



FRIENDS OF
MALHEUR
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Malheur Musings December 2019



December 3rd is #GivingTuesday and we are proud to be a part of this national day of giving! Giving is good for the soul and when we share our generosity, it inspires more of it! Consider telling **@GivingTuesday** why you give and **@MalheurFriends** could win \$10,000. Use **#MyGivingStory**

Photo by USFWS volunteer Alan Nyiri

Director's Message

Greetings!

Winter Solstice, Hanukkah, Kwanza, Christmas – December is a time to celebrate, share and reflect on the year past. It is hard to believe that 2019 is ending, but here it is the end of our 20th Birthday and my first full year as your Executive Director. I could not be prouder of what The Friends of Malheur NWR accomplished and grateful for the opportunity to have been a part of it. Every visitor I met, volunteer I worked with, and relationships I built with Refuge Staff and partners has meant the world to me.

Further down in this issue of the newsletter you will find a set of reflections titled, Gifts from Malheur. I would like to share mine, here. The most precious gift I have received from Malheur this year went beyond the stunning vistas, quiet sunrises and the relationship with our resident owls at Refuge Headquarters. This year I have tapped into a deep well of gratitude for our volunteers. Particularly those volunteers who came and stayed for a month... or four. We quite literally laughed

and cried and sweat and bled together – for Malheur. And now that the season is over and they have all gone back to home to their lives I am left with so many fond memories. I am also touched by the constant reminders, the occasional postcard or small token of appreciation that shows up in my mail. There are invitations I hope to cash in on to visit and stay in Portland, McMinnville or Port Townsend. These people, our volunteers, feel like more than friends; a sort of family that's bound by love for Malheur and the shared experience of service to the Refuge. What a gift that is.

As we close the chapter on 2019 I hope that you, our Friends, have been as inspired as I have by all that we accomplished. The coming year will be full of new opportunities to engage with the Refuge through our organization with events, volunteer opportunities, special fundraising campaigns and more. This also means that we must prepare, financially, to accomplish our 2020 goals. Please consider giving an end of year donation towards our Outreach & Education or Habitat Enhancement Programs.

There is more information below about each program and how you can make a meaningful difference in how our organization contributes to Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and our community.

As always, Thank you for being a Friend.

Janelle L Wicks
FOMR Executive Director

Conservation Corner



[An Uncommon Owl at Malheur](#)

Written by Rick Vetter, FOMR Secretary

[Moths of Malheur, Part 2](#)

Written by Dana Ross

[Do Birds Get Cold Feet?](#)

Written by FOMR volunteer Peter Pearsall



In the high desert, winter draws back the curtain, unmask the actors, and simplifies the plot lines. Nests from previous seasons reveal themselves after the leaves drop, reminders of birds that have since flown thousands of miles to warmer climes.

But minimalism is itself a virtue, and the cold months at Malheur present a chance to set aside the usual distractions. When a landscape is laid bare, so, too, is the life within it....[Read more here.](#)

Golden-crowned kinglets in winter are a



marvelous sight, their movements frenetic, flighty, and all too fleeting. They are industrious while others lie torpid, fluttering about in their desperate search for calories and warmth.

Tiny golden-crowned kinglets, common autumn migrants and occasional winter residents at Malheur Refuge, are thermodynamic wonders...[Read more here.](#)



On a cold day in October, Portland Audubon's Eastern Oregon Field Coordinator Teresa Wicks, Malheur National Wildlife Refuge's Wildlife Biologist Alexa Martinez, and local volunteers Rick Vetter and Joan Suther concluded the 2019 Malheur Lake shorebird surveys. It was a relatively windless day, and other than the waves created by the airboat, Malheur Lake was a mirror... [Read more here.](#)

Gifts from Malheur



'I find both opportunities for solitude and inspiration on my visits to Malheur NWR. This is one of the few places where one can still have unique one-on-one experiences with wildlife. It's simply a treasure.'

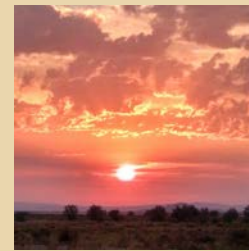
Dan Streiffert
Member & Volunteer



'The Joyful Camaraderie of Shared Purpose'
Cindy Zalunardo
Member & Volunteer

One of my many gifts from Malheur over the years was the privilege Cal and I had of removing miles of unwanted Fencing---not everyone's idea of fun, but so rewarding!!!'

Alice Elshoff
FOMR Board Member



'One of the greatest gifts that Malheur can provide is its stillness. Then add the breathtaking beauty of a sunset across the high desert and it becomes unforgettable.'

Linda Hoffman
FOMR Board Member

'After serving as refuge biologist at Malheur for 15 years, one of the many gifts I received was a lifetime of memories of intimate experiences with wildlife, which I treasure.'

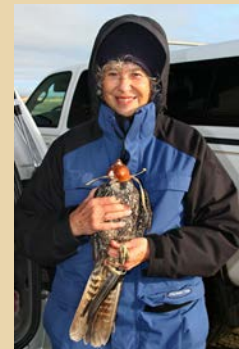
Gary Ivey

FOMR Board President



'Driving up the CPR after a day of birding and coming upon an open field where about one dozen short-eared owls were swooping and turning, hunting in the evening light. Not only were they life birds, but an unforgettable gift of beauty that only nature can provide.

Suzanne Staples
FOMR Board Member



**Alexa Martinez, Malheur NWR
Wildlife Biologist**

To me Malheur NWR has given me many gifts: my first job in my conservation career, a new home from home, memories I will never forget, new life skills, new friends, and the most important gift to me was a family. I may be far from the family and friends I know and love, but I have a great addition to my family here at Malheur. [Read more...](#)

**Teresa Wicks, Portland Audubon
Eastern OR Field Biologist**

Aside from having the time to step away from my desk, from paperwork, and from my dissertation, Malheur NWR has given me the time to stop and experience the one thing that has been a constant companion, teacher, and inspiration throughout my life...the land. [Read more...](#)

FriendsGiving Season

The Friends of Malheur NWR are focusing end of year fundraising efforts

towards financially supporting two of our highest priority programs; Habitat Enhancement and Outreach & Education. Each of these programs have many projects, events and financial commitments that we undertake each year in order to progress our mission of being effective stewards and advocates for the Refuge.



In 2019, our efforts in both of these areas increased exponentially and with that so did their need for financial support. We have budgeted a minimum of \$16,000 towards these efforts and it is all dependent on the generosity of our Friends. Between now and the end of the year we hope to raise half of this amount. Just imagine what we could do with more!

Please help make it possible for us to continue and grow the positive impact we are having on the Refuge and in our rural communities. Whether you choose to indicate the program you prefer to support or leave that to us, please know that the collective contribution of our Friends is making a difference.



Donate Today!

Events

BURNS -HINES COUNT
MON 12/16
7:00 AM
MEET AT
MCDONALDS

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

MALHEUR NWR COUNT
TUES 12/17
7:30 AM
MEET AT P-RANCH FIELD HOUSE

There are options for hiking and/or driving on both counts. It is generally cold and often snowy. Both counts average about 55 species, but have reached 65-70 species! The Burns count holds the world record for California quail, with over 10,000 within Burns city limits!

Join us for the annual post-count tally meeting, over dinner and award ceremony for numerous categories following the Burns-Hines count on Monday Dec 16th!

You can also do a feeder count from the warmth of your home and still join us for the award ceremony and dinner!

To join us or for more information contact Coordinators:
Rick Vetter cell 541-589-2230
Joan Suther cell 541-589-1087
Email cotingas@gmail.com

History of the Christmas Bird Count

The Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Count, a citizen science effort aimed at monitoring bird population trends on a massive scale, is a long-standing tradition dating back to 1901. Born from an entirely different aim—that of shotguns trained on as many birds as one had shells for—the now-bloodless count turns an

age-old maxim on its head: birds in the bush are worth infinitely more alive than dead by one's hand, any ratios notwithstanding...[Read more here.](#)

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!

LAST CHANCE: 2019 Membership Appreciation Program

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.



2020 MEMBER APPRECIATION

Membership vinyl decal & bookmark for all new and renewing members
I LOVE Malheur NWR BUMPer Sticker for Members who BUMP up a membership level
Specialty gifts for increasing membership to the Patron, Steward or Benefactor levels

Thank you to the 350 New Friends
that have joined us since Jan 1, 2019

Current Membership Total: 816

Volunteer Highlights



Volunteering: The Year in Review

It's a moving experience to meet and work with people who have never set foot on Malheur before or have visited and deeply loved this place for over 30 years. Cohorts of volunteers formed bonds with one another and with staff. Working with these more than 40 people who gave over 3,100 hours of their time to the

Friends of Malheur NWR has been both professionally and personally

rewarding...[Read more here.](#)

RECRUITING 2020 Resident Volunteers!

Do you enjoy spending time in the high-desert expanses of Malheur Refuge? Are you interested supporting the Crane's Nest Nature Store operations, improving Refuge habitat, monitoring wildlife populations, or providing interpretive services to visitors? Volunteers with FOMR do all that and much more.

Residential volunteers with Friends of Malheur Refuge are able to park their camper at the newly renovated RV hook-ups with access to a volunteer lounge, kitchen, bathroom and laundry facilities. We require a month-long commitment of 24 hours per week. Our volunteers come away from their service with indelible memories, a renewed passion for Malheur Refuge and public lands in general, and (more often than not) some incredible photographs.

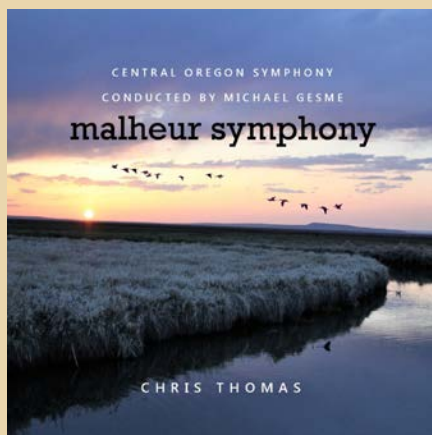
Spots are filling up fast but there is still availability in March, June - October! If you are interested, please fill out [THIS SURVEY](#).



Current Volunteer Hours Logged: 3,137+

Crane's Nest Nature Center & Store

The Nature Store is closed for the season and will reopen March 1st, 2020
Orders made by phone & email will still be available



Malheur Syphony CDs are NOW AVAILABLE!

This is the long anticipated recording of Chris Thomas's piece which was commissioned by the Central Oregon Symphony Association and premiered in Burns this past spring. (\$15 + S&H)

Sagebrush Collaborative and the recently published *Edge of Awe* bring you close to Malheur from wherever you may be and are two of our best sellers!

Email friends@malheurfriends.org to place an order for any of these items and more.
Don't forget Members get a 10% discount.

Malheur HQ Visitor Center

Monday - Thursday 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

New Member Sign-up

Renewing Member Sign-up

Make a Donation Today

Visit Our Website

Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge | malheurfriends.org
friends@malheurfriends.org
36391 Sodhouse Lane
Princeton, OR 97721

STAY CONNECTED:

