

GET READY FOR MIGRATION CELEBRATION! APRIL 16-18 2010

By Neal McLain

It's that time of the year again, folks: the **16th Annual Migration Celebration** gets under way on April 16 with a kickoff dinner at RiverPlace in Freeport. Migration Celebration is an annual three-day event sponsored by the *Texas Mid-Coast Refuge National Wildlife Refuge Complex* and *Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges*.

Friday, April 16

This year's Migration Celebration opens with a kickoff dinner on Friday evening at RiverPlace in Freeport. Our keynote speaker will be Ross Melinchuk, Deputy Executive Director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). In this position, he oversees the department's Wildlife, Coastal and Inland Fisheries Divisions.

Melinchuk will speak on the *Future of Water and Freshwater Inflows to Bays and Estuaries*. He has described the future of water resources as the "defining natural resource issue in Texas."



Our dinner will be prepared and served by volunteers from Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges and the Cradle of Texas Chapter. The traditional menu hasn't changed:

- Sage-rubbed slow-roasted pork
- Pecan & sausage cornbread dressing
- Borracho beans
- Apple-almond-topped mixed greens
- Fresh-baked peach cobbler.

We'll also have several other activities before and after dinner:

- **Silent Auction** featuring numerous items contributed by area businesses. The auction includes a Kids Table where youngsters can bid on fossils and mineral samples for only \$1.00 per item.
- **Photo Contest Exhibit.** This year's photo contest entries will be judged by experienced wildlife photographers Kathy Adams Clark and Larry Ditto. All winning entries will be on exhibit.
- **Jr. Duck Stamp Art Competition Winners** All winning entries for the 2009-10 competition will be on exhibit.
- **Nature Store.** Books, T-shirt, caps, and nature-related items.



One of the silent auction tables

Kickoff Dinner Tickets are priced at \$20.00 each for adults and \$10.00 for children. Tickets may be purchased at the dinner, or from any member of the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges Board of Directors. Proceeds from the sale of dinner tickets support the wildlife refuges.

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Saturday, April 17

Saturday brings a full schedule of events! All Saturday events take place at San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge, and they're all free. Here are some of the highlights...



Photo: Marty Cornell

**Painted Bunting (above);
Bird bander with Hooded
Warbler (right);**

Photo: Kristin Plunkett

Bird Banding Demonstration



**Kemp's
Ridley Sea
Turtles and
numerous
live animals**



Photo: Marty Cornell

Marsh Buggy Ride



Photo: John Boettiger

**A walking tour to the San Bernard
Oak, the largest Live Oak in Texas**



Photo: Denis Mudderman

Kayaking on Cedar Lake Creek

See Page 5 for the schedule of Saturday Events.

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Sunday, April 18

Sunday brings another busy day including several "Amazing Adventures" at San Bernard NWR and elsewhere in Brazoria County.








Neotropical Birding at Quintana Neotropical Bird Sanctuary, 7:00 AM, conducted by David Plunkett and Phil Huxford. Bird photos by Jerry Eppner.



Naturalist Tour of the Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge conducted by Ed Hunter. Meet at Discovery Center at 8:00 AM or 12:30 PM.

Photos: FOBWR




Photo: David Plunkett

Naturalist Walk in the Dow Woods Unit, 9:00 AM (meet at Buc-ee's), conducted by Mike Lange of US Fish & Wildlife Service. Dow Woods Unit is part of San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge. Dow Woods is not yet open to the public, so here's your chance to visit this property before it's opened.



See Page 6 for the schedule of Sunday Events.

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Birds of Prey Shows

A highlight of every Migration Celebration is a series of *Birds of Prey* shows provided by EarthQuest, a Georgia-based non-profit environmental education organization dedicated to the education of the public. Each *Birds of Prey* show includes a cast of raptors: a Peregrine Falcon, an Andean Condor, a Black Vulture, a Red-tailed Hawk, a Barred Owl and a Harris Hawk.



Photo: EarthQuest

EarthQuest Handler Steve Hoddy

Four EarthQuest *Birds of Prey* shows are scheduled during Migration Celebration:

- Saturday at 9:30 AM and 4:30 PM
- Sunday at 1:30 PM and 3:30 PM.

