

# FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK

Newsletter



Tree Swallows

Photo by Donna Bobzin

## Friends of BOMBAY Hook

Vol. 32, No. 4  
May 2023

### Our Mission Statement:

The Friends of Bombay Hook is a not-for-profit corporation working in conjunction with Bombay Hook NWR and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS). It supports and enhances educational and recreational programs at Bombay Hook, provides volunteer services and financial assistance and serves as a link between the Refuge and the public.

Friends of Bombay Hook NEED VOLUNTEERS!!!! We need people to help with the Blue Heron Gift Shoppe, especially in our soon-to-be new store. No experience necessary; we will train you. If you are interested, do not hesitate to contact us at [fobh@comcast.net](mailto:fobh@comcast.net)

Our readers are encouraged to share comments, provide articles for publication and/or suggestions regarding the Refuge as well as notifying us of address changes.

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Photo by KD

### Bombay Hook Visitor Center Nearing Completion

As the finishing touches are added to the new Bombay Hook Visitor Center, staff, volunteers, and visitors are itching to get inside. While most of the work will be completed in the next few weeks, we are waiting on one huge thing before we officially move in, furniture!

The furniture is being ordered, and once the order is complete, it will take approximately 12-16 weeks for manufacturing, shipping, and installation. We hope this means we can officially move in and have a soft opening this summer. One important thing to remember is that supply chain issues still haven't been fully resolved by the pandemic, and there's always a chance for the project to be delayed a little further. While we're all anxiously awaiting that move-in date, we plan to enjoy this building for years to come, and the wait will be worth it in the end.

Our contract for exhibit development was just recently awarded, so the next step for the Visitor Center will be to develop exhibits for the entry hall, vestibule, and multipurpose room. We anticipate the exhibit projects will be completed and installed in a year or so. The opening of the building isn't dependent on the exhibits being complete.

We will continue to keep folks updated on the progress, but if you have any questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to staff anytime.

Kate Toniolo  
Project Leader  
Coastal Delaware National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Hello Friends!

Can you say....excited???

2023 is a big year for the Refuge and Friends of Bombay Hook. The new Visitor Center has got everyone buzzing with excitement and anticipation! FOBH is looking forward to going from a 70 sq. ft. store to one over 300 sq. ft. With a tentative move-in date of August, we have been busy purchasing store fixtures, a new point-of-sale system, and new products to offer our visitors. A few new products are being introduced into the current store space, but most will have to wait until we have room to display them properly.

One new item that will be available by late April will be our new, first-ever Coastal Delaware National Wildlife Refuges T-shirt! The shirt features an outline of Delaware on the back showing the locations of both Prime Hook and Bombay Hook on the Atlantic Flyway. There will be a supply of the shirts available at both Friends stores.

We will again carry the bucket, camp-style hats, and fantastic custom ball caps. We will offer beautiful ladies' wallets, new ornaments, jewelry, books, puzzles, and educational games and books for children.



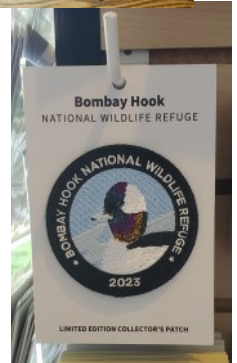
One of our most exciting new items is our Bufflehead Bombay Hook patch! In honor of our "big year," we have included the year (2023) on the patch. These patches are in limited quantity. Once they're gone, they're gone! Get yours now!

As you can imagine, we are searching for volunteers to help in the store. Please consider joining our family. We will train!!!!!! No experience in retail is necessary! Our goal is to have the store open every day, but we currently do not have enough volunteers for that to happen. Our usual shifts are Monday to Sunday from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. or 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. We will work with whatever time you offer!!! Don't hesitate to get in touch with me at [fobh@comcast.net](mailto:fobh@comcast.net) if you can give us a hand.

As always, FOBH thanks you for your continued support of the Refuge and our organization.

See you at the 'Hook!

