FRIENDS OF OTTAWA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE PRESENTS:

Migration-A-Thon

Virtual Race
September 2024

Fundraiser's Toolkit
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## Mission

*Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge supports the conservation mission of Ohio's only national wildlife refuge complex by acquiring land, engaging the community, and enhancing public access.*
Join Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge in September 2024 as we celebrate fall migration of birds, butterflies, dragonflies, and more! As part of our celebrations, we will be offering many guided activities throughout the month. We will get outside to learn about animals that utilize the refuge and see how many species we can find. Anyone is welcome to explore the refuge, but registration may be required for guided events.

You can make a difference for wildlife and habitat conservation.

As part of our celebration, we are hosting an exciting way to raise funds for the refuge. Donations can be made in your honor, or participate in the "walk-a-thon" style fundraiser by asking friends, family, or businesses to sponsor you at a pledged rate per mile moved.

Participants in the Migration-A-Thon will track and upload the miles that you hike, walk, run, paddle, swim, or roll during the month of September. (Whatever is “you” - powered, counts!) Your miles can be completed anywhere, inside or out.

Donations will help Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge to continue our Career Pathways Program in 2025. The Career Pathways Program helps young conservationists gain valuable work experience while helping to maintain the refuge. Our fundraising goal is $5,000 which will help to cover the cost of one internship. We hope that you can commit to raising at least $250 (with aspirations to raise more)!
Get Started in 5 Easy Steps

**Step 1: Register for the event.**

- Click [here](#) to go to the Virtual Migration-A-Thon page or scan our code:
- Click on the orange **Sign Up** button and follow the prompts.
- Setup your individual fundraising page.

**Step 2: Set an attainable goal.**

Challenge yourself. Yes, we want you to raise a minimum of $250, but aim high. People will be more motivated to get involved if they feel their contribution will have an impact in helping you reach your goal. Your network wants you to succeed!

**Step 3: Know your 'why'.**

Why are you raising money for Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge? Your network of donors will be interested to learn about programs and services that support and help youth in conservation. And remember, they are also interested in you and your connection to the Friends! Share personal stories about your favorite experiences at the refuge to make a connection.

**Step 4: Who should I reach out to when raising funds for the Migration-A-Thon?**

It's time to build your donor tribe. Break out your phone, scroll through Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn, sort through emails, and create a list of people you interact with and want to ask for support (this includes friends, family members, neighbors, classmates, coworkers, or businesses you patronize)!

**Step 5: Ask, ask, and ask again.**

Having your contact list ready to go will allow you to hit the ground running with your outreach! Once your list is finished, contact every one of them. If you don't ask, the answer will always be no. You got this!
Fundraising Tips

A Roadmap to Success

You've probably already thought about ways to reach your fundraising goal of $250. We did too! Read on for helpful tips to make raising more money fun and effective.

Post and Share! Social media can often be your best platform for reaching wide audiences. The more times you share what you're doing and tag the Friends (@friendsofottawanwr), the better your chances are that your friends and family will see your posts and donate online using the page you created. In today's world, people's news feeds are changing every second. Keep your posts fresh and engaging by using a different statistic or photo each time! (See our suggested social media posts!)

Tell people why Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge is important and why supporting habitat and wildlife conservation is important!

If you ask, they will give. Remember: your friends and family will want to support you, and a cause you believe in. A personal text message or phone call is the number one most effective fundraising method.

Make it as easy and seamless as possible for people to donate. Post a direct link to your fundraising page when sharing on social media or include it in your text/email.

Life happens. Reminders are not a bad thing. Follow up and share why their donations matter and that now is the time to give.

Matching Donations. Ask your donors about matching gifts to double their donations. Many companies support charitable giving by matching employee gifts. Donors can learn more from their HR representative.

Thank you, thank you! Thanking your donors with a handwritten card, text/email or shout out on social media is a great way to show you appreciation for their support.
Let's Get Social

We've created some suggested social media posts you can share on your accounts to gain support for our Migration-A-Thon. Of course, feel free to add your own personal flair and messaging and tag @FriendsofOttawaNWR in your posts. By tagging @FriendsofOttawaNWR, we will like, comment, favorite, share, and reply back to your messages to help increase traction and create buzz! Make sure to share the graphic below (or add your own image) to accompany the language and messaging we've drafted for you.

Sample Posts

- To celebrate #FallMigration, @FriendsofOttawaNWR is hosting a virtual Migration-A-Thon to help create a buzz for #ottawanwr. Your donation will directly benefit programs that mentor future conservation leaders and protect wildlife habitat for generations to come. Can you help? <link to your fundraising page>

- I'm proud to be teaming up with @FriendsofOttawaNWR for a virtual Migration-A-Thon this September to protect wildlife habitat for generations to come. Will you join me by pledging $x for each mile I (walk/swim/bike/run) this September? <link to your fundraising page>
Event Specific

- Fall migration is in full swing in September. It's a time when some types of birds, butterflies, and dragonflies flock through Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge's 11,000 acres of protected habitats as they journey south to overwintering grounds. Some species like the monarch butterfly travel hundreds or even thousands of miles to their winter home!

- In honor of their journey, Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge is hosting a Migration-A-Thon Virtual Race in September of 2024. This month-long virtual "move-a-thon" is a way for us to come together and move (walk, run, swim, paddle, ride, etc) in our community with a goal of reaching 2,269 miles collectively (the distance it takes a monarch butterfly to travel from Oak Harbor, Ohio to the butterfly sanctuary in Sierra Chincua, Mexico.).

- Researchers estimate that a jaw-dropping 970 million monarchs have vanished since 1990. There are a number of threats to monarch butterflies including habitat loss, climate change, and pesticide use that is reducing milkweed populations, a plant on which the monarch lays its eggs. The long-term solution to ensure the survival of this species is to plant native milkweed species and nectaring plants and protect winter roost locations. This event raises awareness about the monarch migration in hopes of inspiring the next generation of conservationists to protect threatened and endangered species through habitat conservation.

- I hope you will consider making a donation per mile to support my goal of ____ miles this September. Your gift will help Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge to conserve and protect wildlife habitats at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge for monarch butterflies and many other important species.
About Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge

• Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge was founded by a group of passionate volunteers who wanted to make a difference for Ohio’s only national wildlife refuge complex.
• Since 1997 the Friends have supported the refuge’s growing visitation by providing programming, fundraising, and volunteerism opportunities and serving as a bridge between the refuge and our surrounding communities.
• Today the Friends help the community connect with nature by providing public access points for outdoor recreation, supporting youth programs like intern stipends and transportation grants for field trips, and acquiring and restoring land to natural habitats.
• The Friends believe that introducing people to the beauty of nature will foster a deeper understanding of its importance to ensure that the refuge and other critical habitats are protected forever.
• With your help, the Friends can create a visible impact for Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge now and for future generations to enjoy.

There you have it! You are well on your way to reaching your fundraising goal. Remember to keep everyone posted on your fundraising progress. **Updates are a great way to keep everyone in the know and can even act as a reminder to some supporters who haven’t yet gotten involved.** Letting supporters know what you have accomplished so far will excite them and encourage them to help you reach your goals.

Can't find something? No problem! Contact Aimee Arent: mobile 419-707-7756 or email: friendsofottawanwr@gmail.com
Check out these fun perks for top movers and raisers!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance Milestone</th>
<th>Perk</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 miles</td>
<td>10 miler badge. Social media shout out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 miles</td>
<td>25 miler badge. Social media shout out. 1 Entry to win Grand Prize!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 miles</td>
<td>50 miler badge &amp; monarch pin. Social media shout out. 5 Entries to win Grand Prize!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 miles</td>
<td>100 miler badge &amp; monarch pin. Social media shout out. 10 Entries to win Grand Prize!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250 miles</td>
<td>250 miler badge &amp; Swag Bag. Social media shout out. 15 Entries to win Grand Prize!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 miles</td>
<td>500 miler badge &amp; Swag Bag. Social media shout out. 20 Entries to win Grand Prize!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Most Miles Moved</td>
<td>Private tour of the refuge for yourself and up to 12 friends, certificate of achievement and social media FAME.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fundraising Milestone</th>
<th>Perk</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$250 raised</td>
<td>Egg badge. Social media shout out!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500 raised</td>
<td>Caterpillar badge. Social media shout out!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 raised</td>
<td>Chrysalis badge. Social media shout out!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,500 &amp; up raised</td>
<td>Butterfly badge. Social media shout out!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Top Dollars Raised</td>
<td>Private tour of the refuge for yourself and up to 12 friends, certificate of achievement and social media FAME.</td>
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Grand Prize

Garmin Instinct 2 Smartwatch

Whatever you do, own it with Instinct 2. This rugged GPS smartwatch is tough enough to keep up with you and unique enough to fit your style. Do more of what you love with preloaded activity profiles and stay connected to what matters with smart features.

PRODUCT FEATURES

- Rugged GPS smartwatch is water-rated to 100 meters and thermal- and shock resistant with fiber-reinforced polymer case and scratch-resistant Corning Gorilla glass
- Built-in sports apps to take on running, biking, swimming, strength training and more; plus, VO2 Max and other training features
- Live the ultimate connected life with smart notifications and Connect IQ compatibility when paired with your compatible smartphone.
- Track your adventures with the built-in 3-axis compass and barometric altimeter, plus multiple global navigation satellite systems (GPS, GLONASS and Galileo)
- Understand your body better with all-day health monitoring features that track your heart rate, sleep, Pulse Ox, respiration and more (Pulse Ox not available in all countries. This device is intended to give an estimation of your activity and metrics; it is not a medical device)
- Battery life: up to 28 days in smartwatch mode; up to 30 hours in GPS mode
- Dedicated fishing and hunting activity profiles
- Compatible with Xero, Astro/Alpha and inReach products to further enhance tracking, navigating and communicating in the wild
- Compatible with iPhone, Android

Take your fitness to the next step!
Guided Programs

These guided programs will be offered at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge as a fun way to get outside with friends to learn more about the refuge's habitats and wildlife. All programs are free. An asterisk(*) indicates that registration is required. To register, please call 419-313-3236 starting at noon on August 22, 2024.

Sunday, September 1
Monthly Bird Census
(distance varies)
8:00am - 12:00pm
(Meet in the Trailhead Parking Lot)

September 3-30 (Daily)
Collision Monitoring in Downtown Toledo*
(distance varies)
Contact Jessica at 419-607-1239 or jessica_duez@fws.gov

Wednesday, September 4
Lakefront Preserve Beach Cleanup*
(0.5-1 mile)
3:00pm - 5:00pm

Saturday, September 7
Bike the Dike*
(3 miles)
9:00am - 11:00am
Garden Walk
(.25 miles)
10:00am - 11:00am
Monarch Hike at Marinewood
(0.6 miles)
1:00pm - 2:00pm

Wednesday, September 11
Partnership Pond Paddle*
(0.5-1 mile)
11:00am - 12:00pm or 1:00pm - 2:00pm

Thursday, September 12
Paddle at Nehls Nature Preserve*
(2 miles)
2:00pm - 3:30pm

Saturday, September 14
Cedar Point Beach Cleanup*
(0.5 miles)
10:30am - 1:30pm
Storybook Hike at Fox Preserve
(0.25 miles)
1:00pm - 2:00pm
Observe the Moon Night Program
(<0.25 miles)
8:30pm - 10:30pm

Wednesday, September 18
Bike the Dike*
(4 miles)
9:00am - 11:00am

Saturday, September 21
Garden Walk
(.25 miles)
10:00am - 11:00am
Monarch Hike at Fox Preserve
(1 mile)
1:00pm - 2:00pm

Wednesday, September 25
Paddle at Nehls Nature Preserve*
(2 miles)
10:30am - 12:00pm or 1:00pm - 2:30pm

Full Calendar: www.friendsofottawanwr.org/events
Here are some of our favorite Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge trails. Feel free to use these or let them inspire you on your own routes!

**Main Complex**

The main complex hiking trails offer a variety of habitats including diked marshes, wet woods, a freshwater estuary, and beach. You could see anything from wading birds and white pelicans to river otter and beaver!

These trails are on grass and earthen dikes (with a small section of boardwalk near the Visitor Center) which are good for biking, hiking, and of course birding.

Restrooms are available at the Visitor Center, in the Visitor Center Parking Lot and at the Trail Head Parking Lot.
Here are some of our favorite Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge trails. Feel free to use these or let them inspire you on your own routes!

**Main Complex - South Woods**

The South Woods is located directly behind the Refuge Visitor Center and is connected by a 1/3 mile boardwalk loop. There are many routes to explore the woods and this enlarged map shows the distances for each section.

The woodland trails are a combination of crushed gravel, earthen dikes, and forest floor.

Restrooms are available at the Visitor Center, in the Visitor Center Parking Lot and at the Trail Head Parking Lot.
Here are some of our favorite Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge trails. Feel free to use these or let them inspire you on your own routes!

**Fox Preserve**

This mesic prairie is the site of the Friends group’s very first land acquisition and restoration project made possible through the Joan and Richard Kimple Conservation Fund.

The loop closest to the parking lot is home to a storybook trail which makes this site a nice hike for families. The next section is boardwalk over wet prairie, immediately followed by a meadow trail to the woods. A forest floor trail takes you through a section of the remnant Great Black Swamp forest.
Named for the 2000 Federal Duck Stamp artist and conservationist Adam Grimm, this parcel located on the western edge of the main complex is an excellent spot for birds. Sparrows, meadowlarks, bobolinks and dickcissels frequent this grassland.

This is a mowed grass trail. Watch for the parking area off of Krause Rd near State Route 2.
Here are some of our favorite Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge trails. Feel free to use these or let them inspire you on your own routes!

**Nehls Preserve**

This shortgrass meadow and scrub-shrub habitat offers a great hike with a variety of options for all ages and abilities with a gravel road and grassland trails.

Bring your kayak and make use of the EZ Launch kayak launch, to enter and exit the water with extra stability.

A storybook trail and a picnic pavilion near the water make a great addition for a family outing.

This site is owned by Black Swamp Conservancy and cooperatively managed by Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge.
Here are some of our favorite Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge trails. Feel free to use these or let them inspire you on your own routes!

**Marinewood**

The Marinewood Unit is located on SR 163 between Oak Harbor and Port Clinton. It is the old Marinewood Golf Course. Since being acquired by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 2014, it is now the site of a pollinator restoration and tree restoration project.

The .65 mile trail loop is mowed grass. With the Portage River nearby, bald eagles as well as grassland birds are a common sight.
Suggested Water Trails

Here are some of our favorite Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge trails. Feel free to use these or let them inspire you on your own routes!

**Portage River Water Trail**

The Portage River Water Trail begins at William Henry Harrison Park in Pemberville and ends at the Lake Erie Beach in Port Clinton. Find Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge’s Marinewood Unit and Little Portage Unit on the trail!

Compared to other tributaries of Lake Erie, this lower portion of the Portage River is considered extremely wide, with some locations near 3,000 feet in width. The Portage River drains over 600 square miles of land and has 7 major branches. The majority (90%) of streams and waterways in the Portage River basin provide habitats that support robust populations of fish and other aquatic life.

Total trail length: 36 mi.
Here are some of our favorite Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge trails. Feel free to use these or let them inspire you on your own routes!

**Lake Erie Islands Mainland Trail**

The mainland shoreline offers access points with a variety of paddling experiences and offers views of Lake Erie, Sandusky Bay, Kelleys Island, and South Bass Island. View the rocky shoreline around Catawba Island and explore West Harbor where you will find West Harbor Landing, a satellite property of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. Newly established and marked by a star on the map below is the Nehls Memorial Nature Preserve. Owned by Black Swamp Conservancy and cooperatively managed by Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Nehls Preserve offers an accessible EZ-Dock Kayak Launch and pavilion sponsored by the Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge.

Great Egret Marsh Preserve boasts classic Lake Erie marshes, ongoing habitat restoration, and a haven for birds. Lucien M. Clemons Park is being developed by the Village of Marblehead and features a protected inlet access point. Use caution on the rocky shore near the Marblehead Lighthouse, the oldest continuing operating lighthouse on the Great Lakes. Paddle just south to the Lifesaving Station for easier access.
Frequently Asked Questions

Can I log different types of activities to reach my mileage goals?
Yes, you can! Hike, bike, swim, paddle, just get out there and move.

Do I need to be on the refuge to participate?
While we hope you visit the refuge, you are welcome to complete your miles at any location you choose, including your home or gym.

Where do I submit my miles moved?
When logged into www.RunSignUp.com, click on your profile, then navigate to the "Migration-A-Thon" event. Then click on "Submit Virtual Results". Here you can select the type of activity you did and enter your miles (and time if you wish). You may submit results from September 1, 2024 - September 30, 2024.

Can you walk me through setting up an online fundraising page?
Sure! Go to our race page. If you are registering for the virtual challenge, do that first by clicking "Sign Up". If not, click "Become a Fundraiser." Fill out your name, fundraising goal, and create a tagline and custom fundraiser url if you wish (your name works great!). You can then customize your fundraising page by adding your profile photo and a personal story about why you are raising funds for the refuge. Click "Set Up Fundraiser". Click "Manage" next to your name to edit your fundraiser or select "links/sharing" to find a direct link for your fundraising page that you can share with your friends. If you are participating in the virtual challenge, your supporters can click on the "Donation Pledges" at the bottom of your page to make a pledge per mile.

Do I have to log miles to fundraise for the refuge?
No, you can Become a Fundraiser on our Migration-A-Thon website and share with your contacts in person, via email or social media without participating in the virtual challenge.

When should I collect donations?
Donors will receive reminders to fulfill their pledges upon completion of the virtual challenge on September 30. You can help by reaching out to your friends and family who plan to contribute. Please help us to ensure that all pledges are to the refuge by October 15. Offline donations may be mailed to the Friends or dropped off in the Visitor Center.
Thank you for supporting Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge!