



FRIENDS OF MALHEUR NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Malheur Musings - June 2019



Bristly fiddleneck (*Amsinckia tessellata*) is a species of wildflower found this time of year throughout the sagebrush steppe.

Photo by Peter Pearsall

Director's Message

Friends,

Phew, what a month! May was every bit as busy as it promised to be and then some, both in and out of doors. When western tanagers finally arrived, they did so en masse. The yellow-headed blackbirds were voracious at the feeders every day. Their messy feedings made for a veritable showering of seeds to the ground below for quail, robins, towhees and of course the ground squirrels. With such a diverse crowd at the feeders every day, it was wonderful to see everyone sharing the bounty and getting along just fine. The owlets are now mobile and making their rounds of Refuge Headquarters. Between the Refuge staff, volunteers and myself, it is common for the first greeting of each morning to include, "Where is the brood today?" And with all of the hustle and bustle of nature--including many a rainstorm--every

event of May went off without a hitch.

The premiere of the Malheur Symphony in Burns was a grand event with an estimated 600 people in attendance. The gymnasium of Burns High School, which had just three weeks earlier been headquarters for the Harney County Migratory Bird Festival, was transformed into a concert hall, complete with stage, floor seating, bleachers pulled out and of course the Central Oregon Symphony's Regional Orchestra to perform the piece. The listener experience was nothing short of magical. The Symphony has since been played in Bend, OR, where the magic of Malheur reached an additional 3,000 people over three performances. The Friends of Malheur are grateful to for the privilege of having a tabling presence at all four performances.

With the Symphony to kick off the Month of May, we certainly wrapped it up with a grand finale. Our Annual Meeting turned Members Weekend in celebration of our Birthday was everything I could have hoped for and more. With our Birders and Docents spread throughout the Auto Tour Route on Saturday morning for the Migrate with Malheur event, it is estimated that we reached about 100 people. Some folks were there intentionally, but most were enthusiastic bystanders who took advantage of the opportunity for someone to show there what there is to see, whether it was the eagle nest at P Ranch or the owlets at Benson Pond. Saturday evening's Malheur Musings (aptly named after this very Newsletter) brought out 60 people to the Elks lodge for food, camaraderie and of course two wonderful presentations given by Rick Vetter and Alan Contreras. The night was wrapped up with an auction to raise funds in support of The Friends' commitment to sponsor the Northwest Youth Corps (NYC) Tribal Stewards Program to spend 1 week of their time at Malheur NWR this summer. Angela Noah, NYC Tribal Inclusion Coordinator, made a special trip to join us and share the history and value of the Tribal Stewards Program. On Sunday we were able to offer 4 half-day tours of the Refuge, which 41 people were able to attend! By all accounts, this weekend was a wonderful success. And yes, it seems this Members Weekend may be established as an Annual event, so we hope you will join us next year!

Thank you for being a Friend,

Janelle L Wicks
FOMR Executive Director



Malheur HQ Visitor Center

Every Day 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Crane's Nest Nature Center & Store

Every Day 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

March 1st - October 31st

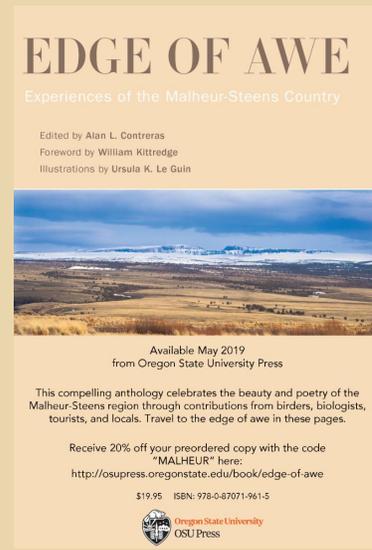
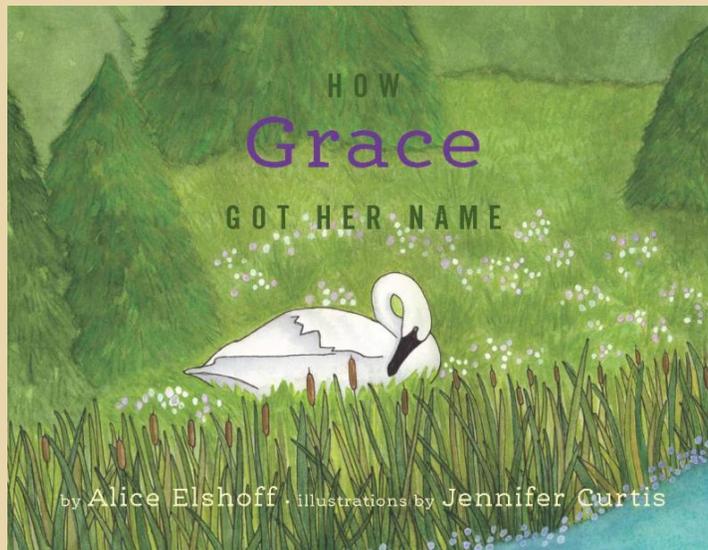


There is always a friendly face or two, like these folks Delona & John Roth, waiting to greet you in the Crane's Nest Nature Store! Delona and John are just 2 of 6 resident volunteers who help to run the store and serve as Visitor Information contacts. We have more than just your new favorite t-shirt or hat. You can also pick up a map, auto tour CD or watchable wildlife brochure before heading out on your Refuge adventures!



NEW! We are proud to now feature locally blown glass art, like these pudgy little quail pictured to the right! Ryan Lisle opened his workshop about a year ago and has since been a featured artist at the Harney County Migratory Bird Festival. Ryan produced a dozen glass eggs for an egg hunt during the event and plans to grow this particular event at future HC Bird Festivals. Ryan's art is currently only for sale locally in his shop and our Nature Store at Refuge Headquarters.

In addition to new art, we are so pleased to be carrying *Edge of Awe*, edited by renowned author and poet Alan Contreras, who has spent the last two months at Malheur as a Refuge Visitor Center Volunteer Docent. We can hardly keep this book on the shelf! And now, just in this week, we also have *How Grace Got Her Name*, which was authored by our FOMR founding member and Vice-Chair Alice Elshoff! This sweet story and the accompanying conservation history was featured in our May Newsletter.



****Don't forget that Members are entitled to a 10% discount. ****

Scratch & Dent Bin

Look for discounts on items in our Scratch & Dent bin. Items might be slightly less than perfect, but everything deserves a home!

Check out discounts up to 40% OFF

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 today!

2019 Annual Members Weekend Event

A Very Birdy Birthday Success!

Up to 100 people enjoyed



the Migrate with Malheur
Birding Hot Spots!

60 Friends and community
members came out for
Malheur Musings with Rick
Vetter and Alan Contreras!

\$1,480 was raised through
the auction to support the
Tribal Stewards Program!

41 People enjoyed guided
Refuge tours on Sunday!

See you next year!

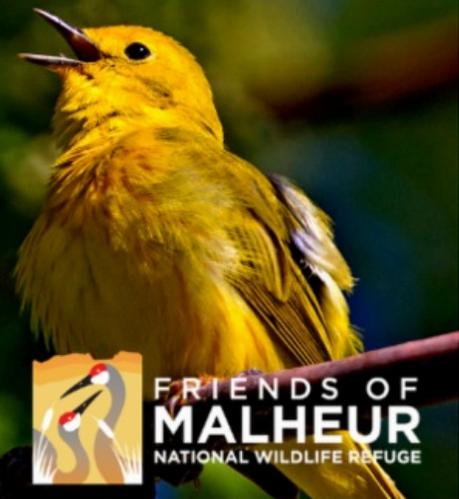
Our Birthday Gift to You

Throughout 2019, we will be giving away commemorative 20th Birthday enamel pins!

WE'RE SORRY!

The #BirthdayBump and new Membership programs have taken flight and run us out of commemorative pins! While we are waiting for more, participants will receive a commemorative sticker set. Anyone who would still like to receive a pin when the replacements arrive please email Janelle, director@malheurfriends.org, and she will add your name to the list.

Thank you for being a Friend!



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, 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 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.



To date, 67 Friends have celebrated our Birthday by increasing their annual Membership contribution and/or signing up for monthly recurring donations!

**Thank you to the 180+ New Friends
that have joined us since Jan 1, 2019!**

Western Burrowing Owls

The Western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*) is a ground-dwelling owl that inhabits areas of short vegetation and bare ground, including deserts, grasslands and shrub-steppe across the West. In Oregon, they are usually associated with sagebrush-steppe, grasslands, pastures, roadsides, and other areas characterized by sparse vegetation and level terrain....[Read more here.](#)



Burrowing owl at dusk
Photo by Peter Pearsall



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.

