

Refuge Personnel Changes

The Refuge is still short staffed due to budget constraints but there have been several changes. The following are recent personnel actions.



Bobby Gentry - After 28 years of service to the refuge and the local community, Bobby Gentry Retired on January 31. Bobby served as a Federal Wildlife Officer for the Refuge.



Tom "Buck" Jackson – On May 2, Tom retired after 33 years of service to the Refuge. Tom was an Engineering Equipment Operator but participated in a wide variety of Refuge duties, including participation on the fire crew, and providing assistance to the forestry and biological staff. Buck's influence on the Refuge has been great and he will be missed.



Johnny Wayne Bradford – Following 26 years of Service, Johnny Wayne retired on May 31, 2013. John Wayne served as the Refuge's long-term Biological Technician.



Justin Boysen – Justin was a member of the Fire Crew for the past three years. During that time Justin helped work fires in Arkansas, Oregon and Texas. Although he was only at the Refuge a short time, his efforts will be greatly missed. Justin's last day was May 31.



Dave Panas – The Refuge will be welcoming Dave as the new Federal Wildlife Officer. Dave has been stationed at the Southwest Louisiana NWR Complex and was recently nominated as the Southeast Region's officer of the year. We're looking forward to have Dave and his family on the Refuge soon.



Kimberly Sykes - Kimberly has been the Refuge's Deputy Refuge Manager for the past five years and responsible for overseeing the Refuge's daily operations. Now, she is off on a new adventure, to serve as the Assistant Manager at the Crystal River NWR, Florida. Kimberly's last day working on the Refuge was May 31.

Michelle Paduani, Planner, took a job with the US Forest Service in Washington State.

From the FONR President- Larry Box



Even though official summer is still a few days away, it already feels like summer - a perfect time to enjoy the Refuge. The eaglets are now flying but they can still be seen in the area of the nest, fishing is in full swing,

and other Refuge wildlife is there to be discovered. As an example, last week a northern water thrush was using the shoreline of Loakfoma Lake, an orchard oriole was feeding across from the levy, and an alligator was heard bellowing in Doyle Arm.

Canoe Day remains a very popular activity sponsored by Friends. Approximately eighty participants have enjoyed canoeing at each of the 2014 events. Additional Canoe Days will be scheduled during coming months. Friends member, Joe Mulrooney, is designing a Canoe Day T shirt which will be for sale at future events. I expect the shirt will be well received and proceeds from the sale will help fund future Friends projects.

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has adopted a new National Friends Policy. While most of the information already existed, the new policy compiles it into one document. New regulations are included and the Friends board is currently studying those requirements. Local Friends groups have six months to align local policies and procedures with the national policy. In addition, local groups have three years to develop a new Memorandum of Understanding with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Of utmost importance in the new policy is the requirement that all Friends members working as volunteers must complete and sign a Volunteer Form. The completed form provides personal liability protection to the volunteer. Forms are available at the Refuge office or online. Search for [Optional Form 301a \(09/2010\) USDA-USDI](#). Be sure to complete a form before starting your next volunteer work. If you have signed a form in the past, it must be updated.

Those of us who frequent the Refuge know it is a real treasure. Invite someone to experience it with you and to join Friends. They will be happy that you did.



Refuge Manager Steve Reagan's Reflections



Over the past year and a half the Refuge staff has been working hard to update our planning documents including creating new Comprehensive Conservation Plan, Habitat Management Plan,

Integrated Pest Management Plan and Visitor Services Plan. The Comprehensive Conservation Plan is the Refuge's broad description of the Refuge's management direction and public programs for the next 15-year period. The three additional plans, more commonly known as step-down plans, provide the site specific details.

We are on schedule to be able to release all these documents for public review within the next two to three weeks, and maybe with luck sooner. Currently we are addressing comments from an internal review during which time Service employees and partnering agencies reviewed the documents. Next the document goes to be formatted prior to being released to the general public. The formal release will be announced through the Federal Register, news releases and on the Refuge's web site. Three public meetings will also be scheduled during early July at which time information on the plans will be presented.

When the documents become available, I encourage all our friends to take time to read them. You'll find there are going to be a lot pages to read but my hope is that you'll come away with a much better understanding of the purpose of the Refuge and plans and steps to be taken for meeting the needs of both wildlife and people. The subject of these documents is important and deserves careful thought. So, when the official release of made in the next two weeks or so, and you're looking for something different to read with you morning coffee or midnight snack, please read a few pages and let us know what you think.

Behind-the-Scenes Event

The next Friends' members-only Behind-the-Scenes event is scheduled for Friday, June 13, at 7:00 a.m. Why so early? According to Scott Rush, songbird bander, most captures occur from daylight to noon.

Meet at the Larry Box Environmental Education Center at by 7:00 a.m. for a very interesting event!

General Membership Meeting June 19 - 6:30 p.m.

Tisdale Auditorium
Noxubee Visitor Center

June 19, Program Announced

New Comprehensive Conservation Plan Overview

The program for the June 19th General Membership Meeting will be a briefing of the new Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Refuge. The CCP outlines the conservation activities which will be conducted at the Refuge over the coming years. The plan has been in development for several years. Numerous individuals, including Friends members, were invited to give input into the development of the plan. This will be our first opportunity to hear about the final product. Project Director Steve Reagan will present the program.

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.

YCC Summer 2014



This year's participants in the 8-week YCC (the Refuge's summer work program) are left to right: Jacob Dunstan, Makenzie Smith, Hayden Henderson, Leader-Lori Haygood (Intern), Nelson Robbins and Neely Abrams. The students are from Brooksville, Louisville and Starkville.

Barn Quilt Project
Larry Box paints background for a barn quilt. Friends hope to install several "quilts" as part of the national trail. See www.barnquiltinfo.com for more about the trail.



Book Review

For years nature lovers have used Peterson Field Guides as go-to sources of information on the outdoors. The Peterson Flash Guides, currently available in the Refuge Nature Store, are condensed sources that can be placed anywhere without

taking up a lot of room. Each colorful guide measures four and a half by eight and a half inches on laminated cardboard. These consist of six folded sections of information, front and back AND only one-fourth inch thick.

The two flash guides I selected were *Roadside Wildflowers* and *Butterflies* with each one consisting of more than 100 common species found in the United States.

The *Roadside Wildflowers* Guide is divided into the different types with the growing season and the common height of the flower. Some types noted are bright showy flowers, vines, and flowers with four to seven petals. For the novice wildflower enthusiast, the information in the guide is very helpful.

The *Butterfly* Guide introduces the reader to a map showing the ecoregions where each specie is most common. Using colored dots, the reader can identify butterflies in their ecoregion according to the butterflies' habitat.

Look for these and other flash guides in the Nature Store.

Submitted by Jan Bryant

Reminder

Annual Family Fun Day

In celebration of National Wildlife Refuge Week, we will hold our annual Family Fun Day on September 27. We are hopeful that by changing the date of this event to September, the chance of conflicts will be lessened. Please mark your calendar and make plans to volunteer for this event.



Youth Fishing Derby

The Fishing Derby was a big success with most youth easily catching their limit of five. The Refuge and Friends had restocked the pond for the event, much to the delight of the proud young people.

Photos by Lawrence Croft



It was a good day for fishing.

This full stringer is almost too heavy to hold up.

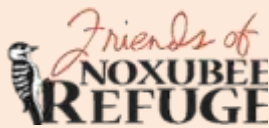


Everyone gets a prize at the Fishing Derby, thanks to Louisville Walmart and FoNR.

Hamilton Scholarship Endowed

Several years ago, Friends of Noxubee Refuge established an endowed scholarship in the College of Forest Resources at Mississippi State University in memory of Sam D. Hamilton. The scholarship was in honor of Starkville native Hamilton's tireless efforts and diligent service to refuges throughout the country. Recently Jeff Little, Director of Development for the College of Forest Resources, announced the first scholarship for \$1300 will be awarded to a graduate student who has demonstrated good academics and efforts in conservation volunteer work.

While the scholarship is fully endowed now, donations are still being accepted and will expand the effort. For information see <http://www.friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org/hamilton-scholarship> or contact Jeff Little, Director of Development for the College of Forest Resources, at 662-325-8151 or jlittle@foundation.msstate.edu.



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

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2014 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP DATES

June 19
and September 18

Contributions to this newsletter were made by L. Box, F. Box, S. Reagan, A. Dunstan, J. Tisdale, J. Bryant, L. Croft, and G. Cotton