



# THE TRUMPETER

NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF OTTAWA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

## A VISITOR FROM FLORIDA



**Trumpeter Club \$250**  
Allie Saker  
Jim and Diane Krieger  
Suzan & Jim George  
Margy and Scott Trumbull

## NEW PROPERTY



**Snowy Owl \$500**  
Eunice Koebel

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



**Eagle Club \$1,000**  
Daniel & Ruth Ann Fraser

## UAW LOCAL 12 HELPS REFUGE



**Osprey Club \$2,500+**  
The Joan Kimple Family  
Anonymous Donor (x2)

## JUNIOR DUCK STAMP CONTEST

### *A Rare Visitor in the Snow*

A limpkin was spotted at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge on November 16, 2019 near the Trail Head Parking Lot. This bird is almost certainly the same bird that was seen from July through September along the Magee Marsh Wildlife Area causeway.

Limpkins are an extremely rare sight in Ohio. They are year-round residents of Florida and Central America, inhabiting freshwater marshes where they hunt snails. As a non-migratory species, it is likely that the bird was blown far off course during a weather event this summer.

This is the first year that limpkins have been reported to stray as far north as Ohio. This particular bird has learned how to walk on the ice and how to find snails along tree trunks where the water has not yet frozen.

Thousands of birders from across Ohio and the surrounding states have enjoyed having the opportunity to watch this unusual visitor along the Lake Erie marshes.

*Photo submitted by Harrison Ponn of Newark, OH*



### *Friends Complete Second Land Purchase*

In October 2019, the Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge completed its second land purchase, a .57 acre parcel that will be added to the Kontz Unit of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. This parcel is located off of State Route 2 approximately 3/4 of a mile to the west of the State Route 19 intersection. The property will be restored and conserved as wetland habitat to provide a contiguous marsh for migrating and nesting waterfowl and shorebirds.

The property was purchased from the Joan and Richard Kimple Conservation Fund thanks to the generosity of land protection donors. To learn more, visit: [www.friendsofottawanwr.org/land-acquisition-and-restoration](http://www.friendsofottawanwr.org/land-acquisition-and-restoration)



### *Ottawa License Plate*

Have you upgraded your license plates yet? Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge plates are now available through the Ohio BMV. \$20 of each plate sold directly supports your national wildlife refuge.

## ABOUT US

Friends of Ottawa NWR is a 501(c)3 non-profit established in 1997 to promote the preservation of the natural and historical resources of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, located near Oak Harbor, Ohio.

Friends of Ottawa NWR supports the only National Wildlife Refuge Complex in Ohio in its mission to conserve, protect, and enhance natural resources for the benefit of wildlife and people.

Join us for an event at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge— you won't be disappointed!

**WWW.FRIENDSOFOTTAWANWR.ORG**

## *Winter Wonderland*

While no two snowflakes are exactly alike, no two refuges are the same either. Don't let the winter weather stop you from following your sense of adventure. Break out your boots or cross country skis and visit YOUR public lands today.

The eagles are busy building nests and courting... don't miss it at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge!



## *Volunteer Spotlight*

Becky Traxler got into birding after joining Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge volunteer Tom Furry on an Eagle Tour. After that spark, she started volunteering at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge as well. Since 2014, she has served dual volunteer roles with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Friends group.

Becky has been very willing to take on any job we throw her way. She helps out at special events and leads some of Ottawa's bus tours during the Biggest Week. She also works the front desk at the Visitor Center on Sundays and Tuesdays and enjoys shopping for new merchandise for the Rookery Nature Store. She loves to direct visitors towards finding their target bird species. Becky takes great pride in introducing new people to the refuge (and in keeping Ottawa's staff well fed with yummy treats!)

As if all of that were not enough, she has even started leading the Eagle Tours where her interest was first sparked.

A big part of leading Eagle Tours involves knowledge of these raptors, so in her free time Becky keeps tabs on all of the eagles. She watches their nests, tracking where old ones fall and new ones are built as well as how many chicks hatch from each in the spring time. Her work as a nest monitor helps keep the refuge biology team up to date on Ottawa's 18+ pairs of eagles.

**In 2019, Becky Traxler logged in an outstanding 712 hours from all of her roles. We cannot say thank you enough to this incredible volunteer.**

Interested in volunteering? Check out our open positions at [www.friendsofottawanwr.org/volunteer](http://www.friendsofottawanwr.org/volunteer)

*Photo: Pair of bald eagles by Stephanie Buck, shared via the Friends of Ottawa NWR Photo Club Facebook group.*





## *Onward and Upward*

Assistant Refuge Manager, Eddy Pausch recently made the move from Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge to William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon where he now serves as Refuge Manager. The refuge, located near Corvallis, was created to provide wintering habitat for dusky Canada geese. It is also home to elk, black-tailed deer, and a host of other wildlife.

Eddy called N.W. Ohio and Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge home for 14 years. He played a critical role in growing the refuge and making a profound impact on the mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Ohio. Everywhere you look as you visit Ottawa NWR, you will see Eddy's legacy and his love for Ottawa.

Thank you for your service Eddy, and best wishes at Finley NWR!

## *Junior Duck Stamp Contest*

Each year the refuge hosts the Ohio Junior Duck Stamp Contest for students in grades K-12. This conservation art program is modeled after the Federal Duck Stamp Contest. Students are encouraged to learn about waterfowl and habitat, then use this knowledge to create an original art piece depicting their native duck, goose or swan. Students submit their artwork to the state contest and the winning piece from each state is sent to the federal contest. From there, an overall winner for the annual contest is chosen. The winning piece of art is made into a stamp, which sells for \$5, and the money raised goes back into supporting the program. These stamps are available in the Rookery Nature Store and make great stocking stuffers!

Ohio youth have been fortunate to win the federal contest three times. While the students' artwork is stunning, there is a lot more to be gained from the program beyond just the coveted Best of Show. Learning about the birds and spending time learning about habitat is a win before a pencil is ever put to paper. Every piece of art is delightful, whether painted by a kindergarten student or senior in high school.

An added treat is the space on the back for students to write a conservation message. It is clear that these students understand the meaning behind the contest. They put a lot of thought into the messages that they write!

If you are interested in the Junior Duck Stamp Contest you can find more information on the contest website <https://www.fws.gov/birds/education/junior-duck-stamp-conservation-program.php>. **Entries are due on March 1, 2020.**

*Photo: Best of Show by Etta Gallaway, Bowling Green High School*



## *Visitor Center Fishing Access Update*

Work on the Visitor Center Fishing Access is nearing completion. Three platforms have been constructed. The ADA platform was built with help from UAW Local 12 volunteers led by Oak Harbor native Justin Taylor. Justin and his crew are the reason that Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge was recently able to secure a \$10,000 grant from the Union Sportsmen's Alliance for materials for the Visitor Center Fishing Access! The project will help to provide conservation opportunities for all ages and abilities.

### Thank you to our partners:

*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ottawa County Community Foundation, Sandusky County Communities Foundation, Greater Toledo Community Foundation (Andersons Fund), Union Sportsmen's Alliance, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Erie Concrete, the Tom Livingstone Family, James Crozier, and UAW Local 12.*



*Photo: UAW Local 12 representative Justin Taylor discusses the fishing access with WTOL 11 News*

## Shop the Rookery

Whoooooo doesn't love owls? Shop owls in the Rookery Nature Store at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, open daily 9AM-4PM (closed some holidays).

- ◆ Snowy Owl Socks: \$10.95
- ◆ 1" Hand Carved Stone Owls: \$4.50
- ◆ 2" Hand Carved Stone Owls: \$5.99
- ◆ Owls and Loons Book: \$10.99
- ◆ Charley Harper Journal: \$14.99
- ◆ Snowy Owl Plush: \$14.99
- ◆ Owl Finger Puppet: \$8.49
- ◆ Owl Foldout Guide: \$7.95
- ◆ Animals at Night book: \$19.99

## Refuge Tractor Fund

Over the last three years, your refuge has been focused on opening new parcels of land for public use. It would ease the workload of the maintenance crew to have a mower that volunteers can use to help maintain these new areas. With only a handful of full-time staff members, volunteers are increasingly more important to the refuge and filling more maintenance roles than ever. **Will you consider helping us to reach our goal of \$15,000 for a John Deere 2025 Compact Utility Tractor?**



## Events

### JANUARY

January 1: Visitor Center Closed  
 January 5: 8am Monthly Bird Survey & CBC  
 January 11: 10am Photography Club  
**January 18– 19: Ottawa Wildlife Drive**  
 January 20: Visitor Center Closed  
 January 25: Eagle Tours\* 9:30am-12pm; 1pm-3:30pm  
 January 26: Eagle Tours\* 9:30am-12pm; 1pm-3:30pm

### FEBRUARY

February 2: 8am Monthly Bird Survey  
 February 8: 10am Photography Club  
 February 9: Eagle Tour\* 9:30am-12pm, 1pm-3:30pm  
 February 14-17: Great Backyard Bird Count  
**February 15-16: Ottawa Wildlife Drive**  
 February 17: Visitor Center Closed  
 February 22: 11am-2pm Chili Cook-off & Wildlife Tours  
 February 25: Eagle Tours\* 9:30am-12pm; 1pm-3:30pm  
 February 29: Eagle Tours\* 9:30am-12pm; 1pm-3:30pm

### MARCH

March 1: Junior Duck Stamp Entry Deadline; 8am Bird Survey; Eagle Tours\* 9:30am-12pm; 1pm-3:30pm  
 March 13: Junior Duck Stamp Judging  
 March 14: 10am Photography Club  
 March 15: Eagle Tours\* 9:30am-12pm; 1pm-3:30pm  
**March 21-22: Ottawa Wildlife Drive; 10am Members Only Event**  
 March 28: 1pm-3:30pm Eagle Tour\*  
 March 29: 1pm-3:30pm Eagle Tour\*

Events marked with an asterisk require reservations.

For more information about events, please call 419-898-0014 or visit us online at [www.friendsofottawanwr.org/events](http://www.friendsofottawanwr.org/events)



# JOIN NOW.

## Membership Perks!

[www.friendsofottawanwr.org](http://www.friendsofottawanwr.org)  
 14000 W State Route 2  
 Oak Harbor, OH 43449  
 419-898-0014 x13

*More ways to support your wildlife refuge...*



Link your Kroger Plus Card to Friends of Ottawa NWR's Kroger Community Rewards Account, number KT924.

Visit [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), and set Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge as your charity. Amazon will donate .5% of the price of eligible purchases to us.



## Nomination for Nonprofit Excellence Award

The Friends were proud to be recognized as nominees at the Northwest Ohio Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence award ceremony sponsored by the Greater Toledo Community Foundation and The Blade. Congratulations to the Lucas County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) who won the category! Pictured here are attending board members: Jake Worthington, Carol Fingerhut, Mary Willoughby, and Jenni Biegala.