



# **Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge**

## *Wildlife Guide Volunteer Opportunity*

We are looking for volunteers to serve as “Wildlife Guides” and work at the observation decks along the refuge’s Wildlife Drive. These individuals will primarily work on weekends, when more people tend to visit the refuge, from mid-April through early October. No prior experience is necessary, as refuge staff will provide training. A love of nature and wildlife watching skills are helpful!

### **Duties**

- Answer visitors’ questions
- Help identify wildlife
- Recruit Friends members
- Assist in emergencies by contacting proper authorities

### **Time Commitment**

Our goal is to cover each observation deck with at least one Wildlife Guide each weekend day between the hours of 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Volunteers will be asked to commit to one 4-hour shift. You can volunteer for more hours if you like!

Observation decks that will be covered include:

- Observation deck on the “high dike” along the Shiawassee River
- Grefe Tower at Ferguson Bayou Trail and Wildlife Drive intersection (permanent spotting scope)
- Observation deck at parking lot for the Ferguson Bayou Trailhead

### **Requirements**

- All volunteers are required to attend the half-day Wildlife Guide training provided by refuge staff and Friends members. Training will include a refuge overview, a guided tour of the Wildlife Drive, simple wildlife identification, and how to handle an emergency.
- All volunteers must fill out a Fish and Wildlife volunteer services agreement. A new agreement must be filled out every year.
- All volunteers must keep track of his/her hours on a sheet provided by the refuge volunteer coordinator. Volunteer time sheet will be turned in on a monthly basis either by dropping off at refuge headquarters, or emailing (Becky\_Goche@fws.gov) or faxing to the volunteer coordinator (fax: 989.791.3621).
- Call the Wildlife Guide Coordinator to schedule your shift.
- Volunteers will be marked in some fashion so that the public can easily recognize them as someone who can answer questions. Items could include any of the following: sign at deck, vest, hat, jacket, pin, flag, magnet on car, etc.
- Volunteers are responsible for providing their own comfort items such as chair, water, food, shade, mosquito repellent, radio for weather reports, etc. Volunteers may also want to bring their binoculars, cameras, spotting scopes and field guides.
- Volunteers are strongly encouraged to bring a charged, working cell phone in the event of

an emergency.

### **Refuge and Friends Provide**

- The refuge will provide Wildlife Guides with refuge brochures and other handouts for visitors.
- Wildlife Guides will check out a backpack from the refuge headquarters to use while at the observation deck. Each backpack will contain a small first aid kit, binoculars, assorted field guides, assorted refuge information, and a notepad with pencil to jot down questions for refuge staff that the Wildlife Guides cannot answer. Backpacks must be turned back in following your shift so that other Wildlife Guides can use them.

### **Benefits**

You will be on the front line of helping refuge visitors learn about the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge and all it has to offer. Through your efforts you will help people understand the importance of the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge and its role in protecting habitat and the wildlife that use it.