HOURS AT THE REFUGE

West Side open year round, dawn to dusk.
East Side closed for the Winter.

Prairie Garden Gets an Eagle Facelift

Mike Henderson, along with 18 members of Troop #667, spent 52 hours and $720 planning and implementing the 27th Eagle Scout project at Two Ponds NWR to help restore and improve our native prairie garden in the educational area.

Mike worked long and hard to solicit and gather native plant donations from several local nurseries throughout Arvada. Afterwards, he and his troop spent many hours preparing the garden by removing non-native plant species, eradicating invasive weeds, and heavily watering the soil. Next, they planted over 18 different species of native perennials throughout the garden, to ensure a healthy diversity of flowering plants was represented.

On behalf of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, we are extremely grateful for his troop's efforts and congratulate Mike for achieving his Eagle Badge by effectively serving both his community and the environment. By providing wildlife with better quality habitat as well as teaching people the values of planting native species, Mike's Eagle Scout project is a welcomed and important contribution to the National Wildlife Refuge system; one that will be greatly appreciated by human and wildlife alike for years to come. Well done!

Photo by Seth Beres

Two Ponds Preservation Foundation
P.O. Box 740748
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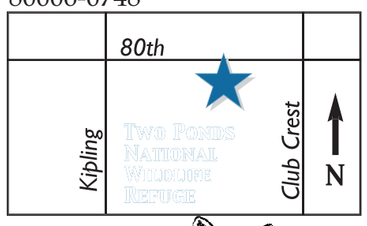

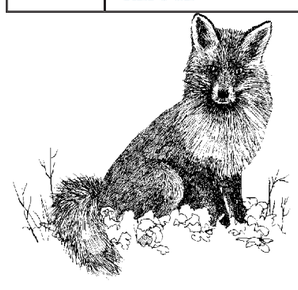

Memberships make great gifts!

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Ripples on the Pond

Newsletter of the Two Ponds Preservation Foundation November 2006

Arvada Harvest Festival

Photo by Seth Beres

On September, 8-10, 2006, Service staff and volunteers from the Two Ponds Preservation Foundation (TPPF) staffed an exhibit as part of the city's annual event. This year, in an extended effort to further collaborate with Majestic View Nature Center, the booths were next to each other. Each exhibit showcased the many roles and services each wildlife resource and its staff provide to the environment and visitors. Volunteer opportunities and accomplishments were also highlighted, and donations were made to the Foundation through the sale of T-shirts. As part of the event, the Service took part in a City sponsored parade. The event was extremely successful, as approximately 7,000 lined the parade route and over 1800 people visited and interacted at the Service's booth throughout the event. Five TPPF volunteers gave a total of 28 hours of service.

New Retaining Wall

Fish and Wildlife Service funding was allocated this year for replacement of the retaining wall that supports a portion of the west shoreline of Marshall Pond. A contractor was selected for the job and work was completed in September. The new wall will make the pond safer to approach and is aesthetically appealing as well.

Weed Invasion

This summer a positive identification was made on a plant that had been concerning Refuge staff for some time. The plant was first observed in a small patch about three years ago and has since spread rapidly. The plant is known as Japanese Knotweed, an invasive plant that forms dense stands of cane-like stems with broad leaves that shade out any competing plants. This plant has become a menace in eastern states where it has taken over habitat making it unsuitable for native plants and wildlife. Japanese Knotweed has a root that can extend eight feet deep and run more than 20 feet laterally. It spreads from the roots or by a very small cutting that is transported to another location. Japanese Knotweed probably escaped from someone's yard where it was likely planted as an ornamental or a visual barrier.

Volunteers helped to remove a large stand of Japanese Knotweed so that the area can be treated with herbicide to prevent reinfestation. Canal companies have been notified about the occurrence of the weed on their property and have also treated the infestations to prevent spread. We still have a lot of work to do to ensure this infestation does not become a serious environmental problem, but because of relatively quick identification and response, successful eradication may be achieved.

Invasive weeds may be the biggest challenge that land managers face across the nation. Two Ponds NWR management has adopted an aggressive approach to weed control in an effort to ensure that native plants, and the wildlife relies on them, thrive.

Photo by Seth Beres

TWO PONDS PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

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NEWSLETTER
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Back in Flight!

The 2007 Colorado Junior Duck Stamp Program has taken wing, and all students K-12 throughout the state are welcome to participate again this year! For a second year in a row, Two Ponds will be the hosting Refuge of Colorado's program, and we hope for continued success by reaching more teachers and kids while exceeding last year's record number of entries.

The Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Contest is a dynamic free art and science program designed to teach wetlands habitat and waterfowl conservation to students in kindergarten through high school. Using scientific and wildlife observation principles, the program helps students communicate visually what they have learned by creating an entry to the Junior Duck Stamp art contest. This non-traditional pairing of subjects brings new interest in both the sciences and arts to students throughout each state. It also crosses cultural, ethnic, social, and geographic boundaries to teach greater awareness of our nation's natural resources.

Preparation for the Junior Duck Stamp contest and involvement in the program requires students to think about and understand the fundamental principles of anatomy and environmental science and can be a valid barometer of a student's grasp of these topics. The program also provides an opportunity for students to learn science and express their knowledge of the beauty, diversity, and interdependence of wildlife artistically. The Junior Duck Stamp contest begins each fall through spring when students submit their artwork to a state coordinator. Students at the state level are judged in four groups according to grade level: Group I: K-3, Group II: 4-6, Group III: 7-9, and Group IV 10-12. Three first, second, and third place entries are selected for each group. A "Best of Show" is also selected by the judges from the 12 first-place winners, regardless of their age group. Each state's "Best of Show" is then submitted to the Duck Stamp Office in Washington D.C. and entered into the national contest.

The first-place design from the national contest is used to create the actual Junior Duck Stamp for the following year. Junior Duck Stamps are sold by the U.S. Postal Service for $5 per stamp. Proceeds from these sales support environmental education and provide awards and scholarships for the students, teachers, and schools that participate in the program. All entries must be postmarked by March 15, 2007. The award ceremony (along with great prizes) to honor all 100 state winners and schools will be held in May of 2007.

For more details on how your kids, teachers, and schools in your local area can participate in this fun and educational program visit http://www.fws.gov/duckstamps/junior/junior.htm or contact Colorado State Coordinator Seth Beres @ (303)289-0867.

HELP WANTED!

TPPF needs a volunteer with desktop publishing skills to help with the production of the newsletter. Please contact Janet at idi1@comcast.net.

Visit the Two Ponds Web Site at http://twoponds.fws.gov

EE Trunk Is Open!

For the past year, Two Ponds has offered a free opportunity to check out an environmental education (EE) trunk of materials to schools and groups throughout Colorado. Specifically, it contains a great deal of interactive items and educational materials for teachers and group leaders in the Denver metro area to help them facilitate a more interactive and hands-on interdisciplinary unit on environmental education. In addition, when utilized as an anticipatory set before a field trip, the materials help prepare children to become more educated and informed about the values of wildlife, habitat, conservation, and the Refuge System.

We will continue to share this wonderful trunk with schools throughout the community in order to bring the Refuge to the classroom. The results so far have been an overwhelming success! Teachers and students alike continue to comment positively on how incredibly fun, educational, and interesting all the materials are. In addition, participants have been able to capture and further share the experience with their colleagues, parents, friends, and community via pictures with the use of the digital camera included within the trunk. Overall, it is extremely gratifying to know how well the local community is utilizing and responding to this opportunity, and we hope the word continues to spread.

The EE trunk is available for checkout (two week intervals) to public and non-public schools, home school groups, and service organizations throughout the year. For further details and reservations please call Seth @ (303)289-0867.

Photo by Seth Beres

It's my favorite time of year, we finally get a break from the oppressive heat, trees don their showy colors, wildlife migration for warmer climes brings opportunities for viewing, and football season is back. I was enjoying a walk on the west side of the refuge the other day when I heard the familiar call of a sandhill crane. As experience has taught me, I began looking high in the sky for the familiar "V" shaped flock. I located the flock flying very high, as usual, over the Refuge heading for points south.

The sandhill crane is a spectacular bird that stands 47 inches tall and has a wingspan of 80 inches. Unlike herons, which are similar in appearance, the sandhill crane flies with its neck outstretched. The unique resonant voice that is produced in a chamber within its breastbone has been likened to a rattling trumpet. Small numbers of sandhill cranes breed in western states, but the majority of the population breeds in Canada, Alaska and some as far as Siberia, making the migration each year across the Bering Strait and down to their winter range in southern states and Mexico.

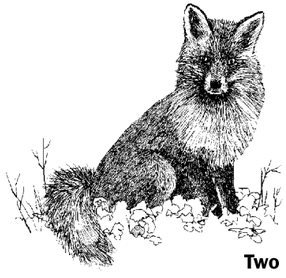
If you have never seen and heard these magnificent birds you can see them at Monte Vista NWR, located in the San Luis Valley, typically in late February and March. If you are willing to travel a little further, I highly recommend the Festival of the Crane at Bosque Del Apache NWR in mid-November near Socorro, New Mexico, which is about 60 miles south of Albuquerque. The ultimate crane viewing destination is Grand Island, Nebraska in March and/or April where the largest congregation of sandhill cranes in the world occurs. People from all over the world travel to Grand Island to witness this spectacle along the Platte River.

Or you can walk the trails of Two Ponds NWR the second week of October for a possible glimpse of the cranes in flight and the opportunity to hear their unique call.

Vic Elam, Refuge Manager

I WOULD LOVE TO JOIN THE TWO PONDS PRESERVATION FOUNDATION!

The Foundation is a totally volunteer organization and 100 percent of your donation is used for the Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge.
The Foundation receives and administers gifts for environmental education, preservation of wetlands and the development of the Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge.
Please make checks payable to **Two Ponds Preservation Foundation**. Your gift is tax deductible.



( ) $25 Beaver ( ) $50 Red Fox ( ) $100 Black-Crowned Night Heron - *engraved brick*
( ) $500 Swainson's Hawk - *engraved flagstone slab*
( ) $1,000 Golden Eagle - *engraved park bench*

Name:_____
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