

Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge Volunteer Newsletter • May 2013

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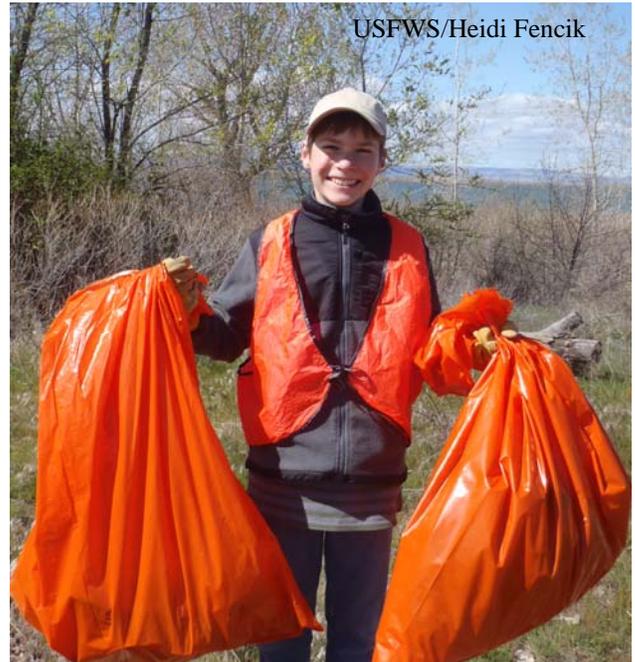


What's New?

Spring is in the air!! Volunteers have had the great pleasure of helping our Wildlife Biologist conduct goose nest and grebe surveys this past month. During the last survey they saw over 1,200 grebes and a variety of other birds such as pelicans, swans, osprey, bald eagles and even 5 common loons (which are not so common for this area). Grebe surveys will continue to be conducted every other week until November.

Cheers!

Thank you so much to the volunteers, team leaders and sponsors who helped with this year's Earth Day Work Day. Over 70 volunteers collected 25 bags of litter to protect wildlife and to improve the cleanliness of Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge for visitors. They also removed over 1500 white bryony and 100 poison hemlock plants, which often out-compete native plants that wildlife depend on for food and cover. Thanks also to the U of I Master Naturalists who helped improve our wildlife-friendly landscaping around the Visitor Center. Finally, much thanks to The Friends of Deer Flat and Spot Pizza in Marsing for the delicious pizza luncheon at the end of our event. You truly helped us succeed. Thanks.



USFWS/Heidi Fencik

Around the water cooler...

We had three highly unusual visitors the Refuge at the end of April. Three sandhill cranes, who were likely just passing through while migrating, made a visit to the Refuge corn fields below the Upper Dam. While sandhill cranes are numerous in many parts of the country their visit to the Refuge was a real treat.



USFWS/Heidi Fencik



Friends of Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge

Thanks to the Friends for providing bus scholarships for this month's Refuge field trips! If you enjoy volunteering and want to support the Refuge in another way, think about becoming a Friends member. Memberships start at \$10 and are tax deductible. **For more information about membership or Friends volunteering, contact friendsofdf@yahoo.com.**

Upcoming Events

Wild About Life Lecture: Tuesday, May 14th, 7pm

Take an "insiders" look at the construction of the US-Mexico Border Fence and the Response to the BP Gulf Oil Spill by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Local Fish and Wildlife Biologist Janice Engle works nationally on these and other issues.

Volunteer Social - Thu May 24th, 2 – 3:30pm. Join us for a casual gathering to get to know one another and learn the "inside story" on current projects. Considering volunteering? This is a great time to ask others about their experiences. RSVPs not required, but appreciated. If you'd like to help out by bringing snacks, please let Heidi know.

Volunteer Orientation: May 11th, 2pm. Interested in volunteering for the Refuge, but you're not entirely sure what it entails? Or interested in volunteering to do something different and new? Come to this volunteer orientation session for a preview of Refuge volunteer opportunities for the spring, summer, and fall.

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

BioBlitz and Kids' Fishing Day (15-25 volunteers)

Dates and Times: June 7th and 8th

Our annual BioBlitz and Kids' Fishing Day events are just around the corner. We need your help to staff various craft and activity tables, shuttle visitors, help youngsters with fishing, wear the Blue Goose costume, and more. Help us show how special Deer Flat is to families and friends, and enjoy the fun events as well! **Deadline to Register: May 30th**

VC Landscaping (2-3 volunteers)

Dates: Spring, Summer & Fall

Do you enjoy working outdoors? Pruning, trimming, and weeding help is needed to maintain the water-conservation and pollinator gardens at the Visitor Center. **Deadline to register: Ongoing**

Festival Outreach Helpers (1-2 volunteers)

Nampa Public Library Reading Kick-off Party: June 1, 10am-1pm (set-up starts at 9, but volunteers not necessary)

Represent Deer Flat at this large festival near the Refuge. Help kids learn about wildlife through fun activities and invite them to Refuge events like BioBlitz and Kids' Fishing Day the following weekend. **Deadline to Register: May 24**

Day Camp Helpers (2-3 volunteers)

Dates: Biodiversity Basics Camp, 7/8-7/12 and Desert Detectives Camp, 7/22-7/26

Help Kim run one of our summer day camps for kids! Volunteers are needed to help lead environmental educational activities and chaperone students throughout the day. Camps run 9-12:30 each day. **Deadline to register: June 15th**

Donating Old CD's

Please drop by old CD's for use in educational crafts this spring/summer. Help prevent bird window strikes!



US-Mexico border fence. Photo USFWS

**To find out more about or sign up for any of these volunteer opportunities, contact Heidi_Fencik@fws.gov
Or (208)-467-9278.**

Thank you, and see you at the Refuge!

Heidi Fencik, Volunteer Coordinators