



Missisquoi Matters

is the quarterly newsletter of the Friends of Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge, Inc., a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, dedicated to promoting a better awareness, appreciation, conservation, and responsible utilization of the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge.

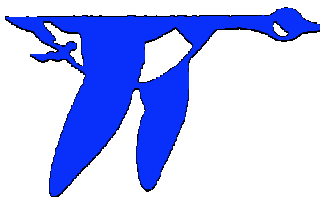
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Newsletter edited by Ken Copenhaver

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Rich Kelley, *Vice President*
Anne Bataille, *Treasurer*
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Dave Frisque, *Assistant Refuge Manager*
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Lisa Swainbank, *Office Administrative Assistant*
Joe Bertrand, *Maintenance Mechanic*

MNWR HQ hours are
Monday thru Friday
8:00am – 4:30pm

President's Message – February 2011

Plenty of snow now, but Spring is on the way—birds moving north, mammals beginning to move about more freely; soon there will be the first appearance of green growth on the vegetation and some of the fish will be moving into the shallows to spawn. And we will again see more people at the Refuge.

Friends of the Refuge continues to be active.

Two of our Friends board members are leading monthly bird walks, on the third Saturday of the month. Please see the Activities Schedule elsewhere in this newsletter, or visit the Events calendar on our website:
<http://www.friendsofmissisquoi.org/events.htm>

In addition, a Friends member leads a monthly nature walk on the first Saturday of the month, using the different trails in the Refuge. See this newsletter or the website for location and time of these monthly walks.

In the autumn of the past three years we have hosted the art work of the St. Albans Artists Guild, placing their art on the walls of the Refuge Headquarters. These art shows have been so successful that we are planning to place local wildlife art on the walls of the Headquarters year round. We're hoping to begin in late spring.

It is still a great time to encourage others to become members of Friends of the Missisquoi NWR. Membership is a bargain at \$15. A membership form is printed on the cover of this newsletter, or it may be found on the website at: <http://www.friendsofmissisquoi.org/membership.htm>

For those who have not heard, on Dec. 31st Mark Sweeny retired as manager of the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge. Mark has been manager for the past 11 years, and will now be able to spend more free time in the great outdoors, looking at birds and chasing after animal tracks. Look for retrospective information about Mark's tenure as manager, to be included in our next mailing to the membership.

Judy Edwards, who is the Refuge staff biologist, has been serving as the temporary manager for the past several weeks. The Refuge system will soon appoint an interim refuge manager who will serve for approximately 90 days. It is hoped that the permanent manager will be in place by June. Look for retrospective information about Mark's tenure as manager, to be included in our next mailing to the membership.

Please mark your calendar for International Migratory Bird Day at the Refuge and the Annual Meeting of the Friends, coming up on Saturday, May 21. For more details, see the Activities Schedule elsewhere in this newsletter.

Respectfully,

Paul Madden

President, FMNWR



Spring Activities Schedule at Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge

29 Tabor Rd.
Swanton, VT 05488

All programs and tours are free, but reservations are required where noted.

Owl Prowls

**Saturday, February 26 - 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM
and Saturday, March 12 - 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM**

Join refuge volunteer Jeremy Brooks for two evening "Owl Prowls" to watch and listen for some of our resident birds who operate during the night shift.

The first walk is on February 26 at the **Stephen Young Marsh Trail** area. (See directions below.)

The second walk is on March 12 at the **Black/Maquam Creek Trail**. (See directions below.)

Dress appropriately and bring a low intensity flashlight with you.

Please call 802-868-4781 to sign up for either of these activities.

Monthly Nature Walk

Saturday, March 5 - 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Join Friends of Missisquoi NWR member Joe Belanger for a walk on the **Jeep Trail**. The Jeep Trail offers a riverside trek along the Missisquoi River as winter begins to relinquish its grip on the refuge. The canopy of large silver maples, cottonwoods, and swamp white oak trees offers possible sightings of pileated woodpeckers, hawks, red fox, white tail deer and perhaps a glimpse of a few of the more hardy very early migrants such as great blue herons. Meet at the Louie's Landing fishing access parking area on RT. 78.

Monthly Bird Monitoring Walk

Saturday, March 19 - 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM

Old Railroad Passage Trail. See below for details.

Vernal Pool Walk

Friday, April 1 - 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Join Park Ranger, David Frisque for a look at the life and activity in a vernal pool early in the spring. Vernal pools are important breeding areas for some of the more reclusive and seldom-seen amphibians such as wood frogs and salamanders. Because these temporary wetlands often dry up completely by late summer or early fall, egg laying and early development of juvenile salamanders and frogs must begin early in the spring. The walk will be at the **Stephen Young Trail** area. (See directions below.) Bring a small flashlight and waterproof footwear.

Please call 802-868-4781 to sign up for this activity.

Monthly Nature Walk

Saturday, April 2 - 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Join Joe Belanger for a walk on the **Black/Maquam Creek Trail**. Some early migrants should be pushing into Vermont by the date of this walk with waterfowl, great blue herons, and red wing blackbirds present on the refuge at numerous locations.

Monthly Bird Monitoring Walk**Saturday, April 16 - 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM**

Black/Maquam Creek Trail. See below for details.

Woodcock Walk**Friday, April 22 - 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM**

Join refuge volunteer, Greg Simard on a Woodcock Walk on Friday, April 22, 2011 from 6:30 PM until 8:30 PM. The walk will be at the **Stephen Young Marsh** area. (See directions below.)

Woodcock have a unique courtship display that incorporates an aerial display and ground level calling display which occurs near sunset and into the early evening hours. Join Greg for an enjoyable early evening walk to witness this unique springtime activity.

Please call 802-868-4781 to sign up for this activity.

Woodcock Walk**Friday, May 6 - 7:30 AM to 9:00 AM**

Join Park Ranger, David Frisque for another Woodcock Walk, beginning at 7:30 PM and ending at about 9:00 PM. Once again we will use the Stephen Young Marsh area for this evening walk. (See directions below.)

Please call 802-868-4781 to sign up for this activity.

To check for any schedule changes, visit the activities calendar on the Friends website at www.friendsofmissisquoi.org and click on the "Events" link.

Refuge Green Up Day**Saturday, May 7 - 9:00 AM to Noon**

The Missisquoi NWR will conduct Refuge Green Up Day along with the rest of Vermont. All participants should meet at the Louie's Landing fishing access parking lot. The refuge will concentrate its efforts on river cleanup activities using refuge boats. The refuge will monitor river water levels and flows. Should floodplain water levels be excessively high or if flow rates in the river channel are too strong due to snow melt and spring rains, this event may be postponed or canceled.

Please call 802-868-4781 to sign up for this activity.

Monthly Bird Monitoring Walk**Saturday, May 21 - 7:30 AM to 11:00 AM**

Stephen Young Marsh Trail. This month's Bird Monitoring Walk will be offered as one of several morning birding activities on International Migratory Bird Day. **REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.** Please meet at the Refuge Headquarters parking lot (not at the trailhead) at 7:30 AM (not the usual 8:00 AM). For more information on other IMBD activities, see the event description on the next page.

Please call 802-868-4781 to sign up for this activity.

International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) Saturday, May 21 - 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM

The Refuge will celebrate International Migratory Bird Day on Saturday, May 21, 2011. The theme for the 2011 IMBD Program is "Go Wild, Go Birding" and is intended to introduce new people to birds, birding, and bird conservation and as an outdoor experience. Our birding activities will begin at 7:30 AM with an orientation at the refuge headquarters. The refuge will continue its efforts to document species on the refuge via the refuge trails and waterways using boats and, if there is interest, using canoes and kayaks as well. We will record all species and as many individuals within those species as we can and then tally the results over a light lunch.

All birding participants will return to the refuge HQ by 11:30 AM to tally results and have lunch. A speaker (to be announced) will follow at approximately 1:00 PM with a presentation on a topic in keeping with the International Migratory Bird Day theme.

The Friends of Missisquoi NWR Annual Board Meeting will begin at the conclusion of the guest speaker's presentation. All activities should conclude by 3:30 PM.

We ask that interested participants call 802-868-4781 to sign up for a birding activity (boat trip, canoe/kayaking, or trail walk).

Kids Fishing Derby**Saturday, June 4**

Please check local media outlets or call the refuge for more details on this event.

All interested participants must call 802-868-4781 to sign up.

Please watch local media outlets (newspapers, cable access channel) for other events and activities that may not yet be scheduled at the time of this newsletter publication.

Monthly Bird Monitoring Walks

Friends board members Bridget Butler and Ken Copenhaver will lead bird monitoring walks on various refuge trails on the third Saturday of each month. The purpose of the walks is to gather long-term data on the presence of birds, their abundance, and changes in populations. Observations will be entered into the Vermont e-Bird database where data is stored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. These walks are appropriate for all levels of birders and provide a wonderful opportunity to learn about birds throughout the seasons. All walks will be from 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM. Reservations are not required.

Directions to the Trailheads

Stephen Young Marsh Trail and Old Railroad Passage Trail: Both trails start at the Tabor Farm Parking lot, located off of RT 78 on Tabor Rd. From Route 78, follow the signs to the refuge headquarters. Proceed on Tabor Road about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile past the headquarters. The parking area is on the left directly across from the Stephen Young Marsh.

Black/Maquam Creek Trail: Meet at the refuge parking lot on the south side of Route 78, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of Swanton. When driving west from Swanton, the parking area is on the left just after the first refuge signs.

Friends News Shorts

Membership Renewal and Email Addresses. Please check your membership expiration date on the address label of this newsletter. Your timely renewal will save us mailing a reminder card. And when you renew, please include your email address so that we can keep our records current. We are working on building an accurate email mailing list so that members can be better informed about Friends activities, volunteer opportunities, and last minute schedule changes. Don't worry—we won't fill your inbox with junk mail! We just want a more timely, less costly means of communication than is possible with paper mail. Thank you!

New Newsletter Schedule. Starting with this issue, the plan is for the newsletter to be published several weeks before the beginning of each season. This will coincide more closely with the activities schedule. As a result of adjusting the publishing dates, the Winter issue was skipped this year.

Saturday hours at Refuge HQ. The Refuge Headquarters will be open on Saturdays from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM beginning on May 21 and going until sometime in mid to late October.

Board Members Needed! The Friends' by-laws require 6 to 12 directors. The board now has 7 directors. Any member who would like to be considered to serve on the board, please contact Friends President, Paul Madden.

Friends Board Meetings. Board meeting frequency has been increased from four times to six times per year. Meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of odd-numbered months at 6:30 pm at the Refuge Headquarters. The exception is the Annual Board Meeting, which is held on the afternoon of International Migratory Bird Day (May 21 this year). Friends members are encouraged to attend meetings and share your ideas!

Friends Bimonthly Board Meeting: Tuesday, March 8, 2011 at 6:30 pm

PRELIMINARY AGENDA

1. Minutes for meeting of Jan. 11, 2011
2. Treasurer's Report- Anne
3. Refuge Manager's Report, and update on the position of Refuge Manager
4. Committee Reports
 - Newsletter: Ken
 - Membership: Joe
 - Store Sales: Anne
5. Ad hoc Committee Reports
 - Website: Bridget and Ken
 - Artists in the Missisquoi Refuge: Anne
 - Wildlife Camera: Russ
 - Kids' Fishing Derby: Dave
6. Friends Calendar
 - Refuge events coming up
 - Boat tour for Board? Boat tour for photography? For birding?
7. Preparation for Annual Meeting, on May 21, 2011
 - Field trips, speaker, lunch, other?
 - New Board members; and building membership

Monthly Bird Monitoring Walk Statistics

by Ken Copenhaver, Friends of MNWR Board Member

After 11 months of bird walks, 131 participants have observed 86 species and counted 1658 individual birds. The statistics below were downloaded from www.eBird.org, where we report all of our counts online. However, many more birds are out there waiting to be found! According to eBird, 176 species were reported in 2010 in all of Franklin County, and I'm betting that most of those species were present on the refuge. So come join us on our walks (see the events calendar) and report all of your sightings on eBird. If you need help getting started with eBird, please contact me at copenhvr@gmail.com.

Species Name	Count
Snow Goose	8
Canada Goose	297
Wood Duck	31
Mallard	41
Blue-winged Teal	4
Common Merganser	1
Ruffed Grouse	2
Great Blue Heron	16
Turkey Vulture	2
Osprey	9
Northern Harrier	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1
Red-tailed Hawk	1
Killdeer	1
Spotted Sandpiper	2
Wilson's Snipe	2
American Woodcock	1
Ring-billed Gull	104
Black Tern	6
Mourning Dove	4
Great Horned Owl	1
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1
Belted Kingfisher	8
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	4
Downy Woodpecker	9
Hairy Woodpecker	11
Northern Flicker	16
Pileated Woodpecker	6
Eastern Wood-Pewee	8
Alder Flycatcher	1
Least Flycatcher	4
Eastern Phoebe	14
Great Crested Flycatcher	4
Eastern Kingbird	11
Yellow-throated Vireo	1
Warbling Vireo	5
Red-eyed Vireo	1
Blue Jay	20
American Crow	50
Common Raven	1
Tree Swallow	36
Barn Swallow	1
Black-capped Chickadee	104

Species Name	Count
Tufted Titmouse	5
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2
White-breasted Nuthatch	16
Brown Creeper	12
House Wren	2
Winter Wren	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1
Veery	4
American Robin	31
Gray Catbird	5
European Starling	150
Cedar Waxwing	15
Yellow Warbler	24
Chestnut-sided Warbler	3
Magnolia Warbler	1
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1
Black-throated Green Warbler	1
Blackburnian Warbler	1
Black-and-white Warbler	2
American Redstart	1
Ovenbird	2
Northern Waterthrush	2
Common Yellowthroat	18
Canada Warbler	1
American Tree Sparrow	24
Chipping Sparrow	1
Savannah Sparrow	4
Fox Sparrow	2
Song Sparrow	31
Swamp Sparrow	4
White-throated Sparrow	8
White-crowned Sparrow	4
Dark-eyed Junco	3
Scarlet Tanager	1
Northern Cardinal	2
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1
Bobolink	13
Red-winged Blackbird	297
Rusty Blackbird	57
Common Grackle	22
Brown-headed Cowbird	7
Baltimore Oriole	4
American Goldfinch	20
Total	1658

The Friends' Store

at the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge

BOOKS GAMES GIFTS TEE SHIRTS HATS

for people of all ages who love the outdoors

**Take your child for a walk in the woods...
and instill a love of nature that will last a lifetime.**

The trails at the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge are a great place to start. Before you go, stop in at the Friends' Store and check our collection of books for naturalists of all ages. **These are our favorites:**

Peterson Field Guide for Young Naturalists: Songbirds \$6.99

By Jonathon Latimer and Karen Stray Nolting, Illustrated by Roger Tory Peterson

Straightforward, simple, easy to use, with lifelike illustrations.

Stokes Beginner's Guide to Birds: Eastern Region \$9.99

By Donald and Lillian Stokes Organized by bird's plumage that makes it easier for beginners.

User-friendly color tab indexes for quick reference.

Take-Along Guide: Caterpillars, Bugs and Butterflies \$7.95

By Mel Boring, Illustrated by Linda Garrow

Basic natural history information included with descriptive text and color illustrations.

The Bug Book and Bottle \$13.95

How to Catch, Identify, and Care for Insects and Other Creepy Crawlies, by Hugh Danks, Ph.D.

Includes a book with clear guidelines on how to collect and care for bugs, a plastic bottle, a fold-out bug chart, a magnifier, and an explorer's journal to record discoveries.

To order by phone, call 802-868-4781. To order by mail, fill out this order form and send to:

The Friends' Store MNWR, 29 Tabor Rd, Swanton, VT 05488

Please add \$5.00 shipping and handling.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please send me: **Peterson Field Guide for Young Naturalists: Songbirds (\$6.99)**
 Stokes Beginner's Guide to Birds: Eastern Region (\$9.99)
 Take-Along Guide: Caterpillars, Bugs, and Butterflies (\$7.95)
 The Bug Book and Bottle (\$13.95)

Payment: Enclose check or money order, or fill in Credit Card information.

Type of card: MasterCard Visa

Credit Card Number _____ Exp date _____

Signature _____