



# Friends of Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge

*Among Friends*

Spring 2004

Friends of Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to the enduring protection, management, and appreciation of Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge and its environs.

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The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to preserve a national network of lands and waters for the conservation and management of fish, wildlife and plant resources of the United States for the benefit of present and future generations.

## FOW and South Country Partnership Invite You To Celebrate Community Awareness Day, May 22

Blue skies (we hope!) and Blue Grass (music!) will add to the fun on Community Awareness Day, to be celebrated in the South Country School District on Saturday, May 22, at the Hamlet Organic Garden on Beaver Dam Road in Brookhaven, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The event is sponsored by the South Country Partnership, of which Friends of Wertheim is a member. The Partnership's mission is to bring together the not-for-profit, community-based agencies serving children, youth and families within the South Country School District. Through the Partnership, agencies can coordinate existing programs and support each other, to get

the most benefit for the community.

"We are excited to be part of this event," said FOW President Claire Goad. "Please come – bring the family and a picnic, and enjoy a Blue Grass band while you learn more about the South Country Community."

The festivities will include crafts for children, tours of the organic farm, various demonstrations, and visits by the Brookhaven Fire Department, Ragtime Pizza's Antique Fire Truck, and the South Country Ambulance.

If rain crashes the party, it will be held the next day, Sunday, May 23. If the weather is questionable, check FOW's website, [www.friendsofwertheim.org](http://www.friendsofwertheim.org), to see if it's been rescheduled.

## Nature Walk & Crafts Highlight FOW's April Event

The participants were enthusiastic and the weather was beautiful for the Family Nature Walk and Children's Nature Craft Fair that Friends of Wertheim hosted at the Refuge on Saturday, April 10.

Leading the nature walk were the brother-and-sister team of Jennifer Clement and Peter Puleston, whose father was the great naturalist Dennis Puleston. As the group hiked the White Oak Trail, Jen and Pete pointed out flora and fauna along the way.

FOW member and event organizer Robin Poulter-McGrath recalls, "We saw the osprey pair who nest



**Jennifer Clement and Peter Puleston led the Nature Walk at Werthem Refuge, at FOW's first program of the season.**

alongside the trail near the Carmans River, a variety of waterfowl and other birds, including pine warblers. We found owl pellets alongside the path, saw a green heron's nest, squirrel nests and skunk cabbage. Plus we were able to examine up close the dead masked

shrew that Peter found next to the path. At the end of the walk, we saw painted turtles and sliders sunning themselves on tree branches overhanging the pond."

After the walk, children and adults alike enjoyed refreshments, painted eggs to mimic birds' eggs and made bird feeders from pinecones, peanut butter and birdseed.

"We would like to thank both Peter and Jennifer for giving their time and expertise to make our first program of the year such a success," Robin said.

See pages 2 and 4 for more photos of this event.

## Friends Meet New Friends at Workshop

FOW President Claire Goad and Refuge Manager Patricia Martinkovic attended the Friends Workshop for the Northeast Region of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, April 16-18, at the Northeast Regional Office in Hadley, Massachusetts.

Claire and Patricia reported that the highlights of the workshop included:

- sharing and networking with other Friends organizations. "This provided us with lots of ideas for Friends of Wertheim," Claire said.
- an address by Evan Hirsche and Max Schenk from the National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA), who explained what this support organization has to offer the Friends groups.
- the workshops they attended, which included "Bookstore Basics," "Fund-Raising Strategies and Methods," "Membership Development" and "Communication Between Friends & Refuge Staff."
- displays by all participating Friends group. Claire was pleased that "Everyone who saw our display remarked on how great our new banner is!" Pat photographed each exhibit and compiled the handouts for FOW records.
- a tour of the new Discovery Center. "The displays are excellent," said Claire, "if you're ever near Hadley, Massachusetts, I highly recommended a visit."



**FOW used one of its new tents for the first time at the Nature Walk event at Wertheim on April 10. Then, they packed up the new banner (shown above), to use with the new tabletop display at the Friends Workshop. These wonderful new acquisitions were thanks to grants from the groups listed in our last newsletter.**

## Two Refuge-Related Restoration Projects Under Way

The past few decades have brought ever greater understanding of the importance of coastal ecosystems that nourish a wide variety of both plant and animal wildlife. But years before this understanding evolved, human activity had begun to damage both wetland and upland areas that form Long Island's shoreline. Two Refuge-related projects aim to undo the damage and restore two of these wildlife habitats.

### Little Neck Run

Located on Wertheim's western boundary, this lovely tributary of the Carmans River was once the site of the Leskowitz duck farm. This operation destroyed native habitats and opened up the property to invasion by exotic plants. As reported in this newsletter last fall, the Refuge had received a grant from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to restore upland habitats adjacent to Little Neck Run. Given the current value and future potential of the Creek to wintering waterfowl and of the shoreline to migrating and nesting songbirds, selection of this



**Lovely Little Neck Run, photographed by Marty Van Lith earlier this month.**

site for restoration was a simple choice to make. □

Senior Biologist Mark Maghini says that this work is well under way though "this is a work in progress that will take several years to complete."

The first phase of the work – clearing the area to be restored – began this winter. "The majority of the clearing of invasive plants has been completed," said Mark, "and we expect to remove the larger, derelict structures by the end of June."

Future steps in this ongoing process include: control of common reed (*Phragmites australis*), and invasive exotic aquatic plants along the Creek's fringe, disking the upland to prepare

a seed bed, sowing native grasses, and planting native shrubs.

But before going on to the next phase, the area must be cleared of all scrap materials resulting from building removal – and Mark would love your help! *To volunteer to help pick up the stuff and load it in a dumpster, call Mark Maghini, 286-0485.*

### Beaver Dam Creek

Though this Brookhaven creek lies about a mile west of Wertheim's western boundary, it is part of the same South Shore Estuary system as the Carmans River, and they are physically and ecologically connected by New York State wetlands. Because the health of these waterways is so intertwined, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is one of several groups involved in this project to restore 10 acres of wetlands along the Beaver Dam Creek, owned by the Post-Morrow Foundation.

The project is being coordinated by Ducks Unlimited's Cindy Patterson. As explained in the project brochure: "When Beaver

Dam Creek was dredged in the 1920s and 1960s, the dredge materials were placed in the wetlands. Dikes constructed along the Creek prevented the tides from reaching the wetlands. As a result, habitat was lost for many important fish species . . . [and] waterfowl, wading birds, and shorebirds that live and feed in wetlands."

The emphasis of the project, notes the brochure, "is removing the dredged spoils from the historical wetland areas, breaching the dikes to allow for regular tidal flow, and controlling invasive plant species, particularly . . . *Phragmites*. These activities will allow natural marsh functions to return as well as the plants and animals dependent on wetlands."

Last year, Wertheim Maintenance Supervisor Bill Starke mowed enough of the land for surveying. This March, heavy equipment began removing the spoils by the truck-full. Now, says Cindy Patterson, "The majority of the dredge spoil material has been removed, and final grading is nearing completion. Once the native vegetation becomes established, this marsh will again provide a haven for wildlife!"



# Ospreycam 2004 Records Ospreys' Return

Trained on an osprey nest in an undisclosed location on the Wertheim Refuge, a silent sentinel records every second of activity and every moment of quietude. That sentinel is the Ospreycam sponsored by the Post-Morrow Foundation, which you can access on



**Above: Four eggs wait to be hatched. Left: The osprey pair in their nest.**

*-photos are from the Post-Morrow website*

## Kudos for Upton Reserve Management

Some 530 acres at Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL) were permanently set aside in 2000 to create the Upton Ecological and Research Reserve. The site is managed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (F&WS) for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), which oversees BNL.

F&WS Wildlife Biologist Jeremy Feinberg (photo on back page) is based at BNL to help manage the Reserve. In April, Jeremy, along with Timothy Green, BNL's Natural Resource Manager, and Frank Crescenzo, Deputy Manager of DOE's Brookhaven Site Office, were awarded U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 2 "Environmental Quality" awards for their "outstanding management . . ." and for being "instrumental in transitioning the forethought of the DOE into a significant habitat reserve that is dedicated to protecting the quality of the Central Long Island Pine Barrens ecosystem."

For more information about the Reserve, go to [www.bnl.gov/esd/reserve/default.htm](http://www.bnl.gov/esd/reserve/default.htm).

the internet at [www.postmorrow.org/](http://www.postmorrow.org/).

