

Malheur Musings - July 2017

Meet Malheur's New Deputy Manager - Jeff Mackay



Photo by David B. Marshall



Jeff Mackay accepted the Deputy Manager position at Malheur last winter. He was raised in the rural area of eastern Shasta County in northern California. He was educated in both private and public schools and attended Shasta Junior College. Jeff was active in 4-H for 10 years as a member and youth leader. Raising and showing hogs and attending annual 4-H summer camp in the mountains were his

passions. His other primary passions were spending time outdoors hiking, backpacking, camping, hunting and fishing, learning to ID birds, and exploring public lands with family and friends. [Read more...](#)

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Mule deer doe avoiding the summer heat by napping in Peter French's Long Barn at P-Ranch. Photo by William Finley III.

A Successful Bobolink Count!

On June 4, 2017, Friends of Malheur NWR led a group of enthusiastic volunteers on the annual Bobolink count in the southern Blitzen Valley. The refuge hosts the largest population of Bobolinks west of the Rocky Mountains and is a significant breeding area for this species. Friends' volunteers, together with refuge staff and field biologists from the Portland Audubon



Male bobolink. Photo by Tim Blount.

Society walked established transect routes through wet meadow habitat counting birds both seen and heard. Between the three routes the total of bobolink's counted was 223, which despite being a good water year, was lower than numbers counted in the 1990s (about 500). This is a legacy survey going back several decades on the refuge, and is one of the tools refuge staff uses to understand land management impacts on this iconic species at Malheur. The Bobolink count is an amazing outreach

opportunity to bring in the local community, outdoor enthusiasts, and bird lovers to experience one of the many magical attractions that makes Malheur NWR such a special place.

Come for the Birds - Stay for the Fishing!



Although its not well known in some circles, the Blitzen River provides the second most popular native trout fishery in Oregon, and fish exceeding 20 inches are not uncommon there. So, if you are a fisherman or fisherwoman, and are coming to Malheur for the birds, bring your fishing pole. If you are just coming for the fish, bring your binoculars. Wildlife viewing is great here!

Trout fishing is good on the Blitzen River at the south end of the refuge and also you can find nice fish in the East Canal and Bridge Creek. Be sure to check Oregon and Refuge regulations before you fish. According to Oregon Fish and Wildlife, large streamers and other nymhs work well on the Blitzen throughout the summer. There are also various hatches that occur that anglers can take advantage of so also bring a selection of dry flies. Fishing should be most productive in and around deep water and in the mornings and evenings. You can check current conditions of the river here: [Current Blitzen River conditions](#).

Carp Fishing Day in August!

If you have been following news of Malheur, you probably know that a major problem on the refuge is the invasive common carp. Malheur Refuge staff and Friends of Malheur Refuge are hosting a **Carp Fishing Day** at refuge headquarters on **Saturday, August 5th**. The refuge opens the Blitzen River from Sodhouse Lane to the bridge at the Boat Landing Road from August 1 - September 15 for carp fishing. This event is designed primarily for kids, but everyone is welcome. There will be some educational information about the effects of carp on Harney Basin wetlands, plus prizes for the best fishing and some cooking of carp to feed the attendees. We are still working on details, so check our web page for updates.





Young Nathan Palmer with his catch in 2012.

We appreciate our Members!

I want to personally thank our members who have renewed memberships or made donations to us so far this year and I encourage those of you who haven't joined us to do so. If you haven't yet renewed, please do so and stay with us. There are increasing political threats to the welfare of our public lands which make our efforts to protect Malheur even more important. We, Friends of Malheur, are letting our voices be heard in the public lands debates. Your continued support will help us support Malheur Refuge and in our political struggle to support refuges and public lands.

Thank you all!

Sincerely,

Gary Ivey, President
Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge

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Thanks for Supporting Malheur National Wildlife Refuge!

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