

REFUGE WEEK EVENTS AT THE RED RIVER NWR

THE BIG SIT! SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2008

When: Before dawn 'til after dark (6:30 a.m. 'til)

Place: Red River National Wildlife Refuge
Headquarters Unit
555 Sunflower Road
Bossier City, LA 71112
Office: 742-1219

Who can attend: The public is invited. **NO PETS PLEASE!**

Sponsored by: Shreveport Society for Nature Study Bird Study Group and the Red River National Wildlife Refuge

Admission: FREE!

About the Event: Founded by the New Haven, Connecticut, Bird Club and now hosted by *Bird Watcher's Digest* magazine, the Big Sit is an annual, international, noncompetitive birding event. It is



sponsored nationally by Swarovski Optik, Alpen Optics, and Wild Bird Centers. 2008 will mark the 14th Annual Big Sit. From its beginnings as a strictly North American affair, the Big Sit has grown to include teams all over the world.

Swarovski Optik donates \$500 to the team who gets the "Golden Bird." A bird species is selected by random drawing from all bird species sighted. All teams listing that species are entered in the random drawing for the Golden Bird. The winning circle then chooses a non-profit environmental-based organization to be the recipient of the \$500.

Sitters count birds observed or heard from within a 17-foot diameter circle. Sitters may come and go at will. Beginning birders are very welcome.

Signs along the refuge road will lead you to the circle. Parking will be available near the circle.

What to bring: Binoculars, scope, chair, hat, drinks, food, mosquito repellent, and sunscreen.

4TH ANNUAL REFUGE CELEBRATION & CATFISH FRY SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2008

When: 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Place: Red River National Wildlife Refuge
Headquarters Unit
555 Sunflower Road
Bossier City, LA 71112
Office: 742-1219

Who can attend: The public is invited. **NO PETS PLEASE!**

Sponsored by: The Red River Refuge Alliance (Friends of Red River NWR) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Admission: FREE! Donations to support the work of the Friends group for the refuge are appreciated. All activities are free except for photos taken with the baby alligators, which are \$5.00 each.

About the Event: Join us for guided nature walks, children's activities, door prizes, photography contests for adults and children, and more! New this year will be Bridges to Birding activity stations and baby alligators with photo opportunities. And your favorites will be back including the falconry demonstration, live owls, refuge tours, hayrides, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service exhibits and demonstrations. Free juice, coffee, tea, and breakfast bars will be available in the morning. A delectable and free catfish lunch will be served at noon.

What to bring: Cameras and binoculars. We will have coolers of ice water with cups in several locations; bring your reusable water bottles to fill or you may purchase a bottle at the Friends sales booth.

Directions to the Refuge

From the intersection of US 71 (Barksdale Boulevard) and Jimmie Davis Highway (LA 511) in Bossier City, go south about one-half mile on US 71 and turn right (west) on Sunflower Road. Proceed to the end of the road to the refuge entrance.

RED RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE CELEBRATION

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18

Breakfast Bar

8:00 a.m. until

Free! Juice, coffee, tea, and breakfast bars will be available.

Family/Beginner Bird Walk

8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Dennis Forshee, owner of Shreveport's Wild Bird Center, will lead this walk that will include some of the trails in the refuge pecan grove. Children accompanied by an adult are welcome.

Intermediate/Advanced Bird Walk (New)

8:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.

Larry Raymond will lead this walk that will explore the Refuge river trail.

Birds, Bugs, and Botany Guided Refuge Tour

10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Maggie Hodge and Larry Raymond will conduct this multifaceted tour of the southern part of the refuge. Transportation will be provided.

Rocket Netting Demonstration

11:30 a.m.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service personnel will demonstrate how rocket nets are used in waterfowl banding.

Catfish Lunch

12:00 noon

Free! Donations are gratefully accepted. We'll serve until we run out of food. The menu includes catfish and all the trimmings, French fries, hushpuppies, corn dogs, coleslaw, dessert, iced tea, and lemonade.

Hayride Refuge Tours

1:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

2:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Space is limited and will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Sign up at the Information & Sales Booth.

Refuge Photography Contest

Entry Submission

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

The contest includes three divisions: adult, youth ages 12-17 and children under 12. You may submit your entries during the celebration, if you wish. Mark Walker will be stationed on the porch of the visitor center/office to upload your digital photos to computer.

EXHIBITS & ALL DAY ACTIVITIES

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Exhibits

USFWS personnel will be on hand to answer your questions as you explore these exhibits, which will include the Red River National Wildlife Refuge and the National Wildlife Refuge System, the Natchitoches National Fish Hatchery, Wood Duck and Red-cockaded Woodpecker conservation methods demonstrations, and firefighting equipment

Falconry – Francine Forrester and Michael Berans

Hunting with hawks demonstration will take place after lunch.

Live Owls – Walter B. Jacobs Memorial Nature Park naturalist Rhonda Clay

Herps Exhibit – Red River NWR biologist Lindsay Coldiron. The creepy crawlers are back. Learn about snakes and their relatives.

Baby Alligator Exhibit (New)

Children may have their pictures taken with a live baby alligator for \$5.00 per photo. Proceeds benefit the Friends group and the refuge.

Native American Culture – Mary Whitesnake Rambin and Everett Rambin

Bridges to Birding Activity Stations (New) – Sponsored by the Shreveport Society for Nature Study Bird Study Group. Complete all the stations and receive a prize.

- How to Use Binoculars
- How to Use a Field Guide
- Habitat Game
- Birds and their Beaks
- And more!

Children's Activities

- Migratory bird educational program, including face painting with bird designs
- Fishing rod casting game
- Owl pellet dissection
- Pine cone and suet log bird feeders creation
- Plaster casting of animal tracks
- Animals Habitats nature projects
- Journey of Discovery
- And more!

Sales

Sales of T-shirts, Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps (Duck Stamps), and Songs of the National Wildlife System CDs will benefit the Friends group, the refuge, and the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The Wild Bird Center of Shreveport will be selling nature-related items. A portion of the sales proceeds is donated to the Alliance.

Refuge Photography Contest

The Refuge Celebration photography contest is open to all and has three divisions: Adult, Youth ages 12-17, and Children under age 12. Submit your best photos of wildlife, plants, refuge scenes, or refuge events taken on any unit of the Red River National Wildlife Refuge. There is a limit of three entries per participant. Photos taken on the refuge any time during 2008 prior to the contest deadline of November 15, 2008, are eligible.



Submitting your photography contest entries

Contest Chairman Mark Walker will be on hand at the Visitor Center from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. during the Refuge Celebration to upload your photos to computer. Mark will have a universal camera adapter but you may wish to bring your own adapter. Alternatively, you may submit your entries electronically by emailing them as jpg files no later than 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, November 15, 2008 to photocontest@redriverrefugealliance.org.

Pick up an entry form and a complete copy of the contest rules at the welcome table during the Refuge Celebration. Entry forms may also be downloaded at www.redriverrefugealliance.org/photocontest.

All entries will be posted to our website at www.friendsofredriver.org. Judging will be by an independent panel of judges. Awards will be presented at the January 2009 Friends of Red River general membership meeting.