



For Release on April 14, 2008

Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day – May 10, 2008

Saturday, May 10, 2008 is International Migratory Bird Day. Officially celebrated throughout the United States and Canada on the second Saturday in May, International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) recognizes the movement of nearly 350 species of migratory birds from their wintering grounds in South and Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean to nesting habitats in North America. This year's topic, **Tundra to Tropics: Connecting Birds, Habitats, and People**, explores the long distances these birds travel, the habitats on which they depend and the people who are important to their conservation.

According to findings in the late 1980s, many migratory bird species were in a decline due to an increase of threats on not only their summer and winter habitats, but their migration routes as well. In 1990, a consortium of government agencies, private businesses, private organizations, and others joined together to form Partners in Flight (PIF). PIF is dedicated to maintaining healthy bird populations in the United States and throughout the Western Hemisphere. IMBD was established in 1993 by a member of PIF, the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, to promote awareness and concern for this issue. The IMBD date is set to coincide with the return of spring migrants over much of North America.

Throughout the Western Hemisphere, hundreds of thousands of people participate in activities, learning about the day and the birds it celebrates by joining bird walks, reading articles, or attending festivals. For more information and ideas on how you can celebrate IMBD visit their website www.birdday.org.

Again this year, the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge and the International Wildlife Refuge Alliance are hosting several activities to celebrate IMBD.

- 6:00-7:30 AM: Bird Walk - Join a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist for an hour and a half guided bird walk to explore all birds using the Humbug Marsh Unit on their journey north.

- 9:00 AM-1:00 PM: Photography workshop & raptor show for children ages 8 and up. **Reservations Required-** Call the International Wildlife Refuge Alliance @ 734-692-7671.
- 9:00 AM-1:00 PM: Humbug Marsh Open House - Explore the last mile of undeveloped shoreline on the U.S. mainland of the Detroit River
- 2:00- 3:30 PM: Wildflower Walk - Enjoy a leisurely walk through the Humbug Marsh Unit while learning about the wildflowers growing in the area.

Please dress appropriately; conditions may be wet and muddy. Programs will go rain or shine.

The Detroit International Wildlife Refuge covers 48 miles of shoreline along the lower Detroit River and western basin of Lake Erie. It focuses on conserving, protecting and restoring habitat for 29 species of waterfowl, 65 kinds of fish and 300 species of migratory birds.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

The International Wildlife Refuge Alliance is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that builds the capacity of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to deliver the mission of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. Major Alliance funding partners in 2008 include General Motors Corporation, DTE Energy, ITC Holdings, and BASF Corporation.

For more information, please call Kristi Thiel of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at (734) 692-7600 (kristi_thiel@fws.gov) or Lisa Appel of the International Wildlife Refuge Alliance at (734) 692-7671 (lisa_appel@fws.gov).

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