

Turnbull Wildlife Refuge



Summer 2017 2nd Quarter

Friends of Turnbull N.W.R. Quarterly Report

Volume 20 Issue 22

A Message from

Molly Zammit

Hello All,

The Friends group has been busy!

We have undertaken a year-long project to build our membership. This has resulted in many renewing their membership as well as new members. We rely on our members for financial, volunteer, and advocacy support. For those of you who have renewed, THANKS! If you haven't renewed, please take the time to do so either online or by mail. The cost is still \$15.00 for an individual membership and \$25.00 for a family, which is a bargain indeed. If you are looking for volunteer opportunities, consider the following: helping in the nature store, working with the EE program (September-June, training is provided by the Refuge), or working on one of the various committees or Friends of Turnbull Board. Email Lorna Kropp at activites@fotnwr.org.

The Friends of Turnbull replaced the viewing scopes on the trail overlooking Winslow Pool. They were built by The Glass Eye Company in Signal Hill, California. It funded through membership fees, donations, and auction monies. Stop by and check them out!

We are looking forward to our general meeting. Please plan to attend! Further details will come out through mail chimp. Hope to see all of you there!

Annual General Membership Meeting Turnbull NWR

Saturday, August 19, 2017
10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

- Pot Luck Lunch
- Elections
- The FOT year in review.

Please bring a salad, side dish or dessert to share

Hamburgers/hot dogs will be provided by FOT.

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Friends of Turnbull Nature Store

Marian Frobe

This year is turning out to be very interesting and challenging for your Nature Store. By the time you read this, Priscilla Bowen will be your new Store Coordinator as we are in the final processes of changing over. We also had to replace Lizzie Riesenberg as our very able Volunteer Scheduler. She had to leave us rather suddenly due to health reasons. Joanne Powell is now the Scheduler and has already contacted most of you.

The first two months the Store has been open have been very good. Naturally, our expenses exceed our income so far, but as of the end of May our sales were \$2044.81, which is very good. Our costs so far are over \$3466.78, so we are in the hole \$1421.97 so far, but that will probably even out by July if sales continue to be as good. We are still trying to find a vendor that will do refrigerator magnets, but everything else has been received for restocking now. In fact, book sales have been so good that we may have to do a few supplemental orders soon.

If you would like to volunteer to help out at the store, please contact anyone on the Friends of Turnbull Board and they can direct you to the right person. Their contact information is listed, usually on the second page of this newsletter. Or check the "I want to volunteer" box on your membership form and we will contact you.

Make a Difference to Protect Refuges

Inside Washington, Refuge News, Wildlife
by National Wildlife Refuge Association

If we wish to galvanize support and make a difference in Washington, DC, it is essential to be familiar with, and have relationships with, your newly elected or re-elected congressional leaders. As refuge supporters and members of the Friends community, what can you do to help?

- Learn about effective solutions to Make Your Voice Heard in Washington, DC
- Learn about the impact of the Friends community to protect and conserve refuges
- Mobilize members of your community to send letters to your congressional leaders about important refuge issues
- Make sure that your lawmakers in the House and Senate are subscribed to your Friends organization's monthly newsletter
- Write Letters to the Editor in your local newspaper about the benefits your local national wildlife refuge provides to your community and the importance of public lands

Throughout 2017, we expect there will be many anti-public lands bills introduced in the House, and we need refuge supporters like you to let Congress know that the removal of public lands is not the will of the American people. Thank you for standing up to support the National Wildlife Refuge System and all public lands.

President: Lorna Kropp activities@fotnwr.org
Vice President: ... Molly Zammit molly.z@comcast.net
Treasurer: Open
Secretary: Nancy Curry currynancy@aol.com

Board Members:
John Barber pattianjohnbarber@hotmail.com
Kelissa Owens wildrefuge@fotnwr.org
Jo Trilling trillingjo@gmail.com

Visit our great website!
www.fotnwr.org

Spring Colors Bird Walk

By Marian Frobe

On May 27th, 13 of us met for our annual walk around Winslow Pool and Middle Pine Lake. It was a nice warm day and we didn't need jackets for a change. However, it seemed like most of the birds we expected to see were either hiding from view or only offered brief glimpses.

There was a family of Canada Geese loafing on the path between the lakes, and we had a cooperative Marsh Wren that displayed his buzzy song for us. We heard Virginia Rails, but none came forward to be seen. Oh, well, part of this walk is hearing and listening to learn the songs and calls of birds so we know what we're looking for. We heard a very vocal Gray Catbird from one of the islands, but no way could we spot him. The Yellow-headed Blackbirds were in full voice in the reeds of Winslow Pool and they are always a treat to listen to and to see in all their finery. Probably our best bird that stayed in the same spot long enough to see through the scope was a lovely male Black-chinned Hummingbird. We also had glimpses of a Wilson's Warbler, a Bullock's Oriole, and a loudly singing Lark Sparrow. All in all, we had 35 species seen and another 6 heard only, so it wasn't too bad a day. Thanks to all who participated. It was a very good group.



Gray Catbird (photo by Debbie McKenzie)

Virginia Rail (photo by Audubon)



Volunteers needed!

Lorna Kropp

Your Friends organization is run by volunteers and the more who take a small part, the more impact the organization can have. We have many tasks that need doing. We need help with leadership on the Board; we will have 3 positions on the Board open which need filling for the term beginning with the Annual Meeting in August.

- Treasurer or Bookkeeper,
- Fundraising, and
- Activities.

Also we need help with the committees which Board members lead:

Activity Committee (2 positions) - Planning 6-8 events for members and the public during year

Finance Committee (3 positions) - Advising Treasurer on financial practices

Fundraising Committee (3 positions) - Organizes 1-2 fundraising events for mission of group

Nature Store Committee (2 persons) - Helps Manager with new products, inventory, technology
Membership Committee (2 persons) - Welcomes new members and sends reminders about renewal

Advocacy Committee (2 persons) - Informs members of issues relating to the Refuge needs and helps recruit new members.

That is a total of 17 persons needed to step up for a role in the operation of The Friends of Turnbull. To contribute and join in the Friends leadership team, call or talk with a Board member, send an email to president@fotnwr.org or activities@fotnwr.org, or leave work in the Nature Store at the Refuge. We will contact you.

The Nature Store could use a few more persons to take on a shift in the store as Salesperson/Greeter for the 4 shifts each weekend. The Nature Store manager could use a committee member to help with inventory and help as needed.

We are grateful that we have a new Nature Store Manager, Priscilla Bowen, who is taking over this summer. The Frobes, Marian and Russell, have organized the store and managed it for 17 years. Their dedication and service has been outstanding.

Thanks.

Activities Report

Lorna Kropp

For activities or other information you would like to let Lorna know about, here is the link: fotnwr.org/activities.html

Spring/Summer Activities

Our series of 3 Beginning Bird Watching Classes led by Joyce Alonso, a member of both Friends of Turnbull and Spokane Audubon Society, on the first Saturday of April, May and June were completely subscribed with 16 participants for each class. The class included a beginning hour plus class by Joyce in the Classroom followed by a walk on the Refuge through all four habitats watching and listening for birds and other sights of Spring. Each class was successful in observing a good variety of birds from red-winged blackbirds, swallows, bluebirds, golden finch, wood peewee, to red-tail hawks, mallards, gadwalls, and golden eye ducks and more. Joyce packed in a lot of information, about birds and binoculars and other birding tips plus hands-on experience which provides participants with a good base to grow from.

Thanks Joyce for leading these very popular classes.



Joyce Alonso and birding class

Lady bugs ready for spring



Summer 2017

The **Earth Day and MayFest/Floods, Flowers and Feathers Festival** brought hundreds of children and families into contact with the Turnbull Environmental Educators. The EE staff helped kids make plaster of paris tracks, and the FOT volunteers enticed kids with a touch table and Bird Migration coloring posters, coloring books, and stickers!

Thanks to our volunteers: Lorna Kropp, Molly Zammit, Kathryn Barnard and Nancy Curry.

Summer Outings:

Have you ever visited to the other Refuges in our Complex?

- 1) the Little Pend Orielle NWR near Colville. It is 41, 878 acres of mountains, forest, streams, marsh and meadows. This Refuge was established to support bird migration and managed for wildlife and native plant species; or
- 2) Kootenai NWR near Bonner Ferry, ID. It is 2,773 acres of wetlands, meadows and riparian areas.

Kootenai NWR - August 26 – Saturday (more details to come)

June was “Membership Renewal Month” for all members who have not yet paid for a membership in 2017 or attended the Wild Refuge Auction 2017. (it was a bonus for attending!! Thank You.). So if you purchased a membership in 2016 or 2015, your membership is now due for renewal (You should have received a renewal letter with return envelope!!). You may have noticed that the Board decided to make the membership year July 1 to June 30 of each year, rather than the actual month in which you signed up the first time.

Friends of Turnbull Annual Meeting - Saturday, August 19, 2017 10:00 - 12:30 pm; Program; Business meeting (Reports, Election of Board members) potluck lunch with hamburgers/hotdogs on the grill and potluck salads and dessert.

