



Tennessee Refuge Reflections

Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge

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Paris, TN 38242

(731) 642-2091
<http://TennesseeRefuge.fws.gov>

Refuge Manager
John Taylor

Office Hours
M-F 7:00 to 3:30

Benefactors

Johnny Allen

Sandra Anderson

Corporate Sponsors

Mrs. Jeanette Rudy

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President's Page

Dear Friends:

We have experienced a busy and exciting year as we learned and organized and planned and implemented the Friends of the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge organization.

Our purpose is to link the local community to the refuge by communication, education, wildlife dependent recreation, and involvement so that the vast resources of the refuge may be enjoyed by the local community and so the local community is willing to enhance the Refuge resources with its time, talent, and money

How many of our citizens know that the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge contains over 50,000 acres of water, forests, farmland, and grasslands? The refuge stretches for 65 miles along the Tennessee River. It was established in 1945 as an important resting and feeding area for wintering waterfowl. The refuge provides habitat for numerous resident wildlife species and migratory birds. It has a major impact on the tourist dollars that are spent in our community. It is an ideal classroom to teach our citizens about the natural resources in our area and about the environment in which we live.

Our Board has worked hard to secure the legal documents that make us a 501 c 3 non- profit organization. These have been secured. Our first attempt at start-up funding was successful with a \$5,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. We are enrolling corporate members and sponsors and general membership from as far away as Nashville and Kentucky. We have plans for our members to experience the refuge in a special way during each of the seasons.

We welcome you to the Friends group and hope that you will enjoy being a part of this organization.

Joyce North
Friends President



Manager's Corner

One of my favorite songs by James Taylor is “You’ve Got A Friend”. Well, I’m tickled to realize that Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge has **many** friends! For several years the refuge staff and I have envied other refuges around the nation who have active Friends groups. I watched those refuges become better partners and neighbors in their communities, and I wanted that for Tennessee Refuge. Refuges succeed best when local people help care for them and care about them. So this past year, when our Friends group was chartered and took off like a rocket, I was not only very proud but elated....because I knew it would make Tennessee Refuge not only a better place for the wildlife we are charged to protect, but also a more valuable asset to our neighboring communities.

Today, over 245 Friends groups work hand-in-hand with national wildlife refuges, linking them to local communities, welcoming a growing number of visitors, and helping restore habitat. Friends groups are made up of “regular folks”.....teachers, carpenters, nurses, bankers, students, and retirees. Some are refuge volunteers, some are hunters, some are anglers, some are birders, some are refuge neighbors, and some just appreciate wild places and their critters. The one thing these people have in common is they care about the refuge and want to work to protect it. Their concern for this locally and nationally valuable resource spurs them into action to organize a Friends group that is dedicated to promoting and perpetuating **their** national wildlife refuge.

What do I expect from the Friends of Tennessee Refuge? Well, I am excited the group has many immediate and long term projects and events it has already completed or planned. It is also promoting who we are, because unfortunately few people in this area know really who we are, or that we are part of a larger national system of wildlife refuges. Many confuse us with TWRA, LBL, TVA and even the state parks. I know the Friends of Tennessee Refuge will help us perform the critical task of helping our local communities understand the mission of the refuge and the refuge system as a place where wildlife comes first.

The projects and events are a great help to us in these times of limited budgets and staff, but what excites me most is the opportunity to use the Friends group as a “sounding board” of how well we are managing the refuge. I will strive to educate the Friends group on issues which not only affect the refuge but also the local communities in which we are located. In return, I expect to receive feedback from the group on whether the refuge is accomplishing the goals we are shooting for, are our actions adversely affecting visitors and neighbors, or how can we do better? Often misinformation gets spread on controversial issues. By educating the Friends group on why and how we do what we do, perhaps they can assist us in assuring the public gets the correct information on refuge issues. An educated public is a supportive public which in turn will help us fulfill our mission of managing wildlife and their habitats for the benefit of present and future generations.

Yeah, as James would say, “Hey, ain’t it good to know that you’ve got a friend?”

John Taylor, Refuge Manager



Critter Corner

The Great Blue Heron

Quick Facts

Height: 4 Feet Tall
Wingspan: Up to 7 Feet
Weight: 5-8 Lbs
Lifespan: Up to 20 Years
Eggs: 3-7

The majestic symbol that is found on our Friends Group Logo is the familiar Great Blue Heron. The Great Blue Heron is a year round resident of the refuge and highly visible throughout the area. It resides in large numbers locally because of the presence of large tracts of floodplain forest in which to nest and the availability of undisturbed, unpolluted wetlands in which to forage. Both habitats are essential and the refuge plays an important roll providing the Great Blue Heron a home that is free from pollution, habitat destruction and human disturbance. Fish are the principal food item of the heron with frogs, lizards and insects providing the rest. As you tour the refuge by car, boat or on foot you will find this large, distinctive bird wading in the shallow waters of the lake seeking that day's meal. Take some time to travel to the refuge and observe our neighbor in flight or as it feeds along the shoreline and in the shallows of Kentucky Lake.

Progress

In less than a year since the first exploratory meeting the Friends have been organized and certified by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 charitable organization.

The Friends received a \$5,000 start up grant from the National Wildlife Refuge Association.

With a match between a Friends donation and Government funding a contract has been let to improve the refuge shoreline. By removing willows growing on the shore the crop fields will be opened for easier access to feeding by the migratory duck and goose population. This project will begin in the fall of 2005.

We have begun the process of researching grants and funding for the restoration of the Chickasaw Trail on Big Sandy Peninsula. This trail offers many wildlife viewing opportunities but has fallen into disrepair.

- New Members**
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|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Joe and Shirley Casey | • Joan and Scott Stevens | • Cindy and Jim Barnett |
| • Anne and Bill Williams | • John and Lisa Clouthier | • Kyle and Jennifer Dunlap |
| • Karen Cliburn and Blake Hunt | • Dan and Laura Dziekonski | • Danny W. Lee |
| • Clarence and Christine Wilson | • Dr. Ernie Gendren | • Becky and Jason Foust |
| • Bill Moody | • Carol and Royce Phillips | • Bryant and Julia Williams |
| • Brandie Mitchell | • John Taylor Family | • Bill and Joyce North |
| • Tom Sinnema | • Jesse and Susan Parker | • Bill and Ann Looney |
| • Margarette C. Blanton | • Madge Lawrence | • George Jackey |
| • James H. Burge | • Kenneth M. Garner | • Jerry Maynard |
| • Nita Whitfield | • Michael and Evonne Williams | • Jane and Johnny Gibson |