



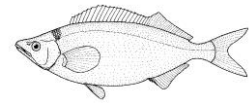
# Volunteer Newsletter

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## Volunteer Power!



2016 Volunteer of the Year Jane Sebring (holding photo) is flanked by garden volunteers Bill Reybold, Erica Weick, and Peter Smithson.

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) celebrated our fabulous volunteers on Thursday, April 27, 2017 at the Elks Lodge in Cambridge during National Volunteer Week. The Friends of Blackwater sponsored the awards dinner in celebration of the amazing contributions made by volunteers during 2016. Volunteers (192 volunteers to be exact!) donated 10,003 hours of their time to the refuge in 2016, which is equivalent to nearly five full time staff!

Every year, Blackwater NWR honors and distinguishes a volunteer for their exemplary performance throughout the year. This year, Jane Sebring received the 2016 Volunteer of the Year Award for her dedicated service to Blackwater NWR. Jane has volunteered at the refuge since 2013, helping to maintain the Beneficial Insect and Butterfly Garden located behind the Visitor Center. During 2016, she single-handedly maintained the garden until mid-summer, when other volunteers were able to step in and help out. The garden is a great place to look for butterflies, hummingbirds, and other pollinators, and is now used as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade environmental education program on the refuge. Jane assists with the refuge's annual Eagle Festival, and has also taken on the role of entrance fee counter. At the end of 2016, she had donated over 425 hours to the refuge. Her passionate, hard-working nature and optimistic spirit is felt by all who know and work with her. Congratulations, Jane!



Scarlet Beebalm, *Monarda didyma* in butterfly garden.

Special recognition was also given to volunteers reaching key milestones in their service to Blackwater NWR. Award pins and certificates were presented to the following volunteers for reaching milestones in the number of years they have volunteered at Blackwater NWR: June Middleton for 5 years of service; Stan Haddox, Nancy Kreek and Kristina Miller for 10 years of service; Mary-Beth Goll and Martha Keating for 15 years of service, and Shirley Bailey for 20 years of service.



Award pins and certificates were also presented to volunteers reaching milestones in the total number of accumulated hours they have contributed to the refuge since they began. Each volunteer reaching these set milestones received a special recognition gift for their volunteer efforts. Those recognized include: Les Baker, Carrie Harper, Ben Hunt,



Top: Volunteers Kristina Miller and Stan Haddox receive pins and certificates for 10 years of volunteer service at Blackwater NWR from Refuge Manager Marcia Pradines. Bottom: Volunteer Coordinator Michele Whitbeck and Refuge Manager Marcia Pradines recognize John Cugnet, Sue Fischer and Vicki Zobel for contributing over 250 hours of volunteer service to the refuge. Not pictured are Suzanne Hurtt, Betsy McCaul, June Middleton, and Art Smith.

Gary Middleton, Maureen Rice, Jason Scrimshaw, Kathy Slaughter and Erica Weick (50 hours); Cathy Beise, Cathy Cooper, Greg Inskip, Ellen Mousin and Elaine Wilson (100 hours); John Cougnet, Sue Fischer, Suzanne Hurtt, Betsy McCaul, June Middleton, Art Smith, and Vicki Zobel (250 hours); Rick Abend and Lynda Hicken (500 hours); and Carol Clarke (750 hours). Those volunteers accumulating 1,000 hours or more are listed on the refuge's "Volunteer Hall of Fame" plaque. They include: Beverly Middleton (1,000 hours); Ed Hessler (1,500 hours); Tom Johnson (2,000 hours); Chuck Mock (3,500 hours); Cindy Bech (6,000 hours); Wolf Hehn (7,000 hours) and Charlotte Hehn (8,000 hours). Charlotte Hehn stepped down as bookstore manager of the Eagle's Nest Book Store and Gift Shop at the end of 2016 after serving over 10 years in that role. She expanded the store to what it is today, offering one of the best selections of nature-themed books and gifts for refuge visitors.

Blackwater NWR is so lucky to have such a dedicated corps of volunteers working to make the refuge a better place for wildlife and people alike. We can't thank all of you enough for your efforts. Thank you!



Above: The Friends of Blackwater are celebrating 30 fabulous years as a 501(c) 3 organization supporting Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. Lots of cake has been going around to celebrate the occasion! This one was served at the Volunteer Recognition Dinner in April!

Top Right: Beverly Middleton receives an award from Refuge Manager Marcia Pradines for contributing over 1,000 hours of volunteer service to Blackwater NWR.

Bottom Right: Volunteers Charlotte and Wolf Hehn are recognized for their 8,000 hours and 7,000 hours (respectively) of volunteer service to Blackwater NWR. Charlotte served as the Bookstore Manager for the Friends of Blackwater for over 10 years, and stepped down from serving in that capacity at the end of 2016.

