



The Grebe



friends of
Deer Flat
National Wildlife Refuge

Note from our President

Dear Friends of Deer Flat,

I hope this letter finds you well. One of the key documents that govern our operations and values is our bylaws. These bylaws serve as the framework for how we operate, make decisions, and fulfill our mission. Your input and perspective are incredibly valued in ensuring that our bylaws accurately reflect the needs and aspirations of our community.

We recently embarked on a comprehensive review of our bylaws to ensure they are up-to-date, effective, and aligned with best practices in nonprofit governance. This review process presents a valuable opportunity for us to strengthen our organization and enhance our ability to serve our mission and community.

I am writing to invite you to carefully [review the copy of proposed revised bylaws](#) and provide your feedback, suggestions, and any proposed amendments by April 15.

Your input will be carefully considered by our Board of Directors as we work towards finalizing updated bylaws. Your participation in this process is vital to the continued success and relevance of the Friends of Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge. Thank you in advance for your time, commitment, and dedication to our shared mission.

Please do not hesitate to by email if you have any questions or need further information regarding the bylaws review process. I look forward to your valuable contributions and the positive impact they will have on our organization.

Warm regards,

Rebecca Flock
President, Friends of Deer Flat
National Wildlife Refuge

In this newsletter
you can expect:

Refuge Updates

Upcoming
Events

Membership
News

Board Updates

Volunteer
Opportunities

Expanding
Leadership

Upcoming Events

Spring Litter Lift

April 20th from 9am to noon - [Event Page](#)

We will be picking up litter on April 20th from 9am to 12noon. Your help will be much appreciated.

Meet at the North end of the Lower Dam. You may park at the boat launch area. We will be working from Orchard and Riverside to Lake Shore and Riverside. Please bring your leather gloves and litter grabbers. Rakes will be helpful in some areas. This is a 2-mile stretch of highway. Don't forget your water bottles!

Canyon County Highway District 4 will provide orange garbage bags and safety vests. Please take the time to watch [this video](#) about safety when picking up litter on the highway.

Earth Day Film Screening

You can attend the film festival at either of our two screenings: **Friday, April 19th from 6:00-7:30 PM and Saturday, April 20th from 1:00-2:30PM**. Films will be played in the auditorium inside the Refuge Visitor Center.

[Event Page](#)

Earth Day Celebration & Panel

Flying M (Nampa) and Citizens Climate Lobby are collaborating to put on an Earth Day celebration and panel.

**Flying M on April 27th.
9 AM-1 PM and the panel will be at 11AM.**
[Event Page](#)

Idaho Gives

April 29 - May 2

Latino Advocacy Week Kickoff Event

This event is an opportunity for community members to learn about air pollution in our local area and strategies for advocating for clean air. Join us with El Aire Que Respiramos for a day of information sessions, discussions, and a guided walk to learn about the air we breathe! More details to come.

May 18, 9:30am-2pm.

Latino Conservation Week

September 14 - 22

Urban Wildlife Observation Day

First week of October

Lights Out – Spring Migratory Bird Season

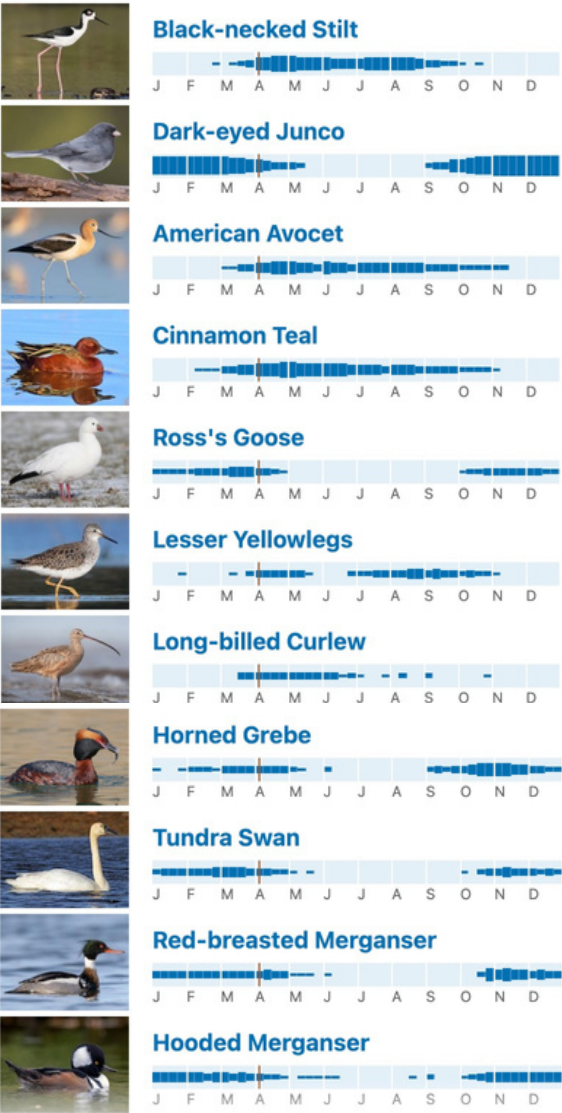
Every spring and fall, billions of birds migrate through the US, mostly at night. Birds must contend with a dramatically increasing but still largely unrecognized threat: light pollution. Light attracts and disorients migrating birds, confusing and exhausting them.

