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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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410-228-2677

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge 12th Annual Open House

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) near Cambridge, Maryland, is holding its 12th Annual Open House on October 6, 2007 to celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week, the 100th Anniversary of Rachel Carson and the 20th Anniversary of the Friends of Blackwater. The public is invited to help celebrate this event with participation in numerous demonstrations, presentations, and activities that show how the refuge is managed for wildlife. There will be no entrance fee charged on the day of the Open House.

We will start activities at 8:00am with a bird walk led by veteran birder Terry Allen. We are excited to have Delaware's Richard Clifton, this year's Duck Stamp winner, available to sign the 2007 duck stamp which is on sale at the Eagle's Nest Bookstore. Highlighting this year's programs will be a "Sea Level Rise and What We Can do About It" program with Volunteer Chuck Mock, a "How to Create A Butterfly Garden" program with Master Gardener Nancy O'Connor, a "Nesting Bird Survey" program with Biologist Sean Flint, and a "Harriet Tubman" presentation with Vernetter Pinder. .

Other highlights will include: falconer Andrew Bullen with his live peregrine falcon and gyrfalcon, a live nutria trapping demonstration that will bring you up-to-date with the nutria eradication project, and eagle prowls with Volunteer Zeeger de Wilde. The eagle prowls require advanced registration by calling 410-228-2677.

A great new kids program this year is Environmental Concern's Wetlands on Wheels with hands on activities throughout the day. Many children's activities will be scheduled including: an invasive species puppet show, butterfly glider construction, birds and beaks activity, kid's wildlife crafts, and waterfowl identification game. Other activities will include kid's archery and our woolly bear caterpillar races. So start practice racing your own woolly bear caterpillar to compete. Kids can also earn a Jr. Refuge Ranger badge and certificate by attending various programs and asking questions to fill out their marsh muckers card. The kids can participate in several Smokey Bear activities, get a close up view of the fire equipment used at Blackwater, and join Smokey Bear in learning how to put out a fire. A bird feeder construction activity will enable the kids to make their own bird feeder to take home. The materials will be provided, but are limited to 30 participants; so kids need to register in advance by calling 410-228-2677.

The Salisbury Zoo's live Birds of Prey Exhibit, Carrie Murray Nature Center live Insect display, Horn Point Touch Tank, Kerry Turner's live reptile display, Jim Turek's live reptile display, invasive species display, confiscated endangered species display, Master Gardner's butterfly display, and other exhibits will be available most of the day. Photographers Bob Quinn, Chuck Prahl, and Mary Konchar will have their photos on display in the Visitor Center. To celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Friends of Blackwater, there will be a display of

the many accomplishments and contributions they have given to Blackwater NWR in the last 20 years.

Special tours will be available to various areas of the Refuge normally not open to the public. Seating is limited to 14, but there will be tours at 9:00 am, 11:00 am, and 2:00 pm.

In addition to the many Refuge activities, the Friends of Blackwater's Eagle Nest Bookstore will have some items on sale as well as some great new merchandise. Food and drinks will be for sale by the Hurlock Lions Club outside the Visitor Center. Baked goods will also be for sale by the 4-H Club.

America's fascinating array of wild animals and plants call the more than 540 national wildlife refuges home. National Wildlife Refuge Week is timed to coincide with the annual fall migration. Blackwater invites you to visit and not only see how the Refuge is managed, but also the many wildlife species that reside here, especially waterfowl and other migratory birds, that use the Refuge as a rest area on their long journey south. For more information, call 410-228-2677.

*Please include in your calendar of events.