



TAKING ACTION THROUGH EDUCATION

## MESSAGE FROM YOUR FRIENDS' BOARD



Spring is right around the corner! At Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, spring is Show Time. Thanks to the great partnership between the Friends and the Refuge, there are lots of free, fun and educational events going on for the family. Special thanks go to Refuge Visitors Services Manager Keena Graham and her staff, and to our board members and volunteers, who have done so much to get these events lined up. Whether it's a free guided tour of Wildlife Drive, or coming to an educational presentation, or participating in a bird walk, or seeing the night time stars through powerful telescopes, or helping out on refuge cleanup day, come on out! It's a great time of the year to be outside.

If you are not yet a Friends member, now is a great time to join! Your donations are tax deductible, and go to a very good cause right here in your own backyard: connecting people with nature.



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<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofForsytheNWR/>

This newsletter is a publication of the FRIENDS OF FORSYTHE, a non-profit, 501(c)3, tax-exempt corporation that works closely with the Refuge. Friends are the bridge between the Refuge and the community, and contribute to its future by helping people understand that their actions today determine the legacy we leave for tomorrow.

Our mission is to support the purposes for which the Refuge was established and includes the following:

- For use as a sanctuary for migratory birds and non-migratory animals
- For protection of natural resources
- For the conservation of non-game, threatened and endangered species
- For promoting environmental education and experiences for children and adults
- For the development of other wildlife-oriented experiences that do not interfere with the primary mission of the Refuge.

We invite you to join. You can serve on the Board of Directors, assist as members of Advisory Committees, work in the Visitor Information Center and Nature Store, or provide your support by being a member. Please share your interest and experience. For more information, please email [friendsofforsythe@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofforsythe@gmail.com) or go to <https://friendsofforsythe.org/>

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**  
**Evenings at Forsythe**  
**and other Upcoming Events**

**Saturdays from 12-2 PM, Free Guided Jitney Tours of Wildlife Drive** sponsored by the Friends. If you are interested, please RSVP by calling 609-652-1665 Wed-Sun 10-3 PM to assure your spot, since there is a high demand and limited seating. Board member Mar-Jo Atack reports “We’ve had a great response to using the Jitneys! I’ve received a lot of positive feedback regarding the more comfortable seats and easier access, and we’re getting more and more people signing up. A big shout out to our volunteer interpreters too--they are fantastic!” Donations are always appreciated.

**Saturday Feb 15, 10-12:30: Great Backyard Bird Count Workshop.** The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a big weekend of birding for nature lovers across the globe! Over 160,000 people in 130 countries participate each February to collect real-time data about winter bird distributions and abundance. Help us tally the birds at the Forsythe while contributing to real scientific research.

You must register for this event by emailing [watershed@marine.rutgers.edu](mailto:watershed@marine.rutgers.edu).

**Saturday Feb 15, 4:00 PM “Looking for Love: Woodcock Mating Dance”.** Spend the day after Valentine's Day learning about the seductive dance of the Woodcock from our bird walk leader Kyle Chelius. Everyone will meet inside of the Visitor Information Center for an orientation before heading out to the field on the back side of Wildlife Drive to watch the Woodcock walk.

**Thursday Feb. 20, 6:30-8 PM Evenings at Forsythe “Pinelands 101: A Walk Through the Pines”**  
Pinelands 101: A walk through the Pines  
This lively presentation includes sights and sounds while taking the audience on an insightful virtual walk in the woods familiarizing them with the flora and fauna of the Pinelands. The talk will also focus on the importance of water to the area while

highlighting cultural and historical resources of the reign. The goal of this program is to raise awareness, appreciation and further stewardship of the Pinelands by revealing this unique but fragile treasure.

Joel M. Mott, Principal Public Programs Specialist - New Jersey Pinelands Commission,

Mr. Mott currently leads the Commission’s efforts to raise awareness and understanding of the Pinelands. Well-traveled with experience in both environmental and historical interpretation his career comprises a wide range of positions from park ranger to museum curator. He assisted NJN in their production of the award-winning documentary, Spirit of the Bay, about the traditions and heritage of the Barnegat Bay. In the past he also has held interpretive and forestry positions at several National Parks, Historic Sites, and Forests including: Beaverhead National Forest (MT); Big Hole National Battlefield (MT); Gettysburg National Military Park (PA); and Eisenhower National Historic Site (PA). Mott is an avid outdoors enthusiast who has also served as Chairman of his local Environmental Commission.

**Saturday Feb. 22, 10-2:30 PM “Project Nest Watch Workshop”** Project Nest Watch is a citizen science project through the Cornell Lab of Ornithology that aims to collect data on how birds nest. Anyone can participate! If you are interested in birds or wildlife then you are invited to attend a Nest Watch training and nest box building workshop at the Forsythe Wildlife Refuge on Saturday February 22nd from 10 am - 12:30 pm.

You must register by emailing: [watershed@marine.rutgers.edu](mailto:watershed@marine.rutgers.edu).

