

# The Marsh Wren

SINCE 1976

THE FRIENDS OF DYKE MARSH

FALL 2010



## The Friends of Dyke Marsh

### FODM Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, November 17,  
7:30 p.m., Huntley Meadows  
Park, 3701 Lockheed Boule-  
vard, Alexandria, VA 22306.  
Ph. 703-768-2525. Free to all.

### Calendar of Events

November 5, Weed Whacking  
(see p. 7); November 20, Pad-  
dle with a Ranger (see p. 7);  
2011 Quarterly Membership  
Meetings - March 2, May 18,  
September 14, November 16.

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## GU Professor Dr. Edd Barrows to Speak

### A Hands-On Evening With Dyke Marsh's Arthropods

The Friends of Dyke Marsh will be treated to a special program on November 17 when Georgetown University Professor Dr. Edd Barrows will give a talk and conduct a hands-on arthropod workshop using preserved specimens from the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, as well as specimens found in other areas. Georgetown University's Center for the Environment is a cosponsor of this program. Bring your magnifying glasses. Refreshments will be served.

Dr. Barrows and Dr. Dan Kjar have developed an online biodiversity database, which includes the arthropods of the preserve. Dr. Kjar and his assistants prepared the "Key to the Ants of Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve."

You can find the databases on-line at <http://biodiversity.georgetown.edu/>.

Dr. Edward M. Barrows is a Professor of Biology in Georgetown University's Department of Biology. His research focuses on arthropod biodiversity and conservation and scientific communication. His teaching includes forest ecology and biology undergraduate and gradu-



A Black and Yellow Garden Spider with prey wrapped up. Photo by Larry Meade.

ate research. He serves as an advisor for biology students and Environmental Studies Minors and is the Director of the GU Center for the Environment. Dr. Barrows is a frequent visitor to the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve and brings many students to this "outdoor laboratory." He received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Michigan and his Ph. D. from the University of Kansas in entomology.

## Marsh Wren to Go Electronic in the Next Issue

### BY DOROTHY MCMANUS, EDITOR

As we announced in our summer issue, your next edition of *The Marsh Wren* will arrive by email in February 2011. The sender will be me-- "editor@fodm.org"-- and your familiar copy of the newsletter will appear as a PDF attachment to that email.

We will email the *Wren* to all members of the Friends for whom we have email addresses, unless we hear from you to the contrary. We will send you an email of this notice in the coming months, which will serve to let you know what

email address we have for you. If we don't hear from you, that's the email address we will use in February. If our email reaches you at an address that you don't want us to use, let us know of another address.

If you would prefer to continue to receive a paper *Marsh Wren*, let us know that also, and we will send you the newsletter by U.S. Mail as we do now. Contact addresses for us are on page two.

And many thanks to you, our members, for helping us take this environmentally responsible step and move us into the twenty-first century.

## Happenings in DMWP this Fall and Winter

*In the animal world –*

*October* – Eagles that nested in the north arrive to winter in the area.

*November* – Raptors like Cooper’s Hawks, Sharp-shinned Hawks and others, pass through, going south.

*December* – Diving ducks arrive. Eagles may start their courtship. Steam may be rising from beaver lodges, a sign of occupancy.

*In the plant world, by Dr. Elizabeth Wells –*

In late October and throughout November, leaves turn color. Ash develop a golden-purple color, sweet gum will become dark purple and red maple will turn either yellow with touches of red or solid red.

Swamp rose hips will turn red and viburnum fruits, dark blue or black. Swamp dogwood will develop either dark blue or whitish fruits. Porcelain berry fruits will turn brilliant blue then purple.

Marsh mallow capsules will open, drop seeds, and remain as empty capsules all winter. Button bush clusters of fruits will fall to pieces. Wild rice will drop remaining mature grains and cattails will begin to release their small fruits into the wind.

Trumpet vine is bearing large curved green capsules.

By December, most of the herbs will become brown and die to the ground. Some of their dead stems and leaves will remain through the winter until storms and ice break them up. Shrubs and trees will drop their remaining leaves and remain as woody skeletons through the winter.

