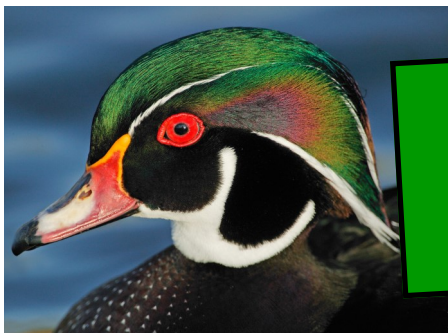




DUCK TALES

Newsletter of the Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge

Summer 2019

Contact Us:

Muscatatuck Wildlife Society, 12987 E. US 50, Seymour.

Nature Store Hours are:
Tuesday through
Saturday 8:30 a.m. to
4:30 p.m. (closed Sunday
and federal holidays;
Monday during winter
hours)

www.muscatatuck.org

Visit us on Facebook

Call 812-522-4352 ext. 12
for Refuge information or
812-523-9972 for
bookstore information.

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Junior Duck Stamp Contest Winners Named

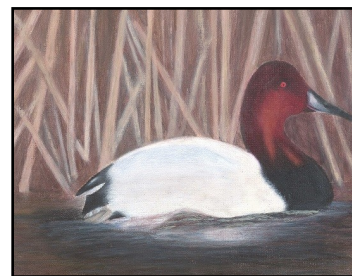
Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge handles Indiana submissions for the Junior Duck Stamp contest.

This year, there were 294 entries in the Junior Duck Stamp contest. After some delivery issues, several pieces of prize-winning artwork arrived after the official judging so a second round of judging was required.

There were 15 first place winners in the four age groups and 3 Best of Show winners. The 3 Best of Show Winners were Faith Rowe, Salem Slater and Larissa Weber. Only one of the Best of Show entries could be sent to the national contest and Larissa Weber's entry of a wood duck was selected by the judges.

Larissa, an 18 year old Home School student, graduated this

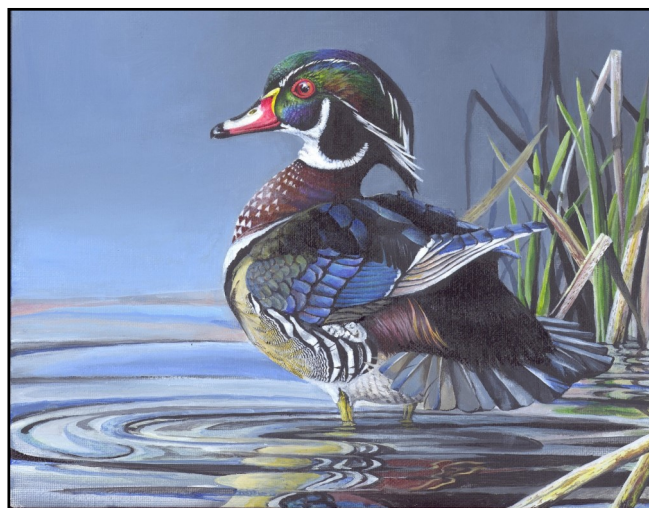
year. Larissa has won the Indiana Junior Duck Stamp contest 4 times and her artwork is outstanding. (see bottom photo) Her entry placed fifth in the National Contest and she won a third place award in a Junior Duck scholarship program (new this year) for graduating seniors.



Faith Rowe, 13, Carmel



Salem Slater, 17, Walkerton



*Larissa Weber, 18, Anderson, Best of Show and
5th in Nation*

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Summer Interns

Five interns enjoyed a portion of their summer at the Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge. Some of their duties included:

- Goose banding with the IDNR
- Keeping the pollinator areas clear of trees and invasive species with herbicide treatment using backpacks
- Tearing beaver dams out of the water control structures and creeks

- Mowing and weed eating public use areas and conducting various biological surveys

Although the interns are volunteers, some schools do offer credit for their work. Of course, an internship is a great resume builder and fun for these nature lovers.

Interns this year were Kara Fox from University of North Carolina at Wilmington; Corwyn Hall from Ball State University; Tristan

Purtlebaugh from Purdue University; Anna Kilian from Malone University in Ohio and Kalee Elliott from Agnes-Scott University in Georgia.

For information about internships available at the Refuge, call 812-522-4352 and speak with Shane Baxter.

From left: Tristan, Kara, Kalee, Anna and Corwyn.



PRESIDENT'S PICK

with Ed Kellar

We have a brindle boxer who has a passion for “walkies”. It came out of necessity to take Copper on long walks. No one told us that a boxer puppyhood can last two to three years and they have lots of energy. This energy could, unfortunately result in chewing on items like electrical cords, wooden swings and anything that can fit inside his mouth. So, before we figured out that walks were the answer, we lost the power cord to the treadmill, a corner to the porch swing, and had to have the whole back porch rescreened.

Copper is now seven and gets excited when he hears words like, “walk”, “going”, and “ready”. There is nothing more dangerous or

destructive than an 80 pound boxer bouncing in excitement for something he loves. Just ask our shih tzu-terrier mix who has, unfortunately, been stepped on during Copper’s eagerness.

Telling Copper that we can’t go out because it is too hot doesn’t seem to register for him and how can you disappoint when he gives you those sad, puppy dog looks with those big, brown eyes.

So, on mornings when I do not have to be at work, I sacrifice sleeping in to take “The Boys” out before it gets too hot and humid. Yes, I may lose some sleep, but I do get to see nature. I have had the pleasure of seeing a pileated woodpecker fly 10 feet above

my head. I have watched the long legs of a great blue heron untucked when coming in for a landing on a small pond. I have listened to the calls of the red-winged blackbird, blue jays, robins, mourning doves and mockingbirds.

I have watched a snapping turtle slosh through the water in a drainage ditch along the road. We have scared scores of rabbits, squirrels and the occasional chipmunks. I have seen how the morning light dances through a dewy spider web in a field.

Yes, it is nice to sleep in once in awhile, but it is worth the price to really enjoy Mother Nature.

Ed

AND THE WINNER IS...

The Best of Show photo contest entry from Wings Over Muscatatuck was awarded to Shirley Lance and her photo was a great horned owl.

Other winners in Birds of Indiana were: 1st – pileated woodpecker by Shirley Lane; 2nd – Cardinal by Bob

Freelove; 3rd – Woodcock by Jennifer ? In the Birds of Other Places category, winners were: 1st – Emperor Penguin by Ruth Ann Hendrix; 2nd – Great blue heron by Carole Graphman; 3rd – Sandhill Cranes by Marilyn Brook.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Marian McKittrick

Marian McKittrick is a vital part of the Wings Over Muscatatuck Migratory Bird Festival.

Marian attended the Master Naturalist class at the Refuge years ago and makes her home in Versailles.

She has a wonderful home garden and is one of the main donors of plants for the yearly Wings plant sale.

This year Marian went above and

beyond and donated a number of fantastic gardening/outdoor books that sold during the Wings Festival.

Volunteers like Marian are what make the Refuge such a wonderful place. Thank you Marian!

(At left, Marian pictured with MWS Board Member Sally Crouch)



Looking Back at Wings Over Muscatatuck

Photos by Ralph Cooley



"Like" and "Share" Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge AND Muscatatuck Wildlife Society on Facebook.



Mission Statement: The mission of this corporation is to improve the natural and cultural resources at MNWR; also to connect people of all ages to nature and history by providing education, outreach and wildlife recreational opportunities. The Wildlife Society focuses on raising funds and providing volunteers for Visitor Center staffing; work projects; education and outreach activities. Your membership dues provide funding and help us to spread the news of Refuge happenings.

SPOTLIGHT ON NATURE

Pollinator Plantings

If you drive into the Visitor Center or to the Discovery Pond right now, you will notice colorful bands of wildflowers along the roadside.

The wildflowers, all species native to Indiana, were planted by refuge staff to provide food for pollinators.

Pollinators are the bees and butterflies that provide pollination of many food crops. Wildflowers were also planted around the entrance sign on Highway 50, along the road to Stanfield Lake, and around the Visitor Center kiosk.

A fun family exercise this time of year is to bring your wildflower guide out and see if you can identify each wildflower.

Many species of bees and butterflies are declining rapidly, so providing pollinator habitat is a

priority for Muscatatuck and many other National Wildlife Refuges.

The latest addition to the Federal Endangered Species list, the rusty-patched bumblebee, is a pollinator which used to be quite common and is now almost extinct.

Scientists are still trying to figure out the exact causes of pollinator population declines, but it is known that habitat loss, disease, parasites, pesticides, and chemicals in groundwater are part of the problem.

If you would like to help pollinators, there are many things you can do on your own property, and those include: reducing or eliminating pesticide use, planting



native wildflowers and shrubs that provide for pollinators in many seasons of the year, leaving some dead tree trunks for wood nesting bees and beetles, and providing a water source for pollinators in a shallow dish with half-submerged stones.

Good luck!

BOOKSTORE REPORT

Sally Crouch

The Nature Bookstore is excited to offer "Birds of Indiana," featuring wonderful illustrations by noted artist William Zimmerman. The text is written by Charles Keller and Russell Mumford. The book identifies over 390 species of birds commonly found in Indiana, describes their habitat, characteristics, and behavior, and provides information on migrations and population. Stop by today and pick up a copy for yourself or as a gift.

We also offer a wonderful variety of books and items for all ages to

help encourage a lifelong love of nature.

The Wildlife Society manages the bookstore, which is entirely dependent on volunteers. Paid Refuge staff can man the Visitor Center but not the bookstore.

Bookstore hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, when a volunteer is present. Muscatatuck Wildlife Society is always looking for volunteers to help in the bookstore, with various events and with a variety of Refuge needs. Stop by!



REFUGE HAPPENINGS

* There were 33 people in the Master Naturalist class this spring. They learned about frogs of Indiana, Indiana natural areas, Indiana geology and fossils, butterflies and wetlands, invasive plants, mammals, snakes, mussels, edible plants and birds. Many of the class members assisted with Wings Over Muscatatuck and the Take a Kid Fishing event. Four members have already completed their 24 hours of volunteer service, needed to receive their completion pin and certificate.

