



Prime Hook Notes

www.friendsofprimehook.org

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HUNTERS HELP MAKE CONSERVATION POSSIBLE

By Dan Ashe, Director, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and our partners have been trying for years to get more people hunting and fishing. And a new survey shows our work is paying off.

The National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, conducted every five years, shows that the number of hunters and anglers in 2011 is up 10 percent over 2006.

This is great news, for conservation and for the national economy.

I know that many non-hunters just shake their heads when the strongest conservationist they know turns

out to be an avid hunter. But for me, and many hunter-conservationists like me, the two go hand in hand.

Hunters have always been dedicated conservationists.

They supported many early laws to conserve species and set up programs, such as the Federal Duck Stamp and the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program, both of which provide money for conservation.

Another example: A group of duck hunters from Alabama persuaded the powers that be to establish Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge in 1964.

The habitat protected by our refuges such as Eufaula not only conserves some of our important wildlife species but also offers some of the nation's best hunting. And we remain committed to increasing hunting opportunities throughout the National Wildlife Refuge System – wherever hunting is compatible with refuge purposes.

We recently opened the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge in Michigan to migratory bird hunting, upland game hunting and big game hunting, while expanding hunting activities at 16 national wildlife refuges in 14 states.

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Hunting is a key part of our shared national heritage, and I am confident that learning to hunt will grow into a real love for the outdoors. What people love, they protect.

This increase in hunters and anglers reverses decades of declines and offers us a great opportunity to get out the “greatest conservation story never told,” which involves sportsmen and -women and their industries.

The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program, which collects excise taxes on hunting and fishing gear and returns the money to the states for conservation, got its start thanks largely to the support of manufacturers and users of such gear. Imagine! Taxing themselves for conservation.

WSFR, celebrating its 75th anniversary, has provided more than \$14 billion for conservation since 1937.

We cannot afford to lose the money and passion hunters bring to conservation ... or what they pump into the economies of local communities.

In 2011, hunters, anglers and wildlife watchers spent \$145 billion on related gear, trips and other purchases such as licenses, tags and land leasing and ownership.

These wildlife supporters made purchases throughout community economies: at sporting goods stores, guide and outfitter services, gas stations, cafes, hotels and many other enterprises.

These contributions also led to jobs at these same businesses. And this spending generated tax revenue for local economies

Hunters and anglers have given America a great gift; let's get out there and enjoy it.

NEW FRIENDS OF PRIME HOOK NWR WEB SITE

By Bill Fintel

The old Friends of Prime Hook web site crashed and was unrecoverable, so after much searching for a reliable outside web site manager, we have ended up becoming our own web site manager using Yahoo Web Site Solutions to publish our site.

The NEW site link is: www.friendsofprimehook.com

On our new site you will find the following pages:

Home, Calendar, USFWS News, Education, Trails, Canoe-Kayak, Birds, Friends Store, Photo Contest, Nature Photos, Event Photos, Newsletters, Contact Us, Directors, and Links

We sincerely hope you will take a few minutes to check out our new web site. It is designed to be easily navigable and user friendly.

When and if you do visit our new web site, a few key points to keep in mind:

The Friends of Prime Hook is a non-profit volunteer organization whose **primary mission is to support the Refuge**, and to enhance public experiences at the Refuge.

Consequently, **all official Refuge communications**, such as a Calendar of Events, will be found on the US Fish and Wildlife Prime Hook site, which is: <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/primehook/>

Your feedback is important, so please let us know how we are doing, and of any improvements you would like to see, or corrections you think we should make. See the Contact page on the web site to do this.

Prime Hook is a superb Delaware natural resource **for all of us that love nature and the great outdoors**, so we encourage you to visit Prime Hook, **ENJOY**, and help as you can.

DISCOVERING PEACE (AND WILDLIFE) ON THE MARSH

By April Abel



American Avocets

Being there nearly every day. Seeing the sunrises that transform Prime Hook from the inky, blue-black pre-dawn sky to a banded vermilion sunrise. The hush of the minutes just before dawn when even the birds are not yet awake. The deep silence of fog that shrouds the water and the herons in silvery blue light. All of these have been deeply moving and inspiring to me both as an artist and as a woman.

Now as then, I see and photograph colors that don't seem possible. Reflections of orange sky on the water leave me mesmerized and moved. The full moon rising over the marsh, and setting softly the next morning, perfectly reflected in the glassy surface of the water.



Double Snowy Egrets

I'm out photographing on Prime Hook Road almost every morning, and many evenings in spring and summer. It's a journey that began in earnest about a year ago. I had made a commitment to myself to practice my photography daily in an effort to build my image library and my skills.

What I didn't know at the time was the profound effect the marsh would have on me, the solace it would bring. It became a spiritual discipline of sorts; even more so after observing a full year of changing seasons and conditions. The marsh can teach a lot about life: Patience, renewal, harsh conditions, and quiet reflection.



Black Necked Stilt

The quiet and beauty are just what I need. I have also been on Prime Hook when the wind blows so ferociously that the sand stings like tiny needles.

I've watched exhausted waterfowl look shell-shocked the day after storms. I have seen the road flood out, and I have witnessed the battalions of heavy equipment and people from DelDot restore it to passable conditions. An expensive miracle of hard work and engineering that I am grateful for with every visit.

When the inevitable storms come, I've worried about the residents of Prime Hook: avian, animal and human. Last spring I saw an osprey whose nest had been destroyed the day before in a fierce windstorm, sitting in the tree where its nest used to be. The osprey was calling out pitifully. It was one of the most



Osprey With Fish

mournful and haunting things I have ever heard. The day before Hurricane Sandy, I drove down to photograph Prime Hook, aware that the storm would batter it pretty hard. I was blinking back tears as I left the marsh and headed home to Milford. But in spite of the hurricane, the marsh survives.

Just yesterday, I photographed an osprey standing on the Prime Hook Road, enjoying its fresh fish breakfast with greedy gusto. The bird was happily distracted and I was treated to a rare close-up view and a photograph.

Today, I saw all kinds of wading shorebirds, and saw that the black skimmers were back for the first time this season. Every time I go to Prime Hook, I see something different,

and I am changed just a bit for the better.

April Abel is a photographer and writer from Milford, DE

E-mail her at aprilabel7@comcast.net



Prime Hook Treasures



Vermilion Sunrise

FRIENDS NEWSLETTER NOW AVAILABLE VIA EMAIL

Members can now receive Prime Hook Notes by email rather than snail mail. The newsletter will be sent in standard ADOBE format for your viewing. For those with a summer place this is a great way to assure that you receive our newsletters in a timely fashion.

To sign up all you need to do is send an email to FPHNWRmembership@gmail.com. We will then put you on our email list in lieu of our standard mailing list. By signing up for our email edition you will help save the Friends money that could be used to help other projects and also do a little to help save the environment.

Please note that this email address is currently be used only for the sending of newsletter publications. Should you want to contact us regarding other issues please use the Contact page at our newly revised website: www.friendsofprimehook.com. Thank you.

An Evening at the Hook

Thursday, June 13 - *An Evening at the Hook Lecture Series* - Delaware Bayshore Initiative - 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Karen Bennett, Program Manager for the Delaware Bayshore Initiative, will give a presentation for transforming the Delaware Bayshore into one of our nation's most important conservation and recreation areas. Extending from Pea Patch Island in New Castle County to the City of Lewes in Sussex County, the Delaware Bay shoreline is widely recognized as an area of global ecological significance. Its expansive coastal marshes, shoreline, agricultural lands and forests provide diverse habitat to many species of wildlife. The lecture is free, open to the public, and fun for the entire family. Seating is limited on a first-come, first-serve basis in the refuge's auditorium. Join us before the lecture at 6:30 p.m. for light refreshments.

LIMITED SEATING AVAILABLE ON A FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVE BASIS

For additional information visit <http://primehook.fws.gov> or call 302-684-8419

NATURE AND PHOTOGRAPHY EVENTS

Saturday, June 8 - Birding Field Trip – 8:00 a.m. Led by volunteer birding guides, beginner and experienced bird watchers will enjoy observing and learning about the bird species frequenting the refuge at this time of year. Come prepared for the weather and expect to walk up to a mile. Bring your binoculars, a field guide, and spotting scope (the leader will have spotting scopes also). Binoculars will be available to borrow. Meet at the refuge office. Trips are free, open to the public, and last approximately three hours.

Monday, June 17—S.N.A.P. it! - 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. S.N.A.P. it! stands for Shutterbugs for Nature And Photography. Bring your whole family out and try a new nature skill...learning about nature photography! We provide the cameras, you provide the creativity! This program is for families that want to learn new, fun ways to play outside together while discovering wildlife and their habitats. The program features a tutorial session and time to snap photos in the outdoors. You will go home with a printed photo and hopefully a new hobby to enjoy! Photographs will also be put on display in the refuge's Visitor Center and on the refuge's website. Cameras are limited, so please call to pre-register. The program is free. Meet at the Refuge office.

Monday, July 15—S.N.A.P. it! - 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. S.N.A.P. it! stands for Shutterbugs for Nature And Photography. Bring your whole family out and try a new nature skill...learning about nature photography! We provide the cameras, you provide the creativity! This program is for families that want to learn new, fun ways to play outside together while discovering local wildlife and their habitats. The program features a tutorial session and time to snap photos in the outdoors. You will go home with a printed photo and hopefully a new hobby to enjoy! Photographs will also be put on display in the refuge's Visitor Center and website. Cameras are limited, so please call to pre-register. The program is free. Meet at the Refuge office.

Tuesday, July 16 - Nature Photography Workshop - 6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m. Are you interested in improving your photography skills? Join us for an evening workshop in the refuge auditorium where a panel of three professional photographers will share with you tips on taking better photographs and provide you with the criteria they use when judging photographs. Participants are encouraged to bring their photographs to be critiqued by our guest panel. Space is limited and pre-registration is required by calling the refuge office.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- PRESIDENT: Glenn Garner
- VICE-PRESIDENT: David Weber
- SECRETARY: Sally Fintel
- TREASURER: Len Henry
- MEMBERSHIP: Matt Golminiak
- NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Matt Golminiak
- EDUCATION: Jean Charles
- WEB SITE : Bill Fintel
- FRIENDS STORE: Rosanne Smith
- OTHER MEMBERS: George Naegele
- David Weber Julie McCall
- Jack Schulz Joyce Lindsay
- Charles Darling Judy Naegele
- Michael Short

WHAT ARE FRIENDS FOR?

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service encourages Friends groups to expand and extend support of national wildlife refuges. Here at Prime Hook, the goals of the non-profit Friends of PHNWR are:

- To provide educational and interpretive material in the Friends' Store and raise awareness of the environment and habitat at Prime Hook NWR. The funds generated through store sales are used to support Refuge activities and programs.
- To seek public and private support for new and existing programs.
- To contribute time, talents and funds for construction, repair and maintenance of recreational and educational facilities and grounds.
- To sponsor activities to encourage the public to become stewards of our natural resources.

**FRIENDS OF PRIME HOOK NWR
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Remember: Membership dues and all donations are tax deductible. Mail checks to FRIENDS OF PRIME HOOK NWR, INC., 11978 Turkle Pond Road, Milton, DE 19968.

Name

Street Address

City State ZIP

Phone E-mail

New Member Renewal Year _____

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

(Choose one level from list below)

- Individual \$ 10.00
- Family \$ 15.00
- Student \$ 8.00
- Sustaining \$ 25.00
- Supporting \$ 50.00
- Sponsor \$100.00
- Small Business \$125.00
- Corporate \$250.00

THE FRIENDS OF PHNWR GIVE A SPECIAL

“THANK YOU!” TO OUR 2013 SPONSOR MEMBERS:

- Eric & Debbie Aloï
- David & Rosemary Baues
- Bob Chambers
- Jean Charles & Anne Pilolas
- Nicholas Constantinople
- Micki & Jim Crellin
- Glenn Garner
- Wayne & Karen Hartschuh
- Janice M. Henning
- Owen Henning
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- Nancy Keyasko
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- Debra Markwitz & Howard Melnick
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AND OUR CORPORATE SPONSOR:

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