

# The Rookery



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## Bayscape/Butterfly Garden Reborn

The Summer issue of *The Rookery* included a small article on page 5 about the somewhat woeful state of our beloved Butterfly Garden and the need for help to return it to its previous glory. Thanks to Visitor Services Specialist Colby Hawkinson and our “Garden Crew” (listed at the end of this article), the garden has been reborn – and we’re pleased to show you how with the ‘before and after’ pictures below and on page 8.

Not only were weeds eradicated and new plants introduced, the plan of the garden was also reconfigured and made much more visitor-friendly. The paths are now lined with driftwood and are wider than before to increase access into and all around the garden. This also creates ‘sections’ where specific flowers can be

showcased if desired and, as an added benefit for the gardeners, makes it easy to control weeds and to plan for new plantings.

We simply cannot thank our dedicated garden crew enough for their tireless work during this seemingly endless hot summer, and they deserve front page recognition: So **Thank you**, Zeeger deWilde, Dave Gauntt, Peggy Christie, Alice Macnow, Rachel Melvin, Ruth Menefee, Miriam Feyerherm, Nora Cary and Michelle Schweikel. If we missed anyone, we’re sorry -- let us know and we’ll add your name in the next issue. In the meantime, see the progress in the pictures below and, if you’re in the area, be sure to come and see it for yourself! 



⇨ “Before” pictures on left taken by Ruth Menefee in April

‘After’ pictures on right taken by Leann Miller in August ⇨

(See more pictures on page 8)

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**President's Message****Fall 2011**

Visitors to Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge quickly discover that the Refuge isn't the only attraction in the area -- whether you enter on Route 213 at the Sassafras River or cross the bridge into Chestertown, or come in by boat, Kent County in its entirety is attractive.

No matter the time of year, Kent County is a gem, with sparse development and extensive vistas of sky, fields and woods, plus streams, inlets, coves, the Sassafras and Chester Rivers, and Chesapeake Bay. Interspersed you find our county seat, Chestertown, towns and villages, among them Rock Hall, Betterton, Galena and Millington.

A strong constituency in Kent County is determined to protect its beauty and environment! I learned this soon after moving here. For example, no matter where a Kent Countian may fall on the political spectrum (radical right, to center, to way left), he or she likely united in opposition to a third Bay bridge terminating at, say, Tolchester.

As I write, a fresh controversy is brewing over a proposed construction-rubble dump that would serve multiple northeastern states and be sited at the headwaters of a stream near Route 301 in Massey. Naturally, it was no surprise to anyone that a preliminary hearing by our three county commissioners was packed and that everyone who testified — except the rubble barons, of course! — opposed it, most with righteous vehemence.

Pure NIMBY-ism? You may say so, but why do the “from-heres” stay here and why are the “come-heres” so attracted? Don't pooh-pooh Kent County boosters and NIMBYs, who are keeping Kent County just the way we like it!



Thought for Today: This grand show is eternal. It is always sunrise somewhere; the dew is never all dried at once; a shower is forever falling; vapor is ever rising. Eternal sunrise, eternal sunset, eternal dawn and gloaming, on sea and continents and islands, each in its turn, as the round earth rolls. — *John Muir, naturalist, explorer, and writer, 1838-1914*

**OUR MISSION**

The mission of the Friends of Eastern Neck, Inc. is to provide support to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge through educational outreach programs and volunteer service on the refuge, including the operation of the refuge bookstore.

**The Rookery**

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The Friends of Eastern Neck,  
Inc.*

**Editor**

Leann Miller

Direct Correspondence to:

P.O. Box 450

Rock Hall, MD 21661

Or call:

410-639-7056

Friends of Eastern Neck

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Bookstore

**REFUGE UPDATE**  
**What's Happening on Your Refuge**

**Fishing Derby a Huge Success**

It seems the Fishing Derby keeps getting bigger and better each June, and this was the best we'd seen in a long time. The weather wasn't too hot and the sun lazed behind hazy clouds for most of the day. And that brought out the kids – **84** of them – accompanied, of course, by various parents and grandparents, aunts, uncles and visiting cousins. They caught lots of fish, both catfish and perch, which seemed to be bigger than last year's stock. They also ate all the food that the Friends donated (free lunches for all!) so we were relieved that the folks who came to help from Blackwater brought some extra. All in all, a wonderful, fun day!



*Just part of the large turnout ↑*

*Look how big! ⇨*



*A little help from Grandpa*



*John and George were in charge of the bait (worms)*



*Concentration!*

**Annual Deer Hunts Scheduled**

If it's Fall, it's time for the annual white-tail deer hunts on the Refuge. These hunts are necessary to manage the deer herd (they have no natural predators) which in turn protects wildlife habitats. **The Refuge is closed to the public on hunt days**, which this year are:

- Saturday, October 1
- Wednesday, October 5
- Friday, October 14
- Monday, October 17
- Friday, October 28
- Monday, November 7
- Monday, November 14



**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Second Annual ENNWR Open House**  
**Saturday, December 10, 2011**

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

- Who: All members of the public are invited to this free event
- What: More details will be available early this fall, but the Refuge Open House will include the **Federal Duck Stamp Art Exhibit**, the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Art Exhibit, an archery range for kids, tours of the refuge including 'backstage' areas normally closed to public entry, food, booths from groups like Friends of Eastern Neck, Center for Environment & Society at Washington College, the National Aquarium in Baltimore, and more.

## CHESAPEAKE PADDLERS CIRCUMNAVIGATE EASTERN NECK

On Saturday, August 20, 22 members of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association participated in an interpretive paddling program with Colby at the Refuge. He began the program at 9:00 a.m. at Bogles Wharf by giving the paddlers an orientation to the National Wildlife Refuge System and to Eastern Neck NWR. Then he led the paddlers on the approximately 10-mile circumnavigation of the Refuge, with numerous stops along the way to interpret Refuge history, management and ecology. The program ended at 3:00 p.m. at Bogles Wharf.

Program participants commented that the highlight of the day was stopping on the Chester River side of the Refuge near Hail Cove to learn about the Living Shoreline restoration project underway there. They enjoyed an interpretive talk about the restoration and then paddled around Hail Point and all the way up Hail Creek to view the project area from the water on the 'back' side. The paddlers appreciated getting to learn about the Project while viewing it from both sides. They said this gave them a better appreciation of how ecologically important (and thin) that strip of land is.

Colby says he enjoyed the opportunity to educate visitors to the Refuge out on the water and hopes to plan similar events in the future. These interpretive paddling programs would be open to anyone interested, so stay tuned for details!



*Paddlers' colorful kayaks are beached for lunch (above); the paddlers round to Ingleside (below)*



### Into Photography? Look into this opportunity!

All of you photographers who frequent Eastern Neck NWR (and other federal lands): Here is an exciting Federal Lands photo contest you might consider entering. Follow this link:

<http://www.sharetheexperience.org/>

It is open until December 31. Good luck!!

And don't forget: we'll send you *The Rookery* through cyberspace (in .pdf format) if you want to save the Friends a little paper and postage. Just send an email to [wkrl@verizon.net](mailto:wkrl@verizon.net) with the subject "Rookery" and tell me that you would like to have the newsletter sent to your email address rather than in hard copy through the mail. I'll add you to the "Rookery group" and you'll get your copy in your Inbox instead of your mailbox.

*Leann*

## FRIENDS' DOINGS

### The Bookstore has Tees ... Lots of Tees!

Summer at the bookstore really had its ups and downs this year. The unusually hot and humid weather combined with the still uncertain economy and high gas prices seemed to keep folks from venturing too far from home. When the weather was good, however, especially on weekends, visitors did come out to see our beautiful little corner of Kent County. Bookstore manager Jackie Cicconi made certain that women and children had as many choices of t-shirts as men by ordering three new tees for women and two for kids from the ever-popular Mountain T-shirt Company.

**The new women's tees** are adorned with our own butterfly and hummingbird designs - a first for us. They're light and soft and easy to wear for only \$14.95. One of **the new kids' tees** also has butterflies and the other features a rather large lizard - just the thing some kids like. These tees are one of our best-selling items at only \$12.95. Buy several when you come see our faithful volunteers in the next few months. We'll be looking for you!



[www.friendsofeasternneck.org](http://www.friendsofeasternneck.org)

At last! We know - we're probably the last Friends group to get a website, but we're proud of it anyway. With the help of our contract with JoAnn Fairchild Wood at Washington College, we have a webmaster who designed a site that fits us. It features **our** projects on the Refuge - the Bayview/Butterfly Trail, the Bayscape Garden, the Kayak Trail and the bookstore, as well as linking to the Refuge website. It's also very attractive, as you can see from this picture of the home page. Have a look!



## Eastern Neck NWR Staff on Wildfire Duty

by Colby Hawkinson

Eastern Neck NWR staff members spent considerable time this summer in southern Georgia helping to fight the 'Honey Prairie' wildfire at Okefenokee NWR. From June 23 through July 8, Maintenance Worker Jon Beck worked on a wildfire engine with a crew from Blackwater NWR. When Jon rotated back home to Eastern Neck on July 8, Visitor Services Specialist Colby Hawkinson took Jon's spot on the same engine and stayed until July 22.

The weather during the wildfire work at Okefenokee was very hot and humid. Much of the physical work for Beck and Hawkinson involved clearing logs and brush from areas to create a 'fire line' through which the wildfire could not advance. The unique wildfire fuel type of the area kept things interesting. The wildfire fuel (aka: vegetation) types at Okefenokee NWR are unique, with burnable material extending from the soil surface to multiple feet underground. Once fire establishes in this fuel type, it can burn under the surface layer for extended periods, making it difficult to extinguish. Actually, fighting fire within the swamp is extremely difficult and usually ineffective. Also, fire is a natural and necessary component of the swamp ecosystem at Okefenokee. So, rather than trying to completely suppress the entire fire, the management goal was to get it out of surrounding commercial loblolly pine plantations and fully contain it within the perimeter of Okefenokee Swamp. Once this was accomplished on July 23, federal resources brought in to fight the fire were sent home and the Georgia Department of Forestry took over a downscaled monitoring effort, which continues now. The Honey Prairie Fire, which was started by lightning on Thursday, April 28 and is currently well over 300,000 acres in size, will continue burning for some time to come. You can learn more about it at:

<http://www.fws.gov/okefenokee/Honey%20Prairie%20Fire.html>



↑ An aerial view of the Honey Prairie fire



Some of the locals are kind of scary! ↑

Colby suited up for action ⇨



A new swamp fire has started, this one called the 'Lateral West' fire at Great Dismal Swamp NWR, in southeast Virginia. Jon is currently with the Blackwater NWR engine crew fighting this one, so there may be more fire stories to come!

✍

## Friends/CES Project Update

The Center for Environment & Society (CES) at Washington College, USFWS and the Friends maintain a productive partnership. We are working on island ecology programs and events for the 2012 calendar. Meanwhile, JoAnn Fairchild Wood reports what we've lined up this fall and early winter:

**October 12** - "Full Moon Paddle" at Eastern Neck Island from 6:00-7:30 p.m. Kayaks and canoes put in at Bogles Wharf.

**October 19** – Film "Green Fire" at 7:00 p.m. in Litrenta Lecture Hall, Toll Science Building, Washington College. The film draws on Aldo Leopold's life and experiences, exploring the deep impact of his thinking on conservation projects around the world. Biographer and conservation biologist Dr. Curt Meine serves as the film's on-screen guide, challenging viewers to contemplate their own relationship with the land community.

**October 23** – Fall "Island / Shoreline Cleanup" at ENNWR from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

**October 30** - "FOEN Community Outreach" at Downrigging Family Day, Chestertown Town Dock, from 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**November 29** – "America's Wildest Refuge" at 7:00 p.m. in Litrenta Lecture Hall, Toll Science Building, Washington College. About the size of South Carolina, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is home to caribou herds, polar bears, grizzly bears, musk ox, doll sheep, wolves, wolverines, snow geese, peregrine falcons and other migratory birds. Colby Hawkinson, visitor services specialist at ENNWR, will answer questions and explore connections between the Arctic and Eastern Neck refuges. At 6:30 PM in the McLain Atrium, join us for cake and refreshments in celebration of the Arctic NWR's 50th Anniversary! Discussion and Q&A following the film. (Running time 50 minutes.)



**December 10** - "Second Annual Open House" at ENNWR featuring nature walks, birding, ecology exhibits, lectures, music and good food at the Refuge Headquarters from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m..

For more information contact [jfairchild2@washcoll.edu](mailto:jfairchild2@washcoll.edu) or 410-778-7295 or Colby Hawkinson at 410-639-7056.



### Is your Family interested in Archery?

Archery is a fun, very safe outdoor activity, accessible to people of all ages and all ability levels. It is a wonderful way to get your whole family outside and having fun together.

Did you know that involvement in any Archery program supports wildlife conservation and your state's wildlife agency? Federal excise taxes on archery equipment directly support hunter education programs and efforts through federal assistance in wildlife restoration.

**Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge is looking to provide family archery opportunities in the future, including at our Refuge Open House on Saturday, December 10.** Family archery may include Introduction to Archery, Target/Olympic style, Archery games, Bowhunting/bowfishing and 3-D, based on your responses.

*If you are interested, please contact Colby Hawkinson, Visitor Services Specialist, at 410-639-7056 Ext. 222, or email him at [colby\\_hawkinson@fws.gov](mailto:colby_hawkinson@fws.gov) or stop by the Refuge Office.*

**MORE BAYSCAPE/BUTTERFLY GARDEN PICTURES**

Before...



...and after.



***The Friends of Eastern Neck, Inc.***  
***P.O. Box 450***  
***Rock Hall, MD 21661***