

[From Spring 1998]

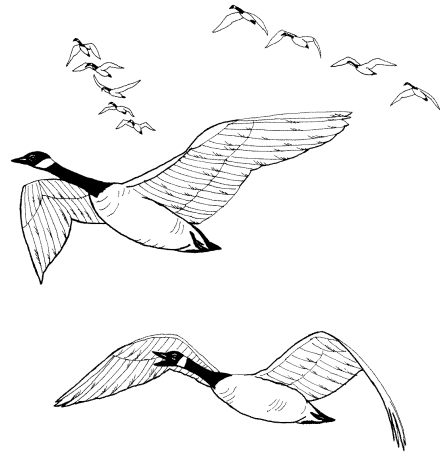
Celebrate Birds! Refuge Unveils Plans for 4th Annual International Migratory Bird Celebration

Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge Manager John D. Schroer unveiled preliminary plans for the 4th Annual International Migratory Bird Celebration to be held May 8 - 10, 1998.

"This year's celebration will offer the public a full array of activities designed to raise awareness about the annual shorebird migration. The event will showcase the importance of the Eastern Shore of Virginia to migrating birds and bring to light the beauty of the natural wonders that are found in our own backyards," said Schroer.

Last year nearly 9,500 visitors flocked to the Eastern Shore of Virginia to participate in bird, beach, and habitat walks; interpretive boat tours; art and craft shows; bird identification and photography workshops, and a host of programs and activities designed especially for children.

According to Schroer, this year's event will commence with a reception on Friday night, May 8, at the Chincoteague Center. Eldon Greij, Editor of *Birder's World* magazine, will serve as a keynote speaker. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Jamie Clark is likely to be present as well. "Our planning committee has invited other guests, however, we do not have confirmation yet," said Schroer.



A 5K Run/Walk will be held on Saturday, May 9, the proceeds of which will be donated to the Special Olympics. Chincoteague and Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuges will continue their traditions of offering the public an array of activities. The National Park Service, Assateague Island National Seashore, Toms Cove District; The Nature Conservancy; and Kiptopeke State Park are also planning to host activities. This year, the Chincoteague Center will be offering the public a wildlife art exhibition that will include Federal Duck Stamp Art, an exhibit by the Ward Museum, as well as other artists and exhibits. The Orioles baseball team mascot and several players from the Shorebirds baseball team will be available on Saturday for autographs.

"You will not want to miss our celebration this year," said Schroer. "We are continuing the partnership with businesses and individuals throughout our local community as we celebrate the awesome spectacle of bird migration along the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

Like a fine wine, this event keeps getting better every year, so be sure to come out and taste the excitement."

The 4th Annual Migratory Bird Celebration will be sponsored by Chincoteague and Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuges, National Park Service, Assateague Island National Seashore, U.S. Coast Guard, Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce, The Nature Conservancy, Delmarva Power, Chincoteague Center, Chincoteague Natural History Association, and a host of volunteers.

For more information on this event, contact the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, P.O. Box 62, Chincoteague, VA 23336, telephone (757) 336-6122.

*Angela Tracy, Super.
Outdoor Recreation Planner*