## Honor a Conservationist

The Virginia Society of Ornithologists (VSO) seeks nominations for the Jackson M. Abbott conservation Award, given for outstanding work to preserve Virginia’s birds and/or the state’s natural areas. Mr. Abbott lived in the Mount Vernon area, was active in the Friends of Dyke Marsh, worked to especially protect Bald Eagles and founded the Fort Belvoir Christmas Bird Count in 1941. The 250-acre Jackson Abbott Wetland Refuge on Fort Belvoir is named for him. The VSO requests three letters of recommendation and a list of the nominee’s accomplishments by February 15, 2011. Send information to Stephen Eccles at [stepheneccles@aol.com](mailto:stepheneccles@aol.com).

## Virginia Legislature, Time to Focus

The Virginia Conservation Network will host the annual VCN Legislative Workshop on December 4 at the state capitol in Richmond. Up to 150 conservation leaders and activists attend this annual preview of the coming General Assembly session. It runs 9 a.m. to noon in House Room 3 and Senate Room 3. State legislators will be invited speak about the upcoming session. Everyone who attends will get breakfast and a copy of the 2011 Conservation Briefing Book, hot off the press. FODM is a member of the Virginia Conservation Network. If anyone plans to go, please contact Glenda Booth at [gbooth123@aol.com](mailto:gbooth123@aol.com) or 703-765-5233.

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[www.fodm.org](http://www.fodm.org)

for more information about us, our programs and how you can join the FODM.

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*The Marsh Wren* is a quarterly publication of the Friends of Dyke Marsh, Inc., a nonprofit 501(c) (3) organization. Letters and submissions to *The Marsh Wren* are welcome. Send them to the editorial address above. Board members too, can receive mail at this address. Special thanks to Duncan Hobart for managing our website ([www.fodm.org](http://www.fodm.org)), and to Paula Sullivan and Ed Eder for their photography contributions to *The Marsh Wren* and website.



## President's Message

Glenda C. Booth, President, Friends of Dyke Marsh

As we sweltered through one of the hottest summers ever and the spatterdock browned under a searing sun, the brilliant

red cardinal flower sprang forth, a cheerful symbol of nature's enduring resilience. *Lobelia cardinalis* has deep red tubular flowers in an elongated cluster on an erect stalk. The Audubon Society guide to wetlands says it is pollinated chiefly by hummingbirds and that over-picking has resulted in its scarcity in some areas.

In the fall, the blazing yellow marsh beggar ticks (*Bidens laevis*) or showy bur-marigold burst forth and the wetland had a big population of Great Egrets, their stark white profiles standing out all around in their post-breeding dispersal.

Fall migration continues to amaze. Kurt Gaskill (FODM field trip coordinator) wrote that the September 12 bird walk, which started with misty, drizzly weather, "... was possibly the best autumn birding day at Dyke in recent memory! The migrants kept coming and coming," he said. About 80 species were seen. The best highlights were Black Tern, Least Flycatcher, Philadelphia Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler + 16 other warbler species, and Bobolink. Big movements of Blue-winged Teals, Northern Rough-winged Swallows, Magnolia Warblers, Common Yellowthroats and Gray Catbirds were noted." And more.

On October 7, four volunteers, led by National Park Service (NPS) Ranger Amanda Chidsey, planted 85 native plants between the bridge and boardwalk. The group put in the following: *Virburnum prunifolium* (black haw); *Cephalanthus occidentalis* (buttonbush); *Sambucus canadensis* (common elder); *Sassafras*; *Viburnum dentatum* (southern arrowwood); *Lindera benzoin* (spicebush); *Hibiscus moscheutos* (swamp rose mallow) and *Ilex verticillata* (winterberry or black alder). Here's one victory over invasives. "There are now no purple loosestrife plants in DMWP known to me," Ned Stone (FODM Vice President and Weed Warrior) announced. Thank you, Ned and NPS.

**Challenges continue:** A group called Westgrove PACK is asking the county for an off-leash dog park at Westgrove Park, a 23-acre park on the western boundary of the Preserve. See the article on page 6.

