

A quarterly newsletter for Volunteers and Friends of the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and Patuxent Research Refuge

FRIENDS OF PATUXENT

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“History in the Making”

by Brad Knudsen

About a year ago, Eugene Marino, the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) National Historic Preservation Officer at US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Headquarters alerted us to the opportunity to apply for grant funding through the Department of the Interior (DOI) for museum/archive/historical purposes. Ever since we completed our history exhibit at the National Wildlife Visitor Center in 2011, which focused on the wildlife research and historic assets on the Central Tract, I had thought how nice it would be to do something similar for our North Tract property, and that this might be the opportunity to do so.

So a few of us on staff wrote a proposal for interpreting the history of the North Tract, including Native American, European settlement, Fort Meade military days, and right up to its current status as the 8,100 acre addition to Patuxent in 1991-92. Lo and behold, in March 2015, we learned our grant application had been accepted, and we were awarded the funding by mid-summer.

Here is language directly from our written proposal - "The North Tract is not only of importance to the FWS for its wildlife and habitat, but also for its historic and cultural significance. Over 8,100 acres, the largest portion of the Refuge, came to DOI from Department of Defense (DOD) in 1991. The materials from this display will help describe the history of the North Tract as it relates to its relationship with the US military, its agricultural use, early

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telecommunications, and a place for outdoor recreation today. Video and photographs will show, how as part of Fort Meade, the North Tract served as an important training area for soldiers

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Chair's Comments

By Jeanne Latham, Chair, Friends of Patuxent

I am humbled and pleased to serve the Friends Board of Directors as Chair. I will do my utmost to serve the Board, the Friends members, volunteers, the Refuge and the Research Center to the best of my ability. I thank the Board of Directors and you for giving me this tremendous opportunity.

I will focus my comments this time on recognizing a number of people. First of all, I'd like to thank Evelyn Adkins, our former treasurer, who retired from the Board in September of this year. Evelyn served on the Friends Board of Directors originally as the secretary, and then became treasurer. For many years, she coordinated the Friends Art Show artists and artisans. Thank you, Evelyn, for your dedication and many years of service to the Friends of Patuxent. We will

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“History in the Making”

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from the 1920's, to include such notable military figures as Dwight Eisenhower and George Patton."

The project was awarded to Wilder-ness Graphics, a long-time vendor for the NWRS for interpretive products. Our project will include a small display case of cultural/historic artifacts at the Visitor Contact Station on Bald Eagle Drive, an interactive video monitor with tidbits of Native American and military history facts, and a brochure that will facilitate a driving (and hiking) tour of some remotely located interpretive panels of the significant historical areas on the North Tract. Still in development, these panels may be located at Old Forge Bridge, in our savannah restoration area, St. Peters Cemetery, and within the Wildlife Viewing Area.

It is very much a work in progress as we work out the details with Wilder-ness Graphics. Dionne Briggs is planning visits to the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC), Fort Meade, and the Maryland Archaeological Center to scout various artifacts we hope



to use for the display case. We have met with Cultural Resources staff from Fort Meade, and they are very excited about the prospect of telling some of their story, particularly since this project coincides with the installation's 100th anniversary to be celebrated in 2017.

I want to thank Arianna Elm - Cultural Resources intern from HQ - who spent several days of her detail here this fall, working through historic records, providing a broad summary of some of the history we may want to highlight as we

fine tune this project. Her efforts definitely helped us crystallize some of our thoughts about what to include.

The timeline is for all these products to be developed and installed by September 30, 2016. Soon, there will be yet another reason to visit the North Tract of Patuxent. As if 20 miles of hiking/biking trails and fishing and hunting and wildlife observation opportunities were not enough!! We hope you will come out to experience a bit of the rich history the North Tract has to offer! 🦅

Friends of Patuxent is published quarterly and can be read online or mailed to our Friends upon request.

Many of the newsletter contributors and other assistants are volunteers. There are regular contributors, however, we welcome and encourage all volunteers and Friends to submit items for the newsletter by sending or bringing them to:

Editor, Friends of Patuxent Newsletter
ATTN: Ross Feldner
 11811 Ivanhoe Street
 Wheaton, MD 20902

Or email to ross.feldner@verizon.net

All articles submitted to the Friends of Patuxent Newsletter will be reviewed by newsletter staff prior to their publication. We reserve the right to not publish submissions based on length, content or suitability.

Article submission deadlines:

Issue			Issue		
No.	Months	Deadline	No.	Months	Deadline
1	Jan-Mar	December 1	2	Apr-Jun	March 1
3	Jul-Sept	June 1	4	Oct-Dec	September 1

To become a member of the Friends of Patuxent or send a donation, please see "Membership Application" on page 19.

**We invite
 you to join!**
 Your membership/
 contribution helps
 support the mission and
 programs at Patuxent



Wildlife Images: Staff Favorites

By Pat Simons



This month, the Wildlife Images volunteers and staff share with you some of their favorite items in the store. With hundreds of hours working in the store, this small group of dedicated folks has an in-depth knowledge of the store's inventory and as you'll see by their favorite items a variety of interests.

Our Favorites

Carol: I am especially fond of the Folkmanis puppets we stock because they are so life-like, they come in different sizes, and children and adults alike so enjoy playing with them. We have a great variety of puppets representing North American wildlife as varied as owls, eagles, squirrels, fawns, beavers, turtles, and more. The Visitor Center staff and other educators often use the puppets to accompany a story time or nature lesson.

Linda: My favorite book is "Wesley the Owl: The Remarkable Love Story of an Owl and His Girl" by Stacey O'Brien. This is a funny and endearing story of the relationship between Stacey O'Brien and four-day-old owl she adopts and ends up taking care of for the next 19 years. During this time she learns to buy rodents in bulk to feed him, takes photos documenting his growth, and comes to know his individ-

ual personality that includes subtle emotions as well as a fierce loyalty.

Pat: I really like the book "Keeping a Nature Journal" by Clare Walker Leslie because it combines the ideas of journaling with drawing, and all with the intention of becoming more aware of nature through slow, quiet observation and recording of details. The book starts with the basics of what materials to use (journal, pens, pencils, etc.) and then provides step-by-step guidance, journaling prompts, drawing instructions, and more. Plus it is just a beautifully laid out and illustrated book that inspires me to create a nature journal.

Bob: The Corens recommend the book "Bringing Nature Home" by Douglas Tallamy; and grandson Zev Ulfeldt (age 2) recommends "Home in a Cave" about a baby bat and all the other creatures that live in a cave with him.

Charlotte: I really like the aromatic balsam fir pillows ... I now have three of them! These pillows come in different sizes, are hand stitched with different designs, and are filled with fresh, all natural, chemical-free, balsam fir.

Pam: I like the beautiful, hand-painted, glass, ornaments by Delaware artist, Marcia Poling. Each year the store gets new designs showing birds in their natural habitats. This year's selection in-

cludes a greater variety of designs with even finer detail of the birds and surrounding plants and flowers.

Jan: My favorite is the canvas bird tote bag because of the bright colors of the birds. We have two different designs—one with a black background, with different birds on each side, and one with a purple background with a rainbow arrangement of birds.

