



Habi-Chat

Newsletter of the Merritt Island Wildlife Association

Volume 17 Number 2

Summer 2011

Fees Coming to Refuge

You may have heard, starting in September, visitors will begin paying a fee to use Black Point Wildlife Drive (BPWD) and/or to launch a boat at three Refuge boat ramps. Why is the Refuge implementing fees now? How will the program work? These are some of the questions visitors are frequently asking and, with the implementation date looming, it's appropriate to lead off this quarterly newsletter with an article on the subject.

Why Fees Now? The Refuge is caught on the horns of a dilemma. Faced with increasing cost for operating visitor facilities and the forecast for flat or declining budgets, the refuge had to make some tough choices. Either reduce the level of services (perform less maintenance and provide fewer programs) or expand the current fee program. We chose the latter but the choice could be described as an **undesirable necessity**.

Merritt Island NWR, like many NWR's in the southeast, has charged a fee for hunts for many years. However, we have resisted implementing an Entrance Fee and are perhaps the last major refuge in the southeast with a large visitor program that has not done so. Other refuges such as St Marks, Ding Darling, Loxahatchee, and Okefenokee, all charge Entrance Fees. Merritt Island has resisted entrance fees because our co-location with KSC and Canaveral National Seashore (CNS) complicates implementing and managing an Entrance Fee Program.

After carefully considering our options, we have decided to implement a limited fee program in four locations: BPWD, and three boat ramps (Bair's Cove, Beacon 42, and Bio Lab). The fees will be collected on an "Honor System" where visitors use a self-serve fee station where they place their \$5.00 fee in an envelope, detach a stub, and deposit the fee envelope in a fee tube. Visitor will also have the opportunity to purchase a \$15.00 annual pass at the Visitor Center. The fee is good for the driver and all occupants of a vehicle.

The Refuge worked closely with CNS to make our fees interchangeable. That is, you may use a pass purchased at BPWD or any of the boat ramps to enter the Seashore and vice versa. This honor system was crucial to public acceptance of the program; however, because Canaveral's fee structure is different, they had to make concessions. The CNS changed their daily fee from \$3.00 per person to \$5.00 per car to match the Refuge's fee and agreed to allow visitors to apply the \$15 cost of annual refuge pass toward the \$35 Seashore annual pass. We applaud CNS for working with the Refuge to make these changes. Visitors to either location may also use America the Beautiful Passes (formerly Golden Age Pass) or a current Federal Duck Stamp in lieu of purchasing a Pass.

The Refuge has mixed feelings about the new fees. On one hand access to any public facilities should not be based on the ability of the individual to pay. We took this into consideration in establishing our fees and feel the \$5 daily and \$15 annual fee structure is affordable and should not pose a barrier to most visitors. If price is a factor, there are many other good wildlife viewing locations and launch facilities to choose from that do not charge a fee.

On the positive side, the additional revenue generated by the fees will help the refuge to pay for needed improvements at our boat ramps, annual maintenance of the wildlife drive, and allow us to begin working on a long list of deferred visitor maintenance projects.

The Refuge understands fees are often unpopular, but we hope the public will support the decision to implement fees and understand the additional revenue will help better maintain visitor facilities and allow the continuation of important visitor programs. For more information on the fee program visit our website www.fws.gov/merrittisland/.

Dorn Whitmore, Supervisory Ranger



Call for Silent Auction Donations

MIWA is requesting donation items for our upcoming annual meeting fundraiser. Gift certificates, artwork, handmade items, and anything with a nature theme are needed. All donations are tax deductible and will be displayed with your name or company name. The deadline for donations is September 30th. Contact Sandee Larsen at 321-861-2377 for additional info.



