

Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge

Volunteer Newsletter

March 2013

What's New?

SAFETY! Well, being safe sure isn't new, but it is time again for the Refuge's safety audit – Wednesday, March 27, and with that – you may notice some staff and volunteers scrambling to ensure all of our safety i's are dotted and t's are crossed! It also means, that as a volunteer, please ensure with Kathi that your agreements are all up-to-date, and that you have the chance to speak to her about safety and take the safety and fire extinguisher trainings. It is also a great time to let us know if you see anything in or around the building that we may have missed and that may be unsafe, and to re-read the building evacuation and safety plans and maps. We appreciate your help and patience with fire drills and safety exercises during this important time.



Thumbs-Up!



One of our own, long-time Volunteers – **Bob Ebeling** – has the honor of being named the 2013 National **Volunteer of the Year** by the National Wildlife Refuge Association! A conservationist and Refuge advocate for over 50 years and volunteer for over 22 years, Bob Ebeling played a key role in the restoration of Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge after it was laid to ruins by the flood of the Great Salt Lake in the mid 1980's. His contributions include professional engineering skills in reconstruction and subsequently visitor services in the Education Center. Over the years, Bob has given more than 10,000 hours of time, professional talents, and use of personal property. His first

hours were logged in from 1989 – 1994 accomplishing on-the-ground projects. In the years since, Bob has volunteered in visitor services, providing information to visitors, as he is able, since the new Wildlife Education Center opened its doors in April, 2006. For more information please see official press release from National Wildlife Refuge Association:

<http://refugeassociation.org/people/awards/2013awards/>



Nominated by Al Trout, Friends of Bear River Refuge board member and former Refuge Manager, in honor of his thousands of hours of work on and for the Refuge. We want to wish Bob a huge **CONGRATULATIONS** and an even bigger **THANK YOU** for all his years of hard work!

Refuge Roundup



Spring is “springing” on the Refuge! Thanks to the warmer weather, much of the ice has melted away and we have more open water. There have been several sightings of returning, migratory birds so far this month. Expect to see Cinnamon teal, Double-crested cormorant, American white pelican, Killdeer, American avocet, Long-billed curlew, California gull, Sandhill cranes and more. The Canada geese have already been seen “pairing-up” and looking for good nesting sites, and several waterfowl and raptor species have been observed exhibiting courtship behavior. Red-winged blackbirds and Western meadowlarks (*pictured*) are tuning up. And, what's more, BUGS are in the air. . and where there are bugs – it won't be long until we're seeing bug-eating birds like swallows and kingbirds. C'mon spring!

****Special Note:** As you are well aware, declining federal budgets have befallen the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for this fiscal year. Like other federal land management agencies, we are facing changes that will affect our operations here at Bear River MBR - a few examples include fewer resources for environmental education and outreach programming that our visitors have come to expect. Additionally, visitor services staff time may be allocated to assist in other program areas in support of the Refuge mission. I ask for your patience and assistance as we traverse these challenging times. Please know that Bear River MBR will remain a special place and that we will do whatever we can to minimize the overall impacts to our publics, to our staff, and to our volunteers.

- Bob Barrett, Project Leader

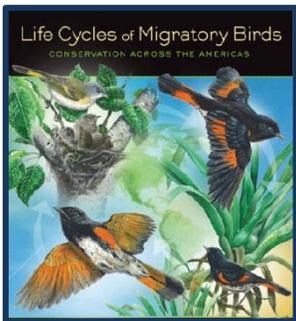
Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

❖ 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.



❖ May 11: Jr. Duck Stamp Awards on International Migratory Bird Day!



Saturday, May 11, is not only International Migratory Bird Day . . . it will be the Awards Ceremony here at the Refuge for the 2013 Utah Jr. Duck Stamp program! The amazing art will be on display from all of the winners, K-12, of the competition, including the Best of Show entry which will be sent on to compete in the National Jr. Duck Stamp competition. We will also have some open house activities like crafts, movies and Jr. Ranger activities – to continue the celebration of migratory birds around the world. We hope you'll join us, or consider helping out at the event!

Mark Your Calendars and Save the Dates!

- Mar. 23: Jr. Duck Stamp entry deadline
- Mar. 28: 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
- May 27: Memorial Day (we're closed)



AVOCET CORNER BOOKSTORE

*While spring welcomes new arrivals outdoors, we also have several new arrivals indoors at the **Avocet Corner Bookstore!** Be sure to stop in to see the wonderful new items available, like this awesome, new "froggy" Earth Day t-shirt being modeled by bookstore manager, Tracy!*