

Volunteer Newsletter

Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge



Photo courtesy Martin Hooker

September 2016

Kids explore nature at the 2016 Biodiversity Basics Day Camp

Don't Miss These Volunteer Opportunities *Volunteers especially needed for:*

Visitor Counting (*Mornings, Flexible*)—Count vehicles at access points to estimate visitation.

National Public Lands Day (*Sep 24*)—Projects include trail maintenance, landscaping and litter pick-up.

Creepy Critter Encounters (*Oct 29*)—Helpers needed for our Refuge Halloween event.

See next page for more information.

What's New?

The start of September means the start of hunting. For the hunters among you, have a safe hunt. For other Refuge visitors, please take appropriate precautions in the East and South Side Recreation Areas.

Cheers!

Thanks to everyone for reporting their hours...and, of course, for all of your service! Believe it or not, since October 1, 2015, **562** volunteers have contributed **12,000** hours of service to the Refuge. That's the equivalent of almost five full-time employees. Wow!

Thanks to Jenn, Adam, Judy, Star, and Tami for working with Mia to make the Desert Detectives summer day camp a success!



Day camp volunteer Jenn demonstrates the tiny amount of Earth's water that is drinkable.
Photo USFWS/Tami Robbins

Around the Water Cooler

Mia Callahan just finished her first AmeriCorps term as Environmental Educator but will fortunately be staying for another year to provide continuity to the Refuge's education program. She is excited to help forge a new direction for the program.

If you volunteered during the past year, mark your calendar for the annual volunteer recognition luncheon from noon-2p on Saturday, November 5th. Watch for official invites.

Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge

The Friends of Deer Flat is a non-profit organization that supports Refuge activities. Friends memberships start at \$10 and are tax deductible. Email friendsofdfwr@gmail.com for more info.



Upcoming Events

Unless otherwise stated, events take place at the Visitor Center.

National Public Lands Day—Sep 24, 9a-noon.

Volunteer event to help celebrate our public lands. *New this year*, we plan to have educational activities for younger participants. Call for more information.



*Helen digging up white bryony on National Public Lands Day 2014.
(Photo © Heidi Zschach)*

Reading at the Refuge—Sep 19 and Oct 3 & 17, 10a and 2p.

Preschoolers are invited to a wildlife-focused story time. Note: There will be no Reading at the Refuge on Labor Day!

Creepy Critter Encounters—Oct 29, 3-6p. Kids come in costume to learn about creepy critters at this Halloween event for kids. Also see volunteer opportunity below.

Don't-Miss Volunteer Opportunities!

Think you might not have the skills needed to help? Don't worry! Training is provided.

Visitor Counting Surveyor—2 hours in the morning (between 8a and noon), 4-6 times per month (4 weekdays and maybe 2 weekends).

Drive around the Refuge in a Refuge vehicle to count the number of vehicles at each Refuge access point and fill brochure boxes. Data are used to estimate total Refuge visitation.

National Public Lands Day—Sep 24, 9a-noon. Deadline to register: Crew leaders, ASAP, Crew members, Sep 18th. Celebrate your public lands by volunteering to improve the Refuge for wildlife and people. Projects to include trail maintenance, digging noxious weeds and litter pick-up. Participants earn a fee-free pass to National Public Lands, but must pre-register. Crew leaders also needed.

Creepy Critter Encounters—Oct 29, 1:30-6:30p. Many volunteers needed for this Halloween event for kids. Staff the welcome table, craft room, and wildlife-related activity stations. Deadline to pre-register: Oct 20th.

Other Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

Bird Feeding—Training Sep 24, 1:30 PM. The Friends of Deer Flat is seeking help feeding wintering birds from late September through May. If you would like more information or would like to attend the training, email Rachel and Dave at deerflat@fws.gov.

Milkweed Seed Collecting—September and early October. Help the monarch conservation effort by collecting milkweed seeds to be planted at other locations on this Refuge or at other local lands. Training will be provided.

Saturday or Weekday Visitor Center

Host—Saturdays 10-4, Monday mornings, & Wednesday afternoons. Staff the front desk, greet guests, answer questions, answer the telephone, and help with various projects. If you enjoy interacting with people and sharing stories with visitors, this might be the opportunity for you! Training is provided. Saturday VC Host volunteers must be willing to undergo a background check.

Vehicle Maintenance—Flexible, monthly.

Check refuge vehicles to make sure they are well-maintained. *No need to be a car expert!*