



# FRIENDS OF **MALHEUR** NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

## Malheur Musings - March 2019

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Sandhill cranes during a March 2009 snowstorm in Harney County  
Photo by Dan Streiffert

### Director's Message

Friends,

Despite the single-digit low temperatures and the much appreciated snow that is still coating the landscape, we are all beginning to stretch our wings in anticipation of spring! Outside my office window from the Crane's Nest Nature Center & Store at Refuge Headquarters, ground squirrels have made an appearance, still quite full looking with their winter fluff. Black-billed magpies are carrying on as they do at the suet feeders and swarms of red-winged blackbirds flutter collectively from bushes still bare to feeders and back again. I keep my eyes to the sky as adult and juvenile bald eagles have been hanging around, but I have yet to see or hear from our trusty great horned owls who generally keep us company.

While outdoors the activity has been increasing, the inside is no different! I am thrilled that with the 1st of March comes the re-opening of our Nature Store complete with a suite of new inventory. I have been particularly excited to offer pint glasses and water bottles with our new FOMR logo which are already in stock, with t-shirts, hats, magnets, patches, pins and more on their way! For something extra fun we are now carrying nature-themed socks with patterns reminiscent of Malheur and the Harney Basin. Who doesn't need socks with sandhill cranes, quail or bats on them? We didn't stop there. I could go on and on, but I'll spare you - so long as you promise to stop in and say Hi during your next visit!

I may be unreasonably enthusiastic about and proud of our Nature Store expansion, but even more exciting is all of the work we are doing that is made possible by those Store sales and your Membership!

- Next week we will be delivering 20 copies of the book Hoot by Carl Hiaasen to a local ELA teacher who is interested in a follow-up field trip to expose her students to burrowing owls in their own backyard.
- Harney County's Migratory Bird Festival is right around the corner on April 11th - 14th and we are excited to be supporting the festival through participating in the planning committee and offering a special FREE event with photographer Dan Streiffert on Sunday morning. [Register NOW!](#)
- Then FOMR's Annual Member's Weekend comes in May! See preliminary details below in the Membership Minute section.
- Friends of Malheur Refuge has made a commitment to financially support the work of six Tribal youth on the Refuge this summer through the Pacific Northwest Youth Corps Tribal Stewards Program. More details and an opportunity to contribute to this program will be coming soon.

Truthfully, there is much more going on than I could ever relay to you in these short messages, but I value this opportunity to share with you. It is so very important to me that you know the immense good that you are a part of, because none of this would be possible without the generous support of every single Friend of Malheur Refuge.

Thank you for being a Friend.

Janelle L Wicks  
FOMR Executive Director

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### **Winter Hours at Malheur HQ**

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

### **Crane's Nest Nature Center & Store is OPEN!**

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM 7 Days/Wk  
March 1 - October 31



From our timeless T-shirts to unique earrings and a full range of books including Bird ID Guides, our Crane's Nest Nature Store has something for everyone! Best of all, proceeds support FOMR projects on the Refuge and in our community. Don't forget that Members are entitled to a 10% discount.



Check out new items including nature themed socks, Advice from Nature bookmarks, and FOMR pint glasses! There's more to come.

## Membership Minute

If you are not yet or no longer a FOMR Member, please consider 2019 the year to become a Friend as we celebrate our 20th Birthday all year!  
If you are unsure of your Membership status please contact us at [Friends@Malheurfriends.org](mailto:Friends@Malheurfriends.org) today!

## 2019 Annual Members Weekend Event May 24th - 26th

Mark your calendars and plan for a fun filled Memorial Day Weekend!  
Experience the Refuge in a whole new way by Birding with the Experts,  
Enjoy a BBQ and Worthy Pollinator Garden Dedication at Headquarters,  
Attend an event w/ Authors & Avian Aficionados  
Kenn Kauffman & Alan Contreras,  
Sign up for exclusive tours of either Boca Lake or Double O.

Watch this space as details and signups become available.

## Our Birthday Gift to You

Throughout 2019, we will be giving away commemorative 20th Birthday enamel pins!  
All new Friends will receive a pin and current Friends can get theirs one of 3 ways!

## Birthday Bump

Renew your Membership in 2019 by bumping up to the next level. If you are currently an INDIVIDUAL Member, consider renewing with a FAMILY or DONOR Membership.

## Forever Friends

Opt for renewing your Membership in 2019 through monthly recurring payments. For as little as \$5 or as much as comfortably fits your budget.

To do this, visit [malheurfriends.org/support](http://malheurfriends.org/support), click DONATE and choose to make this a monthly donation!

## Volunteer

Join us for a work party, special project, staff the Crane's Nest Nature Store or lend us a hand by sharing your unique talents in any way you see fit! Keep an eye on this Newsletter and our Facebook page (@MalheurFriends) for upcoming volunteer opportunities.

**We have had 29 Members already participate and earn their pins! Pins are now in production and a running list of all who are owed one is growing. Pins are expected to arrive in our Crane's Nest Nature Store and begin making their way to you by mid-March.**

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### The First Butterflies of Spring

With below-freezing temperatures occurring regularly at night, one doesn't expect to see many poikilothermic, or "cold-blooded", creatures out and about. But one resident poikilotherm that stirs to life on warmer days in early spring is, improbably, a butterfly: the mourning cloak (*Nymphalis antiopa*), a widespread species found across North America and Eurasia, is usually the first butterfly seen at Malheur Refuge each spring...[Read more here.](#)



Mourning cloak on juniper  
Photo by Peter Pearsall

### Scrub Jays and Range Expansion

As natural landscapes give way to human development, many native bird species lose prime habitat or shift their ranges elsewhere (if they can). Some birds, however, seem able to take advantage of the changes and instead expand their normal range. Take California scrub jays, which have been pushing their range north and east for the past 40 years. Their arrival in southeast Oregon occurred recently, and it looks as though they're here to stay...[Read more here.](#)



California scrub jay  
Photo by Dan Streiffert

### Volunteers Still Needed for Short-eared Owl Surveys!

Calling all short-eared owl enthusiasts! Are you interested in being a part of the world's largest short-eared owl study? Grab a friend and sign up to be a valuable citizen scientist in Oregon!

The Western Asio flammeus Landscape Study covers eight western states and is designed to provide crucial information to help management decisions for the short-eared owl. Spots are filling fast, so don't hesitate to be a part of this important study! To learn more about the project and how to participate, [go here.](#)



Short-eared owl  
Photo by Peter Pearsall

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## Conservation Corner

From Wildlife Biologist to Maintenance Supervisor, there is much important and exciting work being done at Malheur Refuge and they want to share it with you! Click the links below to read the full articles.

### [Thriving Collaborative Efforts Support Conservation in the Harney Basin](#)

By Chad Karges, Malheur National Wildlife Refuge Project Leader

### [Weed-Control Prioritization at Malheur Refuge](#)

By Edwin Sparks, Malheur National Wildlife Refuge Habitat Ecologist

### [Winter Swan Surveys at Malheur Refuge](#)

By Alexa Martinez, Malheur National Wildlife Refuge Wildlife Biologist

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## Volunteer Spotlight



## Crane's Nest Nature Center & Store

We are pleasantly overwhelmed by the number of people who are interested in volunteering at the Crane's Nest Nature Center and Store in 2019! Thank you to everyone who has reached out and will be joining us. If you are interested and not yet on the list, it's possible to join the wait list in the event that someone's plans change mid-stream. Volunteers with an RV or similar set-up are able to take advantage of the RV pads and amenities available at Refuge Headquarters.

## Pollinator-palooza in 2019 - STILL NEEDED!

We are in the final stages of our long-awaited Pollinator Garden that will be going in the ground this spring! Volunteers can join us for one or both work party weekends:

**April 13th & 14th** - We will spend the weekend building and setting the raised garden beds for the Pollinator Garden. This will require light to medium physical ability and use of hand and power tools. Volunteers will have the opportunity to stay on site at the Refuge Fire Bunkhouse the nights of April 12th, 13th and 14th. This is a special treat, as lodging is a scarcity during the Annual Harney County Migratory Bird Festival! [Sign-Up NOW!](#)

**May 4th & 5th** - Finally, the plants will be planted! A weekend of gardening on behalf of the pollinators will include some light lifting, bending, squatting, etc. These plants will attract and support native pollinators and bring joy and exploration to Refuge visitors. Again, volunteers will have the chance to enjoy an overnight stay in the Fire Bunkhouse at Refuge HQ. [Sign-Up NOW!](#)

If you are interested in volunteering this spring, or have general questions about volunteering at Malheur Refuge, please contact us at [friends@malheurfriends.org](mailto:friends@malheurfriends.org).

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

[Become a Member!](#)

[Renew Membership](#)

[Donate](#)

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STAY CONNECTED:

