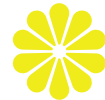


Volunteer Newsletter

Michele Whitbeck, Volunteer Coordinator

Summer 2024

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge
2145 Key Wallace Drive
Cambridge, MD 21613



Volunteers Shine at Blackwater NWR!



Ellie Ludvigsen received the 2023 Volunteer of the Year Award from Visitor Services Manager Ray Paterra.

We celebrated all of YOU and the wonderful work you have accomplished during 2023 at our annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner in May at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park pavilion. Volunteers at Blackwater NWR are involved in everything from staffing the Visitor Center and maintaining the butterfly garden, to leading birding tours, surveying wintering waterfowl, monitoring nest boxes, building accessible hunt blinds, and so much more! During 2023, 145 volunteers contributed 9,219 hours of volunteer service to the refuge!

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge's 2023 Volunteer of the Year Award went to Ellie Ludvigsen. Ellie was instrumental in getting the Roving Refuge Volunteer program up and running, aimed at enhancing the visitor experience on the refuge. These ambassadors answer questions, share information about refuge wildlife, rules and regulations, and the Friends of Blackwater, engaging with hundreds of visitors on the refuge every month. In addition, Ellie leads environmental education programs, staffs the front desk, and assists with special events throughout the year.

Awards were also presented to volunteers reaching key milestones in their service to Blackwater NWR. Volunteers reaching milestones in the number of hours contributed to the refuge since they began

volunteering include: Royce Ball, Maureen Long, Joe Opalski, Eddie Robinson, Greg Schenk, and David Stevens (50 hours); Jane Bowers, Marybeth Daniels, Steve Huettnner, Mark Jenkins, Bob Long, Sr., Jake Peregrim, Kert Scheele, Julie Schoch, Lauren Taylor and Robin Weaver (100 hours); Wade

Bradford, Phyllis Como, Rachel Dawson, Bob Long, Karl Trentler, Kim Trentler, and Scott Warner (250 hours); Ruth Jensen, John Morgan, Bob Quinn, Kathy Slaughter and Peter Smithson (500 hours); Jim Van Ness (750 hours); Terry Allen, Art Smith, and Steve Funderburk (1000 hours); Ellie Ludvigsen



Top: Volunteers receiving recognition for contributing 100 hours of volunteer service to the refuge include (left to right) Bob Long Sr., Marybeth Daniels, Jane Bowers, Kert Scheele, and Julie Schoch. Pictured on the far right is Refuge Manager Marcia Pradines Long. **Middle:** Refuge volunteers Kim Trentler, Bob Long, Phyllis Como and Scott Warner are recognized for contributing over 250 hours of service to the refuge. **Bottom Left:** Refuge volunteers John Morgan and Peter Smithson surpass the 500 hour milestone in volunteer service. **Bottom Right:** Jim Van Ness is recognized for contributing over 750 hours of service to Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

and June Middleton (1500 hours); Mary-Beth Goll and Karl McGovern (2000 hours); Lynda Hicken and Ron Ketter (2500 hours); and Harry Heckathorn (3000 hours).



Above left: Refuge volunteers Art Smith and Steve Funderburk are recognized by Refuge Manager Marcia Pradines Long for contributing 1000 hours of service to the refuge. Above right: Refuge volunteers Lynda Hicken and Ron Ketter are recognized for their contributions of over 2500 hours of volunteer service to Blackwater NWR. Middle Left: Refuge volunteer Mary-Beth Goll is recognized for contributing 2000 hours to Blackwater NWR. Middle Right: Refuge volunteer Harry Heckathorn receives recognition for contributing 3000 hours of service to the refuge.



Special recognition was also given to volunteers reaching milestones in the number of years they have been volunteering at Blackwater NWR. Those volunteers include: Herb Floyd, Martha Foulon-Tonat, Steve Funderburk, Sharon Guenther, Doug Irvin, Charles Maguire, Bill Maiden, Rita Mhley, Kathy Ogle, Bob Quinn, Julie Schoch, Merrill Schuetz, Kim Trentler, Karl Trentler, and Daniel Trentler (5 years); and Janet Kerr, Jane Sebring, and Joseph Soares (10 years). Terry Allen was recognized for leading birding tours at Blackwater NWR for an amazing 40 years!



The work that all of you do as volunteers is incredible, and we can't thank you enough for your dedication and commitment to Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge!

Pictured to the left are (left to right) refuge volunteers Dan and Karl Trentler, Refuge Manager Marcia Pradines Long, refuge volunteers Julie Schoch, Rita Mhley, Bill Maiden, Sharon Guenther, Herb Floyd and Steve Funderburk. They have been volunteering at Blackwater NWR for five years.