

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge Needs Volunteers



Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) needs your help! Volunteers are needed to assist with a variety of programs, including staffing the information desk in the Visitor Center and the Friends of Blackwater Eagle's Nest bookstore.

Blackwater NWR receives over 70,000 visitors from all over the world each year. Visitors come to view wildlife, hike trails, paddle waterways, enjoy the scenic landscapes, and more. From the majestic bald eagles to the endangered Delmarva fox squirrels, wildlife at Blackwater NWR is a star attraction. If you value these magnificent natural resources, like meeting new people, and enjoy learning new skills and sharing your talents, Blackwater NWR can use your help.

A series of volunteer training sessions will be held in August for interested volunteers. A volunteer workshop will be held on Saturday, August 7, 2010 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Visitor Center conference room to update all volunteers (new and experienced) on what's been happening at the refuge. Staff will provide updates on current management activities as well as planned activities for the coming year. Come learn what the refuge is doing to manage habitat for wildlife and improve visitor services, and how you can help. Breakfast and lunch will be provided compliments of the Friends of Blackwater. Please register for the workshop by calling Michele Whitbeck at 410-228-2677 ext. 23.

On Thursday, August 12, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., another training session will be held to introduce new volunteers to the volunteer program at the Blackwater NWR. Interested volunteers will learn about the nuts and bolts of volunteering at the refuge Visitor Center.

A third training session will be held on Saturday, August 21, starting at 9:00 a.m. at the Visitor Center. This training session will involve a tour of the refuge and several local points of interest. Those attending this session should plan to pack a lunch and bring binoculars and snacks. The tour is expected to last until 5:00 p.m.

Volunteers are involved in all aspects of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, and play a critical role in helping the refuge fulfill its mission. Volunteer activities range from staffing the information desk at the Visitor Center, the Friends of Blackwater Eagle's Nest Bookstore, and the research library, to assisting with trail and facility maintenance, environmental education programs, biological surveys, special events, interpretive programs, gardening, outreach, and much more. Whether you can work once a week, once a month, or once a year, your service is welcomed.

If you are interested in attending any of the sessions or becoming a Blackwater NWR volunteer, please contact Michele Whitbeck at 410-228-2677 ext. 23, or Michele_Whitbeck@fws.gov. Come help make the refuge a better place for wildlife and people alike.