

Volunteers

Volunteers are the heart of any nonprofit organization, and Unexpected Wildlife Refuge is grateful to all the individuals and groups who have generously donated their time and effort to keeping us going and improving our grounds, including a number of Eagle Scouts who have completed service projects at UWR.

Operating a refuge takes a lot of time and energy. There is always something to do! You can help with UWR's important work by volunteering your time (and muscle power) for the following:

1. Trail maintenance
2. Making and installing border or trail signs
3. Seasonal help in patrolling the Refuge to deter hunters
4. Fund raising and outreach



Trail through woods

Unexpected Wildlife Refuge

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Leopard frog



Main pond

Unexpected Wildlife Refuge



Beavers eating near shore



Beaver lodge (left) and food 'raft' (right)

Help Guarantee Our Future

Please see the panel with our contact information for where and how to send your donations. We depend on public support to stay viable!

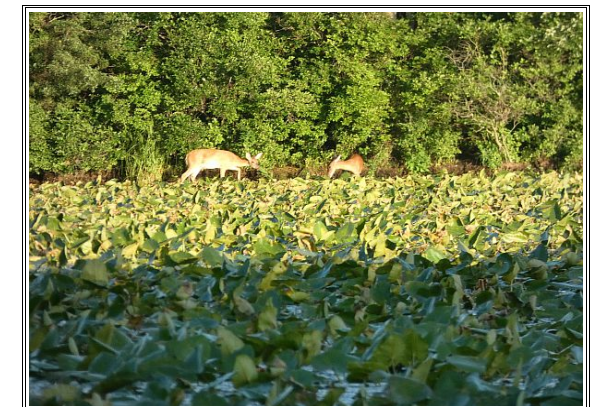
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) entity, federal ID 23-7025010; all contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of applicable regulations. Our federal tax returns are available on request.

Our Mission

1. To obtain and protect habitat in the New Jersey Pinelands area so that indigenous animals and plants can have an unexploited opportunity to live;
2. To protect free-living (wild) animals from hunting, trapping, fishing and other consumptive activities by people;
3. To provide a "living classroom" for the public to study nature and appreciate the importance of wildlife and habitat protection; and
4. To work with individuals and communities to peacefully resolve conflicts with wildlife.



Wood duck babies in main pond



White-tailed deer feeding in main pond

The co-founders of the Refuge were Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci and Cavit Buyukmihci. Hope was an impassioned naturalist, artist, activist and writer. Her compassion was infectious and Cavit, a metallurgical engineer, fully embraced an ethic of reverence for all life. Together, they recognized early on that the biggest threat to wildlife involves loss of habitat through destruction or fragmentation. As a result, they donated their land and home in the New Jersey Pinelands region to begin Unexpected Wildlife Refuge in 1961. Since then, the Refuge has achieved nonprofit status and has added additional contiguous land so that today it encompasses 767 acres of vital habitat comprising wetlands,



Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci & Cavit Buyukmihci



Red-bellied turtles

(southern twayblade orchid and the wild lupine, the latter which is the only known host plant for the nationally endangered butterfly, the Karner blue).

From its inception, the Refuge has remained undeveloped and wild, with the exception of miles of nominally maintained and minimally intrusive trails. These trails provide an avenue for public outreach and education as well as protecting the Refuge's borders.



Canada goose family on main pond

Hunting, fishing, trapping and other consumptive exploitation have always been prohibited. Peaceful coexistence with wildlife is a key part of wildlife and habitat protection and the Refuge extends its influence beyond its borders to help the public achieve this.

The Refuge has always been frugal in its management, never having more than one paid employee. The latter has traditionally been a manager, living onsite and providing a positive presence throughout the year. Extensive use of volunteers for things like border patrol during hunting 'seasons' or maintaining trails has kept operating costs to a minimum. Administrative management is through a dedicated, all-volunteer Council of Trustees.



Footprints across main pond in winter

Programs and Services

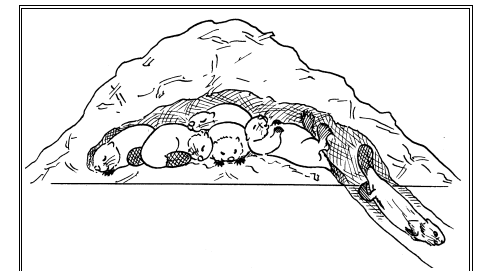
The overarching goal of the Refuge is to protect habitat so that indigenous animals and plants can thrive without significant interference by people. We try to achieve this through acquisition of land, protecting the land we have from intrusion by those who might want to destroy wildlife and educating the public about the importance of protecting habitat and wildlife. Humane education in general, inculcating a compassion for all life, not just human beings, is also a major component of the Refuge programs:

1. Educational forums for the public (onsite and elsewhere);
2. Working with the public to humanely resolve wildlife-human conflicts, particularly between beavers and people;
3. Nominally maintained trails for guided access to the Refuge in order to encourage a 'hands-on' education about wildlife issues and to promote a non-consumptive appreciation for wildlife;
4. Opportunities for the novice or professional to observe, paint, photograph or record the sounds and activities of wildlife in their native habitat;
5. Community outreach through local events such as fairs, art shows and similar; and
6. Educational material via standard mail or our Web site.



Bullfrog in Muddy Bog

forests, bogs and standing ponds. This provides living opportunities for hundreds of species of amphibians, birds, insects, mammals, reptiles and other animals, and plants. Some are considered biologically threatened (Pine Barrens tree frog), endangered (red-bellied turtle) or scarce



Beavers in lodge, artwork by Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci