open every day, all daylight hours. There are maps of the trails in the building, and you can stop and pick one up to take with you. If the building and/or gate is closed, you can still enjoy the trails, just park along the side of the road. The trail head is around the back of the building. Oh, and if you roll over any logs, please put them back in place before you go, and let us know if you find any salamanders!



“I Found a Fawn and I Think It’s Been Abandoned”

By Tom Horb, Park Ranger



We get several calls this time of year from well-intentioned people who believe that they’ve found an abandoned fawn and wonder what they should do. We have even had seasoned deer hunters come in after hiking our trails to tell us about an abandoned fawn lying near the path and want us to come out and rescue it. Here’s a word of advice—
Leave the fawns alone!

Hikers and other nature enthusiasts should remember that it is natural for a fawn to be alone. It’s very likely that the fawn’s mother is hidden nearby, watching. In most cases, an “abandoned” fawn is not abandoned at all, and taking it away is a mistake.

Deer are very good mothers. They do leave their young alone for long periods of time, though. A doe will hide from other deer while giving birth. She will also stay away during the first weeks of the fawn’s life.

The doe hides the fawn most of the time except when it’s nursing.

Fawns have little or no attracting odors for a few days after being born. The mother will even eat the fawn’s droppings and urine to keep the area free of scent that attracts predators. That’s why we always tell visitors that it’s ok to observe the fawn, but not to touch it. It’s best to leave the area soon after you locate the fawn so that predators won’t be attracted to your human scent.

In this part of Michigan, most fawns are born around early to mid-June. Though very quiet and still for the first few days of its life, a fawn soon begins to move around and forage. Of course, it still nurses to supplement its diet. As the fawn gets bigger and stronger, it grows more bold and starts to venture away from its mother. In June, we very often observe fawns at Green Point, sometimes “playing” near the building or more often along the trails.

Want to learn more about fawns and possibly see one in its natural environment? Join me for a “Fawn Hike” on Sunday, June 20, beginning at 9:30 a.m. This hike is open to all ages.

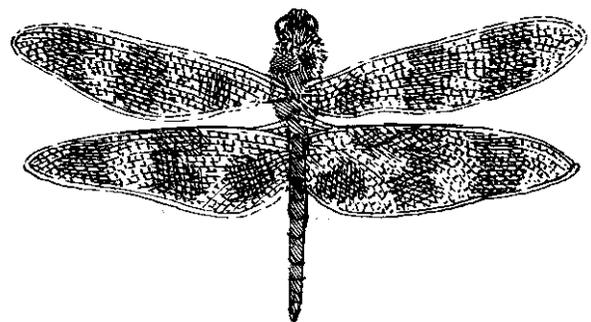
Children to Investigate Animal Mysteries at Habitat Detectives Camp

By Becky Goche, Visitor Services Manager

On July 21, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the **Habitat Detectives Camp** will be held for 5- to 7-year-olds. Children will become detectives and investigate animal mysteries as they explore the different habitats found at Green Point. Lots of fun activities and hikes are planned. Children need to bring a sack lunch. Please register by July 19.

To register for the camp or for more information, please call Green Point at (989) 759-1669. Parents are welcome to drop off their children or spend the day with them. Children should wear clothes and shoes

that can get dirty. No sandals, please. We also recommend mosquito repellent, sun screen and a hat.



Friends of Shiawassee NWR Update

By Chuck Hoover, Friends Board

The Friends of Shiawassee NWR have been busy working with the refuge in obtaining and administering grants of funds for special projects at the refuge. The big funding projects of improving the roads and pedestrian trails that provide access into the refuge are still on hold as monies are found that relate to these projects. This includes the county roads that will lead into our new auto tour route, the roads and trails into Green Point ELC and the Woodland Trail system at the end of Stroebel Road. However, the Friends group is also involved in many other programs that bring people from our community into the refuge. These include our Nurturing Nature Programs on the first Wednesday of the month, the 5K Wild Goose Chase, Kids Free Fishing Day, and others. Our new project will be to provide service to the refuge visitors on weekends when the refuge office is usually closed. Now visitors will be able to stop in and meet a Friend who is serving as a Welcome/Tour Guide with information on what folks can see on their visit to the refuge.

Recently we sent out a survey letter to our membership with both a place to donate funds to our Friends operation and projects, and to fill out a survey of time that you may be able to volunteer on our programs and projects. Refuge Friends may serve both on our Friends programs and projects and/or be trained to join in the Refuge Volunteer projects under the guidance of the refuge staff. Please return your survey forms and let us contact you with details as to where, when, and why we are involved in these programs. You won't be committed to work until we talk to you and a project and time required is agreed upon. The key projects that need help now are "Kids Free Fishing Day at Ojibway Island on June 12th, serving as a Visitor Welcome/Tour Guide, help operate the Nature Store, or work in our concession booth on refuge events. We have many people as Friends and we can spread out the work and volunteer time on our projects.

Auto Tour Update

Construction on the refuge auto tour route began in early May, 2010. The construction process will take most of 2010 and may impact some refuge programs like visitor use of the Ferguson Bayou Trail and goose and deer hunting. Planned opening of the route will be Spring 2011.

REFUGE REPORTER

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Volume 13, Issue 3

Editor: Becky Goche

Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

Established in October, 1953 and administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Shiawassee NWR provides resting, nesting and feeding habitat for waterfowl and other birds. Its mission is to preserve or manage an undeveloped expanse of floodplain forest, marshes, rivers, and associated habitat within an agricultural and urban landscape through habitat management, encouraging public stewardship, educational programs, and private lands activities.

Refuge Manager—Steve Kahl

Assistant Refuge Manager—Ed DeVries

Visitor Services Manager—Becky Goche

Biological Technician—Donald Poppe

Private Lands Biologist—Michelle Vander Haar

Park Ranger—Tom Horb

Park Ranger (Law Enforcement)—Joe Hughes

Administrative Officer—Mary Ann Gillette

Maintenance Worker —Ken Schimp

Engineering Equipment Operator—David Peters

Friends of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

A nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization established in 1999 to promote the preservation of the natural and historical resources of the Refuge, foster its use and enjoyment by the public consistent with the protection and preservation of its environment, and engage in such educational, scientific and civic activities as will assist the management of the Refuge in carrying out its mandates.

Refuge Website: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/shiawassee>

Shiawassee NWR
6975 Mower Rd.
Saginaw, MI 48601
Phone: 989-777-5930
Fax: 989-777-9200
Hours: M - F, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

We're on the web!

[Http://www.fws.gov/midwest/shiawassee](http://www.fws.gov/midwest/shiawassee)



Kids Free Fishing Day is June 12 at Ojibway Island

Got a Kayak? Join Us for Kayak Trips of the Refuge on the Cass River

By Becky Goche, Visitor Services Manager

Have you been looking for a spot to go kayaking in mid-Michigan? How about joining us on the Cass River which flows through the refuge? This kayaking trip is geared for people who already have some kayaking experience. This will be an out-and-back adventure. In other words, you will be paddling against the river's current for half of the trip!

The first guided kayak trip will be Saturday, June 5, 2010, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Bring your kayak and meet at the refuge's Cass River Boat Launch, on the north side of the river, south of Saginaw on Highway M-13. Refuge Volunteer Maureen Tulip and Park Ranger Tom Horb will lead the tour. Two options will be available to kayakers. The first option will be a short route, starting at the launch to the Shiawassee

River and return, lasting about 3 hours. The second option will take kayakers farther into the Shiawassee River and last about 5 hours.

The second guided kayak trip on the Cass River will follow the same format and take place on Saturday, July 17, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Reservations for either trip are required since space will be limited to about 6 kayaks each. Call Green Point at (989) 759-1669 to save your spot. Please note that you will be required to wear a PFD to participate in the tours. In addition, you may want to bring water, snacks, sunblock, binoculars, camera, mosquito repellent, water shoes, field guides, etc. In the event of rain or other adverse weather, the tours will be canceled.

Shiawassee NWR Summer 2010 Calendar of Events

Tracking Turtles on the Refuge

June 2, 7:00 p.m.

Green Point ELC

Blanding's turtles, with their bright yellow chins and throats, are in decline from Nova Scotia to Nebraska. In the summers of 2008 and 2009, refuge staff and volunteers researched for reasons why. Joanna Rogers a refuge intern, shares what was learned and demonstrates the tracking equipment used to find the "marked" refuge turtles. Admission for the program: \$2, FREE for Friends of Shiawassee NWR members.

Cass River Kayak Tour #1

June 5, 9:00 a.m.

Cass River Boat Launch at Highway M-13

Bring your kayak and PFD for a guided refuge tour with Park Ranger Tom Horb and Refuge Volunteer Maureen Tulip. Space is limited and registration is required. Call Green Point (989) 759-1669 to sign up and for more information.



National Trails Day

June 5

Any Refuge Trail

Get out and enjoy some of the refuge's over 13 miles trails!

Kids' Free Fishing Day

June 12, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Ojibway Island, Saginaw

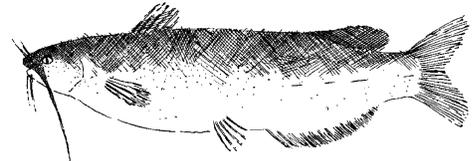
A fishing contest for children ages 3 to 15. Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. Lots of prizes can be won! Bring a fishing pole and tackle.

Family Fishing Day

June 13, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Green Point ELC

Come fish with your family during Michigan's Free Fishing Weekend; no license is required. Bring your own pole. Bait provided.



Stories from Nature

June 16, 10:00 a.m.

Green Point ELC

Young children and their families are invited to join us for nature stories, crafts and a hike. Each month will feature a different theme.

Fawn Hike

June 20, 9:30 a.m.

Green Point ELC

Join Park Ranger Tom Horb for a hike on Green Point's trails as you look for fawns and other wildlife. All ages are welcome.

Fourth of July Holiday

July 4 & 5

All offices are closed.

Stories from Nature

July 7, 10:00 a.m.

