



E. Bristol

The Talon

Rocky Mountain Arsenal and Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuges Volunteer Newsletter
July/August 2006

Inside this issue:

New Photo Blind	2
Calendar of Events	2
Refuge Update	4
Farwell	4
RMANWR Fire Crew	4
Welcome	4

Wild Things 2006



You probably are all aware by now that approximately 7,400 acres of land soon will be added to the National Wildlife Refuge System and Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge by the end of September 2006 through the deletion and transfer process. The acquisition of the land will more than double the current size of the Refuge from 5,000 acres to more than 12,000 acres. This transfer of land is timely as it practically coincides with the celebration of National Wildlife Refuge Week scheduled for the week of October 9 – 14.

To mark this historic occasion, the Service will host “Wild Things 2006”, a special public event on Saturday, October 14 from 1:00 – 6:00 pm. Over the past several years, our special public events have been downsized considerably due to budgets and staffing resources, however, this will be the largest parcel of land the Service at RMANWR will receive, so it deserves a larger celebration!

We are underway with planning a very special event for all to enjoy, but we won’t be able to pull it off without the help and involvement of our fantastic volunteers!

More details about the event will be announced at the next volunteer meeting. So save the date and mark your calendars – we need you! If you will be available to help us with “Wild Things 2006”, please call Susan Echelberger at (303) 289-0366.

Quotable Quotes

“Volunteer are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience and just plain love for one another”

Emma Bombeck

Visit our website

www.fws.gov/rockymountainarsenal/

Calendar of Events

* **Plant Identification Workshop** *
* **When:** Saturday, July 29 at 9:30 am *
* **Where:** Visitor Center *
* Learn to identify some Refuge *
* plants on this colorful workshop *
* lead by Jennifer Taylor. *

* **August Volunteer Meeting** *
* **When:** Thursday, August 31 at 7 pm *
* **Where:** Visitor Center *
* ****Please note the August *
* volunteer meeting has been *
* changed to accommodate the special *
* fishing programs.*** *

Volunteers Make the World a Better Place!



For those of you who were able to attend the 17th Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event, thank you for showing your support of your fellow volunteers! Those of you who were unable to attend the event, we missed you. The afternoon included a fantastic barbeque, socialization, and an exciting Refuge tour. As a Refuge volunteer, you contribute a significant amount of time to the various programs we offer at Rocky Mountain Arsenal and Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuges and without the continuing support of our most valuable asset, our volunteers, we would not be able to accomplish all that we do. Thank you for making the world a better place!

Get to know someone...



Kate Riegle can be found out in the field this summer performing some important field work. For the remainder of the summer, Kate will treat and map noxious weeds, such as houndstoune, and perform weed mapping, using GPS technology. If you see Kate this summer, introduce yourself.

If you are interested in assisting with the Refuge's weed control effort please contact Lorenz Sollman at (303) 289-0927.



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and The Rocky Mountain Arsenal Wildlife Society have received grants to fund the materials for the construction of a mobile photography blind. If you are interested in assisting with the construction of this unique blind please contact Jeannine at (303) 289-0471, construction is anticipated to begin in August.

Thank You!

The Refuge would like to extend a special “*Thank You*” to Brian Nielson of Scout Troop 727 and all of his assistants for their hard work on the construction of the Refuge’s newest trail, the North Ladora Dam connector trail. The troop worked extremely hard to complete Brian’s eagle scout project. Next time you are out on the Refuge’s trails be sure you take a walk on our newest trail.



The Refuge is home to one of the smallest owl species, burrowing owls. These spindly-legged owls weigh only five or six ounces and are about 10 inches tall. Unlike most owls that only hunt at night, burrowing owls also hunt during the day. Burrowing owls mostly eat small mammals such as moles and mice during late spring and early summer. Later they switch to insects, especially grasshoppers and beetles. They also prey on birds, amphibians and reptiles that are in the area. Refuge biologist have surveyed 55 burrowing owl nests on-site. The chicks have left the nest but will remain nearby, so keep your eyes on the burrows you might spot one of these unique little raptors!



The Refuge is home to 2 bald eaglets! These majestic birds of prey have been spotted out of their nest. Next time you are out and about, keep your eyes to the sky and you might spot one of these creatures.

We need you!

Volunteers are needed to assist with staffing an information booth at Bass Pro Shop’s exciting fall hunting classic August 25–27.

Friday, August 25: 9 am-2 pm and 2 pm-7 pm
Saturday, August 26: 9 am-2 pm and 2 pm-7 pm
Sunday, August 27: 10 am-1 pm and 1 pm-5 pm

If you are able to assist with this fun-filled event, please contact Jeannine at (303) 289-0471.

Coming this Fall



This past year approximately 4,500 metro-area students and teachers participated in on-site environmental education (EE) programs. Since the Refuge anticipates being able to go full steam ahead this fall with EE programs, we hope to drastically increase our overall participation and that’s why we need your help! If you are interested in leading EE programs or have any questions about the Refuge’s EE program, please call Stacy at (303) 289-0931.

WELCOME

The staff would like to extend a warm welcome to the newest staff member, Larry Maynard. Larry was selected to fill the vacated outdoor recreation planner position. Larry is bilingual and he has worked in the field of eco-tourism and environmental education in Mexico, with the Colorado Division of Wildlife assisting with peregrine falcon studies, and most recently for Glendale Public Library. Stop by and introduce yourself to the newest member of the Refuge family, his office is located in Building 111 room 229, and he can be reached at (303) 289-0864. Welcome aboard Larry!

HAPPY RETIREMENT

After more than 36 years as an employee at Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Pete Gleim, maintenance worker, and friend to all is retiring. Pete has seen a great deal of change at the Arsenal, from Army era to transition into a premier urban wildlife refuge. We wish Pete the best in his retirement!



RMANWR Fire Crew



The RMA fire crew provides wildfire suppression activities on the Refuge and throughout the western part of the US. Currently we have three fire engines, 2 smaller styled engines called type 6 and one larger type 3. They fall into these categories based on tank size and pump capacities. We also contribute personal to the 20 person Mid-plains Type 2 IA Hand Crew. IA means that this crew is capable of breaking up into smaller units to do initial attack (IA) or first response on a new fire. This crew was formed at Quivira NWR in Kansas and is in the same south fire zone of our FWS region. The crew was formed in 2003 as a training platform for FWS employees and interested cooperators. The crew has been called to duty in Colorado, Montana, California, and Utah. The crew is usually out on an assignment for 14 days straight, but can be extended up to 21 days total.

The fire program at RMA currently has 9 wildland firefighters and 4 prescribed-only firefighters. A physical fitness test is what differentiates the two groups; all other training is the same. We have been very busy over the last several years in the number of acres that we have treated since 2003. The crew burned 790 acres in 2005, in 2004 646 acres we burned, and so far in 2006, 858 acres with a plan fall burn of 255 acres. The crew is busy here at RMA, also assisting with prescribed burns at Alamosa/Monte Vista NWR in the San Luis Valley. We have also cooperated with the Colorado State Forest Service with a burn at Stauton State Park this past fall. Most of this prescribed fire activity is for the benefit of the habitat and the wildlife, but some for hazard fuel reduction to prevent dangerous and damaging large wildfires.

Unfortunately, volunteers can not work on a fire, but we can use help in some of our prescribed burn site preparations. Work is usually done throughout the winter into early spring, weather dependant. If you are interested in volunteering for this important task, please contact Lorenz Sollmann at (303) 289-0927.