Evelyn: My favorite item is "The Family Butterfly Book." As the subtitle says, it has "projects, activities, and a field guide to 40 favorite North American species." It is simple enough for children to understand and complex enough to intrigue adults. Using many, colored photographs you will learn everything from the life cycle of a butterfly to how to raise your own, as well as how to hold and hand-feed these creatures.

While these are just a few of our favorite items, each of us could make any number of recommendations depending on your interest or need, so the next time you are looking for something special and unique—either for yourself or for a gift—let us know and we'll be happy to help you find just the right item.

With best wishes from the Wildlife Images Staff and Volunteers 🐦

Foundation Planting at North Tract

by Beth Bloom-Spiker and Joe DiGiovanni

The University of Maryland Extension Service's Home and Garden Information Center (HGIC) and the Patuxent Research Refuge (PRR) have entered into an informal partnership to establish a foundation planting at the North Tract (NT) section of the refuge.

Dr. Sara Tangen, Associate Agent /Master Gardener Trainer from the HGIC, is currently teaching a year long course to Master Gardeners on native plant foundation beds, which are being established in a number of Maryland counties. At the NT, Beth Blum-Spiker and Joe DiGiovanni, Howard County master gardeners, will be growing *Chrysopsis mariana*, commonly referred to as Maryland goldenaster, at the Wildlife Viewing Area.

The foundation bed class objective is to establish a seed bank of wild collected native plant seeds so that future needs for the plants can be met. While there are many cultivars of natives currently available for sale, the class is more concerned about pre-

serving the actual Maryland-native plants so that the wildlife that they evolved with can continue to be supported. As people become more aware of the benefits of growing native plants in their home landscapes and professional landscapers start re-establishing them in common areas, the seed bank will be essential in filling the demand for plants.

The class started in the fall of 2014 with a collection of wild native plants in a large field in western Howard County. Each class member was encouraged to take 50-75 of the same species, to encourage bio-diversity, to plant and establish a "foundation bed" on their own property. In the next 2 classes, information was shared on the certification of the bed, maintenance, and seed harvesting. The Fall of 2015 will be the final class where the seed produced from the foundation beds will be turned into the seed bank.

In sunny meadows, woodland edges, and rock outcrops throughout the Chesapeake watershed you will find

the lovely Maryland goldenaster thriving in the driest of soils. In spring the dark green basal foliage emerges. Bolting begins in July, and the purplish stems reach almost two feet in height. Leaves and stems have a webby covering of silver hairs that help to keep the plant cool and moist in these inhospitable habitats.

Stems peak at less than two feet tall. In August the first flower heads open. Each is a daisy with bright yellow disk and ray flowers (the latter typically thought of as petals). Flowers are visited by many species of pollinators. Blooming ends in October. As the seed ripens, spherical puffballs reminiscent of dandelion seed heads form. In November and December the seeds are carried away by the wind. Empty seed receptacles are attractive, straw flower-like, and useful for dried arrangements. Maryland goldenaster goes dormant in deep winter, and will emerge again the following spring. Maryland goldenaster plants are thought to have a life span of 3 to 5 years. 🐦



The Maryland goldenaster (Chrysopsis mariana)

The Inner Core - Mostly Untouched by Human Hands

This is part 1 of a 2 part series. Part 2 will appear in the Spring 2016 issue.

Bill Harms - <http://blog.botanybill.info/>

Please note: The "Inner Core" is in a closed area and not readily accessible to visitors.

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to draw attention to and spark interest in a special parcel of land on the North Tract, which I will call the "Inner Core."

While there is no true wilderness on the North Tract, the Inner Core has probably had the least amount of anthropogenic impact of any area on the North Tract, and if any land on the North Tract comes close to being a wilderness, this area might be it. According to initial field observations, this area appears to be the most pristine of all the areas within the North Tract and probably the whole Patuxent Research Refuge. Biologically speaking, this area is like a time capsule.

There are some rare and uncommon plant communities in this area. One plant community of particular interest is the Southern Red Maple - Black Gum Swamp Forest, a type of acidic seepage swamp. It is found in several places on the North Tract, but none are in as pristine condition as the one in the Inner Core. This plant community is considered globally rare (G3) because of its limited distribution. The future preservation of this community on the Refuge will be determined by the level of protection and the type of management provided. There are other plant communities found in the Inner Core, which while not rare, are uncommon and deserve elevated protection. Even if none of the plant communities in the Inner Core were rare or uncommon, the fact that such a biologically pristine area exists at all within a large metro-



politan area is significant and would in my opinion, still deserve a high level of protection.

Boggy Area on the Southern Edge of Beaver Valley

Numerous boggy areas are found within this area, but they are too small to be listed as vegetation types. One good area for this type of micro-community is the southern edge of Beaver Valley. They are usually typified by mats of sphagnum moss growing on top of a gravelly base. Boggy areas usually contain plant species that are not found in other locations. Fringe orchids (*Platanthera* spp.) is an example of a species found in these areas.

The possibility of finding rare and unusual plant species in the Inner Core is high. One rare plant to be on the lookout for in the Inner Core and adjacent areas is the federally threatened

(G2) Swamp Pink (*Helonias bullata*). Further study within this area and adjacent areas may yield some interesting finds.

Location

The Inner Core is located in the area east of the Wood Duck Pond and includes the land that surrounds what is known as Beaver Valley and Shangri La. This area is known for its palustrine wetlands which formed from ancient riverbeds of the Little Patuxent River. The precise boundary of the Inner Core is fuzzy because it is impossible to determine where the area ends and non-Inner Core land begins. What can be done is to exclude certain surrounding areas, and guess on the rest.

Coming in Part 2: Historical Background, Comments About Invasive Species, Bottomland Floodplain Exclude and Conclusion.

Winter Birding at North Tract

Michelle Hanko

North Tract, with its many of acres of forest, river floodplains and open grassy land is a wonderful place to go birding. Ebird records indicate 215 species have been sighted and recorded at North Tract since 2000. In winter, bird diversity decreases, but it is still one of the best places in Anne Arundel County to find birds. Winter birding at North Tract is not static; it changes throughout the winter months as birds come and go, depending on weather conditions and the availability of resources (like berries, fruits, seeds and open water).

In late autumn/early winter, the summer breeders from the tropics, such as the orioles, warblers, vireos and flycatchers, are long gone, and only the winter-hardy residents remain. Some of the birds that are resident in Maryland all year round arrive in North Tract in large flocks to take advantage of the abundant berries, acorns and beech nuts. Sometimes flocks of Common Grackles, in the hundreds or even thousands, arrive out of nowhere for a few days and then disappear completely. Red-winged Blackbirds, American Robins, and Blue Jays can appear in large flocks as well. If there is a good crop of wild berries, flocks of Cedar Waxwings will move in and feast until the supply is gone, much to the annoyance of the Northern Mockingbirds, who chase them off vigorously to try to keep the berries all to themselves. Mockingbirds will establish winter territories around berry bushes and sing to mark the boundaries and warn off other berry-eaters, which is why you can sometimes hear their lovely singing in the fall and winter when most other birds are quiet. This is no game to the mockingbirds - if they are unsuccessful in protecting their berry supply for the winter, they have to leave the area to find another source, or starve.

By December a great silence blankets North Tract, as there are no more crick-

ets, cicadas and frogs to provide background noise - and no leaves to rustle in the breeze. Bird numbers are down, and their voices are only whispers compared to their summer singing and other vocalizations. On a quiet winter morning the sound of chickadee's whirling wings can be heard several yards away.



Black-capped Chickadee



Northern Mockingbird



Red-winged Blackbird



Dark-eyed Junco

But it's not all peace and quiet: there is actually a contingent of birds that nest in the northern forests and taiga that consider North Tract their winter home: White-throated Sparrows, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Winter Wrens, Dark-eyed Juncos, Fox Sparrows, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Yellow-rumped

Warblers, and both species of kinglets. There is another bird on the list that is a bit of a surprise: the Hermit Thrush. While most thrush species head for Central America or points further south, the Hermit Thrush survives the winter primarily by eating berries. They are inconspicuous, keeping out of

sight, but they have a loud, distinctive call that rings through the winter air when they are disturbed. If you spot one, it is usually a single bird in a berry bush, slowly raising and lowering its reddish brown tail. The Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers are another species that is

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North Tract Starter Garden

by Joe DiGiovanni

Early this Spring, volunteer Joe DiGiovanni (Howard County master gardener) at the North Tract established a Maryland-native perennial plant starter garden in order to increase the numbers of pollinator



Coral honeysuckle flowers



New plant starter garden at tower shed



Coral honeysuckle on observation tower

plants throughout the three tracts of the refuge. The starter garden is located adjacent to the tower shed at the North Tract's Wildlife Viewing Area.

The garden has just a few plants at this time but more will be added for later replanting. Presently, the garden has common boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*), horsemint (*Monarda fistulosa*), coral honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) - cuttings, and some wild daisy

plants that were collected from developed areas around the refuge.

This new garden should expand quickly with desirable nectar and host plants as many of our existing garden plants will be thinned out on the refuge later this growing season. Additional plants will be started from harvested seeds, which will be collected this fall and planted in the spring after a period of winter stratification. 🐦

Bird Counts

USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center

Everything from climate change to how we manage our grasslands on Patuxent Wildlife Research Center can affect bird breeding on the Patuxent Research Refuge. How do we know? We count the birds!

Refuge Biologist Sandy Spencer is working with researchers at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (PWRC) to conduct a bird count, using the same grid of the center that was used for counts in 2008 and before then in 1996 and 1997. What's different this time is how they're counting. Regular counts do not detect birds that may not be making any noise at the time of the count, nor do they account for them.

Scientists at PWRC have contributed substantially to a body of work on how to do bird count studies and end up with the most useful information, including how to use multiple (i.e. repeat) counts to increase the chance of detecting birds. Using the repeat visits and some mathematical equations, we can actually estimate missed birds. We get a measure of how detectable a species is on our counts and then adjust our count results accordingly.

These adjusted counts are then more appropriate to compare with other results, which we can do now. The first



time we used this adjusted count was in 2008, and we are doing it again this year. So for the first time we can compare adjusted counts, and we will have more confidence in the changes that might be revealed by the count comparisons.

Special thanks to John Sauer, Mikey Lutmerding, Jo Lutmerding, Bruce Peterjohn, Keith Pardieck, Dave Zolkowski, Deanna Dawson, Matt Ragoski, and Sandy Spencer, who all worked on this project, as well as Dan Niven, a skilled local birder. 🐦

Friends of Patuxent Wildlife Holiday Bazaar

By Brenda Stone, Member of the Friends Board of Directors & Chair of the Friends Wildlife Holiday Bazaar Committee

Thank you so much to everyone who supported the 2015 Friends Wildlife Holiday Bazaar. Your donations of items for Baldy's Bargains and baked goods for the bake sale made for a great sales room. Thank you, too, to the volunteers who helped with set up on Friday. Special thanks go to the many volunteers and staff who helped on the Saturday of the event. You were wonderful, as usual. We raised about \$2400 for Friends of Patuxent to be used in support of the Refuge and Research Center. This year we had 31 vendors with a variety of merchandise, including beautifully decorated ostrich eggs, amazing wildlife photos, creative greeting cards, wonderful wood sculptures, cool bird feeding items, lovely jewelry, terrific wildlife prints and artwork, ceramics, textiles and knitted items, and much more. And there were around 700 visitors who walked in the Visitor Center doors - more than any year so far.

The Bazaar Committee would like to give a BIG thanks to the US Geological Survey (USGS) staff for all of their help



and loan of the Wood Ducks, Eastern Screech Owl, American Kestrel, and their handlers. Many thanks go to Dennis Hartnett, Amy Shoop, Diana Ogilvie, and Mike McConnell, who helped us with the layout for the vendors, set-up during the week of the Bazaar, and throughout the event. We

also would like to thank Dionne Briggs and Jeff Bolden for providing extra tables from North Tract for the vendors.

We have the Bazaar on the schedule again for 2016. Do you believe that it will be our 6th year? The 2016 Holiday Bazaar will be **November 5.** 🦉



Gardening As A Healing Experience

By Paul Berg, MG, Patuxent Schoolyard Habitat Volunteer

After living in Alaska for the past 38 years, Virginia and I decided to relocate in Maryland to be near our children and grandchildren. The relocation involved many challenges, not the least of which was culture shock. Accustomed to living in a vast wilderness with no roads connecting the community to the outside world, I found myself overwhelmed by the crowds, the traffic, and urban culture. Virginia encouraged me to join the Maryland Master Gardener training program. I felt uncomfortable the first day of class to be in a room where I didn't know anyone. But that circumstance changed quickly as both the trainers and the students extended a warm welcome and made me feel at home. The Master Gardener training exceeded my expectations and provided many opportunities to become involved with the life in Howard County.

Despite our relocation across the country, this spring I was invited back to Alaska to run the summer education program at a juvenile detention facility in Juneau. At the detention facility, in addition to running the summer education program, I was responsible for an extensive gardening program which includes two greenhouses and sixteen large raised beds. While raising vegetables in Southeast Alaska is a challenge, the real product of our gardening program is the impact that gardening has on our young charges. Gardening is a healing experience for our young people, many of whom have suffered serious trauma in their lives.

Before leaving Maryland for Alaska, I was able to apply what I learned in the class and planted an extensive garden at our home on the hill above Ellicott City. Virginia and our grandchildren maintained the garden and enjoyed a rich harvest of fresh vegetables throughout the summer. I have had the pleasure of watching the garden grow

and the food being harvested through video which Virginia recorded and sent to me on the internet.

In addition to running the summer school and gardening program at the facility, I have been asked to collaborate with another staff member to write a greenhouse curriculum for southeast Alaska schools. Grow Southeast, a non-profit organization has built a portable greenhouse on wheels which will be circulated to rural communities in Southeast Alaska on an annual basis to promote gardening. In addition to developing the curriculum, I have been told to expect to travel with the greenhouse to help with the initial setup and training of community gardening volunteers.

The need for sustainable food production in Alaska has become apparent over the past several years. Alaska produces only 3% of the food consumed in the state, the lowest percentage of any state in the country. A document from the University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service describes Alaska's food situation as a state of "food insecurity." In response, the state has established several emergency food caches near population centers



and is putting policies in place which encourage local food production. (In the past the state focused on economic development. Short-sighted policies and practices were put into place which actually discouraged local harvesting of resources.)

I am now back with my family in Ellicott City and looking forward to becoming an active member of the Maryland Master Gardener community. Being a part of the Master Gardener program has been a major help to me both with gardening here in Howard County and in my work in Alaska. To say that I am grateful to the Master Gardener Program, to the Master Gardeners who have been my teachers, and to my fellow trainees who befriended me, would be an understatement. 🍷



Live Radio Show About Birds Airs At Patuxent

By Ken Lavish

Introduction

On Sunday morning, November 1, Ray Brown's *Talkin' Birds* radio show originated from Patuxent's Aldo Leopold Auditorium. This weekly show normally originates from its home station of WATD in Massachusetts at 9:30 on Sunday mornings.

Talkin' Birds is a live and interactive radio show about wild birds and the beauty of nature, attracting birds to your backyard, feeding them, and learning more about them. It features expert guests and contests for prizes like bird feeders and other bird-related items each week. The mission of the show is to encourage appreciation of our natural world and to promote the preservation and protection of our environment.

The show first hit the airwaves in 2006, broadcasting from WATD in Marshfield, Massachusetts. Nine years later, the show airs on 16 public and commercial radio stations around New England, New York, and Maryland. Listeners have called or written in from all 50 states, 6 Canadian provinces, and 13 other foreign countries.

Ray Brown is a broadcast veteran with more than 30 years' experience in commercial and public radio and television. His first gigs were at WNRI in Woonsocket, RI, and WJAR in Providence, RI. In the late 1970s, Ray landed a job at Cape Cod's WCOD-FM, where he served as a host until he moved to Boston in the early '90s. He's now been broadcasting on Boston's classical station, WCRB 99.5 FM, for fifteen years. Ray frequently hosts pledge drives for WGBH TV and radio in Boston, as well as for PBS. He's also the voice of Simon and Schuster's Pimsleur language-learning programs. Beginning in February of 2015, Ray began appearing as a regular guest on National Public Radio's Weekend Edi-



tion Saturday with Scott Simon. The topic: birds.

Background

Ray and I were discussing picking him up at BWI when I told him that I was concerned about getting his luggage and all of his equipment in my Prius. The times they are a-changin'. Ray's "equipment" consists of a microphone, an iPhone, an iPad mini, some cables, a speaker, and a small black box (1" x 1" x 3"). Using a wi-fi signal and an app he is able to connect to WATD. Isn't technology wonderful?

Have you ever planned a project and felt that the alignment of the planets or whatever was out of whack? As some of you may remember, the original date for the broadcast was October 4. First there was the potential menace of a government shutdown and then, not one, but two storms threatened. So, we rescheduled to November 1 and everything was smooth sailing. ALMOST! Those of you who attended the broadcast may recall seeing Ray, Brad, and



John speaking into a telephone handset taped to Ray's microphone. As it turns out, technology is not always wonderful! From the internet we could hear the download from Massachusetts perfectly but the upload (the broadcast from Patuxent) would not work. Consequently, Ray took a technological step backward and used a landline telephone to transmit the show back to Massachusetts to be broadcast. To do this he taped the telephone handset to the microphone. Unfortunately, the handset is very directionally sensitive. The slightest movement caused the voices to fade.

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Schoolyard Habitat

By Ann Coren, All photos taken by Ann Coren in the Schoolyard Habitat

Monarchs and Milkweeds

Last summer we planted three species of milkweed in the Schoolyard Habitat, *Asclepias incarnata*, swamp milkweed, *Asclepias syriaca*, common milkweed, and *Asclepias tuberosa*, butterfly weed. To our joy Monarchs visited and laid eggs on all three. Below are photos of the caterpillars on each of the three milkweeds.



Monarch caterpillar on Asclepias tuberosa, butterfly weed

If you're looking for the absolutely best information on Monarchs and how to participate in Monarch restoration see the Monarch Joint Venture (monarchjointventure.org), a partnership of Federal, State and private agencies teaming up to recreate healthy Monarch ecosystems nationwide. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and therefore the Patuxent Research



Monarch caterpillar on Asclepias incarnata, swamp milkweed



Monarch caterpillar on Asclepias syriaca, common milkweed

Refuge is one of the partners on this venture. Another excellent partnership is the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge (millionpollinatorgardens.org).

One important suggestion if you are gardening for pollinators is to stop using hardwood bark mulch. Mother nature uses leaf litter; yep, those lovely autumn leaves, as ground cover, shelter for the pollinators, fertilizer for the soil and gentle ground water control.

Master Gardener Joe DiGiovanni carved and donated two soapstone sculptures to the Schoolyard Habitat. He honored the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with a stone carved with the flying goose logo and he honored the Master Gardeners working in the Schoolyard Habitat by putting a Black-eyed Susan carving in the pollinator garden.

Celebrating Stems and Litter

Our winter holiday celebrations sometimes bring our focus indoors, away from the garden, going outside only to cut some holly for a wreath. But the garden outside is a delightful busy, living space, even in winter. The stems, seed heads, and leaf litter are full of winter beauty as well as sheltering caterpillars and other beneficial larvae. If you have left the stems in place you will have garden beauty all winter long.

Shown here are a few of the lovely seed heads decorating the native



Joe DiGiovanni placing his beautifully carved stone in the Schoolyard Habitat



Rudbeckia triloba, Brown-eyed Susan

plants in the schoolyard habitat. Since we used whole leaf litter as our 'mulch', the seeds will drop naturally to the ground, naturalizing in the garden, Mother Nature will have done our spring replanting for us. Since the seeds choose where they like to grow, the garden is an ever-changing landscape. Part of the fun of native plant gardening is enjoying the ever changing, evolving display that changes with both the seasons and the successional stages of plant species as the landscape matures.

Many of the seeds and larvae will be winter food for thrushes, sparrows and other ground foraging birds. Leaving the seed heads, stems, and leaf litter gives them winter forage and they can

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Friends of Patuxent - Personal Perspective of the Early Years

