

Turnbull Wildlife Refuge

Friends Newsletter



Message from the President

by Lorna Kropp

Volunteer Opportunities for Friends of Turnbull:

1) Our Nature Store is staffed by FOT volunteers. The store is open on weekends from April through October, for two shifts each day. This means there are 16 shifts each month. The Opening Shift is from 11:00 am - 1:30pm; the Closing Shift is from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm. We are looking for additional volunteers who can take at least one shift a month. We will give training in operating the Square POS system and in opening and securing the building. We also will have new volunteers work together with experienced ones. Working in the store is a great way to help out and a good way to get out to the Refuge, work in the store, and then have some time to walk around either before or after your shift.

2) The Activities Committee needs one or two new members to plan events and coordinate community outreach events like Earth Day and MayFest. We will have a booth at MayFest and need at least 3 people take a shift at the booth.

Date: Saturday, May 11, 2019 on First Avenue in downtown Cheney.

Time: Set-up at 9:30. Shifts 10-12, 12-2, and 2-4, followed by taking down the display.

At the booth we will have an activity with the World Bird Migration Day theme – **“Protect Birds. Be the solution to plastic pollution!”** We also will try out having a “mobile Nature Store,” using our Square POS system to sell the new Turnbull metal water bottles.

Contact: activities@fotnwr.org to volunteer.

FOT Fundraising

The Friends group has had a long-term goal of financially supporting the Environmental Education program by fundraising for the money to support one fulltime AmeriCorps Intern to staff the programs offered to 8,500 students in our area. During the Fall and Spring, inters meet with students on Field Trips to the Refuge, and in the winter they visit classrooms.

The annual goal is \$10,000. This year we hope to reach that goal with a combination of earnings from the Nature Store, a grant from a local charity, donations, and an event called “Scenes and Songs for the Refuge.” This event will be held on Saturday, September 21, 12:00 – 4pm, at a site either in Spokane or Cheney (site information coming soon). The Plaid Cats will be one of the bands playing a set and they are arranging for three additional bands to play. We have invited artists and photographers from the region to bring along a table of items to sell. There will be a couple of bid items and special baskets. Please mark your calendars for the date and invite neighbors to come along with you.

In this Issue:

Volunteer Opportunities at Turnbull.....	1
Friends of Turnbull Fundraising.....	1
Nature Store Report	2
Beginning Bird Watching Classes	2
Tundras and Trumpeters Having Fun	3
MayFest Celebration	4
NWRA Leaders Moving On	5
Let Nature Take It’s Course?	6
Gangsters of the Bird World	7

Spring 2019
1st Quarter
Quarterly Report
Volume 21 Issue 1

Friends of Turnbull Nature Store

Priscilla Bowen

I do believe that Spring is finally here. Most of the snow is gone and the trees are budding out. I've seen a few pussy willows. A few colorful flowers are pushing through layers of leaves and grass. I feel encouraged.

I am excited to get our Nature Store open for business. I've been busy the last few weeks, ordering replacement items. Since we had such wonderful support from our customers last year, I have been able to step out a bit and add some new things as well.

First, I added a new shelf unit with eight shelves, giving me a much-needed way to display items for sale. I am sure you are thinking - Where is there room for a unit like that? Wait until you see it. You will be amazed.

Several new books for both adults and kids have been stocked. A few new jewelry items will arrive soon. We also have a new puzzle.

There is a new thermos bottle with the Heron on one side and Turnbull Wildlife Refuge on the other. It's pretty classy for \$20.00 including tax. See the FOT website.

The most exciting item is a new shirt design that was introduced to us at Winterfest by Echo Kane who graduated from EWU. Echo brought in some posters with a moose design on them. We sold almost all she had that day and contracted more for this Spring opening of the store. Along with that, we had her permission to use her design on a T shirt. They turned out better than we even imagined. People already are asking us to hold sizes and colors for them. If you want a sneak peek, check the FOT website.

Our store volunteers have been meeting with Lorna for a refresher course on the Square. Of course, we always need more volunteers. It is a great experience, as you get to meet our customers and share about our wonderful refuge and surrounding area. If you are interested, call any of the FOT board members. I also am looking for folks to be on a Nature Store committee with me.

Priscilla Bowen
Nature Store Supervisor.



New T-shirt Design
New Metal Water Bottle



Beginning Bird Watching Classes

Beginning Bird Watching Classes #2 and #3, led by Joyce Alonso, are scheduled for the first Saturday of May and June, from 8:45 – 10:20 in the classroom, followed by a bird walk until about noon.

Sign up through the Activity page of our website: www.fotnwr.org/activities.html

Visit our great website! www.fotnwr.org

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Tundras and Trumpeters Having Fun!

by Carlene Hardt

Last month I was thrilled to count five swans (four Trumpeter & one Tundra) on the Finger Lakes, 14 swans on Middle Pine (a Trumpeter family of six and Tundra swans with the yellow mark by the eye) and around 30 ducks and coots. There were several swans bathing (diving and rolling) and a few of them climbed up to preen on the remaining ice.



My humorous picture shows a Trumpeter twisting her neck like a pretzel and looking right at the camera!

The Tundra swans stayed together in a group and once in a while a new Tundra swan would fly in to join them. It was great fun watching all the wildlife activity!

All photos by Carlene Hardt



MayFest Celebration!

May 11 will be the annual MayFest celebration in downtown Cheney.

The FOTNWR booth at MayFest will have information about the effects of plastic pollution on birds; and will engage kids and families in making an art project using recycled plastic caps glued into place for a mosaic picture. You can help by collecting plastic caps/lids and bringing to the booth or to the Nature Store or calling/ emailing Lorna Kropp for pickup. (activities@fotnwr.org; 509-294-3642)

In addition, we will be selling the durable metal water bottles at the booth. To help out and join in the fun, sign up for a shift: set-up at 9:30, shifts from 10-12, 12-2, 2-4, and take-down. Hope to see you there!



World Migratory Bird Day
Cheney MayFest

SAVE the DATE

WHEN: **May 11, 2019**

WHERE: **Downtown Cheney**

- Join the Friends of Turnbull NWR and other community groups in a fun day of activities and information.

PROTECT BIRDS:
BE THE SOLUTION
TO PLASTIC POLLUTION

The poster features illustrations of various birds: a Red-tailed Tropicbird on the left, a Blue Heron on the right, and a Yellow Warbler at the bottom right. At the bottom, a duck is shown swimming in water with a plastic bottle floating nearby. The text 'PROTECT BIRDS: BE THE SOLUTION TO PLASTIC POLLUTION' is written in a stylized font across the water.



Earth Day at Balfour Park
in Spokane Valley

Date: Saturday, April 13, 2019 in Balfour Park,
Spokane Valley
(Sprague Avenue between
Balfour and Herald Roads.)
11am - 5pm.

The poster includes a graphic of the Earth with the words 'EARTH DAY CELEBRATION' written around it in a colorful, blocky font.

National Wildlife Refuge Association Leaders Moving On

The National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) has been actively supporting our Refuges by advocating for them in the Senate and the House, by training Friends members and leaders, and helping start up new Friends groups by providing direction and mentors on-site. The two women mentioned below have dedicated years to the NWRA.

Friends of Turnbull received these requests and responded with heartfelt cards and letters of appreciation for all their good work. Here is a link to the NWRA website so you can see what they are doing to support our wildlife Refuges. <https://www.refugeassociation.org>

Dear Friends,

Desiree Sorenson-Groves is leaving the Refuge Association, but not the National Wildlife Refuge System. If you haven't heard she will become the Arctic Refuge Defense Campaign Director in April, leading a coalition of national and Alaskan organizations to permanently protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is fortunate to have her on its side. She is a dynamo who inspires people to care and take action. That's what she has done for us, the Friends community.

Let's show her how much we appreciate her support of Friends and the Refuge System by pulling together messages of appreciate and support along with photos of our refuges and/or Friends organizations. A coalition of Refuge Friends and Advocates, with assistance from the Refuge Association, will pull them together and present them to Desiree in April.

Dear Friends:

As most of you know, Joanna Webb - FWS National Friends Coordinator - will be taking early retirement effective the end of this month. As Friends, we would like to recognize Joanna for the great work she has done to encourage and improve Friends groups during her 8 years in that position. Will you please help us do that by sending a card--you know, one of those paper things you buy in a store, write on, stick in a thing called an envelope, and attach a little magic item called a postage stamp--to our National Wildlife Refuge Association office at the following address. Desiree Sorenson Groves and Mark Musaus from NWRA will be attending Joanna's farewell event on March 28 and we'd love it if they had a whole basket full of cards to deliver to Joanna on that day.



Joanna Webb



Desiree Sorenson-Groves

Let Nature Take Its Course?

Learning when to intervene—or not—if you find a baby animal in your garden

Joshua Rapp Learn, National Wildlife Federation



This American robin and young eastern cottontail appear vulnerable, but animals found in yards during spring may have attentive parents nearby and, if uninjured, probably should be left alone.

AS SPRING ARRIVES and young birds, rabbits and other new creatures emerge, well-meaning humans often make the mistake of thinking an unattended baby animal needs to be “rescued.” But that good intention often ends in tragedy. “If an animal is injured—especially if humans are the cause, such as by car strikes or cutting down nesting trees—it’s OK to intervene,” says National Wildlife Federation Naturalist David Mizejewski. But absent an obvious injury, it’s best to leave animals alone.

Solo time can aid survival

For many wildlife species, it’s completely normal for mothers to leave their young for large chunks of the day while gathering food. Rabbits and deer, for example, leave their babies alone and hidden in the underbrush, a strategy to protect the young from predators while parents are foraging. If mom returns and the baby is gone, she may eventually leave the area, making a family reunion more difficult. Even young birds discovered on the ground may be fine. Many fledglings attempt to fly before their wings can handle the task, so they plop down to Earth. Though these fledglings may spend several days on the ground before they’re able to fly, parents continue to bring them food, so they should be left alone.

On the other hand, newly hatched nestlings without feathers sometimes fall out of a nest prematurely, and they are much more vulnerable. If their nest is visible and reachable overhead, gently putting these grounded chicks back in the nest isn’t a bad idea. Contrary to popular belief, birds or squirrels won’t reject their young if they smell a human’s touch, though it is

“a persistent myth that people associate with birds in particular,” says John Griffin, senior director of urban wildlife programs for the Humane Society of the United States.

Educating people about the best course of action when finding baby wildlife is critical, says Griffin. To survive, animals need to get back to the wild as soon as possible—or not leave it in the first place. Hard as it may be, leaving a baby alone often gives it the best chance of growing up to have babies of its own. Here are some pointers on what to do—or not do—if you find a baby animal.

- Before doing anything, try to assess if there is a problem. If an animal is not clearly injured or orphaned, and if a grounded bird has its flight feathers, leave it alone, as the mother may simply be hunting for food.
- If an animal has visible injuries or you saw the mother killed, call a licensed wildlife rehabilitator to get professional advice on whether to touch or move the baby.
- If you do move an animal, wear gloves to minimize risk of disease or injury to you or the animal. Place it in a well-ventilated box where it’s not too cold or too hot, and keep it away from children or pets until you can take it to a wildlife rescue professional.
- Don’t feed a baby animal without guidance since the wrong food, such as baby formula or pet food, can “do more harm than good,” Griffin says.

