

# News Release

Southeast Region

Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 5, 2017

### **Live Raptors, Reptiles and More at Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge Week Events**

Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge has announced its weekly event schedule for National Wildlife Refuge Week. To celebrate the establishment of the National Wildlife Refuge System which was established in 1966, Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge will have a festival on Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with games, crafts, live animals, and vendors from the surrounding area that help make the refuge a great local resource for visitors of all ages.

In an effort to encourage new audiences to find their way to the refuge, visitors are invited to celebrate and recreate in classic and new ways such as fishing, kayaking, wildlife photography, hiking, biking, and even stand up paddle board yoga. A complete list of activities hosted on the refuge is included below.

Visitors will be able to enjoy live raptors and reptiles at the Refuge Week Festival. The festival is free for all and fun for people of all ages. Working alongside with partnering local, state, and federal organizations like the National Park Service, Florida Animal Hospital, and more, refuge week hopes to encourage and inspire folks from near and far to experience their public lands like Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge.

For more information, email [merrittisland@fws.gov](mailto:merrittisland@fws.gov) or call 321-861-0669.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov). Connect with our Facebook page, follow our tweets, watch our YouTube Channel, and download photos from our Flickr page.

### **Ongoing Weeklong Celebrations**

Wednesday through Saturday 9 am, 12 pm, and 3 pm

Peace of Mind Kayak Tours

Special discounted refuge week rate. Reserve directly with [www.peaceofmindkayaktours.com](http://www.peaceofmindkayaktours.com) or by calling 407-733-8338.

### **Tuesday, October 10**

*Bus Tour at 9:00 a.m.*

Join a knowledgeable refuge volunteer for a guided two hour tour in the Refuge Shuttle bus.

**Wednesday, October 11**

*Reptiles on the Refuge at 11:00 a.m.*

Join us to learn about the various species of reptiles that call this refuge home. Free and fun for all ages.

**Friday, October 13**

*BYOB (Bring-Your-Own-Boat) Tour at 9:00 a.m.*

Join a refuge volunteer for a Bring-Your-Own-Boat/Kayak tour of freshwater ponds behind our visitor center. No cost but visitors must bring personal boats and personal floatation devices. Reserve in advance by calling 321-861-0669.

**Saturday, October 14**

*Stand Up Paddle Board Yoga 7:30, 9, and 10 a.m.*

Join Blake from the Little Yoga Hut for paddle board yoga on the Indian River Lagoon at Sandler Education Outpost. Call 321-861-0669 to reserve.

*Bus Tour at 9:00 a.m.*

Join a knowledgeable refuge volunteer for a guided two hour tour in the Refuge Shuttle bus.

*Refuge Week Festival 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.*

Join us for a fun day of exhibitors including live animals, artists, crafts, games and activities to celebrate responsible stewardship on public lands. Come #FindYourWay to a National Wildlife Refuge with your family for free fun for all ages!

*Activities at Festival*

Visitor Center Butterfly Survey – 10-2 p.m.

11 a.m. Native Plants Talk with Jim Stahl

12:00 p.m. Eagle Talk

2:30 p.m. Live Gator Presentation

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