

# News Release

## *National Wildlife Refuge System*



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee  
National Wildlife Refuge  
Celebrates 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Everglades Day Festival**

Come join in this family-friendly fun event and learn about the history of the National Wildlife Refuge System and the Everglades at the fourth annual Everglades Day Festival, Saturday, February 8, 2003, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The festival will be held at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge, 10216 Lee Road, Boynton Beach, FL. The entrance is two miles south of Boynton Beach Blvd off of US 441/SR 7. Parking will be at Monte's Packaging Company, one-half mile south of the refuge on US 441. PalmTran will be providing a free shuttle service to the refuge.

The daylong fun event will feature live animal presentations, hands-on children's activities, photography workshops, bird and butterfly walks, canoe trips, historical skit and character actors, exhibits, Everglades restorations talks, music and food. This year's theme is on Everglades' history to help celebrate the National Wildlife Refuge's Centennial anniversary. 100 years ago this year (2003) Teddy Roosevelt created the first National Wildlife Refuge at Pelican Island NWR, right here in Florida.

Senator Bob Graham will be in attendance to participate in one of the three dedications to take place during the day. The senator will be dedicating the Everglades Exploration Trail kiosk. The Arthur R. Marshall Foundation will be dedicating their kiosk explaining the importance of cypress forests, and the South Florida Water Management District will be dedicating the LILA (Loxahatchee Impoundment Landscape Assessment) project kiosk.

A special Author's Circle will be at the refuge with some of Florida's most popular authors available to speak to visitors. Ann Spann Tyler, Jim Huffstodt, Richard Procyk, and Patrick Smith, will delight us with their literary knowledge of Florida history.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish and wildlife habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System comprised of 540 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands, and other special management areas. It also operates 70

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national fish hatcheries, 64 fish and wildlife management offices, and 78 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

The Centennial of the National Wildlife Refuge System in 2003 marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the world's largest network of lands and waters set aside to protect wildlife. From its beginnings at Florida's tiny Pelican Island, the Refuge System has grown to encompass hundreds of unique, spectacular and truly wild places that harbor diverse species and welcome more than 35 million visitors each year. To learn more, point your browser to <http://refuges100.fws.gov>.