

Volunteers ↔ Friends

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

www.friendspwrc.org



January-March 2011

Vol. 22, No. 1

Congratulations – Lucy Grimes, Volunteer of the Year 2010

By Dennis Hartnett, Environmental Education Coordinator



Congratulations to Lucy Grimes, Volunteer of the Year 2010. Lucy is one of Patuxent's stalwart long-time volunteers. She started volunteering in 1989 and has been going strong ever since. Lucy has contributed close to 8000 hours to the Refuge in a variety of different categories.

Lucy is a member of the "Tuesday" front desk crew. In that capacity, she meets and greets visitors at the front desk, helps new volunteers with customer service, counts the visitors entering the building, and keeps the front desk and kiosks organized and neat. She completes all these tasks with a bright and sunny disposition.

As an outreach volunteer, Lucy has manned information tables and provided outreach to a number of different organizations including WSSC children's programs, Bowie Fest, Bass Pro Outreach, Junior Duck Stamp Program, Laurel Main Street Festival, Laurel's mayor's open house and many others. She engages people with enthusiasm while giving them information about Patuxent Research Refuge.

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National Visitor Survey

By Anna Trochim

U.S. Fish and Wildlife periodically collects refuge visitor data on a national scale to help manage refuges better. The most recent studies of this kind occurred in 2004 and 2002. This year, Patuxent Research Refuge, along with 52 other refuges nationwide, is participating in another national visitor survey project conducted by the US Geological Survey (USGS). Refuge staff and volunteers conducted the first part of the survey in October, and will conduct the next part in the spring of 2011. In this survey, a random sampling of visitors is asked to provide feedback on their refuge experience. Feedback from the survey will measure refuge visitors' satisfaction with current services, access and facilities, and give refuge managers a better understanding of the quality of their informational, educational, and recreational activities.

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** (Sept. 5 for the Oct.-Dec. 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.



Patuxent Wildlife Art Show and Sale Needs Your Help!

By C. "Sparky" Sparks - Chairman 2011 Wildlife Art Show, Volunteer

As with all past Art Shows, no matter what the venue, we have need for lots of help. If you know of a place to hang flyers or give out brochures, let someone on the Art Show Committee know, and we'll give you brochures and flyers. If you can think of any other ways to get the word out, consider joining the Art Show Publicity Committee.

In early February there will be a mass mailing of brochures to a targeted mail list. Watch your email for announcements of the mass mailing date. Many hands make the job go very quickly, and it's a good chance to socialize with other volunteers while doing a much needed task. This is a particularly good opportunity for new volunteers who would like to meet other volunteers in a relaxed but working atmosphere.

In addition, we need help setting up for the Art Show prior to the Art Show. The Logistics Committee will determine when the set-up will take place, but it will most likely start on Tuesday, March 22th through Friday, March 25th. Setting up for the Art Show can be physically demanding, but fun work. There will also be pre- and post-show needs with placing small road signs around the area to point the way to the Art Show. Signs typically are placed on Thursday, and picked up Sunday afternoon.

The Patuxent Wildlife Art Show and Sale committee is also looking for volunteers to work at the Show. The Show will be held on March 25 through March 27. We have need for volunteers on all shifts. Friday, March 25th will be the artists' reception and silent auction. Volunteer for this and you can eat for free, visit with the artists in a less busy time and get first crack at buying the best art!

Saturday, March 26th and Sunday March 27th is when the art show is open and free to the public. There are two shifts each day, and you may volunteer for as many shifts as you wish. Volunteers are needed for all sorts of jobs including greeting, parking/security, and floating (or filling in where needed), among others. If you can stay after the close of the Art Show on Sunday to help clean-up, you would be most welcome.

If you are available and willing to help with any of the above, contact **Susan Minter** at (301) 490-8118 or sandjminter@yahoo.com. You may also sign up on the sign-up sheets that will be placed at the North and South Tracts in early February.



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

Nothing Quite Like a Winter Walk

Brad Knudsen

Most of you probably are aware of the evidence that continues to mount regarding how important it is for youngsters to spend time outdoors for their physical and mental well-being. “Last Child in the Woods” author Richard Louv, the National Environmental Education Foundation, and the National Wildlife Federation are among the many that have promoted the need to get children outside repeatedly for educational AND playful reasons. Even First Lady Michelle Obama is a huge proponent through her Let’s Move Outside initiative that promotes outdoor activities – especially for children and especially on public lands. She recently visited the Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex in Nevada to promote this very cause.

With summer months packed with trips to the beach, summer camps, field sports, barbecues and picnics, it can be a bit easier to make that outdoor connection. The shorter, colder days of winter can make it more difficult to get outdoors, but you should not overlook outdoor opportunities that are unique to the winter months. Months devoid of mosquitoes, ticks, and chiggers, I might add!!

Winter is the perfect time to get to know Nature in a different way, and there is much to be experienced from a simple winter hike. With the leaves off the trees, take a hike on your favorite trail, and count how many squirrel nests are in the treetops you have walked by all summer, obscured by pesky foliage. You might even find a mourning dove nest in your front yard’s flowering crabapple tree like my daughter did last week while helping rake the lawn – the nest had been there all summer, hidden and camouflaged by leaves. On a cold day, we were able to study its fragile construction, and wonder how in the world it ever held up in those sudden blustery summer thunderstorms.

Sometimes, in cold weather, you can get a step or two closer to wildlife, as they may be reluctant to expend precious energy fleeing from those strange humans. Deer may remain bedded down, birds of prey may not flush from the tree ahead of you, or that foraging nuthatch may be so engrossed in its quest for precious insect morsels on that tree trunk to help it through the cold night, you and your child may be able to walk right up to within a few yards.

Powers of observation can also be honed on a winter hike. Wildlife may not be as active, so your child may have to really focus to see that great blue heron hiding in the marsh grasses along the edge of the wetland, or the crow in the evergreen, with feathers puffed out to help insulate it from a cold blast of a Nor’easter. All the showy flowers and fruits are long gone, so you begin looking for – and appreciating – the non-flashy aspects of nature - patterns of lichens and shelf fungi scattered on a tree trunk, the dried and brown stems of non-woody plants that have the stamina to stand erect in the high winds and deep snows of winter, the shadowy little hole in the ground that shelters a rabbit or chipmunk from the cold.

And of course, any snowfall opens up the wonderful world of animal tracks, and can inspire the nature detective in any of us. What animal made that track? What was it doing? What WAS it doing? Did the rabbit outrun the fox and get away? Are those feathered impressions on the snow from a great horned owl that made a grab for a not wary enough meadow vole? You don’t necessarily have to successfully interpret what they are seeing in the snow – just ask your child what they think happened, and let their imagination do the rest.

So it will no doubt be cold this winter – and it may be snowy this winter. But don’t let that deter you from having an outdoor journey or two with a young one. It can open up a whole new world. Besides – when does it ever feel better to be INDOORS than after you have been OUTDOORS getting slightly chilled to the bone??

The 2010 Patuxent Waterbird Nesting Season

Frank McGilvrey, Volunteer/Biologist



This was the fourteenth year of intensive monitoring of nesting waterbirds on the Patuxent Research Refuge. Monitoring consists of weekly Spring pair counts, nesting checks of 140 wood duck nest boxes, 80 islands, plus assorted beaver lodges and stump mounds and weekly brood counts of the five nesting waterfowl species on the Refuge. These include Canada goose, wood duck, mallard, hooded merganser and black duck. Other waterbird species nesting on the refuge include great blue heron, green heron, pied-billed grebe, belted kingfisher, and osprey.

2010 Results

Canada goose – The 127 pairs recorded were comparable to last year; down by half from the peaks in the late 1990s. Pairs include non-nesting two year olds. Canada geese don't normally nest until their third year. We found 100 nests of which 57 hatched. Nesting has been at about this level since 2003 when the nest baskets were removed. Nesting geese, particularly on South Tract, had to move from the predator-proof baskets to the shoreline, where they became exposed to predation by raccoons and red foxes. Hatching and rearing success improved over last year, particularly on South Tract, apparently due to a crash in last year's very high red fox population. Rearing success increased from 50 young in 20 broods to 180 young in 34 broods.

Wood duck – The estimated 68 pairs were comparable to last year. There was a small increase over last year in nests found in boxes, but still well below the numbers found in 2003-2008. The reason for the decline the last two years is unknown since brood habitat and rearing success were good in 2009. The hopeful factor is an increase in yearlings from only nine last year to 22 this year. Population increases are very dependent on the number of yearlings and two-year olds. We had the first ten year old hen we have recorded. There were 34 successful nests, the same as last year. An estimated seven broods were from natural cavities. The only area with an abundance of suitable trees with cavities is along the Patuxent River. Even though brood habit was excellent, rearing success was down from last year. This was probably due to the large number of yearlings which have much less success rearing young than older hens. About 160 ducklings reached flight.

Mallard – The species is in free-fall as a nesting population on Patuxent. Only 15 pairs were recorded in 2010, by far the lowest on record. The peak was 63 pairs in 1998 and 1999. Only eight nests were found and only one hatched. No broods were seen. Over 100 were reared each year in the mid-1990s.

Hooded merganser – There was also a record low of five pairs for this species. Three nests were found in boxes; up from one last year. All three hatched and two broods totaling seven were reared.

Black duck – This species has almost disappeared as a resident. Only two pairs were recorded. No nests or broods were recorded.

Other Waterbird species

Blue heron – The colony on Emy's pond had fourteen nests; the same as last year. Most of the trees containing

The 2010 Patuxent Waterbird Nesting Season

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nests are still alive, so nesting success was hard to determine. An estimated ten to fifteen young were fledged in ten nests. A single pair nested on Bullfrog Pond and fledged one.