* Fun with Nature Day Camp, sponsored by Purdue Extension/4-H was held June 17 and 18 at the Refuge. Kids toured the Refuge, enjoyed lessons on gardens, fitness trails, birds, fishing, exploring habitats and trees.

* All Seymour Community Schools 6th graders visited the Refuge over three days in May. The students were given programs by Refuge staff and volunteers. Sessions included fishing, a nature hike, a scavenger hunt and exploring the Visitor Center/Nature Discovery Area.

* Take a Kid Fishing Day was held on Saturday, June 1. This year, instead of contests, more instruction was given on the basics of fishing, fishing games and fish crafts, with all equipment provided. About 40 youngsters attended along with

parents and grandparents. Master Naturalist volunteers worked the event along with the manager of the Driftwood Fish Hatchery.

* Boy and Girl Scouts did a number of service projects on the Refuge this spring, including litter pickup around Stanfield Lake and garlic mustard removal.



* The Southern Indiana Conservation Happenings was held at the Refuge on March 13. The purpose of the meeting was to keep the conservation community connected with one another and increase the dialogue about coordinated and purposeful natural area conservation. Approximately 100 people were in attendance. Presentations were given about Indiana Land Protection Alliance, Indiana Water Summit, Urban Mallard Project, Indiana Outdoor Stewardship Act and Healthy Rivers Initiative, to name a few. Attendees also toured the Refuge.

* This spring, the Refuge once again hosted the Mill Creek Alliance Urban Youth Green Team from Cincinnati, Ohio. About 10 high school aged youth, along with their three adult chaperones, visited from March 26-28. While they were here, they planted nearly 500 pollinator plant plugs and also rebuilt a walking bridge on the Turkey Trail. They also kayaked,

fished in Stanfield Lake and hiked some of the Refuge trails. This is the third year that the Refuge has hosted the group as part of our urban partnership with the Mill Creek Alliance. In June, Refuge employees went to Cincinnati and assisted the Mill Creek Alliance with their Bio Blitz along the Mill Creek Corridor.



* A marsh bird survey took place on the Refuge this spring. Species on the survey included Sora, Pied-Billed Grebe, American Bittern, Common Gallinule, King Rail, Virginia Rail and Least Bittern. Of those species, Muscatatuck found 9 Soras; 4 Pied-Billed Grebe; 3 Virginia Rail and one each of Least Bittern and King Rail.

* This year's Butterfly Count was held on July 20, in sweltering heat. Only three butterfly counters were present and found 18 species. The



most common butterfly counted was the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail.

2019 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 17-19– 3rd Grade Conservation Field Days, sponsored by Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District, “Explore the Great Outdoors”

September 28- National Public Lands Day Workday

October 12- Log Cabin Day

October 13- Big Sit Bird Count

October 13-19- National Wildlife Refuge Week

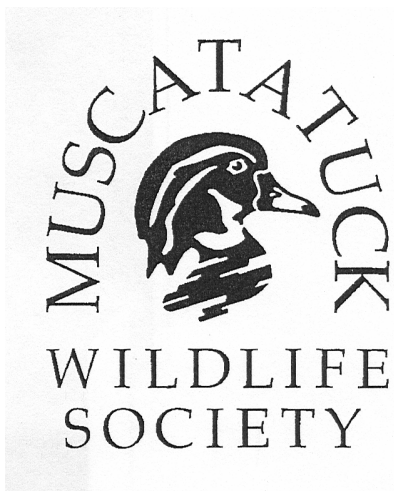
November

Nature Time Program for Preschoolers– 2nd Wednesday each month at Visitor Center. 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Bird Walk- Third Saturday of each month starting at 8 a.m. at the Visitor Center.



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION



Update Your Membership in Muscatatuck Wildlife Society!

Muscatatuck Wildlife Society renewals are due in October but welcome at any time. The non-profit group does great things for the Refuge and MWS members receive a 10% discount on Nature Store purchases and receive the newsletter. Special pins are presented to life members.

Categories of Membership are:

Individual- \$10

Family- \$15

Supporting- \$30

Corporate- \$150

Life- \$500

To join or renew, stop by the Visitor Center or mail your check with name, address, and email address to:

Muscatatuck Wildlife Society,
12987 E. U.S. Hwy. 50, Seymour,
IN 47274.

Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge

12985 East U.S. Highway 50
Seymour, IN 47274

Return Service Requested

www.muscatatuck.org/
or [www.fws.gov/
refuge/muscatatuck](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/muscatatuck)



Fish and Wildlife Service Staff

Alejandro Galvan, Refuge Manager
Shane Baxter, Wildlife Refuge Specialist
Frank Polyak, Refuge Officer
Mark Rarey, Administrative Support Tech
Andrew Houze, Maintenance Mechanic
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If an email version is
preferred, send your
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Crouch at sjcrouch@prograde.net.

