

Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge

Volunteer Newsletter

February 2013

What's New?

It is time again for the Jr. Duck Stamp competition in Utah! This fun and exciting national program, teaching students (K-12) about wildlife and conservation through art, is a perennial favorite for the student participants, teachers, judges and everyone here at the Refuge. Our very own Kathi Stopher is the Utah State Coordinator and is excited to announce a new curriculum for 2013! Along with all the excitement comes the artwork entries, (some has already started arriving). We will need volunteer help during the last two weeks of March to get all of the entries labeled, framed, judged and entered into the database. Please contact Kathi if you would be available to pitch in!



Thumbs-Up!



We hope everyone enjoyed our past two events and get-togethers. It was great to see so many of you at last month's Volunteer Recognition Luncheon. And we want to give a big THUMBS-UP and THANKS to all of the volunteers that helped out with Bald Eagle Day last week. From greeting visitors and reading stories – to helping with eagle spotting and environmental education – the following friends were a great help in making Bald Eagle day a success: June, Mindy, Hannah, Annie, Allison, Jorgen. . .and The Browns & the McGraths for being on call to help even though the weather got in the way. Also a HUGE THANKS to Rich Iwanski for snow removal that day...we couldn't have welcomed nearly 300 people without a clear parking lot! And another

important THANKS to our friends and partners at the Ogden Nature Center for braving the snowy weather. Thank You Bryce, Shawnee and Des Ta Tae! (*Bryce and Des, pictured*)

We also have a special WELCOME to two new volunteers this month! Say hello to Jennifer Bunker and Trisha Nelson. Jennifer, in addition to helping us at the front desk, may be helping us out with the Jr. Duck Stamp program, social media and the Volunteer Newsletter. Trisha is here as part of the Utah State Recreation & Resource Management department and will be helping us out environmental education, the Jr. Duck Stamp program and more.

(*Pictured: Jennifer on left, Trisha on right*)



Refuge Roundup



While the weather may not seem spring-like yet, it won't be long until spring thaw and flow start to really change the Refuge. Recently, Refuge staff and management have worked through the 2013 Annual Work Plan and made some tough decisions on what will be priorities for the Refuge this year. Several of these priorities such as invasive plant control, water management and providing excellent habitat for nesting waterfowl and shorebirds are not new, but one big project this summer may be. Just a few miles down the northern portion (L-line) of the Auto Tour Route, the Refuge will be replacing a bridge and water control structure this summer. This project is to alleviate dangerous conditions created by large volumes of water pushing through a small

structure. The new structure will be much wider allowing ease of flow and water management. Funding for the project is from the Regional Office and work is tentatively scheduled for July.

(*The current structure is pictured, facing west from the Auto Route.*)

Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

❖ March 9: **SWAN DAY!**

We are half way through our 2013 “Second Saturday” events, but our next one is just around the corner. Saturday, March 9 is Swan Day in Utah and we’re celebrating here on the Refuge with a family-fun open house event! Along with our usual activities such as crafts, movies and more...we plan to launch our newly made Audio Auto Tour put together by 7th & 8th grade students from the new Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning in Perry. And as if that were not enough, we’re also planning a Jr. Duck Stamp drawing station for kids to learn about the program and try their hand at painting some amazing Bear River waterfowl! With all that fun, we will obviously need some help, so please contact Jason or Katie if you want to join in.



❖ April 13: **Sense of Wonder EARTH DAY Celebration!**



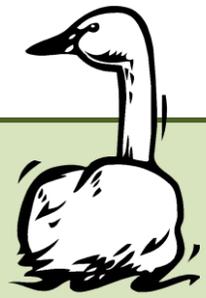
One of our favorite events of the year, in celebration of Earth Day and Rachel Carson’s enduring spirit and work, Saturday, April 13 will be “Sense of Wonder” Day! Building on our success from last year, plans for this event have begun and we hope to add many more amazing stations along the Wetland Walk – providing an educational and entertaining exploration for all ages! Filled with games, crafts and outdoor activities, “Sense of Wonder” Day will have many opportunities for volunteer help. So let Katie or Jason know if you’d like to join in all the fun.

Mark Your Calendars and Save the Dates!

- Feb. 18: **President’s Day** *(we’re closed)*
- Mar. 09: **SWAN DAY!**
- Mar. 23: **Jr. Duck Stamp entry deadline**
- Mar. 28: **Spring Wetland Wonders field trips begin!**
- Apr. 13: **Sense of Wonder / Earth Day!**
- May 11: **Intl. Migratory Bird Day & Jr. Duck Stamp Awards**
- May 16 – 20: **Great Salt Lake Bird Festival**



Check out this stunning snapshot, nabbed by volunteer Brian Ferguson on our Auto Loop recently, of a Rough-legged hawk feasting on a Pied-billed grebe.



*Swan items will be on sale this month and through SWAN DAY in the Avocet Corner Bookstore. Also, if you haven’t joined (or renewed your membership) . . . consider becoming a member of the **Friends of the Bear River Refuge** now. Member info. is available at the front desk.*