



Friends of Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge

Among Friends

Winter 2003

Friends of Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to the enduring protection, management, and appreciation of Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge and its environs.

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The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to preserve a national network of lands and waters for the conservation and management of fish, wildlife and plant resources of the United States for the benefit of present and future generations.

Celebrate the Centennial of the NWR System With a Tour of Three Complex Refuges

To celebrate the upcoming Centennial Anniversary of the National Wildlife Refuge System, members of the Directorate of the Northeast Region of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service are making their way down the East Coast on a Tour of Refuges. Three Refuges in the Long Island NWR Complex – Wertheim, Morton and Oyster Bay – are honored to be their final destination on Friday, March 14, the actual 100th anniversary of this milestone in the history of wildlife conservation in America.

In recognition of the Centennial, the U.S. Congress has declared year 2003 “The Year of the National Wildlife Refuge.”

The NWR System was launched in 1903, when President Theodore Roosevelt set aside tiny Pelican Island off the east coast of Florida for the protection of pelicans and other species from hunters. In the 100 years since then, those scant five acres have grown to encompass more than 93 million acres spread among 575 national wildlife refuges and wetland management districts – at least one in every state and U.S. Territory.

Most areas the size of Long Island are happy if

they have one NWR, but our fortunate Island has nine Refuges composing the Long Island National Refuge Complex. Friends of Wertheim members are invited to celebrate this abundance on March 14, along with Complex staff, visiting dignitaries, FOW Board members and others, by joining a casual, fun-filled Tour of Refuges, specifically, these three Complex Refuges:

• **8:00 a.m., Elizabeth A. Morton NWR, Sag Harbor** – Participate in a program that will help us experience life from the perspective of threatened and endangered species.

• **10 a.m., Wertheim NWR** – Discover the diversity of wildlife-dependent recreational and educational opportunities offered on National Wildlife Refuges.

• **1 p.m. Oyster Bay NWR and Sagamore Hill National Historic Site** – The Refuge borders the NHS, the beloved home of President Roosevelt where the ceremony will take place. One highlight of this celebration will focus on committing several items to a time capsule that will be opened in 2103. These items tell the history and present state of the LINWR Complex. Following that,
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A Capital Place for a Conference



Why is FOW Board Member Kathleen O'Connor (front row, look for the white arrow) standing on the steps of the U.S. Capitol? Who is she with? For the full story, go to page 3.

Get on Board With the FOW Board!

An Update to Our Members From FOW President Claire Goad

If you can make it, I hope you will join the Friends of Wertheim Board in celebrating the NWR Centennial on Friday, March 14. I also encourage you to help the Wertheim Refuge by participating in one or more of the activities mentioned in this newsletter.

Good things have been happening. First, FOW recently received a donation from the Brookhaven Village Association and a grant from the Post Morrow Foundation, which will allow us to purchase a printer with which to print our newsletter and brochures. This will save money that we can put to use for the Refuge.

In January, the Board was thrilled to receive FOW's 501c3 designation from the IRS. The 501c3 designation allows us to sell things at the Refuge and elsewhere and to apply for grants. It also means that your donations are tax deductible. Many thanks to Peter Hutchings, Ellen Dillon, Anne Meinhold and Patricia Martinkovic for helping me fill out the application, and to the Friends of Blackwater NWR in Maryland for their sponsorship, which allowed us to sell T-shirts and other items while we were waiting for our 501c3.

Last September, FOW participated in the annual yard sale at the Old South Haven Presbyterian Church for the

first time, and we were pleased to add about \$600 to the FOW coffers. Based on this success, we plan to participate again this year. So please save items for the sale – remember “your junk is another person’s treasure.”

As usual, there's lots to be done at the Refuge and never enough funding to do it all. We'd like to help with some of the following projects:

- obtaining materials for fishing platforms
- obtaining gravel and timber for trail improvement
- assisting with refuge website construction
- hiring a seasonal maintenance worker and a public use specialist to provide information and assistance to Refuge visitors
- installing a bubbler near the restrooms.

If you can donate some talent, time, materials or money to help with any of these projects please contact me (286-0910 or cagoad@optonline.net) or Andrea Stewart at the Refuge (286-0485).

Finally, I want to invite you all to attend FOW Board meetings. They're held on the second Thursday of each month except July and August, at 7 p.m. at the Post Morrow Foundation Annex, 16 Bay Road, Brookhaven Hamlet. I look forward to seeing you!

FOW Volunteers Take on Two Big Jobs: Treasurer & Webmaster

When Ellen Dillon moved from Long Island to the Grand Canyon (from where she greets all FOW members in the photo at right). FOW lost not only a Treasurer but also a Webmaster. Now, two other committed FOW members have offered their time and talents to fill both positions. Consuelo (Connie) Ludlam has joined the FOW Board as Treasurer, while John Petraglia is now responsible for the FOW website: www.friendsofwertheim.org.



John invites you to visit the site now to review the interesting information you'll find there about the Wertheim Refuge, FOW projects and our mission.

But plan on visiting again soon because, John says, “The FOW website

will be changing over the next few months to be even more informative about the Refuge and the important contributions of the Friends of Wertheim. I'll be adding links to many of the related nonprofit organizations, private and governmental, in our area, and we hope that those organizations will also link their web sites to ours.”

John adds, “Commercial companies wishing to link to the FOW site are welcome to do so, but please

e-mail me to let us know you are providing a link.” One company that already plans to do this is Glacier Bay Sports – website www.glacierbaysports.com – which, John says, “is inserting a link to FOW's web site to assist their clientele in appreciating the Wertheim Refuge and to assist FOW in promoting our activities.”

John welcomes your suggestions for improving the site. Contact him at johnpetr@optonline.net.

Bill Starke has been promoted to Maintenance Leader, the first person in the Complex ever to hold this position. Said Refuge Manager Patricia Martinkovic, “Over the two and a half years that Bill served as the Complex's Engineering Equipment Operator, his knowledge, skills and abilities tremen-

Who's Who & Who's New at Wertheim

dously increased the efficiency and productivity of Refuge operations. Bill also has a natural ability to lead, and this new position provides him with the authority to assign, oversee and review the work of other maintenance and seasonal positions. Bill is

critically involved in nearly all Refuge projects, from planning to completion.”

Jeremy Feinberg became part of Mark Maghini's Biological team this fall. Trained as a Herpetologist – a scientist whose expertise is the biology of amphibians and reptiles –

Jeremy primarily serves as a biologist at the Complex's Upton Ecological and Research Reserve located at Brookhaven National Laboratory. At Wertheim, he'll also be exploring the vernal pool communities and the abundance of habitat for the mud turtle, which New York State lists as a threatened species.

'Twas a Capital Conference

FOW Board member Kathleen O'Connor was one of 374 NWR delegates who attended the Second Annual National Wildlife Refuge Association Conference held in Washington, D.C. over the last weekend in January.

Throughout the weekend, dignitaries from the Department of the Interior and Fish & Wildlife Service, including Secretary of Interior Gail Norton, addressed the delegates, who represented 46 States and 122 Refuges.

In addition, Kathleen said, "Attendees were kept extremely busy and stimulated by a series of seminars each morning and afternoon on topics that affect all 508 refuges throughout the United States – from invasive species to Comprehensive Management Plans and Visitors Centers."

Funding is a major issue. As Kathleen learned, "The nation's refuges are facing a total deficit of \$2 billion in operating funds for 2003. So, after we gathered on the

steps of the Capitol for a photo [page 1], we scurried off to see our representatives and senators to deliver the message that we need more funds!"

Overall, said Kathleen, "the conference was a great networking opportunity to learn how other Friends Groups throughout the country handle their goals and membership duties."

Wertheim's Biology

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gists will be able to map changes in phragmites distribution over time, which will help in targeting control efforts. More recently colonized areas should be easier to treat.

• Also this fall, we installed a **remote fire weather station** to help USF&WS fire professionals and the Central Pine Barrens

Commission to assess local wildfire danger. To check such information as temperature, wind speed and direction, and precipitation, you can access the weather station's data, at http://raws.boi.noaa.gov/obs/NY_LONG_ISLAND.txt.

• The annual **white-tailed deer census** began in December. Deer densities so far, appear to remain at levels above which damage to native habitat occurs.

Junior Duck Stamp Entries Fly Into Wertheim

The Wertheim Refuge is proud to be the receiving site for New York State entries in this year's Federal Junior Duck Stamp Competition for students in kindergarten to grade 12. As described on the U.S. F&WS website, "A Junior Duck Stamp design is a 'term paper' in which students use visual . . . articulation to show what they have learned. Participants select a species of North American waterfowl, [research it] then depict [it] in an artistic medium."

The NYS competition is being organized by Ducks



Unlimited, in partnership with the LINWR Complex, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, local educators, and Suffolk County Legislator Ginny Fields. DU's Cindy Patterson, a biologist stationed at Wertheim, is leading the effort there, including providing oppor-

tunities for school groups to view waterfowl at the Wertheim, Oyster Bay and Morton Refuges.

From among the entries received by the March 15 deadline, first-place winners will be selected in four age groups, and judges will choose one of them as "State Best of Show," to represent New York in the National Competition. The national winner's artwork will be preserved on the 2003 Junior Duck Stamp, just as the mallards portrayed by Nathan Closson of Montana grace the 2002 stamp shown here.

Children's Corner – Wildlife at Wertheim

Created by FOW Board Members
Connie Ludlam & Faith McCutcheon

To solve this word search puzzle, look for the names of all the animals listed below and circle them as you find them. The words can be found spelled left to right, right to left, up and down or down and up, on a diagonal slant and backwards!

BAT
BEES
BLUE HERON
BLUE JAY
BOX TURTLE
CANADA GEESE
CHIPMUNK

F	R	O	G	E	L	T	R	U	T	X	O	B	X
B	L	U	E	H	E	R	O	N	O	Z	P	E	O
K	L	Y	A	J	E	U	L	B	W	D	O	E	F
S	C	H	I	P	M	U	N	K	H	N	S	S	D
W	E	E	L	N	W	S	B	L	E	W	S	G	E
O	W	L	T	U	G	R	E	B	E	I	U	X	R
O	Z	O	W	E	A	S	E	L	Y	L	M	S	W
D	F	M	O	U	S	E	Q	H	L	D	J	K	O
P	I	N	T	A	I	L	L	U	M	T	A	B	R
E	L	O	V	E	E	N	O	P	I	U	Q	R	C
C	O	R	M	O	R	A	N	T	S	R	E	E	D
K	C	U	D	T	U	N	M	U	S	K	R	A	T
E	V	C	A	N	A	D	A	G	E	E	S	E	W
R	A	C	C	O	O	N	X	A	T	Y	M	I	L

CORMORANT
CROW
DEER
DOE
DUCK

EEL
FLYING SQUIRREL
FROG
GREBE
GULL

MOLE
MOUSE
MUSKRAT
OPOSSUM
OWL

PINTAIL
RACCOON
RED FOX
SLUG
TERN

TOWHEE
VOLE
WEASEL
WILD TURKEY
WOODPECKER