Green heron – This is a solitary nester, as opposed to other herons, and nests are rarely found. We have no information on nesting on the Refuge.

Pied-billed Grebe – We never find nests. No broods were recorded this year.

Osprey – The Cash Lake pair fledged two young.

Other species using wood duck nest boxes – Grey squirrels used two boxes successfully. There were four starling nests, which were removed. Tree swallows nested in seven boxes of which three fledged young. There were two crested-flycatcher nests and both were successful, The Carolina wren has been the most common nester in previous years. This year, there were no nests. This is probably due to the population being decimated by the hard winter.

Congratulations – Lucy Grimes, Volunteer of the Year 2010

Continued from page 1

Lucy has aided in a variety of different clerical tasks including collating and preparing Friends newsletters for mailing and preparing materials for children's crafts. Lucy has also participated in a variety of biological surveys including Frog and Toad and Invertebrate studies.

In addition, Lucy has organized hospitality and social activities for a variety of different special events at the Refuge, including the Wildlife Festival and the Refuge Birthday. She has been involved with the Junior Duck Stamp program and was instrumental in getting refreshment donations for Habitat Camp (from the Dryers Ice Cream Factory). She has solicited similar donations for other causes (as for a post-fishing event for disabled soldiers). As "Queen of the Kitchen," Lucy co-chaired the hospitality committee for the annual Patuxent Art Show.

Lucy attends Friends meetings and gives input on a variety of topics including fundraising and preparing for the Art Show. Lucy and her husband Ed have attended the National Friends Mentoring conference several times, bringing back information to help make the Friends a better organization.

Lucy's contributions also extend to a number of non-refuge organizations including: West Laurel Civic Association, Laurel Citizens Police Academy, Prince Georges County Police Community Outreach, City of Laurel Special Events, 9-11 Recognition of Police and Rescue Squads.

She has been recognized by the Laurel Police Force for her volunteer service and was presented the Presidential Volunteer Service Award for outstanding community service.

In summary, Lucy Grimes has shown outstanding community and volunteer service throughout the years. She has been actively involved with refuge events, public outreach and community service. She has provided mentoring to new volunteers while helping out the refuge staff in a variety of different ways. Lucy can be considered a model of what true volunteerism is all about.

Friends of Patuxent
Present the
**2011 Wildlife
Art Show & Sale**

Admission to the show is free!

Saturday, March 26, 2011

9:00AM - 4:30PM

Sunday, March 27, 2011

11:00AM - 4:30PM

National Wildlife Visitor Center

10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop,

Laurel, Maryland 20708-4027

Off Powder Mill Road between the B/W
Parkway (MD RT 295) & MD RT 197

For further information or to order tickets,
call (301) 497-5789, FAX (301) 497-5765
or visit us on the web at

www.friendspwrc.org.



Artists' Reception

Spend a special evening, Friday,
March 25, 2011 6:30PM-9:30PM
with over 40 nationally and
internationally recognized Artists
and Artisans specializing in wildlife
art. ***Tickets for the Evening
Reception are \$40.00 per person
advanced purchase or \$45.00 at the
door. Two or more tickets
purchased by March 1st will be
discounted \$5.00 each.*** Enjoy light
hors d'oeuvres and beverages while
listening to live music.

Art Show Events Sponsored by the Friends of Patuxent

Wildlife Interpretive Tram Tours • Live Animals • Artisan Demonstrations
• An Egg-citing Silent Auction

Saturday — Maryland Migratory Game Bird Design Stamp Contest
& Maryland Black Bear Conservation Stamp Contest

Sunday — Films

www.dcenvironmentalfilmfest.org/films/



Seed Warriors at Work

by Anna Trochim

The National Wildlife Visitor Center staff and volunteers joined together to sow the seeds of native tall-grass prairie plants in the Refuge's Schoolyard Habitat and Bayscape area on November 18th, 2010. The members of the project were fondly referred to as the "Seed Warriors." In the process of combating against the evil forces of invasive species, our warriors diligently prepared the soil and planted various tall grass prairie species including Sunnyview Bluestem, Prairie Dropseed, and Wild Rye. For the hardworking and efficient team the project was anything but tedious as conversations flowed and new friends were made. The habitats represented by these interpretive gardens are essential for the survival of many of the Refuge's native species. The purpose of both the School Yard Habitat and the Bayscape is to educate school groups, families, and individuals about the importance of selecting native plant species for their gardens. Restoration projects such as these are vital to conserving



From left to right (Brad Knudsen, Anna Trochim, Amy Shoop, Joe DiGiovanni, Jennifer Hill, Diana Ogilvie, Jessica Helmbold)
Not Shown: Ken Lavish, Chris Feral

Maryland wildlife by providing them with essential habitat and ridding the area of invasive species. Everyone is encouraged to get involved in our Weed (and Seed!) Warrior projects for a fulfilling, educational, and fun experience. Stay tuned for news on the arrival of our new plants in the spring.

Buddy Bison at National Wildlife Visitor Center

On October 27, Patuxent Research Refuge hosted a program for 70 inner-city Washington, DC 3rd and 4th grade students from the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Public Charter School. The event was sponsored by the National Park Trust (NPT), a non-profit group that champions the acquisition and preservation of America's critical parks and public lands through education, partnerships and community building. As part of their commitment to education, in 2009 NPT launched *Where's Buddy Bison Been?*[®] an innovative environmental education school program that connects students to the outdoors. This event at Patuxent allowed children to explore exhibits, learn about Refuge habitats while riding the Refuge's tram, and participate in Project Wild games. Celebrity trainer and community activist Mark Jenkins, one of NPT's newest Buddy Bison Ambassadors, led stretching and cardio exercises in association with the very active "Migration Headache" learning activity. As Spokesperson for the United Way's Fun Fly and Fit program and Founder of IM Fit, Mark and his wife Nadia Jenkins Bey, are leading the cause in bringing attention to childhood obesity prevention and treatment, as well as promoting outdoor activities as part of a healthy lifestyle.

A healthy lunch and snack was provided by Just Simply Cuisine as part of the day's learning about healthy lifestyles and "green" living choices. The children and parent chaperones all had a wonderful time, and left the Refuge a little more aware of how to treat the environment and their own bodies. Grace Lee, Executive Director of NPT stated she looked forward to other opportunities to partner on similar events.

Patuxent Artists for Winter 2011

There are no post-holiday blues at the National Wildlife Visitor Center — the Hollingsworth Gallery will be delightful. **The first exhibitor for the New Year is Hans Reichnach**, a man of many talents. Born in Austria, he immigrated to the Baltimore area with his family in 1951. Although artistic inclinations run in the family (his father was a sculptor), hunting and fishing were always a part of their lives; and Reichnach attributes some of his success with photography to a lifetime of familiarity with the habits of animals in the wild. Reichnach's camera of choice is a Canon 40D. He also experiments with a variety of exotic papers, linen and canvas – creating with texture real works of art. Reichnach says he'd never thought about exhibiting publically or entering shows, but many people who were impressed by his shots convinced him.

Reichnach, who retired after 50 years as a superintendent for Davis & Hillman in Elkridge, is also an accomplished musician who still plays regularly with the group, “Deutsche Geselligkeit” (German camaraderie). Today, he and his wife Linda travel in Maryland and the northeast to photograph.

In February, a local artist of note, **Roy Ann Carney**, returns to Patuxent. Carney writes that even though drawing and modeling sculpture come most naturally to her, she's been increasingly drawn to the possibilities of watercolor. She will be exhibiting her watercolors of local wildlife and some tree portraits in the Hollingsworth Gallery. Preserving local wildlife habitats has also been an important focus for her, a kind of natural extension for someone who obviously values wildlife.

In addition to Patuxent's gallery, Carney's work has been exhibited at annual shows of the Patuxent Art League, the Audubon Center in Jamestown, NY, the Chestertown Wildlife Art Show, and Stone Harbor, NJ. Carney has a degree in Art History from Goucher College and has studied at the Maryland Institute and the Schuler School of Fine Art. This multi-talented lady is skilled in several media. She has worked as a technical assistant in a bronze foundry and done portraits for wax museums as well as individuals. Carney lists artists as distinctive and diverse as St. Eadfrith of Lindesfarne, Degas and Sargent among those who inspire and influence her; and the interlace designs of the Book of Kells she finds compelling. We look forward to being similarly inspired by her work.

The calendar, “Waterbirds 2011,” is the creation of **Ron Wilder** whose photos will grace the Hollingsworth Gallery in the **first two weeks of March**. Wilder is a Greenbelt resident for whom digital photography is his “first passion.” During his travels – as far afield as Arizona and the length of the East Coast from Cape Cod to Fort Lauderdale, Wilder has recorded memorable images (in addition to waterbirds) of earth, sky, flowers, plants and animals. Photographs on his website include some from nearby Greenbelt Lake, the Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary, and the National Arboretum. Only recently has Wilder presented his work at fairs or submitted it to gallery shows. In 2009 his photos were on display at the Towson Arts Collective, Montpelier Arts Center and the Edward Hopper House Arts Center in Wyack, N.Y. This fall photos were displayed at the New Deal Cafe in Greenbelt and the Convention Center in Ocean City. Wilder's elegant images make you long to see these wild places and creatures yourself.

The public is also invited to view the **winners of the Maryland Federal Junior Duck Stamp Competition** which will be displayed in the Hollingsworth Gallery during the **last two weeks of March**.

