

[From Spring 2002]

## **Countdown to the Centennial**

What an exciting time to be part of the largest network of lands set aside specifically for wildlife! Little did President Theodore Roosevelt know that the National Wildlife Refuge System that he began in 1903 with the establishment of small Pelican Island in Florida, would grow to over 500 refuges, located in all 50 states, encompassing more than 100 million acres (larger than the National Park System).

The staff and volunteers of Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge are excited about the upcoming Centennial and plan to begin celebrating this year with a Centennial Countdown Calendar of Events. The celebration kicks off with a Chincoteague Refuge Visitor Center Open House on March 14th, the System's 99th birthday, from 9 AM to 4 PM. Join us and treat yourselves to a cup of shade grown coffee and a piece of cake.

Other activities planned throughout the year include: a special Earth Day Celebration on Saturday, April 13th; National Fishing and Boating Week, the first week of June; and on July 1st, a hundred years of waterfowl conservation will be celebrated with a banding demonstration and bird walk. Also look for special happenings as part of the refuge's annual events such as: International Migratory Bird Celebration, May 11th; National Wildlife Refuge Week, Columbus Day Weekend; and Waterfowl Week, the Saturday before Thanksgiving to the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

Something big is about to happen and you can be a part of it. Call 757-336-6122 for more information on the Centennial Countdown activities.

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