

There're Two of Them!



Photo by Lawrence Croft

Eagle Nest Watch

Have you ever seen an eaglet? Whether you have or have not, eaglets are always enjoyable to watch. On Saturday April 12th, you have the opportunity to observe an active eagle nest. Hours are from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. Experienced Friends birders will be on hand to take you to the nest and assist you in viewing the action. You are encouraged to bring your own binoculars but doing so is not a requirement. Spotting scopes will be set up and some binoculars will be available.

A relatively short, easy walk is necessary to reach the viewing site. Refuge staff will be driving an ATV cart for those who need assistance reaching the site. So bring the entire family. If you are lucky, you will see the parents bring in a fish or other food for the young.

The event begins at the Checking Station just west of Bluff Lake. To reach the station, turn left on the first road after leaving the lake.

Ceramicist from Pennsylvania Visits Refuge

Lilly Zuckerman, a ceramicist from Pennsylvania, visited Noxubee Refuge as the second artist in the Artist in Residence program. The Artist in Residence program is a cooperative effort sponsored by Friends of Noxubee, Noxubee Refuge, MSU Art Department, and the Starkville Area Arts Council. Zuckerman presented workshops at MSU, area schools, and Noxubee Refuge giving demonstrations and leading participants in creating their own works of art in clay.



Lilly Zuckerman was the second artist in the Artist in Residence program.



Katie Dunstan trying her hand with clay at the workshop.

From the FONR President- Larry Box



Like many others, I have been thinking and talking about the cold wet spring. By the time this newsletter is published, however, I expect our Mississippi spring will finally be here. That will be an excellent time to visit the Refuge.

During the coming weeks, Friends along with the Refuge staff will be hosting several enjoyable and educational events. Check elsewhere in the newsletter for information about the Eagle Nest Watch, Canoe Day, and the Children's Fishing Derby. These events will be fun for the entire family while the next general membership meeting will be of interest to those who enjoy and are concerned about waterfowl.

Spring is also an excellent time to visit the Refuge on a "do-it-yourself" trip. Trees are leafing out, wildflowers are blooming, migrating birds are returning from far away wintering grounds, fishing opportunities are excellent, and picnic tables are waiting to serve you.

I encourage you to come to the Refuge, participate in all it has to offer, and invite someone to become a member of Friends. I am sure there are many people who would enjoy Friends if they only knew about it. Think about whom you know who might enjoy Friends' activities and encourage them to join us.

Refuge Manager Steve Reagan's Reflections



What cosmic event happens twice a year, once in March and then again in September? It is the equinox, when the tilt of the Earth's axis is inclined neither away nor towards the Sun. If you were standing on the Equator, it is one of two days each year when the the Sun would truly be exactly overhead. Sometimes when you think about it, it is incredible we live on a small spinning ball within the vast sea of space kept warm by a ball of hot plasma we call the Sun. Life on our planet is pretty special.

Spring is special because it is a time when we welcome back friends who have stayed away during the colder months. We are lucky that our friends are plentiful and include great egrets, yellow-throated warblers, paddlefish and other wildlife, members of the Friends of Noxubee Refuge, volunteers, turkey hunters, and visitors from throughout the world. Many of our long-term anglers are back too. I see a few have bought new equipment for the season, including boats and rods, while others enjoy a more natural method of fishing, beaks and bills.

Our lives are filled with many amazing things, and somehow it is always easiest to recognize this in the fresh light of spring. With each day the world around us seems to jump to life with new colors, smells, and the newly born. Flowers are blooming throughout the Refuge, new eaglets have been spotted, and herons and egrets are busy building nests. Soon the gift of new life will be all around us. With spring I also want to recognize another amazing gift the Refuge continues to receive, the gift of service granted through more than 450 volunteer hours on the Refuge in the last month.

I invite everyone to at least take a little time to enjoy this special time of year and connect with nature along with your family and friends at the Refuge.

Enjoy the good weather and consider getting actively involved in a Refuge project as a volunteer. Although the volunteer pay is poor, the exchange rate for the experience is priceless.

Refuge Now on Facebook

The Refuge has a Facebook page! Check it out to see day-to-day events that occur on Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee Wildlife Refuge. <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sam-D-Hamilton-Noxubee-National-Wildlife-Refuge/226372510874286>



2013 Photo Contest
Adult Wildlife, 3rd
Kathy Seawright
Wooly Worm

Canoe Day

The first Canoe Day of 2014 will be on April 19th from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Canoes, paddles, and life jackets will be provided. This event is free. Bring the entire family and enjoy time on Bluff Lake. Launch site is at Cypress Cove Boardwalk west of the visitor center.



Come out to the Refuge and enjoy exploring Bluff Lake during this season's first free canoe day sponsored by the Friends of Noxubee Refuge.

Annual Youth Fishing Derby

The free Youth Fishing Derby will be held April 26, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Prizes will be awarded for largest fish and heaviest stringer in two age classes. Friends of Noxubee Refuge and Louisville Walmart are sponsoring the event.

New Items in Nature Store

Noxubee Nature Store has added items that feature the name of the Refuge. Look in the store at the Visitor Center for these and other nature related items.

Metal walking stick medallions are now available in a choice of gold or bronze colors. The medallions are \$5 each.

Small pottery items are also in stock. These were made and donated by Board member Jacque Tisdale. Prices vary.

Support your Refuge and enjoy quality merchandise as well.



General Membership Meeting
April 17 - 6:30 p.m.

Tisdale Auditorium
Noxubee Visitor Center

April 17, Program Announced

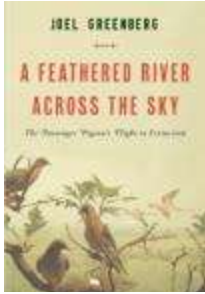
The Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative and
Where have all the Mallards
Gone?

Dr. Rick Kaminski, with the MSU Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture, will describe one of the most popular initiatives in the Natural Resource Conservation Service's history, the Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative. This \$40 million program enrolled more than 470,000 acres from conservation-minded landowners in providing critical habitat for migratory birds. The initiative improves habitat from Texas to North Carolina. Dr. Kaminski will also discuss the changing conditions responsible for the steady reduction in mallards and other waterfowl on the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge and surrounding lands.

The quarterly meeting will be in the Tisdale Auditorium of the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge. The meeting is open to the public, and there is no charge. Light refreshments and a social time will follow the presentation.

Annual Family Fun Day

In celebration of National Wildlife Refuge Week we will be holding our annual Family Fun Day on September 27, with booths representing several organizations, crafts for children, casting practice with prizes, archery practice. The MS Band of Choctaw Indians will have "rabbit-stick" throwing, canoes will be provided for use on the lake, food will be available and much more. We are hopeful that by changing the date of this event to September, the chance of conflicts will be lessened.



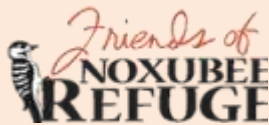
***A Feathered River Across
the Sky:
The Passenger Pigeon's
Flight to Extinction
by Joel Greenburg***

Would we notice if all the white-footed mice started on the route to scarcity? Voles, English sparrows? Maybe not. Nor did people notice that the passenger pigeon, also called the blue pigeon, was less common. Sure, a flock such as that viewed by Audubon, so large that it took three days to pass from view, was no longer seen but nobody much cared. The birds stripped fields and woods and shooting them was a sport much enjoyed by many. They were used for food and also sport (thus the term "clay pigeon" came into use because there weren't any more blue pigeons to use for target practice). They were trapped, clubbed, snared, and poisoned. By the time boy pigeon George died at the

beginning of the twentieth century and Martha was left alone to reign in lonely splendor at the Cincinnati Zoo, the public began to realize that the birds were no more and that we knew the EXACT date of the extinction of the species. Sept. 1, 2014 will be the hundredth anniversary of Martha's entry into blue pigeon heaven; thus the timing of Greenburg's book. Now efforts are being made to make the bird again through various and sundry crosses of existing pigeons. Whether that makes sense or not is up for debate, but we humans, we love to tinker so the effort will probably continue.

Greenburg's book is marred by side trips into the loathsome eugenics beliefs of some of the notable hunters involved in the early Boone and Crockett Club. Thus, he unfairly discounts the advances in conservation hunters financed. If you can stomach these parts of the book, it should prove a good read. This book was reviewed in the January 6, 2014, edition of The New Yorker.

Submitted by Sherrie Wiygul



is an independent, nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, dedicated to conserving our natural resources through volunteer work and fund raising.

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start at only \$15.**

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For a membership form or information about the Refuge, call 662-323-5548, visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/FriendsofNoxubeeRefuge>, or <http://www.friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org>.

2014 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP DATES

**April 17, June 19
and September 18**

*Contributions to this newsletter were made by
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J. Tisdale, S. Wiygul, L. Croft, and G. Cotton*