

FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK

Newsletter



Bear Swamp Pool
Photo by Karen Dever



Vol. 33, No. 1
September 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.

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Fishing Permitted at Pasture Point Pond

With a new floating dock, rest station, picnic tables, and expanded parking area, Pasture Point Pond is now open for fishing. It is a catch-and-release pond using artificial lures only. The pond was recently stocked with largemouth bass, bluegills, channel cats, and flathead minnows. Much of the pond is very shallow, and the back flats will dry up in dry summers; however, there are some deep holes around the floating dock. This freshwater body of water will test your fishing skills.



Photo by BL

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

Be a Bombay Hook Trail Steward

If you would like to volunteer to walk a trail once a week this fall, please drop a line to Joshua Smith at:



Photo by BL

joshua_smith@fws.gov



Greetings Friends!

We're getting closer! Soon we will have a new and larger store to offer unique items to our friends!

Until then, we have many great items in our current store for your shopping pleasure. We now offer bucket-, boonie-, and safari-style hats, and other great things.

At FOBH, we try to open the Blue Heron Gift Shoppe every day from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm. That is a lot of hours to cover! Simply put, **WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!** Please consider a few hours a week or a month. You do not need retail experience to work in the store. We will train you fully. Come be a part of our volunteer family and new Visitor Center experience!

For inquiries regarding FOBH volunteering, please email fobh@comcast.net



Coming soon to the Blue Heron Gift Shoppe! Madd Capp Puzzles and Dole Orchard wood ornaments. All Photos by KD



Purple Martin Program



Purple Martin Fledglings
Photo by Karen Dever

Friends of Bombay Hook is proud to sponsor the Purple Martin program at Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge.

Bombay Hook had 119+ birds total in all the nesting cavities

Unfortunately, we had the lowest number of fledglings per pair despite having the greatest number of eggs ever.

- ✓ 515 Eggs total
- ✓ 380 Hatched
- ✓ 278 Fledged

Thanks to our volunteer Joel Martin for maintaining our Purple Martin program, a program supported by the

Friends of Bombay Hook.

Here's to a better outcome next year!



**COME TO OUR FOBH ANNUAL MEETING ON
10/21/2023**

DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED



Artist Spotlight: Harold Van Dyck



Harold Van Dyck was a native Delawarean and lived in Clayton, Delaware. He passed away a year ago at the age of 87. He carved and painted shorebirds in the "smoothie style." It's been said his shorebirds were "stylized with position and attitude." Growing up, hunting and fishing the saltmarshes along the Delaware, he crossed paths with accomplished carvers like Harold Haman of Middletown. Killdeer, Snowy Plover, Black Bellied Plover, Red Knot, and Avocet are just a few of the species Harold carved and painted.

Harold carved shorebirds for over 40 years, and his carvings are known both locally and nationally. He visited Bombay Hook NWR, where he observed feeding shorebirds and gained inspiration for his artwork. If you're a long-time visitor to Bombay Hook, you might remember Harold displaying his carvings under the large white tent at a shorebird festival.

To see more of his work, Harold's wife Terry said the Dupont Nature Center has an excellent display of some of Harold's carved and painted shorebirds.

(All Photos by BL)



Dolomedes Spiders (Dolomedes spp.)



- ◆ Spiders in the genus *Dolomedes* are known as fishing spiders.
- ◆ They are commonly called fishing spiders, wharf spiders, or dock spiders.
- ◆ These are giant spiders and very scary looking!
- ◆ Ask a fisherman; they'll say as big as their palm (not a fish tale).
- ◆ But they are shy and run from people; bites are rare, like a bee sting.
- ◆ Not a problem generally unless you are sensitive to spider venom.
- ◆ Most species are semiaquatic and

hunt for prey on the water surface.

- ◆ In the water, they trap an air bubble in their body hairs to breathe while diving.
- ◆ Dolomedes spiders are ambush hunters, eating aquatic insects and small fish.
- ◆ Waiting at the water's edge, they often sprint across its surface to subdue their prey. Using the water tension, the fishing spider stays on the water.
- ◆ Susceptible leg hairs help them ID the water surface vibrations and identify a fallen bug instead of a fallen leaf on the water surface.
- ◆ Fishing spiders are nocturnal, feeding at night when most birds are asleep.
- ◆ Females wrap their eggs in a silk pouch, work a web around and guard them.
- ◆ Many Dolomedes spiders have white stripes on each side of their body.
- ◆ They look like wolf spiders, but this is a water environment.
- ◆ The species *Dolomedes tenebrous*, the dark fishing spider, is often seen in wooded areas.
- ◆ Watch for these spiders at Bombay Hook NWR in the summer months. (All Photos by BL)



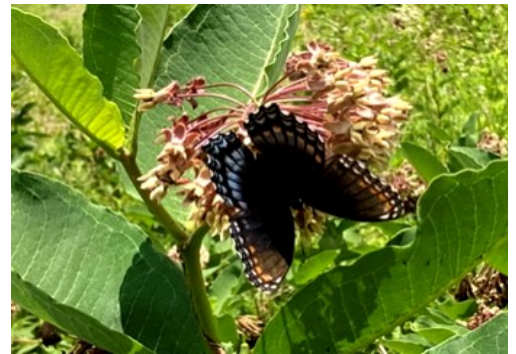


Ethical Wildlife Watching

Paul Daly, a past Bombay Hook Refuge Manager, wrote about "Ethical Wildlife Watching" in his 1996 Manager's Corner. The practices (below) he requested of visitors nearly 30 years ago are still an essential message to our visitors today.

- ☒ Observe "closed area" signs.
- ☒ Stay on designated trails and roads.
- ☒ Keep to posted speed limits.
- ☒ Consider other observers.
- ☒ Do not approach wildlife.
- ☒ Use binoculars and scopes.
- ☒ Keep noise to a minimum.
- ☒ Encourage others to do the same.

(All Photos by KD and BL)





FOBH Refuge-Funded Projects

In August, National Nonprofit Day was observed. It was formed 30 years ago to recognize the contributions of non-profit organizations and their supporters. It's the time, energy, labor, and financial contributions supporters make for their respective causes.

The Friends of Bombay Hook's (FOBH) sole mission has been to support the educational and recreational activities at the Refuge. So, we celebrate all the efforts of past and present members and volunteers to Bombay Hook NWR since 1990.

Listed below are just a few of the many contributions that have been made to the Refuge over the past 30 years:

- New roof and repairs on waterfowler's shed.
- Acoustic bat studies.
- Free informational brochures.
- Bear Swamp Bridge paving.
- Purple Martin colony funding.
- Refuge picnic tables and benches.
- Funding summer intern positions.
- Seasonal trash pickup.
- Fischer Tract field prep and planting.
- Speaker's fees for Environmental Educational programs.
- Nest box funding and maintenance.
- Visitor Center pavilion.
- Visitor Center native gardens.
- Co-sponsored at least six festivals over the years: Snow Goose, Spring Bird, Songbird, Migratory Bird, Waterfowl, and Biodiversity festivals.

Thank you for your efforts and support!

(All Photos by KD and BL)



Ottawa NWR

By Mark and Karen Dever



Yellow Warbler

Traveling along the southern part of Lake Erie to Oak Harbor, OH, you will come across Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge was established in 1961 and protects wetlands, grasslands, and forests for migratory birds, resident wildlife, and some endangered species. Combined with other complex refuges, it covers about 10,000 acres.

This was our second trip to the area, and we were not disappointed! We decided to travel in May during the local bird festival. Along with its neighbor, Magee Marsh, the refuge was loaded with warblers and other migratory birds along the Atlantic Flyway. There were so many marshes, parks, and birding spots; we couldn't explore them all in a three-day trip! We walked trails, drove the wildlife drive, shopped in the Friends of Ottawa gift shop, and enjoyed the special events for the birding weekend.

You can see up to 38 varieties of spring warblers, 30 species of shorebirds, and many other migratory birds in the spring.

If you can, visit this magical area, we encourage you to do so around mid-May. You will surely be amazed!

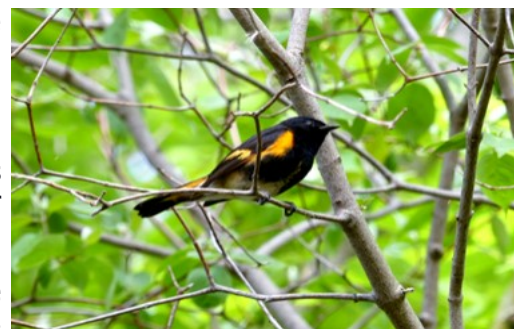
For more information about Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, go to: <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/ottawa>.

For more information about Magee Marsh, go to: <http://www.mageemarsh.org/index.html>.

(All Photos by Mark Dever)



Blanding's Turtle (endangered species)



American Redstart

2023 Bombay Hook NWR Headquarters Deer Hunts

The Refuge will be closed on three dates for a headquarters deer hunt this fall.

That's correct; it's closed to the public for visits. Please mark your calendar.

Those dates are the following:

- October 11 - Muzzleloader
- November 15 - Shotgun
- December 13 - Antlerless

Please understand that, as in years past, the Fischer Tract, Steamboat Landing, and other designated areas at the Refuge will have active hunting activities throughout the fall. Hunting brochures are available at the Visitor Center detailing these activities and specific related regulations.

Watch for the opening of the new Bombay Hook NWR trail!

**It's approximately 2 miles in
length and soon will be in
beautiful fall colors.**



Photo by BL

SPECIAL SUMMER VISITORS

Once in a while, we get some rare for our area visitors of the feathered kind. This summer, we were fortunate enough to see Trumpeter Swans, a Wilson's Phalarope, and a Little Egret, to mention a few.

There could be many reasons that we see unusual birds from time to time. Did they get blown off course from their migration route due to winds and storms? Climate change? Stopped for a Big Mac? Who knows? Whatever the reason, we enjoyed the company!

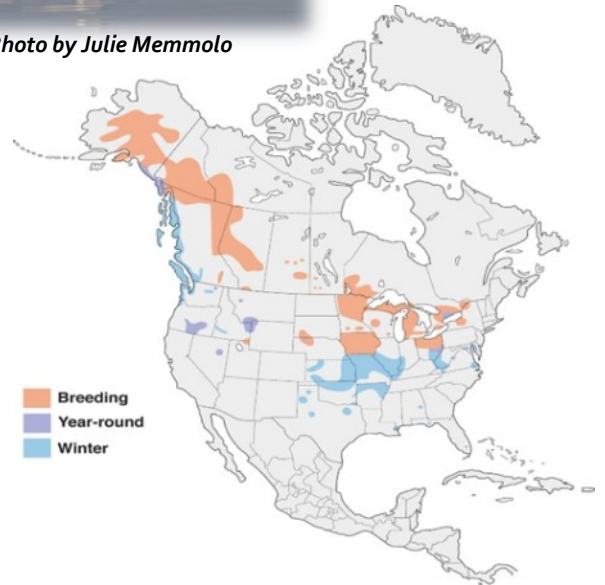
Check out the range maps for these birds, and you'll see why they are so special here in Delaware!

Wilson's Phalarope

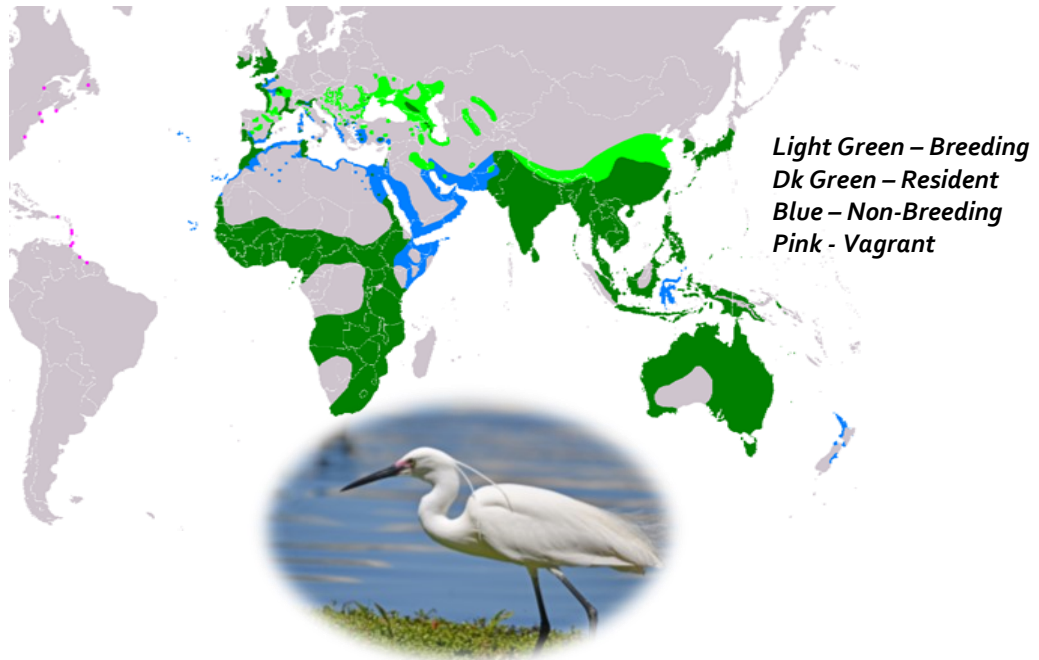


Photo by Julie Memmolo

Trumpeter Swans



Little Egret





Bombay Hook NWR

2591 Whitehall Neck Road, Smyrna, DE 19977
(302) 653-6872

<https://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 am to 4:00 pm.

The **Blue Heron Gift Shoppe** (run by Friends of Bombay Hook) is open
M - F, Saturday & Sunday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, depending on volunteer availability.

The Allee House remains closed until further notice.

Fall 2023 Calendar of Events

Programs are **FREE** and no registration necessary unless otherwise specified.

September 23, 2023 ***Monarch Butterflies*** (2:00 pm) - Terry Willis will present a program on the Monarch Butterfly, including classroom discussion and tagging Monarch Butterflies.

October 14, 2023 ***Marvels of Salt Marshes*** (2:00 pm) - Eileen McLellan will present a program on salt marsh ecology. The program will include a one-hour presentation and a trip to the Boardwalk Trail and the marshes.

October 21, 2023 ***Friends of Bombay Hook (FOBH) Annual Meeting*** (11:00 am) - All members are welcome. A short meeting will follow by lunch. Our guest speaker will be Cindy Heffley; topic to be announced.

November - Dates and times to be announced:

- ***Waterfowl ID***
- ***Wildlife Rehabilitation Program***

Watch for program updates and new programs added on our [FOBH website](#) and [Facebook](#) throughout the fall.



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 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

*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:	\$ _____