

FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK

Newsletter

Photo by Karen Dever



30 Years of Conservation
1990 - 2020

Vol. 30, No. 2
March 1, 2020

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.

WELCOME BACK!!! The Blue Heron Gift Shoppe will reopen on the weekends starting March 1. In other news, we have new items including our 2020 T-shirts and 30th anniversary lapel pins (see Page 4).

Proceeds from the Blue Heron Gift Shoppe help Friends finance projects and programs for the Refuge. Our current volunteers have kept the store running when hours are available, but we need more people in order to open the store more days. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Karen Dever at fobh@comcast.net. Training will be provided.

2020 Newsletter Schedule

<u>Newsletter Release</u>	<u>Articles Due</u>
May 1	April 7
September 1	August 7
November 1	October 7

The next newsletter will be issued on
May 1, 2020

Published Quarterly by
Friends of Bombay Hook, Inc.

2591 Whitehall Neck Road
Smyrna, DE 19977
(302) 653-8322

<http://www.friendsofbombayhook.org>



HAPPY BIRTHDAY FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK!!!

March 2020 marks the 30th Anniversary of Friends of Bombay Hook. We are so very proud to have been a part of wildlife conservation for all these years. Through memberships, donations, grants, and Blue Heron Gift Shoppe sales, we have been able to support many projects over the last 30 years that benefit Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge and its visitors, as well as fulfilling our mission to support and enhance educational and recreational programs at the Refuge.

Here are just a few highlights that FOBH has done to help the Refuge and its visitors:

- ✦ Provided the funds for the start-up and maintenance of the Purple Martin Program
- ✦ Provided picnic tables
- ✦ Helped to fund the paving of Bear Swamp Bridge
- ✦ Provided funding for programs and events at the Refuge
- ✦ Purchased birdseed for the Visitor Center feeders
- ✦ Participated in outreach events
- ✦ Helped to provide and train volunteers
- ✦ Send out Quarterly Newsletters for our members and the public
- ✦ Grant funding for Wheeling Sportsman Mobi Mats
- ✦ Provided the funding for the Junior Ranger program
- ✦ Paid for school transportation for field trips to the Refuge
- ✦ Provided sponsorship of school co-ops and interns

Some of our projects in the making:

- ✦ Constructing a greenhouse
- ✦ Bear Swamp dock renovations
- ✦ Installing benches for the fishing pier

Too much to mention all and so much going on behind the scenes to accomplish our mission! Now that Bombay Hook has gotten approval for a new Visitor Center, we have started a Capital Improvement Campaign to support the project.

You and our precious volunteers make it all possible. Thank you all for your continued and future support. A special thank you for volunteering! Giving back is appreciated and rewarding as well!

BIRD NOTES

By John Janowski

August 1 thru December 31, 2019

HIGHLIGHTS

This five-month report period includes late summer shore-bird migration, fall passerines, and waterfowl migration and winter residents.

WATERFOWL

Snow Geese were reported arriving the first week of October. Numbers increased to 250 by early November and were joined by **Mute Swan**, **Ruddy Duck**, and **Pied-bill Grebes**. By mid-November, both **Tundra** and **Mute Swans** were reported as well as **Hooded Mergansers** and **Bufflehead**. A **Cackling Goose** was reported in the second week of November.

A report from early December had a **Trumpeter Swan** making its distinctive call among a flock of the more abundant **Tundra Swans**. This report, as well as others from southern Delaware, is due to the successful restoration program started in the 1980s in Ontario. This species disappeared from eastern North America in the early 20th Century. The following were reported the last week of the year: **Canvasback**, **Cackling Goose**, **Wood Duck**, **American Wigeon**, **Ring-necked Duck**, **Greater Scaup**, **Ruddy Duck**, **Pied-billed Grebe**, **Common**, and **Red-breasted Mergansers**.

SHOREBIRDS

The impressive show of migrating shorebirds continued into August with 18 species reported including **Wilson's Phalarope**. Two **Buff-breasted Sandpipers (Grasspipers)** were reported from Shearneck. Note that the Friends of Bombay Hook are once again sponsoring a day workshop with author/ornithologist Kevin Karlson in August 2020. Learn how to identify this challenging family of birds synchronized with their peak southward migration. By mid-October, shorebirds were represented by 14 **Marbled** and 3 **Hudsonian Godwits**. Some 400 **American Avocets** were reported at Raymond Pool. Avocets, whose breeding grounds are well west of the Mississippi River for some reason, make Bombay Hook the most reliable location along the East coast to observe them especially in these numbers in either their colorful breeding or black and white winter plumages.