By Harlan Tucker, Member of the Friends Board of Directors and Former Chair

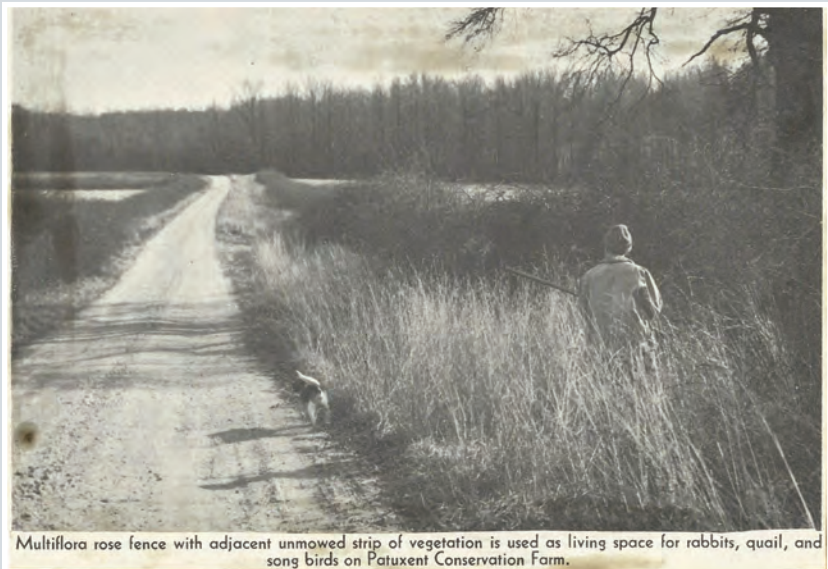
The Deputy Director of the Maryland-National Capitol Park and Planning Commission Department of Parks and Recreation and I, as President of the Prince Georges County Federation of Parks and Recreation Councils, met in the early 1980's to establish a non-profit Parks and Recreation Foundation (the Foundation) to accept grants and raise funds for the county. The Prince Georges County Parks and Recreation Foundation was chartered in 1982 and I became a Director.

In 1987, Hal O'Conner, the Director of Patuxent Research Refuge, and Dr. Matthew Perry came to the Director's meeting of the Foundation to request assistance in obtaining a visitor center at the Refuge. The Foundation established a committee, later called the Friends of Patuxent, of which I was a member, to obtain approval and raise funds for a visitor center. Initial efforts to raise sufficient funds were unsuccessful, but we persuaded Senators Mikulski and Sarbanes and Congressman Hoyer to introduce legislation in Congress, which was passed. And the National Wildlife Visitor Center was opened in 1994 with \$15 million from Congress and \$3 million in private funds.

The initial charter of the Friends of Patuxent was granted in 1982 and called for five directors to be appointed by the Foundation, and ten to be elected by the Friends. In 1994, when the Foundation became the Prince Georges County Foundation, the requirement for five appointed directors to the Friends Board was dropped. I completed my tour as Vice-Chairman of the Foundation, and as an appointed Director of the Friends, continued as an elected member of the Friends of Patuxent Board. I was a member of the Finance, Tram, Bookstore and Art Show committees. In 1997, I was elected Chairman and served as Chairman until 2009. I was a member of the committee that organized the original and subsequent Friends Run for the Refuge 5K. 🏹



Anyone Want to Venture a Guess?



Multiflora rose fence with adjacent unmowed strip of vegetation is used as living space for rabbits, quail, and song birds on Patuxent Conservation Farm.

This photo harkens back to the early days of Patuxent Research Refuge, when many of the studies being conducted focused on "wildlife friendly" agricultural practices, such as planted hedgerows along field edges, providing escape cover for upland gamebirds, and establishing wildlife food plots. While the date and location of the photo are unknown, it most certainly was somewhere on the original Central Tract of the refuge, perhaps near the Knowles or Duvall Marsh complexes. Anyone want to venture a guess?

Photo by Fred Schmid

Recognizing Evelyn Adkins, former Friends Treasurer

By Jeanne Latham, Chair, Friends of Patuxent

Evelyn Adkins is a remarkable individual - dedicated in service to the Friends of Patuxent, the Refuge and the Research Center. She retired from the Friends Board of Directors in September of this year and we will miss her. I asked Evelyn to share with us her "Friends" story and here it is. (My additions, based on a phone call with Evelyn, are in brackets.)

"I was introduced [by Connie Romanello] to the Friends board to become a member of the board at large. I think it was about 1995. Then the secretary, also the Prince George's County Secretary [to Doug Peters], had to leave; so I became secretary. Later on Robin Beatty resigned as treasurer and I became treasurer. Robin stayed on as assistant treasurer and taught me as to what and how they did the things. I believe that was about 1998. And I remained so until retirement. I didn't know what I got into but enjoyed it and grew with it."

Evelyn mentioned to me that her fondest memory of volunteering at Patuxent and serving on the Friends Board was that "It was laid back and the atmosphere was relaxing."

Thank you, Evelyn for your many years of service, your dedication, and your enduring support of the Friends.



Evelyn accepting the 2013 Volunteer of the Year Award plaque.

Friends of Patuxent is Hosting A Night on the Wild Side

By Bobbie Deegan, Member of Friends

Remember the opening of the National Wildlife Visitor Center at Patuxent Research Refuge, 21 years ago? There was so much excitement, support, and involvement by local politicians, the business community, and other community leaders. Today, many of our original supporters have drifted away from the Center, while new folks in leadership positions are only vaguely aware of the Refuge and all that it offers the community. The Friends of Patuxent Board of Directors wants to change that!

We are planning *A Night on the Wild Side* to revitalize support and appreciation for the National Wildlife Visitor Center, Patuxent Research Refuge. This event will be held at the Visitor Center on **Thursday, March 31, 2016, 6 pm - 8 pm**. Along with refreshments, we will offer our guests a fun and interactive evening, including experiences such as conservation tram rides; live wild bird exhibit; an informative overview of the Refuge and highlights of major research of the Research Center; an ex-

cursion to the wolf and Whooping crane exhibits; a chance to talk with a master gardener; opportunity to try one's hand at the crafts table; and much more.

Invited guests will include local politicians, such as Governor Larry Hogan; Congresswoman Donna Edwards; Congressmen Chris Van Hollen and Steny Hoyer; Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker, Howard County Executive Allan Kittleman, and Anne Arundel County Executive Steve Schuh; Anne Arundel County Council Chairman Jerry Walker and Prince George's County Council member Mary Lehman; our state legislators; and the mayors of Laurel, Bowie, Greenbelt, Berwyn Heights, College Park, Edmonston, Riverdale, Hyattsville, and Mt. Rainier. Leaders in our local communities, businesses, and civic organizations also will be invited.

Through these efforts, the Friends Board hopes to raise awareness of the Refuge as a local treasure, a unique resource in many ways. We want to show

local leaders what the Refuge has to offer, so they will be inspired not only to take advantage of the opportunities it offers, but invite their associates, friends and families to experience the Refuge. We also hope to attract new members in the Friends of Patuxent and generate local good will and support.

Accomplishing something this awesome will take a lot of hands! We need volunteers to help address invitations, maintain the guest list, coordinate logistics, and stuff goodie bags before the event. We need volunteers to help welcome our guests, staff the exhibits and tables, and serve refreshments during the event. Would you like to be "in on the ground floor" of the Friends of Patuxent's *Night on the Wild Side* and possibly greet the Governor, the County Executive, or a Congressman as he or she arrives at our beautiful facility? If so, please contact Friends Chairman Jeanne Latham, by email (jelatham@verizon.net) or phone (410-798-1601), and let her know you are interested and want to be involved! 🐦

Winter Exhibits in the Hollingsworth Gallery 2016

Faith Leahy-Thielke, Patuxent Volunteer

Hollingsworth rings in 2016 with a fascinating variety of art and photography. January features not only former exhibitor, Jing-Jy Chen, but also work from her adult students. February welcomes astronomy and space science educator, Jim O'Leary, and March brings not only the medical and scientific illustrator, Ikumi Kayama, but Peruvian bird carvings brought to us by Giancarlo Rendi.

Artist and educator, Jing-Jy Chen, a native of Taiwan, majored at college in Chinese Literature and Education, but she began painting during those college years. She describes her pieces as "studies in the balance between powerful brush strokes and negative space." Her work has been featured in numerous galleries throughout the year. In addition to her outreach as "artist-in-residence" at Maryland schools, Jing-Jy Chen has a number of private students. They range in age from 40-70, many of whom have been painting watercolors together for over 20 years, and whose work will also be featured. These include Judy Dunbar, Lani Choi Frost, Meenu Gupta, Jeff Hatfield, Bok Kim, Mea Lee, Bichha Nguyen, Kristy Park, and Miller Whisnant. All contribute watercolors on rice paper or silk in a tradition that goes back 1000 years. Their subjects are drawn from nature - birds, flowers and landscapes - all with special attention to space and spatial placement.

Jim O'Leary has spent his entire career as an astronomy and space science educator. He is a native of Massachusetts, some of whose best childhood memories include New England's natural beauty. His interest in "nature and wildlife", mirrors his lifelong love of astronomy and the night

sky. He loves a camera's ability to capture and preserve a special moment or place forever, and makes the point that a photograph flips a switch that can transport us to another time and place. Other than that record for family and friends, O'Leary focuses on the "majesty and diversity of our natural world" from the butterfly on a flower to the bird in flight, and hopes to share with others his joy in nature.

Ikumi Kayama is a medical and scientific illustrator as well as the founder of Studio Kayama, which trains interns and helps scientists and doctors share their work via accurate, educational illustrations. Kayama herself has won numerous awards for her illustrations including those from Johns Hopkins, the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators and the Association of Medical Illustration. Her work has appeared in textbooks, websites, journals, science

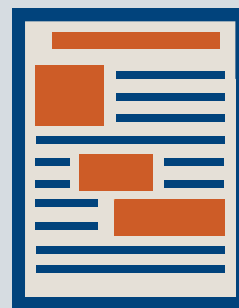
exhibits, brochures and children's books. She holds degrees from the University of Georgia (Bachelor of Fine Arts) and Johns Hopkins - graduate work in medical illustration. Presently, she teaches workshops and creates tutorials on Photoshop tips and tricks to create detailed accuracy. Ikumi is a member of Natural Science Illustrators, and is currently serving as its recording secretary. We'll see some of her exquisitely-detailed work this March.

Also in March unique and lovely Peruvian carvings of birds from semi-precious stones will be featured in our display cases. Fellow-countryman, Giancarlo Rendi, who worked closely with an artistic family near Lima, and who designed some of the pieces, is making them available for us to enjoy.

These winter exhibits span the continents and will brighten the early days of the new year. 🐦

Calling for Your Articles and Photos Please

We're looking for articles—your articles—and cool photos of and about the Patuxent Refuge for future Friends newsletters. Occasionally, we will publish articles that are not about the refuge at the editor's discretion. You don't have to be a professional writer. Just jot down a paragraph or two about a nature topic dear to your heart. Or send us a photo or two of a beautiful plant, wildlife, or people at a Refuge or Friends event. Please include a caption for your photos.



Please consider sending us your article and/or your photos for your next newsletter. Make sure to title your article and include your name and volunteer position. Articles should be 1,000 words or less please. When you send it, put Newsletter Article in the Subject Line of your email. We'd like to hear from YOU. Here's where to send them: ross.feldner@verizon.net or jelatham@verizon.net

Conserving Maryland History

by Debbie Phillips, Volunteer Wildlife Educator

On a beautiful October morning two vans and a car with volunteers and Fish & Wildlife rangers set out for Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum in St. Leonard, Md., the site of the Maryland Archeological Conservation Laboratory. The long white building was built in 1996-8 to resemble a 1930's farm setting. The site is owned and operated by the State of Maryland. Jefferson Patterson, for whom the site is named, was a diplomat in D.C. His wife donated the land to Maryland because of its rich archaeological resources. The Laboratory cost eight million dollars to build. It is climate controlled to keep stable temperature and humidity for the benefit of the artifacts. It is designed in a T shape to resemble a barn. The facility is designed with three purposes in mind, curate, conserve and research. Research also involves active digging carried out in May and June. The biggest Federal curation client of the facility is the Navy as it has rich archaeological resources. Part of our identity as a nation lies with our being good stewards of our history.

The building has high ceilings to accommodate big objects like ship parts and cannon, which enter at the loading dock with large support ropes extending from a 5-ton crane attached to the ceiling. Two 18th century ships have come through the lab; one was cleaned here and then transported to Texas A & M University while the other is still at the lab soaking in a pool of water as the first step in preservation. They had originally been brought in via a flatbed truck. Large shipping containers were part of the original transportation and conservation effort. Iron can easily be corroded so steps are taken to mitigate corrosion. Cannons are X-rayed to make sure there is no cannon ball inside. Federal agencies



comply with rules to prevent items from falling apart.

During field processing the items are carefully unearthed using trowels and toothbrushes to dust off the soil. Items coming from poor storage conditions are put in isolation to observe for mold and pests. A cannon from Fells Point Harbor was encrusted and went through a cleaning process, stabilization and desalination to remove the salt. Under a hood with exhaust fans the iron is conserved via a protective coat of tannic acid. Late 19th-century wagon parts from a blacksmith's repair shop undergo treatment with acetone and xylene under the protection of the hood. Cannon from Valley Forge were treated and set to be displayed in Philadelphia in the spring of 2017.

Muskets recovered from Bull Run are currently being treated at the MAC Lab. They had been abandoned as the battle proceeded up a hill and were covered with dirt and corrosion. The iron ions can leach into the wood. If it is dried out the cell structure of the wood is harmed. To remediate this, the rifle

is soaked in a solution to preserve the wood, and placed in a vacuum freeze drying machine.

The Maryland Historical Trust is the state agency dedicated to preserving and interpreting the legacy of Maryland's past. Items are prioritized for conservation. A cannon was recovered from the Baltimore Harbor with the fleur-de-lys symbol. A confederate cannon from the CSS Alabama was also recovered. One cannon was found off the coast of France but is the property of the U.S. Navy. The photo studio uses X-rays to compare regular pistols to rusted pistols for the purpose of restoration. Five pistols had been discarded in Deadwood in the 19th century and sent to MAC Lab for conservation. 17th-century objects from Charles Calvert's stepson included a chisel, scissors, and wagon hitch and were also treated. In the finishing lab in the clean wing items are packaged to go out. "Finished" wood awaits repackaging.

A current outreach project of the MAC Lab is the "Artifacts of Outlander" exhibit, which highlights early 18th century objects from Maryland by comparing them to the Outlander TV series. The exhibit is traveling to regional libraries for display. Fashion accessories, shoes, and saddle parts are among the artifacts featured. Bottles and corks from a well in Prince Georges County were treated and included in the exhibit as well. Glass decays in sections, leaving a patina. Scattered settlements and plantations are a rich source of artifacts.