Karen Dever  
Store Manager



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(Photos by KD)

*Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge*  
*By B JL*



In early November 2022, my wife Joanne and I took a day trip to Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge across the South Carolina state line near Wadesboro, North Carolina. Pee Dee NWR is situated along the upper section of the Pee Dee River in North Carolina. This 8,500-acre refuge comprises various habitats, including bottomland hardwoods, pine forests, mixed hardwood/pine, cropland, wetlands, and open water. The refuge was established in 1963 to provide important fall and winter migratory waterfowl

habitat opportunities.

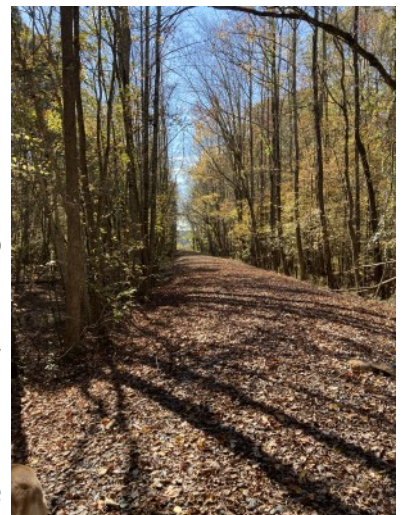
Peak fall foliage colors were about to unfold during our visit. As first-timers at Pee Dee, we took the opportunity to explore the wildlife drive and use its northern network of refuge roads. There were lots of habitats in the large refuge impoundment. The wetlands vegetation was still in an impressive amount of bloom.



Pee Dee offers some excellent birding spots. We observed a nice mix of fall warblers and migrant songbirds working the hardwood forest edge. The early waterfowl migrants were using the impoundment. Finally, we walked a bottom hardwood forest

trail that produced a nice mix of woodpeckers, especially Pileated Woodpeckers vocalizing and crossing our trail. We had a great visit and came away with some nice pics.

Walking through this Pee Dee River habitat of bottom forest and thickets was a bit surreal. I caught myself watching and listening for the ghosts of Bachman's Warbler. Pee Dee was once home to that never-abundant Bachman's Warbler (*Vermivora bachmanii*). The last accepted sightings of this small, yellow-faced, black-throated bird were in 1988 and 2001. It is now believed by many to be extinct. In the early 1980s, John Janowski, myself, and other twitchers were trying to break free and chase this bird.



Is there still a tiny undiscovered population out there? Maybe only for those who believe. From Pee Dee NWR to nearby Waccamaw NWR, down to Awendaw by Cape Romain NWR, these are all integral parts of a larger watershed you'll enjoy exploring. If you hear a strange Northern Parula, especially in early spring, get on it! (Photos by B JL)

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Photo by KD

**Daily Fee and Annual Pass News:  
Digital Payments Coming Soon!**

Josh Smith, our Visitors Services Manager, Coastal Delaware NWR Complex, has shared exciting news on future Refuge entrance fees and annual Refuge passes.

*All too often, visitors arrive at the Refuge and are disappointed to learn that we can only accept cash or checks for passes. That problem will soon be remedied. We are partnering with [Recreation.gov](http://Recreation.gov) to establish several new methods for visitors to pay the daily fees or to purchase a Bombay Hook NWR Annual Pass. The new system is expected to go live sometime in April and will allow visitors to purchase passes online in advance or through the [Recreation.gov](http://Recreation.gov) app. Another option will be "Scan and Pay," which allows visitors to scan a QR code with their smart device and pay digitally.*

*Interagency passes will still be available and, for the time being, will remain cash or check only. We hope to be able to accept credit cards for them also in the near future.*

We will keep everyone posted as these new payment options are rolled out and become available.

**'TIS THE SEASON!!!**



**COME PREPARED!!!**



**NEW!!!**

***Our First Ever Coastal Delaware National Wildlife Refuges T-shirt!***

***Now Available at the Blue Heron Gift Shoppe!!***

*(Photos by KD)*



## *Damselflies (Suborder: Zygoptera)*

- Are commonly seen on the Refuge from May through September.
- Are often confused with larger, stronger, and more powerful dragonflies.



- Damselflies are slower and graceful in their flight.
- They have long, thin, very slender bodies.
- Damselflies come in various vivid colors and shades of green, black, and blue.
- Males typically are brighter colored, while females are plainer and harder to identify.
- They have delicate wings of the same size and shape and fly slower than dragonflies.
- With few exceptions, damselflies rest with their

wings together and above their bodies while dragonflies rest with their wings spread apart.

- Damselflies have eyes spaced far apart, unlike dragonflies with large, close-set eyes.
- Damselflies are flying insect predators, eating mosquitoes and other small insects.
- Damselflies are typically found around fresh-water habitats.
- Adults lay their eggs near water; these eggs hatch and live in water as larvae.
- Damselfly larvae forage on insects, molt, and emerge from the water as adults.
- The needs of dragonflies are essentially the same as damselflies.
- Threats to damselflies are poor water quality and loss of forest habitat.
- Damselflies fall prey to birds, frogs, fish, water insects, dragonflies, and other damselflies.
- Direct your binoculars towards the damselflies next time you're at the Refuge.



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We want to highlight some local artists who often look to Bombay Hook NWR and Kent County for inspiration. In this newsletter, we're featuring a watercolor painting by Randy Murphy, which he submitted upon our request.

Randy grew up just outside the Refuge and greatly appreciated the natural beauty and history of the area. Randy is often found operating the Waterfowl ID Station along the Auto Tour.

# Bombay Hook NWR

2591 Whitehall Neck Road, Smyrna, DE 19977  
(302) 653-9345  
[http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Bombay\\_Hook/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Bombay_Hook/)

The Wildlife Drive is open daily from ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset  
The Bombay Hook Visitor Center is open during the week from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Programs are FREE and no registration necessary unless otherwise specified

**The Allee House remains closed until further notice.**

To request a reasonable accommodation, please call the Refuge Office at (302) 653-9345  
or email [Joshua\\_Smith@fws.gov](mailto:Joshua_Smith@fws.gov) two weeks before the event.

## *Spring 2023 Calendar of Events*

**VARIOUS DAYS: May through June 2023** *Purple Martin Nest Checks (11:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.)* - Joël Martin will perform weekly Purple Martin gourd nest checks during April, May, and June. Individuals can observe and assist with recording data, counting eggs and hatchlings, and after they hatch hold a chick. You will see birds that spent the winter in Brazil and you may see an adult sitting on a nest. The nests need to be checked quickly to make sure the Purple Martins are not disturbed for a long period of time. Meet at the Visitor Center on the following dates: May 5, 10, 15, 19, 24, 29, June 2, 7, 12, 16, 21, 26, 30.

**Saturday, May 6, 2023** *Warbler Walk (8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.)* - The walk will be on one or two trails along the Wildlife Drive with expert birders Eileen McLellan and Terry Willis. This will be an excellent way to practice what you learned at the Warbler Program the day before or for anyone who wants to look for warblers.

**Saturday May 13, 2023** *Beginning Birding: Shorebird Program (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon)* - Eileen McLellan and Terry Willis will give a presentation about shorebirds, their amazing migrations, and simple identification techniques. After the presentation, participants will take the bus to the impoundments to practice their new skills. The presentation is open to unlimited participants. The bus is limited to 14 participants, preregistration is required to reserve your spot. Any un-reserved spots will be available on the day of the event. **Call (302) 653-9345 to register.**

### **Saturday, May 20, 2023**

- *Bird Identification Station (8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.)* - Get a close look at the different bird species in the impoundments. Randy Murphy will be set up on the Wildlife Drive with scopes and binoculars to help you identify shorebirds, wading birds, and whatever else flies by. Look for the blue ID Station sign along the Auto Tour Route.
- *Monarch Presentation and Gardening Tips for Monarchs (2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.)* - Learn how to identify monarch butterflies and about their migration. Participants will learn about their habitat requirements and gardening tips to attract butterflies. Come learn about the amazing monarch and how you can help them survive. While monarchs will be the main focus, other local butterflies and pollinators will be included.

**Sunday, May 21, 2023** *Horseshoe Crab Life History and Ecology by Brandi Besecker (10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.)* - Learn about one of the planet's oldest migrations as we discuss the fascinating story of the Horseshoe Crab, and its critical role for both people and wildlife. We'll then take an excursion to Woodland Beach to get a close look at these prehistoric creatures. High tide at Woodland Beach is 12:08 p.m.

**Saturday, June 3, 2023** *Photo Workshop (2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.)* - Join wildlife and landscape photographer Terry Willis for a Wildlife/Nature Photography Workshop. Learn how to optimize your camera for photographing wildlife and landscapes. In this workshop we will discuss camera settings, and how to go beyond the "Auto" setting on your digital camera. We will also begin to delve into editing your photos using software like Adobe Photoshop, beginning with the raw image and proceeding to the final version suitable for printing or using on the web. **Call (302) 653-9345 to register.**

**Sunday, June 4, 2023** *Bird Identification Station (8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.)* - Get a close look at the different bird species in the impoundments. Randy Murphy will be set up on the Wildlife Drive with scopes and binoculars to help you identify shorebirds, wading birds, and whatever else flies by. Look for the blue ID Station sign along the Auto Tour Route.

## HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT FRIENDS???

### Donate or Become a Member!

For over 30 years, the **FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK (FOBH)** have been working with Bombay Hook NWR in supporting the message of conservation! Without memberships, donations, and proceeds from the Blue Heron Gift Shoppe, we surely would not exist today. Throughout the years, we have been able to aid the Refuge by supporting environmental education programs, fund transportation for field trips to Bombay Hook for school children, purchase audio/visual equipment, secure grants, paid for internships, purchased new chairs for the auditorium and for outside programs to name a few. Because of our supporters, we continue with our mission!

#### **TO DONATE OR BECOME A MEMBER:**

Please fill out the form below and mail your check to **FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK, 2591 Whitehall Neck Road, Smyrna, DE 19977.**

Or go to [www.friendsofbombayhook.org](http://www.friendsofbombayhook.org) and follow the prompts to either donate or obtain membership. And you can always stop by the Visitor Center during gift shop hours to do it in person! We would love to see you! The Blue Heron Gift Shoppe is operated by volunteers and is only open when the volunteers are present. If you are uncertain of days and hours, please call ahead.

**MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS** include voting privileges at the FOBH Annual Meeting; 10% discount on merchandise sold at Blue Heron Gift Shoppe; and eligibility to join the Dover Federal Credit Union.

**ALL** donations are tax deductible.

**FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK, INC.** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation founded to promote conservation, environmental education, and a better understanding of and appreciation for Bombay Hook NWR.

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### **MEMBERSHIP / DONATION APPLICATION**

Submit completed application at the Visitor Center  
(payment by cash, check or credit card) or Mail (with check) to:

*Friends of Bombay Hook  
2591 Whitehall Neck Road  
Smyrna, DE 19977*

Membership     Donation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail

Newsletter Preference:

Print     E-mail (require E-mail address)

#### Method of Payment

- Cash (payment at Visitor Center only)  
 Check (payment by mail or at Visitor Center)  
 Credit/ Debit Card (payment at Visitor Center only)

#### Membership Plan (Check One)

- | <u>Membership Plan (Check One)</u>          | <u>Amount</u> |
|---|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student (under 18) | \$5.00        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual         | \$15.00       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family             | \$20.00       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor**          | \$25.00       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining         | \$50.00       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate*         | \$100.00      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime**         | \$200.00      |

\*Corporate sponsorship includes link to FOBH website; no voting privileges or store discount.

\*\*Sponsor and Lifetime memberships include family.

#### Donation (Check One)

- | <u>Donation (Check One)</u>                           | <u>Amount</u> |
|---|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous                | \$ _____      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allee House                  | \$ _____      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Improvement Campaign | \$ _____      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial for:                | \$ _____      |