Partners in Science

By Edwin Sparks, Malheur National Wildlife Refuge Habitat Ecologist

Here at Malheur Refuge we engage in a lot of partnership opportunities. I have heard it called "The Malheur Model" more than once. I want to take the time to highlight one of these ongoing partnerships that we have been engaged in for a few years that is probably not well known at this time...[Read more here](#).

Is it a Bird? A plane? No, it's a Drone!

By Alexa Martinez, Malheur National Wildlife Refuge Wildlife Biologist

Malheur National Wildlife Refuge has several methodologies for trying to find the best ways to collect data to help provide a biological assessment for management decisions. Whether it's walking transects through a field, driving an airboat on Malheur Lake surveying for shorebirds, flying in a small aircraft to count waterfowl, or conducting point-count surveys from a fixed position, all these methods help improve the quality of our surveys...[Read more here](#).

Spring Inventory and Monitoring at Malheur

By Teresa "Bird Wicks, Portland Audubon Society Eastern Oregon Field Coordinator

This spring has been a particularly wet one at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. Between spring snowmelt and rainstorms, things are lush and green throughout the Refuge. As expected, the water and weather have affected birds on the Refuge, with the first of the year Eastern Kingbird recorded May 27th, during the second round of Woody Riparian Landbird surveys. Woody Riparian Landbird surveys are one of several spring Inventory and Monitoring (I&M) surveys at Malheur...[Read more here](#).

**Friends of Malheur Refuge is Sponsoring
Northwest Youth Corps Tribal Stewards**

& You Can Help!

The Friends have committed to sponsoring this program up to \$7,500 and we could use your support through this special fundraising effort. We have raised an initial \$1,480 towards this goal through the Malheur Musings event & auction. Please visit [HERE](#) to learn more and to make a contribution!



FRIENDS OF MALHEUR NWR



Sponsoring 1 week of hands on Restoration and Stewardship projects interacting with and learning for Natural Resource Professionals.

Tribal Stewards

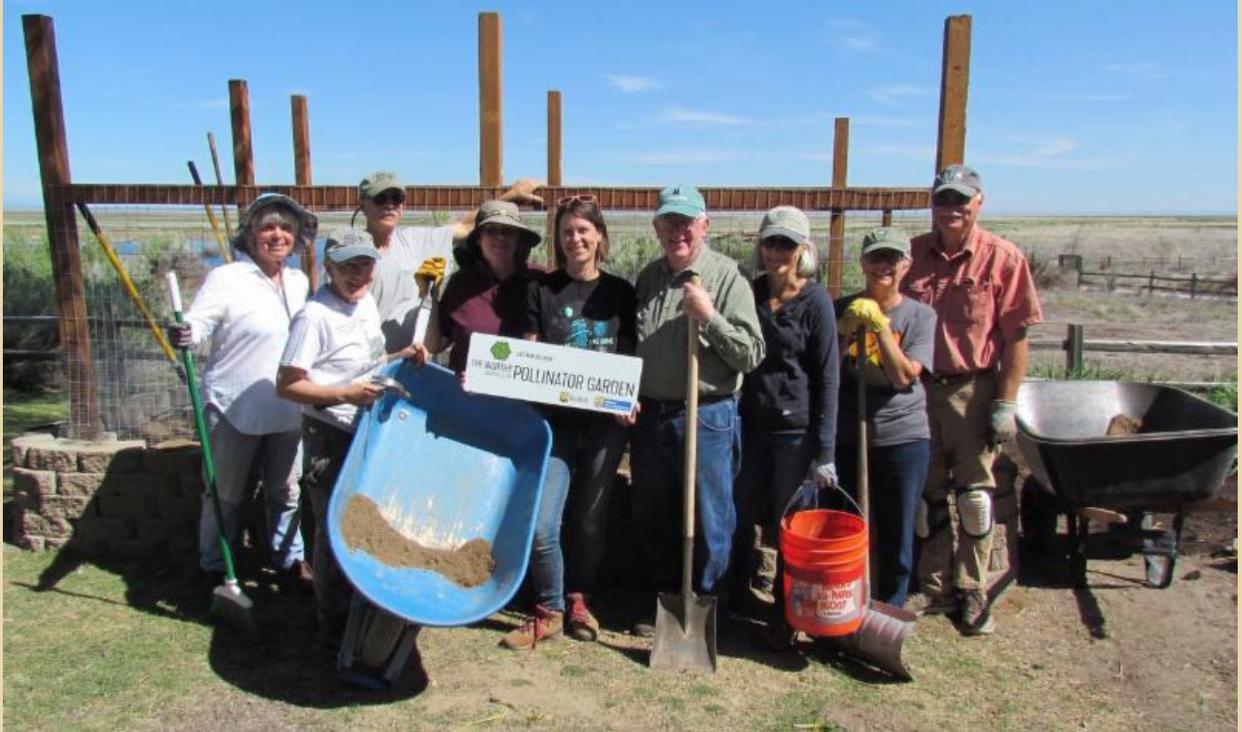
Over 8 weeks, a team of young adults from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Burns Paiute Tribe will undertake restoration projects across Oregon's high desert and gain experience in public lands advocacy and the fundamentals of landscape conservation.

A Program of NW Youth Corps (NWYC)
& Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA)

In Other News:

- **Sodhouse RoMP (Rookery Monitoring Program) will continue through June. Volunteers will be stationed at Sodhouse Ranch, 150 meters from the rookery to collect nest occupancy and productivity data. The visiting public is encouraged to stop by and learn about this exciting project, scope out the rookery and get a rare glimpse at one of the newest bald eagle chicks on the Refuge. Check out the [FLYER!](#)**
- **In light of a particularly wet spring, the Refuge staff are still expecting to experience periodic flooding on the Central Patrol Road (Auto Tour Route) through parts of June. As this happens updates will be posted to [@MalheurFriends](#) on Facebook as soon as information becomes available to us.**

Volunteer Spotlight



Pollinator Powerhouse: Just a few of the many volunteers who helped bring the Worthy Pollinator Garden to life! (Left to Right) Cindy Zalunardo, Linda Hoffman, Greg Burke, Dale Broszeit, Lisa Sanco, John Roth, Delona Roth, Eileen Loerch, and Jerry Moore.

Worthy Pollinator Garden Dedication



May 26th at 1:00 PM

About 30 people gathered around to properly dedicate the Worthy Pollinator Garden. FOMR Vice-Chair, Alice Elshoff, shared our vision for improving pollinator habitat surrounding the Crane's Nest Nature shore and increasing awareness with regards to the importance and the plight of pollinators. These plants will attract and support native pollinators and bring joy and exploration to Refuge visitors.

Alice read the names of all 19 volunteers that brought the garden to being before inviting Linda Hoffman, FOMR Board Member and Project Committee Chair, and Lisa Sanco, of the Worthy Garden Club, to "Prune the Flagging". This was followed by a speech from Marnie Woodruff, the 2017 recipient of FOMR's \$1,000 Scholarship. Marnie spoke of her studies in conservation and natural resources as a sophomore at Oregon State University and the importance of building deep connections to nature through the Refuge.



Shout-Outs!

Our Members Weekend extravaganza would not have been half the success it was without all

who took on volunteer roles throughout the weekend. A huge Thank You is owed to the following people:

Alan Contreras, Volunteer
Alice Elshoff, Board Member
Art Broszeit, Volunteer
Carl Woodward, Board Member
Chris Gardner, Board Member
Dale Broszeit, Volunteer
Darrell Smith, Volunteer
Delona Roth, Volunteer
Eileen Loerch, Volunteer
Erik Hamerlynck, Volunteer
Gary Ivey, Board Member
Isabelle Fleuraud, Volunteer
Jerry Moore, Board Member
John Roth, Volunteer
Linda Hoffman, Board Member
Lisa Sanco, Worthy Garden Club & Volunteer
Lorna Smith, Volunteer
Rick Vetter, Board Member
Steve Loerch, Volunteer
Teresa Wicks, Portland Audubon & Volunteer
Refuge Staff for their support
Burns Elks Lodge
Pine Room Restaurant
Harney County Chamber of Commerce

Thank you!
Thank you!
Thank you!

If you are interested in volunteering this year or have general questions about volunteering at Malheur Refuge, please contact us at friends@malheurfriends.org.

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

[Become a Member!](#)

[Renew Membership](#)

[Donate](#)



friends@malheurfriends.org
36391 Sodhouse Lane
Princeton, OR 97721

STAY CONNECTED:

