



Vol. 34 No. 2

Newsletter - Online Only

Winter 2026



What a deal !!!



Hello 4th graders, parents, grandparents and teachers!

How would you like to get a FREE National pass good from now until August 31, 2026?

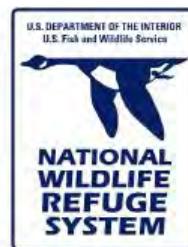
Get a pass that YOU and YOUR family can use to visit National Parks and
National Wild Refuges from now until August 31, 2026 - FOR FREE.

Here's how you start:

Go to the Every Kid Outdoors web site (www.everykidoutdoors.gov) and follow the simple steps. When you complete the "How it Works" part and have printed your pass, come to Bombay Hook NWR and they will provide the official pass.

The visitor center is open Mon – Fri, 9 to 4. Sat and Sun vary so please call ahead.

Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge
2591 Whitehall Neck Road
Smyrna, DE 19977
302-653-9345
www.fws.gov/refuge/bombay_hook



Calendar of Events – Winter/Spring 2026

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

The Visitor Center is open during the week from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Programs are free and no registration is necessary unless otherwise specified.

To request a reasonable accommodation please call the Refuge office at (302) 653-9345 2 weeks before the event.

Saturday December 27, 2025

8:00 am – 10:00 am Delaware Ornithological Society Bird Walk

The Delaware Ornithological Society sponsors a monthly bird walk, each month from September through April, which starts 8 am from the visitor center. The walks will utilize the newly completed Forest Discovery Tree Trail (2.7 miles) and last approximately 2 hours. Walks will take place rain-or-shine unless the weather is extreme (check www.DOSBirds.org or the DOS Facebook page). Bring sturdy shoes that can stand mud and moisture; water bottle; insect repellent; and, of course, binoculars if you have them (loaners will be available). A hand lens or loupe will also be handy if we stop to examine trees, flowers, mushrooms, lichens etc.

Saturday 1/24/2026 2:00 pm Wildlife Photography; Beyond the Basics. 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. Meet at the Bombay Hook Visitor Center at 2591 Whitehall Neck Road, Smyrna DE 19977.

Saturday 1/31/2026 10:00 am Feeding Winter Backyard Birds (Breast Cancer Survivors). This is a reservations only program. Contact Lois Wilkinson at lwilkinson@debreast-cancer.org for all the reservation details. Bruce Lantz will present a program on how to attracting winter bird species

Saturday 2/14/2026 11:00 am Beginning Birding: Birds at Your Feeder.

A program presented by Eileen McLellan that will get you excited about enjoying your backyard birds.

Saturday 2/21/2026 11:00 am Red Fox at Bombay Hook NWR.

This program presented by Bruce Lantz will follow this active mammal through all four seasons at Bombay Hook NWR.

Saturday 3/07/2026 10:00am Refuge Waterfowl.

Review our refuge wildlife as they prepare for the spring migration with Eileen McLella

Artist Spotlight: Marcia Poling

For over 30 years Marcia Poling and her husband Tom have been volunteering at Bombay Hook NWR and have been very active with the Friends of Bombay Hook (FOBH) in many roles. During that same time, Marcia has shared her unique artwork with us, with detailed wildlife images inspired by Bombay Hook NWR.

Marcia grew up in northern New Castle County, Delaware, near the Pennsylvania line. As a child she enjoyed drawing horses and deer. She would paint images on cloth gift bags and give them as Christmas presents. As she got older Marcia started putting paint on matte colored Christmas ornaments. No formal training, just trial and error and lots of practice. She soon learned how to apply paint to the glass ornaments and other skills like painting a curved line that would look straight. She learned how to maintain subject proportion and scale on a curved surface. She utilized ball colors to complement or highlight specific colors in her subjects or background.



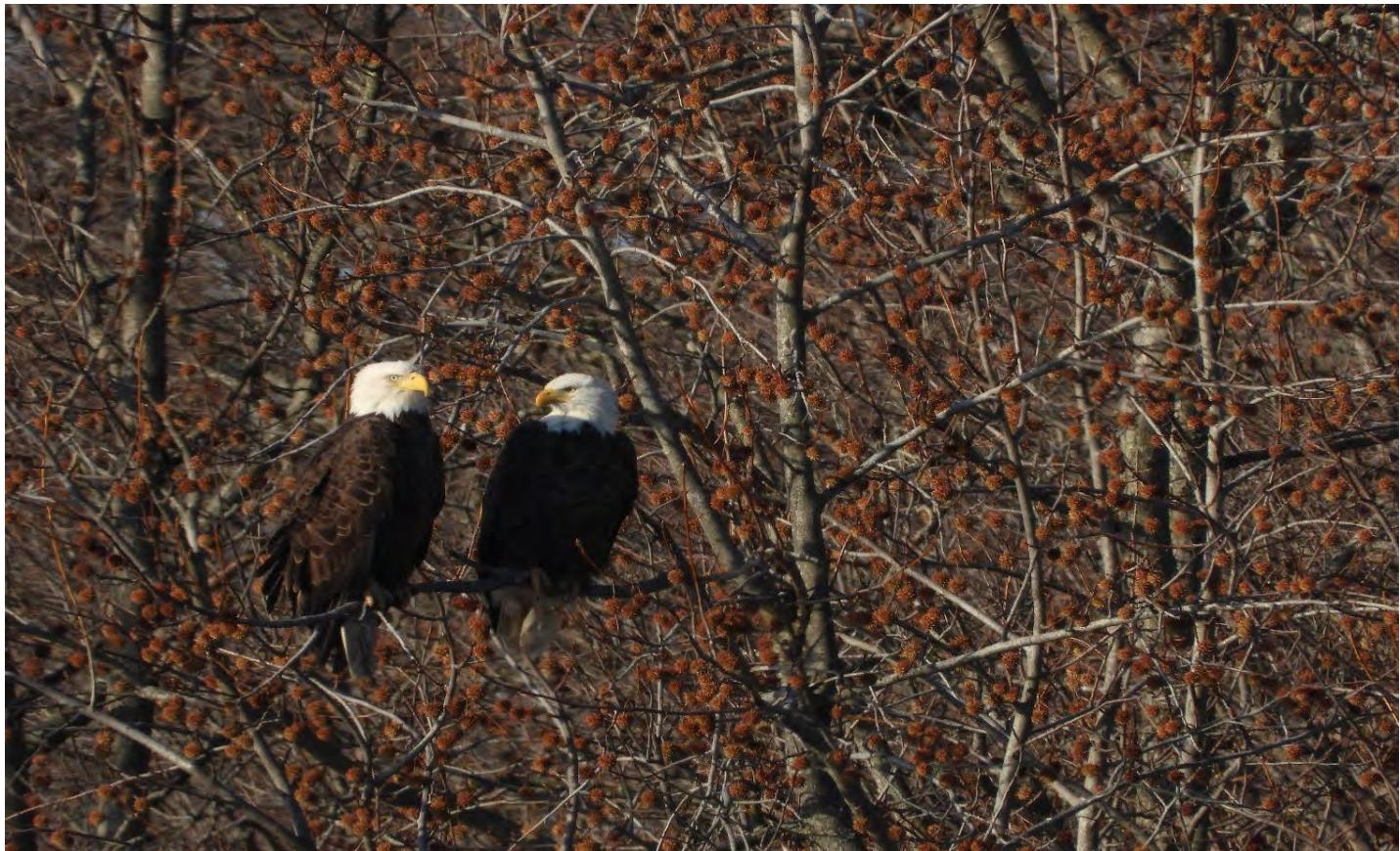
Marcia's father had a great interest in all nature, and she believes that's where her interest in drawing and painting wildlife originated. Her father would take the family on walks in the woods at area parks. Her first of many visits to Bombay Hook NWR was on a family trip in the 1960s. That early interest in wildlife has followed her throughout her life. As an adult, Marcia soon developed her birding skills, allowing her to lead weekly spring migrant walks at Bombay Hook NWR. With her habitat and birding knowledge Marcia could place a bluebird in a spring meadow with blooming black-eyed susans or a wild turkey under white oaks in autumn foliage.

In and around 1996 at Bombay Hook NWR Verna Price was managing the very small FOBH shop at the refuge visitor center called the "Sales Outlet". When Verna saw Marcia's detailed wildlife work on the ornaments, she told her, "I have to have some". This placed Marcia's wildlife artwork as a fixture at Bombay Hook, in the Friends Sales Outlet where we started to admire her detailed wildlife paintings and bring them home. Even today in 2025, you can see and purchase Marcia's ornaments at the much-expanded Blue Heron Gift Shoppe.

Marcia's artistic skills have been recognized beyond Bombay Hook. Several years ago, Marcia was commissioned by the American Bird Conservancy to paint dozens of bird illustrations to highlight specific species of concern and their habitats. She has also painted for fundraisers at Tri-State Bird Rescue and the Brandywine Red Clay Alliance. Her ornaments can be found across the United States in many refuge shops, wildlife art shows, and thousands of homes at Christmas.

Marcia still paints all kinds of birds, mammals, fish and even a Ghost crab. Her more challenging subjects include tiger swallowtails, shorebirds and wolves, and she has even tackled bird species from around the world, antique John Deere tractors and T-rex. She reports Bombay Hook still inspires her artwork. We thank Marcia for sharing a part of her artistic story with us and how Bombay Hook NWR has inspired her.

Bombay Hook - A Winter View





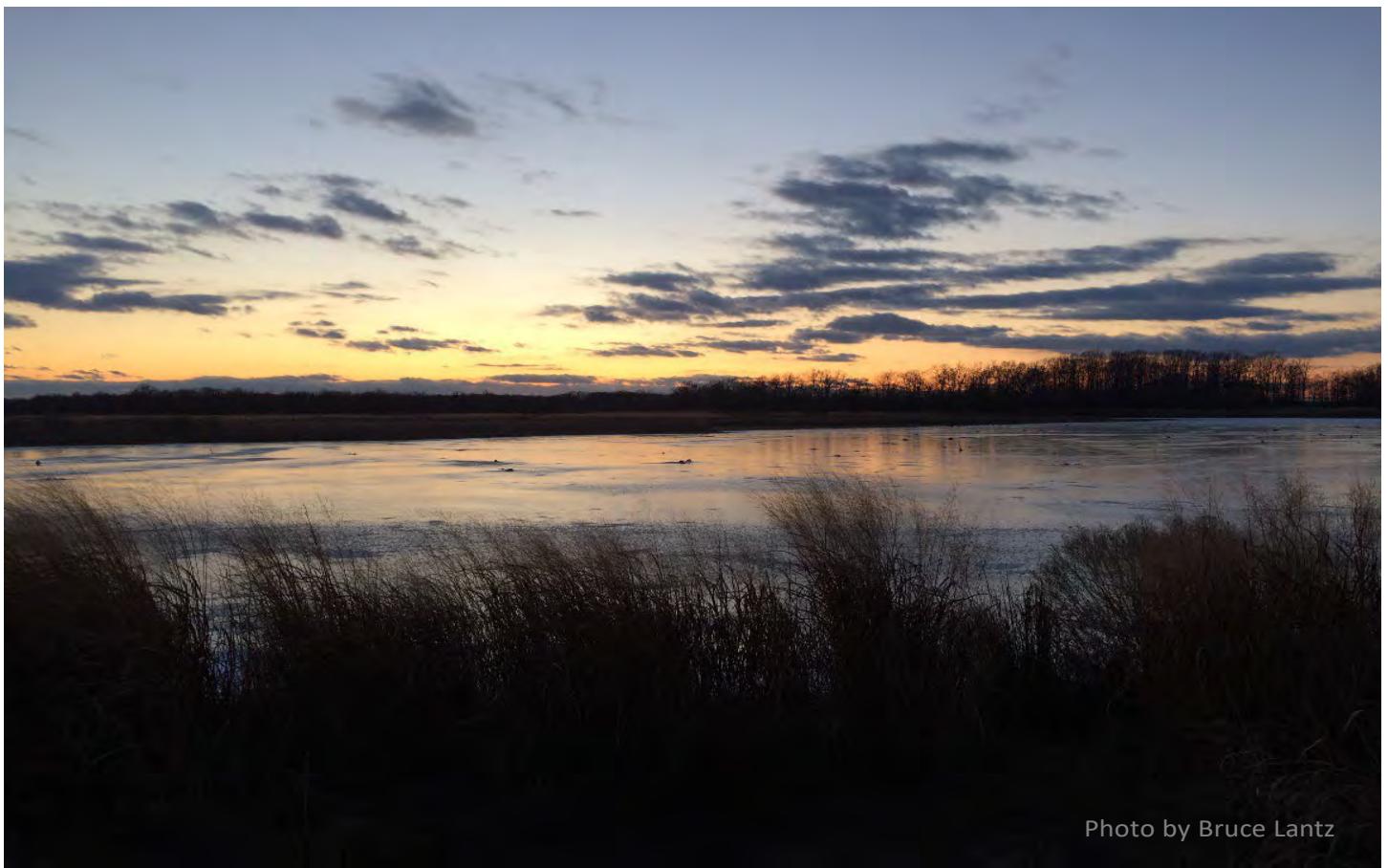
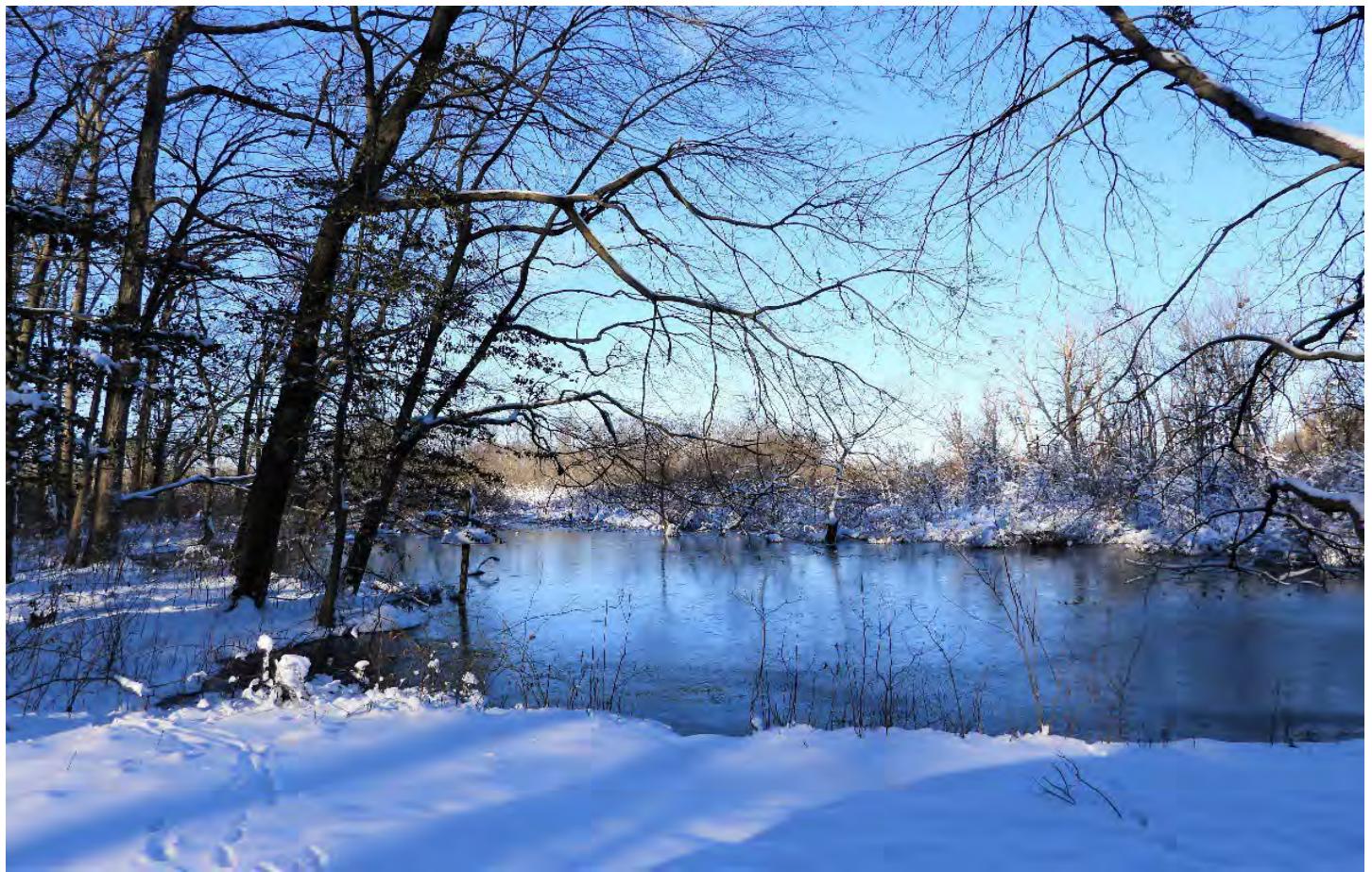