**Saturday March 7, 2-5 PM at Stockton University Alton Auditorium “Gone Missing—3 Billion Birds”.** Dr. Adriaan Dokter of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and a regional panel of conservationists will discuss the issues. Come learn about the avian crisis (one in four birds gone since 1970) and how YOU can help make a difference! The event is FREE but you must register at [Eventbright.com](http://Eventbright.com) under "Gone Missing".

**Thursday March 19, 6:30-8 PM Evenings at Forsythe “NJ Bald Eagle Project”.** Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ Biologist, Larissa Smith presents a program on the NJ Bald Eagle Project. She will discuss the programs history from the 1980’s when there was only one nesting pair of eagles left in the state, to today’s population of 189 active pairs. Learn about these magnificent birds, their story of recovery and what research and management is being done today to ensure their future in NJ.

**Friday March 27, 7-10 PM “A Starry Night at Forsythe”.** Back by popular demand! A fun family event. Last year's star gazing event was such a success that the South Jersey Astronomy Club agreed to come back for a second year. This will be a fun night for all filled with wonder and amazement. Gates are set to open at 6:30pm and we'll have light refreshments.

**Thursday April 16, 6:30-8 PM Evenings at Forsythe “Native Landscaping and Water Conservation”**  
 Shari Kondrup from Brick Utilities is going to show you how you can have a beautiful and ecologically-friendly garden by using native plants that require less water than exotic plants.

**Saturday April 25, 8 AM “Earth Day Clean-Up and Bio Blitz”** (Register at [Joshua.baker@fws.gov](mailto:Joshua.baker@fws.gov))  
 Join a group or dedicated volunteers in their efforts to help the refuge maintain a healthy habitat for our wildlife. Stay longer to assist our biologists in identifying the different plant and animal species in various parts of the refuge. Light refreshments will be served. Contact volunteer coordinator, Joshua Baker, to register at: [joshua\\_baker@fws.gov](mailto:joshua_baker@fws.gov) or call 609-382-7647.

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**FOR SALE!  
 ELECTRIC POWERED TRAM!**



Friends of Forsythe has an all-electric tram available, model “citEcar enclosed transport buddy 14p”. We used it for years to give once-weekly free public guided tours of our 8-mile wildlife drive. It was originally bought new, and donated to us by a board member. It has new batteries, has been garage kept, and is in good working condition. Please reply to [billharclerode@gmail.com](mailto:billharclerode@gmail.com) if interested.

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**SECOND ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC  
 COMPETITION COMING SOON!**

Information about entering the Second Annual Photographic Competition will be posted mid-March. Last year had 330 entries, lets see if we can beat that this year.

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**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS  
OF FORSYTHE BIG NATURE YEAR!  
Prizes contributed by Friends**

Most birds:  
Lester Block, Dianna Lieter, Debbie Dunn

Most Cedar Bonnet Island birds:  
Dianna Lieter, Steve Luell

Most deCamp Trail birds:  
Dianna Lieter

Most mammals seen:  
Steve Luell

Most butterflies seen:  
Tie between Steve Luell and Dianna Lieter

Most plant species seen:  
Steve Luell

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**GET YOUR BIRDING BINOCULARS: ANNUAL  
OPTICS SALE AT CAPE MAY BIRD  
OBSERVATORY**

On Saturday & Sunday, April 18 - 19, 2020, from 9 to 5, Cape May Bird Observatory will hold its 25th Annual Optics Sale at the Center for Research & Education (CRE), 600 Rt. 47 N. Cape May Court House (Goshen), NJ, 08210.

Representatives from Kowa, Leica, Manfrotto & Gitzo, Opticron, Swarovski, Vortex, & Zeiss will be available on Saturday to showcase their optics and accessories and help you choose what best fits your needs and budget. Several of the sales representatives stay through Sunday morning. And, of course, CMBO will have staff and volunteers on hand to help as well.

Feel free to call Cape May Bird Observatory's Northwood Center at 609.400.3868 with any questions.

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**UPCOMING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION  
EVENTS IN SCHOOLS**



*Les Murray, board member, engaging the kids in identifying animals by their pelts*

Our Friends outreach program is going very well. Every year, the number of schools and children in the program increases! Leading this program for many, many years is board member Les Murray, along with fellow board member Mar-Jo Atack and other volunteers. For example, last year, Les and his volunteers taught over 400 kids in just five months. Here are examples of the upcoming school programs that Les and his team are leading. If you are interesting in helping out at any of these events, especially the at-refuge events, please email us at [friendsofforsythe@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofforsythe@gmail.com) with the heading EE Volunteer.

- Feb. 11 Washington Avenue School
- Feb. 19 Pennsylvania Avenue School Science Day
- March 10 Washington Avenue School Urban Birding
- March 16 Gloucester Township School – 16 science teachers at refuge
- April 14 Washington Avenue School Urban Birding
- April 22 FAA Science Day
- April 24 Leeds Avenue School 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at refuge
- May 29 Egg Harbor Twp middle school at refuge
- June 2 Sovereign Avenue School at refuge

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