

Volunteers ↔ Friends

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

www.friendspwrc.org



April-June 2011

Vol. 22, No. 2

Happy 75th Anniversary, Patuxent !!!

Brad Knudsen

When I tell people that Patuxent Research Refuge is turning 75 years old this year, their first response is typically, “Time for a party!!” And they are right – 2011 will certainly be a year for a party or two to celebrate the rich heritage that is Patuxent Research Refuge and Patuxent Wildlife Research Center.

It is so much more than that, though. It is a time to reflect on 75 years of what Patuxent has accomplished in the fields of wildlife research, wildlife conservation, and educating the public to the importance of natural resources and enjoying the outdoors. It is a time to honor those dedi-

cated scientists, administrators, and behind-the-scenes employees and volunteers who have contributed so much to the Patuxent community – and beyond - over the years. It is a time to celebrate achievements, and look ahead to new challenges. Many events are being planned throughout the year to commemorate this anniversary year – lecture series, film festivals, and a multi-day event in the fall around our usual Wildlife Festival weekend involving the public, partners, and alumni.



One of the biggest events will be on Saturday, April 16 held in conjunction with the National Wildlife Federation’s 75th anniversary. It turns out Patuxent and the NWF have a common founder in Jay Norwood “Ding” Darling. As Chief of the United States Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Biological Survey (the precursor to the Fish and Wildlife Service), Mr. Darling envisioned a wildlife experiment station being located near Washington, D.C.,

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Birthday Bash a Blast!

Patuxent Research Refuge celebrated the 108th Anniversary of the National Wildlife Refuge System with a Birthday Bash on Saturday, March 12, 2011. More than 1,050 visitors flocked to the National Wildlife Visitor Center where they were treated to two performances by Reptile World, featuring Michael Shwedick and his amazing reptiles. Also featured were ongoing hikes and special programs led by staff and volunteer naturalists, touch tables, live Wood Ducks, and kids' crafts.

Two new activities developed by our student employees proved to be very popular this year. Geo-quest, a GPS-based scavenger hunt, helped visitors learn about different plants, animals and management practices used on the refuge and encouraged them to make their visit to the refuge an outdoor experience. Another scavenger hunt, based on the refuge system birthday theme, led visitors through the indoor exhibits. There, they searched for "hidden" clues and answered questions that would lead them to the next clue. Every visitor who completed a scavenger hunt was awarded a prize.

As an added treat, the Friends of Patuxent sponsored and staffed the Crane Café, where hungry visitors could purchase lunch fare. While they enjoyed their meal, an Appalachian string band provided live music for entertainment.

For more information on Patuxent Research
Refuge activities, visit

<http://patuxent.fws.gov>

For more information on the research activities of
the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, visit

<http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov>



Contributors are reminded that their input to the newsletter is due no later than the **5th of the month** (June 5 for the July-Sept. newsletter.) The editor(s) and the layout artist need enough time to prepare the newsletter for mailing by the 15th of the month. Special thanks are due to the many contributors who have made this publication what it has become today.

Volunteers ↔ Friends is published quarterly and is mailed to volunteers and friends of the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center.

The editor, layout artists, writers, and other helpers are all volunteers. There are some regular contributors, however we welcome and encourage all volunteers and Friends to write for the newsletter.

Send or bring comments or stories to:
Editor, *Volunteers ↔ Friends*
National Wildlife Visitor Center
10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop
Laurel, MD 20708

To become a member of the *Friends* and receive a quarterly subscription to *Volunteers ↔ Friends*, send \$15 (Individual), \$20 (Family), \$50 (Contributor), or \$100 (Sponsor) to Friends of Patuxent at the address above.

----- From USGS website -----

Nocturnal Bird and Bat Migration through the Appalachians

Concerns have arisen about the potential impacts of wind power development in the Appalachians on migrating birds and bats, creating a critical need for information on their distribution and flight characteristics as they pass through the region. USGS is studying the distribution and flight patterns of birds and bats that migrate at night. Weather surveillance radar data are being analyzed to provide a broad view of spring and fall migration through the Appalachians, and to assess the response of migrants to mountain ridges or other prominent landforms. USGS is also conducting acoustic monitoring at 29 sites scattered through the central Appalachians, recording the calls made by migrating birds in flight to index their abundance and species composition at different locations. The acoustic monitoring is supplemented with portable radar sampling at three sites, to provide additional data on the passage of migrants, including their flight altitudes and directions. The data will be used to model the effects of topography, weather, and other variables on migrant abundance and flight to assess where and when migrants might be at risk from wind power development. Project partners include the USFWS Atlantic Coast Joint Venture, New Jersey Audubon Society, the USDA Forest Service (Monongahela National Forest, George Washington and Jefferson National Forests), Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy of Virginia, and the Bioacoustics Research Program, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center Whooping Cranes Chicks Sent to Louisiana to Start a New Population



USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center has been involved with endangered species for the last five decades. The first whooping crane arrived at Patuxent in 1966 as the genesis of the captive propagation program that attained international prominence. Over the years Patuxent has raised numerous whooping cranes and these birds have helped establish populations in several areas of North America. The recent release of cranes in Louisiana is an attempt to establish a new population of non-migratory cranes. A non-migratory population naturally existed in Louisiana in the past. Now with this new population another step has been made in the long process of restoring this vulnerable endangered species from the brink of extinction to a strong viable wild population. Hopefully, by having several wild populations the species will be better protected from natural dangers such as hurricanes, but also from human-made disasters such as oil spills or other contaminant problems.

For photos taken on the refuge, visit a gallery at
http://www.pbase.com/photoops2/patuxent_research_refuge

She Flies On . . . and On . . . and On

Oldest known wild bird in U.S. returns to Midway to raise chick

Released: 3/8/2011 11:36:33 AM

MIDWAY ATOLL — The oldest known U.S. wild bird – a coyly conservative 60 — is a new mother. The bird, a Laysan albatross named Wisdom, was spotted a few weeks ago with a chick by John Klavitter, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist and the deputy manager of the Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge. The bird has sported and worn out 5 bird bands since she was first banded by U.S. Geological Survey scientist Chandler Robbins in 1956 as she incubated an egg. Chandler rediscovered Wisdom in 2001. In 1956, he estimated Wisdom to be at least 5 years old then since this is the earliest age at which these birds breed, though they more typically breed at 8 or 9 after an involved courtship lasting several years. This means, of course, that Wisdom is likely to be in her early sixties.

There must be something to all that fish oil she consumes because Wisdom does not look her age (see photo below).

“She looks great,” said Bruce Peterjohn, the chief of the North American Bird Banding Program at the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, Md. “And she is now the oldest wild bird documented in the 90-year history of our USGS-FWS and Canadian bird banding program,” he added. “To know that she can still successfully raise young at age 60-plus, that is beyond words. While the process of banding a bird has not changed greatly during the past century, the information provided by birds marked with a simple numbered metal band has transformed our knowledge of birds.”



Photographer: John Klavitter ,
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Wisdom, Peterjohn said, has likely raised at least 30 to 35 chicks during her breeding life, though the number may well be higher because experienced parents tend to be better parents than younger breeders. Albatross lay only one egg a year, but it takes much of a year to incubate and raise the chick. After years in which they have successfully raised and fledged a chick – which on Midway is about two-thirds of the time – the parents may take the occasional next year off from parenting. Klavitter said that Wisdom also nested in 2006, 2008, 2009 and 2010. And since adult albatross mate for life, with both parents raising the young, it makes one wonder if Wisdom has had the same partner all these years or not.

Almost as amazing as being a parent at 60 is the number of miles this bird has likely logged – about 50,000 miles a year as an adult – which means that Wisdom has flown at least 2 to 3 million miles since she was first banded. Or, to put it another way, that’s 4 to 6 trips from the Earth to the Moon and back again with plenty of miles to spare.

