

[From Winter 1998-1999]

## **Visitors Flock to Waterfowl Week**

With mild weather in the north and dry conditions on the Refuge, waterfowl numbers were low during the annual refuge event held in their honor. At times it appeared as if the flocks of visitors outnumbered the flocks of waterfowl. However, despite the dry weather conditions and low waterfowl numbers, Waterfowl Week at Chincoteague Refuge was a huge success!

The Indian Summer temperatures drew 23,283 visitors to the refuge during the celebration from November 21 to November 29. The Service Road was open to vehicular traffic from noon to 3:30 p.m. Thanksgiving Day through Sunday, November 29. A total of 1,292 vehicles traveled the Service Road during these days. The entrance fee booths collected fees totaling over \$6,000 during the three-day weekend following Thanksgiving. Additionally, many bicyclists and hikers took advantage of the warm unseasonable temperatures by exploring the refuge's many trails.

A number of visitors participated in refuge activities offered as part of Waterfowl Week. Outdoor Recreation Planner Ray Paterra hosted a game of "Refuge Jeopardy" on Friday, November 28, and Outdoor Recreation Planner Jill Van Scoyoc hosted visitors to a game of "Refuge Bingo" on Saturday, November 29. Also offered was a "Habitat History" walk along a portion of Wildlife Loop. However, the "Feathered Whatsits" walk was the most popular program, with a flock of bird watchers attracted.



Although waterfowl numbers were low, a diversity of species were spotted on this journey along Beach Road. A fitting conclusion to this migration celebration.

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