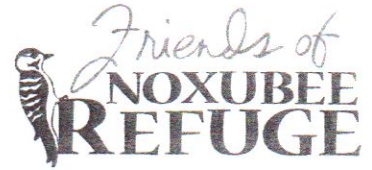


# Noxubee Notes



Volume 2 Number 3

June 2005

## Woodpeckers and Their Recovery Subject of FONR Program

People attending the June 16 meeting of *FONR* will hear an informative and timely program. Noxubee Refuge biologist David Richardson is giving a talk entitled, "Recovery for the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and What About the Ivory-billed Woodpecker?"

Richardson, a.k.a. D.R., will concentrate on the Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) recovery activities on the refuge and nationally. He also will give the most up-to-date information about the Ivory-billed Woodpecker and the recovery efforts in light of its rediscovery a few weeks ago.

Several colonies of RCW can be found on Noxubee. You may have seen trees with broad white stripes scattered around the refuge. If so, you've seen an RCW cavity tree if not the woodpecker itself.

D.R. is chiefly responsible for the care and recovery of Noxubee's small endangered woodpeckers. His RCW expertise extends beyond this refuge as he serves as the RCW technical

specialist for Region 4 (Southeastern US). David also has served as a member of the national RCW recovery team.

A very inventive person, Richardson has developed or invented several pieces of equipment that are used extensively in RCW management efforts.

Richardson began work at Noxubee in 1989 after brief refuge assignments at Moosehorn in Maine, Chincoteague in Virginia, and Alligator River in North Carolina. He holds a B.S. in Environmental Sciences from Unity College, Maine, and a Masters in Wildlife Management from MSU.

D.R.'s other work interests include wood storks, reptiles and amphibians, freshwater mussels, and most recently, work on the big-eared and southeastern myotis bats.

This program promises to be very interesting and informative. Make plans now to hear D.R. our resident RCW specialist and maker of bent-willow furniture. But that's another story.

## Know Our Refuge Staff . . . Richard Smith

Noxubee Refuge has about 45,000 acres of forest land. Management of that timber land for optimum wildlife use is the main responsibility of Administrative Forester Richard Smith. An MSU graduate, Smith came to Noxubee in 1996 from the SE Louisiana Refuge Complex in Louisiana.

The Administrative Forestry job is a big one at Noxubee. Harvesting timber is one tool in managing forests for wildlife. Noxubee provides between \$250 thousand and one million dollars to the U.S. Treasury each year from timber sales. Some of that money comes back to surrounding counties as Revenue Sharing dollars, but none comes directly to the refuge.

Before joining the Fish and Wildlife Service, Smith was an educator. He taught at both the high school and the community college levels. He also worked eight years for the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station in Greene County. Smith remembers one his proudest accomplishments was at the MSU research unit. Then Dean of Forestry Rodney Foil took one of Smith's hand-drawn maps to hang in the Dean's office. Unfortunately, hand-drawn maps are in the past. Smith still produces outstanding maps but uses the Geographical Information Systems and the Global Positioning Satellite.

Smith recalls some of his most memorable forestry jobs were on his wildfire details out west to New Mexico and Montana.



An avid Bulldog fan, Richard says he and wife, Mary, spend a lot of free time at athletic events and entertaining family and friends who come to Starkville for games. It's a family thing; their son and oldest daughter are State graduates, and their younger daughter is an MSU senior. Sports have even replaced a lot of his hunting and fishing trips, and Richard seldom goes to American Contract Bridge tournaments as he once did.

Richard is not out in the public as much as some Refuge personnel, but that's one of the aspects of the job he likes most. He said his career choice allows for the solitary enjoyment of nature. According to Smith, "I just like having a job dealing with and enjoying nature."

## Check to See If You're Lapsed

Has your membership lapsed? How can you know? It's simple. Look at your mailing label to see the month and year your membership expires. *FONR* memberships do not follow the calendar year but the anniversary date of your joining. Please be prompt in renewing membership in *your* organization. It's tax deductible. We're all volunteers. Send your checks to Friends of Noxubee Refuge, P.O. Box 2006, Starkville, MS 39760. For a listing of levels of membership go to the Friends' website at

[friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org](http://friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org)

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT: *It is Time to Consider Some Changes*

Those who attended our April meeting enjoyed birthday cake to celebrate, a few days early, *FONR*'s second birthday. We now have approximately 180 members and appreciate everyone's support and patience as we try to make some changes based on our experience during the past two years. Members are attempting to provide more volunteer assistance to the Refuge Staff to help compensate for the under-funding of Noxubee NWR, a problem it shares with the rest of the Refuge System. We invite your active participation in both of these endeavors.

David Richardson's program on the Red-cockaded and Ivory-billed Woodpeckers at our June 16 meeting will be timely, given Noxubee's RCW program and the recent rediscovery of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker in Arkansas. Our September 15 meeting will include a program on the history of NNWR by Shelton Webster, son of former refuge manager Burt Webster, who grew up on the Refuge.

The September meeting will also include several important business components including votes on amendments to the *FONR* Bylaws and the election of new officers and members of the board of directors. The new officers and board members will serve two-year terms beginning on January 1, 2006. Your next newsletter will contain information on both the amendments and the election. If you have suggestions for modifying our Bylaws, which many of you will recall were hurriedly adapted from those of another friends group, you should contact Larry Box, Chair of the Bylaws Committee. If you would like to recommend someone, perhaps yourself, as a candidate for office, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee: Barbara Crawford, Lyle Nelson, Ray Watson and Sherrie Wiygul.

Whatever your talents, interests and experience we can use you as a volunteer. We especially need additional volunteers to help keep the Visitor Center open on weekends and holidays. These are the times when many people have their best opportunities to visit the Refuge. Please contact Barbara Crawford, Chair of the VC Staffing Committee, or me if you would like to participate in this project. Training is available any weekend and you may work with experienced volunteers until you decide you are ready to perform one of the jobs yourself. Due to cuts in Refuge staff, volunteers are also needed during the week to answer the phone and assist in other ways. If you would like to work a few hours during the week, call the Refuge Office at 323-5548 and talk to Andrea Dunstan or Gwen Cotton.

Although NNWR continues to be a well kept secret for many people in the area, recent visitors from Colorado said that it is one of the best of the many refuges that they have visited. We look forward to seeing you soon at Your Refuge.

*Lawrence Croft*

## Noxubee Nature Amateur Photo Contest Open all Summer

Grab your digital, 35mm, disposable or whatever camera you have and take pictures on your visit to Noxubee Refuge. The Refuge offers a variety of photo opportunities; take advantage, and you may be an award-winning photographer.



As if public display of winners isn't enough, *FONR* also will award prizes to winners in two age divisions, up to 16 years old and over 16 years old. Two submissions each are allowed. So enjoy the summer on your refuge and take some pictures!

The first Noxubee Nature Photography Contest is underway and will continue until September 16. This contest is a follow-up to the highly successful *FONR* Nature Photography Workshop, but participation is open to all amateur photographers.

Contest committee members Joe Mulrooney (chair), Andrea Dunstan, Marion Sansing and Linda Lodato have developed rules and an entry form which are available on the *FONR* website at [friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org](http://friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org), at the Refuge office and the Starkville Public Library. Complete contest rules are included with entry blanks.

Photos submitted in the contest must have been taken on Noxubee Refuge and within the contest dates, June 1 to September 16. Winners will be announced October 15 during National Wildlife Refuge Week activities at the Refuge. Winning photos will be displayed at the Visitor Center and on the Friends' website.

## April Photo Workshop a Success

The April 16 Nature Photography Workshop sponsored by *FONR* and conducted by Buddy Laird was highly successful according to feedback from the 20 participants. Attendees came mainly from nearby towns but several came from as far as Memphis and Jackson to attend the daylong workshop. *FONR* volunteers assisted Laird during the day. Margaret Cope land provided snacks and lunch and from all accounts the food was as good as the workshop. Others who helped make the workshop run smoothly included Lawrence Croft, Luanne Laird, Gwen Cotton, Barbara Crawford and Andrea Dunstan.

While the workshop was not featured as a money making endeavor, the \$50 fee covered all costs with a small surplus added to the treasury. Based on the success, a similar workshop may be featured next year.

## Bob Fye, Super Crafting Guy, and the Nature Store(y)

The Noxubee Nature Store has a wealth of handmade gifts, many produced by Bob Fye. When asked about his talent and his wealth of ideas, this was his reply (abbreviated due to space limitations):

*How did I develop the requisites for crafting?* My father was a stonemason turned postal clerk so we had a basement shop, fully equipped. My mother was a music and art teacher and encouraged us along those lines. During high school we worked on the farm with our uncle, a mechanical engineer displaced by the depression. He introduced us to gadgetry. High school and university\* added shop, art and technical knowledge in my major, entomology/zoology, and associated disciplines. Armed with a new Ph.D. I was confronted with a dearth of jobs. My brother, who managed a lumber yard, came to the rescue and for six months I was the best educated hog house carpenter in the state of Iowa, a step up from building bumblebee bungalows to gather data for my dissertation.

After obtaining a professional job, the next 35 years were spent developing and constructing the necessary gadgetry, contrivance and handling equipment to understand, outwit and promote or eliminate the desirable or undesirable denizens of the insect world. In nine locations (Wisconsin, New Mexico, South Carolina, Ontario Canada, Arizona, New South Wales Australia, Washington state and Mississippi) the construction and adaptation of equipment and structures provided ample opportunity to develop skills requiring some craftsmanship. Such was the life of an insect ecologist specializing in population dynamics in the pre-electronic age.

\*skip over three years military service time.

