



## BUILDING A NATIONAL STRATEGY TO COMBAT INVASIVE SPECIES

By LORI WILLIAMS

**A**round the world native habitats and the wildlife they sustain are under assault by destructive invasive species. Invasive species in the United States have infested more than 100 million acres, an area roughly the size of California, throughout all 50 states, and they continue to spread by 3 million acres annually (Bureau of Land Management 1996).

For centuries, people have moved organisms across the globe both intentionally — for

food, fiber or ornamental purposes — and unintentionally — on people, commodities, produce, nursery stock, livestock, ballast water, packing materials or construction equipment. Although many of non-native species are of significant agricultural value, a few have become invasive and threatening to the natural order. The U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment estimates that at least 4,500 non-native species of plants and animals have established free-living populations in

the U.S. Of that total, about 15% cause severe harm. (Westbrooks, R. 1998. Invasive plants, changing the landscape of America: Fact Book. Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds).

In their respective non-native ecosystems, these invasive plants, animals or microorganisms cause significant harm to the environment, the economy and in some cases directly to human health.

For example, invasive species

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## REFUGE SYSTEM STANDOUTS HONORED

**R**efuge System employees Ron Bisbee and Kristine Askerooth were honored in April with major awards at the 67th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Dallas, Texas. Bisbee, project leader for Texas Mid-Coast NWR Complex, was named Paul Kroegel Refuge Manager of the Year. Askerooth, wildlife biologist at Tewaukon NWR Complex in North Dakota, was named Refuge Employee of the Year. Jointly sponsored by the NWRA and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the two awards recognize Refuge System employees for their extraordinary leadership and devotion to promoting national wildlife refuges.

The Paul Kroegel Award is given in honor and memory of the first manager of Pelican Island NWR, established in 1903 as the

nation's first refuge. Kroegel's dedication and effectiveness set a high standard for those who followed,

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

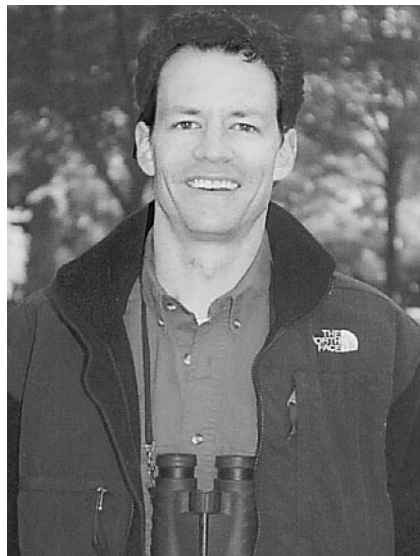
## ATTACK OF THE KILLER WALKING FISH

— and other alien encounters of the worst kind

In late June Washington-area residents were treated to some lively reading in *The Washington Post*, where on page B3 appeared a photo of an unusual looking fish and the tabloid-worthy headline, "Freakish Fish Causes Fear in Md." The accompanying article described the discovery of an exotic fish, called a northern snakehead, at a nondescript Maryland pond behind a shopping center.

A barrage of subsequent newspaper and television reports explained that this south China immigrant with a Herculean appetite was capable of quickly devouring all the fish in a small pond, then waddling its way on pectoral fins to another pond or stream for its next meal — provided that it could make the trek across moist soil in four days or less. Realizing that the Patuxent River was within striking distance, state and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) biologists quickly issued "Wanted" posters, stating unequivocally that the offender should be brought in dead. When biologists found the pond to be full of snakehead offspring, they resorted to poisoning the entire pond to be certain of eradication.

While this high-profile event points to the threat some exotic invasive species pose to our native plants and animals, it represents only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the impact invasive



competition. On the economic side, the Council estimates that invasives cause upwards of \$137 billion worth of damage in the United States each year!

On refuges, the proliferation of invasives is becoming epidemic. FWS estimates that about six million refuge acres are already infested with invasive plants and that the cost of addressing the problem represents a large percentage of the operations backlog. A Refuge System "threats and conflicts" database confirms that

invasive species are the top threat affecting refuges, scoring nearly double that of the second ranked threat (illegal activities). Making matters worse, experts believe that for every year invasives go untreated, the costs of control increase two- to three-fold.

In fact, refuge professionals and volunteers on the ground have been battling invasives for years. For example, refuge staff are working with the Friends of

the Upper Mississippi NF&WR to control the spread of purple loosestrife by creating an educational brochure for the public and providing free native plants to landowners to replace the invasive plant in their gardens. Information collected by volunteers at the Silvio Conte NWR is entered into the Invasive Plant Atlas of New England (IPANE), then posted on the Internet and used for early detection, research and decision

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*Invasive melaleuca trees have been observed on more than 100,000 acres in the Loxahatchee NWR in Florida.*

plant and animal species are having on America's flora and fauna — and its economy.

