

# Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge

## Volunteer Newsletter

October 2012



### What's New?



Phrag cows. Phrag cows? What are Phrag cows?! They are “hired” cows that are on parts of the Refuge to eat the invasive plant, *Phragmites*. Refuge Management is trying this new technique to try and help, in this dry year, to knock-down and browse some of our larger Phrag stands in the Perry units. How will it work? Who knows for sure yet . . . but it is a fun, creative, natural and cheaper way to try and combat this rather pesky and destructive invasive.

Our Refuge Amateur Photo Contest awards were given away this past Saturday. Twenty photographers submitted nearly 90 photographs. New this year was a Fan Favorite – voted by visitors – which was awarded to Dan Nelson for a gorgeous picture of a parent Grebe with young on its back. And this year's Best of Show photograph went to Lloyd Bush for his gorgeous “Swan Moon” photograph to the right. Congratulations to all our local photographers.



### Thumbs-Up!

Here is a HUGE Thank You to all of our fabulous volunteers who helped with a very busy late September/early October. With the Federal Duck Stamp competition, Delta Waterfowl event, USEE conference, hunting season AND National Wildlife Refuge Week all happening within a few weeks of each other...the staff at the Refuge could NOT have got it all done without YOU – our fabulous volunteers. All these events went off without a hitch and great visitor experiences were provided to all! **Special** kudos to volunteer Gil Paquet who put in MANY hours on several of these events to help us out! (Pictured left is this year's winning duck stamp, a stunning, male Common Goldeneye by CA artist Robert Steiner.)



Another special **Thumbs-up** and Thanks to our USGS Survey volunteers over the past two weeks. Our second sampling period for this national survey of Refuges was finished successfully and we'd like to recognize Lori Guyant, Les Talbot, June Bywater, Dorothy Egan and SCA intern Bethanie for all their help on this very important project! Well done.

### Refuge Roundup

Water and hunting update: The waterfowl hunting opener was Saturday, October 6, and reports from Refuge Law Enforcement Officer, Greg Mullin, tell us it was a safe and successful hunt – even with water scarce this year. Waterfowl continues to pour onto the Refuge wetlands . . . including huge numbers of Northern pintails, American wigeon and Gadwall, as well as diving ducks arriving like Ruddy ducks, Canvasbacks and Redheads.



Water is still at a premium and the river is flowing low and slow. That said, many of the Refuge wetland units are at or near target levels...and those that are not (1A, 2C, etc.) are finally starting to fill. Units 1, 9 and 10 are still mostly dry. This means that boating access is limited during the hunt season. Airboating areas in unit 9 and the Willard spur are still dry and inaccessible, but water levels in units 2 and 3 are now deep enough for regular boating access.

Don't forget, we have all the hunting information (Q&A, maps, water updates) at the front desk and available online. Don't hesitate to ask if you have any questions.

# Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

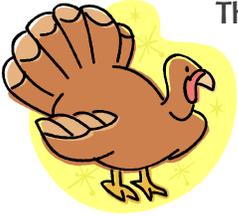


## ❖ Saturdays in November: **Free Fall Films!**

Returning to the Refuge big screen is our FREE Fall Films. Every Saturday in November, at 1pm, we will be showing a family-friendly movie about nature, wildlife and the great outdoors. This year's fun and educational film schedule: Nov. 3 – Hummingbirds: Magic in the Air!, Nov. 10 – The Beauty of Ugly, Nov. 17 – Life in the Undergrowth, and Nov. 24 – My Life as a Turkey!

## ❖ November 23 & 24: **Turkey Days Open House**

Thanksgiving is right around the corner. And even though the Refuge will be closed on Thanksgiving . . . it will be OPEN for our Turkey Days Open House on Friday and Saturday, November 23 & 24<sup>th</sup>. There will be turkey information, turkey crafts, and at 1pm both days, a free showing of “My Life as a Turkey” in the Auditorium. GOBBLE GOBBLE!



## ❖ December 27: **CBC4Kids! (Christmas Bird Count for Kids)**

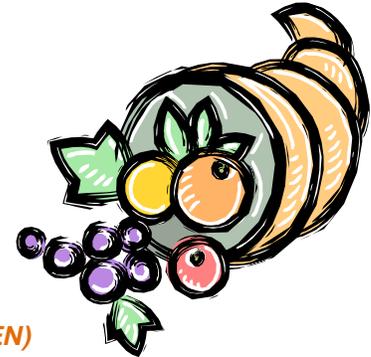
The Refuge will be hosting its 3<sup>rd</sup> annual CBC4Kids or Christmas Bird Count for kids. This fun, citizen science event is modeled after Audubon's adult Christmas Bird Counts that take place nationally on the weeks between the holidays. To get more youth involved, we will again be asking for youth volunteers (and their families) to help us count on Thursday, Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>, from 9 – Noon, and then submitting all our data to the Refuge and eBird.

## ❖ Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in 2013: **Owl Day, Eagle Day, Swan Day...oh MY!**

As the holidays are nearing, it is already time to start thinking about our events in 2013! We will again be having four big events on the second Saturday of each month, January through April: Owl Day, Eagle Day, Swan Day and Sense of Wonder Day!

## Mark Your Calendars and Save the Dates!

- Saturdays in Nov.: **Free Fall Films**
- Nov. 12: **Veterans Day** (we're closed)
- Nov. 22: **Thanksgiving** (we're closed)
- Nov. 23 & 24: **Turkey Days Open House** (we're OPEN)
- Dec. 24 & 25: **Christmas** (we're closed)
- Dec. 27: **CBC4Kids!**



### Avocet Corner Bookstore

*The bookstore has some great new gift ideas for kids that love wildlife! There are owl and frog purses, as well as new “Snap snakes” that wrap right around your wrist or ankle. And for our more adult customers, birders and volunteers – we have both the Federal and Jr. Duck Stamps for sale. Get yours today and help support waterfowl conservation!*

