

# Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge

## Volunteer Newsletter • September 2014

### **Don't Miss These Volunteer Opportunities!**

Volunteers are especially needed for the following projects: **National Public Lands Day** (projects include staining a viewing platform and removing noxious weeds and litter), **Discover Wildlife Journeys Field Trip Guides** (lead field trips for 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders), and **Creepy Critter Encounters** (staff activity, craft, and welcome tables and more). See next page for more information.

### **What's New?**

The start of September brings the start of hunting season on the Refuge. For the hunters among you, have a safe hunt. For other Refuge visitors, please take appropriate precautions when visiting the East and South Side Recreation Areas.

### **Cheers!**

September brings the end of the Fiscal Year, end-of-year reporting, and a great time for celebrating accomplishments. Since October 1, 2013, more than 600 volunteers have contributed over 8,000 hours of service to the Refuge. Whether you served for one hour or hundreds of hours, your service allows us to accomplish wildlife monitoring, habitat improvement, event, environmental education, visitor services, maintenance and many other projects that would otherwise be impossible with a small Refuge staff.

### **Many Thanks to all Refuge Volunteers!!!**

**Around the water cooler...** "Survey says..." Biotech Kyle did grebe and deer surveys in August. Although he never found evidence of grebe nesting colonies during summer surveys (presumably because water levels were so low throughout the season), he did count 311 grebes (many fewer than usual) in an early August survey of Lake Lowell. Also, Kyle and volunteers did a deer spotlight survey in mid-August and spotted 17 deer (a bit lower than usual) around the Lake Lowell Unit.

### **Friends of Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge**

The Friends of Deer Flat is a non-profit organization that supports the Refuge in many ways, including organizing a NWR Week event on October 11 (see below). Friends memberships start at \$10 and are tax deductible. [Friendsdfwr@gmail.com](mailto:Friendsdfwr@gmail.com) for info about membership or getting involved.



Mule deer bucks seen on the mid-August deer spotlighting survey. Photo USFWS/Shanna Eells

### **Upcoming Events** *Unless otherwise stated, all activities take place at the Refuge Visitor Center*

**Reading at the Refuge—Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup> and October 6<sup>th</sup>—10am and repeating at 2pm**

Preschool children and their parents are invited to a free wildlife-focused story hour for preschoolers.

**National Public Lands Day—Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup>—9am to noon**

Seeking volunteers (see below) to help celebrate National Public Lands Day. Volunteers earn a fee-free pass to their National Public Lands!

**Scout Day—Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup>**

Cub Scouts and young Girl Scouts can sign up to participate in this event to earn a wildlife-related badge. Must register.

**Creepy Critter Encounters —Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup> —3:00 to 6:00pm**

Kids come in costume to learn about creepy critters on a spooky hike, make crafts, and listen to scary stories. Also see volunteer opportunity below.



## **Don't-Miss Volunteer Opportunities!**

### **National Public Lands Day (As many as possible!!)**

**Dates and Time:** September 27<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am-noon

Celebrate National Public Lands Day by volunteering to improve the Refuge for wildlife and people. Projects include staining a viewing platform and removing noxious weeds and litter at Lake Lowell. Participants earn a fee-free pass to National Public Lands, but **must pre-register**. **Deadline to pre-register: September 21<sup>st</sup>**.

### **Discover Wildlife Journeys Field Trip Leaders (2-3 volunteers each trip)**

**Dates and Times:** Tuesdays-Thursdays, Sept. and Oct., 9am-3pm

Help influence the next generation of conservationists by connecting them with nature! Volunteers **lead 4th-6th graders through a learning station** during *Discover Wildlife Journeys* field trips near the Visitor Center. No experience necessary—just enthusiasm, a love of kids, and a willingness to learn. **Deadline to register: ASAP**

### **Creepy Critter Encounters (30+ volunteers for event)**

**Date and Time:** Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup> from 1:30-6:30 PM. Many volunteers needed for this Halloween event for kids (and kids at heart!). Kids come in costume to learn about creepy critters on a spooky hike, make crafts, and listen to scary stories. Volunteers are needed to **staff the welcome table, craft room, and wildlife-related stations** along the nature trail. **Deadline to register: October 15<sup>th</sup>**

## **Other Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities**

### **Visitor Center Host (8-10 volunteers per month)**

**Dates and Times:** Weekdays and Saturdays throughout the year.

With recent staff losses, we could use more volunteers to help welcome visitors and answer questions and phones on **weekdays**. We also need volunteers to help keep the Visitor Center open on **Saturdays**. If you enjoy interacting with people and sharing wildlife stories with visitors, this might be the opportunity for you! Training is provided. **Deadline to Register: Ongoing**

### **Reading at the Refuge (1-2 volunteers per month)**

**Dates and Time:** 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays (10:00am and 2:00pm)

Help connect youngsters to wildlife and nature—and help free up staff time to lead other educational programs. We are seeking volunteers to select and acquire story books, prepare wildlife-oriented crafts, and lead the storytelling and craft making. **Deadline to register: Ongoing.**

### **National Wildlife Refuge Week Celebration**

**Dates and Times** October 11<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am - 4:00pm Each October, the Friends of Deer Flat celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week with a family-friendly event. The Friends are seeking volunteers to help staff activity booths at the event. Please contact Genevieve Johannsen (467-7515 or gcj\_83651@yahoo.com).

### **Bird Feeding (3-5 Volunteers)**

**Dates and Times** September 27<sup>th</sup>, 1:00pm

The Friends of Deer Flat is seeking help feeding wintering birds from November through March. If you are interested, contact Noreen Tripp (249-8162 or tonotripp@cableone.net) for info or to join the training on September 27<sup>th</sup>.



To find out more about or sign up for any of these volunteer opportunities, contact Susan Kain or Kacey Kai at deerflat@fws.gov or (208)-467-9278.

**Thank you, and see you at the Refuge!**