



*MK Nature Center*

# STREAM

*In this issue >>>*

The Seasonal Newsletter of the Morrison Knudsen Nature Center

FALL 2025

Bird Seed Sale	2
Idaho Power Black Bear Display	3
Heron Sculpture	4
Habitat Improvement	5
In the Community New Owl Faces	6
Images of Summer and Fall	7
Sockeye Stocking Hunter Education	8
Friendship Corner	9
A Day in the Life	10
Volunteers & Supporters	11

## EFE FUN

The Boise School District's Environmental Field Experience (EFE) 6th grade classes visited the nature center once again this fall, bringing joy, enthusiasm, and excitement as they learned about the wildlife species that live within the Boise Watershed. We hosted Collister, Adams, and Cynthia Mann Elementary Schools this year and had a blast. Thanks to our partners Bogus Basin, the Boise WaterShed, and the Boise School District for working together to bring this fantastic experience for kids!







# **BIRD SEED SALE**

**FUNDRAISER**

Supporting the  
MK Nature Center

**December 5th & 6th  
9 am to 5 pm**

**PREMIUM BIRD SEED**

Several seed varieties to choose from!  
Large selection of nature themed holiday gift items,  
birding guides, children's books, toys, jewelry, and more.

**Activities for the whole family!**

**Saturday December 6th:**

Live Bird Presentations at 11:30am, 12:30pm, & 1:30pm.

Kid's Craft 11am to 2pm.



# Idaho Power Workday

Sue Dudley, Volunteer Coordinator and Gift Shop Manager, MKMC, IDFG



Idaho Power employees “powered through” a huge patch of vinca (non-native, plant) on October 1st. Idaho Power is a long-time supporter of MK Nature Center through their commitment to volunteering in the community. Always in their blue “Volunteer Power” t-shirts and ready to work hard, the crew accomplished a big task once again. Thanks to Sue Dudley (MKNC) for organizing the workday, preparing tools & safety measures, greeting and training the volunteers, and working right alongside!



## Weigh a Bear

How much does a new born black bear weigh?

Sue Dudley, Volunteer Coordinator and Gift Shop Manager. MKNC, IDFG

Thanks to our wonderful volunteer Susan Floriana-Riley we now have new bean bags to test your knowledge. What is your guess? Not sure? Come visit us and check out the answer for yourself!

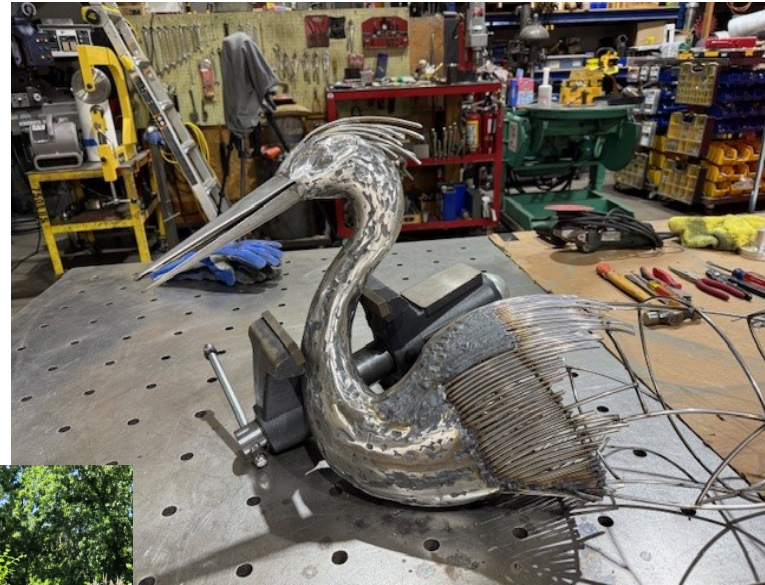
**DID YOU KNOW?** As of January 1, 2025, black bear hunters in Idaho must pass a [bear identification test](#)? Black bears are plentiful in Idaho and can legally be hunted in designated places and times. Grizzly bears are not open to hunting and are listed as a threatened species. This test helps hunters prevent mistakes.



# New Heron Sculpture

Sue Dudley, Volunteer Coordinator and Gift Shop Manager, MKNC, IDFG

The nature center needed a new sculpture for one of our outside donation boxes, and we were thrilled when artist Ken McCall from [McCall Studios](#) agreed to take on the project. Ken McCall is a talented artist who specializes in custom high quality metal artwork. You have likely seen Ken's work around Boise, as he has many public art pieces that beautify the community. After meeting Ken, I found out that he and his family love the nature center and come here often, they too were excited to be able to create a piece for the our grounds. Thank you Ken, we love our new great blue heron!



Most of Ken McCall's childhood was spent exploring various art mediums alongside his grandmother in her art studio, where Ken's passion for sculpture emerged.

Ken studied sculpture and metalwork before embarking on a 20-year career in precision fabrication for the aerospace industry. In recent years Ken has returned to his first love, designing and building beautiful metal sculptures.





# Many Hands Make Light Work

Sue Dudley, Volunteer Coordinator and Gift Shop Manager, MKNC, IDFG

The grassy area behind the beaver pond was overrun with cottonwood shoots, rose bushes, and smaller weeds but with the help of these amazing volunteers we were able to clear the whole area in short amount of time. Thanks to our crew that morning for all the hard work!



Quinn Johnson, Tony Sandor, Whitney Greer, Liz Vavricka, David Shropshire, Mike Pond, Claire Veseth, and Susan Floriana Riley.  
Photo by Sue Dudley (MKNC)



Cottonwood shoots taller than Susan and Claire!  
Tony with the loppers. Photos by Sue Dudley (MKNC).



Weeding is not on most people's list of fun things to do, but take a beautiful morning, friendly faces, and many hands, weeding can be quite joyous! This area was overrun with various weeds and it seemed untamable. Now visitors can actually see the beaver pond and view native plants! Liz and Quinn load up the cuttings into the limb bin. What you cannot see in this photo are the thorns on those rose bushes! Photo by Sue Dudley (MKNC).



# Out In the Community

Sara Focht, Conservation Education Supervisor, MK Nature Center, IDFG



Idaho Department of Fish and Game is committed to reaching out in our community to help others understand more about IDFG, wildlife management, habitat, and the wonderful wildlife species with which we share our state. MK Nature Center participates in many community events! We actually cannot meet all the demand for outreach education that is asked of us. We are fortunate to have the help of our dedicated volunteers to help with outreach endeavors. Pictured here is Martha McClay and Steve Getlein at Bogus Basin's Public Land Day celebration on September 27th. Over 200 people visited our booth and the other agency/organization booths to learn about the value of public land, especially in our immediate area! Other outreach events we have participated in recently include the Harris Ranch Neighborhood's Annual Picnic, Teacher's Night Out at the Discovery Center, and STEM nights at local elementary schools.

**Did you know MK Nature Center is public land? This 5 acres is just a small sliver Idaho Fish and Game's 370,000 acres of land in the state.**

## New Owl Arrival

Frankie Curet, Wildlife Educator, IDFG, MKNC



The MK Nature Center just received a donation of three new owl taxidermies to enhance our very popular "Hoo Lives in Idaho" program!

Terry Bennett (pictured left) of [Bennett Taxidermy](#) prepared the owl specimens for us and Friends of MK Nature Center paid the bill.

The "HOO Lives in Idaho" program helps students understand the unique features of owls compared to other raptors, allows students to look inside an owl pellet, and learn about the different adaptations and sounds of our 14 species of owls in Idaho. It turns out, owls don't all say "hoo," hunt at night, and eat mice! There is so much to learn about each species!



The saw-whet owl, possibly the cutest of all Idaho's owls.



The long-eared owl, whose name is extremely inaccurate.



The northern pygmy owl, our smallest species at



# Images of Summer and Fall

Clockwise: Mushrooms on cottonwood by Sara Focht. Photobomb fish by Allison Ady. Great blue heron by Moira Young. Mule deer fawns by Spencer Zarran. American mink by Ben Biere.





# Sockeye Stocked

Frankie Curet, Wildlife Educator, IDFG, MKNC

On September 11th, five Columbia River sockeye salmon were stocked at MK Nature Center from the Eagle Hatchery. This marks our third year getting these beautiful fish for fall viewing. Columbia River sockeye salmon are from a distinct population, separate from the Idaho native Snake River population. Though visually identical, their genes are different! Eagle Hatchery manages the endangered sockeye brood stock program and when they identify a Columbia River fish in their midst, they do not breed those fish with the Idaho population. What better place to put them to live out their lives than the MK Nature Center? Come see them spawn and die in our large outdoor viewing window this fall!



Staff and volunteers unload the sockeye salmon from the cooler to the pond. Photo by MKNC.



Sockeye salmon in the MK Nature Center viewing window. Photo by MKNC.

## Hunter Education

MK Nature Center had a new display featuring Hunter Education. Hunter Education classes are available online or in person! If you were born on or after January 1, 1975, you are required to take Hunter Education before you buy a license. [Click here](#) to learn more about Hunter Education and how you can enroll.

The role of  
Hunting in Wildlife  
Conservation

Wildlife  
Identification

Shooting and  
Hunting Skills

Hunting  
Ethics

Trip Preparation  
And Survival

Firearm  
Safety





# Friendship Corner

Sara Focht, Conservation Education Supervisor, IDFG, MKNC



If you have been a visitor to MK Nature Center for over 5 years, you may remember a neat space on our north side where we would host events, classes, volunteer parties and even weddings (way back in the old days). That area was known as the “formal backyard.” In that space, we taught visitors that creating habitat at home was important. The area mimicked a backyard with grass and patio, but around the edges, were purposeful plantings, water features, and other good habitat components.

When the IDFG headquarters building was re-built, that space became IDFG’s fleet vehicle parking area. In September, Friends of MK Nature Center hired Habiscapes Inc. to revamp the area that was remaining to help MK Nature Center re-gain some of the functionality lost. Two weeks of hard work by the Habiscapes crew turned the weedy forgotten area into a beautiful and functional space for classes and events!



Now no longer a backyard look with backyard habitat messaging, this new area needed a name! Next time you are at the nature center, be sure to visit *Friendship Corner*! This name honors the Friends of MK Nature Center and their commitment to enhancing the educational endeavors we undertake here.

It was a pleasure of a project to work on, starting with support from IDFG’s Deputy Director Worthington and Communication Bureau Chief Park. Of course our board members from the Friends of MK Nature Center Board voted on funding the project. IDFG’s Engineering Bureau staff member, Matt Bryan, Kim from [Designs by Kim](#), Michael Wiegand from Habiscapes Inc. and his great staff were key players! Thanks to all involved for helping create this space for our visitors!





# Day in the life of a Nature Center Employee

Nature center employee's days are filled with hard work but also many fun experiences. Ask any employee and they will tell you there is *never a dull moment* working at the nature center.



preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage

Photos clockwise starting in upper left: Allison Ady practicing with the float donut. Spencer Zarzan replacing the faucet. Andrew Newburg with Wilson. Lori Wilson teaching a class. Allison and Andrew cleaning and sweeping. Frankie Curet showing students animal pelts. A nature center crew weeding. Bethany Tennant tending to Wilson. Middle photo: Moira Young sweeping the path. Photos by Sue Dudley.



# DONORS

Traci Ann  
James Rankin  
Tim Ferman  
Plein Aire Painters  
Trout Unlimited

Donors listed here **do not** include Friends of MK Nature Center members and donations.

## VOLUNTEERS

### July

### August

### September

Steve Berg  
Pam Bly  
Patrice Davies  
Kevin Drews  
Cooper Ellis  
Todd Finato  
Susan Floriana-Riley  
Anja Fredericks  
Debbie Fugate  
Whitney Greer  
Elizabeth Grosse

Trevor Jensen  
Carter Jones  
Eric Keren  
Connie Kratz  
Connie Kratz  
Randy Langseth  
Kevin Laughlin  
Lily Linton  
John Mathews  
Martha McClay  
Karen McLaughlin

Andy Meyer  
Bronwyn Myers  
Damon Noller  
Josh Olson  
Mike Pond  
Benita Putzier  
Madeline Rosa  
Vicky Runnoe  
Tony Sandor  
Cathy Sandstrom  
Arleen Schaeffer

Howard Sheppa  
David Shropshire  
Terry Thomas  
Quin Vale  
Elizabeth Vavricka  
Claire Veseth  
Roger Wallace  
Julia Zarbnisky  
Susan Ziebarth



Dedicated and long-time volunteer Patrice Davies staffs a booth on Wild Canines of Idaho. Photo by Sara Focht.

Twenty volunteers staffed educational booths between April and the end of September! These folks staffed 97 booths and served 9,607 visitors with information about Idaho's wildlife. Booth subjects this year included canines of Idaho, Bears of Idaho, wild Cats of Idaho, eagles of Idaho, steelhead, beavers, weasels of Idaho, and the deer life cycle. It is a win-win situation for our volunteers and visitors. Our volunteers love staffing booths and showing people what is at their table, delivering simple nature-related information, and chatting with nature enthusiasts. Our visitors love the opportunity to ask a question, touch a pelt or skull and tell stories of their wildlife encounters!