According to the National Invasive Species Council, invasive species — defined as those that are non-native to the ecosystem under consideration and cause or are likely to cause economic harm or harm to human health — are the number one cause of native plants and animals becoming threatened or endangered in the United States, mainly as a result of



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harm approximately 46 percent of the plants and animals listed as threatened or endangered with extinction. Zebra mussels clog pipes and other structures, costing companies about \$200 million a year, and West Nile virus has caused several deaths.

In an effort to curb the further advancement of invasive species, President Clinton created the National Invasive Species Council (Council) at the urging of more than 500 farmers, ranchers, scientists, state officials and interested members of the public. The Council, which provides leadership and coordination for federal invasive species programs, is co-chaired by the Secretaries of Agriculture, Interior, and Commerce and includes the Secretaries of Transportation, State, Defense, Treasury, Health and Human Services, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Director of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

After extensive public input, the council in January of 2001 finalized its invasive species management plan, which is available

at [www.Invasivespecies.gov](http://www.Invasivespecies.gov). This is the first comprehensive blueprint for coordinated action on invasive species and is a major accomplishment for the Council. It contains 57 action items within nine inter-related areas that the Council considers essential to addressing invasive species problems.

One of the Council's top priorities is a nationally cohesive early detection and rapid response capability to address infestations, a priority adopted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) that has broad applicability to the Refuge System where invasive species are considered the number one threat.

Despite the vital role the Refuge System plays in the recovery of nearly 260 endangered and threatened animals and plants, approximately six million acres of habitat distributed among half the refuges across the country are plagued by invasive species. In 1998, invasive species control cost the refuge system \$13 million. Today the backlog of invasive projects on refuges has increased to more than \$150 million, and FWS

estimates the cost may continue to increase two- to three-fold every year preventative action is not taken. Already, invasive species management projects comprise almost 15 percent (the largest single percentage) of top priority refuge operations and maintenance (O&M) projects (FWS).

More than ever, now is the time to take action against this rapidly growing ecological crisis. Through broad coordination among federal and state agencies, and by working with private landowners and others, the Council is working to implement strategies that will curb the loss of habitat. Importantly, the Council also recognizes that it can't succeed without a nationwide corps of citizens who are knowledgeable about invasive species and are willing to become involved in a range of actions. This help is especially critical to our national wildlife refuges. I hope readers will join us in this effort.

*Lori Williams is executive director of the National Invasive Species Council, [www.invasivespecies.gov](http://www.invasivespecies.gov).*

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

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making on how to control invasive species. And the Sequoia Audubon Society is helping refuge staff remove exotic iceplant from Bair Island, a recent addition to the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay NWR.

The National Wildlife Refuge Association has made addressing

the massive threat invasives pose to our refuge wildlife and habitats a top priority. In the coming year, we will work to generate public visibility around the crisis, promote monitoring and early response activities that involve volunteers and local communities and fight to ensure that the finan-

cial resources become available to halt the infestation of these alien invaders. To learn more about our efforts or how you can help, please visit our website at [www.refugenet.org](http://www.refugenet.org).

*Evan Hirsche is president of the National Wildlife Refuge Association.*



## REFUGE SYSTEM STANDOUTS HONORED

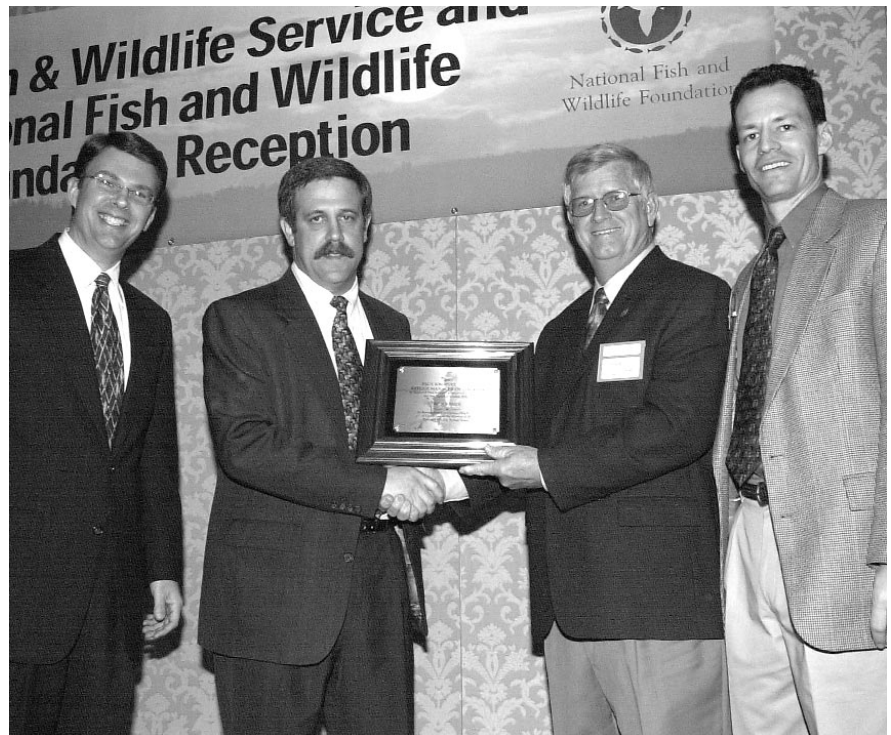
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and this year's award winner lives up to that standard.