We received reports of people shooting paint balls off the boardwalk.

We receive frequent reports of unleashed dogs and got a report of a dog digging into a beaver lodge.

Waterfowl hunting on the Potomac River boundary will presumably resume soon.

Several studies conclude that Mount Vernon streams and the Potomac River are suffering. See the article page 6.

The ubiquitous plastic bottles continue to scar the marsh.

Nationally, the National Park Service estimates it needs

\$9.15 billion (billion) to clear their backlog of repairs and improvements nationwide.

So, team, there's plenty to do. Stay vigilant!

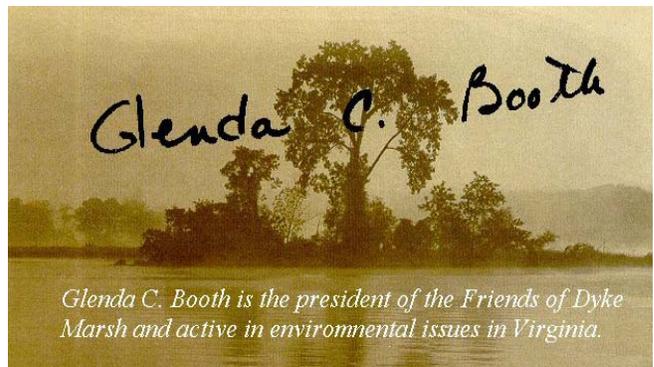
### FODMers Rack Up 1,105 Hours!

"FODMers accomplished significant work to promote public awareness of issues related to Dyke Marsh through their website, quarterly newsletter and regular meeting," wrote Erik Oberg, NPS Natural Resource Management Specialist in September. "After consulting with the FODM president, secretary and committee chairs, we estimate that FODM contributed approximately 985 hours to the George Washington Memorial Parkway's Volunteer in Parks program for 2010," he said. His statistics cover the period of January 1 to September 30, 2010 roughly.

"The Friends of Dyke Marsh also contributed 220 hours removing invasive plants and restoring treated areas by planting native species," Oberg continued. "Volunteers treated 16.3 acres of non-native plants and planted 1.5 acres with native species. This work is now starting to yield visible improvements by opening views of the river along the Haul Road trail that were previously obscured by invasive shrubs. FODM volunteers also conducted hand removal of purple loosestrife and provided GPS data on treatment sites." Explaining that invasive plants were the target of a small number of highly-dedicated volunteers, Oberg particularly singled out FODM Vice President Ned Stone for his dedication. "He has contributed 85 hours this year and has worked steadfastly to treat invasives, remove trash and be the 'eyes and ears' for Dyke Marsh," said Oberg.



Cardinal flower blooms at shoreline in Dyke Marsh. Photo by T.D. Hobart.



Glenda C. Booth is the president of the Friends of Dyke Marsh and active in environmental issues in Virginia.

## Within and Outside of Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve: Part Two

*Part One of this series appeared in The Marsh Wren, Summer 2010 issue.*

**BY J. GLENN EUGSTER**

Open space in the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. area continues to be converted to development as the population of this region increases. In 2008 the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Council of Governments concluded that the region is losing at least 28 acres of open space each day and that that trend would continue until the year 2030. Research conducted by the Washington Post in 1996 revealed that there were few proposals for the protection of additional open space and development would continue to outpace land conservation.

Much of the development is significantly increasing traffic congestion and flooding, degrading air and water quality, removing plant and animal habitat, and diminishing the area's historic, cultural, archaeological, and outdoor recreational value. New development is also increasing demand for roads, schools, water, sewer, solid waste management, police and medical services and parks. Despite local plans, there is not any coherent region-wide plan for open space protection.

In June 2009, a bi-partisan group of members of the U. S. House of Representatives, led by Congressman Jim Moran (D-8-VA), introduced the "National Capital Region

### High-Tech Buoys on the Potomac

Have you noticed the bright yellow buoy out on the river just south of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge? It is a "smart buoy," part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System and part of a series of buoys placed along portions of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. The solar-powered buoy collects weather, hydrology and water quality information and includes historical and geographical information about the local area. The website says that you can also learn something about John Smith's 1608 voyage.



A "smart buoy" collects Potomac River data. Photo by NOAA.

NOAA hopes to use the data to improve marine forecasting by using real time wind velocity, direction, wave height and other current data. Others can use the data too. Call 877-buoybay or visit [www.buoybay.org](http://www.buoybay.org).

Land Conservation Act," a bill that would authorize up to \$50 million per year for cost share grants to state, regional and local governments. The funding would be used to acquire land in the Washington, D.C., metro area for a variety of conservation, environmental and recreational purposes.

"Development density in our region is outpacing population growth by a four to one margin," said Congressman Moran. "It's unsustainable and without increasing land preservation efforts it will result in the continued decline of the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River. By preserving more land for parks and other green space, we can reverse this deadly trend and save our precious waterways before it's too late."

In January 2010, President Barack Obama and Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar began discussions with Congress, through the 2011 federal budget process, about ways to increase the protection of open space values and the important functions they perform. The appropriation reflects the President's agenda to protect America's treasured landscapes and demonstrates a sustained commitment to a 21st century conservation agenda.

"Americans are losing—and losing touch with—the lands and places that set our Nation apart," said Secretary Salazar. "The great outdoors that fuels the American spirit and the American economy is disappearing under the pressures of population growth, habitat fragmentation, and climate change. Every year, Americans lose large areas of open space to development."

These are welcome initiatives. Over the years, despite broad public and private support, a high level of political commitment to provide a total system of parks, open space and natural areas has been largely lacking.

A major problem with traditional approaches has been the narrow focus of these initiatives, rather than a more holistic, ecosystem approach. Most government agencies and private sector organizations have laws or missions directing them to concentrate on pieces of ecosystems. In many ways federal, state, and local laws have pulled apart these ecosystems and divided them into different value-based categories rather than considering them as a holistic natural system that reflects the interaction of these values. This compartmentalization of sites and systems fragments efforts and drives agencies and constituencies toward "stove-piped" individual project funding without a coherent plan for the total ecosystem being protected.

Time will tell if our leaders will redirect the way we try to protect our open space. However, the idea of a connected, interdependent system of lands, wetlands and waters—a green infrastructure—is necessary if we are to protect the values and functions of places like the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve.

J. Glenn Eugster is a former employee of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service, various state, regional and local governments, and the private sector. He is trained in landscape architecture and ecological planning. He lives in Alexandria.

## Profile of a National Park Service Official - Vincent L. Santucci

*This is one of a series of profiles that FODM will publish introducing readers to some of the U. S. National Park Service officials with whom we work.*

**BY GLENDA BOOTH**

Vincent L. Santucci has served as the Chief Ranger for the George Washington Memorial Parkway since May 2003. Vince supervises a wonderful team of rangers and resource managers who help to manage, protect and interpret the diverse resources of the Parkway. Some of the program responsibilities under the Chief Ranger include cultural resources, natural resources, GIS, environmental protection, permits, special events, visitor services, interpretation and education.

Vince attended the University of Pittsburgh for both his undergraduate and graduate degrees. He received a Bachelor's Degree in Anthropology, Archeology and Natural Science, and a Master's of Science in Geology and Paleontology. Vince began his career with the National Park Service at Badlands National Park in 1985. During his career he has served in a wide range of positions and participated in a wide range of activities involving the management, protection, interpretation, planning, museum curation, and research of NPS park resources. In addition to the initial assignment at Badlands, Vince has served at Petrified Forest National Park, Grand Canyon National Park, Yellowstone National park, Fossil Butte National Monument, George Washington Memorial Parkway and currently has served several assignments as the Acting National Park Service Paleontology Program Coordinator. Between 1998 and 2002, Santucci served as the first NPS Servicewide Paleontologist with the Geologic Resources Division.

Between 1993 and 1995 Vince served on the faculty of the Department of Parks and Recreation at Slippery Rock University (SRU), Pennsylvania, as an instructor for undergraduate courses. Additionally Santucci has served as a NPS Compass / Fundamentals instructor and guest speaker on natural resource protection at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, and he assisted servicewide with Paleontological Resource Protection Training. Vince has also been provided the opportunity to participate in several special assignments, details, and NPS committees including: Inventory & Monitoring Coordinator for the Greater Yellowstone I&M Network, representative of the NPS in the multi-agency investigation involving the theft of dinosaur named "Sue" and the Acting Superintendent at two parks. Between 2002 and the present, Vince has helped to coordinate the servicewide inventory of NPS paleontological resources for the NPS Inventory & Monitoring Program.

In 2001, Vince was the recipient of the George Wright Society – Natural Resource Management Award. The George Wright Society is dedicated to the protection, preservation and management of cultural and natural parks and reserves through research and education. He also received Intermountain Region's Guardian of the Flame Award for

natural resource management at Fossil Butte National Monument in Wyoming.

During his tenure at George Washington Memorial Parkway, Vince has served as the Incident Commander for the July 4th Celebration in Virginia, helped to coordinate the Parkway's Long Range Interpretive Plan, chaired the Mount Vernon Trail Safety Taskforce, worked to build partnerships in Virginia related to the Civil War Defenses of Washington, and led a team working to uncover the top secret military intelligence history during World War II at Fort Hunt Park (known only as P.O. Box 1142 during the war). The planning for the restoration of Dyke Marsh is among the many important undertakings in which Vince and his staff have been intimately involved. During 2010, the staff at the George Washington Memorial Parkway worked with the U.S. Geological Survey to develop a research proposal to evaluate the history of erosion and sedimentation at Dyke Marsh.

Vince and his wife Bianca and children live in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.



Vincent L. Santucci, Chief Ranger for the GWMP.

### Kudos

Here are some recent comments about Dyke Marsh:

■ In the September 17 *Alexandria Times*, Alexandria City Councilman Rob Krupicka cited DMWP as one of his favorite local "hidden treasures." "Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve would also be right up there for my entire family," he told the *Times*. He has been a member of the City Council since 2003, is 39, married and the father of two girls.

■ "Thanks for including me on the Marsh Wren mailing list. You folks are great Friends." Barry Stahl, Horticulturist/Nursery Manager, National Park Service

■ "The nearby Dyke Marsh is one of the last fresh water marshes in the area, and it draws a large crowd of bird watchers and nature lovers. Sailors and kayakers have an amazing view of the wildlife from the water. 'We watch the birds,' John Moretti said while pulling his boat out of the water. 'This marsh is a gold mine.'" – from the *Huntington-Belle Haven Patch*, September 27, 2010

# FODM Speaks Out

BY GLENDA BOOTH

**The Future of the Area:** Mount Vernon Supervisor Gerry Hyland has appointed President Glenda Booth to serve on his Mount Vernon's Visioning Task Force "to inventory and assess where we are and what we have as a community and where we need to be and what we should have for Mount Vernon over the next 25 years." There are eight committees: Glenda serves on the Environment, Parks and Recreation Committee. Supervisor Hyland would like recommendations by early 2011. If you have suggestions or comments, please share them with Glenda at [gbooth123@aol.com](mailto:gbooth123@aol.com).

**Bacteria in Hunting Creek:** The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality has sent to the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency a report called a TMDL (total maximum daily loads) that concludes that Cameron Run, Hunting Creek and Holmes Run have levels of bacteria (E. coli concentrations) that exceed water quality standards. DEQ says the sources of the bacteria include discharges from Alexandria's untreated sewage from Alexandria's combined sewer overflow system and pet and wildlife waste. (These bacteria are from the guts of warm-blooded animals.)

DEQ also cites pet and wild animal wastes as sources of E. coli, both wastes deposited directly into streams and wastes that wash off during

storms. The primary source among animals is pets and among pets, dogs are larger contributors to the problem than cats, perhaps because most cats are indoors much of the time and cats produce a lot less bacteria than dogs, according to Ross Mandel, Associate Director of Watershed Analysis, Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin.

Mandel cautioned that the amount of dog waste that gets into streams compared to how much dogs produce is only about two to three percent, but "the problem lies in the fact that dog poop is very large and a little waste has the possibility of causing large concentrations," he pointed out. "Most people probably pick up after their dog, but there're a lot dogs out there," he added. The reports notes that Fairfax County and Alexandria have ordinances requiring proper disposal of pet wastes. In terms of wildlife waste, the TMDL says that raccoons, geese and waterfowl are the biggest contributors. Waterfowl deposit feces directly into the water. You can read the DEQ report here: <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/TMDLDataSearch/DraftReports.jsp>.

**Most Streams Are Impaired:** Virginia's DEQ also reported in late August that most Mount Vernon-area streams and the Potomac River are "impaired."

The Potomac and Occoquan Rivers and the following streams are under fish consumption advisories for PCBs or polychlorinated biphenyls, as

are the following Mount Vernon-area creeks: Hunting Creek, Little Hunting Creek, Pohick and Accotink Creeks.

The following creeks are impaired because of E coli bacteria: Hunting Creek, Pohick Creek, Paul Spring Branch, Dogue Creek and Little Hunting Creek.

**Belle Haven Watershed Not Healthy:** "The Belle Haven Watershed is the poorest quality watershed in the County," concluded the draft Belle Haven Watershed Plan. The Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve is in this watershed. Several streams in this watershed flow into Dyke Marsh. The plan concludes generally, that habitat is significantly degraded, has low biodiversity, little natural forested vegetation, disturbed stream channels, bank erosion and siltation. Over the last two years, FODMers participated in developing a plan to improve water quality. The draft plan proposes a series of projects, including removing concrete channelized streams, building bioretention ponds and retrofitting parking lots to retain stormwater onsite rather than sending it into the wetland and river.

## Board Member Needed

The Friends of Dyke Marsh has a vacancy on the Board of Directors.

Are you interested in actively contributing your time and energy to building the organization? If so, give President Glenda Booth a call at (703) 765-5233.

## Off-Leash Dog Park Next to Dyke Marsh?

BY GLENDA BOOTH

Westgrove Park is a 23-acre county property on the western boundary of the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve. It is the site of a no longer operating pumping station. It is owned by the Fairfax County Park Authority but FCPA has not prepared a plan for its use.

A group called Westgrove PACK, Pumphouse Association for Canine Kindness, is proposing that

Westgrove Park become an off-leash dog park. If the county agrees to establish an off-leash dog park there, county standards require among other things an asphalt trail, a new fence, a kiosk, a 24-foot wide entrance road, a new turn lane off Fort Hunt Road, parking lot expansion with 20 spaces, and a surface of four inches of stone dust. FCPA staff estimates that new turn lanes and widening of Fort Hunt Road would cost approximately \$1 million. The Park Authority staff has

not done an environmental assessment of this proposal. We are not aware that they are looking at other alternative sites.

FCPA is accepting comments on their overall Great Parks, Great Communities plans until November 15. You can view the plans here: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/greatparks/>. For more information, contact Sandy Stallman in the Planning and Development Division at 703-324-8643.

## Paddle With a Ranger

NPS will be offering a Paddle With a Ranger program in Dyke Marsh on Saturday, November 20. The program begins at 9am and ends at 3pm (it includes a lunch break and restroom breaks).



A kayaker enjoys exploring Dyke Marsh. Photo by T.D. Hobart.

Explore the George Washington Memorial Parkway from a new perspective! A ranger will lead you on a kayak or canoe trip through Dyke Marsh.

Participants must bring their own boat, paddle, life jacket, and noise-making device. Program leaves from Belle Haven Marina. There is a \$5 launch fee. Call 703-289-2553 for age restrictions or more information

## Join Our Weed Whackers

Please join the Friends of Dyke Marsh on the first Friday of every month, from 10 a. m. to 12 noon, and help control invasive plants like bush honeysuckle, garlic mustard and English ivy. It's good exercise and a great way to be outside and to restore the biological integrity of our favorite wetland.

The "weed whacking" project is now headed by Amanda Chidsey, NPS Biological Science Technician. You can reach her at [Amanda\\_Chidsey@nps.gov](mailto:Amanda_Chidsey@nps.gov) or 703-289-2545. Welcome, Amanda. The FODM contact is Ned Stone, [nedstone@verizon.net](mailto:nedstone@verizon.net) or 703-768-5441.

## FODM Welcomes Our New Members

Please extend a big welcome to our new annual FODM members David Gorsline, Mari Louise Livingood, Alice & Richard Schoen, Ben Schulz, Betty Vertiz, Christopher Walker, and Kathy Warnkey. Is it time to renew your membership in FODM? If your *Marsh Wren* mailing label says 09 or earlier to the right of your name, renew NOW, so you'll be up-to-date and continuing to support The Friends of Dyke Marsh. Thank you!

U. S. Park Police, Emergency Number: 202-619-7300

## Sunday Morning Bird Walks



Bird walks are held every Sunday morning, all year. Meet at 8 a.m. in the south parking lot of the Belle Haven picnic area. Walks are led by experienced birders and all are welcome to join us. Photo by Ed Eder.

## FODM Membership - Dues and Contributions

Support the Friends of Dyke Marsh by becoming a member or renewing your membership. Benefits include the Friends' quarterly publication, *The Marsh Wren*; quarterly membership meetings with knowledgeable speakers; Sunday morning bird walks and notification of activities in and around the marsh. Most importantly, your membership lends your voice in support of Dyke Marsh, our local natural treasure. To renew your membership, please send your tax-deductible contribution, payable to FODM, P.O. Box 7183, Alexandria, Virginia 22307. The annual dues are \$15.00 per household; \$250.00 for life membership for an individual. Additional contributions are most welcome. The mailing label on this *Marsh Wren* indicates membership status. **If the date indicated is 08 or 09, time to send in your renewal dues. For those with 08, renewal should be for 2 years (2009 and 2010) or \$30. If the number is 09, a \$15 renewal keeps you up-to-date.** If your label says 10, you're good for the current year. Finally, if the number is over 10 or if the label shows a \*, thanks for your continuing support of the work of FODM.

DUES AMOUNT..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 TELEPHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
 EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Please address any questions or comments about *The Marsh Wren* to Dorothy McManus and about membership to Barbara Perry. You may contact them by mail at FODM, P.O. Box 7183, Alexandria, Virginia 22307-7183, by telephone or by email (see page 2).

## DC Surfriders Group Tours Dyke Marsh

BY NED STONE

On Saturday, 18 September 2010, a group from the DC Surfriders ([www.surfrider.org/dc](http://www.surfrider.org/dc)) organized by Cheryl Norcross made a tour of Dyke Marsh by water, led by Ned Stone of FODM. The tour consisted of nine people in one canoe, three kayaks, and three stand-up paddlers. Standup paddling is a relatively new way of getting around on the water, where a person stands on an oversized surfboard and uses a long paddle to propel her/himself. The tour met at Belle Haven Marina, paddled south along the Potomac and west into the Big Gut, and returned. Along with numerous herons and egrets, they were treated to

close views of several Bald Eagles. The DC Surfriders have a special interest in waterway trash cleanups, and do them regularly. So making this initial contact may prove beneficial to DMWP. (After all, if you're a surfer and live on the Potomac, you have to think of something else to do.)



Kayaks, canoes, and stand-up paddlers take the group through Dyke Marsh. Photo by Ned Stone.

## Goodwin House Visitors

The Goodwin House walkers, a group of active seniors, visited the preserve on September 10. Their organizer, Jane McKeel, wrote that their visit "was delightful. Brianne Cassetta [NPS ranger] hopped into our shuttle, which was full, 14 passengers, and took us quite a way down Haul Road. It couldn't have been a lovelier time to visit -- such a clear day, a number of waterfowl, a quiet walk along the boardwalk with a perfect breeze. Brianne gave excellent background and answered a number of questions. Thank you so much for putting us in touch with the Park Service rangers."

"The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as asset which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired, in value."  
Theodore Roosevelt, 1907.

**The  
Marsh Wren**

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