

Refuge Reporter

Volume 15, Issue 1

Winter 2011/2012

Changes in the Friends Organization—We Need Your Help

by Chuck Hoover & Susan Scott

The Friends of Shiawassee NWR are reorganizing their leadership of this group. The untimely death of Wilfrid (Wil) Hufton on October 5, 2011 left a vacancy in his position as Treasurer of the Friends. Wil had served faithfully for several years and not only kept track of the finances, but administered the thousands of dollars in grants that the Friends acquired for projects in support of the refuge. He also fulfilled all the required documentation, reports, and filings on a timely basis. Wil was a true friend and a great gentleman and he will be sorely missed by all of us.

The second vacancy in the ranks of the Board of Directors will be the end of service by Chuck Hoover, who as President has reached his term limit according to our by-laws (3 consecutive 3 year terms).

We usually meet once a month to go over

business and make plans. The meetings last 1-2 hrs depending on the amount of business before the board. You do not need any specific skills, but someone with accounting or bookkeeping experience would be most helpful for the Treasurer position.

The board does help the refuge with projects such as Kid's Fishing Day, the Wild Goose Chase, Nurturing Nature, Friends Bookstore and the Wildlife Guides Program. We hope that some of you might want to become more involved and help on the Board.

If you have any questions about what we do, please feel free to contact me - Susan Scott at (989) 791 9270 or SuHun-Sco@aol.com with Shiawassee in the subject line.

Refuge Goose Hunt Summary

The refuge offered goose hunting from October 8—27. Hunting was available on Saturdays, Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. The first two days were reserved hunts whereby hunters applied through the Michigan DNR. Other hunts who were not on the reserved list were able to hunt on standby. There were 18 blinds available for hunters this year. There was

not a single day, including the reserved weekend, when all blinds were filled.

Hunters could take up to two Canada geese per day. Altogether, there were a total of 259 people who hunted. They harvested a total of 135 geese. The overall blind success was 26%.

Inside this issue:

<i>Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid</i>	2
<i>Let's Talk Turkey</i>	2
<i>Volunteers Wanted</i>	3
<i>2011 Trail Closures</i>	3

Special Points:

- *Be sure to check out trail closures for deer hunting during December inside.*
- *Interested in trying out snowshoes? You can check out snowshoes at Green Point ELC during normal business hours for use on Green Point's trails. Staff will give you a quick overview of how to use them. Please note that there needs to be at least 6 inches of snow on the ground to use them. Call (989) 759-1669 for more information.*

Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid Topic of January's Nurturing Nature Wednesday Series Program

By Zac Gilna, *Biological Technician*



The Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid Recovery Plan is taking root at the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. Developed and implemented by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Ser-

vice, the plan calls for the restoration of declining populations of the state endangered Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid within Michigan and the other five states that it's found in. This summer, restoration efforts for the orchid at the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge began with taking a root sample, harvesting the seed, constructing seed packets, choosing sites for planting seeds, and then planting at the chosen sites.

Zac Gilna, a participant in the project, will discuss each of these steps of the restoration process during the Nurturing Nature Program on January 4th. Zac is a temporary Biological Science Technician at the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge and is currently a Wildlife Biology undergrad at the University of Michigan – Flint. He's been fascinated with native plants and their importance for wild animals ever since childhood and was more than happy to take on the responsibilities tied to the restoration efforts of the orchid project. During his presentation, he will elaborate on these responsibilities along with the steps of the project and some of the challenges he faced while implementing the project as well.



Let's Talk Turkey at the February Nurturing Nature Wednesday Series Program

by Eric Dunton, *Wildlife Biologist*

On February 1, 2012, Eric Dunton, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wildlife Biologist at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge will present information on the history and ecology of Wild Turkeys. One of the greatest wildlife conservation success stories in the history of North America wild turkeys have rebounded from extremely low populations levels at the end of the 1800's to millions of birds across North America. The presentation will cover the history of wild turkeys in North America, restoration efforts, and will discuss general ecology of wild turkeys.

Prior to joining the Shiawassee NWR staff in December of 2010 Eric worked as a Wildlife Research Biologist with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

and served as the statewide wild turkey biologist for Minnesota.



Photo courtesy of Stephen Bauer, National Wild Turkey Federation.

Volunteers Wanted to Serve as Wildlife Guides Along the Wildlife Drive

by Susan Scott, Friends Board

As many of you know, the Wildlife Drive opened in July of this year after suffering delays due to eagles nesting alongside the route and then flooding that destroyed a portion of the road's surface. We were unable to get the "Wildlife Guides" program completely off the ground and are going to take the time this winter to revamp the program. We plan to set up trainings in a timely manner so we can attempt to cover the observation decks along the Wildlife Drive on weekends.

Perhaps you are a retired teacher? Or maybe you have experience organizing people or programs? We are looking for these types of volunteers to help Ed Becker develop and coordinate the training. In addition, we need people to teach the class to other potential Wildlife Guides.

One of our guides who worked one of the observation decks during the Refuge Open House Weekend had this to say in an email afterwards:

"I had a great time volunteering at the Shiawassee

River platform...I had a chance to chat with people. I thought 4 hours might be longish and I might need to read my book, but no! It was a lot of fun to see the blue heron carefully moving his leg to stalk its prey. It was fun to listen to the egrets sound like they were gargling as they flew. What a song!"

If you become a wildlife guide, you, too, might have a similar experience! What fun!

Please let me know if you are interested in helping the Friends group with the Wildlife Guides program. I would love to hear from you! You can reach me at 989 791 9270 or SuHunSco@aol.com. Please put Wildlife Guides in the subject line.

2011 Refuge Trail Closures Due to Hunting

Woodland Trail at Stroebel Road: December 1 – 5, December 9 – 12, and December 27 – 31.

Ferguson Bayou Trail at Curtis Road: December 1 – 5, December 9 – 12, and December 27 – 31.

Cass River Unit in Bridgeport Township: December 1 – 5, and December 27 – 31.

REFUGE REPORTER is published quarterly by the Friends of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge for the refuge.

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

Refuge Manager—Steve Kahl

Assistant Refuge Manager—Ed DeVries

Visitor Services Manager—Becky Goche

Private Lands Biologist—Michelle Vander Haar

Wildlife Biologist—Eric Dunton

Biological Technicians—Zac Gilna, Chris Haggard, Kile Kucher

Park Ranger (Law Enforcement)—Kevin Shinn

Administrative Officer—Mary Ann Gillette

Maintenance Worker — Keith Jensen

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.

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)



Friends Seeking Volunteers for Wildlife Guides Program

Time for Students to Draw Ducks, Geese and Swans

By Becky Goche, Visitor Services Manager

It's time to start working on your entries for this year's Federal Junior Duck Stamp Contest. Thousands of students nationwide participate in this program and art contest each year. In 2011, 393 students in grades K through 12 participated in Michigan.

All artwork must be postmarked by March 15, 2012. Students at the state level are judged in four groups according to grade level: Group I: K-3, Group II: 4-6, Group III: 7-9, and Group IV: 10-12. Three first, second, and third place winners are selected for each group. In addition, 16 honorable mention winners are picked in each group. Judges select the "Best of Show" from the 12 first place winners, which is then submitted to the national Junior Duck Stamp Contest. The first place design from the national contest is used to

create the Junior Duck Stamp for the following year.

All entries will receive certificates of participation and winners will receive special ribbons and prizes. All artwork will be returned to the students or schools. The Best of Show entry is included in a national traveling display. In addition, the top winning artwork in Michigan will travel around the state for up to one year following the contest.

To learn more about the Junior Duck Stamp Program, and get the entry form and rules, visit the refuge website or go to www.fws.gov/juniorduck. I also can email the 2012 informational brochure and entry form to you – either call me at (989) 759-1669 or email me at Becky_Goche@fws.gov.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

2011/2012 Winter Calendar of Events

A Pioneer Christmas December 7, 7:00 p.m. Green Point ELC

Craft tables, hot chocolate, popcorn and cookies all play a role in this hands-on evening celebrating Christmas customs. Admission is \$2, FREE for Friends of Shiawassee NWR.

