



MORRISON KNUDSEN
NATURE
CENTER
BOISE, IDAHO



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The Nature Center Stream



Fall The Seasonal Newsletter of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game MK Nature Center **2017**



Lamprey Release *Tara Jennings, Bio-Aide, IDFG*

Last fall we received three Pacific Lamprey from the Nez Perce Tribe. Two died during the winter, but we were able to release one into the South Fork of the Payette River in May. It was a cold, wet, and snowy day with river temperatures a balmy 42 °F! The water was high and flowing fast, but we hope that the lamprey enjoyed its freedom and found its soul mate!

The Nez Perce Tribe leads a project to help the Pacific Lamprey complete their amazing migration back to Idaho by collecting them at the lower Columbia River dams, and driving them to Idaho where they are overwintered in the dark cold water. In the spring, the Tribe takes them to their spawning waters and releases them to mate. The Tribe allows us to display the lamprey to help us teach people about how important these fish are both ecologically and culturally!



Five more Pacific Lamprey arrived at MKNC October 3rd, 2017. They will be on display all fall, winter and spring.

Nature Center Notes

Vicky Runnoe, Conservation Education Supervisor, IDFG



The nature center was recently visited by an underwater photographer. He spent time snorkeling and “diving” in the sturgeon pond and alpine lake. His photographs and videos show a remarkable “fish’s eye” view of the nature center’s underwater world. While the trout were seemingly nonplussed by the presence of the photographer, a sturgeon fled into the murk of the pond with a mere flick of its tail. Aquatic plants appear as ghostly fronds amidst a hazy backdrop of water.

My favorite photo is that of the camera looking out the viewing windows at a mother and child looking inward. Are the fishes as intrigued by the faces at the glass as those faces are with the fish on the other side? Are we recognizable as something different or dangerous or simply a curious presence? The nature center allows us to ponder such questions. Whether it is face-to-fish at the alpine lake windows or finding a deer around a bend in the path, these encounters with wildlife leave us wondering about the lives of these wild creatures. In the words of writer Henry Beston, they are indeed “. . . other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendor and travail of the earth.”

On your autumn outings, take time to pause and take that “fish’s eye” view of the natural world. You never know what you might discover.



Left: Underwater photographer, Alex Lindbloom, surveys the cold water at MK Nature Center before he dives in with his underwater camera. Photo by Sara Focht, IDFG.

Above: A fish’s perspective at the MK Nature Center. Alex generously donated his videos and photos from his swim. Visit Alex’s website to see his work all around the world. <http://www.alexlindbloom.com>. Also visit on Facebook at [Alex Lindbloom Film and Photography](#).

New Mosaic Makes a Splash of Color

Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, IDFG

On the hot evening of July 12th, local artist Anna Webb unveiled her beautiful wildlife mosaic at the MK Nature Center's raffle window. Funded in memory of Dean Pierose, the Friends of MK Nature Center's generous donors and a grant from the City of Boise's Arts and History Department, this project has captured the hearts of our visitors! The mosaic panels depict plants and animals who call the Boise River their home. View a short video produced about this amazing artwork: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_IsnaKUw48 and don't forget to come see it for yourself!



Photos clockwise starting in upper left:
A panel from the mosaic depicting the ever-important cottonwood tree. The audience at this summer's unveiling listen attentively to mosaic artist, Anna Webb (pictured to right). A red-winged blackbird on the mosaic panel, and a rainbow trout depicted with beautiful and realistic colors.

Idaho Master Naturalist Chapter Enrollment Open

Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, IDFG



Idaho MASTER NATURALIST

The 10th class of the Sagebrush-steppe Master Naturalist Program will begin February 27th, 2018. Enrollment is now open <https://fishandgame.idaho.gov/sites/Wildlife/IDMasterNaturalist/Boise/Master%20Naturalist%20Brochure/2018.Idaho%20Master%20Naturalist%20Enrollment%20Form.pdf>.

The chapter is sponsored by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game MK Nature Center, the Idaho Botanical Garden, and the City of Boise. Participants attend 40 hours of classes and donate 40 hours of volunteer time in a calendar year for certification. This chapter focuses on Conservation Education volunteer activities, but there are diverse volunteer opportunities offered. Contact Sara Focht if you have questions about the online description and enrollment form (see link above).



New AmeriCorps Member Onboard



Welcome to Tess Wolfenson, the Nature Center's new AmeriCorps member! Tess has degrees in business and biology from Saint Mary's College and has a Master's Degree from the University of Idaho in Bioregional Planning and Community Design. Between college and graduate school, Tess worked with birds of prey in South Dakota and spent a semester at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute in Virginia exploring a myriad of conservation practices as well as developing a long-term teaching tool about insects. A recent Chicago transplant, she loves hiking, camping, kayaking, and exploring Idaho with her husband, daughter, and dogs. She is looking forward to her new role at the MK Nature Center!



MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection

Fall Lecture Series at MK Nature Center



Fall Lecture Series at MK Nature Center



October 19th Intermountain Bird Observatory. Their name changed (formerly Idaho Bird Observatory) but their projects are still fascinating! Find out what they do locally and around the region with Education and Outreach Director, Heidi Ware.

November 6th A day in the life of a Wildlife Veterinarian by Dr. Mark Drew, IDFG.

December 11th Beavers in the Desert and Amphibian Habitat Restoration. Wildlife Diversity Biologist from SW Idaho, Bill Bosworth, will share work he is doing in SW Idaho for beavers and amphibians alike.

Lectures are designed for adults, are free, and open to the public. All lectures are 6:30-8 pm.
MK Nature Center 600 S. Walnut Street, Boise, ID 86712 (208) 334-2225



New
Faces

Ryan Rosengrant (left) is from Council, Idaho and is a sophomore at Boise State majoring in General Business. Ryan has a passion about animals and the outdoors so this job seems to be the perfect fit. Our second new employee is Nina Schaeffer (right). She is a sophomore at Boise State majoring in Urban Studies. She is excited to be working with plants and animals, as well as a variety of people from our community at the Nature Center. Michaela Johnson (middle) is a junior at BSU working toward her Bachelor's degree in biology with a minor in music. Her interests include beekeeping, photography, violin, and art. She hopes to pursue a career in ecology and is excited to be a new member of the MK Nature Center team as a BSU work-study student. Welcome to Ryan, Michaela, and Nina!

MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1ST & 2ND 2017, 9AM – 5PM



MK NATURE CENTER



HOLIDAY BIRD SEED SALE

600 S. Walnut Street • Boise, Idaho 83712



Wild Birds Unlimited of Boise is our faithful partner and supporter for this event.. They continue to supply high quality seed for what is one of our most successful and popular fundraisers.

Wild Birds Unlimited will be donating 15% of their feeder & suet sales during the event, back to MK nature Center.

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



Saturday Dec. 2nd Activities for the whole family

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

Free take home kids' crafts - 11 to 2pm

All Proceeds Support MK Nature Center's Educational Programs!

Contact Sue Dudley with question: sue.dudley@idfg.idaho.gov or 208.287.2900

Community Partners

“Stanford Day of Service”



On May 6, 2017 Stanford alumni around the world gave back to their communities with volunteer efforts. Our group of volunteers opted to served at the Idaho Fish and Game MK Nature Center. We planted a red cedar tree, helped with grounds keeping, and created a log-jam in a stream to improve fish habitat.

Participants included Stanford alums Steve Clayton, Jena Vasconcelos, Gail Hawkins, Carrie Melvin, and friends and family members. We plan to do it again next year, with an even larger group.



Carrie Melvin



“HP Community Service Day”

On May 19th, 2017, the “Blue Team” from HP, organized by Alex Peck, made a huge dent in the removal of old brush, invasive trees and dead limbs. Those not working on brush terrorized and eliminated hundreds of weeds in several of the gardens. *Many thanks to Alex, Eric,*

Lindsey, Anshree, Alve, Amalka, Liya, Markus, Kelli, Anne, David, Peter, Matt, Jason, Spencer, Jeff, Mark, Kelsey, and Sean.

Susan Ziebarth, IDFG



“Micron Spring-Clean Work Day”

May 20, 2017 -Again this year, Aubrey Smith rallied a group of his fellow employees, family members and “repeat customers” for a Spring Garden Cleanup, Fence repair and Hot-Dog feed. Again they spruced up the MKNC “Vacant Lot Native Plant Garden” and completed a fence repair that had been looming. *Thank you Aubrey, Justin, George, Lori, Darren, Tom, Abigail, Matthew, Kelli, Kelly, Lacey and Sukneet.*



Usual Suspects

Garden Gurus Rain, shine or smoke, these dedicated garden tamers show up to weed, dead head and rein in the gardens. Cheryl Minckler (bottom photo) has been coming steadily for 15 years! New this year are botanist Valerie Ray (top right) and former IBG Garden Teacher Hannah Max (right oval).



Animal Care Seth Davis (below) with George the snake. Anna Holdiman and Emily Rigg (bottom). These volunteers come regularly to help care for our captive animals.



Formal Backyard Stabilization Project

Susan Ziebarth, Wildlife Educator, IDFG



Bill Horton

Twenty-eight years is pretty good for an old fence. With the majority of the posts rotted out, the fence was leaning and on its last leg, so to speak. Former Fish and Game employees Dan Herrig and Bill Horton briefly came out of retirement and started the repair. They came up with a game plan, a parts list and then dug all of the holes for the new posts.



Dan Herrig

The project was completed a few weeks later by Micron Work Day volunteers George Steiner, Justin Smith and volunteers Ian Black and Sean Jorgensen.



George Steiner



Justin Smith



Ian Black



Sean Jorgensen

The following people volunteered their time to the MK Nature Center between July 1 and September 30th, 2017. MK Nature Center receives an average of nearly 500 volunteer hours monthly. Thank you!!

Charles Barker
Patrice Davies
Seth Davis
Margit Donhowe
Shawnie Geisler
Janna Gray
Maria Haberstadt
Marylee Hale
Raymond Heady
Tim Hebdon
Katie Hebdon

Heidi Hughes
Erin Kemner
Sheila Lehman
Ron Lopez
Hannah Max
Cheryl Minckler
Bronwyn Myers
Tom Neale
Damon Noller
Valerie Ray
Celia Renner

Amanda Richael
Emily Rigg
Derek Roesler
Christen Sapnas
Arleen Schaeffer
Christy Smith
Hailey Smith
Carson Smith
Suzanne Troje

Education Programs at MK Nature Center

Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, IDFG MKNC

The new fiscal year is a quarter over, and I have barely had time to reflect on last year's educational accomplishments. Our "busy season" seems to be extending further each year! In fiscal year 2017 (July 1, 2016 to June 30th, 2017), the MK Nature Center hosted 284 on-site guided programs, serving 8,566 people. This is about the same number of programs we usually perform in a year. Our growth this year came in the form of on-site educational booths and off-site outreach programs. This change was a direct result of our AmeriCorps Member, Brian Lawless and our dedicated volunteers! We were able to attend 30 outreach programs/booths at the request of schools, agencies, and local organizations. To this end, we reached 5,083 additional people! Over the summer, we were able to provide educational booths 25 times, with themes ranging from "bears of Idaho," to "scat and tracks," and "Chinook Salmon."



Photos clockwise starting in upper left: Jasmine Brooks showing students the new mosaic mural on a Streamwalk Program. Master Naturalist volunteer, Janna Gray, staffing an educational booth at MKNC. Wildlife Educator, Sara Focht showing students Fiona, our American Kestrel. Master Naturalist Volunteer Bronwyn Myers helping at International Museum Day with bows and arrows. Idaho Master Naturalist Margit Donhowe teaching at Riverside Rangers. Idaho Master Naturalist Tom Neale staffing an education booth at the Nature Center.



MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection

Alpine Lake Bench Replacement

Susan Ziebarth, Wildlife Educator, IDFG

Much like the 28-year old wooden fence (see article on page 9), the 28-year old wooden bench seats were being eaten away by carpenter ants, termites and plain old wear and tear. Volunteer Charles (Tom) Barker took the lead on this project with the assistance of Derek Roester and Susan Ziebarth. Idaho Salmon and Steelhead Days Inc. donated money for the materials.



Charles "Tom" Barker



Charles "Tom" Barker



Derek Roester

Thank You For Supporting MKNC

The following people donated directly to the MK Nature Center between July 1-September 30th, 2017. Donations come in the form of money, goods, services, or other in-kind donations.

Hilda Packard

Ken Miracle

Wild Birds Unlimited

Donors listed here do not include donors who gave to Friends of MK Nature Center.



Friends Group Sign Project

Joyce Harvey-Morgan, Board Member, FOMKNC

The mosaic is complete (see article on page 3) and now Friends of MK Nature Center has now moved on and begun to implement a new project, the upgrade of all educational/interpretive and informational signage at the Nature Center.

We have raised significant funds for this project, with help from our members, our Idaho Gives campaign, the Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation, the Morrison Knudsen Foundation and the Harry W. Morrison Foundation, but we still need to raise more funds to complete our project's budget. Donations are still being accepted!

Our annual membership campaign will occur in late November. If you are already a member, we are so grateful to you, and you will hear from us again. If you are not a member, please consider joining us!
<http://www.friendsofmknc.org/>

Parting Photos

Top left: Just in time for Halloween, this female wolf spider was spotted near our boot shed. She is carrying her babies on her back. Let's hope she did not find a boot to live in. **Right:** A female chinook salmon stages to spawn in upper photos. Below, a photo taken just after milt (sperm) from an adult male is released into the water. Chinook spawning only lasts a few days at the Nature Center, usually in late August and early September. **Lower left:** A young great blue heron gave us all a laugh as we watched him over a couple of weeks learning to fish, being chased by a mink, and observing fish through the viewing windows. Photos by Sara Focht, IDFG.