Ron Bisbee has demonstrated exemplary skills in habitat land acquisition and stewardship. When he started as Refuge Manager in 1978, the Brazoria NWR Complex covered 39,000 acres. Today, thanks to Ron's negotiating skills, the complex has doubled to more than 80,000 acres. Ron also established the first Friends group in Texas, the Friends of the Brazoria Wildlife Refuges, in 1993, and he works with Friends and refuge staff to develop environmental education opportunities. He has demonstrated a remarkable ability to combine partnership and outreach to build consensus and support across a diversity of interests. His lifetime of service exhibits unmatched leadership and team-building skills.

The Employee of the Year Award is presented to a person whose career has shown superior commitment and effectiveness in the conservation of natural resources and wildlife. Kristine Askerooth's diverse abilities have allowed her to broaden environmental education opportunities throughout North Dakota, while generating strong community interest and participation in refuge conservation. Kristine teaches children, in person and through supplemental projects such as poster contests. She has worked with partner groups to gain protective easements for more than 6,000 acres of prairie wetlands. Kristine is a tireless and enthusiastic champion of wildlife conservation and a valuable advocate for the Refuge System.

Congratulations to both of these outstanding award winners.



*L to R, John Berry (Executive Director, NFWF), Steve Williams (Director, FWS), Ron Bisbee (Refuge Manager of the Year) and Evan Hirsche (President, NWRA)*



*L to R, Evan Hirsche, Kristine Askerooth (Employee of the Year), Steve Williams and John Berry*

USFWS

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## FIRST INTERNATIONAL REFUGE ESTABLISHED

BY GEORGE HOFFMANN

It was a unique Christmas present for the National Wildlife Refuge System. On December 21, 2001, President George W. Bush signed into law the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Establishment Act, which created the first international wildlife refuge.

Simultaneously, the Canadian government approved entering into a refuge partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

"Deputy Prime Minister of Canada Herb Gray and Member of Parliament Susan Whelan also deserve great credit," Representative John D. Dingell (D-MI) said. "Their help and hard work has been instrumental in moving this project forward." Dingell, a staunch supporter of conservation and of the Refuge

*Situated in the heart of a major metropolitan area that includes Detroit, Michigan, and Windsor, Ontario, the refuge is an excellent place for local school children to learn about wildlife conservation.*

System, and an ex-officio member of the National Wildlife Refuge System Centennial Commission, had introduced the legislation.

Situated in the heart of a major metropolitan area that

includes Detroit, Michigan, and Windsor, Ontario, the refuge is an excellent place for local school children to learn about wildlife conservation. FWS will manage the refuge for recreational uses such as hunting, fishing and wildlife observation.

There is plenty of wildlife to observe. The 5,000-acre refuge, located along an 18-mile stretch of the Lower Detroit River, is home to 29 species of waterfowl, 65 species of fish and 300 species of migratory birds. Habitat found on the refuge includes islands, coastal wetlands, marshes, shoals and riverfront lands. The Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network recognizes the river ecosystem as ecologically significant.

The new law creates an

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## SENATE REJECTS ARCTIC DRILLING; FINAL PASSAGE UNLIKELY

On behalf of the caribou, polar bears, musk oxen and millions of migratory birds that call the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge home, NWRA would like to thank all the people who contacted their members of Congress and urged them to oppose oil drilling in the refuge.

On April 18, the U.S. Senate failed to pass a measure attached to energy legislation that would have allowed oil drilling on the refuge's fragile coastal plain. The measure, introduced by Senator

Frank Murkowski (R-AK), would have given the President the discretion and authority to open the refuge to oil drilling based on national security needs. Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK) also introduced an amendment that called for revenues from Arctic Refuge oil to pay for healthcare benefits for retired persons. Senator Stevens' amendment fell short, by 24 votes.

The Arctic drilling provisions faced stiff opposition from a broad-based coalition of conser-

vation organizations that marshalled citizen action across the country. Despite support for drilling by an unusual alliance of oil interests and labor unions, Senate proponents were unable to muster the necessary votes.

While the House previously voted in favor of drilling, at the time of this writing the fate of the energy bill remains uncertain; however, it appears unlikely the drilling provision will survive should a final bill be adopted. Stay tuned.



## FRIENDS CORNER

### THE ROAD TO NOWHERE

BY MOLLY P. BROWN

Embracing more than 8,000 acres of pristine barrier island coastline in south-eastern Virginia, Back Bay NWR provides a wealth of habitats to a variety of bird, plant and animal species. Sadly, this tremendous network of dunes and tidal estuaries has been under threat of a large road-construction project for more than 20 years.

The proposal for this road, which would connect Virginia Beach to the Outer Banks of North Carolina, has been around for so long that it has been named and renamed three times. In the 1970s, it was first called False Cape Parkway. In the 1980s, it was changed to Ferrell Parkway, and now, in the 21st century, it is called Nimmo Parkway.

