

# SPRING 2019 NEWSLETTER

## Friends of the Noxubee Wildlife Refuge



Photo Credit: Kara Roberts



Scan this square to be taken to  
our donation page!  
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Letter from the Friends of the Noxubee  
Wildlife Refuge President Kara Roberts

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Calendar of Events

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Noxubee Wildlife Refuge in photos

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Conserving Wildlife  
by Ron Johnson

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Bluebird Houses & Nature Store

The Bluff Lake Boardwalk was recently damaged when a tree fell on it. However, it's not as bad as first thought and should be repaired in the next couple of weeks. Refuge staff would like to do a complete overhaul on the boardwalk this summer and bring it up to ADA codes, widening it for wheelchair use. This will cost roughly \$5000. We'd like to ask for donations toward this project thru the Friends of Noxubee Refuge to help with the cost. You can visit our website at <https://friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org> and find a link at the top of the page for paypal. You can choose boardwalk project in the drop down menu. Please also add a note with your donation designating your donation to go toward the boardwalk project. If you'd like, drop a check off in the Nature Store and put in the note spot the designation for the boardwalk project. Let's help the Refuge get this done!

Kara Roberts, President FONR

"Blossom by  
blossom the  
spring begins."

Algernon Charles  
Swinburne

### Visitor Center Hours:

Wednesday-Friday: 7:30 am - 4 pm

Saturday: 10 am - 4 pm

Most Sundays: 1 pm - 4 pm

### Contact Information:

Friends of Noxubee Refuge

13723 Bluff Lake Road

Brooksville, MS 39739

[FriendsofNoxubeeRefuge@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsofNoxubeeRefuge@gmail.com)

Visitor Center phone number:

(662) 323-5548

Website:

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



## LETTER FROM THE FONR PRESIDENT

Here we are in a new year! We are thankful that Refuge staff is back to work after the shutdown and hope that another, looming shutdown is averted!

Our Nature Store did very well last year, bringing in \$11,000 minus expenses so that we can continue supporting the Refuge. The store is ably managed by Dalton Anthony! Stop by and visit with him, you might find a good deal while in the store!

**Calling all Volunteers!!** We would like to start having a monthly work-day at the Refuge, to occur on the second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. until the last volunteer leaves. I'm not sure if everyone knows it, but this Refuge has a staff of 9, with a 10th member to be added in the future. That's 10 people to maintain a 43,000+ acre Refuge! Working one Saturday a month is a small way of helping out and showing our support for them!

Mark your calendar: the next Nature Series takes place on March 7 at 6:30 p.m. in the Visitor Center. We will hear updates from Refuge staff.

We have implemented new membership categories and fees. All info can be found on our website: <https://friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org/membership>

You can find the application to download, print-out, and mail in or drop it by the Visitor Center. You can also choose to fill the application out online and pay using Paypal.

See you at the Refuge!

Kara Roberts

President - Friends of the Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge

## Calendar of Events:

March 7: Friends of Noxubee  
Refuge Board Meeting,  
5:30pm in the Visitor's Center

March 7: Nature Series 6:30pm

March 9: Work Day 9am- until

March 23: Open House & Canoe  
Day 10am - 4pm

April 20: Annual Youth Fishing Derby

# Noxubee Refuge Nature

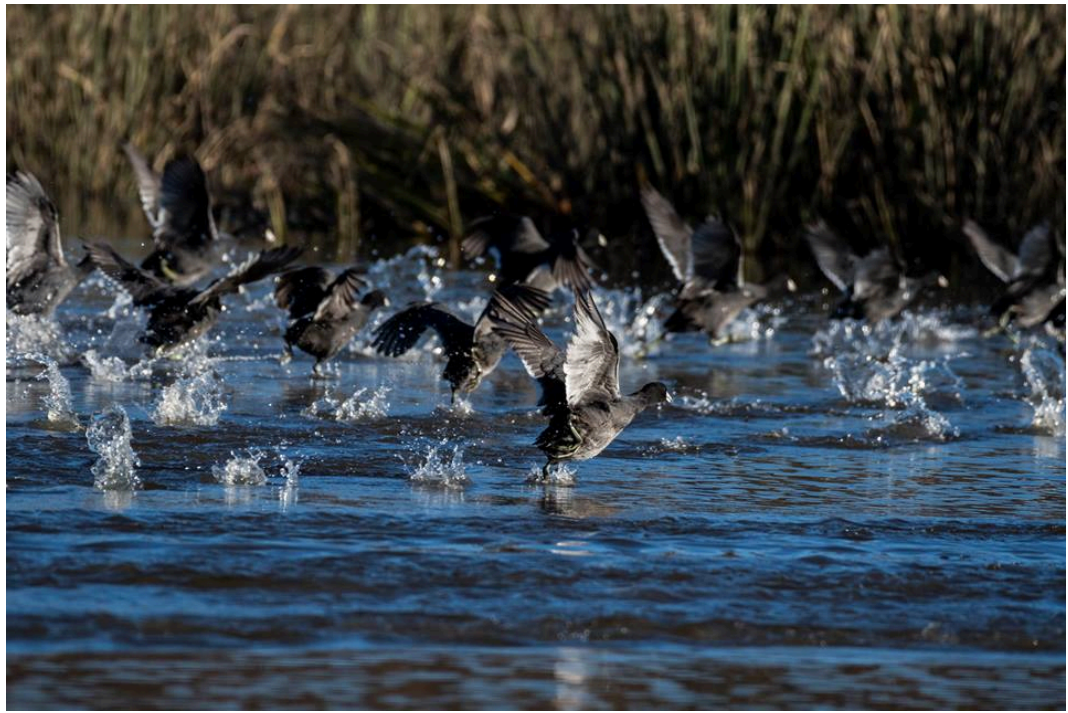


Photo Credit: Joseph Golson



Photo Credit: Real Southern Images  
Robert Garvin



Photo Credit: Lana Grissom Taylor

Go to our:

*Friends of the Noxubee National  
Wildlife Refuge*

*Facebook page to submit your  
photos, enjoy other's photos and  
interact with fellow Friend's  
Members and nature enthusiasts!*



Photo Credit: Vicki Maples

# The Value of Conservation

by Ron Johnson

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Life on Planet Earth needs a little help. Nature holds biodiversity, the variety of all of life and life-supporting ecosystems. From the far depths of the oceans to coral reefs to beaches, bayous, forests, prairies, and mountains, the awesome variety of life on Earth, although still strong and awe inspiring, is facing steady decline. Mitigating biodiversity loss is a key global science challenge.

Biodiversity makes the planet interesting, beautiful, and able to sustain people. It is critical to our physical, mental, and social well-being and sense of security. In addition to amazing health benefits, nature provides pollination, medicines, pest suppression, purification of air and water, production of high-quality soil, water retention and flood control, carbon sequestration, summer shade, wind control, breakdown of waste into nutrients, and joy and inspiration from trees, flowers, birds, and butterflies. These immense benefits and others, called ecosystem services, are still being discovered and studied, but are valued in excess of \$1.25 trillion per year.

For example, beneficial wild, unmanaged insects, not including honey bees, provide a value of at least \$57 billion in the United States each year in pollination services, dung burial, control of insect pests, and as critical food resources that support wildlife important to hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching. In addition, pollination by a diversity (variety) of wild bees improves fruit quality, shelf life, and commercial value (e.g., strawberries) and increases pollen deposition, fruit set (e.g., tomatoes, blueberries, almonds, sunflowers), and crop yield (e.g., blueberries). In crop fields, beneficial insects, birds, and bats suppress crop pests. One study found that Midwestern US farms with natural habitats, such as along field margins or in patches, had lower pest insect pressure and more insect eating birds.



The Enforcer, doing his part for nature conservation (Young Turkey Vulture).  
Photo by R. J. Johnson

Biological diversity slows the spread of pathogens and diseases. For example, in biologically diverse areas, people have a lower risk of West Nile Virus, Lyme disease, and Hantavirus. How biological diversity provides these benefits in reduced disease risk is still being studied but some facts are known. A variety of species brings competition, interactions, behaviors, and differences that interfere with the spread of pathogens and disease. One example of this is a “dilution” effect, in that diversity includes some species that are resistant to particular diseases or pathogens. The diversity or mix of resistant species dilutes the number of susceptible individuals and slows the disease spread. In another example, a recent study found that children living in areas surrounded by greater diversity of native plants had lower rates of allergic reactions such as asthma, related in part to increased beneficial bacteria on their skin. Biodiversity in nature protects against diseases and stresses to both ecosystems and people. There is concern about a continuing slow decline of many beneficial insects and birds and an estimated \$4–20 trillion/year loss of benefits as natural habitats decline or disappear. A pollinator shortage, as one example, was documented in areas of China and Nepal, resulting in time-intensive and expensive hand-pollination efforts by people.

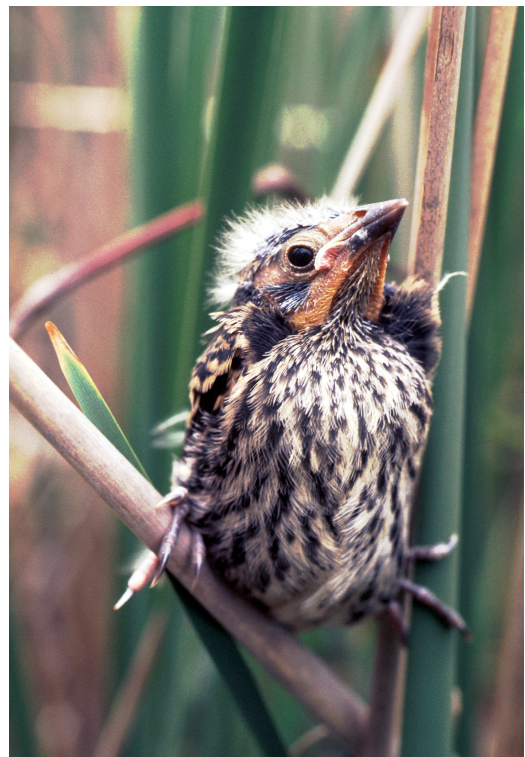
The United Nations declared 2010 to be the International Year of Biodiversity as “a celebration of life on earth and of the value of biodiversity for our lives.” As part of that celebration, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers, representing 600 million family farmers within 120 national organizations in 80 countries, committed to conserving biodiversity as part of a shared responsibility.

Our Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge is a 48,000-acre contribution to nature and people. The many natural areas in Mississippi, including areas on farms or in backyards where we live, hold a home and hope for birds, flowers, butterflies and a hound dog's howl of other wild wonders, plus a legacy for children, grandchildren, and generations to come.

Conservation of nature and biodiversity is a dance for life that promotes wise use, wisdom, and caring today so that tomorrow has the same beauty, bounty, and benefits. Join the nature conservation ballet – observe, learn, and help nature conservation and life on Earth.

**We continue to learn more and more about how the variety of life and ecosystems on Earth form the basis of shared human wealth, health, and well-being (Young Red-winged Blackbird).**

Photo by R. J. Johnson





## Build a Blue-Bird House program for kids at Noxubee Refuge March 2 10-12 at the Visitor Center

Space is limited: please email us at  
[friendsofnoxubeerefuge@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofnoxubeerefuge@gmail.com)  
to sign-up

# New Membership Opportunities

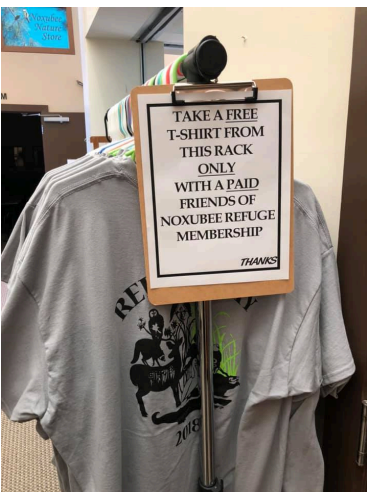
## Membership in Friends

Our new membership year has begun with new categories of members, including several “Cool Critter Contributor” opportunities. If you’ve not yet joined us, or haven’t renewed an existing membership for 2019, please consider doing so right away! With a paid membership in Friends of Noxubee Refuge, you will know that you are a vital part of an organization that strives to keep our Refuge the special place that we know it to be. There are projects that the Friends can do on the Refuge that really make an impact – but we need your financial support.

Please visit our webpage (<https://friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org/>), click on Membership, then follow the instructions for either 1) filling out the form for cash, check, or credit card or 2) filling out the online form if using Paypal.

If you have questions about your membership, email [friends-of-noxubee-refuge@gmail.com](mailto:friends-of-noxubee-refuge@gmail.com) or call 662-722-0990. Thank you for your financial support of Friends!

Get ready for spring  
& summer with new  
Refuge merch!



You can score  
a free t-shirt  
just by joining  
the Friends of  
the Noxubee  
Refuge Group!

