



FRIENDS OF **MALHEUR** NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Malheur Musings - November 2018



Photo courtesy of Janelle Wicks

Introducing Janelle Wicks, FOMR Director

Janelle Wicks joined Friends of Malheur Refuge as Director in October. She brings to FOMR her passion for conservation along with a wealth of relevant experience, having worked in supervisory positions with conservation non-profits and National Wildlife Refuges in Virginia and Oregon.

Born in Erie, Pennsylvania, Janelle received her Bachelor of Science degree in biology, with a concentration on marine and environmental science. After graduating, she spent six years living on the Virginia coast, working first as an environmental educator and then as a field technician at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, conducting wildlife surveys for seabirds, shorebirds and mammals.

After Virginia, Janelle headed west to Oregon, accepting the Environmental Education Specialist position at Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge Complex. In that capacity, she led the Complex's environmental education program, overseeing the

educators and seasonal volunteers that implemented the curricula.

Janelle is excited to lead FOMR in its mission to support Malheur Refuge and conservation efforts in the greater Harney Basin. "The energy coming from FOMR's membership is growing and changing, and I want to harness that energy to create a sustainable way forward," Janelle said. "We can build off the momentum inherent in our membership to take on more Refuge projects, activities, events in the local community. We can strengthen our partnerships with local conservation groups and forge new ones."

A self-described "dog mom", Janelle enjoys hiking with her three canine companions and her wife, Teresa. They moved to Burns in early 2018. If you're visiting Refuge Headquarters in the coming months, please be sure to give Janelle a warm welcome!



Winter Hours at Malheur HQ

The Visitor Center is open weekdays, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

The Crane's Nest Nature Center & Store closed for the season October 31 and will reopen March 1, 2019

Crane's Nest Nature Center & Store Closed For Season

The store will be closed from November to March 1, 2019. Please bear with us as we work to get our online store up and running. In the meantime, you're welcome to contact us at store@malheurfriends.org if you're interested in making a purchase during our off season.



Great horned owl at Refuge HQ
Photo by Peter Pearsall

Refuge HQ Work Party Recap

On October 27, eight stalwart volunteers completed a hard day's work in the yard at the Crane's Nature Center & Store. In readiness for spring plantings, weeds were pulled, ancient root wads dug up, leaves raked, rocks moved and old-growth lilacs pruned. Predicted rain did not arrive--instead a beautiful fall day added to the enjoyment, so a good time was had by all.



Volunteers work outside of the Crane's Nest Nature Center & Store
Photo by FOMR

The High Desert Solitaire

From late summer to early spring, the foothills of the basin, filled with juniper trees and flanked by lichen-covered rimrock, ring with the flute-like calls and songs of Townsend's solitaires. In our region, these thrushes migrate down from the mountains to take advantage of food sources at lower elevations through the winter...[Read more here](#).



Townsend's solitaire
Photo by Peter Pearsall

Beaver or Muskrat?

Of the more than 50 native mammals found at Malheur Refuge, several are specially adapted for the life aquatic, including the American beaver and the muskrat. Since both species occur in the same habitats, it can sometimes be tricky to tell them apart-particularly at a distance, and if the animal is partially submerged...[Read more here](#).



Muskrat (L) and beaver
Photos by FOMR volunteer Kay Steele



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Volunteers in Action!



Volunteers at a sign-replacing work party last October
Photo by Lynn Fox

(Editor's note: We're introducing this section to our newsletter with the aim of highlighting the amazing volunteers we have at Malheur Refuge.)

Meet Donna West. Donna began volunteering at the Crane's Nest Nature Center & Store at the beginning of October and finished her stint last week.

"My home is in Montana but frequently find the call of the Oregon desert with all of its wide open spaces and sagebrush irresistible.

With my husband and dog Walter, we have spent a lot of time wandering this area. We travel with a sheep wagon, allowing us to camp almost anywhere."

Donna expects to go on more of those adventures now that she's retired after more than 40 years of nursing. One of her passions is photography, with animals of any kind being her favorite subject. For her, Malheur Refuge has been a draw ever since the first bird festival she attended in Burns.



Donna's sheep wagon!

"I am so happy to have had a chance to volunteer this year," Donna said. "I couldn't have asked for better accommodations for us as campers. I'm particularly delighted to be able to spend time with visitors to the gift shop. I continue to realize the common thread of humanity in everyone, and am encouraged by the idea that we have more in common than differences if we take the time to look for it." Thank you, Donna, for your hard work and positive outlook!

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



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