The Friends of Back Bay was established in the 1970s to stop the planned construction of False Cape Parkway. The parkway would have traversed the original Back Bay NWR, established in 1938, and done irreparable harm to this invaluable coastal habitat nestled between the Atlantic Ocean and Back Bay.

The refuge's dunes, beaches, woodlands, farm fields and marshes protect a number of

*Friends of Back Bay has gone through a series of victories and defeats to protect Back Bay NWR from the looming threat of Nimmo Parkway.*

total in the lower 48 states, can be spotted there during various seasons. The refuge is also home to white-tailed deer, river otters, muskrats, gray foxes, green tree frogs and a variety of snakes and turtles.

Nearly 125,000 people visit the refuge annually to participate in educational programs, hiking, biking, wildlife watching, canoeing and other wildlife-compatible activities.

Friends of Back Bay has gone through a series of victories and

defeats to protect Back Bay NWR from the looming threat of Nimmo Parkway. In the 1970s, with the cooperation of local, state and national organizations, the Friends group was able to dissuade the City of Virginia Beach from building the road. But when FWS proposed an expansion of the refuge's boundary in 1988, proponents of the road challenged it. The land acquisition would have protected the Back Bay watershed from the fast-encroaching

suburban development of Virginia Beach. However, the road proponents, made up of several developers and supported by the National Inholders Association, saw the acquisition as a threat.



MOLLY P. BROWN

*Friends walk through the proposed road right of way that traverses a bald cypress swamp wetlands, joined by Back Bay refuge biologist John Gallegos.*

threatened and endangered species such as the loggerhead sea turtle, piping plover, peregrine falcon and bald eagle. Additionally, more than 300 bird species, approximately half of the



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They urged City Council to purchase the right of way for the road, which would cross the new refuge property.

Without public notice or a public hearing, the Council approved the purchase, 6-5.

At that point, the Friends group didn't know if the refuge expansion would be funded. The road supporters resorted to name-calling and threatened lawsuits. An arduous and hateful battle followed, resulting in many scars remaining to this day. However, the Friends took the high road and kept presenting the facts to the Council.

Happily, the Friends are winning the battle thus far, as 65 percent of this worthy expansion project has now been completed. With the help of many refuge supporters, such as the National Wildlife Refuge Association, The Wilderness Society, National Audubon Society and Defenders of Wildlife, the refuge has received \$17.9 million from Congress to purchase more than 4,000 additional acres of valuable habitat and land to control pollution and flooding in this environmentally sensitive area.

By purchasing and protecting this land, Back Bay NWR has prevented the development of more than 3,500 homes and several acres of commercial property along the right of way for Nimmo Parkway. As a result, City Council has questioned the need for this road.

Furthermore, the existing Sandbridge Road is in need of

*...the refuge has received \$17.9 million from Congress to purchase more than 4,000 additional acres of valuable habitat and land to control pollution and flooding in this environmentally sensitive area.*

engineering to make it a safer ingress/egress to the Sandbridge Beach community, a neighbor to Back Bay NWR. To meet this need, in 2001 City Council proposed that FWS purchase the right of way for Nimmo Parkway from the city. As part of the agreement, FWS would trade land that it owns along Sandbridge Road for city land of equal or greater wetlands value. This would allow the city to make the necessary Sandbridge Road improvements.

Seven of the 11 council members supported the agreement. However, the parkway proponents sued the city, arguing that it would take a supermajority, 9 out of 11 members, to sell the right of way. After some good old back-room politicking, the Circuit Court judge ruled in their favor.

Next the city asked FWS to enter into a 40-year lease of the right of way. The road proponents sued again. The same Circuit judge ruled against the city because it had rigged the lease proposal to exclude any party besides FWS. The city has appealed to the Virginia Supreme Court.

If there is a silver lining in the downturn of the economy and the state's budgetary shortfall, it is that the Virginia Department of Transportation is broke. With no funding in the foreseeable future and several higher priority roads, it looks like Nimmo Parkway may never be built. In fact, the city removed the parkway from its Master Street and Highway Plan in 2001.

Unfortunately, as of July the Friends of Back Bay lost five of our friends on the City Council, and there is no telling what the new council will do. The Friends group's hope is that the city will stay the course and begin to upgrade Sandbridge Road, while FWS continues to expand Back Bay NWR.

On a more personal note, even though my term on the board of the NWRA has ended, my work with the Back Bay is ongoing. Friends of Back Bay may need your help, so stay tuned, and remember to balance the wants of the people with the needs of wildlife.

*Molly Brown is president of the Friends of Back Bay and a former board member of the National Wildlife Refuge Association.*



## FRIENDS CORNER

# FRIENDS PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT

BY BEVERLY HEIZE-LACEY

It's probably not news to your Friends group that invasive species have become the number one threat to the health of our national wildlife refuges. For anyone who spends time on refuges, it's easy to see how invasive plants and animals are overtaking and threatening native species and destroying habitat. The problem is quite serious, for not only are refuge habitats being invaded, but our ability to deal with these invaders, both financially and physically, is being stretched beyond capacity.

Refuges need all the help they can get to deal with this problem, and Friends groups are in a position to offer significant support. For example, Friends can:

- Advocate for increased Refuge System funding;
- Educate the public about invasive species;
- Raise funds for removal projects;
- Build partnerships with other local organizations; and
- Volunteer on invasive species eradication projects.

### EDUCATING AND ADVOCATING

As we reported in our last issue, the Refuge System operations and maintenance backlog is



Young refuge volunteer Skye Maher removes invasive autumn olive at Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge in New Hampshire.

about \$2 billion. Critical staff positions needed to tackle invasive species problems, such as biologists and maintenance workers, remain unfilled, and budget items such as herbicides and equipment go un-funded. The cost of invasive species control, which competes directly with other System priorities, is growing daily: a problem estimated to cost about \$13 million in 1998 has grown to about \$150 million today.

Consider Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee NWR in Florida, where an invasive tree called melaleuca is spreading at a rate of 10 acres per day — yet the current refuge budget provides resources to remove only one acre of melaleuca a day. The Loxahatchee

Natural History Association has initiated an outreach campaign to educate the public and members of Congress. It has an informative website ([www.inha.net](http://www.inha.net)) and has dedicated several issues of its newsletter to describing the problem. These efforts raise awareness and garner public support, important building blocks in securing increased funding for refuges. Friends can make an incredible difference for refuges by continuing to mobilize support for increased Refuge System funding.

### FUNDRAISING AND BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Friends can raise funds for invasive species control projects. One excellent resource for grant funds is the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), which has an abundance of programs directed at habitat restoration, community stewardship and education. The programs emphasize public involvement, partnerships, innovation and matching funds — areas in which Friends excel. (Go to [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org) for more information.) Many groups, like the Friends of Willapa NWR in Washington, have taken advantage of these and other grant



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opportunities to support invasive species projects.

Willapa NWR is located in southwest Washington's Willapa Bay. The bay has the largest infestation of *Spartina alterniflora* of any estuary on the Pacific coast. A native of the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, *Spartina* invades the intertidal mudflats and saltmarshes of the West Coast, eliminating mudflat foraging areas for shore- and wading birds and destroying oyster-growing areas.

*Spartina* infests 15,000 to 20,000 acres of Willapa Bay, including about 5,000 acres on the refuge. *Spartina* is growing at a rate of 20 percent annually, which translates to about 1,000 refuge acres each year that are damaged. To deal with the problem, the refuge and its partners have developed an eradication plan for the bay that will take six years at a cost of about \$1.2 million.

The Friends of Willapa NWR is an important partner for the refuge. The group uses its newsletter and website ([www.willapabay.org/~fwnwr](http://www.willapabay.org/~fwnwr)) to educate the public about the problem; it writes and visits with congressional staff to gain support for more federal funds; it builds partnerships with area agencies and organizations; and it raises grant funds for invasive species projects.

A recent grant the Friends received from NFWF may prove critical to *Spartina* control at the refuge. Area partners are matching this \$60,000 grant with \$188,000 in contributed goods

and services. Grant funds will purchase herbicide in a large-scale test of a new infrared sprayer mounted on an amphibious tractor that might improve the efficiency of the spray and reduce costs for *Spartina* control.

It's important to realize that Friends groups don't necessarily need expertise in invasive species management or grant writing to apply for these grants. Friends groups can simply be the catalysts to engage the necessary partners and get the ball rolling.

### VOLUNTEERING

Friends and refuge volunteers are participating in invasive species control in all kinds of ways, whether it is managing native plant nurseries, raising beetles to combat purple loosestrife, pulling weeds or removing trees.

At Hakalau Forest NWR in Hawaii, Project Leader Dick Wass said that his volunteers formed an "essential component" of the refuge's resource management program. Hakalau Forest NWR is in a remote area, accessible only by a bumpy, two-hour ride in a four-wheel-drive vehicle. The refuge sponsors a program in which volunteers come from the mainland and the other Hawaiian Islands for a weekend, working one to two days planting trees and bushes that will eventually form a multi-layered canopy and cool the ground. This canopy will limit the spread of *gorse*, a weed that thrives in areas denuded by grazing cattle, sheep and pigs. In

return for their efforts, volunteers receive a guided refuge tour and a custom-designed T-shirt available only to refuge volunteers. Because the refuge is mostly closed to the public, the only way to visit is as a volunteer. Since 1989, eco-tourists have paid for this privilege and contributed their time planting more than 225,000 native seedlings.

In New Hampshire, the Friends of Great Bay NWR have proven instrumental in restoring refuge grasslands important to nesting species such as the upland sandpiper and bobolink. The Friends work in small groups to hand-pull *autumn olive* and other weeds — not an easy task. One member, Dick Hughes, said they used a wrench that went around the stem of the plant, and they just hoped that the other end pulled up. The Friends' contribution of \$6,800 in volunteer time helped the refuge qualify for a NFWF challenge grant for grasslands restoration — allowing the refuge to accomplish work not otherwise possible through their regular budget.

Every little bit counts in this incredible challenge. We would like to encourage Friends groups around the country to examine the possibilities with their refuge managers to find ways they can help build and protect the biodiversity of our national wildlife refuges.

For more detailed information on invasive species and refuges, see <http://invasives.fws.gov/indexrw1.html> or contact Mike Ielmini at 703-358-1744. Also visit NWR's website at [www.refugenet.org](http://www.refugenet.org).



## FWS REPORTS INCREASE IN VOLUNTEERING AND WILDLIFE WATCHING ON REFUGES

Volunteering and wildlife watching reached new heights in the National Wildlife Refuge System, according to two recent reports by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

In its 2000 Volunteer Report, FWS noted that a remarkable 24 percent more Americans volun-

worked on his own time to protect pelicans and other wading birds on Pelican Island, Florida. Raising public awareness of conservation issues, helping manage the refuges, monitoring species and organizing education programs are some of the many activities refuge volunteers engage

This survey, conducted at approximate five year intervals since 1955, helps organizations such as the National Wildlife Refuge Association estimate demands for wildlife recreation such as hunting, bird-watching, fishing and wildlife photography, assess the effects of spending on the economy and recognize trends in wildlife recreation.

Although there was no statistical change in the number of people participating in wildlife recreation overall since 1996, the survey did show a 5 percent increase in the number of wildlife watchers — those who fed, photographed or observed wildlife — and an 11 percent increase in expenditures for wildlife watching. Fishing participation stayed steady but expenditures decreased 17 percent since 1996. Hunting participation decreased by 7 percent and expenditures decreased by 12 percent since 1996.

The report encouraged people to take into consideration the economic and social conditions of the year when assessing the results. Despite an economic recession and terrorist attacks, Americans continued their involvement with wildlife recreation. "Wildlife recreation was not a fad that came and went but instead called to people no matter what else was going on in their lives," the report said. The final survey report will be released in November.

Both reports can be found online at: <http://www.nctc.fws.gov/library/pubs3.html>.



LEE M. STEVENS

*Bird watchers at Parker River NWR, MA, pursue their quarry with binoculars.*

teered at their local refuges in 2000 than in 1999. The Refuge System benefited from more than 1.3 million hours by close to 36,000 people — equal to 639 full-time employee positions with an estimated value of \$14 million.

Volunteers have been a crucial part of the Refuge System since Paul Kroegel, who eventually became the first refuge manager,

in throughout the country.

FWS has also released preliminary findings from its 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation showing that more than 80 million Americans 16 years and older participated in various wildlife recreational activities with collective expenditures of \$110 billion in 2001.



# GIVE THE PERFECT REFUGE BIRTHDAY GIFT — A NFWF FUNDED PROJECT

BY CHEREE PETERSON

**W**ith the National Wildlife Refuge System's Centennial approaching, Friends groups are encouraged to apply for National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grants for a special 2003 project.

NFWF is a private, non-profit organization that has an extensive history of supporting the Refuge System. It offers a multitude of funding opportunities for Friends groups and other community-based organizations focused on conservation.

Foundation grant programs likely to fund Friends projects are highlighted below:

"Special Grant Programs" address specific conservation needs and have specific guidelines and time-lines. Two such programs are: **Centennial Refuge Legacy** — Funds special conservation, partnership, recreation and education projects for the National Wildlife Refuge System to recognize the Centennial.

*Deadline: December 1, 2002.*

**National Wildlife Refuge Support Group Grant Program** — Assists Friends groups with refuge projects, capacity-building efforts and costs associated with establishing a new Refuge Support Group. This grant does not require matching funds.

*Deadline: March 30, 2003*

"General Challenge Grant Program" funds projects that promote fish, wildlife and habitat conservation; build partnerships; leverage financial support; and evaluate project outcomes. Proposals are accepted year-round and decided upon biannually, on June 1st and

*NFWF is a private,  
non-profit  
organization that  
has an extensive  
history of  
supporting the  
Refuge System.*

October 15th, using the General Challenge Grant guidelines. All projects require non-federal grants that are matched equally with federal funds from annual Congressional appropriations and agreements with federal agencies. NFWF encourages applicants to maximize matching funds.

Annual special grant programs include:

**Ford Motor Company Company Bird and Habitat Conservation Fund** — Supports habitat conservation programs benefiting birds, particularly prairie species and waterfowl.

**Five-Star Restoration Challenge Grant Program** — Funds community-based wetland, riparian and coastal habitat restoration projects fostering diverse partnerships and local stewardship through education, outreach and training. This grant does not require matching funds.

**Migratory Bird Conservancy** — Focuses on priority habitat conservation projects to protect neotropical migratory birds.  
**Pathways to Nature**

**Conservation Fund** — Partners with Wild Birds Unlimited, Inc., to enhance environmental education activities and bird and wildlife viewing opportunities at nature tourism destinations.

**Unified Request for Proposals** — Supports conservation projects funded through partnership programs between the Foundation and federal natural resource management agencies.

Check the NFWF web site, [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org), in the fall for upcoming deadlines.

**Other Programs** — Numerous special grant programs support projects in specific geographic areas and conservation issues. For example: the Shell Marine Habitat Program, the Coral Reef Conservation and the International Sea Turtle Conservation programs are geared toward projects in coastal areas. NFWF's website provides a list of additional programs and people to contact for further information and guidance about specific programs, deadlines and funding. The website address is: [www.nfwf.org/programs/grant\\_apply.htm](http://www.nfwf.org/programs/grant_apply.htm).

NFWF recognizes the important role Friends groups play in building critical community support for the National Wildlife Refuge System. As such, NFWF encourages project proposals from Friends groups. Make your group's dream project a reality for the Refuge System's 100th birthday.

*Cheree Peterson is Assistant Director, Government Relations and External Affairs, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation.*



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 2003 NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM AWARDS—CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Ever admired the dedication and talent of a refuge employee? Ever wanted to recognize volunteers for outstanding work? Here's your chance!

Each year the National Wildlife Refuge Association and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation present awards honoring outstanding accomplishments by refuge managers, refuge employees, volunteers and Friends groups. Recognizing the excellence of these individuals and groups not only highlights the dedication of those who support the Refuge System but also raises awareness about the diversity of the National Wildlife Refuge System, the challenges it faces and the innovative efforts across the country to meet those challenges.

### Paul Kroegel Award

This award recognizes outstanding accomplishment by a refuge manager in the protection and management of our national wildlife refuges.

### Employee of the Year

This award recognizes the excellence of the men and women employed by the NWRs.

### Volunteer of the Year

This award recognizes the invaluable commitment of volunteers in the operation and management of the Refuge System.

### Friends Group of the Year

This award recognizes the exceptional contributions by the groups of dedicated volunteers in Friends organizations who provide essential services to the Refuge System.

Please use the Awards Nomination form to submit your nomination; send four copies of the form and supporting materials to the NWRs.

### Important Dates

September 15, 2002	Nomination period opens
November 15, 2002	Nomination period closes
February 1, 2003	Volunteer and Friends group awards presented at the Centennial Refuge Friends Conference
March 26-30, 2003	Paul Kroegel and Employee awards presented at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference

### For More Information

To download a copy of the nomination form, or to learn more about the Awards criteria and presentation, visit us on the web at [www.refugenet.org](http://www.refugenet.org). To receive a nomination form by mail, call Debbie Harwood at 202-333-9075 or email [dharwood@refugenet.org](mailto:dharwood@refugenet.org).

## CHECK #1131!

### Attention Federal Employees: Support NWRA through the Combined Federal Campaign

As you know, the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is the annual fund-raising drive conducted by federal employees in their workplace each fall. Each year, federal employees and military personnel give millions of dollars to benefit thousands of non-profit charities like the National Wildlife Refuge Association.

Contributing through CFC is a unique and easy way to support the NWRA. Please help us make a difference for the Refuge System by checking #1131. CFC donations help us carry out our mission of pro-

tecting refuges by building community support and educating decision-makers about the importance of refuges for wildlife conservation.

Be Sure to  
Check #1131 to  
Support NWRA in  
the Combined  
Federal Campaign!





# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## CELEBRATE THE CENTENNIAL!

### Register Now for the 2003 Centennial Refuge Friends Conference

The National Wildlife Refuge Association and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service invites all refuge support group members and refuge volunteers – of all levels of experience – to join us in celebrating the Refuge System’s 100th birthday at our annual Friends Conference. The conference will be held at the Wyndham Washington, D.C., Hotel, January 31 through February 3, 2003. This exciting event will include a dozen skills-building workshops, regional meetings, loads of exhibits featuring our national partners and bookstore vendors, excellent networking opportunities, an awards reception and, following the conference, visits with lawmakers.

The 2002 National Refuge Friends Conference was an overwhelming success, and with the excitement of the Centennial, 2003 promises to be even better. In 2002, NWRA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and 11 other partners hosted 270 people representing 102 refuges and 43 states. In 2003, we hope to see the Friends who joined us last year, along with lots of new faces too.

This year, in addition to hiring expert trainers, we are calling upon Friends and volunteers to lead some of the skills-building workshops. We hope that those of you with experience and knowledge to share will take advantage of this opportunity.



### Important Dates

January 8, 2003	Registration closes
September 30, 2002	Workshop presenter applications due to NWRA
October 11, 2002	Workshop presenters selected and notified by NWRA

### For More Information

To register online or to download a workshop presenter application form, visit us on the web at [www.refugenet.org](http://www.refugenet.org). To receive a registration brochure or a presenter application form by mail, please call 877-396-NWRA or email us at [nwra@refugenet.org](mailto:nwra@refugenet.org).



## JOIN NWRA TODAY!

Membership benefits include a handy canvas tote bag with the “Honk” logo, our quarterly newsletter, action alerts, an NWRA sticker, and discounts on events.

\$25 (basic membership)    \$50    \$100    \$500    \$1,000    Other

Make checks payable to the National Wildlife Refuge Association.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ or Charge to  Visa or  Mastercard.

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

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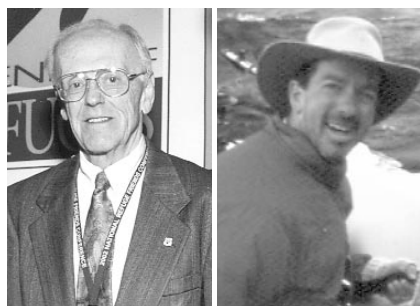


## NWRA WELCOMES TWO NEW DIRECTORS...

The NWRA is pleased to announce the election of George Hoffmann and Jeff Smith to our Board of Directors as members of the class of 2005.

Many people in the refuge community are familiar with George Hoffmann, of La Crosse, Wisconsin, from his years of active involvement with refuge Friends groups. George serves as president of Friends of Midway Atoll NWR and as a board member of Friends of Necedah NWR, and he is the immediate past president of Friends of Upper Mississippi River Refuges. He is the Region 3 representative for the NWRA and is part of the National Fish and Wildlife Service team for mentoring Friends groups across the country.

George is an active conservationist, serving as secretary of the



*George Hoffmann (l) and Jeff Smith*

Wisconsin Audubon Council and on the board of the Coulee Region Audubon Society. He is retired from Lions Club International where he was an administrative executive. Prior to his work with Lions Clubs he was president of Marine Bankcard Corporation.

Jeff Smith hails from Clayton, California. An avid outdoorsman, Jeff is committed to wildlife and habitat conservation.

He has more than 18 years of high technology sales, marketing, business and corporate development, and venture capital experience. He was most recently with Commerce One, retiring from the company in August 2001 as vice president of corporate development and general manager of Commerce One ventures. He previously worked with BlueCurve, Inc., Sybase and Unisys.

Currently, Jeff is president of his own franchise development company and sits on several technology company boards. He is also active with the California Nature Conservancy.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to George and Jeff, and thank them for their service in helping to build support for the National Wildlife Refuge System.

## ...AND THANKS OUTGOING MEMBERS

The Association lost two wonderful board members, Bill Ashe and Molly Brown, when their terms expired after the last annual meeting. We thank each of them for their years of loyal service and for the special contribution each made to the vitality of our organization.

Bill Ashe joined the board in the early 90's after a very successful career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A man of great integrity, he served as chairman of the board for two years and was instrumental in establishing our annual awards program, which recognizes exemplary service to

the Refuge System. Bill settled near the Great Meadows NWR in Sudbury, Massachusetts where he has remained active in conservation, working for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and serving as a director of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The NWRA has benefited from Bill's wise council as an ardent defender of the Refuge System.

Molly Brown joined the board in 1995. As president of Friends of Back Bay NWR, she convinced Congress to appropriate some \$17.9 million to augment the refuge through the purchase of

more than 4000 acres of forested swamps, low lying farmlands and marshes. She fought many successful battles against those who would build roads and other intrusions in the refuge. That experience, as well as her background as a teacher, enabled her to become a much sought after mentor to many fledgling friends groups throughout the country. On the NWRA board she was a staunch and persistent champion of our program to build a nationwide network of friends groups in support of the refuge system. We will miss her quiet, persuasive advice.



## FIRST INTERNATIONAL REFUGE ESTABLISHED

*Continued from page 5*

“acquisition” boundary for the refuge, which authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to acquire lands adjacent to the Detroit River for protecting wildlife and habitat. The act provides incentive opportunities for private landowners within the boundary to sell or donate their holdings to the refuge, grant conservation easements on their property while retaining ownership, or enter into cooperative management agreements with FWS. In addition, the act states that the Wyandotte Refuge and its islands — Grassy, Mud and Mamajuda — are now part of the Detroit River

International Refuge.

The refuge’s establishment rewarded 30 years of cooperative efforts among federal, state, county and local governments, private industry, conservation groups and citizens on both sides of the river — all of whom were interested in improving the quality of this historically industrial river. These parties successfully advocated for the river to be designated both as an American Heritage River and as a Canadian Heritage River.

Given this history of collaboration, the act left the opportunity open for the U.S.- Canadian partnership to grow. It authorizes FWS

to negotiate with Canadian officials to create a Detroit River International Wildlife Corridor along the river that includes American and Canadian land.

Although the international refuge is certainly a milestone in conservation, it is only the beginning. “The creation of an international wildlife refuge is a significant step towards restoring the health and vitality of this invaluable natural resource,” Dingell said.

*George Hoffmann serves on the NWRA Board of Directors and is president of the Friends of Midway Atoll NWR.*



Unknown

*L to R: Peter Stroh, Chairman of the Greater Detroit American Heritage River Initiative Executive Committee; U.S. Representative John D. Dingell (D-16th); Susan Whelan, Member of Parliament, Essex, Ontario, Canada; U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and the Honorable Herb Gray, Deputy Prime Minister of Canada, Member of Parliament, Windsor-West, Ontario, Canada.*



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