

Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge

Volunteer Newsletter

February 2013

What's New?

We are already accepting entries for the 2014 Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest! Students, K-12th grade can enter their original waterfowl art until March 15th. Teachers and students can learn about wildlife and habitat conservation through extensive curriculum guides, as well as enter in the conservation art contest. Kathi Stopher is the Utah State Coordinator, so if you would like to help with submitting and preparing entries or judging, please email her at kathi_stopher@fws.gov or call her at 435-734-6438. More information can also be found at the Junior Duck Stamp website: www.fws.org/juniorduck Please spread the word about this contest!



Last year's Junior Duck Stamp Utah Best of Show by Zachary Williams

Thumbs-Up!

Bald Eagle Day at the Refuge was a huge success! We saw another 450+ visitors, similar to Owl Day, and even had to turn many visitors away when our auditorium filled completely for the live eagle presentation. DesTaTe, the eagle from the Ogden Nature Center, was very popular, and made another appearance that day at Salt Creek WMA. We also hosted a very emotional eagle-feather presentation to the 101st Airborne Division, the "Screamin' Eagles," from the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Chris Cline and Melissa Burns gave a fascinating talk about eagles in Utah. Last but not least, we held our first Refuge Tour in over a year, led by Brian Ferguson and Dickson Smith. With some more support and advertising, we hope to start a weekly tour again soon! Thanks to all of our wonderful Eagle Day volunteers, June Bywater, Dorothy Egan, JoAnne Cole, Kayla Bass, Mindy Nicholas, Jeremy Freshwater, Allison Gilson, Caroline Mullin, Marilyn Perry (pictured), Brian Ferguson, and Dickson Smith. We truly could not have done it without you.



With Swan Day and Sense of Wonder Day coming up, we will be looking for more event day volunteers! If you would like to help with planning or day-of assistance with either of those days, please get in touch with Kathi or Charlotte (charlotte_mason@fws.gov or 435-734-6457).

Refuge Roundup

Although some may not be thrilled about all these clouds and rain, we are ecstatic about all this water! Some of our units have already started filling up, and in the Bear River Basin we are at 108% of average snow water equivalent! This is great news, considering that a month ago we were in a drought and at around 75% of average snowpack. That said, we hope everyone remains mindful of high water with spring runoff – Stay safe!

Some swans have started appearing, with 26 counted last week. Plus, more bufflehead, pintail, mallards, and geese are arriving every day. Other birds like Rough-legged hawks and horned larks have started migrating back north already with the warm weather, so go take a peek at what's out there!



Photo by R Davis

Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

❖ February 22: Junior Duck Stamp Art Day

With JDS in full swing, we will be hosting a day where students, in grades K-12, can come in and work on their duck art. We will provide supplies, duck mounts, and entry forms. If you know a beginning artist who would like to enter their artwork, bring them in from 11am to 3pm!



Photo by Lloyd Bush

❖ March 8: SWAN DAY!

Continuing with our second Saturday programs, Swan Day will be coming up very soon. We will host Blair Stringham, Waterfowl Coordinator for Utah DNR, to educate us on the Tundra swan. We'll present a children's story titled, *Koog and Tina: A True Story of Two Alaskan Swans*. Howard Browers, our Wildlife Biologist, will be leading a tour behind the gates in the morning, and there will be a volunteer-led tour in the afternoon. Additionally, family-friendly crafts and games will be offered. If you would like to help, please let Kathi or Charlotte know.

❖ March 11, 12, & 13: Volunteer Refuge Tour

Our Wildlife Biologist, Howard Browers, will be leading a tour of the Refuge (including behind gates) starting at 10:00am on Tuesday, March 11th, Wednesday March 12th, and Thursday March 13th. Tours will return by 2:00pm. If you would like to go and have not yet signed up for one of the dates, please email Howard at howard_browers@fws.gov

❖ March 18 & March 22: Volunteer Safety Training

Because we have had such great attendance at our event days this year, we will be hosting Volunteer Safety Training. Led by Greg Mullin, Law Enforcement Officer, the session will cover managing large crowds as well as CPR/AED/First Aid requirements. Volunteers are required to attend if working with the public. Please plan to attend either Tuesday, March 18th or Saturday, March 22nd. Bring your own lunches, snacks, and water bottles please.

8:30 – 10:30 General Preparedness Training

11:00 – 4:30 CPR, AED, First Aid

Mark Your Calendars and Save the Dates!

- Feb. 17: President's Day (we're closed)
- Feb. 22: Jr. Duck Stamp Art Day 11am-3pm
- Mar. 08: SWAN DAY!
- Mar. 15: Jr. Duck Stamp entry deadline
- Mar. 18 & 22: Annual Volunteer Safety Training
- Mar. 27: Spring Wetland Wonders field trips begin!
- Apr. 12: Sense of Wonder / Earth Day!



Sense of Wonder Day is coming up April 12! If you would like to help with planning, contact Kathi.



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.