Photo by Bruce Lantz



Photo by Julie Memmolo



Photo by Julie Memmolo



Hello Friends!

All I can say is it's been great but come on Spring!! We cannot wait to get our new merchandise out! There are Farmers Defense products here to help with your native gardening, we have a new sterling silver owl pendant, kids planting activity kits, and more!

- ♡ 10% Off Birds & Beans coffee
- ♡ Lots of after holiday sales
- ♡ We have books, jewelry, toys, socks, coffee, teas, candies, Tees and other cool merch.

Did I mention we are in dire need for weekend volunteers who can sell passes and greet visitors?
fobh@comcast.net.

See you soon!

Karen Dever

Blue Heron Gift Shoppe Mgr



HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT FRIENDS???
Donate or Become a Member!

Since 1990, 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 on the right and mail your check or money order to **FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK, 2591 Whitehall Neck Rd., Smyrna, DE 19977.**

Or go to <https://www.friendsofbombayhook.org> and follow the prompts to either donate or obtain/renew 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.

FOBH 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 (<https://www.doverfcu.org>).

FOBH Memberships and Donations help support and finance Refuge programs, and are tax deductible.

Our Mission Statement

The **Friends of Bombay Hook (FOBH)** is a non-profit corporation (501c3) 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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www.friendsofbombayhook.org



FOBH MEMBERSHIP / DONATION APPLICATION

Submit completed application at the Visitor Center (payment by cash, check/money order, or credit/debit card), or by mail (with a check/money order) to **Friends of Bombay Hook; 2591 Whitehall Neck Rd.; Smyrna, DE 19977**, or go to <https://www.friendsofbombayhook.org> and follow the prompts to either apply/renew membership or make a donation online.

Membership **Donation**

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

E-mail

Newsletter Preference:

Print **E-mail (require E-mail address)**

Membership Plan (Check One)	Amount
<input type="checkbox"/> Student (must be 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)	Amount
<input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous/General	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Allee House	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Memorial for:	\$ _____

Method of Payment

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