

**United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Chesapeake Marshlands NWR Complex
BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge Opens Research Library

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is holding a grand opening ceremony for their wildlife and natural history research library at the 8th Eagle Festival on March 15 at 10:00 am. Richard C. Kleen, a long time Volunteer at Blackwater, donated the first 450 books to the library. Mr. Kleen may be well known by many of the residents of the St. Michael's area. He was a teacher of contemporary issues, U.S. history, and academic English for 40 years. He moved to the St. Michaels area in 1951 and taught many 7th, 8th, 11th and 12th graders. Mr. Kleen is also an avid birder having traveled to many states and countries to add to his U.S. life list and his world life list. He has observed close to 1,000 species of birds. While doing so, he has also collected many birding and natural history books which he has donated to the refuge library. In addition to books, Mr. Kleen has also collected 21 paintings of famous bird artists, political buttons, and stamps.

The new library is located on the second floor of the Visitor Center along with the Wild Birds Unlimited Pathways to Nature Observatory. The Friends of Blackwater and Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge have decided to start slow with opening only on Wednesday afternoons 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm and Saturday mornings 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. The library will depend on Volunteers to keep it open. It will be a wildlife and natural history research library and books will not leave the room. Thus we are presently in need of Volunteers for Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings to staff the library. If anyone would be interested in being a Volunteer, please call 410-228-2677.

The refuge will also accept donations of books that are about wildlife or natural history in good condition for inclusion in the library. However, the final acceptance of such material will be made by Blackwater NWR and will have the right to use them as needed for other purposes such as environmental education.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.