



# Turnbull Wildlife Refuge

Fall 2012, 3rd Quarter

Friends of Turnbull N.W.R. Quarterly Report

Volume 15 Issue 3

## Friends of Turnbull Yearly Report

by Joanne Powell

We have had a solid year and the future is looking even better. Your board has worked hard to make the Turnbull NWR Friends group a positive force in the community and for Turnbull.

Louise O’Leary, our Activities chair, has arranged for programs for the membership to enjoy over the past year. She is the person to thank for having Jack Nisbet, famous author, conservationist and speaker to us at the General Meeting on August 21st. Mike O’Leary has been tirelessly representing us at the West Plains Chamber of Commerce.

Thanks again to Linda Long, our hard-working Secretary. She is an active volunteer with the Environmental Education program and is the Secretary of the Ice Age Floods Institute.

Bob Liepold, our Treasurer, is still doing an impressive job at an under-appreciated position, critical to the functioning of the Friends group. Treasurer is a job fundamental to any organization. He can’t ever quit, you know, I would be lost without him!

Many thanks to Marian Frobe, our Political Advocacy Chair and Manager of the Friends’ bookstore. She has done a great job finding interesting books and items

for our bookstore. She works closely with long-time FOT member and ex-President, MaryJane Booth, who is our Bookstore Volunteer Coordinator. It is very important to have our store open for the advertised hours and MaryJane can use more volunteers at the store so we can support this very important part of the Friends’ public face. The Refuge staff is now opening the bookstore during the week if a visitor is interested in purchasing a souvenir so many thanks to them.

Don’t forget to visit our website at FOTNWR. Our Web Minder, Pete Porter, has been keeping the site up-to-date for many years and it is a very important contribution to FOT especially over the last few years as more people use the Internet for their information. Non-members visit the site also and may be encouraged to join when they see our newsletter and check out our activities.

Our yearly auction was held at the United Christ Church in Cheney this April. The site was really nice but we did not get the response we had hoped for. The day was the first nice one in months and most people were out enjoying the heat and sunshine. We could have used a little less heat at the auction! Our newest board member, Katherine Ryf (and her husband, Jeremy) worked incredibly hard to put on a great show at our auction – Jeremy was the master pasta chef and everyone brought their special spaghetti sauces to share. Our Auction Committee and ad hoc members worked diligently to gather great items for our auction. I especially want to thank the volunteers who worked the auction in really intense heat. Kelley and Ann Connor, John and Patti Barber, Marian and Russell Frobe, Kathy LaFrance, Fran and Brad Hayward, and Judy Hamel. If I’ve left anyone’s name off I sincerely apologize. A number of members jumped in to help at



### In this Issue:

<b>Yearly Report</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Bookstore Report</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>FOT Activities</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Going Underground</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>News from Washington D.C.</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Refuge Happenings</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Wildlife Observations</b> .....	<b>11</b>

the last minute and I didn't think to write their names down. And I can't forget the Girl Scouts who stood out in the sun to direct cars and people. Thanks to Katherine Ryf for organizing that much-needed assistance.

Everyone shared the workload and made putting on the event much easier. If you are interested in being a part of the auction for 2013 and sharing your ideas with committee members, please contact Katherine Ryf or Louise O'Leary.

Solo's "widow" returned to the Refuge this spring and successfully raised another brood of Trumpeter Swans. A very exciting event!

Thank you for all your support for another successful year

## Friends of Turnbull Bookstore and Gift Shop Report

Marian Frobe

The Store is really doing well this year. Our sales through mid-August are \$5606.87 and our expenses are \$4001.18, giving us a net profit of \$1605.69 so far. Although I reordered some books, I find some titles are still selling out, so will probably have to do another supplemental order. One reason for the strong sales this year is that the Refuge staff is now keeping the Store open for folks who come in during the week, and this has resulted in quite a good increase in our sales. In fact, some weeks seem really busy during the week with almost nothing on weekends. This has been our pattern on previous summer months—not much action on the weekends. Of course, there is still traffic that comes in to look at the new displays and to ask questions about what to look for, etc. Although we like them to buy a post card or something, too, just having a volunteer there to try to help them is valuable, too.

We are now stocked up on patches and pins and earrings, and T-shirts are starting to sell again now that the hot days of summer are winding down. I'm hoping to hold off until the spring before I reorder shirts and

sweatshirts, but time will tell. We ordered some new Peterson Color-In books that seem popular. We have them in birds, mammals, reptiles and butterflies. Also, the refuge's and Discovery School's book on the birds of Turnbull, called Discover Birds at Turnbull is finally finished and printed and we have a supply of them to sell at the Store. They are priced at \$10.00 and have some really cute pictures done by the children.

If you were not able to attend the Annual Meeting and Jack Nisbett's presentation, the Store carries a few copies of his book, Singing Grass, Burning Sage, in case you would like to purchase one.

As usual, we have trouble finding enough volunteers at times in the summer months, so we are always looking for a few more volunteers. If you can help us out, please call MaryJane Booth at 235-4466 or me, Marian Frobe, at 328-0621 or at rrfrobe@msn.com.



**Membership:** Just a reminder to renew your membership. We depend on your support to continue our important work with the Environmental Education program at Turnbull.

If you would like to receive your newsletter through your email, please let us know. It not only saves paper but you can enjoy all the pictures in living color! Email [jcorder@hughes.net](mailto:jcorder@hughes.net).

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Visit our great website!  
[www.fotnwr.org](http://www.fotnwr.org)

# U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge  
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## News Release



### Help Us Celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week

#### Turnbull NWR Community Work Party

Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge and Spokane Audubon Society will host a community work party on Saturday, October 20, 2012. This is part of an ongoing community effort to restore native riparian habitat to benefit birds and other wildlife species. We have hundreds of native saplings to plant, and fencing to build at the project site to protect the trees from deer, elk, and moose browsing. Everyone is welcome!

**Attention Groups:** Please call in advance to register. It helps us in our planning if we know how many are coming. The Refuge will also host a "potluck" lunch. Please feel free to bring your favorite dish. Ask for Sandy.

**When:** Saturday, October, 20 2012.

**Planting Time:** 9 am to 12 p.m.

**Lunch: Potluck** 12 p.m.

**Where:** Turnbull NWR Headquarters, 5 miles south of Cheney on Cheney-Plaza Road: turn left on Smith Road and drive 2 miles on gravel road to headquarters.

**Clothing:** Long-sleeved shirt, work pants, sturdy boots or shoes, gloves.

**Equipment:** (if you can) pliers, shovels



The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).



## News from Washington

### House Bill would Eliminate FWS's Authority to Establish Refuges

by Evan Hirsche

When President Theodore Roosevelt sought to protect tiny Pelican Island NWR in Florida, he evaluated the best options on the table and ultimately chose to use his executive authority to create the nation's first national wildlife refuge in 1903. Since his precedent-setting public land conservation decision, fully 90% of all of the nation's 556 refuges have been established administratively and by every president since.

In fact, the creation of refuges has been bipartisan with nearly the same number created by Republican and Democratic administrations, with the largest addition credited to President George W. Bush who in 2009 decreed a 50-million-acre addition to the System in the West Pacific, protecting some of the most pristine marine habitat in the System.

Yet, despite a 109 year history of creating new refuges through administrative action and with broad-based local community support, Representative John Fleming (R-LA) has introduced a misguided bill – H.R. 3009 – that would make it impossible for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to establish new refuges administratively and would instead require Congressional action. The bill may be voted on by the full House Resources Committee in September.

Should the bill be enacted into law, the ramifications would be enormous – the recently-established Everglades Headwaters NWR and Conservation Area would be nullified; hundreds of private landowners hoping to sell conservation easements would be put on indefinite hold pending refuge boundary expansions; and it will all but halt the strategic growth of the System – something Congress itself mandated in the 1997 Refuge Improvement Act.

### Obama Administration Announces New Funding for the Northern Everglades

by Evan Hirsche

The central Florida ranching community has been a crucial partner in NWRA's efforts to conserve the Northern Everglades.

It's no small feat to establish a 150,000-acre national wildlife refuge and conservation area. But it's a whole different level of commitment when it's backed up with \$81 million for purchase of conservation easements.

Yet that's just what happened today when top conservation officials from the Obama administration made an announcement that they would direct \$80 million from the Department of Agriculture's Wetlands Reserve Program and \$1.5 million from the Department of Interior's Land and Water Conservation Fun account toward buying easements from private landowners in the recently-established Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area, north of Lake Okechobee. Announced by Agriculture Secretary, Tom Vilsack and Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Rachel Jacobson, these funds could ensure the long-term conservation of up to 25,000 acres.



#### From Jim Kurth, Chief, NWRS **Did You Know ...**

... most of the Refuge System's 150 million acres came from the public domain (U.S. land never conveyed from federal ownership) or from other federal agencies, including the Defense Department. Since its 1903 founding, the Refuge System has purchased only 7.4 million acres. Of those purchases, 60 percent were via fee title acquisition; 40 percent were via easements, primarily wetland, grassland and non-development easements.

## Refuge Happenings

by Sandy Rancourt

Another year has flown by, and I just finished compiling data and crunching numbers for the public use section of our annual report. The numbers say it all. Over 700 volunteers contributed 18,687 hours. This was a substantial increase from last year. The majority of the hours were volunteered in the biological and public use programs. Volunteers helped with many biological surveys including bluebird nest monitoring, elk surveys, forest transects, wetland monitoring, weed surveys, pollinator studies, songbird mist netting and point counts, marshbird surveys, habitat restoration and so much more. In addition, both long term volunteers who have been with us for years and refuge staff conducted a great deal more environmental education and outreach on and off refuge this year. This resulted in over 8,590 participants in on and off site refuge environmental education programs. Additionally, nearly 5,000 participants experienced our interpretation programs.

#### *An oversight-*

In the last Refuge Happenings article acknowledgment was given to partners who helped us with our new Floods, Flowers, and Feathers Festival. Two partners who helped us out tremendously were omitted. Our deepest gratitude goes to City of Cheney Parks and Recreation and to Brian Maebius. The City of Cheney assisted us not only with advertisement but they also provided a bus and driver for the Ice Age Floods Institute tours. Brian designed a new logo for the festival which was also used on t-shirts made available to the public. We extend our deepest appreciation to these two partners for their contribution.

#### **Volunteer Program**

#### *Riparian Restoration*

Our summer has been no less hectic than the spring. We are now actively recruiting for our fall community planting event set for Saturday, October 20th. Many groups and individuals have really pitched in on restoration projects.

#### Inland Northwest Wildlife Council

Inland Northwest Wildlife Council members helped us with our potting project on June 16th. We still had quite a few bare stock seedlings that needed to be prepped and potted for future plantings. Six individuals from the Council, led by Floyd Barlow, spent the day potting several hundred cottonwood and currant seedlings. The group dove right in and did an impressive job on this project. These saplings will be ready for planting next year in time for our spring community planting event and for several private lands projects.



**Inland Northwest Council members spent a Saturday potting native trees and shrubs (SR)**

#### Upper Columbia Academy (UCA)

Thirty-eight elementary students, parents, and teachers participating in a summer camp at UCA visited the refuge in early June to learn about Turnbull and to participate in a riparian restoration project. I instructed the students on the Refuge and the National Wildlife Refuge System and how to plant trees. Mike Rule discussed riparian management and worked with the group planting several trees in the area that Discovery School maintained for many years. We accomplished a lot in a relatively short period of time considering the age of the students. This really was not all that surprising considering what a great group of students they were.



**UCA summer camp students helping plant trees below Refuge HQ (SR)**

### The Beaver Project

Consulting with the Lands Council we came up with another project to deter the ever persistent rodents from using the trees in the Pine Creek Restoration Unit for their own construction purposes. Needless to say, Joyce Alonso was ready to jump right in on this project which entails putting a paint/sand mixture on the base of the trees which is supposed to deter beaver chewing. Joyce worked with John Overdorff, another volunteer who has helped us out considerably on restoration projects. Together the volunteers have painted many tree bases. The outcome is yet to be determined.

### Bluebird Nest Boxes

Scout leader Matthew Maney, his wife Judy, and several scouts from Troop 481 surprised the refuge recently with a very generous donation of 21 bluebird nest boxes. The boxes will be used for replacing worn out boxes on the trails and several have already been given to Friends of Turnbull for their bookstore which was getting a little low on nest boxes. The boxes were very well done, and I am sure the public will really appreciate receiving a box when they sign up for membership at the store.



**Matthew and Judy Maney deliver bluebird boxes constructed by scouts from Troop 481 for FOT (SR)**

### Pollinator Project

Kevin Durland, a master hunter, constructed several high quality pollinator display boxes that will be used to store pollinator specimens and for display at numerous outreach events. Kevin's work was "exceptional" and we are very grateful for his work on this project. Carla Martinez an Eastern student will put these boxes to good use. She has spent many hours this summer collecting bees as part of a national bee monitoring program. She is cleaning, drying and pinning these specimens some of which will be used for displays.

### **Biological Program**

With the help of AmeriCorps member Sean Koesler, SCA Volunteer Ruby Valadez, FOT volunteer Christian Schroll, and refuge bio-tech Steve Fredrick, we have nearly completed topographic mapping of Upper Turnbull Slough using RTK GPS surveying techniques that provides highly accurate position information. We plan to map 3 more large wetlands over the next 2 years. This data will help us monitor and refine our water management and model the impacts of climate change. This same group also completed the second round of habitat monitoring of one of our first commercial thinning units. This data will allow us to evaluate whether our forest restoration strategy is meeting objectives and also provide the habitat information to evaluate any bird responses we find from our point count data. The other big project

they are involved in has been mosquito collecting to monitor for West Nile Virus. No infected mosquitos have been collected yet. We are also wrapping up our 18th year of mist netting and banding songbirds with the help of Marian and Russell Frobe who have been there almost from the start (see the wildlife section for details). Several volunteers mentioned in the last newsletter recently finished up monitoring bluebird boxes. The last clutches of bluebirds were fledged this past week.

Eastern Washington University students have also been involved in several studies on the refuge this summer. Graduate student, Kristin Ancito is continuing research on mima mound prairie restoration using fire and herbicides. This is a continuation of work by Brandy Reynecke who just completed her thesis. This project is supported by a grant received by the Refuge. Savannah Walker has completed her field work on the effect of predators scents on aspen browsing by elk and will be writing up her thesis this fall. Natassaja Noelle has been completing a lichen inventory of the refuge and setting up a long-term monitoring protocol for the refuge. Sara Stankavich initiated a study this summer looking at bat activity over different wetland types. Adam Gebauer is continuing his work on the effects of reed canarygrass on stream flows in Eastern Washington. Most of these projects involve undergraduate student volunteers.

### **Environmental Education and Outreach**

#### *Bat Presentation*

On July 18th Mike and I conducted a presentation on bats for the public. Almost 100 individuals showed up for "Bats of the World and the Channeled Scablands." After the presentation, we led the group to a mist net that we had set up to demonstrate techniques used for capturing bats. It was a rather large crowd, and the bats didn't get very active until well after 10 pm. This was not the case, however, with the mosquitoes. Several people were in shorts and short-sleeves. There was a lot of hand slapping and desperate waving going on. Despite this, the public endured with a great attitude and many hung on until the end. Fortunately, we had mist netted the night before and caught some bats for the group to get a close up look of one before too many

people became anemic. We also used a bat detector so that the public could hear bat ultrasonic calls.



#### *Discover Birds at Turnbull Field Guide*

Turnbull collaborated with Discovery School to develop a field guide of birds commonly found on the refuge that is geared to elementary students. The refuge received a grant a few years back for the publication of this project. The guide was designed to help younger students relate better to using a field guide. We asked Discovery School if students could research, write a summary, and draw a picture of selected bird species commonly found in the 4 main habitats on the refuge. We then recruited the help of local photographers to supplement the student's drawing with a photo. Bob Griffith, Chuck Kerkering, and Tom Munson were an immense help as usual and provided some incredible photos for this project. The field guide has been recently published and well worth the wait. The students and teachers from Discovery did a great job, and you wouldn't believe the student's drawings. They are quite awesome! We also enlisted the help of Spokane Audubon and Friends of Turnbull to assist with editing. The book is on sale at the Friend's bookstore for \$10. All proceeds go towards purchasing additional field guides when necessary and for the EE program.

## Discover Birds at Turnbull



by  
**Students from Discovery School**  
 for  
**Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge  
 Cheney, Washington**

**Our new bird field guide (SR)**

### *Cheney Jubilee*

Turnbull and Friends of Turnbull participated in the Cheney Jubilee on July 14th and 15th. Thanks to long term refuge volunteer Louise O'Leary, we had a pretty successful event. Refuge volunteers and staff assisting Louise included Christian Schroll, Ruby Valadez, Erica Keene, Paul Reilly, and Kylie Gaard. The Refuge and Friends group had an informative, interactive booth. This was another great outreach opportunity with the town of Cheney. Volunteers and staff interacted with hundreds of people participating in festivities during the rodeo weekend and also made a few hundred animal tracks.

### *Camp Sekani*

Turnbull also participated in Camp Sekani at Camp Sekani Park in Spokane. The event was hosted by Cub Scouts and over 200 people attended. Environmental Education Contractor Kylie Gaard and Park Ranger Paul Reilly staffed a refuge booth. The duo provided information and made animal tracks out of Plaster of Paris for all those scouts.

### *EWU Summer Camp*

Eastern Washington University conducted a summer research internship for high school students at Eastern and on the refuge that was funded by the Charlotte Martin Foundation. The emphasis was on environmental quality in the Inland Northwest. The students, under Dr. Joanna Matos supervision, designed and conducted research on regional freshwater habitat quality, summarized results, and wrote reports based on their studies. Turnbull hosted a reception for the students on July 6th in the refuge's Environmental Education classroom. This was a very nice night. The students presented posters of their work and Eastern catered the event. The students did a great job on their posters, and the food provided by EWU was very good. A highlight of the evening was when several members of the Spokane Tribe performed an Honor Chant thanking everyone for the opportunity and also to remind us of the importance of honoring and understanding the natural world.



