



Morrison Knudsen

Nature Center

STREAM

The Seasonal Newsletter of the Morrison Knudsen Nature Center Fall 2026

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Bird Seed
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BIRD SEED SALE

FUNDRAISER
Supporting the
MK Nature Center

Dec. 4-5
9 am - 5 pm

PREMIUM BIRD SEED

Wildlife Trunks

Lori Wilson, Wildlife Educator, MKNC, IDFG

Have you ever heard of a wildlife trunk? These trunks are filled with items related to learning about certain species or concepts. They are available for checkout through Lori at the nature center.

If you are unsure of how to use a wildlife trunk, read on to learn more about how they can be used to get kids excited about nature.

“Grandpa Steve” is an Idaho Master Naturalist and he checks out trunks to take to elementary schools to enhance his presentations. Steve has kids howling like wolves and learning all about their natural history.

Kathy C. is another person who uses the four trunks to add lots of hands-on learning to “Cousin Camp” with her 10 grandchildren, ages (4 -13). I can guarantee she’s creating family memories those kids will never forget! Kathy shares the list of trunks ahead of time and asks what animals the kids would like to learn about. This year they chose elk, trout and bald eagle. Kathy says, “The trunks really bring learning to life.” Sharing these lessons and tying into habitats helps kids look more closely at nature. It’s a win-win for everyone.

I’ve also had a parent check out the Trout trunk for a fish themed birthday party! Teachers often check out trunks to enhance their lessons. Trunks are FREE – pick up and return is required at 600 S. Walnut Street in Boise.

To check out a wildlife trunk and/or get a list of what trunks are available, contact Lori Wilson. Lori.wilson@idfg.idaho.gov.



Above: Cousins hold elk antlers from the Ungulate trunk.
Right: Little cousin shows off her wings from the Eagle trunk. Photos by Kathy C.





Honoring Helen Harrington

Sara Focht, Conservation Education Supervisor, MKNC, IDFG

MK Nature Center staff and Board members of the Friends of MK Nature Center honor the memory of Helen Harrington after her passing. Helen joined the Idaho Master Naturalist Chapter in 2022 and became a dedicated nature center supporter. Helen's "job of choice" was sweeping the path along the underwater

viewing windows. It is always interesting to see how volunteers find their place at MK Nature Center. Some want to teach, while others like to do weed-pulling. Helen found her place with the solitary, outdoor, and physical task of sweeping. Helen spent well over 50 hours volunteering at MK Nature Center until she passed away on February 9th, after a two-year battle with cancer.

After Helen's passing, Friends of MK Nature Center received an unexpected and *extremely generous* donation from Helen's state retirement account. Helen had designated Friends of MK Nature Center as a beneficiary. Helen's donation will allow Friends of MK Nature Center to fund a large project (yet to be determined), that will serve MK Nature Center visitors in the future. Helen's dedication and support for the nature center lives on.

BIRD SEED SALE
FUNDRAISER
Supporting the
MK Nature Center

Dec. 4-5
9 am - 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 5th:
Live Bird Presentations at 11:30am, 12:30pm, & 1:30pm.
Kid's Craft 11am to 2pm.

MK Nature Center's annual Bird Seed Sale fundraiser will take place December 4-5. You will find premium bird seed for all your winter bird feeding needs as well as nature-themed holiday gifts for old and young alike!

Enjoy live bird presentations and a free take home kid's craft on Saturday.

Make time to stroll around the grounds and enjoy the nature center in a different season. The quiet winter season has a lot to offer for wildlife viewing!

We hope to see you at the Bird Seed Sale. Contact Sue Dudley at sue.dudley@idfg.idaho.gov if you have questions, and keep your eyes on our social media accounts for product highlights.

Volunteer of the Month

July

Jan Egge



Congratulations to Jan Egge-Volunteer Extraordinaire! Jan is a dedicated MKNC volunteer. She works weekly in the sensory garden (she was an original creator of that garden). Jan also spends each winter helping us with the bird seed sale, spending days of her time to make that event successful. Jan joined us as a volunteer in 2020 when she joined the Idaho Master Naturalist Program. Since then, she has donated over 260 hours of her time to MK Nature Center. Jan's niche is in the garden. She shops for plants, weeds, waters, and prunes. We are so blessed to have her talent, positive spirit, kind smile, and skilled talents as part of our team.

August

Randy Langseth



Randy Langseth has been a volunteer at MK Nature Center since 2020. As a retired teacher, Randy excels at guiding tour groups. He engages the kids with his genuine enthusiasm for nature! Randy helped us succeed in a busy field trip season this last spring by volunteering to guide three days a week the entire month of May. In addition to teaching, Randy regularly shows up to do grounds maintenance work such as weeding, shoveling rock, and emergency tree work after storms. Randy comes to volunteer with a smile, positive attitude and often, oatmeal cookies for the crew. We appreciate Randy's easy-going personality! Randy also serves as our official acorn cap whistle expert!

September

David Shropshire



David is a Renaissance guy! David is a member of our volunteer bee keeping team. He also helps guide educational programs all year long. David is a close neighbor of MKNC and like good neighbors, he seems to always be here for us when we need a hand. David has woodworking skills and has built us a series of bird houses for an upcoming bird house display. He shows up when we have tree emergencies and works outreach events. David has been volunteering for MKNC since early 2025 when he joined the Sagebrush-steppe Chapter of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program. David is an important and skilled member of our team!

Cheers to the Beekeepers

Sara Focht, Conservation Education Supervisor, MKNC, IDFG

MK Nature Center is lucky to have a 100% volunteer beekeeping team to support our pollinator display. The most charismatic part of our pollinator display is our observation European honey bee hive. Maintaining this hive takes time, energy, research, troubleshooting and a village. This village of volunteers meets regularly and works as a team to support the hive and help visitors Western Idaho Fair competition and received a second place ribbon. We are thankful for their time, expertise, and dedication. What a sweet team!



Back row left to right: Nick Brokaw, David Shropshire. Middle row left to right: Roger Wallace, Todd Finato, Howard Sheppa, Kevin Drews, Vicky Runnoe, Madeline Rosa. Front row left to right: Gail Robb, Janeil Gilbert, Julia Zarbnisky.



Second place at the Western Idaho Fair brought a proud moment to the beekeepers. Next year they want blue!



David Shropshire, Madeline Rosa, Vicky Runnoe and Janeil Gilbert spin honey.

Photos by MKNC staff.





Headquarters Help

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

In September, MK Nature Center hosted another IDFG Headquarters employee work day. Seven IDFG employees came to do some serious weeding for the afternoon. In addition to getting some non-native plants ripped out, we had some great conversations with these co-workers, with whom we don't often get to interact.



EFE



Back row left to right: Angelo Ward (GIS Analyst), DanaJo McGee (Buyer), Christy Hooper (Program System Specialist), Leila Hooper, (Technical Records Specialist) Brittany Biglari (Admin Assistant) , Pauline Finkbeiner. (Customer Service Representative). Front row left to right: Sara Focht (MKNC), Sarah Maher (Natural Resource Program Coordinator). Photo by Sue Dudley.

MK Nature Center, the Boise School District, Bogus Basin and the Boise Watershed partnered to get 200 6th graders out on three days of field trips to visit different parts of the Boise River Watershed as part of their Environmental Field Experience.



Volunteers at Work



Dedicated volunteers came out in July to weed and maintain the butterfly garden. Twelve volunteers worked tirelessly to get the garden under control and looking good for the summer.



Clockwise starting in upper left: Pam Woods mighty volunteer team. Sierra Page and Tony Sandor. Cathy Sandstrom. The whole crew. Lynn Kelley. McKenna Hoelscher, Andy Meyer and Tony Sandor. Tony Wickham.



Images of Fall



Clockwise starting in upper left: Wilson by Bethany Tennant. Western screech owl by Bethany Tennant. Fall flowers by Moira Young. Tree work on the MKNC path by Ricardo Jimenez. Great blue heron at the creek by Moira Young. Visitors enjoying the pond by Ricardo Jimenez. Mule deer fawn by Sue Dudley. Middle photo: Mule deer by Andrew Newburg.



DONORS

Cameron Cox
Kate Killpack
Courtney Fitzpatrick
Rosellen Hong
Andrea Meyer

Julia Potter
Ashlyn Vandevooren
Robert Warns

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

VOLUNTEERS

Allison Boldridge
Lynn Bachman
William Beaman
Steve Berg
John Bergset
Pam Bly
Nick Brokaw
Dave Callan
Emily Clark
Majel Coxe
Patrice Davies
Abie Diaz
Kevin Drews
Jan Egge
Todd Finato
Dave Fotsch

Steve Getlein
Janeil Gilbert
Kristin Gnojewski
Elizabeth Grosse
McKenna Hoelscher
Trevor Jensen
Lynn Kelley
Susan King
Randy Langseth
Kevin Laughlin
Jillian Lewis
Martha McClay
Barbara McGillivray
Andy Meyer
Chris Monell
Bronwyn Myers

Josh Olson
Sierra Page
Diana Parker
Mike Pond
Benita Putzier
Susan Riley
Gail Robb
Madeline Rosa
Hanna Roth
Vicky Runnoe
Tony Sandor
Cathy Sandstrom
Sky Satterfield
Arleen Schaeffer
Katie Sheppa
Howard Sheppa

David Shropshire
Sandy Smith
Patrick Stoll
Lauren Studley
Sandy Sweet
Terry Thomas
Elizabeth Vavricka
Claire Veseth
Roger Wallace
Tony Wickham
Pam Woods
Julia Zarbnisky
Susan Ziebarth

July

August

September



Majel Coxe, Martha McClay and Emily Clark staffed our booth at Bug Day. Thanks, ladies!

MK Nature Center was proud to support our colleagues at the Idaho Botanical Garden on September 19th for BUG DAY. Our booth focused on how insect pollinators support other wildlife species in Idaho. Here are three ways pollinators help wildlife:

1. Some wildlife species eat pollinators. (SAGE GROUSE).
2. Some wildlife species are herbivores and depend on pollinators to perpetuate the plants they eat (DEER).
3. Some wildlife species are carnivores and eat animals who eat plants! (MOUNTAIN LION).