

The Grebe

FALL 2022

Shrub Planting

October 22nd
Noon – 3pm
(Page 9)

Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge

*Our mission is to promote, protect
and provide resources to preserve
and enhance*

**Deer Flat National
Wildlife Refuge**
*for the enjoyment of present
and future generations.*



Friends of Deer Flat Board of Directors

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Contact Information

13751 Upper Embankment Rd
Nampa ID 83686

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Facebook: [www.facebook.com/
FriendsofDeerFlat](http://www.facebook.com/FriendsofDeerFlat)

Website FriendsofDeerFlat.org

*Bob & Kathy Christensen
Newsletter Editors*

President's Corner by Rex Hanson

Happy Autumn Everyone!

So far in 2022, our biggest news occurred on May 16 when the Deer Flat Visitor Center re-opened after 2 years of Covid closure! Although our trails and lake remained open to visitors, the Center was not available for many of our traditional activities. However, work by Refuge staff and Friends volunteers continued, so now is your chance to come to the Visitor Center with your families and see the renovated KidSpace area - including seasonal mural displays by local artist Jolene Edwards. Of course, mask and distance precautions are still advisable depending on your circumstances.

Also note that Sept 30 was the end of our fiscal year, and we are seeking nominations for our 2022-2023 Board & Board Officers. Nominations are due before our next Board meeting on Oct 20 and elections will be held via email in November. Joining our Board is a good chance for Friends members to get more involved in our management to propose, guide and volunteer for our activities. Questions/RSVP to friendsofdfwr@gmail.com.

Two Osprey Chicks with Parent (2022 Nesting Season)



Technology

A few items to note about our "techy" Refuge:

Wi-Fi Service - This service at the Refuge has been upgraded with 10 times the previous speed! Members can access via request at the visitor center reception desk. We are considering free public Wi-Fi after we test the service needed for our other projects.

Osprey Webcam - Our new camera installed in 2021 worked very well for a few weeks but is now frequently failing to transmit the images. If you are knowledgeable about Wi-Fi cameras, please let us know and join the troubleshooting! The ospreys successfully fledged/raised two chicks this past summer (see page 1).

Weather Station - We maintain a weather station which can be accessed by the public at:

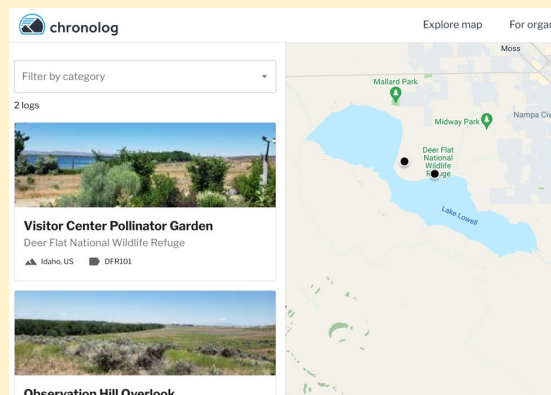
<https://ambientweather.net/devices/public/85eaea2c0f5f6f78edad218bd824ff65?embed=true>

If you are planning a visit to the Refuge, it might be a good idea to check the weather first - not always as ideal as in the photo below!



Chronolog - One of many fun activities at the Refuge is to take landscape photos from our two Chronolog stations. Place your camera at the Chronolog sites, take and upload a photo of the scene and then check out the time lapse images at this website:

<https://www.chronolog.io/project/DFR>



Update on Pollinator Garden & Garden Bricks – by *Tricia Matthews*

Funds from an Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation grant, along with various donations, will enable a 30 by 50-foot expansion of the pollinator garden located behind the Visitors Center and east of the existing garden. Ground-breaking activities by volunteers and refuge staff (to remove weeds, repair sprinklers and churn up the dirt) occurred August and September. During the last week of September, volunteers helped rake out weeds and level the ground, followed by placement of pathways. A 10 by 12-foot cedar pergola has been ordered and is planned to be assembled by volunteers sometime in October. Once the pergola is installed, pavers, a picnic table, interpretive signage, bench, and lots of native plants will follow—to turn the space into an attractive and enjoyable garden. If you would like to help with renovations of the garden contact Tricia Matthews at idadgal@gmail.com.

The Fall brick order was submitted on Sept. 23rd and is scheduled to be shipped on Oct. 17th. Later in October, fourteen new bricks will be placed in the existing pollinator garden.



New
Project

Litter-Lift on Lower Dam

The Friends have taken on a new project. We have coordinated with Canyon County to conduct a periodic litter-lift along the highway which crosses Lake Lowell's Lower Dam. The first effort was a great success despite gale-force winds.

Thank you volunteers: Mary Jo Shumacher, Mike Ferdinand, Linda Wentz, Leah Parsons, Janie Ganzkow, Terri Bonstrom, Louisa Evers, Cheryl Huizinga, Ina Thompson, Jeanne Muller, David LaTulippe, Kathleen Eastman, and Kathy Lankford!

If you would like to be involved in the next litter lift on the dam, please contact Mary Jo Schumacher at newfs48@gmail.com.



REFUGE HAPPENINGS

by Devyn Hallamore – AmeriCorps Community Conservation Ambassador

The weather is definitely starting to get cooler, which makes it the perfect time to be outside! Make sure to visit the Refuge to see the changing colors and view the migratory birds that will be making their way to the Refuge. Thanks to Visitor Center host volunteers, we are now able to open the Visitor Center every second and fourth Saturday of the month! Plan a Saturday visit to get your questions answered or just to say hello.

With September also came the start of the hunting season. There are bright orange brochures with information about hunting and fishing regulations available at the Visitor Center and at various access points around the Refuge. To all you hunters, have a safe and enjoyable hunt! For other refuge visitors, take precautions when visiting the East and South Side Recreation Areas.

Events Calendar & Volunteer Opportunities

- **Upcoming Events**

- **Urban Wildlife Conservation Day (October 8)** – On the Saturday leading up to National Wildlife Refuge Week, Urban Wildlife Conservation Day highlights the 101 national wildlife refuges located in and around cities that help urban communities maintain a connection with nature. As one of those 101 urban refuges, the Deer Flat team will be celebrating by serving our community through a service project at the Hispanic Cultural Center of Idaho, located in Nampa, Idaho..
- **National Wildlife Refuge Week (October 9-15)** – National Wildlife Refuge Week, observed the second full week of October each year, celebrates refuges that are dedicated to providing vital habitat for thousands of native flora and fauna species around the nation. Visit Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge to discover the various recreation opportunities and local wildlife!
- **Volunteer Appreciation Dinner (October 13, 4-7pm)** – On behalf of refuge staff, we would like to say thank you for all the ways you have contributed to supporting the refuge. Please join us at the Visitor Center for a meal and mingle with fellow Friends, volunteers, and staff. Eddie will be flipping burgers and hot dogs, and we will be having some giveaway prizes for a few lucky attendees! **Please RSVP with Devyn (devyn_hallamore@fws.gov or 208-467-9278 Ext. 17) no later than 10/5.**

Be a Refuge Volunteer



- **Volunteer Opportunities**

- High Priority Volunteer Opportunities
 - **Visitor Center Hosting – Saturdays** (*10am – 4pm Saturdays, ideally one Saturday a month*) We are hoping to be able to re-open the visitor center on all Saturdays throughout the month, but we need your help! If you like wildlife and people, then visitor center hosting may be for you. On Saturdays, two VC hosts work together to greet visitors, answer phones, and help with projects. *Must undergo a background check and commit to a year of service.*
 - **Weekly Work Crew** (*9am – noon every Thursday*) Become part of the Weekly Work Crew to enjoy hands-on, outside projects and a sense of accomplishment from doing your part to improve the refuge for wildlife and people. Join Rob (the Refuge Maintenance Manager) and other volunteers to tackle a variety of projects. To help us plan appropriate activities, ***please sign up*** by emailing deerflat@fws.gov!
- Other Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities
 - **Bird Feeders** (*mid-October to mid-March*) Fall is here and all our birds will love the support in finding some food! If you enjoy birdwatching around the Visitor Center, don't pass up this opportunity to be able to fill the feeders and see the birds enjoying a meal. If you would like to be involved, contact Mike Ferdinand at meferdinand@centurylink.net.
 - **National Public Lands Day** (*October 22, 12noon – 3pm*) The season may be over for tomatoes, but you can still come in for a day of planting sagebrush and other shrubs. The Friends of Deer Flat will provide drinks and snacks, all you need to do is bring the energy! (Limited gloves and shovels available; bring your own if you can). To RSVP or for more information contact Bob Christensen at rcloydchris@gmail.com.
 - **Weed Warriors** (*September – October, Wednesdays, 9am – 12pm*) Not a fan of those “goat heads” getting into your shoes, bike tires, or pet’s fur? Join the weed warriors in removing/spraying puncture vines and other invasive species from the trails!



Reprinted from the Second Issue of "The Grebe"

November/December 2006 Vol 1, No. 2

Changing Seasons at the Refuge

As summer wound down the mudflats that are so inviting to the local and migrating birds emerged

as the water level of the lake fell. At the lower

dam in August, a Snowy Plover was found. Snowy Plovers are rarely found in Idaho. They live and breed along the coast. What a great find!

In late September the geese and ducks started arriving in large numbers,



Snowy Plover

and hunters started staking out their favorite spots hoping for a successful hunt. Upland game birds are not stocked at the Refuge but bird dogs can help locate the Quail and Pheasants that are hiding. Duck numbers usually peak in December so hunters will be busy for the next few months.



The fishing season has come to an end at the lake for everyone but the diehard fisherman. Only non-motorized boat can be used in search of bass or catfish.

The Refuge has much to offer to everyone who lives in the area. Fall is a great time to get out spend time at the Refuge, whether biking, hunting, fishing or just wildlife watching.

It's your Refuge, if you don't use it, who will?

The Grebe's Nest Nature Store

by Becky Hanson – Treasurer

The nature store is open only during select hours. These hours are entirely dependent on the availability of qualified volunteers during the week and on Saturday. As a front desk volunteer, if you are interested in being qualified to sell merchandise from the store, it only takes a few minutes of training—on how to use the new Square device (which takes credit/debit cards), operating the new iPad, plus signing the volunteer agreement between the Friends of DFWR and yourself. We have great hopes of adding more items of interest for sale before the holidays and beyond. If you are at the visitor center, check out our merchandise. Suggestions for new inventory are always welcome!

Bitterns, Herons and Egrets at Deer Flat NWR



Heron Rookery

These species are generally categorized as large “Wading Birds.” They have long legs, long necks and long stout bills for stalking and catching food in shallow water. Graceful crests and plumes adorn the heads of some species in breeding season.

At Deer Flat NWR the Great Blue Heron is the most common of these species, and even abundant during the summer months. The Great Egret, Snowy Egret and Black-crowned Night Heron are also quite common during specific seasons. However, all these species are generally absent during the wintertime when snow and ice obscure their prey.

Hérons and egrets are known to be colonial nesters—nesting in rookeries. At Lake Lowell these birds build their nests in tall cottonwood trees on the south side of the lake. Several islands in the Snake River sector of the Refuge also harbor nesting colonies of these large birds. They feed abundantly on fish from Lake Lowell and the Snake River. They also forage in wetlands and wet pastures for amphibians, large insects and occasional small rodents.

Of lesser abundance, and even rarely, one might catch a glimpse of a solitary American Bittern in a clump of cattails or a flock of wandering Cattle Egrets (non-natives) feeding in an adjacent field.



Top: Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret
 Bottom: Black-crowned Night Heron, American Bittern, Cattle Egret
 (all photos are stock images)

The following is an account by Denise Hughes from a 2012 issue of *The Grebe*.

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The One That Didn't Get Away!



A few weeks ago, I had an opportunity to watch a Great Blue Heron catch a yellow perch at the Lower Dam. The heron took almost 15 minutes preparing the fish before it ate the perch. It walked to the top of the berm and threw the fish to the ground. Then it speared the fish and returned to the water. The heron did this 4 or 5 times. Then it swallowed the fish whole. It was fascinating to watch the drama! When the heron was finished eating, it fluffed its feathers and returned to fishing. The people fishing up the canal didn't see the fish that got past them.....Denise

Fifth Annual Shrub Planting At Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge

The Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Project, adjacent to the Visitor Center at Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge, is advancing to the fifth season.

**The event will take place on Saturday afternoon,
October 22nd, from Noon to 3:00 p.m.**

The Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge are leading out on this project. We will be working together with other volunteers to plant about 1,200 big sagebrush, 100 four-wing saltbush, and 100 rabbitbrush seedlings. The designated plot will have already been pre-seeded with perennial bunchgrasses and desert forbs.

Finishing this work in a three-hour planting session will require at least 50 volunteers, armed with shovels, gloves and lots of energy. Volunteers are advised to bring their own shovels and gloves if possible and come dressed for the weather.¹

We are counting on you!

If you, your group, or family would like to join us to help plant on Oct. 22nd, please txt Bob Christensen at 208-371-0521 or email at rcloydchris@gmail.com

We request that you pre-register, but show-ups are welcome.

The Friends group will furnish drinks and snacks during the planting fun. Some extra shovels and gloves will also be available.



Shrub Planting October 2021

¹ All volunteers will be required to fill out and sign Refuge volunteer forms.

KidSpace Update

- by Becky Hanson and Mary Jo Schumacher

The KidSpace upgrade is finished and getting rave reviews from our visitors, young and old! The brighter colors and LED lighting have really made it an inviting space. The microscope now has viewable slides. One wall surface has magnetic paint and currently challenges kids to put magnets for the Lifecycle of Plants into chronological order. Some exhibits are now labeled in both Spanish and English. Kinetic sand and newly mounted animal tracks provide plenty of entertainment at the sandbox. The KidSpace library has new books with both Spanish and English language editions.



The KidSpace currently features a beautiful painting depicting the summer flora and fauna of the Refuge. Jolene Edwards is the amazing artist who painted this mural and three others. Each depicts one of the four seasons, featuring a different area of the Refuge along with native flora and fauna. The paintings will be changed out with the corresponding season, reflecting the plants, animals, and human visitors that you might see if visiting the Refuge at that particular time of year.



Chris Miller, a local software engineer, has developed educational software presentations specific to the plants and animals that are found at Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge. Cindy Clark, a Friend's member and educational collaborator, has developed several age-appropriate quiz exercises for the display. Thank you, Cindy! All programming is in Spanish as well as English and we want to thank Adriana Melendez for helping us with this. Thanks also to Devyn Hallamore for providing us with the animal photos we are using in each quiz. The interactive Elo touch screen monitor is now up and running in the KidSpace.

Thank you to everyone on the Friends' board, and local businesses (Rostock and Caxton's), who contributed their ideas, time, and labor toward this project. It was completed during the 1½ years of the Covid pandemic—despite the mask requirements, social distancing, and a closed Visitor Center.

Renovation of the KidSpace was made possible by a \$9,021 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

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URBAN
PLAN

UPDATE ON URBAN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Please refer to our article in this past summer's issue of *The Grebe* for a detailed explanation of how Deer Flat NWR is integrating the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program.

Update: Deer Flat NWR is continuing to collaborate with the community to co-design and co-implement the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program. As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month (*September 15 – October 15*), Friends and the Refuge are listening to Hispanic and Latinx voices so that we can better know and relate to our community. One way Refuge staff have done this recently is through continued meetings with the Hispanic Cultural Center of Idaho, who they have collaborated with to plan a service project that Friends will participate in for Urban Wildlife Conservation Day.

Refuge staff are also in the midst of revising the Refuge's 7th-grade environmental education program in partnership with the Caldwell School District. Friends have supported this effort by providing stipends for participating teachers who will collaborate with Refuge staff in a workshop to revise the program for maximum impact with all students (of which 60% are Hispanic/Latino), and to inspire continued engagement with the Refuge.



Urban Mule Deer

Membership News

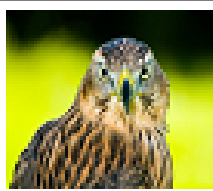
Now is the time to renew your membership for the coming year. If you are a current member and know someone who loves nature, consider gifting a 2023 membership to them.

We have many volunteer and recreational opportunities available. Volunteering can take on many forms. Covering the desk at the Refuge Visitor Center on Saturdays is a great way to meet people and help them to be more informed about the Refuge. *Please consider volunteering!*

We currently have about 114 members and our goal is to increase our membership by at least 10% this next year! Please help us in this endeavor.

If you are unsure of your membership status you can email us at friendsofdfwr@gmail.com. A membership application is attached below.

A membership of \$100 or more will entitle you to receive an engraved brick in the pollinator garden. The next order for bricks will be this next spring (see the following page).

<p style="text-align: center;">Yes!</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I want to be a member</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Renew my Membership</p> <p>Just copy this page, complete the requested information, cut along dotted line above form, and mail it with your annual dues to:</p> <p>Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge 13751 Upper Embankment Road Nampa ID 83686</p> <hr/> <p>Name _____</p> <hr/> <p>Address _____</p> <hr/> <p>City/State /Zip _____</p> <hr/> <p>Phone _____</p> <hr/> <p>Email _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Annual Membership Levels (Please mark one)</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>___ Owl (Senior or student)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>___ Deer (individual)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>___ Fox (family)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>___ Osprey</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>___ Eagle</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>___ Goldeneye</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$500</td> </tr> </table>	___ Owl (Senior or student)	\$ 10	___ Deer (individual)	\$ 15	___ Fox (family)	\$ 25	___ Osprey	\$ 50	___ Eagle	\$100	___ Goldeneye	\$500		<p style="text-align: center;">Yes!</p> <p>I want to be involved.</p> <p>Please mark all areas of interest and ways you'd like to participate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat Restoration <input type="checkbox"/> Staffing the Bookstore <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing events <input type="checkbox"/> Litter Lifts <input type="checkbox"/> Weed Eradication <input type="checkbox"/> Project Participation <input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Documentation of Events and Activities <input type="checkbox"/> Garden Enhancement <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity / Public Relations <input type="checkbox"/> Grant Writing <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising <input type="checkbox"/> Community Outreach <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Directors <input type="checkbox"/> Advisory on specific policies, protocols and processes. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____
___ Owl (Senior or student)	\$ 10													
___ Deer (individual)	\$ 15													
___ Fox (family)	\$ 25													
___ Osprey	\$ 50													
___ Eagle	\$100													
___ Goldeneye	\$500													
<p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">Join the Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge</p>														

Engraved Bricks Order Form

Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge are selling engraved bricks to help support the many activities at the Refuge. Your brick will be made a permanent part of the Pollinator Garden located just behind the Refuge Visitor Center.

Whether you are honoring a friend or family member, or celebrating a special occasion, our engraved bricks make a wonderful and lasting gift.



Each brick is 4" x 8," and may contain up to three engraved lines OR one symbol.

Lettering may be a maximum of 19 characters and/or spaces per line.

Inquire at friendsofdfwr@gmail.com about available symbols.

Brick price is \$50 for one; or \$45 each for two or more bricks.

You are also eligible for one FREE brick for each \$100 Friends membership.

Make check or money order payable to and mail to:
Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge (c/o Bricks)
13751 Upper Embankment Road, Nampa, ID 83686

Engraving information (please print)

Line1 _____

Line 2 _____

Line 3 _____

Your information

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____