**Members of the Spokane Tribe performed a Honor Chant at EWU's summer camp reception (SR)**

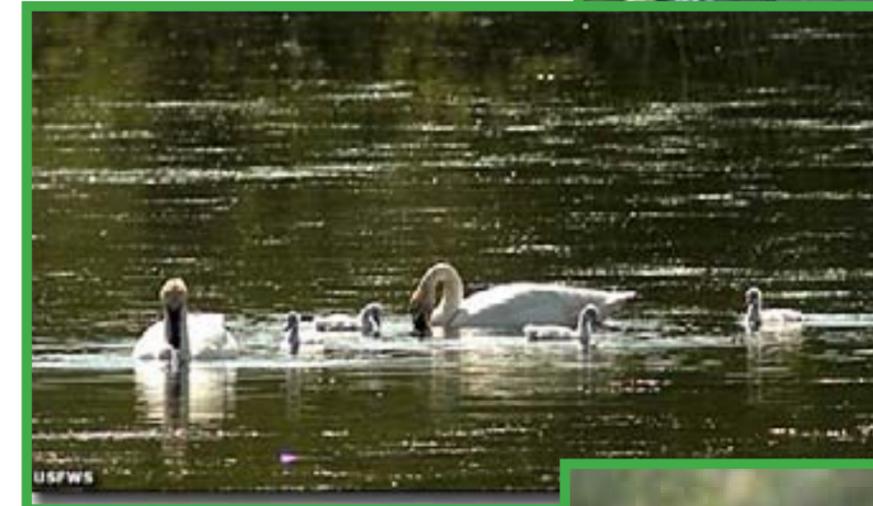
### *EE Classroom*

We decided to give a little face lift this year to our environmental classroom. The rugs were old and stained and the office needed a painting. New rugs were purchased that should hold up pretty well with all the student activity. I am hoping the color and pattern will hide the stains that are eminent. We chose a light green color paint to pick up spirits especially during the long winter months. Paul did a great job painting and organizing so we should be pretty set for the upcoming year

# Late Summer Wildlife Observations

by Mike Rule

Fall songbird migration is underway, Wilson's, Nashville, and yellow-rumped warblers have made their appearance and flocks of warbling vireos are coming through the refuge. Several accipiters (Coopers and Sharp-shinned hawks) have been seen in recent days



We still have 4 Trumpeter cygnets. They are growing fast. An additional adult has been seen with the parents - possibly a previous year's cygnet.



River otters have been observed several times on Upper and Lower Turnbull.



Red-breasted



White-breasted



Pygmy Nuthatch



For the moose lovers, a nice bull has been seen below HQ as have a cow with one calf and another with two calves.



The pines are alive with flocks containing all three nuthatches and black-capped and mountain chickadees.

All though slow to start this spring, the flocks of western bluebirds seen and heard throughout the refuge indicate they made good use of the late summer.

The banding station has been very productive this year with 155 total captures, slightly higher than the average of 153 for the previous 18 years. Total captures were considerably higher than the previous 5 year's average of 119. The most common species captured continue to be willow flycatchers, western wood pewees, house wrens, song sparrows, black-capped chickadees and yellow warblers. Notable changes this year were an increase in the number of common yellowthroats, cedar waxwings, and gray catbirds. We also captured a young orange-crowned warbler in mid-August, an early migrant that has only been captured once before in our past 19 years of banding.

Great news for habitat. This year we received funding from a million dollar National Wetland Conservation Act Grant received by Ducks Unlimited and numerous other partners including Turnbull and our Friends group who are working to conserve habitat

in the Channeled Scablands. This is the third grant of this size received by this partnership. These grants must have at least a 1:1 match from non-federal entities. The Friends of Turnbull have contributed to each of these grants by way of volunteer labor to restore riparian habitat on the refuge. The Friends contribution and that of the other non-federal partners have leveraged over \$347,000 for refuge habitat restoration projects this year. The 5 projects we received funding for include the Pine Creek Riparian Restoration Project, Cheever Lake Wetland Enhancement, Upper Blackhorse Lake Enhancement, the North Reeves and Ballinger Lakes Restoration and the Corder Pothole Restoration. These projects in total will restore or enhance 214 acres of wetlands and 12 acres of woody riparian habitat. So keep on coming to our planting events, your work pays huge dividends for wildlife.



Friends of Turnbull NWR  
P.O. Box 294  
Cheney, WA 99004

*The Friends of Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge, a nonprofit organization, supports the mandate of the refuge to protect and enhance wildlife and their habitats through education, research, habitat preservation and restoration.*

Got email? Add it to your membership form for quick activity updates!

**Membership Application**

YES! I want to support the Friends of Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge and its programs with my membership.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership: (Circle one)

Individual \$15

Family \$25

Business/Group \$35

Patron \$100

Benefactor \$500

Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Endowment Fund Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

My check is enclosed payable to:

Friends of Turnbull N.W.R.

P.O. Box 294

Cheney WA 99004