

New onsite manager hired

We are pleased to announce that we have hired Michael Puleo as our onsite manager for the Refuge. An avid naturalist, backpacker and forager, Michael is a long- time animal and environmental activist, a vegan and holds a BS in Environmental Science. Raised in the NJ Pinelands region, his experience and knowledge of indigenous animals and plants will be a welcome part of our public outreach and education efforts. You can contact Michael through our office telephone (856.697.3541) or E-mail (manager@unexpectedwildliferefuge.org).



Refuge appoints new Trustee to Council

Leor Veleanu has been appointed as a fifth Trustee on our Council, all dedicated volunteers who oversee the mission of the Refuge. Leor is an attorney dedicated to protecting the rights of all species, including human and non-human animals. He is passionate about photographing wildlife, especially birds, and has been a vegan for over two decades.

Request for your E-mail address

Please help reduce our costs, environmental damage and receive our timely bi-monthly electronic newsletters: send name & E-mail address to info@unexpectedwildliferefuge.org.



Refuge attends annual Lines on the Pines event



educational stand.

Trustees Dave Sauder and Janet Romano reported a busy day at the annual Lines on the Pines event that took place in March, with lots of interest in the work of the Refuge. Thanks to those who visited and supported our

Refuge moving forward to replace cabin

Our headquarters building, which we affectionately refer to as the cabin, has suffered structural deterioration as a result of its age. The most important function for this building is to provide living quarters for our onsite manager, a critical component of keeping the Refuge – and wildlife – safe from harm. Once we have a firm figure for a new, modest and environmentally-friendly building, we will begin raising funds in earnest. *You do not have to wait for this appeal!* We have set up a special account for this purpose and your donations, now, whatever the amount, will be gratefully received.

Another successful Eagle Scout project at the Refuge



Scout seeking Eagle Scout status. With tireless supervision by Refuge Trustee Dave Sauder, Jake and his 'crew' spent a day clearing one long section of our trails. We thank Jake and his friends for this great service to the Refuge. We have much more to do and you can contact us to volunteer, whether you are a Boy Scout looking for a community service project or just want to help the Refuge.

Off-road vehicle invasion stopped by Refuge manager

Once again, people have tried to use the Refuge as a venue for 'off-roading'. Luckily, Michael heard the noise and was able to find the two men and their vehicles on Refuge land. He calmly explained to the men that not only were their activities illegal, they are responsible for damage to delicate habitat, plants and animals.

Squirrel killing 'contests' in New Jersey



There have been at least two squirrel killing contests in NJ this year (New Gretna and Winslow). The Refuge has protested these barbaric events (see photo, Janine Motta & Trustee Dave Sauder) that teach children to view wildlife as mere 'things' to be killed wantonly. We are also supporting the call by the Animal Protection League of New Jersey and the Humane Society of the United States for a statewide ban on wildlife killing contests in New Jersey. Write your state legislators and urge them to introduce legislation to ban *all* killing contests.



NJ first state to ban wild animals in traveling circuses

We are delighted to report that New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy has signed legislation making it illegal to use wild and exotic animals in traveling circuses and other acts. Known as Nosey's Law, named after a 36-year-old African elephant used in traveling circuses across the country (now in a sanctuary), the bill passed the NJ Assembly last October. New Jersey is the first state to pass this kind of legislation. Thank you to everyone who contacted their NJ Assembly members and Governor Murphy urging support for this important bill. Our hope is that other states will soon follow with similar humane legislation. If you live outside New Jersey, you can urge your state legislators to initiate such legislation.

Snapshots of Life at the Refuge

Another muskrat lodge...and sighting

Miller Pond, one of our lush wetlands areas, seems to be a favorite place for muskrats. We rarely get to see these illusive creatures, but we know they are there from the extensive lodges they build (pictured). Michael was lucky enough to get an early-morning glimpse of one as he swam up to and quickly disappeared into this lodge, possibly to spend the rest of the day until dusk. A much-persecuted large rodent, muskrats – who are not rats at all – are important in the natural 'management' of plant growth in wetlands.



Bald eagle sighted in main pond



This bald eagle landed on a stump protruding from the main pond on a recent windy day. He at first was standing with the wind coming from behind, causing his feathers to ruffle. He soon turned into the wind, maybe to be more comfortable. The Refuge is home to nesting pairs of these iconic individuals.

Birds of a feather and others flock together

On a recent, beautiful winter day, Michael sat on the shore of the main pond and was treated to a rich avian and chelonian (turtles) display. Three Canada geese were resting and grooming on one of the islands at the other end of the pond. After about 20 minutes, the trio moved into the partially ice-covered

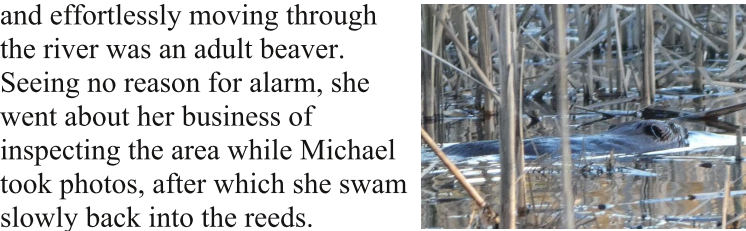


water and came closer to Michael's location. An hour later, the scene had swelled to include 36 geese, seven mallard ducks and three snapping turtles (who can be active all winter long). "All you need is a bit of patience, and the wildlife will make their presence known," observed Michael. Just another exciting day at the Refuge!

A beaver and Refuge manager share a moment

While on patrol, Michael reached the river intersecting Miller Pond and Unexpected Rd. After an hour overlooking the lush native grasses, sedges, cattail colonies and numerous waterfowl, he noticed a dark form in the waterway. Quietly

and effortlessly moving through the river was an adult beaver. Seeing no reason for alarm, she went about her business of inspecting the area while Michael took photos, after which she swam slowly back into the reeds.



Eastern painted turtles in main pond



One of the thrills of quietly observing the animals living at the Refuge is to watch turtles, like these two eastern painted turtles, slowly make their way up onto logs for sunbathing. Of course, if we

try to get too close, the turtles quickly drop into the water and take off in different directions. If we are patient, we can see a head appear, often a relatively long distance from the original log, as the individual comes up for air.

Colorful red velvet ant

This female red velvet ant was seen scurrying through fallen pine needles and 'flowers'. Although known as ants, this insect is a type of wasp. The females are wingless and look like large ants, whereas the males have wings and can fly. Because the female can give a painful sting, they are also called 'cow killers'. The only animals in real danger, however, are the ground-dwelling wasps who become food for the red velvet ant's larvae.



Close encounter of the avian type



We do not often get a close look at black vultures, also known as American black vultures. Michael was fortunate to have a camera available when this relatively young individual swooped down from the sky and sat on a branch nearby to bask in the sunlight. Although some people view them as 'ugly', we see them as beautiful, vital members of a thriving ecosystem.

American grass spider and web near main pond

Spiders are present at the Refuge, as they are elsewhere. They are fascinating to observe, but often difficult to identify based on the human penchant for classifying everyone and everything. Here is just one of the many individuals we have had the pleasure of seeing at the Refuge. Thanks to Linda Buyukmihci-Bey who did some research and identified her (the spider) as an American grass spider.



Tufted titmouse studies our manager



On a cold winter day (notice ice on branch), this tufted titmouse stared at Michael while having her photo taken. We say 'her', but unless you have a female and male together, it may be difficult to discern that the forehead patch is larger in the more dominant male. Because this species is generally non-migratory, we assume this individual is spending her life at the

Refuge and, we hope, will have a family soon, maybe in an abandoned woodpecker nest.

Reminiscing: Our co-founder's educational presentations



In addition to being an accomplished artist and naturalist, Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci used her experiences to teach others the wonders of our natural world. Soon after she co-founded the Refuge with her husband, Cavit Buyukmihci, Hope decided that

she needed to put her hours of studying nature to good use. With her easel, huge pad of paper and colorful chalk, she would give presentations to any who would listen: school groups, civic gatherings, even other wildlife enthusiasts like at an Atlantic Audubon Society meeting shown in the photos (circa 1974). Kevin Inman was in the audience, took the photos and was kind enough to share them with us recently.



Reminiscing: Passenger pigeons mural



This mural in the Dennison, OH, Post Office, was created by Edmund J Sawyer, father of Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci. It is a

beautiful rendition of now extinct passenger pigeons. When he was alive, Edmund related to us that he used to see the sky obscured by these wonderful, gentle birds during their migrations. Tragically, hunting and a view that they were 'plentiful' eliminated this species from the planet. This should be a poignant reminder that *all* non-human species are threatened – despite how many individuals there are and what officials say about them – and that there is no such thing as overpopulation in nature.

Helping wildlife and the Refuge today

Unexpected Wildlife Refuge is home and sanctuary for hundreds of animal and plant species. Some of these are highly endangered and our Refuge ensures them the best chance possible for survival. We depend on the support of our donors to keep the Refuge safe. We – and the wildlife – could not exist without you. *May we rely on your continued support?* A donation today – no matter how small – will help us to continue our important work and secure the future of the Refuge. We care for these 767 acres with a very small operating budget, a paid staff of one and a completely voluntary Council of Trustees. Despite this, even our small operating costs continue to exceed our donations.



Helping wildlife and the Refuge in the future

Please remember Unexpected Wildlife Refuge when planning your will and estate. It is an easy, effective and lasting way to help the Refuge... and wildlife. Provide your estate planner with our name, address and tax identification number (23-7025010). This is one of the most important gifts the Refuge can receive. If you have already included us in your future plans, thank you!

This issue of our newsletter is brought to you by a grant from Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics. It is the result of a team effort involving people dedicated to protecting wildlife and the Refuge. Contributors to this edition: Dave Sauder, Michael Puleo, Nedim C Buyukmihci and Sarah Kite

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