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Contributes to the 2010 NAAEE Conference


By Amy Shoop

The 2010 North American Association for Environmental Education Conference, held in Buffalo, NY from Sept. 26- Oct. 2, was an opportunity for USFWS to join forces with NAAEE to support environmental education. The conference and research symposium attracted about 900 educators and about 450 presenters showcasing a variety of research and interactive program ideas from various disciplines focusing on environmental education and the public. Research and topics ranged from cultivating environmental awareness through music and the arts to citizen science and spirituality.

In addition to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Exhibit staffed by various Service members at the conference, Patuxent's own Amy Shoop acted as the Young Professionals and Students Committee Chair for NAAEE. Amy developed a Speed Networking Social to encourage students and young professionals to network among the experienced professionals attending the conference. By rotating the participants through the room, most participants were able to connect in the time allotted. With the help of NAAEE staff Rob Nathan, the activity was a success! Many participants continued to pair up and attend multiple events and sessions with the new professionals they met at the Speed Networking Social.

Amy and fellow volunteer Annelena Porto Delgado, a graduate student from the University of Florida, also organized a day of Meet and Greet informational sessions. They invited conference presenters from a variety of disciplines, organizations and agencies to commit to a half hour time slot in which they would mentor and answer questions from other conference attendees. The sessions received positive feedback from both presenters and conference attendees.


Amy was thrilled to have had the opportunity to support NAAEE in their efforts to bring together experienced professionals in Environmental Education and encourage and welcome the next generation of professionals. This annual conference has been bringing educators together, year after year, to share ideas and successful methods of teaching our future environmental stewards. Thank you to NAAEE for their compassion and hard work!



Wildlife Images
BOOKSTORE

We carry a selection of wildlife-related books for all ages, posters,
jewelry, art work, stationary, a variety of children's items
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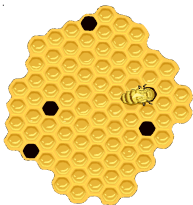


Rusty Pick-ups, Live Oaks and Spanish Moss

By Jenn Hill

In November I was called down to the Gulf to assist with the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill clean-up efforts. I served as a Resource Advisor for Bon Secour NWR in Alabama. In a nutshell, a Resource Advisor is there to supervise the BP clean-up crews and ensure that they are watching out for resources of concern during their daily clean-up efforts. The job - in and of itself - was completely boring, however, having time to talk to the crews, the visitors and meet all of the people made it great. I took time to get to know the folks who have been working out there since the spill, to learn where they come from, what their backgrounds are, etc. It was really humbling to think about all of their situations (folks who were 18 and 19 all the way to 62) and what brought them to suit up in tyvek day after day to scoop tar balls. To them, it was a job, but to me and to the Service, I tried to let them know that it was more than a paycheck - they were helping us and the natural resources in a huge and unforgettable way. I felt uncomfortable just “watching” them to make sure nothing went haywire - we were not allowed to “work” in a clean-up capacity as we were solely there to ensure the natural resources were not further harmed. Many of the folks in the crews have been there since the spill and they have a much better “know-how” and understanding of the situation than those of us flying in from all over the states. So to ease my discomfort, I worked in a little visitor services; I passed out trail guides for the refuge, I encouraged some folks to hold a ghost crab and to use my binoculars to watch the brown pelicans and dolphins. Many times, it was someone from a crew who would approach me and point out some wildlife or ask a question about the beach –

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2ND Annual Honey Harvest Festival – A Huge Success

By Dennis Hartnett, EE Coordinator

The Patuxent Research Refuge hosted the 2nd Annual Honey Harvest Festival (sponsored by the Maryland State Beekeepers Association) on Saturday, September 18th, 2010. The festival, which attracted over one thousand visitors, was declared a huge success. Many on-going activities were featured, including beeswax candle making, honey tasting and sales, bee education exhibits, an observation beehive, kids’ crafts and story time, face-painting, children’s games and a mock apiary. Food was available for sale outside the entrance to the Visitor Center.

Throughout the day, guest speakers presented a wide range of topics from bee-sting therapy to beekeeping basics – how to get started. There were open-hive demonstrations in a tent in front of the Visitor Center and honey extracting demonstrations in the Main Lobby. There was also a bee keeper’s rodeo (bee catching and smoker lighting contest) in the demonstration tent and a discussion of the importance of pollinators and native landscaping. The wildlife conservation tram tours were a big hit with the visitors.

Special thanks go to Steve McDaniel (a master beekeeper) for organizing the event along with refuge staff. The volunteers and interns provided logistical support, greeted the visitors and helped the children with crafts and other activities. Thanks also go to the Friends of Patuxent, the Bowie-Upper Marlboro Beekeepers Association, and the American Beekeeping Federation.

The 2010 Annual Volunteer Awards Dinner - A Huge Success!

By Dennis Hartnett, Environmental Education Coordinator

On November 21, 2010, the Annual Volunteer Awards Dinner was held at the National Wildlife Visitor Center. With over 70 volunteers, staff and guests in attendance, the awards dinner began with the usual buffet of outstanding food, beverages and dessert. The awards presentation began right after dinner with staffers Nell Baldacchino acting as master of ceremonies and goose call player and Diana Ogilvie as assistant. More than thirty volunteers received awards for reaching important milestones in hours volunteered.



The award presentations included:

Frank McGilvrey – 15,000 hours

Dennis Hartnett – 12,500 hours

Ed Grimes – 10,000 hours

Lucy Grimes – Volunteer of the Year 2010

Pauline Chvilicek – Special recognition plaque for her dedication and leadership in organizing the Friend's new fundraising initiative – "Run for the Refuge 5K Race"

At the end of the awards presentations, a special video was shown on the Fish and Wildlife Service response to the Oil Spill in the Gulf. The video discussed what is being done to help the wildlife and the future of the ecosystems affected by the oil spill.

In keeping with the tradition, volunteers reaching thousand-hour milestones had a thousand-hour goose engraved on their name plate on the Refuge Guardian plaque located in the Main Lobby of the Visitor Center. Volunteers who were not able to attend the dinner but did reach specific milestones in 2010 can contact Nell Baldacchino or Diana Ogilvie at the Visitor Center if they would like to receive their awards before the 2011 Volunteer Awards Dinner.

Rusty Pick-ups, Live Oaks and Spanish Moss

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which was heartening to me! As my time rapidly came to a close, it was actually hard to leave because I felt connected to the crews, the people working down there. I can see how people could think it is not necessarily the best use of our time to be deployed to the Gulf to serve in various roles, but one just has to make the most of the situation. If that is the kind of help that is needed, then that is the kind of help I'll give.

In addition to the daily resource advisor roles, we were able to assist the refuge staff with some Alabama beach mouse trapping, sea turtle carcass transportation and general Refuge maintenance. For myself, it was a hard decision to go and set aside only two weeks of my time given my two young children and workload, but if the timing worked out again, I now know I would return. To me, this spill represents the very reason the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service exists – to serve and protect our natural resources and to aid our agency brothers and sisters; so it only seems natural that we would help out in any fashion that is needed. Now, with all of that said, I also have to admit that as a southern girl at heart, I got to eat all the fried okra, collard greens and field peas till my heart was content while being around over-sized, earth shattering, rusty pick-ups, live oaks and Spanish moss - so I felt right at home!

Advanced Bat Study Techniques Workshop at Patuxent Research Refuge

By Christopher Wicker

John Chenger and Janet Tyburec, of Bat Conservation and Management, Inc. (BCM) in PA, held a workshop called Advanced Bat Study Techniques at Patuxent Research Refuge from September 7 to 10, 2010. The workshop lasted three and half days and three nights, during which the participants conducted active/passive acoustic monitoring and physical live capture by mist-netting for positive identification of bat species. The first two nights occurred near National Wildlife Visitor Center at South Tract, and the third occurred on and around Duvall Bridge over the Big Patuxent River at Central Tract. Four bat species were positively identified by live capture: Evening Bat (*Nycticeius humeralis*), Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), Eastern Pipistrelle Bat (*Pipistrellus subflavus*), and Red bat (*Lasiurus cinerus*). The bats captured in the mist netting were weighed and measured for their wing lengths. John Chenger and Janet Tyburec will compile and analyze the data collected during the week and send us the final report on their findings. Their data will aid us in listing the positively identified bat species that use the refuge in the Comprehensive Conservation Plan.



Winter Bird Count for Kids

By Jessica Helmbold

This holiday season, Paul Baicich and birding volunteers partnered with members of the Patuxent Research Refuge staff to hold a Bird Count for Kids program in an effort to connect children with the outdoors, interest them in birding and prepare them for the annual Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count when they become adults. This was our first year for the half day event and although we had somewhat undesirable weather, we had no shortage of volunteers and the event was very successful.

We started with a welcome session and orientation to the refuge, followed by a quick binocular and Birding 101 session. Then the kids hit the trails to discover the birds of Patuxent for themselves. After 90 minutes of birding they came back inside to a cup of hot cocoa (graciously provided by one of our volunteers).

They couldn't wait to share their birding stories at the Tally Rally and lunch break. In all, we saw about twenty bird species. Some of the sightings included ring-necked ducks, ruddy ducks, cedar waxwings, various species of woodpeckers, and a bald eagle! Of course, we also sighted many of our common winter birds. This was not only an exciting count for the volunteers and staff who helped out, but also for the children. At the end of the event each participant received a certificate for participation, and while their results didn't count in the official CBC count, we hope we have kindled their interest in birding in the future.



Members/Friends Benefit from Tree Tour!

by Lisa Bierer-Garrett, Board member

A small group of Patuxent Members/Friends accompanied M-NCPPC Rangers Chris Garrett and Amanda Goldberg on a spectacular van tour to see several Prince George's County Champion Trees on November 3rd. From Marietta Mansion (Pecan, Dawn Redwood) to Ash Hill Estate (Hemlock, Kentucky Coffee Tree), tucked away in Hyattsville, we were awed by the size of some of these magnificent trees. We also enjoyed a private tour at University of Maryland with UMD arborist Josh Nadler, responsible for the health of over 5000 trees on the campus.

We hope to offer this trip again in the spring for all those Friends who missed this great member's benefit.



Patuxent group, M-NCPPC Rangers Chris Garrett and Amanda Goldberg stand beneath a sprawling White Oak on the Nov 3 Tree Tour offered as a member's benefit. A spring tour is in the works to see more Tree Champions.

2010 Patuxent Wildlife Festival

By Beth Lenker, Education Intern

The National Wildlife Visitor Center hosted this year's Wildlife Festival on October 16, 2010. This annual festival showcases research being done on the Patuxent Research Refuge by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Over one thousand visitors had the opportunity to go on guided tram tours, listen to live musical performances by B.J. & Cody, see live research animals, and talk with researchers from various USGS and USFWS departments. In addition, special behind-the-scenes tours of USGS research areas were offered, including the Seaduck colony and the endangered Whooping Crane area.

Children of all ages had the opportunity to play a telemetry game, go through a wildlife challenge course, listen to "A Secret Place" by Eve Bunting during story-time, create paper tube binoculars, as well as make wildlife themed origami and paper bag puppets.

The City of Laurel Fire Department Rehab Unit provided food and beverages for visitors to purchase.

A very special thank you goes to all of the USGS and USFWS staff and volunteers for making this event a success!



Camera Traps in Animal Ecology

Methods and Analyses

O'Connell, Allan F.; Nichols, James D.; Karanth, K. Ullas (Eds.)

1st Edition., 2011, 280 p. 20 illus., 7 in color., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-4-431-99494-7
\$189.00

Remote photography and infrared sensors are widely used in the sampling of wildlife populations worldwide, especially for cryptic or elusive species. Guiding the practitioner through the entire process of using camera traps, this book is the first to compile state-of-the-art sampling techniques for the purpose of conducting high-quality science or effective management. Chapters on the evaluation of equipment, field sampling designs, and data analysis methods provide a coherent framework for making inferences about the abundance, species richness, and occupancy of sampled animals. The volume introduces new models that will revolutionize use of camera data to estimate population density, such as the newly developed spatial capture-recapture models. It also includes richly detailed case studies of camera trap work on some of the world's most charismatic, elusive, and endangered wildlife species. Indispensable to wildlife conservationists, ecologists, biologists, and conservation agencies around the world, the text provides a thorough review of the subject as well as a forecast for the use of remote photography in natural resource conservation over the next few decades.

Content Level » **Research**

from the USGS website

***Planning your calendar for
2011?***

***Don't forget to add these
Special Events at the Refuge!***



*Volunteers are always needed
and appreciated.*



Refuge System Birthday Bash!

*Saturday, March 12th
10AM - 3PM FREE*

Annual Patuxent Wildlife Art Show & Sale

*Saturday, March 26th
9AM - 4:30PM*

*Sunday, March 27th
11AM - 4:30PM*

Kids' Fishing Day

Saturday, June 11th



Run for the Refuge 5K

Sunday, September 25th

Patuxent Wildlife Festival

*Saturday, October 15th
10AM - 3PM FREE*

*Food will be available for purchase at each of these events,
courtesy of Friends of Patuxent.*

-USGS website-

Lyme Disease and Vector-Borne Pathogen Studies

Principal Investigator: [Howard Ginsberg](#)

Among all vectors, ticks have the distinction of transmitting the widest diversity of microbes that are harmful to humans. Ticks can harbor and transmit a wide diversity of pathogens simultaneously. Viruses, bacteria, and protozoan parasites are all transmitted by ticks. Most health problems in humans result from pathogens being transmitted to humans from ticks during blood meals. The most commonly reported vector-borne disease in the USA is Lyme disease, which is caused by infection with *Borrelia burgdorferi*, a bacterial spirochete.

Dr. Howard Ginsberg is studying the transmission of Lyme disease spirochetes in nature using ecological studies of ticks and their vertebrate hosts, and models of spirochete transmission dynamics. Environmental factors that influence tick populations apparently operate on a regional scale. Distribution of vertebrate hosts plays a role in tick distribution, but local factors that determine habitat distribution vary from year to year. Recent studies suggest that the conventional wisdom that white-footed mice serve as the reservoir of Lyme disease spirochetes in the northeast is too simplistic because other common mammals (e.g., meadow voles) and some birds (e.g. robins and song sparrows) are also competent reservoirs.

Effective management of Lyme disease requires appropriately-scaled surveillance, and efficient Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs to manage disease risk. Dr. Ginsberg is using transmission models to develop strategies for efficient integration of management methods for vector-borne diseases. This approach will allow better-targeted management, which will minimize the need for broad-scale environmentally damaging interventions while effectively lowering the number of human cases of disease.

-USGS website-



Thanks

THANK YOU

The Friends took inventory at Wildlife Images on 10/1/10 (the end of our fiscal year) but not many of our regulars were able to assist. Many, many thanks go to our interns and staffers Anna, Jessica, Beth and Missy who came through for us to complete the inventory. Again, many thanks.

Evelyn Adkins, Treasurer

Friends of Patuxent

“Run for the Refuge 5K” a Success!

By Pauline Chvilicek

On September 26th, the Friends of Patuxent held its newest event, the *Friends of Patuxent “Run for the Refuge 5K”* at the North Tract. Due to the hard work of the Friends, volunteers and staff, this event was more successful than anyone could have anticipated.

For a first year 5K to be considered a success, one would expect around 100-125 registrants. Our first year 5K had 145. The volunteers reported lots of positive feedback from the runners with many asking, will they have this race again?

A brief survey was e-mailed to the registrants shortly after the race. Over forty runners responded to our survey. One of the questions asked was, “*Would you run this race again?*” Forty three people responded to this question. Forty said yes, one said no and two said maybe. Another question asked, “*Would you recommend this race to others?*” Forty two people responded to this question. Forty one said yes, one said no.

In addition to having a good turnout and introducing the Refuge to a new audience, the *Friends of Patuxent “Run for the Refuge 5K”* was also a fundraiser. A first year event does not always make money, and may in fact take a couple years to actually become profitable. With the recent recession and state of the economy, making a profit is not easy. However, the “*Run for the Refuge*” was also successful on that front, making almost \$800.

Thank you to our sponsors CORT, Costco, Dick’s Sporting Goods, Giant, Harbin Farms, M-NCPPC Parks & Recreation, Panera Bread, REI, RoadID, and Weis, and thanks again to the Friends, volunteers and staff for their time and dedication, and making this event the success that it was.

Save the Date!

Due to popular demand, the *Friends of Patuxent “Run for the Refuge 5K”* will be held again next year on Sunday, September 25, 2011.

Congratulations to our award winners:

Overall Women

1. Nicola Bailey, 43, Columbia MD, 24:15

Overall Men

1. Gordon Smith, 24, Annapolis MD, 18:37

Women 19 & Under

1. Mary Wester, 13, Beltsville MD, 39:58
2. Chloe Broadhurst, 10, Beltsville MD, 41:57

Continued on page 19



Friends of Patuxent “Run for the Refuge 5K” a Success!

Continued from page 18

Men 19 & Under

1. Alex VanValkenburgh, 10, Pasadena MD, 23:41
2. Nathan Jones, 14, Gambrills MD, 26:35

Women 20-29

1. Cherrees Jones, 20, Gambrills MD, 26:34
2. Taylor Callicrate, 26, Columbia MD, 27:11

Men 20-29

1. Eric Jones, 21, Gambrills MD, 19:31
2. Edward Potter, 27, Owings Mills MD, 22:33

Women 30-39

1. Rachel Bridenbaugh, 36, Silver Spring MD, 25:25
2. Rebecca Rau, 34, Pasadena MD, 27:12

Men 30-39

1. Jeremiah Weaver, 34, Laurel MD, 24:44
2. Ken Richkus, 36, Owings MD, 25:11

Women 40 & Over

1. Kate Rappaport, 49, Elkridge MD, 24:58
2. Mary Degeorge, 47, Laurel MD, 25:41

Men 40 & Over

1. Daniel Kostecka, 40, Odenton MD, 19:58
2. Ed Desantis, 41, Fort Meade MD, 22:55

Volunteers and Friends,

We're Lisa Garrett and Jeanne Latham, Chair and Co-chair of the Marketing & Publicity Committee for the March 2011 Patuxent Wildlife Art Show & Sale.

We need your help to make this upcoming Art Show the biggest success ever. You could help by volunteering in the comfort of your own home, or by getting out and about. You could join our marketing committee or just plain help out where needed.

Among other things, we're collecting the names of additional organizations, individuals, publications, etc., to whom we can reach out to publicize this, the Friends largest fundraising event of the year. We hope to bring in as many people as possible to the Art Show, and in doing so, raise funds to support Patuxent Research Refuge. You may know people, businesses and local magazines or newspapers that we don't. Would you please send us their names and contact information?

There are also other tasks with which we'll be glad to have your assistance. If you have any questions, please e-mail or call one of us:

Lisa – frogliipp@gmail.com , 301-751-4344

Jeanne – jelatham@verizon.net , 410-212-2280.

In advance, thanks for your help.
Sincerely, Lisa and Jeanne



Volunteers ↔ Friends
Friends of Patuxent
 National Wildlife Visitor Center
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 Laurel, MD 20708-4027

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 ☎ (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 Maryland Charitable Organization Registration number is **2348**

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

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

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 _____

