

Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge

Volunteer Newsletter

January 2014

What's New?

Welcome to 2014 everyone! We had a nice long break around the holidays, and we are refreshed and ready to hit the ground running this year. Owl Day was a great success with 447 visitors throughout the day, and a full house at the live owl presentation. Thank you to all who helped with the event, and we are now in gear to start planning for Eagle Day. Planning for our fourth grade Wetland Wonders watershed field trip program has also started, and we will be kick-starting that very soon. Front Desk volunteers, be aware that teachers will be picking up and dropping off pre-field trip trunks periodically starting at the end of January.

New findings have led the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to conclude that the recent Bald Eagle deaths can be attributed to the West Nile Virus.

According to the most recent report on December 31st, the eagles may be contracting the virus from eating infected eared grebes on the Great Salt Lake.

This is not a threat to humans, but if you see a dead or sick eagle do not approach or take it. Call Greg, Lisa, Howard, the DWR (801-476-2740), or the Wildlife Rescue Center of Northern Utah (801-814-7888).



Healthy eagle taken by Jana Cisar

Thumbs-Up!



THANK YOU has never tasted so good!! This month we'd like to say **THANK YOU** to all of you, our fabulous volunteers, for an amazing 2013! We saw 22 volunteers plus staff at our annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon on Wednesday January 15th, and had 31 pins to give out! Andrew Durso have a fascinating herpetology talk afterward and we were able to handle some neat salamanders and snakes.

Another **THANK YOU** to all our volunteers who helped us out at (or to set-up for) OWL DAY this past Saturday! The event was a big hit and we really

appreciate all your amazing help. Special thanks go to: Dorothy, June, Frank, Josée, Spencer, Mitchell, Caroline, Mindy, Les, Jeremy, and the great folks (and owls Pueo and Banshee) from the Ogden Nature Center!

Refuge Roundup

Compared to November and December, the weather at the Refuge has been pretty mild after the early cold snap. All units are still frozen, with small areas of open water around the water control structures. We expect the refuge to start going through periods of thaw and freeze in the coming weeks. Therefore, waterfowl/birds are rather scarce, but there are plenty of bald eagles, hawks, and other raptors to be seen as well as beautiful icy scenery!



Keep caution when heading out on the Auto Loop. Make sure to check road conditions and be aware of ice on the roads and on the walk from the parking lot into the building. Our wetland walk is finally completely open and plowed as of January 14th! Feel free to come enjoy it again but be aware that although we try our best to keep it safe, it may not be plowed every time it snows.

Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

- ❖ **January 23: Waterfowlers Open House**
Bob Barrett, our Project Leader for the Refuge will be discussing the 2013-2014 hunting season with waterfowl hunters in our auditorium at 6:30 pm on January 23rd. The public is invited to come and discuss any questions or comments they might have.



- ❖ **January 25: “The Desert Speaks” Promontory School Documentary Premier**
This year, the students at the Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning made a documentary about our Utah deserts and how humans are impacting them. We will be showing the video at 10:30 and 11:30 am on Saturday the 25th.

- ❖ **February 8: BALD EAGLE DAY!**
Bald Eagle Day in Utah and at the Refuge is almost here! One of everyone’s favorite days to visit, Bald Eagle Day will be Saturday, February 8th. There will be plenty of fun activities for visitors, and lots for volunteers to help us with too, from Eagle games and crafts to Refuge tours, speakers, and a live presentation with DesTaTé, our live eagle friend from the Ogden Nature Center. We hope you’ll join us for the fun, 10 am – 3 pm. Please call or email Charlotte at charlotte_mason@fws.gov if you would like to volunteer.

Mark Your Calendars and Save the Dates!

- **Jan. 15: Volunteer Recognition Banquet!**
 - 11:00 am – Appetizers and social
 - 11:30 pm – Lunch from Tumbleweed BBQ
 - 1:30 – 3:00 pm – Herpetology presentation
- **Jan. 20: Martin Luther King Day (we’re closed)**
- **Jan. 23: Waterfowlers Open House 6:30 pm**
- **Jan. 25: Desert Video created by Promontory School**
 - Showings at 10:30am and 11:30am
- **Feb. 08: BALD EAGLE DAY!**
- **Feb. 14-17: The Great Backyard Bird Count**
 - For more info, visit <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc>
- **Feb. 18: President’s Day (we’re closed)**
- **Mar. 08: SWAN DAY!**
- **Apr. 12: Sense of Wonder / Earth Day!**



Help us help the birds!

Our feeder station has been very popular with the birds over the past few months. We’re sure that they appreciate the feeding that you’ve committed to doing! Thank you very much for staying dedicated to the cause. A sign-up sheet for 2014 is on the front desk.

Phones!

Have you noticed? We have a new phone system in place. There are still a few kinks to work out but we are on our way! Thank you for all of your patience with the old system.

The bookstore is marking all of its Owl and Eagle Days merchandise to 10% off on those days in celebration! “Owl” be “Eagle” to see you in the bookstore!