The archaeological process is divided into three phases: One, finding a site and surveying; Two, the archeologist conducts further testing to determine how important the site is and whether it is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places; Three, data recovery

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Conserving Maryland History

Continued from page 15

takes place if development is needed and cannot be avoided. For example, a helipad was needed at the Patuxent River Naval Air Station in an area that impacted a site, so full excavations were conducted prior to construction of the helipad.

In the Paleo Environmental Lab skeletons of animals and cattle skulls are available for study. These are useful for identifying the animals recovered at a site, which helps reveal the diet of past cultures.

Collections Storage contains artifacts from throughout Maryland, including ordinance from Baltimore Harbor. There is an acorn finial from atop the Annapolis capitol dome that was struck by lightning. The inside is exposed. The wood grain was destroyed by lightning to the point of looking like charred rotting charcoal. The paddlewheel and engine from the steamship Columbus was recovered off of Point Lookout and also displayed in the Collections Storage area.

The Visiting Scientist Room is for visiting researchers to study objects. A stone ax and hammer stone are on display. Items from the period of 1711 to the 1750's from Richard Smith, Jr.'s home, Smith's St. Leonard, were recovered during public archaeology excavations in May and June. Three thousand year old pottery from Accokeek is displayed in a glass exhibit case. Counting and cataloging are done in the hub of the research wing.

Our 2½ hour tour was educational and entertaining. The MAC Lab scientists work together to explore the past to protect the State's rich archeological heritage. Archaeologists, conservators and curators study, treat and preserve the eight million artifacts housed in the state-of-the-art laboratory to learn about the people who have lived in Maryland for the past twelve thousand years. We ended our visit by having lunch on this beautiful property bordering the Patuxent River basking in the sunshine. 🦋

Chair's Comments

Continued from page 1

miss your presence and your hard work. I would also like to recognize Harlan Tucker, former Chair of the Friends. Harlan served as Chair from 1997 to 2009. He then stepped up to be the Friends Acting Chair for nearly a year after Emy Holdridge passed away. Thank you Harlan for all you do.

Two other Board members, Sparky Sparks and Rich Dolesh led the charge to plan and conduct the Friends-sponsored and first annual Monarch Festival in September. This was a big success! Kids played the Monarch migration game; families had their photos taken at the Monarch photo board; visitors, volunteers, and staff planted milkweed plugs; and we all had a fantastic learning experience. Thank you Sparky and Rich!

For the fifth year, Brenda Stone chaired the Friends Wildlife Holiday Bazaar Committee! This year's Bazaar was yet another success. We raised significant funds for the Refuge, drew nearly 700 people to the Visitor Center and had fun all around. Thank you Brenda!

Charlie Deegan, our newest Board member, introduced an idea for a community outreach event, now called "Night on the Wild Side." Planning and coordination are under way for this invitation-only March 31 event. We'll be inviting local businesses, service organizations, elected officials, local media, and others. The purpose will be to raise awareness, increase visibility and inspire folks to enjoy and experience this amazing resource - Patuxent Research Refuge and all it has to offer - and of course to make lots of friends. Thank you Charlie.

Ken Lavish, Chair of the Adopt A Whooper Committee, coordinated the second very successful Magnificent Whooping Crane Month in May, with guest speakers, Kid's Day, interactive and educational displays, Whooping Crane videos. Thanks, Ken.

Ed Grimes is always there for the Friends with his support for Friends



Jeanne Latham some years ago holding cool screech owl.

and Refuge events, taking cool photos to capture everything that goes on. Thank you, Ed. And I would like to thank Rod Burley and Tom Mikell, who stepped off the Board this year, for their dedication, support and hard work for the Friends.

I would also like to thank all of the Refuge and Research Center staff for their let's-get-it-done and positive attitudes in everything they do for Friends - this includes Refuge staff: Brad Knudsen, Diana Ogilvie, Amy Shoop, Dennis Hartnett, Laurel Harrison (who has moved to Vermont), Mike McConnell, Dionne Briggs, and Jeff Bolden; and Research Center staff: John French and Shannon Biliew. I may have inadvertently omitted some folks and my apologies for that.

The Friends face a number of challenges for the future and hope that you, our members, volunteers and staff, will continue to offer us your support - I know you will. We will be building our Board, membership, and community relations and partnerships, among other challenges. These are also terrific opportunities for us to grow, improve and have fun. Let me know how you would like to get involved - the Friends and I would like to hear from you: my email is jelatham@verizon.net. 🦋

Winter Birding at North Tract

Continued from page 6

found at North Tract only in winter. They are usually seen, oddly enough, on the thick poison ivy vines crawling up tree trunks, at least when they first arrive. They are also easy to overlook, because they are not vocal woodpeckers, and their mottled plumage is excellent camouflage, but every once in while one will start calling, sounding almost like a very loud catbird.

In the darkest days of late December and January, the weather can turn so cold that snow squeaks like styrofoam underfoot, while the trees creak in the wind. Canada Geese, Mallards and Great Blue Herons spend the winter here, but when ponds and lakes freeze completely over, they all leave to seek open water elsewhere. There are fewer human visitors, and North Tract seems at its most desolate, but still beautiful. This is the time to watch for Bald Eagles, Red-tailed, Coopers and Sharp-shinned Hawks, Pileated Woodpeckers, and even the occasional Great Horned Owl. A walk along the Wildlife Loop might find the huge tracks of Wild Turkeys in the snow.


The feeders near the North Tract Contact Station are the center of bird activity all winter long, with many of the same winter birds you see at your backyard feeder. It's always fun to check out the feeders because there are occasionally Fox Sparrows, Red-breasted Nuthatches and (rarely) Pine Siskins among the flocks of more common birds; and in the coldest part of winter a few American Tree Sparrows can usually be found in the weedy field across from the visitor center, fluttering among the dried grasses and bush peas. American Tree Sparrows at North Tract are at the southern-most part of their winter range, and are hard to find elsewhere in the area.

One magical winter (2012-2013) the North Tract became the epicenter of birding activity in Anne Arundel County as flocks of Red Crossbills and White-winged Crossbills swept in from the North in search of food. These are rare

for the area, and had not been seen at North Tract for many years. For several weeks the road to Lake Allen was a parking lot of cars, vans and SUVs loaded with birders, looking for Crossbills in the Virginia Pines along the road. When patches of pink (White-winged Crossbills) or orange-red (Red Crossbills) were spotted, the telephoto lenses and spotting scopes were deployed and happiness was in the air. The white winged crossbills were also seen on sweetgum trees, holding a seed ball in one foot while prying out the seeds like little parrots. Crossbill invasions are unpredictable, and the next one may come next year or twenty years from now - there is no way to predict it; but it's always worth checking out the pines and sweetgums in late winter.

Late winter is the time for Great Horned Owls, Barred Owls and Bald Eagles to start nesting. If the weather conditions are just right, it is also the best time to spot Woodcocks. If there is snow or ice everywhere except the roads, Woodcocks sometimes can be seen walking along the roads, along

with flocks of American Robins, probing into the dead leaves scraped up by the snow plows, looking for worms.