Green Point ELC

Young children and their families are invited to join us for nature stories, crafts and a hike. Each month will feature a different theme.

River Exploration Hike

July 10, 9:30 a.m.

Green Point ELC

Join Park Ranger Tom Horb for a hike along the Tittabawassee River. Learn about some of its history and the wildlife that call it home. Bring mosquito repellent.

(Over for more programs)

Cass River Kayak Tour #2

July 17, 9:00 a.m.

Cass River Boat Launch at Highway M-13

Bring your kayak and PFD for a guided refuge tour with Park Ranger Tom Horb and Refuge Volunteer Maureen Tulip. Space is limited and registration is required. Call Green Point (989) 759-1669 to sign up and for more information.

Sunday Stroll

July 18, 9:30 a.m.

Green Point ELC

Want to hang out with Green Point's wildlife and recharge in nature? Try a leisurely walk along Green Point's trails with Park Ranger Tom Horb. All ages are welcome.

Habitat Detectives Camp

July 21, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Green Point ELC

This day camp is geared for 5- to 7-year-olds. Children will investigate the different habitats through fun, hands-on activities.

Stories from Nature

August 4, 10:00 a.m.

Green Point ELC

Young children and their families are invited to join us for nature stories, crafts and a hike. Each month will feature a different theme.

Habitat Exploration Hike

August 7, 9:30 a.m.

Green Point ELC

Explore Green Point's different habitats and the wildlife that live there. Park Ranger Tom Horb will be your guide.



Sunday Stroll

August 15, 9:30 a.m.

Green Point ELC

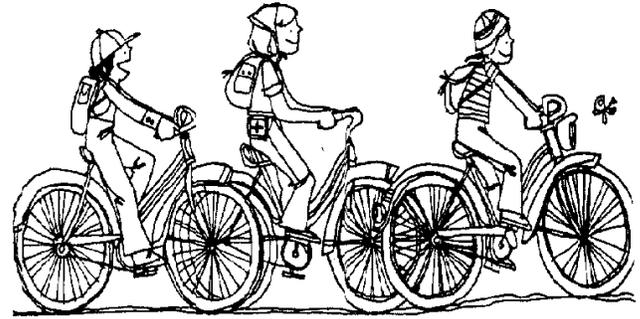
Go on a leisurely walk along Green Point's trails with Park Ranger Tom Horb. All ages are welcome.

Guided Bicycle Tour

August 21, 9:30 a.m.

Evon Road

Park Ranger Tom Horb will lead a guided bicycle tour through a portion of the refuge that is normally closed to visitors. The tour will last about 2 hours. Mountain bikes or those with wide tires work best on the gravel roads. Dress for the weather and bring your binoculars, cameras and mosquito repellent.



Sunday Stroll

August 29, 9:30 a.m.

Green Point ELC

Go on a leisurely walk along Green Point's trails with Park Ranger Tom Horb. All ages are welcome.

***Plan ahead for bad weather! Please note that events will be cancelled in the event of local travel advisories and/or severe weather conditions.**

All programs are FREE unless otherwise noted. For more information call Green Point Environmental Learning Center, (989) 759-1669 or visit the refuge's website at www.fws.gov/midwest/shiawassee

Join the Friends of Shiawassee NWR Today!

FREE Membership includes the following benefits...

- Joining a local constituency in support of the development and operation of the refuge
- Subscription to the *Refuge Reporter*, the quarterly newsletter from the refuge
- FREE admission to monthly *Nurturing Nature Wednesday Series* programs
- 10% discount on Friends merchandise
- Opportunities to participate in programs and volunteer for projects that help the refuge

To become a member of the “Friends of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge” you must agree to support the mission and goals of the group, abide by the current and future bylaws if amended, and sign the following disclaimer. *“I acknowledge that I am participating in “Friends of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge” (Friends) activities at my own risk, and that Friends has made no warranty or representation, expressed or implied, regarding safety of conducting any activity. I expressly release and hold harmless Friends and their officers, directors, employees, and agents from and for any and all claims, demands, actions and causes of action whatsoever on account of any loss, damage or injury to person or to property suffered or incurred by me in connection with the activity or any aspect of it, including, but not limited to, any transportation arranged by, paid for, or provided by Friends. By signing below, I (we) acknowledge that I (we) have read and understand this form and that the statements I (we) have made are true.”*

Signature(s) and Date: _____ Date: _____

Parent’s signature if member is under age 18: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Friends’ Volunteer Opportunities

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assisting with refuge events | <input type="checkbox"/> Helping with workshops |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doing outreach activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Leading walking tours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assisting with Nurturing Nature | <input type="checkbox"/> Developing trails |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing newsletter articles | <input type="checkbox"/> Helping with simple maintenance projects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing/developing grants | <input type="checkbox"/> Staffing Store |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serving as Committee member | <input type="checkbox"/> Researching/Ordering merchandise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leading children’s activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please list: _____ |

Send membership form to:
Friends of Shiawassee NWR
P.O. Box 20129
Saginaw, MI 48602

If you wish to make a financial donation, please make check payable to “Friends of Shiawassee NWR.”