Snowshoe Hike December 9, 3:00 p.m. Green Point ELC

Park Ranger John Anderson will teach you how to snowshoe. You may bring your own or use one of ours; call Green Point to reserve your pair. If there is not enough snow, there will still be a guided hike.

Guided Cross-Country Ski Tour December 17, 10:00 a.m. Woodland Trail

Park Ranger John Anderson will take you on a tour of our most popular ski area. Bring your own equipment and dress for the weather. If there is not enough snow, there will still be a guided hike.

Christmas Day Holiday – Offices are closed December 26

New Year's Day Holiday – Offices are closed January 2

Flourishing of Fringed Orchids January 4, 7:00 p.m. Green Point ELC

The refuge is participating in the work underway to restore the endangered Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid within Michigan and 5 other states. Zac Gilna of the refuge explores the challenges of this project. Admission is \$2, FREE for Friends of Shiawassee NWR.

Short-eared Owl Tour January 7, 4:00 p.m. Refuge Headquarters

Join the Saginaw Valley Audubon Society for a chance to view short-eared owls. Registration is required – call Carolyn Szaroletta at (989) 295-2165. In the event of bad weather, the alternate date is January 14.

Guided Cross-Country Ski Tour January 14, 10:00 a.m. Green Point ELC

Park Ranger John Anderson will take you along Green Point's flat winding trails. Bring your own equipment and dress for the weather. If there is not enough snow, there will still be a guided hike.

Martin Luther King Holiday – Offices are closed January 16

Snowshoe Hike January 18, 5:00 p.m. Green Point ELC

Park Ranger John Anderson will teach you how to snowshoe. You may bring your own or use one of ours; call Green Point to reserve your pair. If there is not enough snow, there will still be a guided hike.

Guided Cross-Country Ski Tour January 28, 4:00 p.m. Ferguson Bayou Trail

Park Ranger John Anderson will take you on the Ferguson Bayou Trail. Bring your own equipment and dress for the weather. If there is not enough snow, there will still be a guided hike.

Talking Turkey February 1, 7:00 p.m. Green Point ELC

Eric Dunton, refuge wildlife

biologist, will explore one the greatest wildlife conservation success stories in the history of North America – the rebounding of wild turkeys. Admission is \$2, FREE for Friends of Shiawassee NWR.

Short-eared Owl Tour February 4, 4:30 p.m. Refuge Headquarters

Join the Saginaw Valley Audubon Society for a chance to see short-eared owls. Registration is required – call Carolyn Szaroletta at (989) 295-2165. In the event of bad weather, the alternate date is February 25.

Snowshoe Hike February 11, 10:00 a.m. Green Point ELC

Park Ranger John Anderson will teach you how to snowshoe. You may bring your own or use one of our pairs; call Green Point to reserve your pair. If there is not enough snow, there will still be a guided hike.

Presidents' Day Holiday – Offices are closed February 20

Guided Cross-Country Ski Tour February 25, 4:00 p.m. Woodland Trail

Join Park Ranger John Anderson on this tour. Bring your own equipment and dress for the weather. If there is not enough snow, there will still be a guided hike.

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: _____

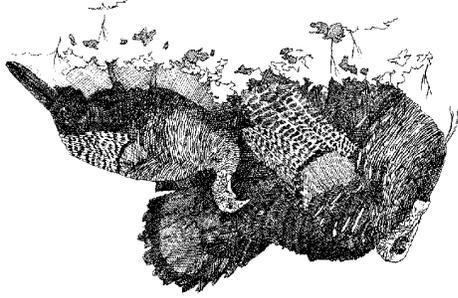
Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

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.”



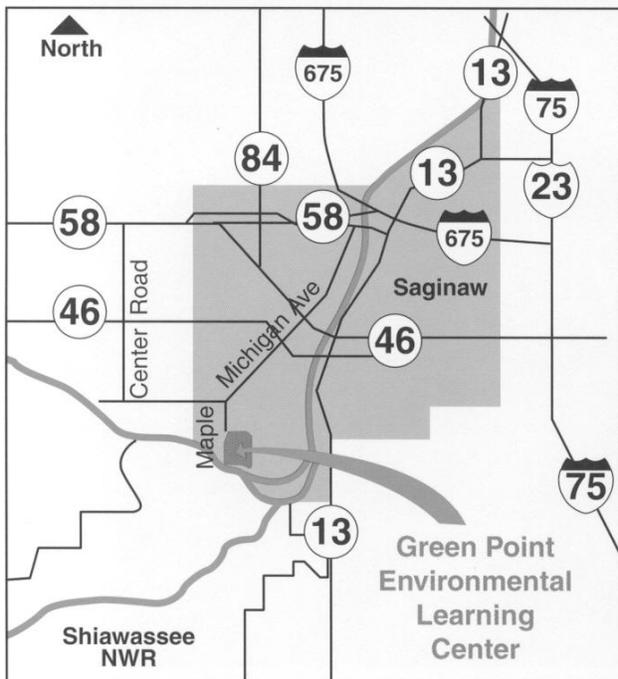
All programs begin at 7:00 p.m. at:
Green Point Environmental
Learning Center
3010 Maple Street
Saginaw, Michigan 48602

Sponsored by the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge and Friends of Shiawassee
National Wildlife Refuge

2012 Nurturing Nature Wednesday Series

The first six months...

Admission \$2 per person, all ages
FREE for members of Friends of the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge



Directions to Green Point Environmental Learning Center

From points north and south via I-75

Take the I-675 exit. Follow I-675 and take the Michigan Ave./Davenport Ave./M-58 exit. Get onto South Michigan Avenue and head south (towards the hospitals). Proceed on S. Michigan for almost 3.5 miles. Turn south (left) onto Maple Street and proceed 0.5 mile. Veer left at Gabriel Road. Green Point is located on the right side of the road.

From points west via M-46/Gratiot Rd.

Take M-46/Gratiot to South Center Road. Turn south (right) onto S. Center Rd. and proceed 1 mile. Turn east (left) onto West Michigan Avenue and proceed 1.5 miles. Turn south (right) onto Maple Street and go 0.5 mile. Veer left at Gabriel Road. Green Point is located on the right side of the road.

The Flourishing of Fringed Orchids

January 4

The Shiawassee National Refuge is a participant in the work underway to restore the endangered Eastern Fringed Orchid within Michigan and five other states. Zac Gilna, a temporary technician at the refuge and a wildlife biology undergrad at the University of Michigan-Flint, explores the challenges of the project.

Talking Turkey

February 1

Eric Dunton, a wildlife biologist at the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, will explore one of the greatest wildlife conservation success stories in the history of North America – the rebounding of wild turkeys from low populations at the end of the 1800s to millions of them today.

Wildlife in South Africa

March 7

Ann Bierman, a longtime member of the Friends of the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, worked on two hand-on volunteer projects in South Africa – dealing with lions, tigers, birds, flowers and trees. She shares her adventure in a slide presentation.

Animal Skull Investigator

April 4

You don't have to be a crime scene investigator to identify a skull you find while out on a walk or digging a hole in your backyard. Janea Little, a senior naturalist at Midland's Chippewa Nature Center, will show how each animal species has a unique skull and, using clues from the size, number and type of teeth, eye holes, brain cavity and other characteristics, you can determine what you have found.

Ephraim Williams, Pioneer Fur Trader

May 2

Ephraim Williams arrived at "The Forks" of the Tittabawassee and Chippewa Rivers in 1828 to reopen a trading post as an agent of the American Fur Company. For the next 12 years, he and his brothers were leading traders in the Saginaw Valley. Step back in time as Kyle Bagnall, manager of historical programs at Midland's Chippewa Nature Center, presents a costumed, first-person program based on the life of Ephraim Williams -- tales of a family caught up in the War of 1812, establishing a farm in an unbroken forest, trading with Native Americans and building the first sawmill in the Saginaw Valley.

Researching Deer on the Refuge

June 6

Stephanie Longstaff, a Michigan State University graduate research assistant and biological technician at the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, will discuss how white-tailed deer are impacting the plant community at the refuge and what this means in terms of ecosystem health. She will discuss how her research will help with conservation efforts and current management techniques.

July – No Program

August – No Program

September-December – Programs not yet chosen

For information about other programs, please visit our website at www.fws.gov/midwest/shiawassee.