

Friends of Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge

Quarterly Newsletter

ISSUE 03 January 2018

From the Friends

Love the Refuge? Please consider joining Friends or renewing your membership. The Friends begin the new year with many plans: to continue Friends projects (such as the Eagle Tours, the Pollinator Habitat Project, and the Photo Contest); to participate in community events (such as Hunting and Fishing Days); and to provide continued support of many Refuge Programs and improvements (such as the Kids Fishing Derby, Becoming an Outdoor Family Programs, the Bluebird Trail project, Junior Duck Stamp Contest, Refuge Cleanup Days, School Travel Reimbursement Fund, the Volunteer Banquet, and improvements to wetland control structures and picnic areas). Your dues, and volunteer assistance if you have time, help us continue these efforts. Each of us have special reasons we value the Refuge, but whether its because we love to hunt, fish, boat, take photos, watch wildlife, hike trails or just enjoy the natural beauty; we accomplish the most by working together. *Judy Groskind*

THE PEACE OF WILD THINGS

By Wendell Berry

When despair for the world grows in me and I wake in the night at the least sound in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be, I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds. I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their life with forethought of

grief. I come into the presence of still water. And I feel above me the day-blind stars

waiting with their light. For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

HELP

Anne is no longer able to care for her section of the Bluebird Trail. If you are interested in taking care of a section of the trail, call her at: 618-687-2546

CREATURE FEATURE

Some of noticed this hanging nator gar-Trail. No-the tubes Mason bees in them and (They don't "house",



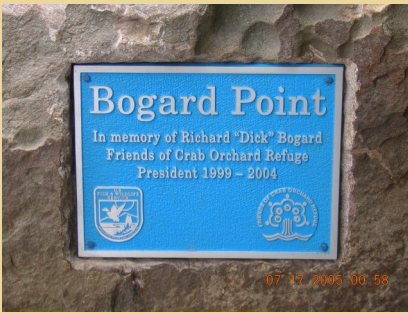
stemmed plants allowed to stand overwinter.) These native bees, about the size of a honeybee, are efficient pollinators of orchards and many important agricultural crops.

Judy Groskind

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THE STORY OF BOGARD POINT



One of the first major projects of the *FRIENDS OF CRAB ORCHARD REFUGE, INC.* was the cleaning and underbrush clearing of a jetty of land just west of the Wolf Creek Causeway. The Refuge still had a working restroom facility and numerous fishermen spent many hours fishing from the lake and roadway banks. The fishermen were often seen eating lunch in their cars or from their truck tailgates. Wolf Creek Causeway with Crab Orchard Creek flowing under that narrow area was an excellent bank and small boat fishing area.



The *Friends* volunteers spent many hours preparing the jetty, assembling tables and grills, and pouring concrete pads for the tables to spread all the way out to the south point with that beautiful view all the way across the lake to the west. The

idea was for children who came with grandpa or Mom/Dad and soon tired of fishing on a slow day to have a place to run and play and families to have a great cool, breezy place to picnic and enjoy wildlife. The charcoal grills added a safe cooking ability and families began coming more and staying longer and as the Refuge built handicap-fishing facilities, even more people



came to this site.

Richard “Dick” Bogard, the first president of the Friends of Crab Orchard Refuge, conceived the project. Dick was familiar with the abundant fish catches at this area as his older brother had only one leg and in the 1970’s and early 1980’s, the brother, with a friend’s help, would tie himself with a rope and let himself down the steep bank for access to this excellent fishing spot.

Bogard, a retired commercial



construction contractor, along with the talents of Vice President, Roy “Skip” Frank, a SIU Professor/Surveyor, and Treasurer Steve May, Design Engineer

and an avid fisherman, led the *Friends* group into a completed project.



After Bogard’s sudden premature death in 2004, a group of *Friends* led by Frank and May petitioned the Regional Office in Minneapolis, MN to name the jetty “Bogard Point.” The dedication and name placard placement were held on July 17, 2005 exactly one year after Bogard’s death.

Under President Steve May, the *Friends* group had a rock and



gravel path installed with plans for a blacktop or concrete path for handicap accessibility when *Friends* funds became available. Money was set aside for improvements in 2008. Concern jetty point to the far western shore of Crab Orchard Lake. What a beautiful sunset and peaceful place to enjoy Crab Orchard wildlife.

THE STORY OF BOGARD POINT

When the derecho felled several trees in 2009, native trees were donated and planted in strategic spots selected by Refuge biologists. The trees would enhance growth and fill in as non-native pines died out. Later in 2014, more trees were donated. The Refuge staff augur dug holes as *Friends* and staff planted large trees. Approximately 20 years after its beginning, Bogard Point is a work in progress to enhance the public enjoyment and viewing of wildlife.

Colleen Bogard



Wildlife and Wild Places Photo Contest



This year's Wildlife and Wild Places Photo Contest Reception was held November 5th at the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Visitors Center. The purpose of the contest was to highlight the beauty and natural wonders of Southern Illinois and the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge and to encourage more people to photograph and share that beauty. This year we had 182 entries, 40 more than last year, including over 30 youth entries. Our contestants came from all over Southern Illinois and even beyond. We had contestants from Murphysboro to Harrisburg and West Frankfort to Vienna as well as some from outside the immediate region. The reception had a wonderful turn out with all seats taken and standing room only.

The quality of this year's photographs was truly exceptional, making the judging a real challenge. Our judges this year were: Jan Sandberg, Susie Phillips, and Jim Osborn, all excellent, experienced photographers in their own right. They considered technical aspects of the photography, artistic appeal, composition and difficulty of shot.

They were very impressed with the quality of the entries overall.

All 182 photo entries were on display at the reception. It is fair to say that many wonderful photos did not win prizes due to the stiff competition. The winning photos were displayed in the front of the conference room and

will stay on display at the Visitor's Center through the end of November. Best of Show and Refuge Staff Choice was awarded to Valerie Freiboth from Marion with the Garden of the Gods photo. This is a night shot of this iconic Southern Illinois landscape. For our youth category, first place went to six-year old Drake Penrod from Jonesboro for Amber Waves and the Refuge Staff Choice went to Olivia Drew from Benton for Reflections. Each winner got a ribbon; 1st, 2nd, 3rd places also got a cash prize. Winners in each of the categories included:

Youth

Honorable Mention—Ty Robinson for Sitting on the Dock of the Lake and Olivia Drew for Red Wing Blackbird
3rd place—Makayla Miller for Under the Canopy
2nd place—Hannah Bender for Strike a Pose
1st place—Drake Penrod for Amber Waves
Refuge staff choice—Olivia Drew for Reflections

Taken on the Refuge

Honorable Mention—Valerie Freiboth for Pablo and Pedro
3rd place—Valerie Freiboth for Help Meeee!
2nd place—Jan Uhls for Cold Turkey
1st place—Jon Montgomery for Springtime Courtship

Floral/tree/plant/fungi

Honorable Mention—Jon Montgomery for Common Milkweed
3rd place—Debbie Bradley for Icy Sunbursts
2nd place—Bob Erxleben for Catching the Rain
1st place—Dwayne Sheumaker for Passion Flower with Insect

Scenic/Landscape

Honorable Mention—Doren Kirk for Sunset
3rd place—Dwayne Sheumaker for Lace Silhouette
2nd place—Jay Zimmerman for Side of the Road with the Moon
1st place—Bob Erxleben for After the Rain

Wildlife

Honorable Mention—Jon Montgomery for Windy Morning
Gosling and Darlene DuFay for Sheer Elegance
3rd Place—Darlene DuFay for Dewy Morning
2nd Place—Ron Clark for Honey, I'm Home
1st Place—Clay Guthrie for Mouthful

Refuge Staff Choice—Valerie Freiboth for Garden of the Gods

Best of Show—Valerie Freiboth for Garden of the Gods



This year's contest was sponsored by the Friends of Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge and the youth prizes were sponsored by Youth Outdoor Education Foundation.

Youth 1st Place “Amber Waves” 2nd Place “Strike a Pose” 3rd Place “Under the Canopy”



by Drake Penrod



by Hannah Bender



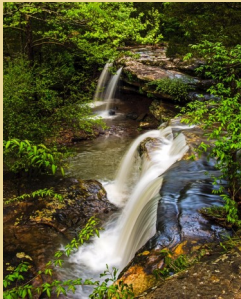
by Makayla Miller

Taken on Refuge—”Springtime Courtship”



by Jon Montgomery

Landscape/Scenic—”After the Rain”



by Bob Erxleben

Flowers/Plants/Trees/Fungi—”Passion Flower with Insect

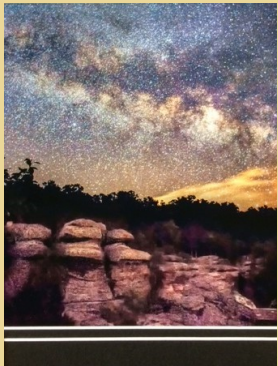


by

Wildlife—”Mouthful”



Best in Show / Refuge Staff Choice—”Garden of the Gods”



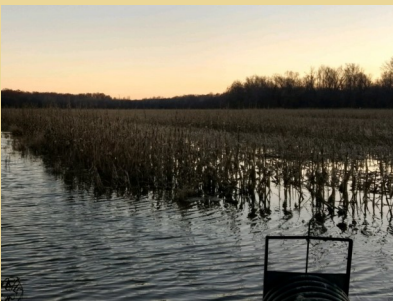
Eagle Tours

The Refuge Eagle tours for 2018 will be held on the last weekend of January and the first weekend of February. Please sign up at the Visitor Center to volunteer as a driver of an aide on one of the days.



WATER GATE CONTROL

Friends recently purchased a new water control gate structure for the Refuge, utilizing funds from a Memorial Fund for Paul Thomas.



Paul was a longtime volunteer who donated over 10,000 hours of his time to Refuge projects.

Pollinator Habitat Project Update

2018 begins the 3rd year of our pollinator habitat project. We look forward to the blooms Spring will bring in the demonstration wildflower garden, ephemeral woodland beds, and milkweed plantings established last year near Harmony trail; and we move forward into a new phase of the project. Have you noticed the barren looking field across the road from the gardens? Refuge staff have worked hard, with multiple controlled burns and chemical treatments, to give it that "barren" look and eliminate invasive species. This winter we will hand-sow an initial 2 acres of that field with native prairie grass and wildflower seed, to begin our work of establishing a 12 acre prairie restoration and interpretive path. This is a long-term project that will require the work of many volunteers. (Watch for information about workdays on our Facebook page.) The initial planting should be a field of blooms in about 3 years. You may have also noticed several plantings of bushes and understory trees around the pollinator gardens. These native flowering shrubs are important nectar and host plants for pollinators, and work well in a home landscape. (It is important that your nursery verify they are natives, and not cultivars or related but non-native species.) Consider: Red Buckeye: A small tree or

shrub (6-24 feet tall) that can be grown in partial sun or light shade. Its tubular red flowers blooms are a favorite of hummingbirds.



An early spring blooming small tree or shrub that does well in many soil types and attracts a large variety of native bees, butterflies and moths. In mid-summer it produces a small reddish purple berry that draws many bird species.



Also consider the more familiar Red-bud and native Dogwood, both of which provide nectar to a large variety of pollinators.

Meet the Refuge Remediation and Restoration Program

Before it was a national wildlife refuge, Crab Orchard was an important player supporting the U.S. effort in World War II. In the 1940s, the War Department managed a munitions manufacturing plant called the Illinois Ordnance Plant. The plant encompassed some 22,000 acres and contained more than 500 buildings used to produce artillery shells, bombs and land mines. After the war, the former plant and an additional 21,500 acres were transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to establish the refuge. The former ordnance facilities were leased to industrial tenants to foster economic growth in the area.

Over the course of seven decades of military and industrial use, parts of the refuge became contaminated with hazardous substances that could pose a risk to human health and the environment. The refuge is now listed on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Priority List due to environmental contamination. The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, known as CERCLA or Superfund, authorizes federal agencies, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to clean up hazardous waste sites and protect human health and the environment.

The Refuge Remediation and Restoration Program has been conducting and overseeing the environmental investigation and cleanup of Crab Orchard Refuge

National Wildlife Refuge for more than 20 years, expending more than \$150 million. Environmental remediation is aimed at reducing the hazards associated with contaminated areas, while restoration efforts seek to restore or replace lost resources. Remediation includes efforts such as excavating and/or treating soil, sediment, water and groundwater contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), heavy metals, explosives and solvents. More than 140 acres have been restored. Groundwater treatment or monitoring will likely continue for several decades until groundwater is restored. Citizens of southern Illinois are benefiting from improved fish and wildlife habitats, better water quality in Crab Orchard Lake, and expanded recreational opportunities such as fishing, boating, bird watching, camping and swimming.

The federal government and private parties continue to conduct environmental investigation and cleanup with support from federal and state regulatory agencies and input from the public. The primary focus of current cleanup activities include the Additional Sites Operable Unit and Area 7 Pesticide Area. Cleanup options are being evaluated for these projects. The Additional Sites Operable Unit is a group of 32 sites located within the restricted area of the refuge. The Area 7 Pesticide Area includes four buildings in a warehouse complex located at the end of Ogden Road in the southeast portion of the refuge. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will ask for

public input on the proposed cleanup actions. More information is available at https://www.fws.gov/refuge/crab_orchard/cleanup/environmental.html. Contact information: Leanne Moore, Senior Operable Unit Specialist at Leanne_Moore@fws.gov or (618) 998-5907.

VOLUNTEER of the QUARTER

Our quarterly volunteer is:
Aimee Hemphill



As coordinator of the Friends Pollinator Habitat Restoration Project, Aimee has put in hundreds of hours researching wildflower species and planning and caring for our demonstration wildflower garden. (You've probably seen her there, dragging around big hoses to keep everything watered.) Aimee also monitors and cares for a section of the Refuge bluebird trail, and is on the Friends Board of Directors.

Submit your choice for Volunteer of the Quarter, along with photograph, by March 15th to:
admin@friendsofconwr.com

Upcoming Quarterly Events

January

Tour January 14th Come and join us for a birding tour guided by Crab Orchard NWR Volunteers. Experienced birders will lead the tour. Binoculars are available at the Refuge Visitor Center for check-out. Program begins at 8:15 am at the Refuge Visitor Center. Reservations are required.

Fee Free Day Monday, January 15th

Bald Eagle Tours January 27th, 28th Guided tours visit eagle nests and areas of the Refuge where eagles may be spotted. Saturdays and Sundays at 8am, 11am and 2pm Meet at the Crab Orchard NWR Visitor Center. Reservations are required. Reservations beginning December 26th.

February

Eagle Tours February 3rd, 4th Guided tours visit eagle nests and areas of the Refuge where eagles may be spotted. Saturdays and Sundays at 8am, 11am and 2pm Meet at the Crab Orchard NWR Visitor Center. Reservations are required. Reservations beginning December 26th.

Tour February 11th Come and join us for a birding tour guided by Crab Orchard NWR Volunteers. Experienced birders will lead the tour. Binoculars are available at the Refuge Visitor Center for check-out. Program begins at 8:15 am at the Refuge Visitor Center. Reservations are required.

Fee Free Day Monday, February 19th

March

Tour March 3rd Come and join us for a birding tour guided by Crab Orchard NWR Volunteers. Experienced birders will lead the tour. Binoculars are available at the Refuge Visitor Center for check-out. Program begins at 8:15 am at the Refuge Visitor Center. Reservations are required.

Volunteer Recruitment Day
Becoming an Outdoors-Family Program March 10th
Want to help out your local wildlife refuge? Come to the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge Volunteer Recruitment Day! Volunteerism is a large part of the Wildlife Refuge system and could include you! Event is at the Visitor's Center from 10 am - 3 pm

Refuge Ponds Open March 15th
Our ponds are open again! Time to do some fishing!

Family Archery Course
Becoming an Outdoors-Family Program March 17th
Bring out the Robin Hood in your family! If you want to build your archery skills with all members of the family, come and join us in a basic introduction of archery. All equipment will be provided for all the members of your family. Program begins at 10 am Program meets at the Martha's Theater. Reservations are required.

Youth Turkey Hunt Workshop
March 24th Sign up early for a day of fun and learning at the Youth Turkey Workshop. Learn all you need to know about turkey hunting, safety and stay for some snacks and prizes! Keep an eye on our website, Facebook Page or call to the Visitor Center for more information about this event.

MEMBERSHIP

Each year, members should renew their membership dues.

Please fill out the form below and mail it to : Friends of CONWR, 8588 Route 148, Marion, IL 62959. Please send this form along with your payment of \$10.00 per person or \$20.00 per family.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

AMOUNT PAID: _____

WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO SERVE ON A COMMITTEE: YES _____ NO _____

COMMITTEE NAME: _____

FRIENDS of CONWR

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