

[From Winter 2007]

Thoughts of a German Intern at the Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR

After deciding to go to the United States I decided I wanted to do something totally different than my every day routine. My name is Robert and I am a student at the Carl-von-Ossietzky University in Oldenburg which is in the northern part of Germany, about one hour from the coast.

Why not spend two or three months in a national wildlife refuge? Getting a clear head, doing something for wildlife, and working in a nice environment is always good. Plus, as a 12-week-intern you can actually stay on the refuge and do not have to worry about an apartment.

What I enjoy most about working in this refuge is the silence. Far away from the city's noises, the cars' bad smell and the fast-paced life there you finally get a rest here. For some people it might be too quiet but I think that's what makes it so special. Where else do you see raccoons, deer, and eagles on your way to work? Nature's variety over here is both breath taking and fascinating. Not to mention Fisherman Island.

My first tasks consisted of basic maintenance work, preparing the refuge for the upcoming hunting season, and everybody worked on the new butterfly garden which you should definitely come to see next spring! Working in the Visitor Center is also always a great thing to do. I have had so many nice conversations in this place, it is just amazing. It is usually a little bit quieter in fall and winter but the good thing about it is, when someone comes in you can totally focus on that person and very often the best conversations come out of that.

So if you like working with nice and enthusiastic people, are keen on meeting people from all over the U.S. (and beyond that!), like to give back to nature what it gives to us, then this might be just the perfect opportunity for you. Everybody who works here is here for the same reason: the interest in nature and the will to preserve it. Give us a call, check our website, or ask for brochures.