One reason for all these miles is that Laysan albatross spend the first 3 to 5 years after fledging at sea, never touching land. Then they return to breed in the northwestern Hawaiian Island chain but some of their feeding grounds are actually off the coast of western North America, including the Gulf of Alaska. The parents tend to

She Flies On . . . and On . . . and On

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feed closer to the islands where their nests are when the chicks are very young, but they regularly commute to the northern Pacific Ocean and even the Gulf of Alaska when the chicks are older or when the adults are incubating. They convert the fish eggs and squid oil they eat into a rich, oily liquid, which they regurgitate and feed to their chick.

In the non-breeding part of the year, albatross do not touch land — the birds, scientists believe, often even sleep while flying over the ocean.

Peterjohn noted that Wisdom's remarkable record is just one example of the valuable data provided by bird banding. In addition to establishing longevity records for birds, banding data from the North American Bird Banding Program documents migratory patterns, provides critical harvest and survival information used to manage populations of migratory game birds, and supports research activities on many issues from toxicology to disease transmission and behavior. Since 1920, approximately 64.5 million birds have been banded by this Interior Department-Canadian Wildlife Service program, and of those, nearly 4.5 million bands have been recovered.

About albatross

Albatross are legendary birds for many reasons – in Samuel Coleridge's poem, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," a sailor has to wear an albatross around his neck as punishment for killing the bird. According to seafaring legends, albatross are the souls of lost sailors and should not be killed. However, as reported by James Cook, sailors regularly killed and ate albatross.

Albatross are remarkable fliers who travel thousands of miles on wind currents without ever flapping their wings. They do this by angling their 6-foot wings to adjust for wind currents and varying air speeds above the water. Nineteen of 21 species of albatross are threatened with extinction, according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. Present threats to the birds include lead poisoning of chicks on Midway from lead paint used in previous decades; longline fishing, where the birds are inadvertently hooked and drowned, though conservation groups have banded with fishermen and dramatically lowered the number of deaths from this cause; and pollution, especially from garbage floating on the ocean.

The birds ingest large amounts of marine debris – by some estimates 5 tons of plastic are unknowingly fed to albatross chicks each year by their parents. Although the plastic may not kill the chicks directly, it reduces their food intake, which leads to dehydration and most likely lessens their chance of survival. In addition, albatross are threatened by invasive species such as rats and wild cats, which prey on chicks, nesting adults and eggs. Albatross evolved on islands where land mammals were absent, so have no defenses against them.



The Friends of Patuxent

The Friends of Patuxent is a fundraising group that supports both the Patuxent Research Refuge and the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. The group was organized in 1991 and is governed by a Board of Directors. Currently there are thirteen members of the board and the board has two vacancies. Our largest fundraiser is the Patuxent Wildlife Art Show and Sale held each spring at the end of March. Other events are held throughout the year and last year we held our first 5 K Run on the Refuge at North Tract. We are planning another run for this year on September 25, 2011. The Crane Café which operated at the Refuge Birthday event is another of our fundraisers as well as Wildlife Images, the bookstore. We have an exciting new cookbook for sale, "Wild and Not So Wild Recipes," that is available in the bookstore. Last year we were able to provide \$10,000 to the Refuge and \$10,000 to the Research Center.

We are always looking for volunteers to help with these events and to serve on various planning groups. The planning group for the 2012 Patuxent Wildlife Art Show and Sale will begin meeting in July. If you would like to be a member of this group, please let me know. There are a variety of jobs available and everyone will be working to make things happen for the refuge and the research center. If you would like to be a part of this exciting group, please let me know. If you would like to learn more about the Friends, please check out our website at www.friendspwrc.org.

Emy Holdridge, Chair
Friends of Patuxent
emyh608@verizon.net



Happy 75th Anniversary, Patuxent !!!

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to serve as the nation's first wildlife research center. He spearheaded the exploration of available lands in the D.C. area, culminating in President Franklin D. Roosevelt signing Executive Order 7514 on December 16, 1936, officially establishing Patuxent Research Refuge and its wildlife research purpose.

Shortly after resigning from USDA, Mr. Darling spoke to 1,500 conservation leaders from throughout the nation at the first North American Wildlife Conference held in February 1936 at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C. He was elected as the first president of this fledgling organization, which was renamed the National Wildlife Federation in 1938. Thus, the nation's largest private conservation organization was born – the same year Patuxent became a reality!

This joint event in mid-April will honor the conservation leadership that "Ding" Darling exhibited throughout his career. There will be group work projects, citizen science activities, and the dedication of the J.N. "Ding" Darling Conservation Heritage Trail, honoring leading conservationists of the past including John James Audubon, Rachel Carson, and Teddy Roosevelt.

So, yes, it will be "party time" at Patuxent this year, which, of course, also means, "for every minute you party, you spend hours on logistics and coordination" time. So please thank those who are responsible for all the wonderful events we will be having over the coming months. And thank those who have made Patuxent the renowned and special place it has been over the last 75 years.

A Refuge for All

My dictionary defines “Refuge” as a place for protection from danger or hardship. The implication appears to be that all land outside the refuge is dangerous or poses a hardship - but for whom? The dictionary does not say. The original intent of a refuge was to save wetlands and wilderness for the habitat these lands provided for wild animals and plants. The rate of destruction of natural lands rose from moderate to rapid as human population soared and wildlife populations declined. Persons who enjoyed seeing and experiencing wild lands with its many creatures, and then witness the devastation and loss of those same lands, became alarmed and took action. They took action not just to save animal life. They took action because it infringed on their own enjoyment. Perhaps I should say it infringed on our enjoyment. In reality we humans have set aside lands as refuges and national parks to save ourselves from the habitat we created. We need wildlife refuges for our own well being and to reconnect with nature.

The University of Illinois recognized this, not as a phenomenon, but as fact. In 1993 Dr. Frances Kuo and Dr. William Sullivan established the Human-Environment Research Lab, now called Landscape and Human Health Laboratory. Dr. Kuo and colleagues have conducted many research tests with appropriate controls to demonstrate phenotypically what we feel inside ourselves when surrounded by trees and greenery. I will here relate two examples that seem to demonstrate what the Illinois lab is all about.

1. One day on our refuge I passed a woman sitting on a bench appearing to be in a serene and passive mood. I thought of saying, “Hello,” but I felt my voice would break her reverie. Just then a flock of geese flew overhead with their very audible raucous “Honk, honk.” Her countenance and posture remained the same. She absorbed this sound of nature because it blended with her mood. My voice, less raucous, was from the civilized world which she had chosen to escape by coming to the refuge.
2. On another occasion I was on the river walk in Laurel, on our very own Patuxent River. A man was standing there as I passed by. We exchanged greetings. Then he started talking. “You know,” he said, “I come down here just to watch the river flow. I’ve been to doctors for various ailments; they gave me pills for stress and tension. Then I came to this river. I just stand here under this tree and stare at the water. I don’t need the pills anymore.”

So.... what is this disconnect we have, half in nature, half out? Our parks are set aside like patches in the landscape so that we can jump in and get a quick dose of nature, then jump out again into what many people called “the real world.” Our species, *Homo sapiens*, appears to be confused as to our place in nature. We have placed ourselves at the top of the phylogenetic heap, but being on the cutting edge leaves us vulnerable to dangerous surprises. The geological time table which marks significant events in Earth’s history shows the last Epoch as the Holocene. Today, some scientists are suggesting that we name our current epoch “Anthropocene” as an indication of how much modern man has changed the very vitals of our planet. As a species we have inhabited every nook and cranny the earth has to offer, from tropical rainforests to arctic tundra. We have explored the ocean depths and the vastness of outer space. The new brain forges ahead and the old brain calls us back. The vestiges of our ancestors are carried within. We need natural surroundings, as the lab in Illinois shows.

