

THE REFUGE RAPID RESPONDER

Official Newsletter of the Friends of West Tennessee National Wildlife Refuges



Refuge Spotlight: Reelfoot Lake

The most significant recent geological event responsible for the present-day landscape of the Reelfoot Lake area was a series of earthquakes that struck the region between December 1811 and February 1812. The most significant tremors to hit the continental United States in recorded history caused an area as much as 30 miles long and 10 miles wide to sink up to 50 feet, creating a sunken forest and forming the present-day Reelfoot Lake.

Providing habitat for migratory birds, most notably waterfowl, was the purpose for which the Reelfoot NWR was established. Thus, the refuge's management priorities are directed toward providing quality wetland areas that are attractive to migratory birds, including dabbling ducks, diving ducks, and geese.



Refuge Spotlight

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The Preservation of Quake Lake

BY TARA DOWDY

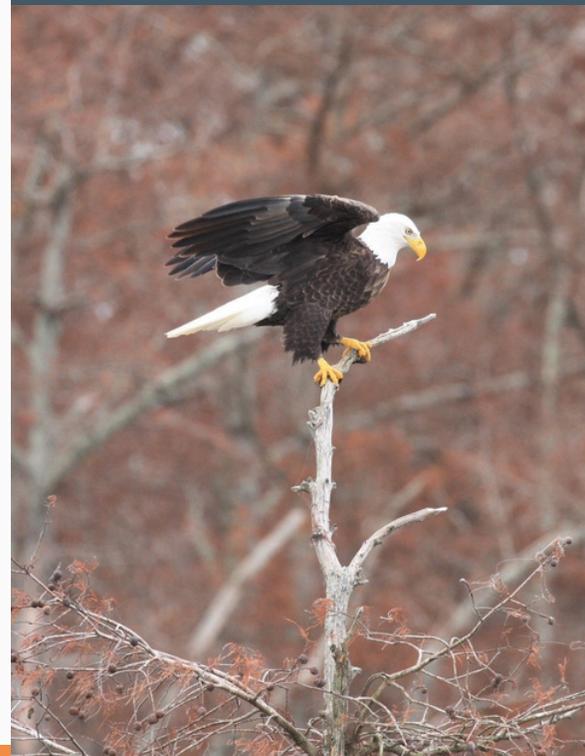
Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuge is located on the northern portion of Reelfoot Lake, which lies along the boundary of the northwest corner of Tennessee and southwest corner of Kentucky. The Refuge was established in 1941 under the terms of a lease and cooperative agreement with the State of Tennessee. Additional land purchases over the following decades extended the Refuge into Kentucky and to its present extent of 10,428 acres.



Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuge was specifically authorized for use as an inviolate sanctuary for migratory birds, and the refuge does just that by providing important habitat to over 283 species of birds including the endangered Least Tern. The refuge is also home to a variety of mammals, from the large white-tailed deer to the busy squirrel, as well as reptiles and amphibians, including the eastern box turtle, Tennessee's state reptile. While dozens of species of fish inhabit Reelfoot Lake, the white crappie is perhaps the most sought after swimmer. Reelfoot Lake is, in all regards, an eclectic and unique ecosystem in itself, matching the majesty of wintering eagles with the mystique of wetlands and the allure of teeming waters.

"The wildlife and its habitat cannot speak, so we must and we will..."

THEODORE ROOSEVELT



"The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in service to others."

GHANDI

In the Community



Refuge Ranger Dowdy worked with 5th grade students at Union City Middle School for a full week of instruction on archery and archery safety, completing an extensive course in safety followed by days of hands-on practice. Kids learn quick - by the last day, the students were equipped with the 11 steps of skilled archery and many showed interest in purchasing their own equipment to continue practicing at home.



Memphis Kids in Nature

The Memphis Kids in Nature group brought multiple field trips to the Hatchie NWR during the month of March. These students hiked on the refuge, enjoyed a picnic lunch and collected macro-invertebrates from Oneal Lake before departing back to Memphis. Programs like these are crucial to connecting young minds to their natural heritage and culture and bringing awareness to the concept of Wildlife Refuges.

Junior Duck Stamp Competition

Congratulations to Isaac Schreiber, age 17 from Rockwood, TN for winning Best of Show in the Tennessee Jr. Duck Stamp competition held at the Tennessee NWR Visitor Center. Competing with 1,270 other entries from across the state, his acrylic painting of a single male American Wigeon showed his amazing talent as the top student waterfowl artist in the state!

Isaac also won the TN Best of Show for Jr. Duck Stamp in the 2021 competition. His artwork now moves on to the National Jr. Duck Stamp competition held in April. Great job, Isaac!

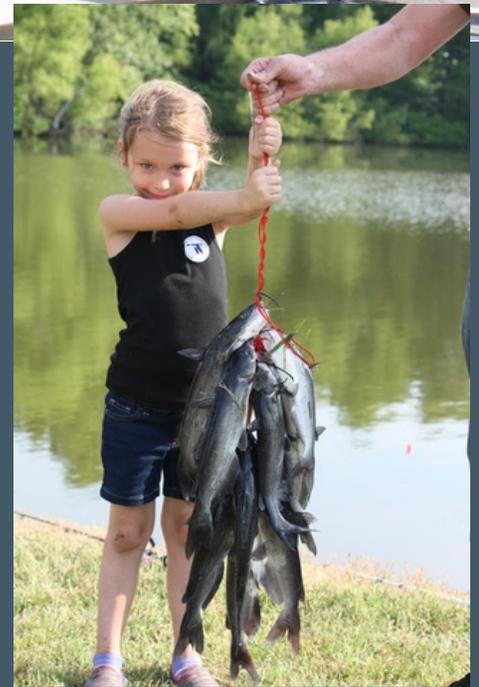


Left to right: Friends Board Member Dr. Dawn Wilkins, Refuge Ranger Tara Dowdy and Friends President Kayce Workman attended the Jr. Duck Stamp judging at the Tennessee NWR in Springville, TN. Students K-12 enter into this program and show their talent as they combine art and science for an original design in hopes to become the next Jr. Duck Stamp Contest Best of Show.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- June 4, 2022
 - Friends Get Together
- June 11, 2022
 - Reelfoot NWR Annual Youth Fishing Rodeo
- June 15-17, 2022
 - Junior Ranger Camp



Refuge Photo Contest

The Friends of West Tennessee National Wildlife Refuges will be hosting its first photography contest. Details about the contest are being worked on and information will be available when it is completed. If you, or anyone you know, are interested in entering please contact us at

friendswtnnwr@gmail.com

