



# Volunteer Newsletter

## Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge

December 2019



December can be a great time to spot bald eagles at Deer Flat.  
Photo David Lawrence

## Volunteers Especially Needed For

**Master Naturalist Class** (*Friday afternoons, February-May*) Learn more about Idaho's natural resources and become a certified Master Naturalist!

**Internships** (*At least 8 hours/week*). Seeking Environmental Education and Volunteer Coordination interns for spring semester.

**Visitor Center Hosts** (*Saturdays 10-4pm or flexible hours on weekdays*) Help visitors connect with the refuge and support staff with programs and projects.

*See High Priority Opportunities below for more information.*

## What's New?

Remember: The Refuge is a great place to bring your family and out-of-town guests for a

fun, local outing. Every day from sunrise to sunset you can take a hike, go birding, fish, hunt, and much more. The visitor center is open 8-4 weekdays and 10-4 Saturdays. We will be closed on Christmas and New Year's Day. Staff schedules aren't quite set, so call to confirm when we are open the week of Dec. 23.

Pay attention when you're here In November, birders spotted a snow goose on Lake Lowell that had been neck-banded in Russia. What a journey! Another volunteer noticed a Canada goose with a rare condition called leucism that causes a partial loss of feather pigmentation. He said the goose's head and neck looked more like a swan's!

## Cheers!

The Friends of Deer Flat helped plan and run a two day sagebrush-steppe restoration event. More than 150 volunteers from Nichol's Accounting as well as Rotary and Interact clubs across Idaho and abroad planted over 2,000 seedlings, including native shrubs (basin big sagebrush & rubber rabbitbrush), wildflowers (penstemon, aspen fleabane daisy, and yarrow), and bunchgrasses. A HUGE thank you to all involved!

## Around the Water Cooler

We are looking forward to welcoming a new Refuge Manager in mid-December! Eddie Owens will be moving here from San Diego Bay and Tijuana Slough National Wildlife Refuges. He has done a wide variety of wildlife-related work all across the country. Next time you're here volunteering, take some time to introduce yourself.

## Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge

The Friends of Deer Flat is a non-profit organization that supports Refuge activities like field trip bus scholarships, Refuge events, and restoration projects. (Check out news of their restoration work in Cheers! *above*) Tax-deductible memberships start at \$10. Or consider an extra donation to support your favorite Friends' programs! Email [friendsofdfwr@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofdfwr@gmail.com) for more info.



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## Upcoming Events

*Unless otherwise noted, events take place at the Visitor Center.*

**Nampa Christmas Bird Count** (*Saturday Dec 21, 8 am-5 pm*) Join local birders in the nation's longest-running birding project. We would love to see you out at the refuge, but if you can't make it you can participate by counting the birds around your own feeders at home. Check out the event on the [@SWIdahoBirders](#) Facebook page for more information or to sign up to count from home.

**Nature Photography Workshop** (*Tuesday Jan 28, 7-8pm; optional field trip Feb 1, 6:30-10am, starting point TBA*) Join photographer Levi Sim to learn simple ways to **Make Great Pictures with Any Camera**. Photographers of all ages and skill levels will learn tips and tricks to make their cameras and phones take better pictures. This is a FREE workshop. Registration is required: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/great-pictures-with-any-camera-workshop-tickets-83204616247>.

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## Help From Home

**Wanted: Owl pellets** Owl pellets are a great educational tool. if you find owl pellets or know where we can find them, please bring them to the visitor center or tell us where to collect them. Or, ask how you can help prep pellets for classroom use. Treasure Valley students thank you!

**Last Chance for Monarch Butterfly habitat Kits:** There is one milkweed seed packet still available for you to take home. Help create Monarch habitat this winter by planting milkweed seeds on your property or in your neighborhood. Monarchs lay their eggs on milkweed plants and that becomes the caterpillars main food source.



Sagebrush seedling planted during the November restoration event.  
Thanks all! Photo USFWS/Augusta Catherin-Sauer

### High Priority Volunteer Opportunities!

*Think you might not have the needed skills? Don't worry! [Training is provided.](#)*

**Master Naturalist Class** (Fridays 1-4pm and some weekend field trips)

### Other Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

**Outreach Booth Lead or Helper** (Ongoing) Enjoy fun local events while helping staff a Refuge outreach booth. Volunteers will share information about local wildlife, Refuge programs, and

Participants learn about Idaho's natural resources and get involved in local conservation projects. To become certified you must attend 40 hours of class and volunteer 40 hours.

**Internships** (*January-May 2020, at least 8 hours/week*) Develop your professional and leadership skills while connecting the community with nature through conservation projects, hands-on teaching opportunities, and visitor service activities. Environmental Education and Volunteer Coordination internships available, or let us know how you would design your own! We will begin reviewing applications on December 9.

**Visitor Center Hosting** (*Saturdays 10-4pm or weekdays flexible hours.*) Do you like wildlife and people? Visitor center hosting may be for you. Greet visitors, answer the phone, and help with various projects. Saturday hosts must be willing to undergo a background check and commit to a year of service—whether once a month or once a quarter. Interested but have questions? Please ask!

ways to get involved in conservation. Seeking volunteers willing to take the lead so staff availability doesn't limit our participation in community events. Orientation provided.

**Bird Surveys** (*November-March, usually Wednesdays 9 am -1 pm, but some flexibility*) Help a Refuge volunteer with his effort to document Refuge birds. Volunteers will both walk and drive during surveys.

**Nature Explorers** (*fourth Thursday of each month, starting again in January*) Help our lead volunteer guide preschoolers to use their natural curiosity to investigate nature.



Stretch into a new volunteer role!  
(Photo Kyran McLeod)



**Know anyone who might be a good fit? Please pass this newsletter to family, friends, and neighbors! To sign up or find out more, contact the Volunteer Coordinator at [deerflat@fws.gov](mailto:deerflat@fws.gov) or (208) 467-9278**



**Our mailing address is:**

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