



Malheur Musings - September 2017



Pulling weeds near the future Nature Store

Changes are Afoot!

With our growth this year from a small group to an active membership of 650, we are poised to assume the running of the Nature Store. By spring, we will be opening "The Crane's Nest" Nature Store in the historic residence located near Marshall Pond. The move to this building also allows us to have our own office space. Watch for news of our Grand Opening next March!

In preparation for this move, Alice Elshoff, Jerry and Chris Moore, and three members from the Paiute Tribe - Deshean Richards, Anna Purcella and Jarvis Kennedy (also a new FOMR Board member) - spent July 27 and 28 moving furniture and library books to other locations so some interior remodeling can begin.

In August, another crew of members and volunteers did some interior painting of the building and began work on the landscaping. Old fences were removed, weeds were pulled, and native plants were saved for spring planting. We're looking forward to the changes in store!

As always, stay tuned to our [website](#) and [Facebook page](#) for updates!



The August work crew



Western sandpipers - Photo by Peter Pearsall

Shorebirds on the Move

Birds, like many aspects of the landscape, change in lockstep with the seasons. Some of the species found at Malheur Refuge are year-round residents, but the majority pass through on their way to other areas, using the refuge as a stopover site. This is especially true of Malheur's shorebirds...[Read more here](#)

Meet Alexa Martinez, MNWR Wildlife Biologist

Alexa Martinez started work as the MNWR Wildlife Biologist earlier this year. She hails from a small agricultural community called Chamberino, NM, 30 miles away from the U.S.-Mexico border.

"I represent the first generation of my family to live in the U.S.," Alexa writes. "My family originates from Chihuahua and Durango, Mexico. Hence, Mexican culture plays a huge role in my life and has deeply influenced the person that I am today. I am also the first to go to school and complete a college degree from both sides of my family, which is a huge deal from where I come." [Read more here](#)



Support the Big Sit!

Remember to pledge your support for the 2nd annual Benton County Big Sit, which takes place September 24 at William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge in Benton County, OR. Organized by young birders Kai Frueh, Ben Frueh and Isaac Denzer, this charitable event raises money for local and national bird conservation organizations...[Read more here](#)



An Internship in Review

FOMR intern Nick Varvel spent eight weeks at Malheur Refuge doing everything from aquatic vegetation surveys to installing bat-monitoring

systems to banding ducks at night (pictured at right).

"Coming from the high plains of Kansas, I had never been to Malheur NWR before my first day of the internship with FOMR," Nick writes. "My only exposure to it had been the occupation last year that made national news." [Read more here](#)



Bald eagle
Photo by Peter Pearsall

Experience Malheur in Fall

Can't make it to Malheur this fall? Let FOMR member and longtime refuge supporter Donald Jonasson provide a visually rich, narrative tour. In 2014, Jonasson released "Four Seasons of the Malheur", a series of videos about the uniqueness and beauty of Oregon's Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in each of the four distinct seasons.

The videos were made as a volunteer project with FOMR/MNWR and are for sale as a DVD in the Nature Store. All proceeds go to FOMR. You can [watch the "Fall" video here](#).

Stand with Friends of Malheur Refuge

With the illegal occupation in January 2016, Malheur and the National Wildlife Refuge System were thrust into the international spotlight. The occupation itself was not merely a one-off spectacle - it joined a long and multigenerational list of threats to public lands in this country, jeopardizing the legacy of conservation, cooperation and informed decision-making that these collective national treasures represent.

While the threats aren't necessarily new, they are increasing in scope and magnitude. To construct a border wall that would bisect Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge in Texas, the Department of Homeland Security will waive 37 environmental laws and regulations designed to protect natural resources and endangered species. A renewed push to extract petroleum from American soil has once again put coastal plains within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge at risk. At Izembek National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska, a proposed road linking the remote communities of King Cove and Cold Bay would cut through a globally important wildlife area that happens to also be designated wilderness - a "Road to Nowhere" that sets a dangerous precedent for public-land use in nominally protected areas.

In short, public lands need our support, now more than ever.

From its inception in 1999, Friends of Malheur National Wildlife has worked to support Malheur Refuge and the wildlife, habitat and cultural history it protects. To continue doing our part in taking a stand for public lands, we in turn rely on your support. Please consider becoming a member or donating to our cause.

Thank you for standing with us.

Sincerely,

Peter Pearsall, Executive Director
Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge

[**Become a Member!**](#)

[**Renew Membership**](#)

[**Donate**](#)

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