How can you help? Turn off or dim non-essential lighting from 11 PM until 6 AM during critical migration periods. Turning off lights dramatically reduces hazards, allowing birds to safely proceed with their migratory journeys. Spring migration runs from approximately Mar 1-Jun 15th. View migration traffic [here](#).

Expected nocturnal migrants

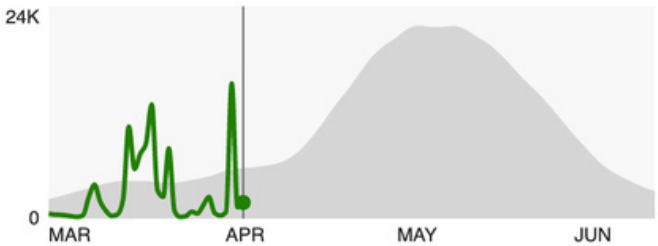
POWERED BY EBIRD

Nocturnally migrating species most likely to arrive or depart this region at this time of year, based on frequency of observations



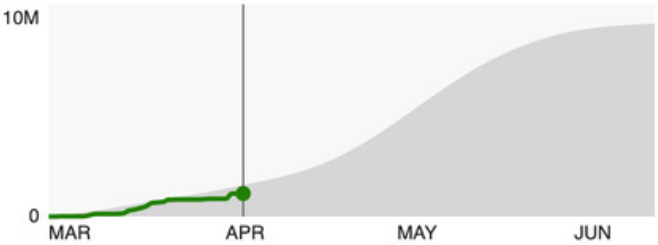
And so far this season...

Birds in flight (nightly avg.) ■ Spring 2024 ■ Historic



During spring migration, most birds pass through the contiguous U.S. from mid-April to mid-May.

Total birds crossed ■ Spring 2024 ■ Historic



This is the estimated total number of birds that have fully crossed this region. The curve rises quickly during peak migration and levels off at the end of the season.

from <https://dashboard.birdcast.info/region/US-ID-027>

Friends of Deer Flat Volunteer Opportunities

Social Media

Do you have an interest in social media and the ability to post on Instagram and/or Facebook about once a week? We would like to gather a small team to share that duty.

Volunteer & Event Support

Organize events, workshops, and activities that enhance connection to Refuge. Bring your creativity and enthusiasm to create welcoming experiences for both prospective and dedicated members.

Committee Chairs

The Friends are currently seeking additional committee chairs and champions to help move forward strategic projects, attend community gatherings, and support events.

Submissions

Call for submissions. Please send us your photos, written narratives, and recommendations for informational content to the newsletter.

Hospitality and Refreshment Manager

Coordinate hospitality and refreshments at refuge events, meetings, and conferences. This role combines elements of event planning, customer service, and logistics to ensure that all attendees have a positive and enjoyable experience.

Advocacy

Coordinate efforts to influence public opinion, policies, and legislation in line with the Friend's mission to support the Refuge. Oversee strategic engagement with policymakers and the community to drive positive change.

Community Engagement

Focus group efforts to promote dialogue, participation, and collaboration with Treasure Valley community members, businesses, and historically marginalized populations. Attend community gatherings on behalf of the Friends. ie. City Council, Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Home-Owners Associations,

Champion a Project

Bring your expertise to make a meaningful impact.

- **OspreyCam and Tech Support:** Operate and maintain live streaming equipment and cameras. Ensure the livestreams run smoothly and troubleshoot any technical issues that may arise. Capture engaging and educational moments.
 - **Builder:** help the Nature Store expansion through the architectural design phase. Those with experience with building and design would be especially well suited. (Actively Seeking a Representative)
 - **Other:** If you are enthusiastic about using your skills to contribute to positive change in the community, we encourage you to reach out.
-

NEW NOTECARDS IN THE GREBE'S NEST

by Bob Christensen and Mary Jo Schumacher

The Friends of DFNWR will be adding a new set of note cards for purchase in their nature store, The Grebes Nest. The new set will feature a western grebe and chick, illustrated by Bryce Robinson, raptor biologist and professional ornithological illustrator.

In 2015-2016 Bryce was a graduate student at Boise State University. During this period, he was asked to present a program at the Refuge on his master's research at the monthly meeting of the Southwestern Idaho Birders Association. His presentation addressed his studies of the prey selection of gyrfalcons in Alaska. It was also made known at that time that Bryce was an excellent bird illustrator.

The Friends board had been looking for someone to produce an art piece which they could use to reward board members who had faithfully served, but who were subsequently leaving the board. Bryce was contacted and commissioned to produce an artist rendition of the western grebe. The illustration above was the result. The original 11" by 14" artwork is hanging in the refuge visitor center.

Bryce is now a Ph.D. candidate at Cornell University and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, where his research focuses on the evolution of diversity in the Red-tailed Hawk.

We are very grateful to Bryce for allowing us to use this beautiful illustration of the Western Grebe. The Western Grebe is the Friends logo, and we use it for many of the items we sell in the nature store.

Note: Other notecards featuring the artwork of Jerry Wilda, a long-time local wildlife artist, will continue to be available in the nature store: Bald Eagle, Kingfisher, Meadow Lark, Marsh Wren, Bullock Oriol, White-tailed Deer, Canada Goose, Rainbow Trout, and Yellow-headed Blackbird.



Illustration by Bryce Robinson
Western Grebe with Chick

Refuge Happenings

by Devyn Hallamore



Earth Day Film Festival

We're getting excited about celebrating Earth Day with you!

Join us for a captivating Earth Day Film Festival featuring short documentary films that highlight community conservation projects and celebrate the power of local action in addressing environmental challenges. These stories of grassroots efforts to care for our planet showcase how people with different backgrounds come together to support our natural resources. This event is free and open to all ages.

You can attend the film festival at either of our two screenings: Friday, April 19th from 6:00-7:30 PM MST and Saturday, April 20th from 1:00-2:30PM MST. Films will be played in the auditorium inside the Refuge Visitor Center (13751 Upper Embankment Road, Nampa, ID 83686). Auditorium seating is limited and will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Information and updates can be found on the [**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's events page**](#) and on the [**Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge's Facebook page**](#).

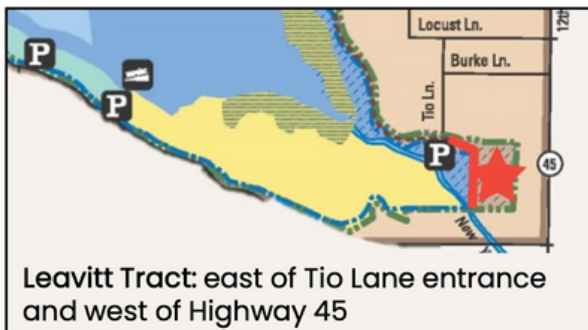


The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to providing access to these events for all participants. Please direct all requests for accommodations to DeerFlat@fws.gov or (208) 467-9278 at least one week before the event.



Spring Prescribed Fire at Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will be conducting prescribed burns on up to 85 acres of land at Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge. Burns will happen when weather conditions are favorable. Roads and public areas may be temporarily closed during these burns. Smoke will be visible during and after the controlled burn.



- ★ Prescribed Burn Sites
- Temporary Trail Closures: the Upper Dam and East Dike Trail will be closed during burns.

Why prescribed burns?

Controlled fire improves wildlife habitat, reduces invasive species and decreases wildfire risk. These burns will improve the success of projects to restore emergent wetland habitat and will help native plants thrive.



Learn more about how the Service uses fire as a land management tool:

www.fws.gov/story/managing-fire

For updates, please visit:



www.fws.gov/refuge/deer-flat



www.facebook.com/DeerFlatNWR

Questions?



208-467-9278



DeerFlat@fws.gov



**NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
REFUGE SYSTEM**

About Prescribed Burns

It might seem counterintuitive, but fire can be a valuable tool for land management! Some benefits of a controlled burn include:

- **Weed control:** Controlled burns can help remove unwanted weeds and brush, giving native plants a fighting chance. It can also help prevent or control certain diseases and insect infestations.
- **Wildfire hazard reduction:** Reduces the amount of fuel (leaves, grasses and twigs) on the ground, which can help prevent catastrophic wildfires in the area.
- **Perpetuate fire-dependent species:** Many plant and animal species are dependent on periodic fire to create an ecosystem suitable for their growth and reproduction.

By carefully using these burns, land managers can promote a healthy ecosystem!

P.S. Don't try this at home! Controlled burns require careful planning and execution by professionals.

Updates on prescribed burns and temporary closures will be found on the [**Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge's homepage**](#) and [**Facebook page**](#).

News from Deer Flat Wildlife National Refuge

(from Deer Flat Volunteer Spring Newsletter)

SPRINGTIME is here and with it come many recreational opportunities! Boating season starts on April 15 (watch out for the "no wake" buoys!), Gotts Point Trail and Murphy's Neck have now reopened, and the Lower Dam Recreational Area will open on April 15. Keep an eye on the osprey nests! Ospreys typically start feeding nestlings by the end of April.

High Priority Volunteer Opportunities:

Think you might not have the skills needed to help? Don't worry! Training is provided.

Sign Crew (time TBD) The refuge is looking forward to installing more welcoming, bilingual refuge boundary signs in the spring, and we need your help putting them up! No experience necessary.

Bee Box Cleaning (1-2 hours) Bee boxes provide nesting habitat for native pollinators. Help the pollinators out by cleaning away old nesting material and preparing the bee boxes for the new season! One volunteer needed, no experience necessary.

Litter Lead & Helpers (flexible) Keep our refuge clean and safe for wildlife and visitors by clearing out litter. Let us know if you are interested in the lead role or in volunteering to help on work days.

Trail Crew (time TBD) We are recruiting a crew of volunteers to meet regularly during spring, summer, and fall to take on various projects along trails and refuge access points. Possible projects would include minor trail repairs, adding and maintaining mile markers, removing noxious weeds, and picking up litter. No experience necessary, but volunteers that are handy and work well on a team would be appreciated.

Other Volunteer Opportunities:

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 worker) and other volunteers to tackle a variety of projects.

BARK Ranger (1-2 hours weekly) Have a furry friend that loves to go on walks? Become a BARK Ranger to walk the trails with your dog and teach others how they can be safe and respectful when visiting the refuge with pets! You'll get a bandana, a certificate, and your pup can be featured on our social media.

Visitor Counters (flexible) Help calibrate existing vehicle and trail counters installed at the refuge. Volunteers will drive to designated refuge access points, sit in place for a few hours, and record all vehicles and/or people that pass the counter while they are there.

To sign up or find out more, contact the Volunteer Coordinator at deerflat@fws.gov or (208) 467-9278.

2024 CANYON COUNTY City Nature Challenge

A global effort to celebrate and document biodiversity in communities across the globe by discovering and recording the species found in our yards, neighborhoods, parks, sidewalks and open spaces.

APRIL 26 - 29, 2024

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

- Step 1:** Mark your calendar to get outside April 26-29.
- Step 2:** Download the iNaturalist app & make an account.
- Step 3:** Take photos of WILD plants, animals and/or fungi anywhere in Canyon County (no people, pets or potted plants).
- Step 4:** Upload your observations to share with the iNaturalist community.
- Step 5:** (Optional) Help identify species or learn more as your discoveries are identified by the iNaturalist community April 30-May 5.

MORE INFO:

Visit citynaturechallenge.org or contact Allyson Turner, ally_turner@fws.gov



Photo credit: USFWS



The City Nature Challenge is organized globally by the California Academy of Sciences and the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Smartweed

(Reprinted from the second newsletter published by the Friends Nov-Dec 2006)

If you have spent any time at the Refuge during the past several months, you will have seen the green plants that are growing along the shoreline around the perimeter of the lake. The plant is *Polygonum* spp., more commonly known as Smartweed. It is part of the Buckwheat family and is a native to North America.

Smartweed is a perennial plant that forms dense colonies in shallow water or moist soils and can grow to 4 or 5 feet tall. Stems are jointed or have swollen leaf nodes that are surrounded by a tubular sheath. Roots can develop from the leaf nodes. Leaves are alternate, lance-shaped up to 4 inches long but usually less than 1/2 inch wide. Flowers are on spikes at the end of stems (often numerous spikes on the same plant). Flowers begin as greenish then turn whitish or a light pink in color as they mature. Fruits are flat, triangular (1/8 inch), dark brown to black. Submerged portions of all aquatic plants provide habitats for many micro and macro invertebrates. These invertebrates in turn are used as food by fish and other wildlife species (e.g. amphibians, reptiles, ducks, etc).

After aquatic plants die, their decomposition by bacteria and fungi provides food for many aquatic invertebrates. Smartweed seeds are heavily consumed by ducks, small birds, and small mammals. Each plant produces about 3,000 seeds. The next time you are at the Refuge take a few minutes to scan the smartweed; there is no telling what you will find.



Outcome of Public Hearing

re: LAKEVIEW SUBDIVISION (155 homes at Midway & Iowa) before CITY COUNCIL on
MARCH 18, 2024

Hi Rebecca, Friends and friends of Friends,

I want to take a moment and give a heartfelt thank you to all who wrote letters to the City, emailed, attended the meeting and/or spoke and opposed the Lakeview subdivision project. This project would have been a mere 1750 feet of Lake Lowell and abut the Deer Flat Refuge. Both the City and Canyon County Principal planners wrote letters opposing the project due to lack of buffer areas around Lake Lowell, the Boise River and "sensitive habitat areas" from dense development. As a reminder, the developer wanted 3 times the number of homes permitted by the "Agriculture" zoning. In the end and after hours of residents testifying and opposing the project, the City denied the annexation and the subdivision in its entirety. One of the City Councilmembers (Victor Rodriguez) was very impressed by the support from the residents for the Deer Flat Refuge, the birds and wildlife.

On a separate note, at the last Friends meeting, some of you asked me about the SunRoc Concrete plant development (across the street from existing homes and also would have caused problems for the Warhawk Museum and Nampa airport). That was also an item on the agenda and it too failed. Their CUP (Conditional Use Permit) was denied.

All GREAT news for the residents of Nampa (and the birds and wildlife). And thank you again and again to all who were able to help with these victories.

Regards,
Linda Steele
LindaSteele.RE@gmail.com

Idaho Gives April 29 – May 2, 2024

Have you dreamed of making history? Of course, we all have. And now we have a chance to be a part of your community's day of giving - an opportunity to unite our community around causes in which we truly believe and help nonprofit organizations connect to the larger community.

We need your help! Please join our campaign and help us reach our goal of 50 individual donors! We need you to tell your friends and family members about the important work we do and ask them to join us in helping to make a difference.

Get ready to give! On April 29 - May 2, visit idahogives.org and make a donation to us and/or to any of the great participating nonprofit organizations in your community. All giving will end at 11:59PM on May 2, so make sure to get your gift in on time!

Questions? If you have any questions or would like more information, let us know at friendsofdfwr@gmail.com. Thank you in advance for your generosity to the Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge!



**APRIL 29 –
MAY 2, 2024**

Visit [IdahoGives.org](https://idahogives.org) for more information.

Idaho Gives – a program of the Idaho Nonprofit Center – is designed to bring the state together, raising money and awareness for Idaho nonprofits.

Membership News

Renew Now!

If you have not done so yet, now is the time to renew your membership for the current year. If you are a current member and know someone who loves nature, consider gifting a 2024 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!

Our goal is to increase our membership by at least 10% this year! Please help us in this endeavor.

If you are unsure of your membership status you can email us at friendsofdfwr@gmail.com.

[Paypal link](#)

Engraved Commemorative Bricks

Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge offer engraved bricks to help support Friends' 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.

The 2024 Brick order will be placed at the end of April

[Brick Order Form](#)



friends of
Deer Flat
National 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

Rebecca Flock, President
Spencer Hawkins, Vice President
Diana Shafer, Secretary
McKenna Hawkins, Treasurer
Mary Jo Schumacher, Member
Rex Hanson, Member
Becky Hanson, Member

Thank you for your support!

CONTACT INFO	EMAIL: FRIENDSOFDfWR@GMAIL.COM
Facebook: www.facebook.com/ FriendsofDeerFlat Website FriendsofDeerFlat.org	13751 Upper Embankment Rd Nampa ID 83686
