

News Release

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Parker River National Wildlife Refuge; Phone: (978) 465-5753

Free Public Programs in May at Parker River & Great Bay National Wildlife Refuges

Kids' Nature Walks - Explore the Refuge

On these Mondays in May: 1st, 8th, & 15th; each session from 10:00 – 11:30 am

Take your 3-5 year old youngster on a good old fashioned nature discovery walk. Meet at the refuge visitor center before driving together to the head of the day's trail on the refuge (no parking fee charged). For each session, a refuge volunteer will lead the children and their caregivers on a walk to explore different aspects of the refuge: beach, dune, marsh, scrub forest, cranberry bog. Come dressed for the weather. If the weather is completely unsuitable for outdoor enjoyment, then an indoor program comprised of a story, activity and craft will be held at the visitor center instead. Enrollment is limited to 12 children. The parent or guardian must remain for the entire program. Preregistration is required for this program.

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge - Behind the Scenes Tour!

Held on the following days: Saturday, May 6th @ 9:30 am; Sunday, May 7th @ 1:00 pm; Saturday, May 13th @ 9:30 am; Sunday, May 21st @ 1:00 pm; Saturday, May 27th @ 9:30 am; Sunday, May 28th @ 1:00 pm

Join a refuge ranger for a behind the scenes tour of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge. Tour will be conducted via refuge van, with several brief "drive by" stops along the way. The tour will present an "up close and personal" look at the refuge through the multiple lenses of the cultural history of Plum Island and the Great Marsh, native wildlife and their habitats, and the role of refuge management in the conservation of these precious natural resources. Participants may be driven along areas on the refuge otherwise closed to the public. This guided two hour program is most appropriate for older teens and adults. Binoculars and/or a camera are recommended, but not required. Meet the ranger in the lobby of the refuge visitor center 15 minutes prior to the program start time. Each session is limited to 14 participants; no more than 4 individuals per sign-up. Again, this is a vehicle – based tour, with limited stops on the refuge. Advance registration is required for this program, as enrollment is limited. Be advised that individual tours may be subject to cancellation. *Please note: Those who call and leave messages after hours, your registration is not confirmed until you receive a confirmation call from a refuge staff member. Please call (978) 465-5753 to register for this program.

Woodcock Walk at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, May 6th @ 7:45 pm

Each spring American woodcocks engage in one of nature's most fascinating courtship displays. Here's your chance to witness this "sky dance" up close and in-person! This program is appropriate for ages 8 and older. Meet the ranger on the deck of the visitor contact station at parking lot 1. Bring binoculars and a flashlight. Program is limited to 15 participants. Please plan to arrive 15 minutes prior to the program start time. Preregistration required.

Nelson Island Tour

Monday, May 8th, 10:00 – 11:30 am

Explore another part of the refuge – this time, on the mainland. Join a ranger for a tour of a beautiful spot that few people visit: Nelson Island. If we're lucky, we might catch a glimpse of a nesting osprey. Learn about the history of this little known refuge jewel. If weather and tide permits, we'll take a very short walk along the marsh. (Muddy, wet areas are possible so rubber boots are recommended.) Consider bringing binoculars and/or a camera. *Please

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The Healing Power of Nature

Thursday, May 11th at 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Do experiences in nature heal us? Can an outdoor view enable surgical patients to recover faster? Can pleasant natural vistas decrease heart rates and trigger calming changes in the brain? Can a healing balm emitted by evergreens contribute to an increase in “natural killer cells” and improved immune function? The answer is *yes!* A growing body of research from around the world demonstrates the positive impacts of nature on physical, cognitive, and emotional well-being at all stages of life. This illustrated and interactive presentation offers an overview of research on nature’s healing power, including the mindful forest walking pioneered and practiced in Japan as “Shinrin Yoku” (literally translated as “forest bathing”). Presentation was developed and will be delivered by Mary Jacobsen, refuge volunteer. Program will take place in the visitor center auditorium. **NO** preregistration for this program.

Whip-poor-will Walk at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Friday, May 12th @ 7:30 pm; Saturday, May 13th @ 7:30 pm; Friday, May 19th @ 7:45 pm; Saturday, May 20th @ 7:45 pm; Friday, May 26th @ 7:45 pm; and Saturday, May 27 @ 7:45 pm

Have you ever heard a strange bird singing in the background of a movie and wondered what it was? You may have been hearing the song of the whip-poor-will. Join Nancy Landry, refuge volunteer and avid birder, for an evening of listening for the song of the whip-poor-will and other nighttime birds. Participants should meet Nancy in the Hellcat Parking Lot (on the refuge) 15 minutes before the program start time (see date-specific start times, above). Dress appropriately for weather conditions. Preregistration is required; enrollment limited to 15 people.

The Photographic Society of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Next Meeting: Saturday, May 13th @ 1:30 pm

The Photographic Society welcomes anyone who has an interest in nature, wildlife, and/or photography – whether you are a total novice or earn a living by taking pictures! The club meets every month, generally on the second Saturday afternoon. Club activities include special presentations, slide shows (of members’ work), intra-club mentoring and training, photo shoots, on-line photo sharing, and involvement in the refuge’s various photography-related programs, events, and outreach activities. Venue capacity is limited to 85 attendees (first come, first served). Admission to this program is free and preregistration is NOT required.

FREE International Migratory Bird Day Film: *Winged Migrations*

Sunday, May 14th, 1:30 – 3:00 pm

Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day by treating yourself to this extraordinary and award winning film. This documentary presents an epic portrait of winter bird migration. Filmed on all seven continents over four years, the footage is brought together into one portrait of a journey that's uniformly arduous for all kinds of different birds. Rather than concentrating on statistics and facts, the film near-wordlessly portrays the sheer physical effort demanded of the birds on their disparate routes. Along the way, we see the many dangers they face, from man-made waste to a group of hungry crabs. Film will be projected on the BIG SCREEN in the refuge visitor center auditorium. **NO preregistration for this program.** (2001; Rated G; Runtime: 1 hour, 38 minutes)

Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge - Behind the Scenes Tour!

Held on the following days: Friday, May 19th; Monday, May 22nd; & Friday, May 26th; all tours are conducted from 9:00 am – 12:30 pm

Join a refuge ranger for a behind the scenes tour of Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge, located in Newington, NH. Participants will have an opportunity to visit areas of the refuge that are not normally open to the public. See a diversity of wildlife habitats while learning how the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is managing this very special landscape for conservation. Consider bringing along binoculars and a camera. The tour is limited to 14 participants; no more than 4 individuals per sign-up. This is a vehicle-based tour, with limited stops on the refuge. This guided program is most appropriate for older teens and adults. Meet the ranger in the lobby of the Parker River NWR visitor center in Newburyport no later than 9:00 am OR in the Great Bay NWR parking lot in Newington, NH no later than 9:45 am. (Indicate location you prefer at time of registration.) Be advised that individual tours may be subject to cancellation. *Please note: Those who call and leave messages after hours, your

registration is not confirmed until you receive a confirmation call from a refuge staff member. Please call (978) 465-5753 to register for this program. Preregistration required. For directions to the refuge, click on this link: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Great_Bay/visit/plan_your_visit.html

Storm Surge Presents: Coastal Processes along Plum Island

Wednesday, May 24th, 7:00 – 8:30 pm

A regional assessment of coastal processes along Plum Island was conducted on behalf of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission as part of larger study for Community Risk Reduction through Comprehensive Coastal Resiliency Enhancement for Great Marsh Upper North Shore, MA. Woods Hole Group worked collectively with Boston University on the study that was funded through the National Fish and Wildlife Federation Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Competitive Grant Program. The purpose of this study was to conduct a process-based analysis of existing conditions to determine the net sediment transport potential along the Plum Island shoreline. Wave and sediment transport models were developed to provide a physically-based representation of alongshore currents and sediment transport driven by breaking waves in the surf zone. Areas of convergence and divergence (patterns of erosion and accretion) were identified to indicate spatial variations in sand movement. It is the hope that this effort, together with other studies, will provide a basis to help inform and guide the development of potential mitigation strategies and future considerations for reducing erosion impacts along the island.

Program presenter Matthew F. Shultz, PE, is a Senior Coastal Engineer in the Coastal Sciences, Engineering & Planning team at Woods Hole Group. He has over 10 years of experience in coastal studies involving the evaluation of coastal hazards, shoreline restoration, and the development of flood mitigation solutions for reducing risks and offering increased resilience in a changing climate. His areas of expertise include the design of structural and non-structural shoreline protection and restoration alternatives, as well as the modeling of coastal and estuarine hydrodynamics, waves, and sediment transport processes. Program will be presented in the refuge visitor center auditorium. NO preregistration for this program.

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