

Beaver Tales

from Unexpected Wildlife Refuge

Spring 2016

It is 60°F on this early March day and the waters of the Refuge are filled with activity. Canada geese, hooded mergansers, wood ducks, American black ducks, mallards and even a couple of diminutive lesser scaup are all pairing up and making their – sometimes raucous – circuit around the length and breadth of the main pond. There are already insects on the wing and last week I came upon a turkey courting a large group of hens. The signs of approaching spring and the Refuge filled with life, including residents and their young, inspire optimism. The woods are filled with the songs of wood frogs and chorus frogs.



A young beaver caught on a trail camera in the main pond, brings sticks and mud to make repairs to a lodge.

***Philadelphia Inquirer* story**

In February, we welcomed Kevin Riordan from the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. He and Pulitzer-winning photographer, Tom Gralish, talked to us about our mission, our legacy, the fauna and flora and our history. We showed them collections of Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci's and her father's, naturalist and famed bird artist Edmund J. Sawyer, sketches and paintings. We are working on archiving these historic pieces and preserving them as part of the Refuge's legacy. The story was published on Sunday, February 28 and you can access it in the “News” section on our website, UnexpectedWildlifeRefuge.org.

Events

Lines on the Pines

Unexpected Wildlife Refuge presented archival-quality prints of Hope's at “Lines on the Pines”, an event created to showcase the talent of artists and artisans in the New Jersey Pine Barrens. We also plan to have tables at the Sustainable Cherry Hill Earth Festival and at Greenfest in Galloway, NJ.



A Carolina duck, or “wood duck”, couple in one of the waterways within the Refuge.

Outreach and education

Comprising 767 acres of pristine wild lands, the Refuge provides a peaceful and necessary sanctuary for wildlife indigenous to the New Jersey Pine Barrens ecosystem. But protection efforts everywhere else in the state and the country cannot be accomplished unless people understand the need and the value to wildlife of learning how to peacefully coexist with them. In that spirit, over the last few months, we have worked with the city of Toms River, NJ, to try to convince them to install nonviolent beaver devices on a local lake instead of killing the family of innocent animals due to a few isolated complaints by neighbors.

We visited local government officials, created an online petition that gathered thousands of signatures and enlisted the cooperation of New Jersey Animal Protection League, New Jersey Humane Society, attorney Dante DiPirro and the state senate offices of Senator Raymond Lesniak and Senator Corey Booker. The story was covered in all the local daily and weekly newspapers. Despite our concerted efforts and the outpouring of public outrage, the mayor ordered traps to be set. Although the total so far is in question, we know that several beavers have been trapped and killed. We have not given up, however, and are still pushing for nonlethal alternatives for the future.

We also reached out to the city of Franklin, NJ, and a housing development in Mullica Hill, NJ, to help them mitigate conflicts caused by local beavers; worked with two local Boy Scout troops to help their Scouts prepare for graduation to Eagle; and were again successful in protecting the Refuge during hunting season with a dozen local volunteers patrolling to prevent hunters from illegally luring wildlife from the Refuge and trespassing to hunt within our borders.



A great blue heron perched on top of one of the beaver lodges, reflected in the water.

Earth Day

Unexpected will be hosting a cleanup on Saturday, April 23, from 11 am until 1 pm. We are inviting volunteers to help us clean the trash from Piney Hollow Road, which is adjacent to the Refuge. Cleaning the roadways keeps garbage from entering the Refuge and is a great way to meet our supporters, reconnect with volunteers from hunting patrols over the fall and winter months and to enjoy the beginnings of spring weather. We will be cleaning the roads, rain or shine! Everything you need will be provided and we will host a free, vegan lunch at 1 pm back on the Refuge for all volunteers. E-mail us at director@unexpectedwildliferefuge.org to sign up!

New ways to help Unexpected

We love our supporters. And we understand that everyone needs flexibility and options, even when making a gift to the Refuge. We depend on our donors, volunteers and other supporters to keep this Refuge for wildlife a forever sanctuary.

~~Amazon Wish List~~

~~One of the most popular and exciting ways to help us is through our Amazon Wish List. Just log into your Amazon account, find "Your Lists" at the top of the screen, choose "Find a List or Registry" and type in "Unexpected Wildlife Refuge" to find our list of needed items. You can also visit us on our Facebook page at "Unexpected Wildlife Refuge" and our Website "UnexpectedWildlifeRefuge.org" for a link to our Amazon Wish List.~~

~~Amazon Smile~~

~~You can support Unexpected Wildlife Refuge when you shop with Amazon. Now with your purchase, you can help us continue our work keeping this beautiful Refuge an inviolate sanctuary for wildlife. Just make your purchases through Smile.Amazon.com and type in "Unexpected Wildlife Refuge" to choose it as your charity from the list.~~

Planned giving

Please consider us when planning your wills and trusts. Unexpected has been providing sanctuary to New Jersey's indigenous species for more than half a century. One of the most valuable gifts to us is planned giving. Your estate planner will ask for our name and tax identification number. That is all you need to begin assuring that Unexpected Wildlife Refuge will continue to exist for the next 50 years and for as long as wildlife need a wild and inviolate safe haven.

Finally, a plea again for your E-mail address in order to reduce costs for the Refuge and the environment.

For wildlife everywhere, thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Veronica Van Hof".

Veronica Van Hof, Director

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