

Wings

Newsletter for Alligator River and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges

Vol. XII No. 3/4 August/Sept, 2005

WOW Registers First Participant for November Festival

Wings Over Water festival's first registrant for the annual event held in November is an active refuge volunteer with Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Maryland, who just returned from her first visit to the Outer Banks this month.

"We are always interested in the stories of our festival participants, whether they are repeat visitors, and what drew them to the festival," said Angie Brady-Daniels, who represents the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce on the WOW steering committee.

Registrant Lisa Mayo decided to return for the festival in November after vacationing in Nags Head, and reading about Wings Over Water on-line. "I fell in love with the area and was looking for a way to return to see the Outer Banks out of the normal busy summer season. I just heard about Wings Over Water via the Internet, and decided it would be a great time to return, especially since local hotels/motels were offering good room prices for Festival registrants," Mayo said.

Wings Over Water offers dozens of opportunities for birders and natural history enthusiasts to access portions of the refuges normally closed to visitors. Participants walk, hike, or paddle in order to get a good birds-eye view of our feathered fall visitors, to bird with local and national experts, to observe migratory bird behavior, and to swap stories and information with other birders. Other festival sessions focus on our region's unique habitats, such as Nags Head Woods, or wildlife such as the reintroduced red wolf.

Mayo credited the area's natural beauty-and its friendliness-with influencing her decision to return. "The Outer Banks is an amazing place for nature lovers, and the people in town are very friendly and helpful. I look forward to having another chance to see the people, the wildlife, and the beaches in November."

To learn more about the festival, or to register, call the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce at 252-441-8144 or log on to the Wings Over Water website at <http://www.wingsoverwater.org>. Festival partners include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society, the Carolina Bird Club, and the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce, as well as a number of local businesses.



graphic by Michal Skakuj

Visitor Center Supports Local Authors and Artists

The Outer Banks of eastern North Carolina is an inspiring place for many authors and artists. Many photographers come to Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge specifically because of the great photographic opportunities. Others can be seen with a pad and paper sitting atop a dune deeply engrossed in their thoughts and writing. Pea Island's visitor center features many of these local authors and artists by selling their merchandise in the book store. Below is a list of the talented locals that have merchandise in the book store.

-Alexander "Zander" Brody moved to Cape Hatteras with his family in 1969 after living the first three years of his life aboard a 36 foot Chris Craft. As a young artist, his teachers and fellow students recognized his talent. Zander is a graduate of the Ringling School of Art and Design in Sarasota, FL. Zander works in pen and ink, acrylics, and watercolors. He and his wife operate Jellyfish Designs in Buxton. We carry Zander's stickers, notecards, and prints.

-James Melvin obtained a B.S. degree in Art Education/Design from N.C. A&T State University. He is a versatile artist who works in oils, acrylics, pastels, and colored pencils. The theme of James's art is peace. His artist's rendition of the Pea Island Lifesaving Crew can be found in the bookstore on notecards and posters. He also illustrates children's books written by Suzanne Tate, which we carry at Pea Island.

-Jan Deblieu is the author of several books and articles and essays about people and nature. Her first book, *Hatteras Journal*, is sold at our book store and is considered a regional classic. Most of Jan's work explores the subtle ways we are shaped by the landscapes where we live and work. In the spring of 2003, Jan was named Cape Hatteras Coastkeeper for the North Carolina Coastal Federation.



-Jeff Lewis is the president of the North Banks Bird Club and the Greenhouse Manager at the Elizabethan Gardens. Whenever possible, Jeff is out observing birds, trying to capture them in that perfect pose. Jeff has always loved nature and has been birding since he was 10 years old. We sell Jeff's matted prints.

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Biology Updates

Pea Island NWR

The refuge currently has 12 turtle nests and four false crawls. Turtle Watch training was held on July 20 and the watch began on July 27. Turtle Watch continues for nest # 12, the last nest of the season. To date, 773 turtles have emerged from 11 nests/

Terns have finished nesting and both adults and fledglings have left the enclosure areas. It was not possible to get a good estimate on numbers of birds fledged. All nesting was by common and least terns.



photo by Allen Bridgman

At least 2 (and maybe 4) American oystercatcher chicks fledged on the refuge during this nesting season.

No nesting behavior by piping plovers was observed during 2005.

Dredging at Oregon Inlet will be done by hopper dredge with nearshore disposal just off the refuge beach starting in September if the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers receives adequate funding in FY05. Pipeline dredging for the Bodie Island Spit section of the navigation channel may occur beginning on or about December 1 if funding becomes available in FY06. Pipeline dredging would involve bypassing dredged material onto the refuge beach.

Ducks, snow geese, and swans started arriving earlier than normal this year (mid-October).

Alligator River NWR

Trail work was completed in red-cockaded woodpecker clusters with the help of interns. Of the trees observed, it appears that one is currently active. Because of damage from Hurricane Isabel in 2003, getting an accurate assessment of cavity tree status has not been possible.

Malformed amphibian survey work has not been very productive due to heat and erratic weather.

Raptor and waterfowl surveys resumed in October.

Want to help these refuges in a really concrete way??

Friends of the Refuge Work Team!!

The group meets the second Thursday of each month at 7:30

pm at the FWS office in Manteo!

Come and join us!

Red Wolf Updates

Denning season during April and May was very productive this year and resulted in 41 pups (31 females and 10 males).



photo by Chris Lucash

The St. Vincent NWR in Florida found evidence of a litter of red wolf pups. What makes this pup evidence particularly significant is that St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge had not had a wild-born red wolf litter since 1998.

A red wolf interpretive kiosk was also installed outside the visitor center. This kiosk is one of 4 located at various North Carolina locations and RWC has just obtained funding for two more.

Ford Mauney worked as a wildlife technician for the recovery program in 1999 and has returned to rejoin the staff as a wildlife biologist with his graduate degree focusing on GIS analysis.

The last public Red Wolf Howling Safaris will be conducted on the following dates this fall and winter: October 15, October 29, and December 10. To register for these programs, call the Red Wolf Coalition office at 252-796-5600 or visit www.redwolves.com.

Joey Hinton is a graduate student from Rice University, Houston, Texas, and was working with red wolf biologists to obtain family dynamic and group activity for the Beech Ridge Pack as well as monitoring and tracking statistics from its pups. This pilot program is the first time pups have been outfitted with transmitters that may lead to new information previously unavailable to biologists.

The "Far Traveler" teacher workshop was held on Oct. 6. Environmental educators were brought up to date on red wolf recovery efforts in NC and also had an opportunity to make red wolf track casts.

A few weeks ago, an unidentified wolf-like animal was seen in Marion, NC. This prompted the Red Wolf Recovery Program to dispatch a wildlife biologist to the area. Within 48 hours of his arrival, and working with the local Sheriff's Animal Control Office, the animal was caught and blood samples sent to a lab. The test results confirmed that the female hybrid is 60% dog and 40% gray wolf. The animal will remain in a shelter pending ownership claim investigation results.

Fire Updates

Although most wildfires in Eastern North Carolina were small this season, the Memorial Eve Fire on Alligator River burned 177 acres of marsh out along Parched Corn Bay. It is believed that lightning from a storm on Saturday evening ignited the marsh, but it didn't really start burning until the next afternoon when things had heated up. Residents of Stumpy Point reported the smoke. Both Refuge and North Carolina Forest Service (NCFS) personnel responded in relatively quick order despite the holiday weekend and being scattered out and about. The first tractor was into the woods approximately 1 hour after notification of the fire. Alligator River's flex-tract AX6 went into the woods with 2 NCFS tractors and air support from a NCFS plane. With plenty of downed trees from Hurricane Isabel, the tractors slowly worked their way to the fire and mashed down a line around it. The woods were too wet to burn, but the fire had no problem burning across the marsh grass right over some standing water. Monday, crews went back out to the tractors, finished extinguishing any smoke, and brought the equipment out.

Important Dates!!

November 10, 7:30 pm

The Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society **Annual Membership Meeting** in the upstairs conference room of the FWS Manteo Office.

November 19, 4:00 pm

Dunes Restaurant- **Annual Volunteer Awards Banquet**. If you have contributed one hour of volunteer service during 2005, you are invited. Please RSVP to Bonnie at 252-473-1131 ext 230 with your name and the number of people in your party.

Join Today!!



Become a member of the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society. Send a check with your annual membership or volunteer today!

Regular - \$10
Wildlife - \$50
Donor - \$200
Corporate - \$500

Please make check payable to CWRS and mail to:
Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society
PO Box 1808
Manteo, North Carolina 27954

(Local Artists-continued from pg 1)

-Kim Mosher discovered the beauty of Hatteras Island in the mid-80's on a college field trip, and shortly after graduating from VCU, she made Hatteras Island her home. Kim was inspired to sketch many of the inshore fish in their natural habitat. Eventually, the colored pencil became her tool of choice. Over the last several years, Kim has made her art available through limited edition prints, tiles, and fabrics. She has also illustrated a children's book, "Pelican and Pelican"; signed copies are available at the Visitor Center, along with Note cards.

-Michael Halminski moved to Hatteras Island in 1973 and began photographing the beaches, water, and Atlantic maritime environment of this unique place. His photography has appeared in international, national, and regional publications such as Newsweek, The Washington Post, Philadelphia Enquirer, Miami Herald, and Southern Living, just to name a few. Michael operates a gallery in Waves, located on Hatteras Island. We sell Michael's notecards.

-Pat Troiani worked in the Pennsylvania school system for 15 years and has resided on the Outer Banks since 1985. Her subjects are inspired by the scenery and life of the Outer Banks and she uses a technique known as collage, as well as the traditional watercolor techniques in which she specializes. We sell Pat's notecards and prints.

-Scott Geib is a self-taught artist who has worked and done business on the Outer Banks for 20 years. Scott has the unique ability to capture just the right moment on film, even if it takes six months for just the right angle and lighting! Scott and his wife operate the Light Keeper Gallery in Buxton on Hatteras Island. The book store carries Scott's magnets, tiles, bookmarks, and prints.

-Stephanie Geib graduated from the School of Design at N.C. State with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Graphic Design. Her career as an artist has allowed Stephanie to work in a number of different mediums including, pen and ink, colored pencil, and soft pastel. Stephanie and her husband operate the Light Keeper Gallery in Buxton on Hatteras Island. (again, magnets, tiles, bookmarks, and prints)

-Suzanne Tate is a graduate of University of New Mexico with a degree in Anthropology/Biology. Suzanne is the author of a Nature Series for children, featuring Outer Banks local wildlife and the adventures they encounter. She has been a resident of the Outer Banks for over 30 years and has also written historical accounts of the local communities such as one about the logging and moonshining community of Buffalo City where Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge now sits. Suzanne's company, Nags Head Arts, Inc represents and distributes art for numerous Outer Banks artists.

Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society Board Of Directors

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Pat Moore and Warren Davis Receive Regional Volunteer Awards

Patricia J. Moore received the 2004 Regional Director's Honor Award this month for Volunteer Service at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. On behalf of Regional Director Sam Hamilton, refuge manager Mike Bryant presented Moore with the 2004 Honor Award for Volunteer Service for her commitment to wildlife conservation and her dedicated volunteer work in support of Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. This award was presented to Pat prior to an 8AM bird walk that she and her husband lead every week. Pat is also a member of the Wings Over Water steering committee in which she coordinates the birding field trips for the festival. Pat's responsibilities and influence in the birding community are one of the reasons why the Wings Over Water is a success. Pat also helped in developing the bird

checklist for the Outer Banks, which also has her artwork on the front cover. Pat serves as the president of the Cape Hatteras Bird Club, Arkansas Audubon Society, and was a founding member of the Montgomery County, Maryland Bird Club.



Pat accepts award from refuge manager, Mike Bryant, just prior to her Friday morning bird walk.

Warren Davis also received recognition this month and accepted a 2004 Regional Director's Honor Award. As his family surrounded him, Warren accepted the award from refuge manager Mike Bryant. Warren has been a dedicated volunteer to Alligator River and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges for 20 years. Warren has donated nearly 6,000 hours of volunteer time over those 20 years, and served as a founding member of the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society. Originally, Warren's involvement with the refuge was his late wife's idea. "Bonnie Strawser showed up at our church in about 1985 looking for volunteers. My wife was a very enthusiastic conservationist, and she said, 'we'll both volunteer!' She died in 1989, and I have kept on ever since."

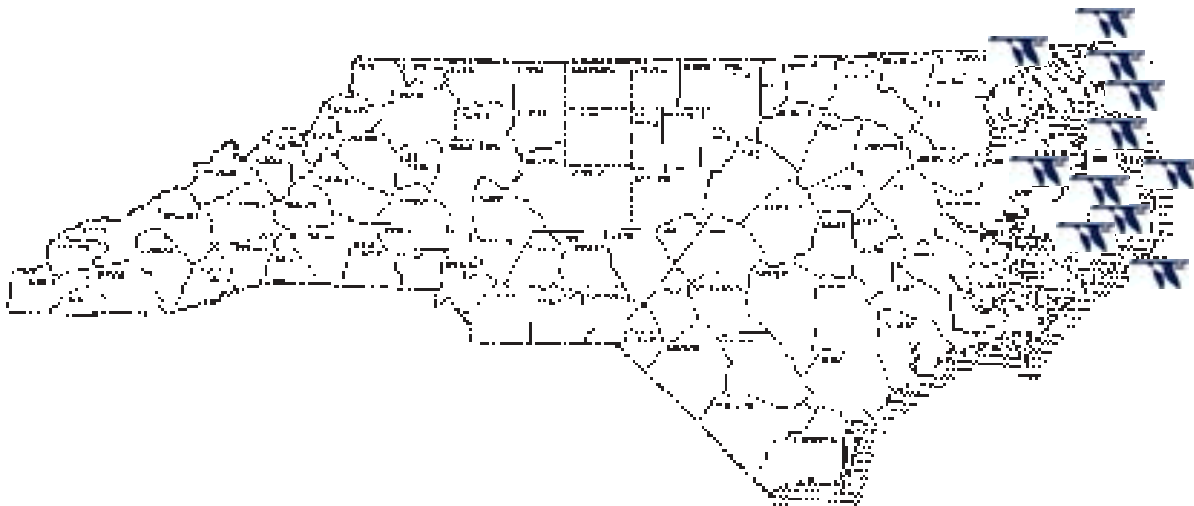


Warren has nearly 6,000 hours of volunteer service for Alligator River and Pea Island.



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