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# The Nature Center Stream



Summer The Seasonal Newsletter of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game MK Nature Center 2018



## National Geographic Photo Ark



National Geographic photographer Joel Sartore has an ambitious goal of photographing all animals under human care, in order to bring awareness of and funding to conserving those in greatest need.

The National Geographic crew arrived at the MK

Nature Center on April 23rd to photograph the Pacific Lamprey. These dramatic images provide a close up look at these amazing anadromous fish. Visit the Photo Ark website to learn more and to contribute <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/projects/photo-ark>.



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# Nature Center Notes

*Vicky Runnoe, Conservation Education Supervisor, IDFG*



As I write this article, it's the summer solstice, the longest day of the year. It's also the official beginning of summer although the season seems to have started at the nature center several weeks ago. School groups have shifted into summer camps with battalions of children in matching shirts arriving for programs. Families stroll slowly about the grounds, enjoying the riot of colors dotting the native flowerbeds and exclaiming at sights of sturgeon and trout in the ponds. The sudden appearance of a mink, slinking around the pond or slipping through the water in a trail of bubbles, is sure to elicit excited comments from visitors lucky enough to spot this brown weasel.

Sightings of volunteers hard at work also increase during the summer season. Visitors can expect to encounter volunteers doing a myriad of tasks from leading groups to tending the gardens to staffing the Front Desk to working on landscaping projects. This swell of volunteer effort is priceless! We appreciate not just the hard work but also the friendships that are created and knowledge that is shared as we work together to make the nature center such a special place. Please enjoy the articles about our wonderful volunteers in this newsletter issue.

Lastly, the end of summer will bring with it the installation of new interpretive signs thanks to the efforts of yet another group of volunteers, the Friends of the MK Nature Center. We are all very excited to see this project come to fruition and be able to share it with our visitors. In the meantime, we hope to see you along the path or at a program. Enjoy your summer!

## Leadership Boise

*Tess Wolfenson, AmeriCorps Member, MKNC*

On Friday April 13, 2018, Leadership Boise participated in a volunteer day to help clear out an overgrown area on the MK Nature Center grounds. Their hard work was invaluable and without volunteer groups like this, larger scale projects just couldn't get done around here! They were a friendly group of people that really brought a great energy to the MKNC that day. Thank you, Leadership Boise, for helping keep the MKNC looking beautiful!



*Left to right: Kelly Duncan, First Interstate Bank; Chase Erkins, Idaho Central Credit Union; Kathryn Beattie, St. Luke's Health System; Lisa Holland, Boise Valley Economic Partnership; Mark Gier, CSHQA; Heather Hill, Albertson's Foundation; Angela Hansen, CTA Architects Engineers; Gabriel Hamilton, Holland & Hart LLP; Heidi Hecox, Idaho Army National Guard (not pictured).*

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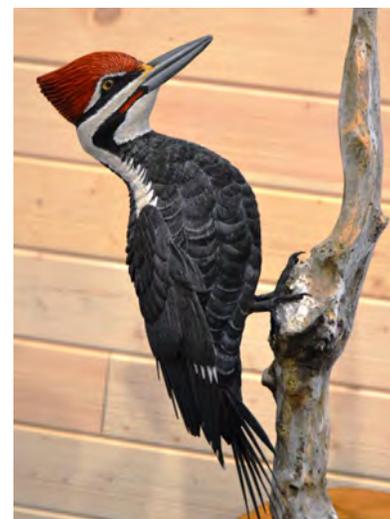
# A Gift from a Friend, Again

Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, IDFG



A beautiful woodcarving of a pileated woodpecker was recently donated to the MKNC. But this was not the first time this work of art had been gifted. The woodpecker was crafted by Wildlife Sculptor Matthew J. Placzek (world renowned sculptor and public artist) as a piece commissioned by Dr. John Hanlin and Dr. Bob Johnson for their longtime friends, Al and Caroline Farnsworth. The inspiration for the gift came after Al and Caroline retired from their jobs in Colorado Springs and moved to Bonner's Ferry, Idaho, where their two doctor friends would often visit them to explore the forests. Al encouraged them to be on the lookout for Idaho's largest woodpecker, and talked a lot about the amazing bird.

*Right: The pileated woodpecker woodcarving by sculptor Matthew J. Placzek. The carving is made from western red cedar. Above: Sue Johnson and her father Al Farnsworth at the MK Nature Center on the day Al came to generously donate the woodcarving. Photos by Sue Dudley, IDFG.*



Al and Caroline's daughter Sue Johnson lives in Boise and as she was trying to help her father decide where to donate the wood carving, they thought of the MK Nature Center. We are so grateful for this gift, as we can display it and allow all our visitors to enjoy its detail and beauty.

## AmeriCorps Position Open

The MK Nature Center, in partnership with the Friends of MK Nature Center, is proud to announce that our AmeriCorps Member position is open for 2018-2019. This valuable member of our team helps in the day-to-day operations of our education and outreach program. If you like working in a fun, fast-paced environment surrounded by nature and children ready to explore nature, this position might be for you! For information [about the position](#) contact Sara Focht at [sara.focht@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:sara.focht@idfg.idaho.gov) or (208) 287-2906. Find out how to apply [here](#).



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# Behind the Scenes

*Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC*



*Left to Right” Katie Sheppa, Lois Nadolny, Howard Sheppa, Jane Wallace, and Roger Wallace (not pictured). Photo by Roger Wallace.*

It is easy to spot volunteers working at the Nature Center. But it is not so easy to see all the volunteer work that happens *behind the scenes!* Volunteers help sterilize owl pellets, cut and prepare educational craft materials, and build woodworking projects at home, just to name a few tasks. Pictured here are four volunteers meticulously converting plastic coat hangers into bows and arrows for our Spring Wildlife event! It is quite a process and these folks did it right...to work in a group to make the time go by.

## IDoTEACH Intern 2018

*Emily Avila, IDoTEACH Intern, MKNC*



*Emily teaching students at the Nature Center.  
Photo by Sara Focht, MKNC.*

Hello! My name is Emily Avila and I am the BSU IDoTEACH Summer Intern at MK Nature Center. While I am not a native Idahoan I have found Boise to be a wonderful home. I am originally from Sacramento, California. I found this opportunity to work at the Nature Center as a Biology Major and an emphasis in Secondary Education, but because of this opportunity and recognizing where my heart is, I am now an Elementary Education major with an emphasis in Math. I was interested in exploring a diverse teaching opportunity beyond the classroom. I love the Nature Center and enjoy seeing the students' excitement when looking at the large fish. Through this opportunity, I have found the most fulfillment in teaching students in the first and second grade. Their excitement to learn and the level of respect they give the guides has made them my most exciting group to show around the nature center.

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# Spring Wildlife Event: A Success



We had perfect weather and a great turn out for our event this year, all of which would not have been possible without our great volunteers! THANK YOU ALL!! Photos by Sue Dudley, MKNC.

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# A Flutter in the Night



On July 18th at 8 pm, MK Nature Center will be hosting a program about the fascinating world of bats. Bat biologists Dr. Rita Dixon (IDFG) and Bill Doering will share their passion and knowledge about bats, introducing you to the bat species that call Idaho and the Nature Center, home. This program begins indoors and moves outside after dark where we will survey for bats using state-of-the-art technology to “hear” their echolocation calls. Don’t miss this opportunity to learn about and observe these shy, but ecologically vital creatures.

## Western Tent Caterpillars

*Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC*

On a recent hike at Bogus Basin, I discovered a plethora of western tent caterpillar (*Malacosoma sp.*) tents on shrubs and trees. Western tent caterpillars are most visible and recognizable in their larval stage (that is the time they construct the tent). Pictured here (right) is a typical tent with larva inside, and one mature larva emerging to feed on its own. When they disperse from the tent, these insects can defoliate the shrub or tree on which they live!

Tents are constructed in purposeful locations, to maximize exposure to the morning sunshine. Western tent caterpillars must reach a certain temperature in order to digest food. Since they emerge from eggs very early in the spring, when morning temperatures are still quite low, they have adapted to building these tents which are made of layered chambers that trap the heat.

The adults are lovely little moths that vary in color from cream to brick red, all having two delicate horizontal stripes along their wings. Western tent caterpillars are a native species and though they can cause significant plant damage in localized areas, have several natural parasites and predators that keep them under control.



*Photo by Sara Focht, IDFG.*



*Forest tent caterpillar adult. Photo by Andy Reago & Chrissy McClarren’s photo stream (CC BY 2.0) on Flickr.*

# Mason Bees

Emily Avila, IDOTEACH Summer Intern, MKNC



Orchard Mason Bee (*Osnia lignaria*) BY-NC 3.0 USDA

Hello, I'm Mayson! I am just one of the Mason Bees hard at work here at the MK Nature Center. Most people think the honey bees are the stars of the show, but I should be the one in the spotlight. I pollinate much more efficiently, holding pollen on my belly as I forage for food. My gals and I work hard even in the early months which is super helpful for nearby farms. I don't make my own nest. I am very thankful that I have found a home in wood that the Nature Center workers have made for me. Look around the Nature Center and you may see my house! Most queen honey bees have help when making their homes, scavenging for food, and pollinating plants, but I am a one-woman show. When I am about ready to have babies I start work on a bee hotel; laying my eggs one by one starting with my daughters. Backing into the holes, I lay one egg and build a wall (that is how I get my name), lay one egg and build a wall, all the way until the end of the hole. Once I have reached the outside I build a covering to keep my family safe. The walls are usually made up of mud. I leave plenty of food for each larva in their cell. Even when building the safe place to lay my eggs, I promise I won't hurt you. Unlike my neighbors, the honey bees, I don't have a temper. Get close and say hello (always be cautious).



A mason bee house constructed by drilling 3/8 inch holes about 7 inches deep into a log round. These open holes indicate eggs have not been laid in the holes yet. Photo by Emily Avila.

## Foothills School Donates Birdhouses



Jackson Kearns and Jax Brune from Foothills School of Arts and Sciences help construct birdhouses. Photo provided by FSAS.

[The Foothills School of Arts and Sciences](#) built and donated 14 American kestrel/screech owl boxes to the Nature Center! They will be sold at the Bird Seed Sale and in our gift shop, as well as given away as gifts, and placed on the Nature Center grounds. Thank you Foothills School for your hard work and generous donation!



Left to right: Matty Shaine, Tucker Naumann, and Matt Shaine constructing bird houses. Photos provided by FSAS.

# Friends of MKNC

Joyce Harvey-Morgan, FOMKNC Board

What an incredible year it has been for the Friends of MK Nature Center! By the end of the summer, the Nature Center will have all new interpretive signs, new entrance signs, new information signs, and a beautiful donor recognition wall. We can't wait to see what an incredible difference this will make for all visitors!

When we tackled the signage project, we anticipated it might take us quite a while to raise the necessary funds, but fortunately we were wrong. We are completing the project in record time—with tremendous community support and our terrific partners, design by Stephanie Inman and manufacturing by Trademark.

In May we received a large grant from the Idaho Women's Charitable Foundation and a grant from the College of Idaho Student Philanthropy Council. Our 2018 Idaho Gives participation resulted in over \$18,000. All of this helped us reach our fundraising goal.

Early grants from the Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation, the Morrison Knudsen Foundation, the Harry W. Morrison Foundation (a matching grant) and Salmon and Steelhead Days got us started on the project. And donations from many community members helped us along the way. We have deep gratitude for the generosity of our community!



*Pictured left to right: Bert Bowler (FOMKNC), Vicky Runnoe, (IDFG), Tony Sandor, Diana Parker, Joyce Harvey Morgan, and Brad Vandendries (Board Members of FOMKNC) accept a check from the Idaho Women's Charitable Foundation.*



*Vicky Runnoe (IDFG), Alexandra Runnoe (College of Idaho), and Joyce Harvey Morgan (FOMKNC) accept a check from the College of Idaho.*



# Education Program Guides

We wanted to give a special shout out to our regular Streamwalk Guides! When we have large education programs at the MKNC, we rely on volunteers to help us manage the crowds and allow us to divide the kids into smaller groups. This ensures that students have a more personal experience and can really engage with everything that the Nature Center has to offer. Thank you! If you are interested in becoming a Streamwalk Guide, contact Sara: [sara.focht@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:sara.focht@idfg.idaho.gov).



Pictured clockwise starting in upper left: Janna Gray, Tom Neale, Jackie Murphy, Bronwyn Myers, Pam Bly, Jeremy Emerson, and Margit Donhowe. Center photo, Teri Muse.

# Donors and Volunteers

Supporters listed here donated directly to the MK Nature Center between April 1 and June 30th, 2018. Donations come in the form of money, goods, services, or other in-kind donations. Donors to Friends of MKNC are not listed.

Anser Charter School  
Brooklyn PTO  
Mary Coleman  
Al Farnsworth

Foothills School for the Arts and  
Sciences  
Janna Gray  
Sue & Jim Jameson  
Cynthia McNair  
Barbara Mecham

Sydnee Morehouse  
Hilda Packard  
Grant Patton  
Jeremiah Wallace  
Wild Birds Unlimited

## The following people volunteered their time to the MK Nature Center between April 1 and June 30th, 2018. Thank you!

Barb Alexander  
Michele Andrew  
David Armstrong  
Kris Barrish  
Kay Beall  
Noreen Bechie  
Pat Berens  
Steve Berg  
Sheldon Bluestein  
Pam Bly  
Loreli Bouffard  
Steve Bouffard  
Don Brigham  
Liz Brodie  
Ann Brueck  
Penny Bullock  
McKailey Burchett  
Liana Cabiles  
Connie Capobiano  
Susie Carlson  
Taylor Castillo  
Levi Claussen  
Mary Coleman  
Cyndi Coulter  
Corrine Christ  
Charlotte Cumberworth  
Mike Cumberworth  
Tim Curns  
Patrice Davies  
Seth Davis  
Brent Davy  
Nancy DeWitt  
Margit Donhowe

Maria Donovan  
Jeremy Emerson  
Breann Evans  
Helen Faith  
Peggy Faith  
Jessica Fischer  
Karen Gelf  
Kristin Gnojewski  
Janna Gray  
Colleen Greenwalt  
LouAnne Gwartney  
Marylee Hale  
Anne Halford  
Julie Hall  
Kay Hummel  
John Hanna  
Laura Hansen  
Peggy Heady  
Katie Hebdon  
Kim Holt  
Dave Hopkins  
Barbara Howard  
Jody Hull  
Gary Hundt  
Sonya Janson  
Ayla Kaltenecker  
Michael Knoll  
Theo Knoll  
Sandy Kurka  
Jen Landers  
Kevin Laughlin  
Tamara Lightle  
Howard Little

Ron Lopez  
Levi Luck  
JB Magpantay  
Debi Mahler  
Kevin Malloy  
Nancy Malloy  
Mike Mancuso  
Barb McGillvary  
Mary McGown  
Nanette McGrath  
Joanne Michaels  
Cheryl Minckler  
Lizzy Miskell  
Sue Moeller  
Sydnee Morehouse  
Christina Moschella  
Daniel Murphy  
Jackie Murphy  
Terri Muse  
Bronwyn Myers  
Tom Neale  
Damon Noller  
Conor O'Brien  
Eric Owens  
Thekla Owens  
Karrie Pappani  
Grant Patton  
Keith Pearson  
Barb Recla  
Amanda Richael  
Emily Rigg  
Susan Riley  
Bryce Robinson

Isak Rodenhiser  
Doug Rose  
Lori Rumen  
Laura Rutherford  
Abigail Sasso  
Arleen Schaeffer  
Klaudia Schaller  
Harry Schumacher  
MaryJo Shumacher  
Drew Scott  
Kristen Severud  
Howard Sheppa  
Stuart Shoemaker  
Hanna Sinaronic  
Aubrey Smith  
Lisa Smith  
Sandy Smith  
Luci Snow  
Lorna Snowdon  
Julie Steele  
Sandra Sweet  
Bonnie Urrest  
Justin Vanderbilt  
Kristen Vanderbilt  
Ariel Varland  
Jeremiah Wallace  
Roger Wallace  
Marcus Weeks  
Judy Wojcicki  
Jeanette Young  
Anna Zhikhareva