Birds are super sensitive to the length of daylight, and they begin their hormonal response almost as soon as the day lengths start increasing after the Winter Solstice. Almost any time after the first days of the New Year when the sun shines, the Northern Cardinals, Tufted Titmice and Carolina Wrens will start singing, only to stop again if the weather turns bad. By early March the Great Silence is over, and the dawn chorus is in full voice, with all the permanent residents of North Tract, as well as the winter visitors, singing in preparation for the breeding season. The male Red-shouldered Hawks take to the air, with their wild wailing calls, making spectacular swooping dives in front of the perched females. As the coldest weather eases, the lakes and ponds fill with migrating ducks (Ring-necked Ducks, Mallards, Hooded Mergansers, and sometimes Gadwalls, Common Goldeneyes and Pintails) signal the approach of spring, and the end of the winter birding season at North Tract. 

Thank You to Our Generous Donors and Lifetime Members

The Friends of Patuxent would like to recognize folks who gave generously to our organization, helping us to fulfill our mission of supporting Patuxent Research Refuge and Patuxent Wildlife Research Center.

The following individuals and organizations donated funds during the past calendar year and we thank you so much!

Nancy Newman-Pape

Joan Nolan

Smithsonian Resident Associates

Margaret Skoog

John Peebles

Sparky Sparks

Marilyn Johnson

Ed Grimes

The following individuals joined the Friends at the Lifetime membership level and we applaud their support and generosity:

Richard and Sarah Bourne

Live Radio Show About Birds Airs at Patuxent

Continued from page 10

The Show At Patuxent

Once the problems were overcome the show went on. Brad Knudsen was the first Patuxent guest. He talked about the National Wildlife Refuge System in general. Then he got into what Patuxent has to offer. John French was up next. He discussed Patuxent's role in researching the effects of DDT on wildlife and described the Refuge's role in saving Whooping Cranes.

The program also included several *Talkin' Birds* regular features:

- Wasylik of Charlotte's Web-log discussed the upcoming American Birding Association Young Birders Camps. Charlotte is an avid birder and chicken-keeper on her family's farm in Alberta, Canada. She also writes a bird blog called Prairie Birder and is an advocate for young birders. Her involvement with *Talkin' Birds* started with a call into the Mystery Bird contest in 2010, when she was just 13 years old.
- The Featured Feathered Friend segment highlighted the Surf Scoter which happens to be one of the species at the McAtee Seabird Pen Complex here at Patuxent.
- How good are you at identifying birds? The Mystery Bird Contest segment can be a fun and rewarding way to find out. Can you identify the bird if you heard the call, and used these clues: medium sized sea-going bird, black neck and head, white underside, dives underwater for schooling fish, crustaceans, and other invertebrates using its wings to swim, the bill is flattened with a heavy deep brown tip and is wedge shaped, a thin white line extends from the eyes to end of bill? The answer is Razorbill. The prize for correctly identifying the bird was the Droll Yankee Onyx Clever Clean bird feeder.



- The Let's Ask Mike segment stars the humorous and knowledgeable Mike O'Connor as he answers listener questions about birds. For our show, he recommended putting out a birdbath to a listener wanting to attract more birds to her backyard. Mike is the owner of the Bird Watcher's General Store in Orleans, Massachusetts, on Cape Cod. He is also the author of *Why Do Bluebirds Hate Me?* and *Why Don't Woodpeckers Get Headaches?*

How To Listen To *Talkin' Birds*

There are several options to listen to the show: live through two radio stations in Massachusetts, live over the internet, on a delayed basis through the *Talkin' Birds* website, or as a podcast through iTunes or other podcast provider. To listen to a live show over the internet at 9:30 on a Sunday go to <http://www.talkinbirds.com/>, select HOW TO LISTEN, select LIVE STREAM, then select LISTEN TO THE LIVE STREAM HERE and enjoy the show. To listen to archived shows go to <http://www.talkinbirds.com/>, select HOW TO LISTEN, select ARCHIVE and then select the episode you would like to hear. The show from Patuxent is number 548.

Thank You

Many thanks go out to Geoff Edgar, Ed Grimes, Ron Landy, Allan Dansie, and Heidi Primo for helping with the show. A big thank you goes to Eddie Burton for setting up the wi-fi system necessary for the performance. 🐦

Schoolyard Habitat

Continued from page 11

celebrate the winter as well. There's nothing more delightful on a winter morning than a flock of goldfinches feasting on seed heads.

An overview of a section of the pollinator garden, showing the decorative effect of the autumn stems and seed heads. 🐦



Solidago nemoralis, Gray goldenrod



Pycnanthemum muticum, Short-toothed mountain mint



Chasmanthium latifolium, Wild oats



Conoclinium coelestinum, Blue mistflower



We invite you to join!

Your membership/ contribution helps support the mission and programs at Patuxent.

You also receive the following benefits:

- Quarterly newsletter (mailed on request or go to www.friendsofpatuxent.org)
- 10% discount in our Wildlife Images bookstore and other area refuge bookstores
- Attendance at member functions
- Participation in on-site educational programs
- Sense of accomplishment in providing many opportunities for wildlife-related recreation, education and research

FRIENDS OF PATUXENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014-2015

- Jeanne Latham, Chair
- Richard Dolesh, Vice-Chair
- Clarence "Sparky" Sparks, Secretary
- Brenda Stone, Assistant Treasurer
- Ed Grimes, Director
- Charles Deegan, Director
- Harlan Tucker, Director

LIAISONS

- Diana Ogilvie, Patuxent Research Refuge Liaison
- Shannon Beliew, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, USGS Liaison
- Douglas Meister, Esq., General Counsel

FRIEND OF PATUXENT BOARD MEETINGS

Friends Board Meetings are usually held on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7 PM at the Visitor Center. No Board meetings are held in August and December. The scheduled meetings remaining for this fiscal year are: June 23, July 28, September 22, October 27, November 24.

JOIN TODAY!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

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(E-mail address will not be sold or shared. It will be used for Friends and Refuge announcements only.)

Phone: (opt.) _____ New Renewal

- Individual (\$25/yr), gift: FOP bookmark (or other) Family (\$35/yr), gift: FOP decal (or other)
- Contributor (\$75/yr), gift: History of Patuxent DVD (or other) Sponsor (\$250/yr), gift: FOP hat (or other)
- Life (\$500), gift: FOP shirt (or other) Life-65+ (\$300), gift: FOP shirt (or other) Donation \$ _____

Make check to "Friends of Patuxent" and mail to address on reverse side of this page.

- Check here if you prefer not to have a gift, and instead have your entire dues support Friends of Patuxent.
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WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN!

Friends of the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and Patuxent Research Refuge, Inc is a designated Section 501(c)(3) public charity. It is a membership organization whose mission is to financially support the research of the PWRC and the environmental education, outreach and recreational missions at the PRR. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Our Maryland Charitable Organization Registration-2348.

Your membership/contribution helps support the mission and programs at Patuxent. You also receive the following benefits:

- Quarterly newsletter (mailed on request or go to www.friendsofpatuxent.org)
- 10% discount in our Wildlife Images bookstore and other area refuge bookstores
- Attendance at member functions
- Participation in on-site educational programs
- Sense of accomplishment in providing many opportunities for wildlife-related recreation, education and research

(Application on reverse side)