

Friends of
BOMBAY
Hook

<http://www.friendsofbombayhook.org>

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President's Corner
By: Frank L. Rawling, Jr.

So Long, Farewell ...

This is my last President's Column for the FOBH newsletter. After 6 years as President it is time to pass the task over to someone else. During the past 6 years I have had the opportunity to meet many of you when you stop in at the Visitor Center when I happen to be there. It has been a pleasure and lots of fun talking with you. I have also had the opportunity of meeting Friends from other refuges when I have been at regional and national Friends meetings. Friends are a remarkable group of people. They are passionate about their refuge and the refuge system and are willing to go to great lengths to support it. I have also had the distinct pleasure of meeting the most dedicated group of professionals I have ever run across. I speak of course of the staff of the refuge system. They truly deserve the appellation "professionals". For all of these memories I am very grateful. But I am most grateful for that place that I consider to be a natural gem – Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge. My volunteer service at the refuge has been extremely rewarding. To me, going out on the refuge early in the morning brings home the meaning of solitude and peace. What a place!

Over the past years I have mentioned several times the need for more volunteers. The need is still there and is more important now than ever. We are in a period of decreased funds and decreased staff. More must be done with less. One way to pick up the slack is to make more use of volunteer effort. If you haven't tried volunteering at the refuge, give it a try. It is fun and you experience the satisfaction of knowing that you are contributing something that is worthwhile. Although I am retiring as President of

the Friends I will continue to volunteer. I could not do otherwise.

See you on the Refuge!

The Refuge Store
By: Verna Price

Business has been pretty brisk in the Refuge Store. Wildlife and people have come out of hibernation and are ready to see what is going on!

We have some great items depicting shorebirds. These include a beautiful T-shirt that is popular we have a difficult time keeping them in stock. We also have field guides on shorebirds. These include:

- Stokes – *Beginner's Guide to Shorebirds*
- Shorebirds – *Beautiful Beachcombers*
- Shorebirds of North America – *The Photographic Guide*
- The Shorebird Guide

We have a new horseshoe crab T-shirt, a new wildflowers with butterflies T-shirt, and many others for you to pick and choose from.



Don't forget to look at the things for kids. We have T-shirts, magnets, jewelry, ball point pens and other items they would like.

Come visit the store and see what we have!

Friends of
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Newsletter

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
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<http://www.friendsofbombayhook.org>

Bird Notes

By: Frank L. Rawling, Jr.

The Winter Season

The winter of 2007 was certainly variable. Indeed, one wondered whether it would ever begin. January was almost 5 degrees above normal and precipitation was about half an inch above normal. February, on the other hand, was some 8 degrees below normal with precipitation slightly below normal. March turned out just about normal in temperature but was about a half inch low in precipitation. What effect did this have on the bird diversity at our favorite refuge? Let's have a look.

January

The month opened with the sighting of **American Wigeon** at Finis Pool and **Buffleheads** on Raymond Pool. An **Eastern Meadowlark** was seen at Bear Swamp and a peenting **American Woodcock** was observed near the corn crib along the exit road from Bear Swamp. A pair of **Hooded Mergansers** were at Finis Pool as well as a **Pied-billed Grebe**. A good location to see **Hooded Mergansers** at the Refuge is Big Woods Pond on the way to the Allee House. There were some 15 there on the 7th and on the same day there were 25 **Ruddy Ducks** at Shearness. **Great Egrets** were still on the Refuge on that day with 6 spotted at Bear Swamp. Almost

every day one can spot **Bald Eagles** at the Refuge and 2 were seen on the 7th along with a **Peregrine Falcon**. Still on the 7th a female **Canvasback** was seen at Shearness as well as approximately 30 **Ring-necked Ducks**. **American Kestrels** are in serious decline within the eastern flyway but one was seen along Whitehall Neck Road on the 13th. **Green-winged Teal** were at Bear Swamp on the 14th. An **Eastern Phoebe** was seen in the wooded area of Bear Swamp on the 15th and that day there were 15 **American Coots** counted on Shearness.

The 15th also saw large groups of **Northern Pintails** and **Northern Shovelers** on the impoundments. A flock of about 150 **American Pipits** was seen in one of the fields on the 17th. The next day a **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was found at Raymond



Red-shouldered Hawk

Pool and a **Black-crowned Night Heron** was seen along the Boardwalk Trail. Every now and then a **Great Horned Owl** is spotted and one was seen along the road to Finis Pool on the 20th. The same day an adult **Red-shouldered Hawk** was seen at Shearness. A nice find at Bear Swamp on the 21st was an **American Bittern**. The **Red-shouldered Hawk** was still on the Refuge on the 27th, this time it was seen at the Allee House. The first **Winter Wren** was tallied on the 28th along with 6 **American Tree Sparrows**. An **American Bittern** was along the Boardwalk Trail that day also.

February

The cold month of February opened with the sighting of an immature **Bald Eagle** and a flock of **American Pipits**. This was followed by a sighting of 4 **Hooded Mergansers** on the bayside of Raymond Pool. A **Northern Harrier** was seen hunting at Bear Swamp on the 11th. There was also a **Great Blue Heron** spotted there. One of the ponds along the Boardwalk Trail hosted 4 **Hooded Mergansers** and 8 **Buffleheads** on the 14th. A **Mute Swan** was seen at Bear Swamp on the 17th. One lucky birder found 2 **Eastern Screech Owls** on the 17th that had taken up residence in wood duck boxes. On the 19th 4 **Virginia Rails** were

photographed along the Boardwalk Trail along with 2 **Clapper Rails**. On the 24th both **Green-winged Teal** and **Canvasback** were seen at Bear Swamp and Shearness respectively. The month closed out with the sightings of **Bufflehead**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Ring-necked Duck**, and 27 **Common Mergansers** at Shearness Pool.



Great Blue Heron

March

As the month opened waterfowl numbers began to increase with large numbers of **Northern Pintails**, **Northern Shovelers**, **Common Mergansers**, and **Green-winged Teal** in residence. **Lesser Yellowlegs** were also seen. A 2nd year **Golden Eagle** was reported flying over Bear Swamp on the 3rd. A **Barred Owl** was seen at Finis Pool on that day also. A nice find was 3 **Common Goldeneyes** at Shearness on the 5th. **American Tree Sparrows** were seen at Finis Pool on the 9th. **Tundra Swans** in residence on the 11th were estimated at 300 spread between the 3 main impoundments. There were also 4 **Black-crowned Night Herons** at the



Wood Duck

usual spot at Bear Swamp. A flock of about 15 **Eastern Meadowlarks** were seen near the Allee House on the 15th and a **Horned Grebe** was spotted at Bear Swamp. Both **Yellowleg** species were seen at Shearness on the 19th. Sparrows seen on the 19th were 2 **Fox Sparrows** and 30 **Rusty Blackbirds** in the woods near Big Woods Pond. Three **Greater Scaup** were also observed. The **Fox Sparrows** were seen again on the 22nd. Seven **Wood Ducks** were seen near Bear Swamp and Big Woods Pond. A good way to finish off the month was with the

sighting of 5 **Bald Eagles** and both male and female **Cooper's Hawks**.

Spring Migration is coming up. See you then!

Cheers and Good Birding!

Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge Calendar of Events

Check back for updates

June 6, 2007 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm Rain Gardens in the Home Landscape - Global warming is the hot button environmental issue in the news, but there is another crisis that is equally pressing in a rapidly developing state like Delaware – water quality and availability!

However, there is an answer...Rain Gardens! Learn how to make an attractive Rain Garden in your own home landscape which filters and recharges water into the aquifer while lessening flooding and non-point source pollution!

The program, co-sponsored by the Duck Creek Horticulture Society and the Bombay Hook Garden Keepers, will introduce the basic principles of constructing a Rain Garden and how to plant it for year round interest. National Garden Week Program. **Call to register, 302-653-6449.**

June 12, 2007 9:30 am – 11:30 am Gardenkeepers Meeting and garden work.

June 23, 2007 10:30 am – 5:00 pm Pea Patch Island Field Trip Joel Citron will meet us in Delaware City for the 12 noon ferry. We will spend a couple of hours walking the trail on the north end of the Island looking for the 9 species, herons and other birds, that nest at the rookery. An 11-passenger van will leave Bombay Hook at 10:45 am. **Call to register** if you plan on taking the van from Bombay Hook. Interested participants can also meet in Delaware City in time to board the 12 noon ferry.

The Calendar of Events is subject to changes and additions. Check for an updated schedule on the website: www.fws.gov/northeast/bombayhook

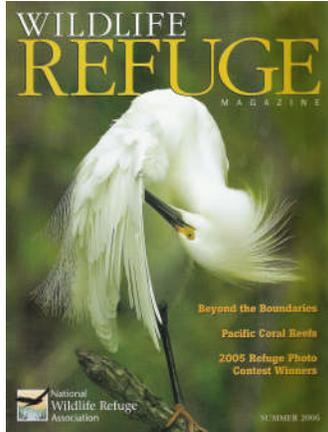
**Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge
2591 Whitehall Neck Road
Smyrna, DE 19977**

**For more information contact:
Tina Watson, 302-653-6872**

To All Our Members.....

The Friends of Bombay Hook (FOBH) has recently affiliated with the National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) to promote wildlife issues such as conservation and education.

Our affiliation resulted in a new membership benefit. Everyone who is a member of FOBH, the NWRA is sending a copy of the *Wildlife Refuge Magazine*. This



©NWRA

magazine (see sample copy) contains articles and photos about Bombay Hook NWR and other refuges across the country as they deal with issues that impact them. We hope that our members enjoy reading this magazine and take a more active role in our refuge.

Personal Information

National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) is committed to preserving your privacy and safeguarding your personal information. They do not sell, trade, or barter names, e-mail addresses, or other personal data they collect from affiliated Friends groups. Each of the FOBH members will be a member of the NWRA as long as FOBH remains an affiliate of the NWRA. FOBH members will not be required to formally "join" the NWRA or renew annually, but they will receive a special fundraising appeal letter from NWRA once or twice a year. Of course, anyone may opt-out at anytime. If you want to opt-out, you can call 877-396-NWRA, email nwra@refugenet.org, or write to them at: *National Wildlife Refuge Association, 1901 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 407, Washington, DC 20006*



The Refuge Corner ***By: Terry Villanueva***

Previous articles have mentioned the planned joining of Bombay Hook and Prime Hook into one refuge complex. While steps have been taken to begin implementing the plan, Regional Office is moving further with this plan early July, by designating the headquarters at Bombay Hook and naming me the complex manager.

The decision to complex the Delaware refuges was made as part of the Regional downsizing plan to manage effectively with declining federal funding, particularly operational funds. Some refuges in the Regional will get smaller and seven will be de-staffed. The Delaware refuges were identified as "stay strong" refuges.

The details of the operation of the complex are still being developed. Our primary focus will be to facilitate the two refuges working together for wildlife conservation and serving the public.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Make a difference in your community by volunteering your time and expertise. Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge is looking for volunteers that can help with the following opportunities:

- Environmental Education Coordinator
- Outdoor Classroom Teachers
- Program Developer for Pre-school Program
- Program Developer for Junior Refuge Manager Program
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Scheduling Volunteers
- Computer input and reports
- Landscaping and weeding Refuge area and native plant trail
- Staff information booths at local events
- Staff Bird Identification Stations on Auto-tour route during peak bird migration weekends
- Staff the Visitor Center and Refuge Store

For more information contact Tina Watson at 302-653-6872.

Shorebird ID Workshop with Kevin Karlson

Saturday August 4, 2007 1:00 – 6:30pm

At Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge

Kevin Karlson, noted birder and nature photographer, will host a shorebird identification workshop at Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge on August 4, 2007. The program, entitled ***Shorebirds by Impression: A Different Approach to Field Identification***, presents a new and exciting approach to field identification of shorebirds. The workshop is free and registration is required and open to 35 participants. You must call to register.

A Different Approach to Field Identification focuses on impressions of non-changeable field characteristics such as size, shape and behavior/body language to form a fast yet surprisingly effective picture of every bird seen. Other important field marks include habitat use, general coloration, vocalizations and comparative viewing of nearby birds. With practice, an intuitive or unconscious recognition of familiar species will develop.

The program begins in the auditorium with Kevin's presentation of Birding by Impression, the field identification method followed in his new book, "The Shorebird Guide".

During the break, from 2:30pm to 3:30pm, Kevin will sign copies of his new book, which will be on sale in the refuge store.

After the break, Kevin will explain and apply his identification techniques in the field as he and the participants identify the shorebirds of Bombay Hook NWR. This portion of the program is scheduled to conclude at 6:30pm.

To see more of Kevin's photography, see his web site, www.kevinkarlsonphotography.com.

To learn about his birding tour company, visit the Jaeger Tours web site, www.jaegertours.net.



Kevin Karlson has been a wildlife photographer for 26 years and a birder for 28 years. He has traveled from the wilds of the Alaskan Arctic to the rain forests of South America to photograph birds. His work is widely published in birding magazines and journals, books, field guides, calendars, and software programs.

Kevin is a resident of Cape May County, NJ, and is active in the Cape May birding community. He is the founder and president of Jaeger Tours, Inc., a small birding tour company emphasizing the enjoyment of a total birding and nature experience.

His latest book, *The Shorebird Guide*, coauthored with Michael O'Brien and Richard Crossley and published by Houghton Mifflin Publishers, has received critical acclaim.



Sponsored by the Friends of Bombay Hook NWR

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN JOINING FRIENDS???

FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK is a cooperating association formed with the Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It is a private, non-profit corporation which was founded to promote conservation, environmental education, and better understanding of and appreciation for Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge.

Each year more than 3,000 students visit Bombay Hook. They use equipment to study habitats, watch videos about endangered species, and are taught from field guides - all provided by FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK!

If you used an Auto Tour Brochure or the Bird or Mammal List, these too have been funded by FRIENDS OF BOMBAY HOOK!

Your Membership Dues will make it possible for Friends of Bombay Hook to continue its support of educational and recreational programs at Bombay Hook.

Proceeds from the Refuge Store in the Visitor Center at Bombay Hook also help support the Friends program and activities. Make this your place to buy field guides, books, T-shirts, Posters, and Souvenirs!

OUR MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- 10% Discount on all items sold in the Refuge Store
- Subscription to the Friends Newsletter (published 4 times a year)
- Participation in special wildlife education programs and field trips
- Attendance at the Annual Meeting (held in June)
- Eligibility in the Dover Federal Credit Union (DFCU)
- Opportunity to meet others with similar interests in birds, other wildlife, wetlands, and the environment

And perhaps best of all, the chance to say, "Thank you Bombay Hook, for all the great times I've had here!"

MEMBERSHIP 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*

Date: _____

Renewal New Member

Name

<u>Membership Plan (Check One)</u>	Annual
<input type="checkbox"/> Junior (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"/> Life***	\$200.00

Address

City, State, Zip

E-mail

Method of Payment

- Cash (payment at Visitor Center only)
- Check (payment by mail or at Visitor Center)
- Visa (payment at Visitor Center only)
- MasterCard (payment at Visitor Center only)

*Junior membership: under age 18.

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

***Sponsor and Life memberships includes family.



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Smyrna, DE 19977

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