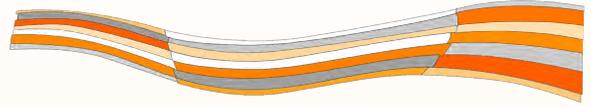




The Nature Center Stream



FALL The Seasonal Newsletter of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game MK Nature Center 2015



IDFG MKNC Outreach Events

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(Above) IDFG MK Nature Center Superintendent, Dave Cannamela dresses up HP's Jodi Olson, (Boise Site Program Manager and a darn good sport) like a beaver at HP's annual Bring Your Inventor to Work Day.

The number of requests for the IDFG MK Nature Center to teach outreach events far exceeds what we are able to do with our very limited staff. Annually, we are asked to do about 30 events and we only can say yes to about 10. In a way, this breaks our hearts, as we really would like to be at all places all the time. We do our very best with the resources we have. Our outreach events this year included International Museum Day, Earth Day at Cole and Ustick Library, Week of the Young Child, International Migratory Bird Day at the Peregrine Fund, White Pine School Carnival, HP, Riverside Rangers and the movie Sagebrush Sea showing at the Egyptian Theater.



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Dave's Two Cents

Dave Cannamela, Superintendent, MKNC

You'll have to go to the website to find out what a Sailtoad really is (<http://robiecreek.com/about/>). The local legend that is the namesake for this group is interesting and perfect reading for Halloween, but to us the Rocky Canyon Sailtoads is a very generous group of locals who organize one of the most grueling half-marathons on the planet, and then distribute the



earnings to many local organizations. The "Race to Robie Creek" is world renowned for its degree of difficulty; I can personally attest to that. What people might not know about is their impact on the community. In 2013 and 2014 they distributed \$142,200 to about 50 local organizations all of which serve very important purposes. We have been the fortunate recipients of their generosity for the last three years. We are pleased that the Sailtoads find us worthy and we are sincerely grateful. As you know, it's the support from the community that increases our output and funds special projects.

Oh Baby!



Do you see a pattern in these photos? Our newest arrival is Hagan Camille Cardenas (pictured left). She is the beautiful daughter of Fidel Cardenas and Jessica Gordon, our long-time employee (just back from a year working at BSU). We are so happy to have Jessica back to work with us and the bonus is we get to hold the baby!



Far left: Dave holds Madeline Stiefel and Lyla Olson in 2011 (right).

Just a Little More Room



Pat Mills, closet carpenter.

Recently, we had a visitor from Utah who was looking for advice about Nature Centers. He was planning to build one and was out gleaning wisdom from other Nature Centers. Dave and I spoke with him separately, but both of us had a #1 suggestion that was the same, “BUILD LOTS OF STORAGE.” Our main theme here at the IDFG MK Nature Center is HABITAT (food, water, shelter and space). If there is one thing we do not have a lot of, it is space! Coincidentally, during this young man’s visit, we were having our friend Pat Mills bust open the back of our only closet to give us 50 cubic feet more space! We filled it in about 3 seconds.

Pat is a retired Morrison Knudsen Corp. employee who over the years, has been responsible for encouraging MK Corp. to donate money to the Nature Center from time to time.

Pat helped us extend our storage closet using his own tools, carpentry skills, and donating all of his time. We appreciate his donation and dedication to the Nature Center.



Wild Birds Unlimited will be sponsoring a raffle during the MK Nature Center Bird Seed Sale with all proceeds to go to the Friends of the MK Nature Center.

They will be donating a bird feeder, pole and bag of seed, all of which will be on displayed at the MK Nature Center.

Tickets can be purchased at the MK Nature Center from Nov. 23rd - Dec. 4th, check or cash only.

Drawing will be held on Dec. 5th. Inquiries contact Sue Dudley @ sue.dudley@idfg.idaho.gov



Those of us with any experience at all at the Nature Center understand all too well that with every project comes some endless maintenance. Thanks to Bob Foss for a much needed cleaning of our beautiful Alpine Lake Mural.

MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection

COPS!



While in Boise to film some episodes for COPS, some of the crew was treated to a visit to the Nature Center. Boise Police Officer Anderson (pictured middle) brought Jeremy Bermudez (left) and Carlos Domenech (right) here for a walk-about. Dave saw the activity so he approached them and asked, “Are you guys on official business or just taking a break?” Jeremy and Carlos, both from Los Angeles, were absolutely blown away by the nature center grounds, the animals, particularly by the existence of the opportunity just to find a dose of nature in the city- a far cry from LA. Naturally, Dave gave them a tour -it doesn’t hurt to make friends with police officers. Dave remarked (for the millionth time) how

everyone just feels better when they get off the pavement and into nature. Hopefully none of their calls on film feature the Nature Center, but if they do, we know they will do their best to protect what we have.

Education Programs Hold Steady

Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC

Our fiscal year ends June 30th, so July is the time we calculate how many field trips we taught and how many people came to the IDFG MKNC to learn about plants and animals. The numbers listed here do not include our outreach or in-house event attendance nor do they include our largest event, Salmon and Steelhead Days, which brings about 2000 people here for a 4 hour program. The numbers in the table are just scheduled field trips by schools, daycares, scout groups, church groups, and others. Our numbers have not fluctuated much in the past five years despite our loss of graduate student and part time educators.

year	number of programs	number of people
2010	289	8985
2011	272	7282
2012	262	7716
2013	286	8694
2014	293	9370
2015	293	8825
Totals	1695	50872



MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection

Kokanee

Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC



Lyla Olson (4) shares her mother's (Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator at IDFG MK Nature Center) excitement for Kokanee Salmon.

Even though we get 300-400 Kokanee Salmon each fall just before Salmon and Steelhead Days, it remains my favorite time of the year and my excitement never seems to dwindle. Kokanee are the landlocked version of Sockeye Salmon. Sockeye Salmon of course are anadromous, meaning, they travel from their birthwaters in Idaho to the Ocean and back to Idaho to spawn and die. Kokanee are born in the cold streams of Idaho as well, but only migrate to a lake or reservoir and then back to their stream to spawn. The Kokanee we get at the Nature Center each fall come from Deadwood Reservoir as they migrate to their spawning grounds and are trapped and delivered by the good folks at the Nampa Fish Hatchery. The fish don't last long here...we get to enjoy them for about three weeks before they are grabbed by an opportunistic mink, heron, or are all covered in fungus and decomposed, nourishing the other resident animals and plants.

MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection

Volunteer Spotlight Susan Ziebarth, Wildlife Educator, MKNC



Seth Davis called over a year ago looking for a volunteer opportunity because he was bored and playing too many video games. At first glance he seemed shy and was a little hard to read, so after the first few times he came it was always a surprise that he returned. We were never sure if he was enjoying himself or just plowing through to kill time. But he kept coming; with a great attitude, an unusual sense of humor and ready to work.

He maintained a regular schedule for more than a year, coming twice a week for 2-3 hours each time. This was a large commitment for his family as well because they dropped him off and picked him up each time. His brother and two sisters, mom, and step-dad all pitched in to car pool. They live several miles away on the west side of town so coordinating these trips was no small feat.

Seth said this became a hobby for him and the thing he enjoyed the most was walking around the grounds on his breaks enjoying the wildlife (unless school children were screaming!). He did so many different jobs it's hard to list them all, but much of it was hard, dirty work like digging up broken sprinkler pipes, weeding, pruning trees and repairing pavers on the path (his least favorite job). The better jobs included running the little John Deere tractor, helping with "Kids in the Creek," and making plastic and duct tape lamprey, as shown in photo.

Seth's other hobbies are music, video games, reading, drawing and cooking, especially BBQ-ing. He completed a course at Life's Kitchen where he learned many culinary skills including knife skills and properly cutting meats.

Thank you Seth for sharing your enthusiasm, humor, perspective on life, and your blood, sweat and tears with us! ...and we still don't know what fixes duct tape!

The following people volunteered their time to the MK Nature Center between July 1 and September 30th, 2015. MK Nature Center receives an average of nearly 500 volunteer hours monthly. Thank you!!

Steve Berg	Genny Gerke	Bronwyn Myers
Erkia Buchanan	Miles Giso	Patt Mills
Susie Carlson	Heather Hayes	Cheryl Minckler
Levi Claussen	Raymond Heady	Abby Moone
Naomi Clayton	Katie Hebdon	Jillian Moroney
Zachery Clayton	Sandy Kurka	Holly Moss
Seth Davis	Chris Lark	Rick Neislen
Margit Donhowe	Carolyn Larson	Clint Penfold
Bob Foss	Graydon LeGault	Sara Reed
Marlene Fritz	Mack Leith	Arleen Schaeffer
Davy Frogley	Amanda Laib	Doug Schreivers

Guzzler Goes to Greener Pastures

Michael McCormick, BSU and Susan Ziebarth, Wildlife Educator, MKNC

Many who have looked at or peered curiously into “The Guzzler” over the years have wondered what it is or what animals are housed in it. Guzzlers are “tanks” designed to capture and hold rain water for desert dwelling animals where water sources have been depleted. Ours had a two-fold purpose, to provide water for local birds and the occasional deer or small mammal, and to inform our visitors about the usefulness of a guzzler when deployed in the wild.

Placed as an interpretive display at the MK Nature Center in 1990 it had finally outlived its usefulness. Although, frogs and aquatic insects often found refuge in it, there was very little use by resident wildlife because they prefer to drink from our clean, clear running stream and ponds. Children often found it amusing to throw rocks in the “UFO” and the stagnant water also made an ideal environment for the mosquitoes. “The Guzzler” became a constant maintenance project of removing rocks, and due to the fear of West Nile Virus it required continuous monitoring, draining and drying at the first sight of mosquito larvae. It was also hard to break it to the kids that it was not a giant turtle.

Luckily, Michael McCormick, a Boise State University graduate student from the Department of Biology saw the beauty in this “mosquito hatchery.” He eagerly jumped at the chance to expand his bio-survey research on mosquito larvae and their gut dwelling fungi (*Trichomycetes*). He is working in conjunction with The Zygolife Project (<http://zygolife.org>); they are in search of a “tricho” that is a host-specific pathogen known to kill mosquito larvae. He spent the spring and summer of 2015 collecting specimens from our guzzler to add to this research project.

Better yet, Mike found a new home for the guzzler and relocated it to a small farm in Kuna where it is often emptied of its larvae for research and has a renewed usefulness by providing a water source for local desert wildlife.



Pictured left, the guzzler where it resided for 25 years at the Nature Center. Now installed at a farm in Kuna (right) where it is put to better use.



We still don't know what we will put in its place, any ideas?



MK NATURE CENTER



HOLIDAY BIRD SEED SALE

600 S. Walnut Street • Boise, Idaho 83712

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4TH & 5TH 2015, 9AM – 5PM



Wild Birds Unlimited has been our faithful partner and supporter from the beginning. They continue to supply high quality seed for what is one of our most successful and popular fundraisers.

As usual, several varieties of seed will be available to feed your favorite birds. And, WBU will have the latest in bird feeding supplies available.



Saturday Dec. 5th Activities for the whole family

Live Bird Presentations - 11:30, 12:30, & 1:30pm

Free take home kids' crafts - 11 to 3pm

MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection

Thank You For Supporting What We Do!

These individuals and businesses supported the MK Nature Center between July 1 and September 30, 2015. Donations come in the form of cash or in-kind materials.

Amanda Spence	James Ryan	Sally Hughes
Annette & Robert Hanson	Kroger-Fred Meyer	Steve Bouffard
Bob Ruesink	Lynn Kinter	Wild Birds Unlimited
Doug Shaw	Parker Hinton	
Hilda Packard	Rocky Creek Sail Toads	

2016 Idaho Master Naturalist Program Registration Open



The Idaho Department of Fish and Game MK Nature Center will be co-hosting the Sagebrush-steppe Chapter of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program beginning in January of 2016. Registration is open and forms can be found at this link <https://fishandgame.idaho.gov/sites/Wildlife/IDMasterNaturalist/Boise/Updated%20Syllabus/Idaho%20Master%20Naturalist%20Enrollment%20Form16final.pdf>.

The Idaho Master Naturalist Program (Sagebrush-steppe Chapter) is an adult education and volunteer program. Participants attend 40 hours of educational sessions in the form of lectures, workshops, and field trips provided by the four partnering agencies (MK Nature Center, Idaho Botanical Garden, City of Boise and the Foothills Learning Center). In addition, participants donate 40 hours of volunteer service in the calendar year to complete the program.

If you would enjoy learning about local nature topics such as birding, geology, mammals, flowers, trees, fish, and insects and if you have time to volunteer to teach others about nature, or conservation-related work, this program may be for you! email Sara.focht@idfg.idaho.gov with questions.

The 2015 Sagebrush-steppe Chapter of the IMNP tours Hyatt Wetlands on one of their many interesting field trips.



MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection



The northern flicker is a medium sized woodpecker species (only surpassed in size by the Pileated Woodpecker) that can be found throughout Idaho. They feed mostly on insects on the ground (as pictured left). They have beautiful bright orange feather shafts on their wings and distinct black polka dots on their breasts. Males have red patches of feathers on their cheek. Notice this bird has a dull red patch, which probably indicates an immature male. This unstartled bird was digging in an ant-hill and what you cannot see in the picture are hundreds of tiny black ants dispersing around him. As well as eating ants, flickers have a behavior called “anting,” during which they use the acid from the ants to assist in preening, as it is useful in keeping them free of parasites.

To Donate to the newly-formed Friends of MK Nature Center Group, fill out the form below, enclose your check, and mail to FOMKNC PO Box 604 Boise, ID 83701

F R I E N D S O F MORRISON KNUDSEN NATURE CENTER

Individual Memberships:	
\$10	Mayfly
\$25	Sagebrush
\$50	Gopher Snake
Family Memberships:	
\$100	Mink
\$250	Mule Deer
\$500	Great Blue Heron
\$1,000	Chinook Salmon
\$10,000	White Sturgeon

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail Address _____

Phone Number _____

Today's Date: _____

- New Membership (\$ _____)
- Renewal Membership (\$ _____)
- Check here to receive a donation receipt.

Make checks payable to FOMKNC



fishandgame.idaho.gov/MKNC

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 Dave Cannamela 208.287.2902 david.cannamela@idfg.idaho.gov