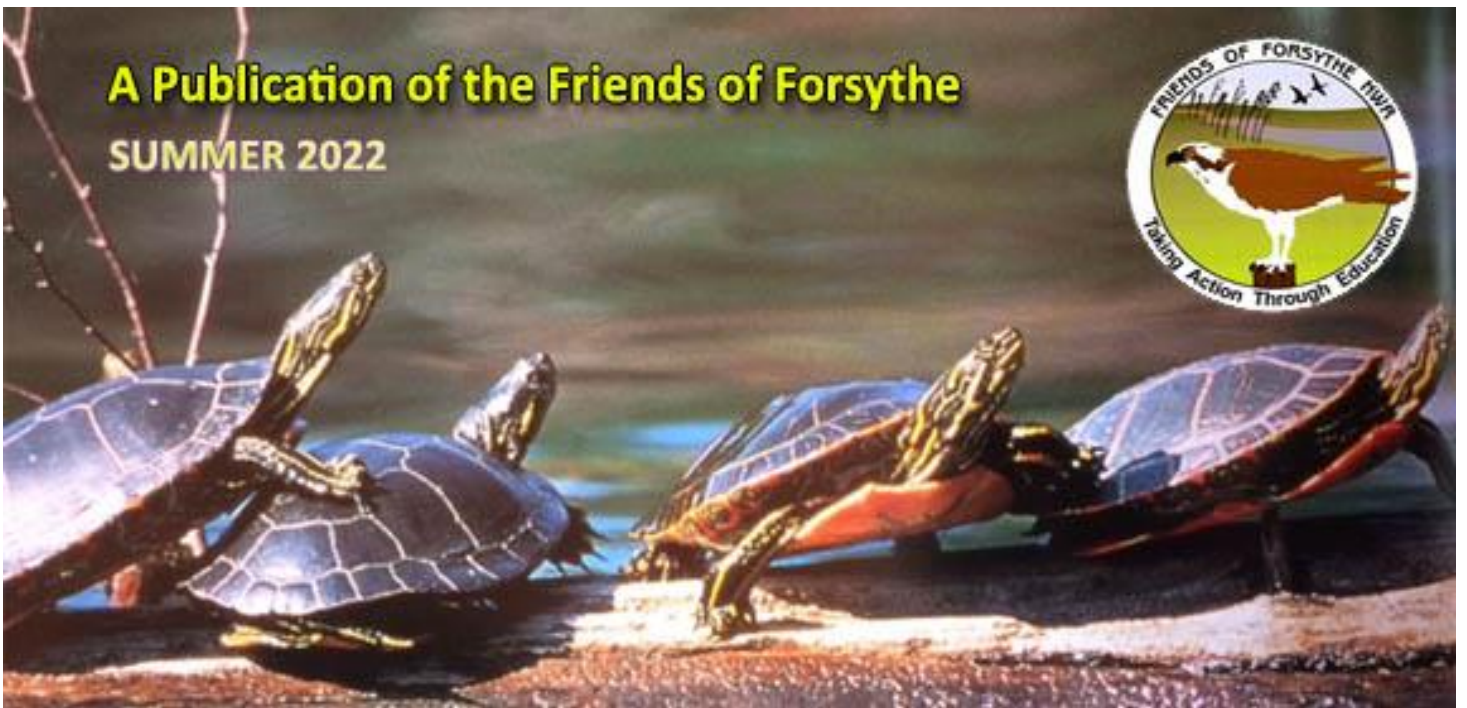


# A Publication of the Friends of Forsythe

SUMMER 2022



## Saying Goodbye to Board of Trustee Members

By Rae Griffiths, President of Board of Trustees

**Les Murray** – Before his retirement this past May, Les Murray served on the Friends of Forsythe Board for over 14 years and was the driving force behind the environmental education programs that the Friends provided to school groups and scout troops both on the refuge and in local classrooms and community centers. Les was also a key organizer of the Hooked on Fishing, Not on Drugs fishing derby each May. Les's dedication to the mission of the Friends earned him the distinction of Friend of the Year in 2019, and we feel very fortunate that Les continues to help out with education programs and special events, while also serving the refuge with garbage collection on a regular basis. We wish Les great enjoyment in his well-deserved retirement and extend our deepest gratitude for his long, faithful service.

**Tom Touhy**- After over 10 years of involvement on the Friends of Forsythe Board, Tom followed Les's lead and also retired from the Board in May. Tom was serving as Secretary at the time and had also served as President and Vice President of the Board in the past. Tom helped with many projects over his tenure on the Board, especially with installing the boardwalk planks that honor and memorialize refuge lovers and were a means of

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/>

revenue for the Friends to help support refuge initiatives. Tom will be sorely missed, and we greatly appreciate his continued support.

**Stephanie Sanchez** – Stephanie served as President of the Board and later as Secretary. She was a huge supporter of the Evenings at Forsythe and always attended to ensure visitors had cookies and drinks! Stephanie helped lead efforts at our Forsythe in Art event where Alice McEnerney Cook's art was displayed for fundraising. She kept Friends group operations running and always brought a smile and hearty laugh to meetings. She has moved West to be closer to family.

**Capt. Alex Majewski** – As a skilled birder, Alex helped coordinate the Friends of Forsythe World Series of Birding team for several years, raising money to allow the Friends to support the refuge. Alex also assisted with education programs and special events and served as Secretary as well. Alex leaves us to pursue seasonal opportunities at Everglades National Park and continue his sport fishing pursuits in New Jersey.

SO, as you can see, we need new board members to help us support the refuge! Do you love Forsythe and want to make it the best it can be? Do you live in Atlantic, Cape May or Southern Ocean counties? Do you have 5-15 hours/week to devote to help running a dynamic non-profit that benefits the EB Forsythe NWR? If you answered "YES" to these questions, a Board position with the Friends of Forsythe might be for you. If you are interested in contributing your time and talents as a board member, please send a statement of interest and resume to Rae Griffiths, President at [friendsofforsythe@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofforsythe@gmail.com). To learn more about the Friends of Forsythe, including our mission, please visit [www.friendsofforsythe.org](http://www.friendsofforsythe.org).

## The Boardwalk is FULL!!

For the last several years, the Friends of Forsythe have raised money to support the refuge by selling special engraved planks for the boardwalk that extends over the marsh by the Leeds Eco Trail. These planks have allowed people to memorialize loved ones or pay tribute to long-time supporters of the refuge. We are sad to announce that the plank program is coming to an end for the simple reason that the boardwalk is at capacity and all the planks are claimed. We hope to offer this program again if/when the boardwalk is expanded in the future.

## Friends of Forsythe Annual Meeting

Open to current members and supporters, the Friends of Forsythe invites you to the annual meeting on Saturday September 10, 2022 from 2-4 PM at the Visitor Information Center Conference Room, 800 Great Creek Rd. Oceanville, NJ. This meeting will include a brief overview of recent Friends activities, voting on current and new Board members and officers and a live animal program by Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge. For more information and to register, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/friends-of-forsythe-annual-meeting-tickets-387759738817>

## Refuge Overlook Gets a Facelift

Check out the newly renovated Refuge Overlook on the backside of the Wildlife Drive. This site was recently overhauled by Fish and Wildlife Service employees that were hired through the Great American Outdoors Act to get projects completed that have been sitting on deferred maintenance lists for years. Our zone's team has their home site at Great Swamp NWR and they came down for a week in May to knock out this great project.

(Before ...)



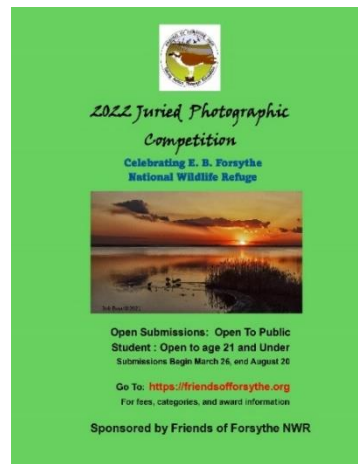
(... and after)



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## 2022 Juried Photographic Competition

The days are dwindling down to August 20<sup>th</sup>, which is the last date to enter the 2022 Juried Photographic Competition, sponsored by Friends of Forsythe. The Prospectus is up to date, so we recommend everyone check it out along with the submission information on our website [Friendsofforsythe.org](https://friendsofforsythe.org).



Award winners and honorable mention photographs will be displayed on the Friends of Forsythe website and their Facebook page on September 3, 2021. The cash awards will be mailed at that time.

Again, photographs may have been taken during the past three years, but must have been shot at one of the E.B. Forsythe NWR units. There have been many great photos taken of the wonderful wildlife, insects, reptiles, scenics, flowers, sunrises, sunsets, and birds that can be found at the Refuge. So, we hope that you will get those photos submitted before the deadline of midnight August 20, 2022.

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## Forsythe Garden Gets New Signage

We are indebted to the dedicated volunteers who tend the native pollinator garden that surrounds the Visitor Information Center. These master gardeners weed, plant, and generally maintain the extensive gardens around the building. Recently, a new sign was installed to highlight their activities. Check it out and if you are interested in volunteering in the garden, contact Patti Cassidy at [dragonflyfields@comcast.net](mailto:dragonflyfields@comcast.net).



## E.B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge and Friends of Forsythe Help in Atlantic City Arbor Day Celebration



On April 29<sup>th</sup>, Virginia Rettig and Rich Albers of Forsythe NWR, Marc Virgilio from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Susan Puder from the Friends of Forsythe traveled to Atlantic City to help the Atlantic City Shade Tree Committee celebrate Arbor

Day at the Richmond Avenue School. After a brief ceremony at the school with Mayor Marty Small, Sr., giving encouraging remarks, over a dozen students walked over to Atlantic Avenue and planted seven native trees along the sidewalk. This is part of the Refuge's effort reaching out to our urban communities and working with them to improve Atlantic City's open space by improving their native habitats, which helps both wildlife and the people living in the community. It was a fun morning, and very satisfying to see seven new trees gracing the area.



## Tern, Tern, Tern

Article and Photography by Susan Puder

To every season, tern, tern, tern. Well, that's not quite true in New Jersey, as we rarely have terns here in the winter. But during the other three seasons, there are populations of at least six tern species, and with luck and good winds, we may get several others as visitors to our state. They range from the largest tern species,



the Caspian, to the smallest, the Least Tern. Terns can be found on all seven continents, but this article will concentrate on those along the eastern seaboard of the U. S., especially in my home state of New Jersey.

Terns were formerly considered a subspecies of gull, but they are now recognized as their own family. They can be found along our coastal areas, wetlands, and even near inland ponds. Terns are slender birds with long pointed wings, straight pointed bills, and usually have forked tails. Mostly white with black caps, terns are quite agile in flight and fly great distances during migration.

To feed, most terns will hover over water before diving in headfirst to pierce a fish, while a few, such as the Gull-billed Tern will feast on insects flying over the marshes and ponds. Many species breed on beaches, such as, the Least Tern, and as a result of nesting out in the open, many suffer heavy predation by foxes, raccoons, gulls, and crows. Many a nesting colony has had their young wiped out by predators, leaving the adults to wait until the next year for another try with better results. Terns are normally long-lived, but populations of some are declining due to habitat loss, climate change, and gillnets. It has been reported by the Biological Conservation Journal that globally an estimated 400,000 seabirds are

killed by gillnets, including terns who dive for their food out on the open ocean.



The **Caspian Tern** is the largest tern in North America and can be easily identified by their black crown and a large orange/red bill. They are rather common

migrants in southern New Jersey during the fall, just watch for a bird who looks like it's carrying a carrot. The Royal Tern is a large, crested bird occasionally seen migrating in the fall through New Jersey without their black crest, but they can be found during the spring and summer on beaches along the coastal areas of the southern states in full breeding plumage.



Easily seen along beaches and open water during the summer months, the **Common Tern**, with its smart black cap, is very similar to the Forster's Tern; however, the outer wingtips are darker, and the bill is reddish with a black tip. The Forster's Tern is slightly

larger than the Common Tern with paler wingtips and prefers salt marshes and ponds. The Foster's bill is more orange with a black tip. During the cooler months they are much easier to identify as the nape of their necks will turn pale, leaving only a black area by their eye.

The Least Tern, endangered in New Jersey, is the smallest tern in North America, and nests in large colonies along protected beaches, making shallow depressions in the sand, called 'scrapes', to lay their two to three eggs. Least Terns have a black-capped head with a distinctive yellow bill, which in addition to weighing just over an ounce, helps to identify them. Trying to make a comeback, they are extremely protective of their nests and won't hesitate to dive-bomb any intruder.

Sounding like a Frankenstein bird, the Gull-billed Tern is uncommon in New Jersey, though a few may nest in the summer at the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge. Not a tern to dive for its food, these birds will grab insects from the water surface and marsh flats. They are identified by their thick black bill and crown and nape and are a bit stockier than the Common or Forster's.

It is not difficult to find many species of terns on summer beaches or along bays and marshlands, from Sandy Hook to Cape May. Some of the best locations are the inlets along the coast, Barnegat Bay, Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, Cape May National Wildlife Refuge, and the Delaware Bayshore areas. Heading out on a boat into the back bays can get you some great flying shots or chicks on the ground.

Whether in flight, hovering before a dive, resting on a piling or bulkhead, or nesting on the beach, terns are elegant and sleek birds that beg to be photographed. If you live in the southeast, you can see them all year long; those of us in the mid-Atlantic or Northeast get to enjoy them from late March through October. So, head out and see how many species of these captivating birds you can find.

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## **Tern, Drenched to the Bone, but all for a Good Cause**

On May 7th, the Friends of Forsythe took a crack at our Hooked on Fishing, Not on Drugs event.



Unfortunately, the weather did not hold up for us. Huge downpours reigned the day, but our crew was out and gave it the best we had.



There were about twelve children who showed up with their parents ready to fish. We gave them that opportunity. One young man caught a fish and we gave him a rod and reel. He and his dad were thrilled!



Hopefully next year, the weather will be on our side. We plan to announce a rain date as well.

A Dried Off  
Susan Ricciardi  
Friends of Forsythe Board Member

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## Become a Visitor Information Center Volunteer

The Visitor Information Center (VIC) at Forsythe is open Wednesdays – Sundays, 10 a.m.– 2 p.m. and is looking for volunteers to help staff the center. Volunteers serve to provide information to visitors about the Wildlife Drive, trails, and other areas of interest throughout the refuge as well as sell daily, monthly and lifetime passes or assist the Friends selling merchandise in the VIC gift shop. For more information, stop by the VIC during open hours or call 609-652-1665.

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**Friday July 29 - 1 PM** - Rich's Farewell Ice Cream Social - VIC Conference Room - RSVP to Virginia

**Monday August 8 - 6-7:30 PM** - August Friends of Forsythe Board Meeting - Administration Building Conference Room

**Sunday August 18 - 2PM** - Volunteer Appreciation Lunch - Vincenzo's Restaurant - RSVP to Virginia

**Saturday September 10 - 9 AM - 12 PM** - Holgate Beach Clean Up - Holgate Beach

**Saturday September 10 - 2-4 PM** - Friends of Forsythe Annual Meeting - VIC Conference Room with presentation by Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge. There is an [EventBrite](#) sign up, but all current and prospective Board Members are already counted in!!!

**We will NOT have a Board Meeting on Monday September 12**

**Saturday September 17 - 12 noon - 8PM -**  
Atlantic City Latino Festival – Bader Field, 545 N. Albany Avenue, Atlantic City

**Saturday September 24 & Sunday September 25 - 9 AM - 6 PM -** Old Time Barnegat Bay and Decoy Show at Tuckerton

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**WILDLIFE LIKES US AT**



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

**Our monthly FRIENDS MEETINGS are  
the SECOND MONDAY of each month  
at the  
EDWIN B. FORSYTHE NATIONAL  
WILDLIFE REFUGE  
Administrative Building  
800 Great Creek Road  
Oceanville, NJ 08231**



Seaside goldenrod (*Solidago sempervirens*) blooms on the sand dunes at Holgate.

Photo By/Credit Y. Laskaris/USFWS