President's Message

Greetings from the Refuge! Finally, the much-talked-about minibus for tours has been ordered! Our Refuge Liaison, Dorn Whitmore, and I placed an order for a 14 passenger (plus driver) minibus made by Starcraft and powered by Ford. If you would like to see it for yourself you can Google: "Starcraft Starquest bus". Check out the features that come with it. This bus has many amenities and is more comfortable and much safer than our present van. The price is \$48,140. We have placed \$5000 down and will provide the rest of the money when it is delivered in about 8-12 weeks. It will be given to the Refuge and they will hold title. This has been a slow process mostly because of the cost and other issues. Buses larger than 14 passengers require a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) – a costly endeavor. Not only is it expensive but impractical since we would have to license many volunteers and refuge staff for its operation.

We are also continuing to seek donations for the bus. If you would like to donate, please send funds to our Bookery Manager, Sandee Larsen at: MIWA, PO Box 2683, Titusville, FL 32781. Please specifically earmark donations for the "Refuge Mini Bus".

Again, thanks so much for all you do for Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge and come see us at anytime.

Jim Pedersen, MIWA President



*Jim Pedersen, MIWA President
Photo by Carol Pedersen*



The purpose of the Merritt Island Wildlife Association is to promote conservation, awareness, and appreciation of the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge and to provide assistance to Refuge programs.

President	Jim Pedersen
Vice President	Dan Click
Treasurer	Jim Butts
Secretary	John Tribe
President Emeritus	George English

Board Members

Sam Beddingfield, Warren Camp, James Clark, Chris Fairey, Darleen Hunt, Robert Hutchison, Dan LeBlanc, Forrest McCartney, Truman Scarborough, Lee Solid, Ned Steel, Diane Stees, Laurilee Thompson, Jim Tully, John Turcot and Charlie Venuto

Refuge Manager Layne Hamilton **USFWS Liaison** Dorn Whitmore
NASA Liaison John Shaffer

The Merritt Island Wildlife Association (MIWA) is a nonprofit, cooperating association for the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. The *Habi-Chat* is published quarterly. For MIWA information, call **321-861-2377**.

Newsletter Editor Carol Pedersen **Technical Consultant** Cheri Ehrhardt

Habi-Chat **Committee** Cheri Ehrhardt, Sandee Larsen, Carol Pedersen, and Dorn Whitmore

Thank You to Our Corporate Sponsors

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Volunteer Recognition 2011- Stepping Back In Time

For this year's celebration, Refuge volunteers stepped back in time and experienced what it was like to live like a Florida Cracker in the 1800's. The site was Rowell Heritage Farm in Mims, founded and operated by Jim and Delores Rowell. Volunteers participated in a guided tour of the farm house and vegetable garden, toured the property on a hayride and learned how to use a vintage sugar cane press. The experience was enlightening, educational and fun.

Loughman Lake Restaurant was the destination for a lunch and the volunteer award ceremony. MIWA sponsored the southern meal of fried catfish, pulled pork, cold sweet tea, and key lime pie. Hmmm, delicious!

The award ceremony took place under a pavilion with the St. Johns River as the back drop. Refuge Manager Layne Hamilton and Supervisory Ranger, Dorn Whitmore thanked and commended the volunteers for their outstanding work, totaling 14,000 annual hours. Volunteers reaching milestone hours in increments of 250 received special recognition. Of special note, Bill Nunn was crowned volunteer of the year and Cary Salter reached a whopping total of 5,000 hours of service.

Thank you MIWA for sponsoring the luncheon, award ceremony and visit to the farm. Thank you to our outstanding Refuge Volunteers for their dedication and hard work! The Refuge acknowledges and thanks the following volunteers for reaching the milestone volunteer hour awards:

100 Hours: Doris Franklin, Roslyn Grimm, Pam Lee, Dennis Lee, Lucy Pruss, Robbie Robinson, Don Thulin, Harry Tolles, Andrea Matthews, Margaret Towe

250 Hours: Barbara Peterson, Rosemary Georganna, Jim Butts, Deborah Ferraro, Joe Ferraro

500 Hours: Kathie Benson, Michelle Corbett, Ron Corbett, Ron Henderson

750 Hours: Bob Armbruster, Curt Arnold, Peter Bartman, Al McKinley, Ned Steel

1000 Hours: Don Bruse, Patricia Thomas-Arnold

1250 Hours: Jim Pedersen

1500 Hours: Al Brayton, Kathy Eichinger, Connie Foreman, Daryl Foreman, JoAnn Heenan

1750 Hours: John Boucher, Margaret Towe, Susan Waldron

2000 Hours: Barbara Schoen

2250 Hours: Beverly Campbell

2500 Hours: Dan Witmer

2750 Hours: George Schoen

3000 Hours: Jim Stahl

3750 Hours: Bill Nunn

4000 Hours: Betty Salter

5000 Hours: Cary Salter

Volunteer of the Year: Bill Nunn



*Refuge Volunteers at Rowell Heritage Farm
Photo by Nancy Corona, Refuge Ranger*



*Volunteer Cary Salter Achieves
5,000 Hours of Service
USFWS File Photo*



*Volunteer of the Year,
Bill Nunn
USFWS File Photo*

Volunteer of the Year Bill Nunn

Bill Nunn was awarded Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge's Volunteer of the Year 2011. If you meet Bill on the Refuge, his love and dedication for the refuge's wildlife, plants and visitors is evident. Bill's willingness to assist the refuge whenever he can, led to his accumulation of 3,750 hours. He loves to talk to and show visitors wildlife, which led to the creation of the eagle watch program. Bill chaperones, teaches and takes pictures during school field trips and he generously donates prints to students. Whether the job assignment is assisting with a school group, a clean-up, staffing the manatee deck or a turtle watch program, Bill is the first to sign up and typically the last to leave, ensuring that the gates are locked and the visitors and staff are headed safely for home. Bill is a tremendous asset to the Refuge's wildlife and people. Thank you Bill!

Nancy Corona, Public Use Ranger



MIWA Minute

Spring is in the air at the Refuge. We have spotted a few active bird nests along the boardwalk and the manatees are feeling frisky at the observation deck. Wildflowers are blooming along our roadsides, and gators are acting territorial. The only thing lacking is rainfall. Even with the low rainfall we have plenty of mosquitoes!

This is a great time to come out. You can visit the Visitor Center to cool off in the AC, shop in the Bookery, or drive Black Point in the comfort of your personal vehicle.

I am happy to announce receiving \$120 via **United Technologies (UT)** Employee Giving Program. Thanks to UT staffer and MIWA member **Eric Gardez**, we were included in this program supporting organizations recommended by employees. Eric has suggested MIWA for years and we cannot thank him enough! If your company has a program such as UT's please recommend MIWA! All proceeds go to the refuge we all love.

I especially want to give thanks to the **Downtown Gallery** in Titusville. MIWA received a donation of \$134.10 via their annual Art for Wildlife event. Participating artists donate a portion of their sales to MIWA at this popular open to the public program. Thank you to artists: **Barbara Evans, Dale Nichols, Yvette Whitmore, John Michael, Diane Deshong Cannon, and Jeff & Heidi Thamert**. Your love of the refuge is inspiring.

And last, but surely not least, I want to announce our newest Life Members; **Megan Van Vleck, Carlton Lynn, Jean Lynn and Kevin Lynn**. Megan is from Vero Beach and has been a member since Feb. 2010. She is true nature lover. It's a family affair for Carlton, Jean and Kevin! They all reside in Rockledge and have a love for the Refuge. Thank you to Megan and the Lynn family! Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Also, thank you to all of our life members:

Arlova Allen	Jim Escoffier	Jean & Carlton Lynn	Judge & Mrs. Joseph Schneider
David Barne	Valerie Fadok	Kevin Lynn	Robert Sieck
Tommie Barron	Mrs. Emmett B. Ferguson, MD	Barry Maness	Jerome & Kerry Skelly
Sam Beddingfield	Dennis & Kathleen Gasick	Phyllis & Howard Mansfield	Sid & Carol Smith
Mary Beyrer	Kathy Gay	Captain Fredrick. Mastin	Stephen & Evelyn Snell
Homer & Pat Bodiford	Andrew & Rosemary Georganna	Forrest & Ruth McCartney	Lee & Shirley Solid
John & Linda Boucher	Robert Green	Barbara Jones McClure	Tiffany Stamas
Kathryn Brown	Carolyn Haas	Marian Meguiar	Pat Stearns
H.P. Bruckner	Ron Hight	Bob Merrilees	Ned Steel
Robby & Sue Buckalew	Barbara Hoelscher	John Milani	Frank & Liz Steele
James L. Butts	Carl & Nancy Holtman	Tom & Virginia Mills	Rick & Diane Stees
Warren & Betty Camp	Jay Honeycutt	Joanne Napieralski	Joyce & Bill Stefancic
Paul & Leah Casper	Darleen & Jerry Hunt	Jo Lynn Nelson	Jim & Helen Thomas
Dan Click	Barbara Hutchinson	Dale & Maggie Nichols	Laurilee Thompson
B.E. Cushing	Thomas Ingersoll	Hugh & Mary Nicolay	Cheri Ehrardt-Topper
Howard & Kiki Davidow	Carl Jones II	Lewis Oliver	John Tribe
Doug Demetrick	Bill & Ann Kellermeyer	Gerry & Arline Oppliger	Megan Van Vieck
Neil Doby	Kam & Judy Kersey	Kerry Palermo	Gerald & Vatsna Wallace
Don Doerr	Charles Keyes	James Pedersen	Bill & Natalie Walls
Margaret Dolan	Darlene Koenig	James & Elza Phillips	Jean & Ron Weed
Dr D. & P Buitendorp Drew	Kerri Lambert	Juan Riera	Malcom & Amy Whitelaw
Judy & Jim Dryja	William Lathrop	Dr. Bill Rylander	Nan Wilson
Karl & Betty Eichhorn	Daniel LeBlanc	Cary & Betty Salter	Maureen & Wayne Wright
Kathy & Richard Eichinger	Judith Lindquist	James Salyerds	Jarrett Wyant
Lori & Steve Emly	Richard & Carol Loehr	Joseph Sanders	Thomas Wyrobek
George English	Fran Louwerse	Cynthia Schneider	
Richard English	Marian Lunsford	Charles Schneider	

If you would like to become a Life Member or make a donation to MIWA, please contact the MIWA by phone at 321-861-2377 or via mail at MIWA, PO Box 2683, Titusville, FL 32781. All donations are tax deductible.

See you at the Refuge!

Sandee Larsen, Bookery Manager

Southeast Regional Honor Awards

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Southeast Regional Director, Cindy Dohner, presented annual awards on May 11, 2011. Several Florida projects and staff members were recognized. Cheri Ehrhardt, Natural Resource Planner stationed at Merritt Island NWR received one of 26 individual Honor Awards. The award recognized her facilitating a meeting with over 500 attendees at Cahaba River NWR in Alabama, assisting Crystal River NWR with manatee rulemaking for Kings Bay and waterway management at Three Sisters Springs, and facilitating several engaging meetings for the proposed Everglades Headwaters NWR and Conservation Area.

The cold stunned sea turtle rescue operations team that operated out of Merritt Island NWR in January 2010 also



*Cold Stunned Sea Turtle Rescue Group Receives Awards
USFWS File Photo*



*Cheri Ehrhardt Receives an Honor Award
Photo by Tom MacKenzie USFWS*

received a Conservation Award (including Candace Carter at Canaveral National Seashore, Angy Chambers at Patrick Air Force Base, Lynne Phillips at Kennedy Space Center, and Jane Provancha at IHA, as well as the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). Another important Florida project was also recognized with a Conservation Award- the acquisition of Three Sisters Springs for Crystal River NWR. Ken Litzenberger, a former Florida Refuge Manager, also received the prestigious Department of Interior's Meritorious Service Award and the Paul Kroegel National Wildlife Refuge Manager of the Year Award. And, last but not least, the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society was awarded a Conservation Award. Congratulations to all recipients!

Cheri Ehrhardt, Natural Resource Planner, USFWS



New Proposed Florida Refuge!

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing a new refuge in Florida – the Everglades Headwaters NWR and Conservation Area. Public scoping for this proposal was conducted earlier this year (January-March 2011) and over 38,000 comments were received. For more information about the proposal, please visit the project's website:

<http://www.fws.gov/southeast/greatereverglades/>.

Outlining the alternatives and the Service's proposed action, the draft Land Protection Plan (LPP) and Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Everglades Headwaters NWR and Conservation Area will be available for public review and comment later this summer:

- on the web at <http://www.fws.gov/southeast/greatereverglades/>,
- at the Refuge Complex HQ, or
- by calling 321.861.0667 to request a paper or CD copy.

Once the draft LPP and EA are available for public review and comment, comments can be:

- emailed to EvergladesHeadwatersProposal@fws.gov;
- faxed to 321.861.1276; or
- mailed to Everglades Headwaters Proposal, US Fish and Wildlife Service, POB 2683, Titusville, FL 32781-2683.

Public meetings will also be scheduled. Inquire at: EvergladesHeadwatersProposal@fws.gov or 321.861.2368.

Cheri M. Ehrhardt, Natural Resource Planner, USFWS



New Facilities at MINWR



*Improved Bair's Cove Boat Ramp
Photo by Dorn Whitmore Supervisory Ranger*

mid 1980's. The new dock is constructed of PVC pilings, aluminum frame, and a plastic thru-flow deck. The dock has an environmentally friendly design and was described by the permit agencies as "state of the art". The dock was conceived to reduce manatee impacts from boats circling and waiting to use the ramp. The longer dock provides the ability for several boats to tie up while waiting their turn to use the single wide ramp, thus reducing threats to manatees in the boat basin. MIWA provided financial assistance for the project. Thanks MIWA!

Dorn Whitmore, Supervisory Ranger

Seminole Rest Historical Tour

On Sunday, April 17th, fifteen MIWA Members attended the Seminole Rest Tour lead by Canaveral National Seashore (CNS) Ranger, Leslie Peters. The day was sunny and warm, perfect for a walking tour. Leslie gave a leisurely walk of the 21 acre park, stopping at key sites to talk of the native tribes (the Timucuan and Ais Indians) that once inhabited this part of Florida. Several mounds are at the site, made of clam and oyster shells and fish remains.

Two structures remain on the site, the historic Instone House and a caretaker's house. The Instone House and the caretaker cottage were constructed prior to 1890. Both homes have been restored and are worth the trip to view. There is a gift shop in the Instone House, with the proceeds going to CNS. Ranger Leslie is onsite Wed-Sat from noon till 4pm and is happy to answer questions.

The view on the water is great, a perfect place to enjoy a packed lunch or just quietly sit and relax. After MIWA's tour our group visited the nearby popular fish eatery, Goodrich's. The meals are delicious and priced right. Please visit Seminole Rest; it is a great getaway for family and friends!

Sandee Larsen, MIWA



*New Refuge Office Building
Photo by Dorn Whitmore Supervisory Ranger*



*MIWA Group View Instone House
Photo by Sandee Larsen, MIWA*



Hello to...

..... *Nancy Hauser*, our new summer work camper from Tuscan, AR, is a retired physical therapist and will be here until early fall. Nancy has family in Titusville (sister- Sally Hutchinson). Her interests are many – wildlife, classical music, photography and her two cats. Welcome Nancy!

