

Malheur Musings - June 2016

Member Appreciation Tour, May 28th



Friends members investigate the Krumbo rock art boulder. These petroglyphs are estimated to be 3,500 years old. Photo by Tim Blount

We appreciate your support of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge!

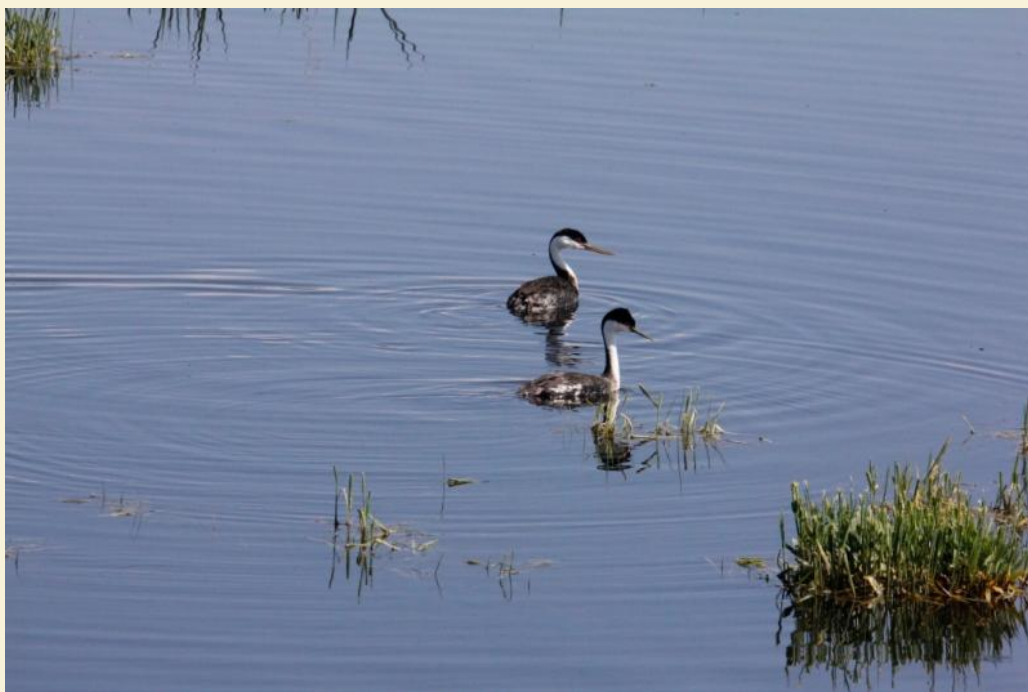
On May 28th, Friends of Malheur Refuge (FOMR) members gathered at Buena Vista Overlook on the refuge to begin a fun day of touring and seeing some areas not open to the public. Gary Ivey, president of FOMR, began with introductions to the 29 members who attended. Gary's extensive knowledge of Malheur NWR, and his stories of refuge management during his 15 years at Malheur as the refuge biologist, kept his audience rapt as he discussed how management practices changed over time. Executive Director Tim Blount and Board members Jerry Moore, Rick Vetter and Carl Woodward also helped with the tour.

Friends' members enjoyed the rare opportunity to watch a Trumpeter Swan pair with 3 cygnets in tow at Benson Pond. Also at Benson, participants found two Great Horned Owl chicks that had recently fledged and were working on their wing strength deep in the willows.



A long-tailed Weasel at Benson Pond, taken May 28, 2016 . Photo By Tim Blount.

A major highlight of our tour was a visit to Boca Lake which is normally closed to public access to protect breeding birds from disturbance. This is the largest managed wetland in the Blitzen Valley and is a very important brood site for refuge waterfowl. Many of the ducks will move to Boca Lake to raise their ducklings, where the large open water areas allow better escape from predators such as coyotes and mink. Also, Boca Lake regularly supports large colonies of Eared Grebes (up to 2500 nests have been counted there) and a few Western and Clark's Grebe nests.



Rick Vetter also led the group to see a Golden Eagle nest containing two fledglings and showed the group how to digiscope a photo. A great time was had by all and we appreciate the support of our Friends!



Rick Vetter showing the group how to digiscope photos of the eagle nest. Photo by Louisa Evers.

Meet Alice Elshoff, Woman of the Year!



Serving as FOMR Vice President, Alice was recently recognized for her voice and work during the Malheur Refuge siege by militants. We are very proud of her. Click her to read the story...[\(more\)](#)

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