In addition to Migration Celebration shows, several *Birds of Prey* shows are presented at area schools. These shows have been presented every year since 2003 in cooperation with Friends of the Brazoria Wildlife Refuges, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, EarthQuest, and local sponsors. In 2010, thirty shows have been scheduled for presentation. This series of shows began on March 24 and will continue through mid-April. School shows are not open to the public.



Photos: Denis Mudderman

Steve Hoddy (left) and Phil Huxford at Migration Celebration 2009.



EarthQuest will present a *Birds of Prey* show at the TMN Cradle of Texas general meeting on March 14 at the Texas AgriLife Extension Office.

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Migration Celebration 2010 Daily Event Schedule for Saturday, April 17 San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge See http://tinyurl.com/AA-MAPS for a map to San Bernard NWR.	
7:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Bird Banding Demonstration
7:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Amazing Adventure: Birding by Ear
9:00 AM – 6:15 PM	Information Booth Pick up a free Map and Schedule Sign up for daily events Check out the Nature Store
9:00 AM – 4:30 PM	Exhibitors and Children's Discovery Program
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Van Shuttles to and from Other Venues
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Refuge Fireside Exhibit conducted by Refuge Fire Staff
9:00 AM – 6:00 PM	Exhibits in the Exhibits Building Photo Contest Exhibit Junior Duck Stamp Competition Winners Exhibit
9:30 AM – 10:30 AM	EarthQuest Birds of Prey Show
9:30 AM – 4:00 PM	Marsh Buggy Tours on Wolfweed Reservoir Moccasin Pond Van Tours Kayaking on Cedar Lake Creek
9:30 AM – 5:00 PM	Crabbing for Kids and San Bernard Oak Interpretative Walking Tour
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Reptile Identification and Ecology Conducted by Curtis Jones Assistant Manager, San Bernard NWR
2:30 PM – 3:30 PM	Amazing Adventure: Butterfly & Dragonfly Walk
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Reptile Identification and Ecology Conducted by Marc Ealy Area Manager, Nannie M. Stringfellow WMA
4:30 PM – 6:00 PM	EarthQuest Birds of Prey Show

This schedule was accurate when this newsletter was published. For updates, check the Saturday schedule on the Migration Celebration Website
<http://migrationcelebration.org/Saturday2010.html>

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Migration Celebration 2010 Daily Event Schedule for Sunday, April 18 San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge See http://tinyurl.com/AA-MAPS for maps to Amazing Adventures at remote locations.	
7:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Bird Banding Demonstration
7:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Amazing Adventure: Neotropical Birding <i>Starting Location: Quintana Neotropical Bird Sanctuary</i>
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Amazing Adventure: Herpetology Tour <i>Starting location: Information Booth</i>
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Amazing Adventure: Naturalist Walk in Dow Woods Unit <i>Starting Location: Buc-ee's Convenience Store 101 FM 2004, Lake Jackson</i>
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Amazing Adventure: Marsh Buggy Tour <i>Starting Location: Information Booth</i>
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Amazing Adventure: Kayaking at Cedar Lake Creek <i>Starting Location: Information Booth</i>
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Amazing Adventure: Naturalist Walk to San Bernard Oak <i>Starting Location: Information Booth</i>
12:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Children's Discovery Program
12:00 PM – 4:00 PM	Food and drink sales
12:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Exhibits in the Exhibits Building Photo Contest Exhibit Junior Duck Stamp Competition Winners Exhibit
12:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Refuge Fireside Exhibit conducted by Refuge Fire Staff
12:30 PM – 4:00 PM	Moccasin Pond Van Tours
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM	EarthQuest Birds of Prey Show
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Presentation: Reptile Identification and Ecology Conducted by Curtis Jones Assistant Refuge Manager, San Bernard NWR
3:30 PM – 5:00 PM	EarthQuest Birds of Prey Show

This schedule was accurate when this newsletter was published. For updates, check the Sunday schedule on the Migration Celebration Website
<http://migrationcelebration.org/Sunday2010.html>