Goodbye to...

..... Everyone's favorite intern, *Stacey Shriner*. Stacey has gone to Anchorage Alaska for a 13 month internship. We will miss her and we are sad to see her go. Thank you for the great environmental education programs you developed here. MINWR & Alaska were lucky to get such an energetic, hard working intern. Stay warm and keep in touch!

..... Return work campers *-Michelle & Ron Corbitt* and *Daryl & Connie Foreman* who have left for home during the hot, muggy summer season. Thank you for all your hard work. We could not have kept the place going without you! We'll see you next fall!

St. Johns NWR CCP Update

The St. Johns NWR CCP is presently in the planning and development stages and we anticipate delivering a draft plan for public review this June/July 2011. Once complete, the Draft CCP will be made available for a 30-day comment period.

An electronic draft version will be available on the Internet (select the “Draft CCP Documents” button at <http://www.fws.gov/southeast/planning> and navigate to the St. Johns NWR), paper and CD copies will be available at Merritt Island NWR (321-861-0667) or you can request a physical copy (identify CD or paper or both) via email to St.JohnsCCP@fws.gov or MerrittIsland@fws.gov.

There are many different ways to deliver draft comments as listed:

- Fax us: 321-861-8913 or phone us: 321-861-0667 or 561-715-0023
- Email us: St.JohnsCCP@fws.gov
- Mail them to us: St. Johns NWR CCP c/o Bill Miller, Wildlife Biologist,
 - P.O. Box 2683, Titusville, FL 32781

You can also sign up to be a member of the CCP’s mailing list by visiting <http://www.fws.gov/stjohns> and navigating to the mailing list form. For those who’ve already asked to be on the mailing list, you should have received a card in the mail asking whether you’d like a copy of the draft plan and in what form. If you would like a paper or CD copy, please make sure to contact us with a request for a copy. For more information, please visit: <http://www.fws.gov/stjohns>, contact the refuge at 321-861-0667, or contact Bill Miller, our Service point of contact for the CCP, at 561-715-0023.

Bill Miller, Fish and Wildlife Biologist



St. Johns NWR
USFWS File Photo



Fort Jefferson

Photo by Jim Butts, MIWA Board Member

MIWA Members Tour-Key West

Twelve adventurous MIWA Members attended the Key West-Dry Tortugas Trip April 29- May 2, 2011. Seven attendees left Titusville for the all day van drive on Friday amidst the thousands of space shuttle launch visitors. It was a good time for all to get acquainted and rest up for an energy packed weekend. We arrived, checked into our hotel and headed for Old Town. There we met up with other members who drove separately and went to hydrate and have dinner. After a great meal it was off to bed for an early rising for our boat tour.

Early Saturday morning our guide, Wayne Landrum, met us dockside and we boarded the Yankee Freedom. Wayne served as National Park Ranger for many years and is the perfect guide to get the most out of our day. The trip to the island took 2 ½ hrs, which we spent bird watching, eating breakfast & lunch and enjoying each other’s company. Upon

landing we toured Fort Jefferson- then broke into groups to go birding, snorkel, or just swim in the clear cool ocean.

Wayne did a great job spotting birds for our birding group. A total of 41 species were sighted. Species of interest are; Masked Booby, Brown Booby, Magnificent Frigatebird, Pomarine Jaeger, Brown Noddy, and the Northern Gannet.

We reluctantly left early afternoon and all shared stories from our day. Sunday, we had an “open day” in which we could tour the city, go biking, tour the butterfly conservancy, or visit nearby historical houses. I chose to attend Loyd’s Bike Tour, and it was a wonderful event. The two hour tour turned into a four hour tour that included visiting hidden gardens, a parrot rescue site, a wildlife rehab park, off the beaten path roads filled with exotic fruit trees for the picking, Loyd’s house for a quick drum circle, and the historic cemetery. We rested the remainder of the day, and attended the historic sunset event at Malory Square for some street performance fun!

We left for home Monday morning, cat napping most of the way. If you missed this tour, watch for announcements of future MIWA Member’s Tours via the *Habi-Chat* and e mail. I hope you can join in the next trip!

Sandee Larsen, MIWA



MIWA Tour Group Dockside
Photo by Sandee Larsen, MIWA



PROTECTING AMERICA'S WILDLIFE



Top 10 Things Congress Should Do To Protect Wildlife

The National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) has announced 10 actions Congress should take immediately to protect America's wildlife heritage in a new report, *Top 10 for 2011: Priorities for Protecting America's Wildlife*. Top priorities include maintaining funding for the nation's 553 national wildlife refuges which encompass 150 million acres and protect some of America's most unique wildlife habitats, from the Chesapeake Bay to the Everglades and the remote Pacific islands to the spectacular Arctic refuge in Alaska.

"We have a moral obligation to future generations to protect our nation's diverse natural world," said Evan Hirsche, President of the Refuge Association. "And when we protect our natural world, we improve the lives of people through clean water, clean air, wide-open spaces and stronger local economies that benefit from higher property values and a better quality of life."

In outlining the 10 actions Congress can take, NWRA highlights how supporting national wildlife refuges strengthens our local economies and leverages millions of dollars. For every \$1 appropriated by Congress for refuge funding, and average of \$4 is returned to local economies. And it's not just refuges, other programs under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service leverage millions more; the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program leverages between \$4 and \$10 for every \$1 appropriated and the North American Wetlands Conservation Act delivers multiple benefits including improved water quality and carbon sequestration.

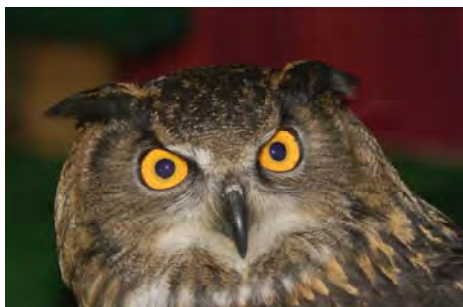
"Spending funds to support national wildlife refuges and wildlife conservation leverages a significantly higher investment of private dollars and volunteer commitment," said Hirsche. "For example, refuge volunteers and "Friends" groups deliver 20% of all the work on national wildlife refuges."

Other actions for Congress include:

Restore the Gulf of Mexico – implement the Presidential Oil Spill Commission recommendations;

- Support full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund – where money from off shore oil leases go to protecting habitat in other areas;
- Promote Farm, Ranchland and Forestland Conservation through Estate Tax Provisions;
- Expand wetlands conservation by increasing the price of the Migratory Bird Hunting & Conservation Stamp;
- Release promised funding from the Department of Homeland Security to the Department of Interior to mitigate for the border wall on the Mexico/U.S. border.

Article via *National Wildlife Refuge Association, Washington, DC*



Great Horned Owl
Photo by Bill Nunn, Volunteer

Speak up!

Government decisions determine the fate of the Merritt Island NWR. You can help by letting key decision makers know how you feel about the Refuge and other natural resource issues.

President

Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500
(202) 456-1111
President@WhiteHouse.gov

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southeast Regional Director

Cynthia Dohner
1875 Century Boulevard Northeast, Suite 400
Atlanta, GA 30345
(404) 679-4000

Secretary of the Interior

Ken Salazar
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 208-3100

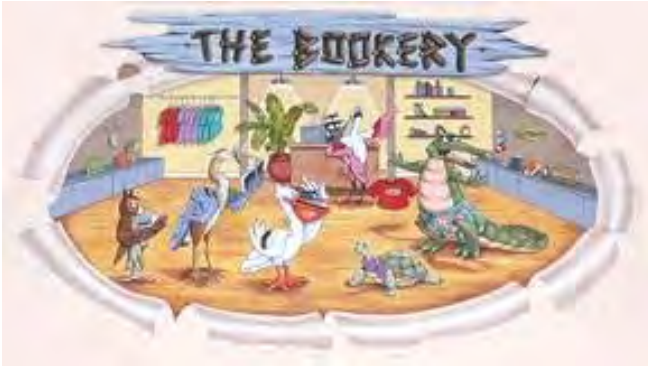
FL Senators

Marco Rubio
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-3041
Bill Nelson
716 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-5274

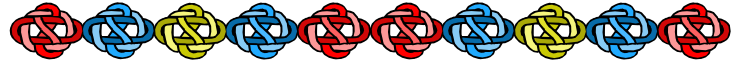
FL Representatives: <http://www.house.gov/writerep>

Sandra Adams
513 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300
(850) 488-1157

New Items in



Habi-Chat has email! If you would like to be on our mailing list to receive MIWA announcements, please add us to your safe senders list and send a request to HabiChat@MerrittIslandWildlifeAssociation.org



Donations in remembrance of loved ones and friends can be sent to:

MIWA
P.O. Box 2683
Titusville, FL 32781



Snakes of Central Florida
 Photo & Text by George L. Heinrich & Timothy J. Walsh.....\$7.95
 A waterproof guide to common and notable species of habitat & diet, behavior and easy field identification.



Things That Bite
 By: Tom Anderson.....\$12.95
 A realistic look at critters that scare people – be aware, not afraid. Featuring detailed information about more than 30 critters found in the Gulf States, fascinating facts, bite prevention, recommended resources, and full-color, easy-to-use guide.



For retail information, call the MIWA Office at 321-861-2377

Visitor Information Center Hours

Monday through Friday
 8:00 am – 4:30 pm
 Saturday and Sunday*
 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

*VIC is closed Sundays from April – October
 The Refuge is open daily from sunrise – sunset, except during Shuttle Launch/Landing operations.

Merritt Island Wildlife Association

Supporting the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

Joining is simple. Just fill out this form and mail it to the Merritt Island Wildlife Association at P.O. Box 2683, Titusville, FL 32781 or join online at www.MerrittIslandWildlifeAssociation.org

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone Number _____
 Email _____

Type of Membership:

- Seniors and Students – \$10
- Individual – \$15
- Senior Couples – \$15
- Family Membership – \$20
- Supporting Membership – \$50
- Senior Couple Supporting – \$75
- Life Membership – \$250
- Patron – \$1000
- Optional – Donation \$ _____

Total Enclosed _____

Make checks payable to MIWA. For credit card payments please call the MIWA office at:

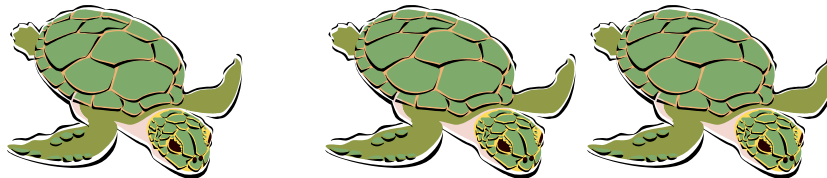
321-861-2377.

MIWA Members-Only Sea Turtle Walk

Saturdays: *June 18th and July 9th*

7:30 p.m.

**MINWR Visitor Center &
Canaveral National Seashore**



Meet a Refuge Ranger at the MINWR Visitor Center for a short informational program followed by a trip via personal vehicle to the Canaveral National Seashore in search of a nesting sea turtle. Program typically lasts three to four hours. Long sleeve shirt, bug spray and comfortable walking shoes are recommended.

Cameras and flashlights are not permitted.

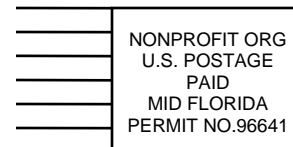
RSVP, as limited space is available.

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