



# The Nature Center Stream



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The Seasonal Newsletter of the MK Nature Center

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## BSU SCIENTISTS TEACH AT MK NATURE CENTER

Brian Stark and Micah Scholer are REAL scientists teaching at the MK Nature Center. Both are graduate students at Boise State University and are Graduate Fellows in the Graduate, Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> grade Program (GK-12). The GK-12 program is a national program funded by the National Science Foundation. Boise State University received a 2.26 million dollar grant 3 years ago to place graduate student scientists in community learning centers in Boise for five years. This year, MK Nature Center was selected to receive two of the Fellows to help us teach science!



Micah is a Raptor biologist, specifically looking at how best to determine the presence of owls in an Idaho forest by using woodpecker presence as one indicator. Some owls are cavity nesters, but no owls make their own cavities! Woodpeckers, on the other hand, do make their own cavities which are often later used by owls. Because owls are nocturnal and illusive, it is difficult for biologists to count them. Micah is attempting to find out if the presence of woodpeckers can *better* determine the presence of owls.



Brian is a geomorphologist studying windblown sediment in the Boise Foothills. “Geomorphology is the scientific study of landforms and the processes that shape them, and more broadly, the evolution of processes controlling the topography of any planet. Geomorphologists seek to understand why landscapes look the way they do, to understand landform history and dynamics, and to predict future changes through a combination of field observation, physical experiment, and numerical modeling” (Wikipedia).

We look forward to having Brian and Micah on our team through June, 2011!

*MK Nature Center-Your Face-to-Fish Connection*



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## MKNC TAKES NATIVE FISHES PROGRAM ON THE ROAD

Dave Cannamela, MK Nature Center Superintendent

Several months ago, I was approached by Wes Wills of the Sawtooth Interpretive and Historical Association (SIHA) to do a presentation for their summer lecture series. Discussions with Wes lead to a "Native Fishes of Idaho" presentation on the evening of Friday August 6, followed by a "Class in the Creek" session Saturday morning. Friday's presentation to an audience of about 60 very interested and friendly people, Stanley residents and visitors alike, was very well received and an absolute blast.

The discussion was followed by an incredible dinner and abundance of socializing hosted by Gary and Laurii Gadwa. Kerry Overton, my long time friend and US Forest Service fish biologist, provided invaluable support on all fronts. The Class in the Creek session, although only attended by a handful of folks, was a great experience. The river life was abundant and interesting and the audience responded with an appropriate measure of excitement. Of course, the Stanley scenery can never be beat; what a venue!

We sincerely thank SIHA for their generous donation and Wes for his incredible hospitality and personal donation as a new member of the MKNC friends group. A *thank you* the Gadwa's for sharing their home for a wonderful evening. Looking forward to another gig next year!

## 2010 BIRD SEED SALE COMING UP!

The MK Nature Center will host its fourth annual bird seed sale with proceeds from this event to benefit educational programs at the Nature Center on Saturday December 4, 2010 from 9-4 pm.

Once again this year, the Nature Center will be partnering with Wild Birds Unlimited to bring you a variety of high quality, locally-preferred bird seed in assorted quantities.



The MK Nature Center Gift shop will have many nature-themed holiday items for purchase as well.

In keeping with the Idaho Department of Agriculture's efforts to stop the spread of noxious weeds, this year's sale features safe, noxious weed-free seed. For more information please contact Sue Dudley at 208-287-2900.

# CITIZENS AGAINST POACHING (CAP) CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE NATURE CENTER

Jerry Conley, along with Bill Lewis and Fred Christensen, presented the Nature Center with a check for \$1,000 on behalf of Citizens Against Poaching (CAP). The money will be used for educational programs and security services at the MKNC. As you may recall, CAP donated several thousand dollars a few years ago that funded the purchase and installation of security/web cam cameras at the MKNC. We also employ a private firm to conduct nightly patrols of the MKNC grounds. CAP's generosity is greatly needed and appreciated.



*Pictured from left to right: Chris Wright, Janet Conley, Bill Lewis, Jerry Conley, David Cannamela, and Fred Christensen.*

# NATURE CENTER STORE PROFITS HELP SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

MK Nature Center now carries beautiful sea glass jewelry that has been hand picked off Pacific Ocean beaches and then turned in hand crafted earrings, necklaces and bracelets. Also in stock right now is a great assortment of silver earrings that contain 92.7 percent silver.

MK Nature Center sells a variety of local Idaho Author's guide books such as Back Country Roads, Best Easy Day Hikes in Boise, Idaho Birding Trail, and Idaho Mountain Wildflowers. All sales benefit the MK Nature Center education programs.



# FACE-TO-FISH DAYS-A SUCCESS!



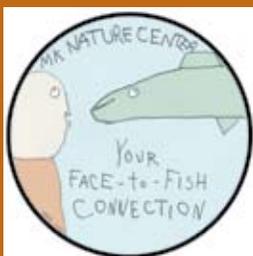
Left: MKNC educator, Sara Focht shows YMCA kids where the insects hide from the fish.

Right: IDFG Conservation Education Supervisor, Vicky Runnoe introduces Boise Mayor Dave Bieter and Idaho's Lieutenant Governor, Brad Little at Face-to-Fish Days on July 8th, 2010.



Left: Kids who attended Face-to-Fish Days made colorful Salmon crafts.

Right: Visitors enjoy the views of our three sturgeon in the large pond. The largest is nearly 7 feet long and 200 lbs!



# MK NATURE CENTER'S

## 3RD ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST

Have you taken any photos at the MKNC in the last year? Enter them into our photo contest!

All entries must be:

- Digital
- Taken at MKNC
- Taken by an amateur photographer
- Sent to sara.focht@idfg.idaho.gov by December 1, 2010
- Accompanied by permission for MKNC to use the photo for publicity
- Must not have been entered into previous MKNC contests
- Entered into one of the following categories:



Abstract/Artistic

Arachnids/Insects

Education

Fish

Aquatics

People Enjoying Nature

Wildlife (nonbird)

Bird

Macro

Plants

Seasonal

Additional rules:

A single photo can only be entered into one category.

Photographers may only enter two photos in a category.

Photographers may only enter 6 photos total in the contest.



*Great Blue Heron by Gene Halberstadt  
Swallowtail Butterfly by Luana McCauley*

## NEW VOLUNTEER-RIGHT UNDER OUR NOSES

*Dave Cannamela, MK Nature Center Superintendent*



Lu (Luann) Gochnour did an incredible job pruning all of our crab apple trees! What a gift. Lu approached me one day in August, introduced herself as one of our neighbors at Kimberly One Condos, and asked if she could prune the trees along Walnut Street. WOW! There's an offer I couldn't refuse. She worked like a maniac putting in 8-10 hours a day on some of the hottest days of the year. And, after making our trees look absolutely beautiful (and safe for pedestrians), she bought and spread yards of bark to finish the job. Then, while I was on vacation, she did the entire "crab apple strip" along the driveway to the Nature Center. Lu, we can't thank you enough. That was a long-overdue job we just couldn't get to!

*MK Nature Center-Your Face-to-Fish Connection*

## ATHENA-OUR NEW RESIDENT!

The Nature Center is unlike the zoo in that most of our wildlife is WILD and not in cages. There are a few exceptions. We currently have a salamander, a gopher snake, a turtle, and two American Kestrels. All of these animals were injured and cannot be released into the wild. We recently received a new resident! Athena is a small burrowing owl that came to us from a raptor rehabilitator.



*Cathie Havlina and her daughter Gillian Havlina delivered Athena to MK Nature Center on September 28th. Athena hit a windshield at night in early September. Havlina, a raptor rehabilitator, nursed the bird back to health, but the wing was broken and calcified causing permanent damage.*

## VOLUNTEER POTLUCK FUN!



*Thanks to all our volunteers for their hard work and dedication this year! Also, a big thanks to volunteers who attended our fall Volunteer potluck on September 29th. Great food, great weather and GREAT people! Pictured top left: Arlene Schaeffer and Brenda Beckley. Bottom left: Fred and Cheryl Minckler. Middle: Becca Fritz. Right, Willow Hahn and David Cannamela.*