

FRIENDS OF PATUXENT

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www.friendsofpatuxent.org



July-September 2014

Volunteerism: Priceless

John Burgess, Patuxent Volunteer

The solitary gosling was tentatively enjoying her first day of life. Only hours earlier she had broken out and left behind the safety, warmth and protection of her eggshell home; warmed by her mother who was still sitting on the 3 remaining eggs. Within hours those eggs would all hatch and join their sibling. While mom sat with the remaining eggs, Dad dutifully and protectively escorted his new daughter around the pond. My wife and I imagined the proud papa was somehow communicating to his new progeny, "Eat this, don't eat that, stay close by, don't ask so many questions, just do as I say or you'll have to answer to your mother ... and trust me, you don't want to go there."



Of course we don't really know what Papa Goose was communicating to his daughter, in fact we don't know if this first gosling to arrive was, in fact, a female. The playful filling in of the unknowns with our imagination was a big part of our enjoyment as we watched the new gosling swimming with its dad. We waited patiently for an hour or so hoping more goslings would emerge, but none did before we needed to head home. We revisited the pond two days later to find that the remaining eggs had all hatched successfully and the 4 young goslings were safe and sound

swimming playfully under the careful eye of their parents.

My wife and I are fairly new to Maryland. We love to hike and so we did a simple Google search and found, not too far from where we live, some wonderful walking trails in Patuxent Research Refuge conveniently located between Baltimore and Washington D.C.

What we found at Patuxent was a wonderful opportunity to escape from the stress of daily life. The Research Refuge is a beautiful, secluded, wooded area that offers walking trails, wildlife, and countless birding opportunities. On our hikes we've spotted deer, turkeys, a muskrat, and a fox. The main attraction, however, are the birds, so

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1ST Ever Magnificent Whooping Crane Month

In May 2014, under the enthusiastic leadership of Ken Lavish, the Adopt A Whooper Committee of Friends of Patuxent hosted the first ever Magnificent Whooping Crane Month (MWCM) at the Visitor Center. The public, staff, volunteers and Friends listened to three terrific speakers. Dr. John French of the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center's Whooping Crane Program, talked about the *Flight from Extinction: Restoring Whooping Cranes to North America*. Then Brooke Pennypacker of Operation Migration discussed *Reintroduction of Whooping Cranes to Eastern North America: An Operation Migration Pilot's Perspective*, his experiences about guiding young Whooping Cranes on their first migration. And finally Ken Lavish, Volunteer Crane Technician, talked about his rewarding experience as

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Hollingsworth Gallery Gallery Exhibitors for Summer 2014

By Faith Leahy-Thielke, Patuxent Research Refuge Volunteer

Summer at the refuge is always a treat as well as a retreat - inside and out. Exhibitions at the Hollingsworth Gallery contribute a lot to the enjoyment. This year we welcome Charles James in July, Jean K. Phillips in August, and Wayne Bierbaum in September.

“Chuck” James has lived in Prince George’s County for 53 of his 57 years (that gap must have been college in Georgia where he earned a BS in industrial management). Mr. James is currently employed as a national account manager for a food and beverage company - but hopes to transition eventually to full-time photography - especially of birds. He started his company, 3ceeMedia to “showcase my photography as well as music and videos”, but his love of birds and bird photography has “gone past” hobby status. As with many, Chuck James’ enjoyment of photography began early. At 10, it started with the family Polaroid - but progressed through to film SLR than digital SLR. James writes about a difficult and pivotal experience that changed his professional



goals. In 2007, he was diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer. Surgery, radiation, chemo and isotope therapy weakened him significantly, and doctors recommended strength-building exercise. He chose long daily walks during which he became aware of the orchestra of birdsong around him. He began to take his camera on these walks to photograph the “musicians.” James began to study the birds and his interest deepened - and his walks lengthened - from Bowie to Cambridge, Denver and Orlando! James has been cancer-free since 2009, and hopes 3ceeMedia and he will be able to focus fulltime soon on birds. In the meantime, we are fortunate to enjoy the images he has captured - and hope the ones of those darling

zebra-striped (black-bellied whistling) ducklings are included!

Photography, writes Jean K. Phillips, is her fourth career! All of the photos she displays, and all of the honors she has received for those images, date from 2008 to the present. She writes that prior to that time, she was too busy with family and farm to take more than a few snapshots. A lifelong resident of Maryland, Jean grew up on a dairy farm in Germantown. Her University of Maryland degree is in science education, but after a year of teaching in Montgomery County, she became an immunologist at the National Institute of Health. Ten years later, she took over her father’s farm - where she raised her sons and adapted the farm’s operation from dairy to grain, hay, straw and vegetables, and finally, entertainment farming. Although Jean had actually filmed her son’s wrestling matches and used her college graduation camera for family pictures, a trip to Alaska and a Christmas present of a digital camera changed her entire “focus”. In Alaska, she accompanied a professional photographer from England on a shoot originally intended to record polar bears (but then focused on birds). He used her snaps of him at work, and encouraged her to get serious about photography. Six years later, her images have won numerous awards in competitive exhibits and are reproduced in prints and cards available at outlets all over Western Maryland. Picasso software and a Canon 5D Mark 2

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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
National Wildlife Visitor Center
10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop
Laurel, MD 20708-4011

Or email to Diana_Ogilvie@fws.gov

To become a member of the Friends of Patuxent or send a donation, please see “Membership Application” in the reverse side of the address page of the newsletter.

July NABA Butterfly Count

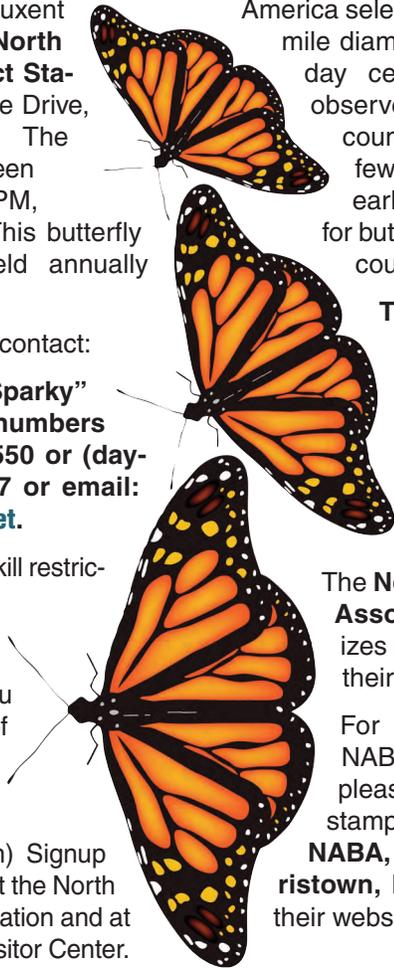
C. "Sparky" Sparks, Volunteer Naturalist

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: The 16th Annual West Anne Arundel County, North America Butterfly Association, 4th July Butterfly Count will be held on Saturday, July 12 2014, (**Rain date: Saturday, July 19, 2014**). Counters will meet at 08:00 AM at the Patuxent Research Refuge-North Tract, Visitor Contact Station at 230 Bald Eagle Drive, Laurel, MD 20724. The count will be held between 8:30AM and 5:00 PM, weather permitting. This butterfly count has been held annually since 1999.

For more information contact:

Count Leader - C. "Sparky" Sparks at phone numbers (home) (410) 519-1550 or (day-time) (410) 854-2777 or email: csparks007@verizon.net.

There are no ages or skill restrictions, all levels of interest and experience are welcome. Please bring a field guide if you have one and plenty of water. (Note: children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by parent or guardian) Signup sheets will be posted at the North Tract Visitor Contact Station and at the National Wildlife Visitor Center.



The North American Butterfly Association (NABA) count program has been held annually since 1975, when only 29 counts were held. In 2010, 444 counts were held in 47 U.S. states (including District of Columbia counted as a state). Volunteers around North America select a count area with a 15-mile diameter and conduct a one-day census of all butterflies observed within that circle. The counts are usually held in the few weeks before or after early July, but the best timing for butterfly observation in each count circle varies.

The count program is intended to promote interest in butterflies and provide results useful for scientific monitoring of butterflies within North America.

The North American Butterfly Association (NABA) organizes the counts and publishes their annual reports.

For more information on NABA and the count program, please send a self-addressed, stamped business envelope to: **NABA, 4 Delaware Road, Morristown, NJ 07960.** Or check out their website at www.naba.org.

From Chan Robbins-Correction to the Patuxent's Winter Bird Counts-2014

April-June 2014, Vol. 25, No.2

On page 3, middle column near the bottom, delete the words [on January 25]. I was thanking all the observers I listed, not just certain ones. Some of the folks had counted at Patuxent on both days, others on only one; but I happen to know that if they counted only one day at Patuxent they were volunteering at other locations on the other day. We do appreciate very one of our volunteers.

In Memory of Greg Smith, Director of Patuxent Wildlife Research Center

Dr. Gregory James Smith, 58, passed away on April 11, 2014, while on business in Beijing, China. Greg was working in China on the effects of avian influenza and the effects of global climate change. Having more than 35 years of ecological research and management experience, Greg spearheaded many environmental initiatives. His career began with post-doctoral studies at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and came full circle when he became the Director at Patuxent in 2009. He also served as Director of the National Wetlands Research Center where he led a rescue team during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita as they hit the Gulf Coast and New Orleans. He and his team were awarded the Service to America Medal by the Partnership for Public Service to honor excellence in federal civil service. Greg was honored to serve on the board of the National Wildlife Federation.

Greg not only had a passion for his work, but also a passion for life. During his time he traveled to over 65 countries, making friends and adventure with every step. From hiking through the Tibetan Himalayas to diving the oceans to treks through jungles and savannahs, Greg lived life to the utmost. His love of life led him to look to his heritage, reconnecting with his Scottish past and relatives.

The world has lost a true world leader and environmental conservationist. He will be greatly missed by us all.

Quirky Hybrid Oaks

Bill Harms, Patuxent Volunteer

Did you know that the Patuxent Research Refuge is the home to several types of hybrid oaks? Read on to learn more.

The oak-rich Patuxent Research Refuge has 15 native oak species, one naturalized exotic oak species, and at least seven types of trees that are regarded as oak hybrids. The reason so many oaks species call the Refuge their home is due to the Refuge location near the Fall Line between the Coastal Plain and the Piedmont.

In North America, there are two basic groups or sections of oak species, the red oaks and white oaks. An easy way to tell them apart is determine where or not there are bristles at end of the lobes of the leaves. Red oaks have bristles while white oaks do not. When considering hybrid oaks, it is important to distinguish between these two groups of oaks because red oak species will cross only with other red oak species and white oak species will cross only with other white oak species.

Hybrid oaks may be found anywhere two parent species are found. However, the Refuge seems to have more



Subfalcate Oak
Quercus xsubfalcata

than its share of hybrids when compared to other areas, with at least seven types of hybrids identified so far on the Refuge. Undoubtedly, there are other types of hybrids on the Refuge which have not yet been identified. The reason for the richness of hybrid oaks on the Refuge is probably due to the influence of human activity.

Under normal conditions, there are barriers against hybridization. These include pollination timing, closeness to other trees of the same species, and the rejection of “foreign” pollen by the female (pistillate) flowers. While hybridization occurs naturally, many of these barriers can be easily broken down and the process accelerated be-

cause of human disturbance. This phenomenon is easily observed on the Refuge due to the Refuge’s long history of farming, logging, and more recently, military training. These activities have contributed to an increased number of opportunities for individual trees to become isolated and marginalized from others of their own species. When this happens, these isolated trees can be overwhelmed with pollen from nearby trees of a closely related species - under normal circumstances they would not readily cross. It is interesting to note that this means the mother tree of the hybrid can generally be assumed to be the tree that was isolated from others of its species.

There are several young Fernow’s Oak (*Quercus fernowii*) trees at one location along Wild Turkey Way. (The Fernow’s Oak is the hybrid between the Post Oak (*Quercus stellata*) and the Common White Oak (*Quercus alba*)) Here, a mature Post Oak which found itself isolated from other Post Oaks but surrounded by a large number of Common White Oaks. As a result, the pollen from the surrounding Common White Oaks fertilized the female flowers of the mother Post Oak and the progeny of this tree are found nearby. As with most other hybrid oaks, mature Fernow’s Oak can produce viable acorns. However, none have been noted here yet.

Another easily observed and notable hybrid is a Saul’s Oak tree located along Wild Turkey Way near Snowden Cemetery. The Saul’s Oak (*Quercus saulii*, a cross between the Common White Oak and the Chestnut Oak (*Quercus prinus*)). This particular tree is a known prolific acorn producer. The mother tree is probably a Chestnut Oak based on the fact that there are a large number of Common White Oaks at this location.



Scarlett Oak - a type of red oak - Notice the bristles at the end of the leaf lobes

Swamp Chestnut Oak - a type of white oak - Notice the rounded leaf lobes, no bristles



Fernow's Oak
Quercus Xfernowii



Fernow's Oak
Along Wild Turkey Way



Saul's Oak
Quercus Xsaulii



Saul's Oak?
Along Wild Turkey Way

Sometimes it is difficult, if not almost impossible, to determine the parentage of some individual trees which appear to be hybrids. These trees may clearly exhibit some, but not all, of the characteristics of one parent species, but not the other. There are several trees on the Refuge that fall into this category. It might be possible to clear this up by DNA testing.

Then there is the process called introgression or hybrid swarming. This happens when a viable hybrid will backcross with one or another of the parent species creating progeny that are not clearly intermediate between the two parents. The observer is forced to speculate on the parentage of the tree based on what species of trees are located nearby. If

backcrossing with the parents, other hybrids, and backcrossed trees continues, trees exhibiting a highly variable range of characteristics between the two parents can result. There is evidence that this is also happening on the Refuge.

Finally, it is possible for hybrids to cross with a third species or even hybrids from different sets of parents to cross with each other. The resulting individual trees have three or more "parents." This is not yet known to happen on the Refuge, but has been well documented as happening in other locations like California.

If there is interest, the Refuge may schedule a walk focusing on oak hybrids in the future. 🦋

New Faces at Patuxent this Summer

McCale Carter—I am a 22 year old senior at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point working towards a major in environmental education and interpretation, with a minor in captive wildlife. I really enjoy sharing my passion for the natural world with others, and look forward to doing this type of work here at Patuxent. I am from Minnesota, so in my free time I love doing anything on the water, as well as; hiking, camping, and playing lacrosse. It is nice to meet all of you, and I am so excited to see what this summer brings!

Todd Mignosa—I am a student at Salisbury University, and am working toward an environmental studies major with minors in biology and geography. I grew up in Montgomery County, Maryland, and have always enjoyed the outdoors. I am interested in all aspects of the environmental field; including recreation, education, interpretation, field science and data collection, and trail maintenance.

PATUXENT RESEARCH REFUGE OAKS

Hybrids

Bush's Oak - *Quercus bushii*
[*marilandica velutina*]

Fernow's Oak - *Quercus fernowii* [*alba stellata*]

Bartram's Oak - *Quercus heterophylla* [*phellos rubra*]

Quercus incomita
[*falcata marilandica*]

Saul's Oak - *Quercus saulii*
[*alba montana*]

Subfalcate Oak - *Quercus subfalcata* [*falcata phellos*]

Willdenow's Oak - *Quercus willdenowiana* [*falcata velutina*]

Native Red Oaks

Scarlet Oak - *Quercus coccinea*

Southern Red Oak -
Quercus falcata

Bear Oak - *Quercus ilicifolia*

Shingle Oak - *Quercus imbricaria*

Blackjack Oak -
Quercus marilandica

Pin Oak - *Quercus palustris*

Willow Oak - *Quercus phellos*

Northern Red Oak - *Quercus rubra*

Black Oak - *Quercus velutina*

Native White Oaks

Common White Oak -
Quercus alba

Swamp White Oak -
Quercus bicolor

Overcup Oak - *Quercus lyrata*

Swamp Chestnut Oak -
Quercus michauxii

Chestnut Oak -
Quercus montana

Post Oak - *Quercus stellata*

Naturalized Exotic Oak

Sawtooth Oak -
Quercus acutissima

Friends of Patuxent Wildlife Holiday Bazaar



The 2014 Holiday Bazaar has a new, earlier date - **November 15**. The deadline for donations is **November 7**. **It's not too early** to start looking for those forgotten treasures. When you drop them at the Visitor Center, **PLEASE** remember to fill out a donation form and make a copy for yourself. This year we will NOT be accepting posters, flat art or large frames.

New this year - **Handmade by Friends** - an area dedicated to new items handmade by Friends (and friends of Friends.) We already have scarves, hats, quilted wall art, and wooden ornaments. If you are a hand crafter please consider donating one or more of your creations.

The Holiday Bazaar committee is looking for help with marketing and publicity. We are looking for one or more people to take on the following projects:

- Create a press packet
- Research options for advertising in the Washington Post and Baltimore Sun
- Make sure the Bazaar is listed in local newspapers

For more information contact Brenda Stone at stonesoop@comcast.net or 301-490-0384.

We're always looking for new and different vendors, preferably folks who have nature or wildlife related merchandise.

Contact Jeanne Latham at jelatham@verizon.net or 410-212-2280 regarding vendors.



