

[From Summer 2001]

## **CNWR Bird Celebration a Huge Success**

Chincoteague Refuge hosted the 7th Annual International Migratory Bird Celebration on Mother's Day weekend. Nearly 9,000 people visited the refuge during the celebration and over 2,300 people joined in the festivities under the tent. It was a beautiful weekend as the weather cooperated and everyone seemed to be having a good time.

Saturdays 5K Run raised \$850.00 for the local Chapter #19 of the Special Olympics. In all, 68 participants entered the race. Two hand-carved decoys donated by Ed & Judy Green of Riderwood Maryland, were awarded to the top overall male and female, Leslie Wright and Jean Albaugh, respectfully. This year's main sponsor was ICNet. A special thanks goes out to all the sponsors and volunteers who helped make the event a success.

Activities were continued both days under the tent. Nearly 200 children entered the art contest, created pictures from sand painting, made bird feeders, built bird houses, made animal tracks, painted decoys, and made tattoos. Fifteen wildlife artists exhibited their work. Approximately one thousand people climbed to the top of the Assateague Lighthouse for a bird's eye view of the island. More than 200 people attended the auditorium programs that included: a musical slide presentation called \*Mason Jars and Memories' by nationally renowned nature photographer, author and writer, Jim Clark, a slide presentation called "The Birds, Beaches, and Wild Ponies of Assateague Island' by Larry Points, retired Chief of Interpretation at Assateague Island National Seashore; a slide show, called \*Just Eagles," by author and wildlife photographer Bill Silliker; local decoy carver Reggie Birch demonstrated his talents in wood carving; Recreation Assistant Alison McGuire presented a program on shade grown coffee and neotropical birds entitled "The Birds and the Beans; and famous author of children's books, Suzanne Tate, read some of her children's stories and signed books.

On Sunday afternoon, TR Bear arrived with a Birthday cake celebrating the 58th Birthday of Chincoteague Refuge and the 98th Birthday of the National Wildlife Refuge System. TR Bear was a big hit with the children. Goody bags were handed out to the first 98 people. It was a good time for all!

Sally Bowden, Park Ranger - CNWR