MARSH AND WATERBIRDS

Upwards of 27 **American White Pelicans** were reported in early August. Delaware's inland wetlands are becoming a reliable location to observe these birds as they migrate from their breeding grounds west of the Mississippi River to their wintering grounds in south Florida. Early August brought a report of 14 **White Ibises** at Shearneck Pool. Numbers of this species have increased in recent years in Delaware, mostly immatures. Late summer reports are representative of post-breeding dispersal from locations south of Delaware. Summer is a great season to observe the many species of herons and egrets, but late fall and winter with its short days increase the odds of seeing an **American Bittern**. A reported sighting from mid-December placed one at the southern end of Shearneck.

GULLS, TERNS etc.

August saw an influx of tern species with counts as high as 50 **Forsters'** and 192 **Caspian**s. Other tern species reported during August included **Black**, **Gull-billed** (4), **Least**, and **Royal**

reported in early August. Delaware's inland



is published quarterly by "Friends of Bombay Hook, Inc. (FOBH)", a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization working in conjunction with Bombay Hook NWR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. FOBH provides financial and developmental support for Environmental Education programs at the Refuge and in communities throughout the region.

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.

Please direct communications to:

Friends of Bombay Hook, Inc.
2591 Whitehall Neck Road
Smyrna, DE 19977
Phone: (302) 653-8322
Fax: (302) 653-0684
email: fobh@comcast.net

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Terns. Four Bonaparte's Gulls were also reported.

RAILS, COOTS, AND GALLINULES

Clapper, Virginia, and later Sora rails were reported from the area.

UPLAND GAME BIRDS

Wild Turkey with young was reported early August. Eleven were reported at the entrance gate mid-September. Bobwhite Quail continues to hold on throughout the Refuge.

RAPTORS

Aerial performances by Merlin and Peregrine Falcons are always a spectacular sight, especially during shorebird migration. One of the few reliable locations for American Kestrel is still the wires along Whitehall Neck Road.

PASSERINES & WOODPECKERS

An interesting report of a "yellow-bellied kingbird" in mid-August was intriguing but of the four "western" kingbird possibilities it did not remain long enough for anyone to confirm it. However, another "yellowish-bellied bird" was reported on Christmas Eve behind the Visitor Center. This very cooperative gift was well documented and as of this writing is still present feeding on viburnum berries. If confirmed by the Delaware Birds Record Committee (DBRC), it will represent the first "live" state record of Western Tanager (see "A Special Christmas Visitor!!" below). Until now the only Delaware record of this species is from a photograph of the remains of a bird taken two years ago on the grounds of the Lifeguard Museum south of Dewey Beach. Left overnight a hungry winter scavenger consumed the evidence. Refuge attendance may have well spiked as a result of this amazing find.



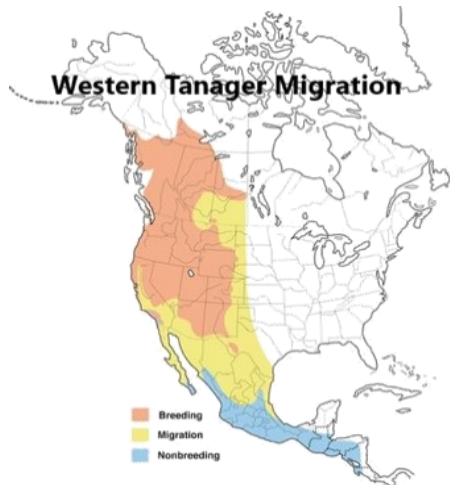
Photo by Frank Rohrbacher



A Special Christmas Visitor!!



This Christmas Eve, Bombay Hook was visited by a little bird called a Western Tanager that stayed around for about one to two weeks. What a bright and welcome sight this female was eating berries from a Southern Arrowwood viburnum located in front of the Visitor Center! Who knows what brought this pretty lady to the East coast but what a treat it was to all who witnessed it.



Western Tanagers are common in fairly open western conifer forests. In migration and on winter grounds, the species is usually found in small flocks, often mixed with other tanager species or with Black-headed Grosbeaks. The migration of Western Tanagers occurs in areas including lowland woodlands of southern California, desert oases, riparian areas, parks, and orchards.



Photo by Karen Dever

We certainly hope that this little bird somehow made it back to its area safe and sound!



Hello Friends!

Welcome back to our Spring season at the Blue Heron Gift Shoppe. We are all stocked up and ready to roll!



Of course, we have new items every season while holding on to our old favorites, so please come in and support your Refuge by completing your Bombay Hook visit with something from the Gift Shoppe to take home.



For FOBH's 30th Anniversary we will have these beautiful lapel pins available. Come and get yours before they are gone! We also have our yearly collector's T-shirts now available for 2020.

Come visit soon before "fly" season!

Thank you for your continued support. *(Photos by Karen Dever)*

Karen Dever,
Store Manager



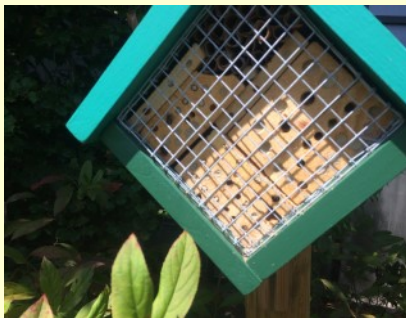
Friends is turning 30 this year (!!!) and we have new items celebrating this milestone—our 2020 T-shirts shown front and back (top and middle) in two styles, and our lapel pins (bottom)

FREE On-the-Job Training

If you volunteer a couple hours a month at Bombay Hook NWR, we can offer **ABSOLUTELY FREE** on-the-job training.

Direct your questions to: fobh@comcast.net

Mason Bee Boxes



These small Mason Bee nest boxes really work!

Last July, working with Flavia Rutkosky, Biologist for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Delaware Bay Estuary Program, several small bee boxes were placed in the Refuge pollinator meadow and the Refuge Visitor Center's native plant garden. In less than 4 weeks the Mason Bees made use of a



majority of the holes in the nest blocks. They typically lay their larva eggs down in one of the block holes and then seal off the entrance. The bees get their name from the sealing plugs that appear to have been mortared over with cement. Declining populations of many of these very important native bees have been in the national spotlight since President Obama's Presidential Memorandum was issued in 2014.

If you're interested in trying a small Mason Bee box for your home flower garden, visit the Refuge's Blue Heron Gift Shoppe. *(Photos by BJL)*

*Exploring the Western Oklahoma Panhandle
By Rod Murray*



Black Mesa State Park and Black Mesa Nature Preserve located in the extreme western end of the panhandle of Oklahoma (Cimarron County pop. 2,475) are not destinations for those who don't like being alone. This is where short-grass prairie and ranchland meet mesas, canyons, and wide-open spaces. The only nearby "town" is Kenton, OK (pop. 17) which observes Mountain Time even though it is in the Central Time zone. There are a few scattered B+B's in the area, no gas stations, and one general store that seems to be closed much more often than it is open. So, if you decide to explore this gorgeous part of the country that is still often referred to as No Man's Land, be

prepared!

The state park (which boasts the 220-acre Lake Carl G. Etling) and the preserve are only minutes away from the New Mexico and Colorado borders, and roughly forty miles from the Kansas and Texas borders. Black Mesa extends from Colorado through New Mexico ending near Kenton Oklahoma. If you are one of those adventurers who like to hike to the highest point of each state, a somewhat strenuous trail leads to the mesa's high point in Oklahoma at 4,973 feet above sea level.

Birds? Did I mention birds yet? Quick. What is the state bird of Oklahoma? Ding-ding-ding! Correct! The Scissor-tailed Flycatcher--just like the ones you've seen on the Oklahoma state quarter! Even though Oklahoma's state bird has been found in every county of the state, you probably won't find it here. But, you are likely to find some of the 252 bird species that either are at the westernmost or easternmost points of their ranges here.

There are plenty of great natural attractions just a few hours away. In New Mexico, you can visit Capulin Volcano National Monument, Kiowa National Grassland, and Clayton Lake State Park. Rita Blanca National Grassland is just over the border in north Texas. In the extreme southwest corner of Kansas lies the Cimarron National Grassland, and just over Oklahoma's northern border in Colorado is the fabulous Comanche National Grassland. East of Black Mesa State Park and east of Guymon, Oklahoma near the small town of Hardesty is the difficult-to-access Optima NWR. Just east of this is the Optima Reservoir, dam, and spillway marsh which are worth investigating since any body of water in this territory will attract birds.



Be sure to visit the birding at the Black Mesa State Park website for more details. I hope you can someday visit this under-visited and under-appreciated part of the country. Good Birding!

Share Your Refuge Experiences

Back in 2008 Janet Manchester made an insightful request. Today we continue to embrace her call to the Friends of Bombay Hook by reprinting her request below:

(From FOBH Newsletter, March 2008)
WANTED: YOUR TRAVEL STORY

Many people make a point of visiting National Wildlife Refuges when they travel to other parts of the country. In the last newsletter (December 2007), Frank Rawling described a visit that he and his wife and sister made to Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge in the state of Washington.

In recognition of the uniqueness and great importance of the National Wildlife Refuge System, we would like to print more articles about other refuges.

If you have visited a refuge recently, or if you do so in the future, please consider sharing your experience with other Friends by submitting an article to the newsletter. Just a couple of paragraphs describing what you saw and experienced might inspire someone else to visit a refuge. If space allows, we might be able to print a photo, so if you took a nice digital picture, feel free to send that along with your article.

Submit your articles to this e-mail address: fobh@comcast.net.

***Bombay Hook NWR
Pasture Point Pond***

On the Refuge Map, the pond has no name. Spend some time volunteering around the Refuge and you might hear a Refuge staffer refer to the pond as the Swimming Hole. Ask a longtime volunteer and they might call it the Beaver Pond. In 1996 Jim Hewes wrote in the FOBH Newsletter about a self-contained freshwater pond at the intersection of Finis Road and the Allee House Road. Without calling it by the name he went on to state that it was home to Pumpkin-seed Sunfish and Brown Bullhead Catfish that might be seen from a floating dock. He speculated the feeding egrets and herons brought fish eggs to the pond.



Historically it's believed the pond was a borrow pit, created to provide fill sand for the Finis Road and other small projects around the Refuge. In the winter it is a reliable birding spot for early morning Hooded Merganser and Belted Kingfisher. In the summer evenings, it's a great spot to watch bats emerge from the trees as they hunt for insects over the water. During dry spells, large pond sections would dry up completely and sprout a carpet of green grass.

Well, times are changing, and this little freshwater pond is getting an official name. It is now Pasture Point Pond. In 2019 the US Fish and Wildlife regional office provided the funding for improvements at the Pasture Point Pond. The ultimate goal is to create a thriving and sustainable pond habitat for native freshwater fish species.



You might have noticed equipment activity last summer and fall at the pond. First, there was an excavation of the very shallow pond bottom to reach a pond depth that would not dry out as in the past.

Then a new pier and gangway were installed. The Allee House road shoulder was graded and a gravel parking lot

was created with a pad for handicap parking. Later this winter the staff will install benches, picnic tables, trash cans, and an informational kiosk. Then appropriate signage and a receptacle for waste monofilament line will be placed. Finally, the Refuge is developing a fishing plan and once approved it will provide a catch-and-release opportunity for the visiting public at Bombay Hook NWR.

In the past BHNWR has partnered with Delaware Fish & Wildlife to hold youth fishing programs with Appoquinimink, Smyrna-Clayton and Caesar Rodney Boys and Girls Clubs. However, these programs were held at state-managed ponds and not at Bombay Hook NWR. With these changes at Pasture Point Pond future youth fishing programs could be held at the Refuge. *(Photos by BJJ)*

FoBH Board of Directors

President	Vacant (Note 1)
Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	Tammy Lewis
Treasurer	Joanne Lantz
Members at Large:	Bill Bond
	Libby Burgazli
	Arlene Davis
	Bruce Lantz
	Randy Murphy
	Brandi Besecker
Past President	Mark Dever

Note 1: As Past President, Mark Dever is Acting President.

Black Swallowtail Butterfly (*Papilio polyxenes asterius*)

Here are some fun facts about the *Black Swallowtail* (Eastern), a common summer butterfly resident at Bombay Hook NWR:



Photo by BJL

- ◆ Also called the *Parsnip Swallowtail* or *American Swallowtail*.
- ◆ Black Swallowtails are a common summer visitor to open refuge fields.
- ◆ They are active at Bombay Hook from May to September.
- ◆ Females have much larger blue patches in the inter-hind wings.
- ◆ Males have 2 rows of large bright yellow spots on the upper wing surface.
- ◆ Males are very aggressive and will chase other males out of their mating territories.
- ◆ Females lay single eggs on a host plant.
- ◆ Young larva has black w/white patches, using bird dropping camouflage.
- ◆ The larva also has orange head horns covered with a chemical ant repellent.
- ◆ The older larva resemble monarch larva but have yellow spots - not lines.
- ◆ Caterpillars feed on native herb plants in the carrot family (*Apiaceace*).
- ◆ This would include Queen Anne's lace, Wild parsnip, and mock Bishop's weed.
- ◆ Black Swallowtail larva throws their feces pellets to confuse predator flies.
- ◆ Summer pupae are often green, while overwintering pupae are brown.
- ◆ Adult Black Swallowtails feed on nectar from clover, milkweed, and thistle.
- ◆ They live a long time compared to other butterflies.
- ◆ Highest butterfly predation occurs when they can't fly during poor weather.

Spring Into Amazon Smile.....

Did you know that you could donate to Friends of Bombay Hook simply by shopping through Amazon?? If you shop on Amazon Smile, Friends will receive 0.5% of eligible purchases made.

To shop on Amazon Smile, simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device, sign on if you have an existing Amazon account, and choose Friends of Bombay Hook from a list of charitable organizations. It's a great way to do shopping for loved ones while donating for a good cause.



2020 FOBH SPRING AMATEUR PHOTO CONTEST

ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS:

APRIL 1, 2020 THRU MAY 8, 2020

**10:00 AM – 1:30 PM MONDAY – FRIDAY
9:00AM - 4:00 PM SATURDAY & SUNDAY**

SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED AT:

**2591 WHITEHALL NECK ROAD, SMYRNA, DE 19977 AT THE
BOMBAY HOOK VISITOR CENTER**

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SEE OFFICIAL RULES ON THE NEXT PAGE

2020 FOBH Spring Amateur Photo Contest Official Rules
Contest is open to Amateur Photographers only

Categories: Raptors, Other Birds; Scenic/landscape; Insect; Mammal; Reptile/Amphibian; Junior (up to age 16); Cell phone (must be able to enlarge up to a 5"x7" photo); and the last category will be for Town of Smyrna photos. These photos will be of "Anything Smyrna". We have a lot of beautiful places, buildings, and scenes that can be found in our town so take a ride through the town, attend some events and get snapping!

Photo Contest Rules:

All *Bombay Hook Refuge* photographs must be taken within the boundaries of Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge. "Anything Smyrna" photos are to be within 19977 zip code and not of the Refuge.

All photos must have been taken within the last 2 years.

Photos will be accepted as an 8x10 photo in an 11x14 white mat with back and no frame. Photos must be adequately adhered to the back of the mat. Cell phone photos accepted as a 5x7 photo with an 8x10 white mat with back and adhered to back. Any other color, or not having the proper matting on the front or back, will not be considered for judging.

Photo backing must include name, category in which to be entered, address, email, and phone number.

To have your photographs considered for the contest you must mail or drop off your photographs at the Refuge office from Wednesday, April 1, 2020 – Friday, May 8, 2020. Photo contest entry fee is \$10.00 per photo. You must also sign a consent form allowing any photos not picked up by June 30, 2020 to become FOBH property and can be used for sales or any other use that FOBH might have.

Entries will be received Monday thru Friday from 10:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

*Prizes will be awarded at the Photo Contest Reception to be held on Sunday, May 17, 2020 at Painted Stave Distillery in downtown Smyrna DE. A silent auction will be held at the reception, as well as a 50/50 raffle. Light refreshments will be served and photo prizes will be given out. The Grand Prize will be awarded to Best in Show and other awards will be given for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each category.

If there are any questions about the contest, please contact the Friends of Bombay Hook at fobh@comcast.net, www.friendsofbombayhook.org or [message us on Facebook](#).

*You do not have to be present at the reception to receive your award.

Thank you for your continued support and good luck!

Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge in Wells, Maine
By Brandi Besecker



While visiting friends in Massachusetts, we voyaged up the coast to southern Maine - home of the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge. Dedicated after its namesake in 1969, Rachel Carson has a very similar makeup as Bombay Hook. It is a network of 11 coastal wetlands and critical estuaries across southeastern Maine from the state border all the way north to Portland.

It spotlights its marshes and barrier dunes as critical habitat for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl along the Atlantic Flyway. Up to 75% of Maine's piping plover population nests around Rachel Carson.

The increased nesting successes of the plovers in Maine, as well as least terns, have been attributed to the enhanced protection of the habitat. Another notable species found around the refuge is the New England cottontail, which is currently a candidate for federally endangered species. Moose, black bear, and bobcat sightings have increased in recent years as their ranges grow.

The Visitor Center wasn't open for us to peruse, but even on a hot Labor Day weekend, the parking lot for the Carson Trail was extremely crowded. It didn't deter us and as we continued out the trail, we may as well have been the only ones out there. Every twist and turn of the deciduous trail obscures your view of what is ahead and behind, so you can focus on what is directly in your vicinity.

The Carson Trail offers a piece of everything the refuge has to offer-beginning upland through the white pine, hemlock, and ferns and progressing in and out of the tidal salt marsh of the Merrilland River. Along the woodland portion of the trail, there are unmistakable signs of woodpeckers and other cavity nesters. The tidal marsh was busy with gulls, herons, and shorebirds fishing for an afternoon snack in the salt pans. Peak activity is during the spring and fall migrations, and if you time it right you could see the same birds in Maine and Delaware.



There is limited refuge access to the saltmarsh and beach, as the closest approach via water is in Wells to the south, but the unique and tranquil perspective is well worth the trouble if you have the time. The next time you find yourself in need of a northern escape, the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge can provide as much wildlife as it can be an education on conservation. *(Photos by BB)*

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Donna Bobzin

We have an eagle watcher here at the Refuge that we just love! Donna Bobzin has been updating us on our nesting eagles for several years and we love hearing from her. You can find the shared posts on the Friends of Bombay Hook Facebook page. Recently I asked her to tell us about herself and why she likes eagles.

Here's what she had to say:

I was born in Dover, but because my Dad was in the US Army and was stationed in many different places in my childhood years, my family lived in several states, also in England and France. After his retirement from the service, we returned to his home state of Delaware.

I have always been an animal lover, but my interest in the "fine feathered friends" began later in life, with much enjoyment as I watched "backyard birds". My interest in the Bald Eagle piqued in November 2014 when I found live streaming on the internet of a Bald Eagle nest in Hanover, PA. The mated pair is named Liberty and Freedom. As I watched the nest during a major snowstorm in March 2015, I was in awe at the dedication and commitment that the Bald Eagle possesses to defy Mother Nature and keep their eggs protected from the snow and harsh elements. The female was completely covered by many inches of snow, only the top of her head and eyes were visible on the camera. After many hours of being buried in the snow, she finally needed to shake off the snow, stand, stretch out her wings, then return to incubate the eggs. I was hooked on Eagles from that point on. (The two eggs hatched, the eaglets survived then fledged in June 2015)



I am definitely not a photographer, but just a "senior citizen" with a camera that I just point and shoot to take pictures of Eagles and wildlife whenever and wherever I can. Documenting my findings is an activity that I enjoy for my own records but am pleased that others show an interest in my findings and postings so that they may also learn the beauty and majesty of our national bird, The Bald Eagle, and other wonders of nature.

For the past several years, I have been observing nests at the Refuge:

- *The nest on Georges Island (with George & Martha Eagle) has not been successful*
 - * *March 2017 - storm destroys nest and their one eaglet perishes.*
 - * *Winter 2018 - parents incubate egg/eggs but the eggs are not viable.*
 - * *Winter 2019 - parents incubating egg/eggs but storm destroys nest and eggs.*
 - * *February 2020 - parents are now incubating egg/eggs.*
- *Eagle Nest at Raymond Pool*
 - * *2017 - parents raised 1 eaglet to fledge.*
 - * *2018 - the eagles abandoned the nest, but Great Horned Owls used the nest and fledged 1 owlet.*
- *Bear Swamp Area*
 - * *Discovered new Eagle nest (Barney and Betty Eagle) who are now incubating in the nest for the 2020 winter season. (Eagle photos by Donna Bobzin)*

*Becoming a Trail Steward
By Brandi Besecker*



In the months void of the hoards of biting insects, the trails at Bombay Hook are becoming more and more popular. Unfortunately, poor etiquette is also on the rise. Let's look at some ways we can have the best trail experience by being a good trail steward.

First and foremost, know the rules. What you are and are not permitted to do at the Refuge are on the website, and you should always ask if you're not sure if you're allowed to do a certain activity. Some of the most common breaches of the rules we see are feeding the wildlife and trespassing into non-designated areas. This is anywhere that is not an official marked trail, or off the side of the Wildlife Drive. Wildlife refuges are just that: a refuge for wildlife. Stepping into fields or down the side of the impoundments may seem innocuous to you, but there may be nests that either you're destroying, small animals hiding from predators that you're flushing into danger, or you could even unknowingly disperse an invasive plant from your shoes. Some of the footings can be quite precarious, and one missed step on the marsh side can make you go headfirst into the river. By feeding the local wildlife, you are not only turning them into nuisance pests by causing a human dependency for food and associating humans in general with food, but their digestive tracts are not made for processed foods, and you run the risk of making our wildlife very sick.



Next, and just as important, pick up after yourself. We don't have trash cans placed around the Refuge for a good reason: we don't want the wildlife to get into it and get sick, as I mentioned above. We love to see families picnicking out at Shearneck Pool, but please if you bring it in, take it back out with you. We have Adopt-a-Highway cleanups along Whitehall Neck Road, and the trash we find is astounding. Trash is a big problem in the State of Delaware, and we want to do our part in making the state a top destination by being litter-free.

Finally, set a good example, and get involved. What better way to enhance your visit than by giving back to the Refuge? When you're out walking the trails or the Wildlife Drive, take notice of your surroundings. If you see a piece of trash, pick it up. If you see someone wandering into the woods or throwing

Be a Bombay Hook Trail Steward !!!
Walk a trail once-a-week and help keep it safe.

To volunteer contact fobh@comcast.net

bread into the impoundment, say something either to them or find a Refuge staffer to address it. If you're on the trail and see downed branches or a tree, if you can move it go ahead! If it seems a little heavy for you, find a volunteer or staff and we'll make sure any obstructions are cleared. If you want to do more, consider becoming a Refuge volunteer, by staffing the Visitor Center, helping in maintenance, or providing informational programs to your fellow Refuge visitors. It doesn't take much to ruin the Refuge experience, but it takes even less to make your visit a great one. (Photos by BB)

*Refuge Maintenance Winter 2020 Update
By Michael Vandevander, Maintenance Department*



Photo by BJL

As winter comes to a close, things on the Refuge will begin to pick up. We now have a signed contract for the Tar-and-Chip of the Auto Tour Route. This work will begin soon. With that being said, there will be road closures and 2-way traffic on 1-way areas. This is to ensure that we minimize the inconvenience to your visiting experience. So please be patient with us as we strive to improve your Wildlife Refuge. We also ask that you **OBEY** all signs and **SLOW DOWN**.

The maintenance department is still looking for a maintenance intern. If you know someone that would be interested in working through the summer here at Bombay Hook, please have them contact the Refuge for more information. Alternatively, go online to www.usaconservation.org for more information and apply.



Spring 2020 Calendar of Events

(302) 653-6872

http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Bombay_Hook/

The Bombay Hook Visitor Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and is open on weekends from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Wildlife Drive is open daily from ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset.

The Allee House remains closed until further notice.

All Public Events are FREE unless noted

Sunday, March 15, 2020

DELAWARE BATS (1:00 p.m. @ BHNWR Visitor Center)

Holly Niederrider, Presenter

The program will cover the bat species commonly found on the Delmarva Peninsula and their status. Holly is a State wildlife biologist and the Delaware Fish & Wildlife Bat Program Coordinator.

Saturday, March 21, 2020

MEDICINAL AND TOXIC PLANTS OF BOMBAY HOOK (10:00 a.m. @ BHNWR Visitor Center)

Joe Francis, Presenter

Being unable to run or hide, plants have evolved myriad chemical strategies to deter their predators. Their defenses can sometimes benefit humans - provided they don't poison us as well! The speaker, a physician, naturalist, and birder, will introduce some of the common plants of Bombay Hook along with their historical, current, or potential future medical uses. Weather permitting, there will be a short nature walk geared towards introductory field identification and natural history of the trees, shrubs, and wildflowers mentioned in the lecture.

Participants should dress appropriately for the weather, wear a suitable trail shoe (expect mud), and bring a water bottle, field notebook for notes and hand lens if you would like. The Refuge has loaner binoculars if needed.

Wednesday, April 1, 2020

PHOTO CONTEST ENTRY DROP OFF BEGINS! (10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. M – F & 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Sat & Sun)

OPEN TO ALL AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHERS

Drop off your photos for the 3rd Annual FOBH Spring Photo Contest at the Bombay Hook Visitor Center at 2591 Whitehall Neck Road, Smyrna DE 19977. See Official Rules for the contest at www.friendsofbombayhook.org, on FOBH Facebook events page, or on Page 9 of the Friends newsletter. Questions should be directed to fobh@comcast.net.

Saturday, April 4, 2020

FOREST BIRDS SKINS WORKSHOP (10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. @ BHNWR Visitor Center)

Dr. Jean Woods, Presenter

(Continued on next page)



*Bombay Hook Spring 2020 Calendar of Events
(Continued from Previous Page)*

Dr. Woods, Curators of the DMNH will guide us through the museum's selected skins collections.

SPACE IS LIMITED. REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED BY EMAILING DR. WOODS AT jwoods@delmnh.org

Saturday, April 11, 2020

COLONIAL WATER BIRDS (Time TBA@ BHNWR Visitor Center)

Terry Willis & Eileen McLellan, Presenters

Nope! These aren't birds from back in the colonial days, but birds that nest in colonies! Learn about Egrets, Herons, Bitterns and more!

Saturday April 18, 2020

**WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY; FUNDAMENTALS FOR CAPTURING A QUALITY WILDLIFE IMAGE
WITH EARL BLANSFIELD (10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. @ BHNWR Visitor Center)**

In this 75-minute presentation, Earl will share what he believes constitutes a quality wildlife image and basic techniques that he uses to capture it. The presentation will touch on areas such as lighting, composition, photo editing and environmental factors can that affect the quality of a photo. The presentation does not cover camera settings or operations in detail. It is assumed that the audience already has an understanding of these facets of photography.

The program will include a short ride out on the Refuge to practice what you learned!!

SPACE ON THE BUS IS LIMITED SO PLEASE PRE-REGISTER BY CALLING (302) 653-9345

Saturday April 25, 2020

• **FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK EARTH DAY ROAD CLEANUP (8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. @ BHNWR Visitor Center)**

Arlene Davis, Organizer

Please join Friends of Bombay Hook pick up litter along Whitehall Neck Road and Route 9 South to the Leipsic Bridge. Gloves, vests, trash grabbers and trash bags will be provided. We will also have transportation going along the trash route in case anyone needs to go back to the building. Do your part to help keep the Earth a clean place!

• **BEGINNING BIRDING - WARBLERS (10:00 a.m. @ BHNWR Visitor Center)**

Terry Willis and Eileen McLellan, Presenters

Join Terry as he teaches about our colorful little migrating warblers and birding tips on how to spot and identify them.

Sunday, May 3, 2020

WARBLER WALK (8:00 a.m. @ BHNWR Visitor Center)

Terry Willis and Eileen McLellan, Leaders

Meet up for an early walk on the Refuge to find colorful Warblers!

Friday, May 8, 2020

PHOTO CONTEST CLOSING DATE!

All photos must be dropped off by 1:30 p.m. to be considered for the FOBH Spring Photo Contest.



Saturday, May 9, 2020

WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

- **BEGINNING BIRDING – SHOREBIRDS (10:00 a.m. @ BHNWR Visitor Center)**

Terry Willis and Eileen McLellan, Presenters

Do all shorebirds look alike to you? Find out how to spot the differences to identify these birds. Then join Terry and Eileen on the Refuge to put to use what you just learned!!

- **LIVE BIRDS!! (1:30 p.m. @ BHNWR Visitor Center)**

Phung Luu of Animal Behavior and Conservation Connections will be bringing back his amazing birds for live demonstration!

Creating connections between people and wildlife since 2009, Animal Behavior & Conservation Connections offer unique free-flight education programs featuring native and exotic birds. Our goals are to connect people with animals and contribute to conservation of wild animals via our presentations. They accomplish these goals by featuring free-flighted avian partners exhibiting natural behaviors and interacting with our audience while skimming just inches over their heads as well as raising awareness and funding support for conservation programs through our dialog and the birds' behavioral repertoire.

This is an outside event so please dress accordingly.

Sunday, May 17, 2020

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK!

2020 FOBH SPRING PHOTO CONTEST RECEPTION & FUNDRAISER! (1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

Join Friends of Bombay Hook for an afternoon of friends, food and drink! Included in the day are awards given out to winners of photo contest, silent auction and 50/50. Hors d'oeuvres will be on hand. Alcoholic drinks are available to purchase. Belly up to the bar and have one of the Painted Stave's amazing drinks! Water will be provided for non-drinkers and children. YES! Children are welcome under supervision of parent or guardian.

Event will be held at Painted Stave Distillery, 106 W. Commerce Street, Smyrna, DE 19977; (302) 653-6834

Donations are welcome but not required

Please come out and support us in our 30th year of wildlife conservation!

Saturday, May 23, 2020

HORSESHOE CRAB WORKSHOP (10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. @ BHNWR Visitor Center)

Brandi Besecker, Presenter

This program will cover the current the Horseshoe Crab life cycle, role in the spring shorebird migration and its current status in Delaware. She will also discuss conservation efforts being taken to help declining population numbers recover. There will be a short field trip after the classroom program. Bring your sunscreen and favorite bug spray.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR THIS EVENT BY CALLING (302) 653-9345

(Continued on next page)



*Bombay Hook Spring 2020 Calendar of Events
(Continued from Previous Page)*

Saturday, May 30, 2020

GREAT BLUE HERONS, WATERSHEDS, AND YOU (10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. @ BHNWR Visitor Center)

Kathy Doyle, Author

Marsha Holler, Illustrator

Great Blue Herons love Bombay Hook! Come find out why. Kathleen Doyle, author of **Blue's River* will teach you about the elegant Great Blue Heron and what led her to write a children's book about a very specific heron named Old Blue. You will learn where these beautiful birds live, how they live, dangers they have faced throughout history, and the dangers that they face today.

You will also learn about the importance of watersheds. Humans and Great Blue Herons require water, and our water comes from our watershed. Find out what a watershed is and where your watershed is located. Learn about the types of actions that can be harmful to watersheds, and what actions are helpful.

Ultimately, Great Blue Herons and our watersheds rely on all of us to take better care of them. Learn about specific things that you and your family can do to be good stewards of the environment.

Lastly, learn how to draw a Great Blue Heron! Marsha Holler, illustrator of *Blue's River* will tell you how she approached illustrating *Blue's River* and she will give you tips on how to draw your own Great Blue Heron!

**Blue's River book will be available for purchase and book signing at the program!!!*

Saturday, June 13, 2020

FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK ANNUAL BOARD MEETING, LUNCHEON AND SPEAKER (10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. @ BHNWR Visitor Center)

10:00 – 11:00 Whelks Workshop

Presenter, Rich Wong

More than a seashell, the whelk program will cover the biology of this little known but important Refuge resident.

11:00 – 12:00 Annual Meeting, Elections

12:00 – 1:00 Catered Lunch

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Calendar of Event updates will be announced on Facebook (<http://facebook.com/bombayhookwildliferefuge>), Friends of Bombay Hook website (www.friendsofbombayhook.org), and the Bombay Hook website (http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Bombay_Hook/)

IMPORTANT REMINDER TO REFUGE VISITORS....

To protect wildlife and their habitat and to provide the best opportunities in wildlife observation and photography, it is important not to disturb, injure, or damage plants and animals of the Refuge. In fact, it is a prohibited act as stated in 50 CFR27.51. This disturbance includes flushing birds and other wildlife or using electronic calls (taping) to lure birds closer for observation or photography. Please remember to take only memories and photographs and leave only footprints.

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT FRIENDS???

Donate or Become a Member!

This year, the **FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK (FOBH)** is celebrating its 30th Anniversary! 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 Bombay Hook NWR by supporting environmental education programs, fund transportation for field trips to the Refuge 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 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.

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)

<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

*Student membership: under age 18.

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

***Sponsor and Lifetime memberships include family.

<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:	\$ _____