Our refuges not only have natural plants and animals but are also examples of how to have clean air, clean water, healthy soil, native plants, and “free range” creatures. People come to the refuge to be a part of that kind of environment, in effect, a lost Garden of Eden. Essentially we enjoy our refuge because it gives us peace of mind and protects us from the danger and hardships posed by “too much” civilization.

Patuxent Research Refuge Weed Warriors

Non-native invasive plants are threatening our wildlife habitat. We need YOU to help stop them. Come out for one of our “Weed Warriors Days” and help us treat garlic mustard, mile-a-minute, Japanese stiltgrass and other non-native plant infestations on the refuge. All ages and abilities are welcome. Do your part to protect Patuxent from alien invaders, and become a Weed Warrior! You will receive a short educational briefing explaining the effects of invasive plants on wildlife and wildlife habitats and how to identify and control these plants. Wear long sleeves and pants and bring gloves. Please register for this event by calling 301-497-5887. Dates for 2011 events are as follows (dates and times subject to change if necessary):

Friday	4-22-2011	Earth Day event - Weed Warriors kick-off,	
		North Tract Visitor Contact Station	1:00PM – 3:00PM
Wednesday	5-18-2011	North Tract Visitor Contact Station	1:00PM – 3:00PM
Saturday	5-21-2011	National Wildlife Visitor Center	9:00AM – 12:00PM
Wednesday	6-08-2011	North Tract Visitor Contact Station	9:00AM – 12:00PM
Wednesday	6-15-2011	North Tract Visitor Contact Station	9:00AM – 12:00PM
Saturday	6-18-2011	North Tract Visitor Contact Station	9:00AM – 12:00PM
Wednesday	7-06-2011	National Wildlife Visitor Center	9:00AM – 12:00PM
Wednesday	7-20-2011	North Tract Visitor Contact Station	9:00AM – 12:00PM
Saturday	7-30-2011	North Tract Visitor Contact Station	9:00AM – 12:00PM
Wednesday	8-03-2011	North Tract Visitor Contact Station	9:00AM – 12:00PM
Saturday	8-27-2011	National Wildlife Visitor Center	9:00AM – 12:00PM

Chris Wicker
Wildlife Biologist

2011 Greater Baltimore Children & Nature Conference

Amy Shoop, Park Ranger

The Baltimore Montessori Public Charter School of Baltimore hosted the 2011 Greater Baltimore Children & Nature Conference on Saturday, January 15th. This conference brought together a variety of professionals to explore the avenues and benefits of encouraging youth into the outdoors, to value nature and invoke stewardship. Workshops were aimed at developing partnerships between various professionals, from healthcare workers to environmental educators.

Two US Fish and Wildlife Service employees, Amy Shoop (Patuxent Research Refuge) and Janet Ady (National Conservation Training Center), attended the conference with approximately 190 other attendees. Workshop topics and partnership ideas ranged from education to faith. Conference highlights were speaker Michael P. Carter, Director of Family and Community Engagement for Baltimore County Public Schools, and an inspiring panel of local Baltimore City Youth who discussed engaging their peers with the natural environment.

Pet Cemetery on the North Tract

By D. Green, North Tract volunteer

The Patuxent Research Refuge, North Tract, was transferred from the Department of Defense (Ft. George G. Meade) to the Patuxent Research Refuge in 1991. With more than 8,000 acres, the North Tract had been a major training area for Ft. Meade since its beginning in 1917. It also has over nine cemeteries, one of which is unique because it is for pets of military personnel (and possibly others).

For years volunteers had speculated that there may have been at least one pet cemetery somewhere on Ft. Meade. A few North Tract volunteers were aware of some markers but did not have much information about them. In the summer of 2008, other volunteers located an old neglected pet cemetery on the North Tract. Permission was granted to partially clean up and document what we found. We picked up old discarded bottles and cans and removed many fallen trees in the area. We started to find pieces of metal under the light ground cover and further investigation led to some grave markers. We eventually uncovered more than twenty markers. Most were standard aluminum plates, screwed onto a piece of cinder block that revealed the pet's name, date & owner's name and rank. A few more elaborate markers were made of cast brass or bronze, and a few markers had a glass cover with the pet's name and date painted on a backing of some kind. Most of these were unreadable due to natural fading and deterioration.

We uncovered a few surprises, like finding two sentry dogs, "Falko" and "Rinnie". Falko died in 1965 and Rinnie died in 1968. An attempt to find more information through telephone calls, emails, web and general research of military working dogs was unsuccessful, although I gained a better understanding of military working dogs and the services they provided. I do not know the name of the cemetery, nor do I have any additional information about Rinnie or Falko. Secrets from the Fort are hard to get...

Earliest marker: Jan 1960 "MOOCHIE" MSGT MARUCHA, FELIX

Most recent marker: 1974 "SAM" The Stanfiels

Highest military rank: General, "MOX" Feb 28, 1968

Lowest military rank: Sgt.

Most common year: 1968

Other: many plaques have names that may be civilian

PLEASE NOTE: This pet cemetery is in a closed area and not readily accessible to visitors.

Contributors Needed!

We invite articles about wildlife, nature, education programs, research and the various happenings at Patuxent!

Articles should be submitted to Diana Ogilvie (Diana_Ogilvie@fws.gov).

Articles are due by:

Summer (Jul-Sept)-due June 5

Fall (Oct-Dec)-due Sep 5

Winter (Jan-Mar)-due mid Nov

Spring (Apr-Jun)- due Mar 5



Photographing Nature at a Refuge

by Volunteer Naturalist Steve Noyes

When volunteer applicants go through volunteer orientation at the Patuxent Research Refuge (PRR), one of the things they learn in the “mission” section is that there are activities that the National Wildlife Refuge System promotes (i.e. observing wildlife, environmental education, photographing nature and more..).

One of my favorite activities to do FOR the refuge is photography. As a “nature” photographer, I can choose from many aspects of the art form. Some photographers specialize in scenic shots while others concentrate on specific subjects...birds, plants/wildflowers or even insects. Each wildlife refuge offers different subjects, often dictated by available habitats. The PRR has the eastern deciduous forest as its predominant habitat along with “created” water impoundments. Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge on Maryland’s Eastern Shore has wetlands as its predominant habitat with stands of Loblolly pines. So, if you’re interested in photographing songbirds and other typical flora and fauna of Maryland, you’d come to the PRR; if interested in finding waterfowl, you go to Blackwater NWR.



photo by Steve Noyes

There are many challenges to wildlife photography. First you have to find wildlife. Here’s where the refuge system venues excel. My “life” list of birds is approaching 350 species...the majority of which I have found visiting refuges from Maine to Texas. Having versatile camera equipment and accessories, including a tripod and telephoto lens, is imperative. With the advent of digital cameras, film is no longer an expense; you can sometimes even edit your pictures immediately after having taken them.

Although my area of expertise is BIRDS, I’ve found songbirds to be the biggest challenge (they constantly flit about). A tripod is seldom helpful and using a telephoto lens in low light in the woods can be problematic. Large wading birds, ducks, and geese prove to be easier subjects to photograph. In recent years, I’ve added other creatures of flight to my list of targets (butterflies, dragonflies, and even bees and wasps. Plant micro-photography has also been an “eye opener”. So, I guess I’m becoming more of a “generalist” nature photographer, after all. It does make me more aware of EVERYTHING around me.



The next time you go to a refuge, even just to walk your dog, bring your camera and see how much more observant you become. Hope to see you on the trails! CLICK! CLICK!

AMERICA’S NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES...
Where Wildlife Comes Naturally!!

Staffers and Volunteers attend the Annual MAEOE Environmental Education Conference

By Dennis Hartnett and Diana Ogilvie

Staffers Amy Shoop and Diana Ogilvie and Volunteer Dennis Hartnett had the opportunity to attend the annual MAEOE (Maryland Association of Environmental and Outdoors Education) Conference held at the University of Maryland.

Representing the Patuxent Research Refuge, Amy, Dennis and Diana staffed a booth at the conference and networked with a number of environment and outdoor educators, sharing information and ideas. The Patuxent team also attended a number of workshops on some of the following environmental topics:



Schoolyard Habitat-Now What?
Master Naturalist Program
Natural Play Spaces
Educating for Sustainability
Integrating Technology with a Focus on Birds

The conference gave the staffers and volunteers a chance to meet and network with others in the field of interpretation and environmental education. The vast wealth of information and knowledge presented at the workshops will enable the education team to incorporate fresh ideas into the education programs at Patuxent.

New at Patuxent Research Refuge

Hi, Everybody! I am **Samantha Fleming**, a proud Massachusetts native where I spent most my childhood outside, either hiking in the summer or snowmobiling in the winter. When college time came around, I headed to Maine to a wee-little college, Unity, and received my Bachelor's in Conservation Law Enforcement. I was lucky enough to get on board with USFWS as a LE SCEP for Region 3 at Crab Orchard NWR in Southern Illinois. Two and a half years later, I was still at Crab Orchard looking for a change. Patuxent then came open for new LE, and I jumped at the chance to get back to the east coast and experience the fun of the metro area. After a few weeks here, I know I made the right choice to join Patuxent's "family."

Hi! I am **Caitlin Finnerty**, the newest Spring Environmental Education and Interpretation intern. I grew up in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and attended Mount Saint Mary's University, a small liberal arts college in Northern Maryland. During college, I ran Division 1 cross country and track. I love to explore the Appalachian Mountains. My interests led me to Italy, Martha's Vineyard, the Dominican Republic, and Peru, where I pursued work experiences that ranged from television production to international service and magazine writing. I graduated in May 2009 with degrees in Communication Studies and Fine Arts. Soon after, I ventured to Portland, Oregon to take an AmeriCorps position, where I worked on a watershed restoration field team and implemented environmental outreach programs. I am happy to be back in Maryland and learn about the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Frog Survey Schedule

Spring is coming and the frogs will soon be emerging and calling for mates! As in the past years, the biological team will be conducting call count surveys to monitor frog and toad activity on the refuge, and we need your help to monitor the calls! Surveys are conducted every other Thursday evening beginning at 1/2 hour after sunset and lasting two hours. Surveys involve driving to various ponds and vernal pools located on the refuge and listening for calling activity of 12 species at each site. Refuge vehicles are provided for the surveys; interested volunteers need to take the frog call quiz prior to the first survey (new volunteers will be trained and can obtain a CD of calls) and certification to drive refuge vehicles is also encouraged. Interested volunteers should contact Chris Wicker at Christopher_Wicker@fws.gov. More details will be given through e-mails to interested volunteers. Surveys began Thursday, February 24, 2011. (Schedule appears below, subject to change or cancellation.) Thanks, and I look forward to seeing you there!

<u>Survey Date</u>	<u>Sunset</u>	<u>Meet at:</u>
Thursday, April 7	7:37PM	7:30PM
Thursday, April 21	7:50PM	7:40PM
Thursday, May 5	8:04PM	7:55PM
Thursday, May 19	8:17PM	8:10PM
Thursday, June 2	8:28PM	8:20PM
Thursday, June 16	8:35PM	8:30PM



Christopher Wicker
Wildlife Biologist

Welcome to the Team!

by Diana Ogilvie

Volunteer Orientation was the subject of a marathon training session at the Visitor Center on February 20. As a result, we have added twelve new people to our volunteer ranks! It was a diverse group, including high school and college students, recent college graduates, graduate students, young professionals, mid-career professionals, retirees and military service members. New volunteers include Lindsay and Maddy Barranco, Bill Buckingham, Taj Chauvin, Caitlin Finnerty, Brett Hartl, Ryan Hejduk, Emily Hutchins, Sahbin Kim, Marla Moore, Sarah Morris, Gabriella Nowicki, and Karen Maher. Please be sure to give them a warm welcome when you meet them at Patuxent.

Remaining Wildlife Conservation Film Festival dates



Saturday, April 9, 2011

Series 1-10:30

Series 2-1:30

Woodcock Survey Schedule

The time for the woodcock survey has come, as the male woodcock is now advertising for mates. As in past years, the biological team will be conducting call count surveys to monitor woodcock activity on the refuge, and we need your help! Surveys are conducted every Monday evening beginning shortly after sunset (time varies by date, Wednesdays reserved as rain dates) and last approximately one-half hour. Volunteers meet at the Visitor Contact Station at North Tract. Participants divide into groups, driving to each of 7 or 8 points along three routes on North Tract to listen for calling activity at each site. Refuge vehicles may be provided for the surveys, but generally personal vehicles are used; no experience necessary (new volunteers will be trained through participation.) Volunteers interested should contact Chris Wicker at Christopher_Wicker@fws.gov. Surveys began Monday, February 7, 2011. (Schedule appears below, subject to weather.) Thanks, and we hope to see you there!

Survey Date:

Monday, April 4

Monday, April 11

Monday, April 18

Monday, April 25

Monday, May 2

Report to NT VCS at:

7:20PM

7:30PM

7:35PM

7:40PM

7:50PM



Christopher Wicker
Wildlife Biologist

Upcoming Events.....

Birding for the Blind Saturday, April 30



8-11AM, Ages 8+

National Wildlife Visitor Center



Earth Day
April 22

Happy
Mother's
Day
May 8



The Refuge will be closed on
Memorial Day May 30

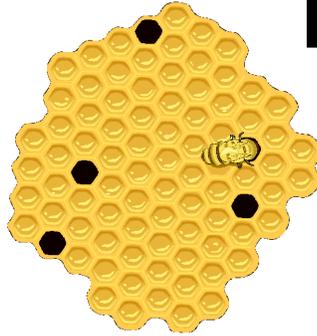
Kids' Fishing Day June 11

National Wildlife
Visitor Center



.....**Mark Your Calendar**

**Happy
Father's
Day**
June 19



**Honey Harvest
Festival**
Saturday,
September 17

National Wildlife Visitor Center

Run for the Refuge 5K
Sunday,
September 25

North Tract



Patuxent Wildlife Festival
Saturday, October 15

National Wildlife Visitor Center

*P***75** years of wildlife
conservation
research
atuxent



Volunteers ↔ Friends
Friends of Patuxent
 National Wildlife Visitor Center
 10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop
 Laurel, MD 20708-4027

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**“Friends” website: www.friendspwrc.org
 ☎ (301) 497-5789**

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 Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and the environmental education, outreach, and recreation missions at the Patuxent Research Refuge. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Our Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) number for the **Central Maryland** area is **63960** and Maryland Charitable Organization Registration number is **2348**

Your mailing label denotes your membership expiration date. We appreciate your prompt renewal.

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

- Newsletter
- 10% discount in our Wildlife Images bookstore and other area refuge bookstores.
- Attendance at members-only functions
- Participation in on-site educational programs
- Sense of accomplishment in providing many opportunities for wildlife-related recreation, education, and research

Friends of Patuxent
Membership Application

Please mail, along with a check, to:

Friends of Patuxent
 10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop
 Laurel, MD 20708-4027
 (make check out to **“Friends of Patuxent”**)

Date: _____

New Member Renewal

Annual Membership Rates

Individual (\$15/yr) Family (\$20/yr)

Contributor (\$50/yr) Sponsor (\$100/yr)

Donation only \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **(Zip)** _____

Telephone:

Email _____

