Volunteer Newsletter
Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge
September 2019

A family of hunters at the Refuge. Photo USFWS/Todd Fenzl

Volunteers Especially Needed For:

**SEEDS: Nature Detective Field Trips** *(September 17, 24, 26, 27 and October 4)*
4th graders with nature as a lead or helper at fall field trips.

**Recycling Mentor** *(September 17, 24, 26, 27 and October 4)* Orient students to and facilitate recycling and composting during field trip lunches.

**Creepy Critter Encounters** *(October 26)* Volunteer for our wild Halloween event.

See *High Priority Opportunities* below for more information.

What's New?

September brings the start of hunting season. For the hunters among you, have a safe and enjoyable hunt. For other Refuge visitors, please take appropriate precautions when visiting the East and South Side Recreation Areas.
Unfortunately late summer has also brought us a harmful algae bloom. The health district issued a Public Health Alert warning people (and pets!) to avoid contact with the water.

**Cheers!**
This month, we want to extend our cheers to ALL OF YOU! This fiscal year (10/1/18 to end of September), we anticipate over 450 volunteers will serve over 8500 hours. That's the equivalent of four full time staff! This Refuge and the work we are able to accomplish with our volunteers is something so special to all of us here, and we are astounded by the outpouring of support from all of you. So in case we don't say it enough: Thank you! Thank you! Thank you for all you do!

**Around the Water Cooler**
We hope you'll join us in welcoming our new PCEI AmeriCorps members this month! Gusty, our new volunteer coordinator, and Kaitlyn, our new environmental educator, start September 3 and will serve through July 2020. Fortunately, Nicole will also be re-joining us for a second term. They will hit the ground running with fall field trips and volunteer events and we are extremely grateful for their enthusiasm and future hard work. Thanks to the Friends of Deer Flat and the Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute for providing these members!

**Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge**
The Friends of Deer Flat is a non-profit organization that supports Refuge activities like field trip bus scholarships, Refuge events, and restoration projects. Tax-deductible memberships start at $10. Or consider an extra donation to support your favorite Friends’ programs! Email friendsofdfwr@gmail.com for more info.

**Upcoming Events**
*Unless otherwise noted, events take place at the Visitor Center.*

**Nature Explorers**—September 26, 10:30 am. Preschoolers use their natural curiosity and participate in guided nature explorations. **September's theme is seeds!** 3-5-year-olds should bring a parent and be prepared to be outside and get a little dirty. Repeats on the fourth Thursday of each month. Free. Rain or shine, cold or hot. Service dogs only.

**Creepy Critter Encounters**—October 26, 3-6 pm. Kids come in costume and learn about creepy critters at this wild Halloween event. **Also see volunteer opportunity below.**
High Priority Volunteer Opportunities!

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

SEEDS: Nature Detective Field Trips (September 17, 24, 26, 27 and October 4, 8:45am-2:30pm; training September 11, 8:30-12:30) Sign up now to lead or help at SEEDS: Nature Detectives fall field trip stations. Volunteers help 4th grade Students Explore the Environment and Discover Science.

Recycling Mentor (September 17, 24, 26, 27 and October 4, 10:55 to noon) Teach 4th graders on Refuge field trips about recycling and composting and

Other Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

Milkweed Seed Collection (tentatively scheduled morning of September 25) Meet the new Refuge AmeriCorps team while helping monarch butterflies! Seeds will be used in Treasure Valley restoration projects.

Refuge Helpers Litter Control (schedule flexible) Help protect the Refuge’s wildlife, habitat, and natural beauty by becoming Refuge Helpers. Adopt part of the Refuge and visit monthly as a group or individual to remove litter.

Nature Explorers lead (fourth Thursday of each month) Help
help them sort their lunch "trash" into the appropriate waste stream.

**Creepy Critter Encounters (October 26th)** Many volunteers needed for this Halloween event for kids. Staff the welcome table, craft room, or wildlife-related activity stations. Sign up early because this is a popular event.

This Clark's grebe wants you to try stretching into some new volunteer opportunities! (Check out those lobed toes!) Photo courtesy Helen Goerke.

Know anyone who might be a good fit? Please pass this newsletter to family, friends, and neighbors! To sign up or find out more, contact the Volunteer Coordinator at deerflat@fws.gov or (208) 467-9278

Our mailing address is:
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