Gangsters of the Bird World

by Lisa Langelier



American crows and common ravens have reputations as the gangsters of the bird world. The cartoon magpies “Heckle and Jeckle” – cousins of crows, and Edgar Allen Poe’s “The Raven” contribute to this notoriety. They are noisy, gregarious, opportunistic scavengers. Both stoutly built, solid black birds, they exhibit complex and interesting behaviors. Although

categorized as songbirds, their raucous calls are anything but melodious. From calls to size, distinguishing between crows and ravens takes practice.

Ravens weigh about three pounds and measure 21 to 27 inches from beak to tail. In contrast, crows only weigh about one pound and measure between 17 and 21 inches from beak to tail. The beak of a raven is heavier and more powerful than a crow’s beak. In fact, the scientific name of the American crow is *Corvus brachyrhynchos* or “short beak” in Greek. No songsters, the vocalizations of crows and ravens are harsh yet distinct. The crow, well known for its oft-used “caw,” makes up to 23 different sounds, while the raven utters a variety of guttural croaks, gurgles, and metallic sounds. The scientific name for the common raven is *Corvus corax* or “croaker” in Greek.

In flight, a raven’s tail is wedge-shaped while the crow’s is shaped like a fan. Crows are strong fliers with regular flapping or rowing wing beats. Ravens are aerial acrobats, soaring and gliding like hawks, rolling and tumbling and even locking feet in flight.

While many songbirds breed during their second year, corvids breed at three to five years of age. Compared to smaller birds, they are relatively long-lived. Although few studies have evaluated their longevity, a captive raven at the National Zoo lived 24 years and crows live 20 or more years in captivity.

When it comes to the bird-brained, crows and ravens are among the most intelligent. Good at solving puzzles, they learn to associate symbols and noises with food, and are keen and wary. Henry Ward Beecher, minister, social reformer, and speaker from the 1880s, was so impressed with the intelligence of crows he said, “If men had wings and bore black feathers, few of them would be clever enough to be crows.”

Crows are infamous for eating sprouting seeds, much to the dismay of farmers and gardeners. They tend to forage in open fields while ravens often feed in forested

habitats. In addition to seeds, the eclectic diet of crows includes carrion, fruit, insects, bird eggs and nestlings, small rodents, and garbage. Ravens shun crops and favor road-killed animals but are unable to penetrate a freshly-killed carcass and rely on other scavengers to rip into the flesh. Ravens even bury their food for later. Eating carrion does not help the reputation of ravens and crows.

Crows are social, family-oriented and forage in groups. They often live in close proximity to humans and tolerate disturbance. Their breeding strategy allows non-breeding young from the previous year to stay in their parents’ territory and help protect and care for the new brood. An American crow family group may include 15 individuals. During fall and winter, crows roost in huge groups of as many as 200,000 birds; these groups are known as a “murder.”

Ravens are more solitary and when paired, keep to themselves. Unlike crows, they have little to do with their young once they leave the nest. Ravens are very secretive and do not tolerate being disturbed. Young, unpaired ravens form groups or “gangs” with their own hierarchy, based on age and experience. A legend that ravens push their young out of the nest to fend for themselves earned groups of ravens the title “an unkindness.” In some cultures ravens are symbols of death, darkness, and depression.

Like their cousins – magpies, jays, and nutcrackers – ravens and crows can be quarrelsome, playful, aggressive, and wary. In the 1941 Disney movie *Dumbo*, five jive-talking, cigar-smoking crows even teach *Dumbo* to fly. Scrappy and tough, feared and misunderstood, these intelligent hooligans deserve a closer look.

The original version of this essay appeared in *The Wild Eye: Field Notes from a Wildlife Refuge*, ©2016 by Lisa Langelier.



Crows vs. Ravens
©Phillip Krzeminski.

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 _____
Nature Store _____
Committee _____
Environmental Education _____
Where needed _____

My check is enclosed payable to
Friends of Turnbull N.W.R.
P.O. Box 294
Cheney WA 99004