



1st Place Adult Scenery
Canoes and Cypress
Ramdeo Seepaul



2nd Place Adult Scenery
Lotus Leaf Jewel
Kathy Seawright

Annual Amateur Nature Photography Contest

Winners were announced in October and are on display in the Refuge Visitor Center.

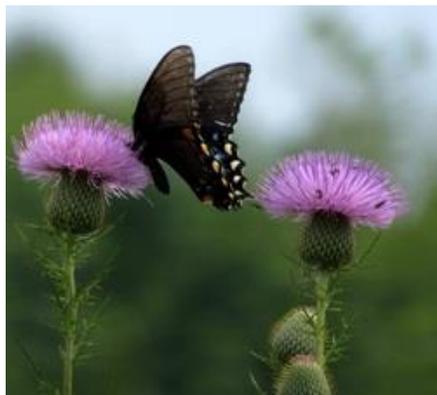
For details concerning the 2014 contest, please visit the Friends' webpage or inquire at the Refuge.



1st Place Adult Wildlife
Honey
Ramdeo Seepaul



2nd Place Youth Division
Run Through the Forest
Parker McMullen

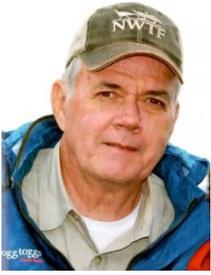


1st Place Youth Division
Black Swallowtail Collecting Nectar
Kylee McMullen



2nd Place Adult Wildlife
Watch for Curves
Susan Hamilton

From the FONR President- Larry Box



As I write this I am reminded of the old western song “Back in the Saddle Again” and of Willie Nelson’s “On the Road Again.” This is my second time to serve as president of “Friends,” and like Willie, I am looking forward to making “music with my

friends” by working with all of you who want to support Refuge efforts to aid wildlife. Our by-laws state Friends of Noxubee was incorporated “to promote appreciation and conservation of wildlife and habitat at the federal wildlife refuges in the state of Mississippi and, more specifically, at the Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge.” (Incorporation occurred prior to name change to Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge.)

Friends of Noxubee has a long history of supporting Refuge staff and providing activities which do promote appreciation and conservation of wildlife. Friends’ officers, directors, and I are looking forward to working with Project Leader Steve Reagan and the Refuge staff to continue the joint efforts to aid wildlife and provide programs to encourage public use and appreciation of Refuge assets.

I certainly want to thank outgoing president, Jim Taylor and vice president, Gale Hagood for the many hours of work they gave Friends during the past two years. Both devoted themselves to making Friends’ activities successful.

As we begin the new year, I encourage each of you to participate in Friends activities and to invite someone to join Friends. Being involved in Friends is enjoyable and rewarding. For those who enjoy nature and the great outdoors, it is an ideal form of recreation.

Volunteers Can "Live" on Refuge

The Refuge now has facilities for long-term volunteers to park recreational vehicles, enabling them to live onsite for weeks at a time. After applying on-line (<http://www.volunteer.gov>) and being selected, each volunteer couple is asked to volunteer a minimum of 24 hours each week or 32 hours per single individual for a minimum of 8 weeks and maximum of 3 months. Duties include assisting staff with everyday needs related to the refuge hunt program and assisting staff with the refuge visitor services program and biological monitoring programs. In exchange for the work time, the Refuge provides, at no cost, a full RV hook up, laundry facilities, and a bath-house. Volunteers are already taking advantage of living in this beautiful spot for a short time while giving valuable service to the Refuge.

Refuge Manager Steve Reagan’s Reflections



You know how it is when you go somewhere and have to wait in a room you would rather not be in and across the room is a stack of magazines as your only company? I recently saw an article in Mother Earth Living titled, Season of Peace, authored by Carol Venolia.

The opening paragraph read, “TRY THIS EXERCISE: Close your eyes. Breathe deeply. Imagine yourself somewhere you feel totally at peace, relaxed and revived.” Well, I had nothing better going on, so I tried it and enjoyed a beautiful spot I had visited recently in the Noxubee Wilderness Area just north of Bluff Lake. On opening my eyes, I felt good, better.

The article went on to discuss how walks in the woods have unique health benefits including decreases in cortisol levels, blood pressure and heart rate. The author also stated when compared to walks in other environments, walks in the woods “enhance immune strength and boost resistance to stress – benefits that may stay with us for up to 30 days.” If this is not describing a typical experience at the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge, I don’t know where the author is talking about!

Whether or not you have to deal with ice and snow, winter is a hard time for many people. Days are shorter, often temperatures are lower and it is just too easy to talk yourself into staying at home bundled up under the blankets. But, once you get outside and start walking in the woods, it’s true about feeling relaxed. Even sitting here at my desk I can imagine the downed leaves of fall crackling and crumbling under each of my steps while around me I see a squirrel scramble to the top of a tree and flash of the white tail of a deer as it bounds out sight. Then after having walked awhile, I picture myself sitting down on a log next to a small stream; I’m picturing Loakfoma Creek. While I snack on my goodies, to my surprise a pair of otters make their way by, and they flush a wood duck that was hidden from my view. Wow, I just ruined any chance of getting any office work done! Talk later, I’m going for a walk.

How Fast Can a Bald Eagle Fly?

A flying Bald Eagle can reach speeds of about 75 miles per hour. When going long distances or just moving around their territory, they tend to fly 20-30 miles an hour.



Photo by Lawrence Croft

Membership

Our fall membership drive is still underway, and we thank those who have already renewed their annual memberships. A big “Thank You!” goes to those who have chosen to become life members of the Friends. If you have not yet joined or renewed your membership, now is the time in order to be ready for our upcoming “Members-Only” event sometime in January. The Refuge staff will be hosting another behind-the-scenes look at some special activity or project. The past members-only events have been so interesting and we’d love to have you join us. But to do so, you must be a member – so join/renew today. You may access a membership form on the Friends’ website at www.friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org/-membership.html or at the Refuge Visitor Center. If you are unsure of your membership status you may email the Membership Chair at friendsofnoxubeerefuge@gmail.com or call 323-4098.

Anna Marie Raspberry

Just Something to Keep in Mind

Researchers analyzed data from 40 published papers and found evidence that volunteers had a 20 percent lower risk of death than non-volunteers. In addition, volunteers had lower levels of depression, increased life satisfaction and enhanced well-being.

General Membership Meeting
January 16, 6:30 p.m.

Tisdale Auditorium
Noxubee Visitor Center

January 16 Program Announced

January 16 is the next quarterly Friends of Noxubee Refuge general meeting. Dr. Jeff Harris, the relatively new Extension Bee Specialist who is internationally known and comes from the Bee Lab in Baton Rouge, will be discussing the state of Bee Keeping in the United States, Mississippi and Mississippi State University's Bee Research Program.

The quarterly meeting will be in the Tisdale Auditorium of the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge. The meeting is open to the public, and there is no charge. Light refreshments and a social time will follow the presentation.

EAGLE UPDATE

This photo was taken December 30, 2013, with a DSLR and 500mm lens hand-held with a monopod. It shows that the eagles are interested as they were bringing new material and placing it in the nest.

By Lawrence Croft



Refuge Has Facebook Page

The Refuge now has a Facebook page! Check it out to see day-to-day events that occur on Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee Wildlife Refuge.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sam-D-Hamilton-Noxubee-National-Wildlife-Refuge/226372510874286>



Junkyard Planet

By Adam Minter

Son of an American junkyard owner, veteran journalist Adam Minter, traces the journey of American junk cars, discarded Christmas tree lights, yesterday's newspapers, and other items Americans trash daily in JUNKYARD PLANET. Through the journey, Minter

introduces memorable characters from across the globe.

Scrap peddlers who subsist on their collections, laborers who sort, by hand, pieces of shredded metals from autos, and boardroom executives who have figured out how to build fortunes from what we throw away are a few of the characters Minter describes. From back-alley Chinese computer recycling operations to high-tech facilities capable of processing a jumbo jet's worth of recyclable trash every day, Minter fully explores the hidden world of globalized recycling and reclamation with a wry sense of humor and a passion for getting his hands dirty.

Submitted by Florence Box

Maroon Volunteers to Help in Plant Garden

Mississippi State University Maroon Volunteers will be at the Refuge January 18 for a service project to begin rehabilitating the native plant garden located at the Visitor Center on the south shore of Bluff Lake. Volunteers will help weed, mulch, trim vegetation and complete minor repairs to the brick walkways. Volunteers are encouraged to bring gloves and garden tools including shovels and racks. Because of MLK Day, volunteers will receive a boxed lunch for participating. Volunteers are an integral part of the Refuge now and the help from this group of college students is greatly appreciated.



is an independent, nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, dedicated to conserving our natural resources through volunteer work and fund raising.

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*Contributions to this newsletter were made by
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JOIN FONR TODAY!

Individual yearly memberships
start at only \$15.
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For a membership form or information about the Refuge, call 662-323-5548, visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/FriendsofNoxubeeRefuge>, or <http://www.friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org>.

2014 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP DATES

January 16, April 17, June 19
and September 18