**Where do the ideas for the crafts in the Nature Store come from?** Upon retiring in 1987, I searched a bit for something to occupy my time and finally decided on crafts. From 1987 to 2004, I participated in more than 100 craft shows. In the process of fleecing the ladies out of their egg money, two file boxes of patterns were accumulated along with about three feet of craft books. During the transition to refuge pertinence, zoo and circus animals have been replaced by wildlife; bird production has been limited to refuge inhabitants (some exceptions) and other nature oriented items added. New bird designs are derived from our library of over 20 bird books and stencils and templates. Birdhouses and bat houses are from accepted dimensions from ornithologists and qualified authorities. Our bird library dates from early 1900's Audubon leaflets (priced 2¢ each), accumulated by my mother in the early 1920's, to numerous current publications. Other material is derived from our library of *National Geographic* from 1957, and *Wildbird* dating back to 1991. A few patterns have been purchased from commercial sources. I still have about five feet of shelf space occupied by craft journals. Of course I draw on my professional biological background in many cases and glean ideas from the numerous catalogs that accumulate in our mailbox. Above all, I rely upon fellow *FONR* members for their many suggestions and look forward to a continued flow. With many thanks!

Bob's Motto #1: *Steal those ideas wherever you can!*

Bob's Motto #2: *Modify, adapt and manipulate.*

### New Shipment of Items at Nature Store

Several shipments of new items have arrived at the Noxubee Nature Store. New books arrived in early May as well as boxed sets of cards featuring photographs of the refuge by Marion Sansing. Mississippi wild flowers are also pictured on new bookmarks. The most recent additions include items embroidered with the *Friends of Noxubee* logo. Those additions include denim shirts, crushable hats, caps and white polo shirts with red and black accents. If you are looking for a Father's Day gift, the Nature Store is a good place to begin shopping!

### Keep a Volunteer Log, Hours = Money

Noxubee Refuge receives limited funds in support of volunteers. Those funds are directly related to the amount of volunteer hours reported. The funds have remained static because total volunteer hours were not kept and/or not reported.

With the very active Friends Group now at Noxubee, volunteer hours are extensive. It is very important to report all hours. Administrative Assistant Gwen Cotton said, "I urge everyone to be realistic and admit ALL the hours spent in support of Noxubee." Remember all committee meetings, trail work, store hours, front desk hours, time in the native garden and on Morgan Hill, time spent making donated items and travel time. The list could go on and on. Just count everything.

It's not complicated to keep a record. There is a simple form that denotes name, date, time and volunteer duties and location. It's simple but very important. Forms will be available at the June 16 meeting, but you don't need a form. Just write the hours down as you work for Noxubee. It will make a difference.



### Refuge Summer Help Hired

Noxubee Refuge has four young YCCs this summer. The Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) is a work-learn program that helps develop an understanding and appreciation for the outdoors and our wildlife heritage. It offers gainful summer employment in a healthful outdoor atmosphere to youth, ages 15 through 18. The enrollees work a 40-hour a week for 8 weeks beginning May 31 continuing through July 23.

This year's crew comes from Macon, Louisville and Starkville. Brooks Powell, Antolin Conley, Jeremy Carter and Cody Ming will be under the supervision of a leader, Adam Courtney, an MSU senior Wildlife major from Hattiesburg.

Deputy Project Leader Brett Wehrle stated, "The YCC enrollees are excited and ready to get started." The young men will assist the Refuge maintenance staff with projects such as building and maintaining trails, marking boundaries, maintaining grounds and buildings, helping with the fishing derby, checking and maintaining wood duck nest boxes and banding wood ducks. Welcome to Noxubee, guys!

## In the Manager's Corner . . .

Since our last newsletter, the Refuge lost a dear member of our Friends group and a member of our Refuge family. James Craighill "Craig" Hays was lost to us on May 20. Craig served as Noxubee's Administrative Forester for 23 years and retired in 1987, just a year before I began my career at Noxubee Refuge. Craig was proclaimed by many as the grand architect of the forests of Noxubee Refuge, a title truly earned. When I started at Noxubee, I had the opportunity to get to know Craig and visited with him a few times, learned a lesson or two about the Refuge and its habitats, and immediately respected and admired a man in whose footsteps I would be walking. Having come back to Noxubee NWR, sixteen years after my first meetings with Craig, I again had the opportunity to visit with Craig and talk some about the Refuge, which we all dearly love. My only regret is that we did not have the opportunity to ride around and talk forestry as Craig had mentioned that we need to do sometime. When you visit Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge, take the time to look around, wander the numerous trails, or follow the bank of the Noxubee River and take in all the splendor of the Refuge's various habitats. All of the forests that you see were managed, manipulated, cared for and loved by our dear friend. While you're out enjoying the Refuge's beauty, pause, remember Craig, and smile as you and I are certainly walking in his footsteps. Thank you, Craig, for all you have done and for all of us you touched.

Henry R. Sansing

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### Youth Fishing Derby—June 11. Volunteers needed.

*This is a quarterly publication of the Friends of Noxubee Refuge,  
non-profit 501(c3) organization.*



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