

[From Winter 1999]

Back To School

This fall, CNWR found its way into elementary schools throughout Accomack and Northampton counties. Educational programs, free of charge and based on Virginia Standards of Learning, were presented to students in grades 2-4. Outdoor Recreation Planner, Ray Paterra, and I collaborated to develop programs based on bird characteristics and adaptations, migration, and the functions and importance of wetlands.

"Build A Duck" was the favorite program among the 580 students reached this fall. Students learned about physical adaptations unique to birds and waterfowl by transforming a volunteer classmate into a duck. The highlight of the activity was the unsuspecting volunteer having to put on a duck bill and webbed feet. Although not everyone in the class could be transformed, they all had a chance to participate by sharing ideas and stories, and eating a duck meal of candy corn.

Teachers were supplied with a packet of information about the refuge and its wildlife and were encouraged to bring their students to the refuge in the spring when diverse environmental education programs are conducted.

In December, CNWR will continue to conduct these programs in local schools as well as programs on the refuge. The refuge is looking forward to seeing many of the students reached this fall participating in environmental education programs this spring.

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