Since "going live" at 4:29 p.m. on February 29, and initiating its second year, the Ospreycam has witnessed the following milestones that are preserved in clips also accessible on the website:

- **March 15** – The adults returned to the nest in mid-afternoon. □
- **April 5** – The first egg arrived at approximately 11:10 p.m. The full moon provided good lighting of the event.
- **April 8** – The second egg arrived at about 3:50 p.m.
- **April 11** – After fussing with the nest for a while, the female settled down in the nest and, after six contractions, laid the third egg at about 4:10 p.m.
- **April 14** – Immediately after returning from feeding, the female osprey started having contractions for the

fourth egg, which arrived at approximately 1:35 p.m.

According to the commentary on the website, "The first of the chicks usually will have hatched by mid-May, and once the chicks start to hatch the female will assume almost exclusive duty at the nest, incubating, feeding and protecting the chick(s). □ The male will provide the fish and only occasionally sit on the eggs/chicks." So treat yourself to some time on the Ospreycam today, and see what these fascinating birds are up to!

## Children's Corner – Find the Animals & Trees

*Created by FOW Board Members Connie Ludlam & Faith McCutcheon*

To solve this word search puzzle, look for the names of all the animals and trees listed below and circle them as you find them. The words can be found spelled left to right, right to left, up and down or down and up, on a diagonal slant and backwards!

S O U T H E R N F L Y I N G S Q U I R R E L R  
 A P A B C A H I C K O R Y D E K A O D E R F E  
 S O G H I S J K L M N O P Q R S T U V D W X E  
 S S W C B T A L E R R I U Q S Y A R G F Z Y D  
 A S E D E E F B L A C K C H E R R Y U O G H D  
 F U R H A R B O R S E A L I N M L K V X J I E  
 R M H P Q N R R S T U T A R K S U M T V E W L  
 A J S S T C O C D H I L M Q R C W Z R Y S X I  
 S I K R U H W H I T E O A K S V U F O A U C A  
 D O L P H I N Y R R E B E L K C U H E I O O T  
 A H L Q V P B B E L I A T N O T T O C T M L E  
 B G R E D M A P L E J K N D O G W O O D S E T  
 C F M P W U T U P E L O O P T U X Z H C O Y I  
 D E N O X N Z A F G E N I P H C T I P O N O H  
 V O L E Y K P E P P E R I D G E Y L E S A E W

### Trees

WHITE OAK  
 RED OAK  
 SASSAFRAS  
 HUCKLEBERRY  
 RED MAPLE

HICKORY  
 BLACK CHERRY  
 PITCH PINE  
 DOGWOOD  
 TUPELO  
 PEPPERIDGE

### Animals

OPOSSUM  
 COTTONTAIL  
 SHREW  
 HARBOR SEAL

DOLPHIN  
 RED FOX  
 WEASEL  
 BROWN BAT  
 MUSKRAT  
 VOLE

EASTERN CHIPMUNK  
 SOUTHERN FLYING SQUIRREL  
 WOODCHUCK  
 GRAY SQUIRREL  
 WHITE-TAILED DEER  
 MOUSE



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## FOW Hosts a Fun-Filled Day at the Wertheim

FOW Board member John Petraglia snapped all the photos in this issue of the

Family Nature Walk and Children's Nature Craft Fair that FOW hosted at



Wertheim on Saturday, April 10. At left, folks gather for the nature walk near the Refuge office on the banks of the Carmans River. Above, some of the eggs children painted to resemble the eggs of various birds, both real and fantastic! See page 1 for the full story.

### Efforts Rewarded

Go to page 3 to read about the kudos that U.S. F&WS Wildlife Biologist Jeremy Feinberg (below right) received recently for management of the Upton Ecological and Research Reserve. Jeremy is shown here with intern Raphael Sierra.



## Dues Are (Over) Due for 2004

If you haven't yet renewed your FOW membership, please sign up now while it's on your mind, and be sure to include your e-mail address so Webmaster John Petraglia can send you reminders about Refuge and/or FOW events.

### FOW MEMBERSHIP

Please renew/establish a one-year membership for:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*Individual membership – only \$10*

*Family membership – an incredible bargain at \$15*

If enrolling more than one member, please provide information for each person. Send check, payable to Friends of Wertheim NWR, to: PO Box 376, Brookhaven NY 11719

**Community Awareness Day  
 Saturday, May 22  
 at the Hamlet Organic Garden  
 Beaver Dam Road, Brookhaven  
 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

### Did You Notice?

We told you it was coming, and now it's here – the full-color HP laser printer that FOW was able to purchase and install at the Wertheim Refuge – thanks to a generous grant from the Knapp/Swezey Foundation. And we're sure you've noticed that this newsletter is printed in full color – our first application of this wonderful gift.