Blast from the Past-Reprinted from the September/October 1993 Volunteers & Friends Newsletter Nature Tales from the North Tract...Bluebird Boxes a Success!

By Steve Noyes

When I volunteered to undertake the bluebird survey at North Tract this Spring, little did I realize how long bluebirds breed in this area... April to August, with as many as three broods per pair. The first eggs were laid in late April, the last in early August. A grand total of 68 eggs were laid in a total of 14 boxes (out of 30 surveyed). From this total, 46 birds survived to fledge and venture out into the world. One pair raised three broods before the summer came to an end. Some bluebirds couldn't even wait for me to clean out their old nest, so they set up house in a nearby box.

Hopefully next year we'll have more birds deciding to nest at the North Tract if we can get some of the older boxes repaired and others moved to more appropriate locations. My Dad has volunteered his talents and is presently building 4-6 boxes for us next season.

Don't forget to watch for the bluebirds from the north that will winter here. It is truly a pleasure to see this once-declining species becoming evident year-round in Maryland. Stop by the North tract this winter and look for them along Wildlife Loop, hanging out on the wires watching the visitors go by. Just say, "Welcome to the North Tract!!" 



Bio Team Notes

Sandy Spencer, Supervisory Wildlife Biologist

Mile-A-Minute Bio-Control-This aptly named vine, Mile-a-Minute, can quickly spread laterally and vertically, smothering large areas on the backs of other vegetation. There is an extensive patch by the wildlife viewing blind. On May 14, 2014, in cooperation with the Maryland Department of Agriculture, we were able to release at that site about 500 Mile-a-Minute weevils (*Rhinocomimus latipes*), a stem boring insect in the beetle order that is host-specific to Mile-a-Minute. The weevils cause extensive damage to the foliage of the vine which is easily identified by many little holes on the leaves. But the worst

sites, the weevils need them to be left alone so they can thrive and multiply, as this is the only plant they feed on. When they deplete a local patch, they'll move on to the next closest. It may take up to seven years before a local patch will be eradicated by the weevil.

Spraying Lake Redington for Kid's Fishing Day 2014-The objective was to more efficiently remove floating or emerging vegetation near the dam that impeded fishing by causing hooks and lines to become tangled and caught in the vegetation. Target species: Spad-derdock (*Nuphar lutea*) and water-sheild (*Brasenia schreberi*).

Prior efforts to hand pull by staff and volunteers were very labor intensive, slow, and difficult.

damage is by the larvae which feed on the stems, robbing the vine of its ability to obtain nutrients and water from the soil. The weevils overwinter in the ground beneath, emerge in early May and produce about 3-4 cohorts before retiring again for the winter. The particular patch of MAM mentioned above had already shown signs of weevil damage, probably because of another release nearby from USDA's Beltsville Agricultural Center. Scientists believe weevil populations can travel up to 6 miles per year. Documenting the weevil feeding damage at this patch would make a great citizen science project.

We also released another 500 weevils in the whooping crane area on Central Tract. Patience is definitely a virtue in this situation. Although it will be tempting to pull or spray the MAM at these

Prior efforts to hand pull by staff and volunteers were very labor intensive, slow, and difficult.

We applied a low rate of "Clearcast", 2% in water, to the floating lily pads on Monday, May 19 along the entire length of the Lake Redington dam out up to 30 feet.

Prior to spraying, we had to look for a weather window of several days of no rain so that we could lower Cash Lake and Lake Redington and keep them low. Our state permit to apply this herbicide specifies that we should prevent outflow for about 6 days after spraying. Starting with low water levels in the two lakes increased the storage capacity and allowed us to keep them closed for several days without fear of overtopping...provided there are no major rain events. 

Excerpts from Service Director Dan Ashe's Special Message to Friends about the New Friends Policy

The Service has finalized its long awaited FWS policy covering non-profit Friends organizations. This new policy, the first of its kind in agency history, will enable us to strengthen and expand ties with Friends organizations.

We finalized the policy only after conducting a thorough review of more than 500 public comments on the draft policy released in 2010 as well as input gathered during numerous Service briefings and reviews. It provides guidance on the relationship between the Service, its employees and Friends organizations and clarifies Service employee responsibilities towards Friends organizations. It outlines consistent financial and administrative practices for revenue generating operations and includes a new Friends partnership agreement template. By bringing much needed clarity, and national consistency to our relationships, the new policy will strengthen the way we've worked together for years.

It may require modifications in our working relationship in order to ensure that we continue operating in the highest standards of efficiency and ethical conduct. Friends organizations are too important to our future to do anything other than hold ourselves to the highest standards.

On behalf of the entire US Fish and Wildlife Service, I'd like to thank you again for the enormous help and support you provide. Your passion and dedication inspire us all to do a better job every day. With your help we can ensure that every Friends organization operates on a strong foundation of mutual support and responsibility. We look forward to building on that foundation to do great things together for years to come. 

Thanks for all you do.

Hollingsworth Gallery Gallery Exhibitors for Summer 2014

Continued from page 2

are her professional tools that she uses to capture and share the natural beauty she loves, and photography gives her “a good excuse to be outside”!

Wayne Bierbaum has kept his day job. He is a physician who is Chief Medical Officer for Owensville Primary Care, and has worked there since 1989. This Riva resident has been involved with photography since age 18, but “little things” like lack of a darkroom, making a living, and raising children placed youthful interests on a backburner for a time. Bierbaum writes that digital cameras and kids growing up propelled his relaunch. Self-taught photographer and naturalist, Bierbaum studies the habits of an animal and tries not to disturb it while he captures unforgettable images. In describing his successful techniques, he has given talks to photo clubs in Westminster and Annapolis. His approach should be published in a How To manual. One major suggestion was: Arrive 30 minutes before dawn. This timing allows Bierbaum to set up his equipment and to wait to intercept the bird working its way to his spot. He prefers eye level shots - so preparing to get messy is part of his drill. A tripod holds the camera steady, and his comfort setting allows for quick adjustment if needed. Bierbaum mentions that birds have color vision - and infrared also, so wears appropriately colored clothing. His favorite locations are local and include Patuxent (naturally!).

In DC, 29 prints of Bierbaum's were used for businesses' Environmental Excellence Awards. His work has also been displayed at various wildlife areas, publications and the Maryland State Legislature Building. He contributes to Getty Images and is a member of the Muddy Creek Artists Guild. He does take portraits and does some architectural work, but his love is clearly wildlife and nature scenes. Although many of his images are wonderful, while viewing his work on line, I fell in love with a yawning snowy owl on a beach.

We can all look forward to fascinating displays this summer. 

Volunteerism: Priceless

Continued from page 1

many varieties from the larger ospreys and swans, to the smaller but very beautiful and fairly rare, Scarlet Tanager. We chatted with an experienced birder who joined us on a lakeside bench as we all sat enjoying the view. She had spotted over 26 species in the short two hours she had been there that day. For the past three weeks, sitting at this same bench, my wife and I had a birds-eye view watching this particular nesting Canada Goose pair set up housekeeping on what was appropriately named ... Goose Pond.

We love visiting the park every chance we get. Because it looked like we would be spending a day or two a

**...I'm proud to know
that as part of a
larger volunteer group,
we are making a difference.**

week visiting the refuge, my wife suggested that I should investigate whether there may be some volunteer opportunities I might explore. My wife volunteers quite often for causes she believes in, but it's not something I would have naturally thought of. She offered that volunteering would make my time spent at the refuge even more rewarding. The idea made sense and so after giving it some thought I mustered up the courage required to break out of my comfort zone and went in to see if there might be someone in the Visitor Center that could give me some information. Mike, at the front desk, who was himself a volunteer, encouragingly related his positive experience at the park and then called the volunteer coordinator. She came out, introduced herself, and we discussed their program. She couldn't have made me feel more welcome as she explained that, yes, there were several opportunities to volunteer, which could take up

as much or as little time as I felt comfortable committing to. I thought I might initially like to do something outside on the trails that would act as an addition to my normal walk. She gave me some ideas to take home and mull over. A few days later I returned to the Visitor Center and we spoke again. There was one perfect fit; Nest Box Monitoring. I would be assigned a couple of bird nest boxes to monitor that were located along one of the trails. It would require an hour or so on only one day a week, and I could choose the day. I chose Tuesday. As good luck would have it there was a meeting in a few days that would instruct myself and four others, who were also newly volunteering, as to exactly what would be required. None of it was particularly complicated.

The bird nest boxes on the refuge just need to be monitored and documented so that wild life managers can track nesting activity within the refuge. I would merely go out once a week, inspect my two assigned boxes, and record my findings ... that was it. Pretty simple. As of my writing this article in early May, I have been out on two consecutive Tuesdays. Both boxes have nests within them that birds have very recently built; but as of yet, no eggs.

Unfortunately, the number of staff at the majority of national and state parks and refuges have been cut drastically. If we want to continue to enjoy these parks it's going to become more and more necessary for volunteers to chip in. I realize what I'm doing is but a small individual contribution; but I'm proud to know that as part of a larger volunteer group, we are making a difference. Needless to say, I am very happy my wife encouraged me to volunteer.

I highly recommend getting out in the fresh air, get a little exercise, and enjoy the parks. If you have the time and inclination to volunteer I'd encourage you to explore the many volunteer opportunities. You'll be happy and proud that you did. 

1ST Ever Magnificent Whooping Crane Month

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the *Life of a Volunteer Surrogate Whooping Crane Dad*.

On Sundays, there were tours of the Whooping Crane Observatory on Central Tract - every tour was packed to ca-



Dr. John French of the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center's Whooping Crane Program, talks about the Flight from Extinction: Restoring Whooping Cranes to North America.

capacity. There were two "storytimes" about the Whooping Crane and a "Measure Up" display for younger folks. Visitors could see how tall they were

compared to the 5-foot tall Whooping Crane with an 8-foot wingspan. There were six educational displays - the many national and international partners in the Whooping Crane restoration effort, including Patuxent Wildlife Research Center; Patuxent's pivotal role in the restoration; locations where Whooping Cranes can be found in North America; a photographic display of the care and development of Whooping Cranes from egg to adult; and a continuous loop of phenomenal video clips about the endangered Whooping Cranes.

Additional educational activities included two fun Whooping Crane Puppet Shows, thanks to the work of the interns, Audrey Bohl and Ryan Gradel. Diana Ogilvie presented two Tiny Tots programs about Whooping Cranes.

Thanks to the committee including Chair Ken Lavish, Janice Devine, Bob Privette, Frank Cockrell, Diana Ogilvie and Jeanne Latham for their hard work—they even had fun doing it! 🐦

September Social Hosted By Friends of Patuxent - Open to All

Wouldn't it be fun to hear about some exciting travels to an exotic foreign country or fascinating place in the US?



Well, come to the Friends of Patuxent Social on Saturday, September 13. Diana Ogilvie has offered to show the photos of her amazing trip to Antarctica. And we hope to have someone talk about travels to other cool places.

We'll have some yummy refreshments and everyone is invited. So put 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM on your calendar for September 13 and we'll all have a great time. Where, you ask? Answer - at the Visitor Center in one of the meeting rooms.

Maybe you too would like to share your travel stories and pictures. If you do have a cool travel story and photos you'd like to share even informally, let us know. Contact Jeanne Latham at jelatham@verizon.net or 410-798-1601.

JOIN TODAY!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

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

Phone: (opt.) _____

- New
 Renewal
 Individual (\$15/yr)
 Family (\$20/yr)
 Contributor (\$50/yr)
 Sponsor (\$100/yr)
 Life (\$500)
 Donation _____

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

Check here if you would like save a tree by reading our quarterly newsletter online.



FRIENDS OF PATUXENT

A Dozen Birds for Summer

Helen Alexander, Patuxent Volunteer

Although birds tend to sing less frequently in the summer, there is still plenty to hear if you just sit quietly for a while and listen.

1. Yellow-billed Cuckoo

The Yellow-billed Cuckoo seems to prefer the hot, humid days of summer when you are almost certain to hear them vocalizing in the edges of the woods or in the wet meadows near Lake Redington or Cash Lake.

A low easy to miss hollow “kuk - kuk’, kukukukuku-kuk” is unmistakable once you learn to associate the sound with the bird. Look for them flying across the wet area between Goose Pond and Cash Lake in the early morning.



2. Song Sparrow

The Song Sparrow is one of the most commonly heard birds on the refuge year-round. Listen for a somewhat raspy six to eight phrase call that is made up of an introductory slow three-note phrase, followed by a more rapid trill and ending with a descending, emphatic three note phrase.



3. Chipping Sparrow

The trill of the Chipping Sparrow can be heard all summer long. The trill has a mechanical quality that has been compared to a sewing machine. Look for him hopping along the edges of the parking lot, or singing from a low branch of the Pin Oaks in the parking lot of the Visitor’s Center.



4. Field Sparrow

The Field Sparrow’s song begins with three to five musical whistles of the same tone, followed by a descending trill that ends his somewhat haunting song. Look for him in the small bushes and shrubs along the edges of the paved loop trail.



5. Warbling Vireo

The Warbling Vireo has a somewhat hoarse warbling song that he repeats often with pauses between each song typical of Vireo song.



6. Indigo Bunting

The Indigo Bunting is one of the more persistent songbirds of summer even in the heat of mid-day. They like small trees in somewhat open areas where they give their deliberate, somewhat trilled song which might be rendered, ‘hot, hot, I like it very hot, hot’.



7. Blue Grosbeak

The song of the Blue Grosbeak is a somewhat raspy but pleasant multi-phrased, emphatic trill that is a familiar sound of the summer meadows here on the refuge.



8. Osprey

The Osprey does not really sing, but he gives emphatic, high-pitched, rapidly repeated ‘kee, kee-kee’ calls to communicate with his mate, chicks and other birds of his water-oriented life. Watch for the Osprey flying over Cash Lake often with a fish in his talons.



9. Red-eyed Vireo

Another persistent songster throughout summer is the Red-eyed Vireo. You will hear him singing his song over and over again as you walk the wooded trails here. Listen for a deliberate, musical song with pauses between each two or three note phrase that sounds a bit like, “Hello, .. up here .. up high .. over here .. hello .. (repeated). He is tricky to see, but brightens any walk here in summer with his cheerful singing.



10. American Goldfinch

The American Goldfinch has a bright cheerful, bubbly type of song that can be rendered as a very fast and repeated ‘chick-o-ree, chick-o-ree’ or ‘po-ta-to chips, po-ta-to-chips’. When he flies, he sings as he flies, but a different, more mechanical ‘flying song’. You will often hear this flying song before you see the bird. Look for a small bird bounding between trees in a deeply undulating flight.



11. Mourning Dove

In the early morning and the evening you will hear the soft, low calling of the Mourning Doves here on the refuge. Their quiet 'coo, coo, coo' seems to announce the beginning of the day and the calm of the coming evening and night.



12. Belted Kingfisher

The loud, harsh rattle of the Kingfisher can be heard over either Cash Lake or Lake Redington as the Kingfisher flies up and down between catches. He perches on low limbs over the water and makes quick dashes to catch small fish or he hovers almost like a hummingbird before making the killing plunge after his prey. 🐟



Friends of Patuxent Volunteer Position Available

Newsletter Editor/Coordinator

As the new Friends policy goes into effect in October, the Friends are looking for a new editor/coordinator volunteer to take over for the staff member who has been filling that position. The newsletter is a quarterly publication.

Are you looking for a substantial volunteer position to take over? As Newsletter Editor, you would record your volunteer hours as a Friends of Patuxent Volunteer. Training will be provided.

Responsibilities include:

- requesting articles for each issue from volunteers, Friends and staff
- publishing deadlines
- proofreading/sending to a proofread team
- sending proofed articles to layout volunteer
- proofing completed layout
- sending to printer
- preparing completed newsletters for mailing
- mailing
- distributing in-house
- sending electronic version to Friends website

If you have questions or are interested, please respond to Emy Holdridge at emyh608@verizon.net

Ospreys of the Patuxent June 7 Members Program

Jeanne Latham, Friends of Patuxent Membership Chair and Patuxent Volunteer

Greg Kearns, park naturalist for over 31 years at Patuxent River Park in Croom, Maryland, delivered a riveting program with fantastic photos on ospreys at the National Wildlife Visitor Center. It is amazing that a fish hawk, at about 4 pounds (for the female), can lift a struggling fish half its weight out of the water. Most ospreys migrate to Central and South America for the winter. Their numbers keep growing in the Chesapeake Bay area as they return from their winter home. We enjoyed facts, pictures, stories of osprey banding trips, and questions and answers with expert Greg Kearns. Many thanks go to Greg for sharing his time, work experience and passion. And thanks to all the Friends members and their guests who attended.



Editor's note: And thank you, Jeanne, for scheduling and setting up the program!

Cool Experience on a Hot Day

Carter McCale, Visitor Services Intern

Kids Fishing day was a success! To get kids interested in fishing we provide free fishing once a year on our Lake Redington. This is always a popular program, and this year was no exception we served 68 kids. They all learned about being responsible anglers by visiting stations based on fishing ethics and proper fish handling, before they let their first casts fly. The kids caught a variety of fish such as; blue gills pumpkin seeds, and crappies. Thanks to a great group of volunteers and staff the day went off without a hitch and we all enjoyed the sunny hot day on Lake Redington!





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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)