Future Dates:

Fall Planting Day - October 14

WinterFest - December 9

Farewell to the Frobes and Welcome to the New Nature Store Manager

by Sandy Rancourt

Marian and Russell Frobe and the FOT Nature Store

After 17 long years, Marian and Russell Frobe have retired from their role as managers of the Friends of Turnbull Nature Store. I say retired, because managing the FOT Nature Store was comparable to having a job. They invested many long hours into the store not only in its overall management, but it was obvious that a good deal of their heart and soul went into it as well. Yet another example of long term refuge volunteers who are completely dedicated to the conservation of natural resources. Their managerial tasks included keeping meticulous records, ordering and purchasing products from multiple vendors, inventorying, stocking shelves, displaying products, counting money (which sometimes included tracking down receipts), bookkeeping, writing articles for FOT regarding the store, training volunteers on all aspects of the store, coordinating with volunteers and refuge staff, and personally staffing the store once a month on both days during the weekend. They, at times, also staffed the store when another volunteer was unable to make it in. They also, on occasion, donated funds and products to the cause. I have no doubt that I have missed many of their accomplishments as managers of the nature store considering all the

years that they have invested into the project and the people that they are. What is truly remarkable is that they did all this at the same time they were volunteering for Mike in the biological program which included their participation in so many very early morning surveys, long hours under hot and cold conditions, and a long drive in. I also did my share of dragging them into helping us out at annual community planting events and the Cheney High School EE Stewardship Program. Talented and dedicated folks... The Frobes leave the store in Priscilla Bowen's capable hands. She has generously offered to take on the enormous role of managing the store. Priscilla is another one of those very dedicated volunteers whom the refuge and FOT are lucky to have. I have no doubt she will excel in her new role.

Fortunately for us, Marian and Russell are still volunteering at the Refuge in the biological program. Bottom line, we would be at a loss without them on both a personal and professional level. Thank you Marian and Russell for always being there to further the conservation work at the refuge. You both have made everyone's job not only easier, but a much more pleasant experience as well.



Russell and Marian Frobe assisting with bird banding. (S. Rancourt)

Celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week



*with a Community Work Day
at Turnbull National
Wildlife Refuge!*



Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge, Spokane Audubon Society and Friends of Turnbull will host a community work party on Saturday, October 14, 2017. 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 erect to protect the trees from deer, elk and moose browsing.

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 (6509) 235-423 ext. 228.

Planting Time: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

When: Saturday, October 14, 2017

Lunch: Potluck, 12 p.m. (Friends of Turnbull will supply the hamburgers).

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

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

Equipment: (If you can) shovels and pliers.

Rain or Shine 

Everyone is Welcome



Refuge Happenings

by **Sandy Rancourt**
Visitor Services Manager

Floods, Flowers and Feathers Festival

On Saturday, May 13, the Refuge hosted the Floods, Flowers and Feathers Festival for its sixth year. Numerous partners helped us make this event a success both in the town of Cheney and out at the Refuge. This was also our 2nd year partnering with Cheney May Festers who were exceptional hosts and provided Turnbull and its partners a centralized spot for their information and activity booths in downtown Cheney. Partners in town included Spokane County Noxious Weed Board, West Plains Beekeeper Association, EWU Biology Department, EWU snyamncut, Ducks Unlimited, National Weather Service, Spokane Carvers, Spokane Clean Air, Ecological Services (ES), Spokane County Water Resources, Inland Northwest Wildlife Council, Friends of Turnbull, and Ice Age Floods Institute-Cheney, Spokane Chapter. Our partners had many great activities for Festival attendees. One very popular booth was Inland Northwest Wildlife Council, who in addition to their touch table of animal skulls and furs display, hosted an interactive booth where members assisted festival participants with building bluebird nest boxes. INWC members Floyd Barlow and Ray Manspeaker cut out 150 bluebird nest box kits in preparation for this event. Brock Sieb, snyamncut Residential Life Coordinator at EWU and several helpers hosted a pot painting activity and handed out native seed provided by Spokane County Noxious Weed Board. EWU hosted a great booth on invasive species emphasizing the problematic brook stickleback species. Spokane Carvers partnered with us for their first year. They had some incredible carvings by some very talented folks on display. Ice-Age Floods Institute Cheney-Spokane Chapter, Ducks Unlimited, National Weather Service, Spokane Clean Air, ES, Spokane County Water Resources, Spokane County Noxious Weed Board, West Plains Beekeepers Association, and Turnbull's biology and environmental education departments also hosted exceptional information booths with lots of handouts and fun activities for the participants. Back at Turnbull, we were all kept very busy as well.

Long term refuge volunteer Linda Long and Visitor Services Volunteer Deanna Veilleux staffed the welcome tent on a pretty cool, windy day. The bird and nature walks, tours, songbird banding, bluebird talks, live raptors, fire demo, Can You Find that Bird, and aquatic, soil, and tick activities were well received with great attendance. Thanks to all our partners for hosting such wonderful activities and booths. Thanks also to our maintenance staff and Visitor Service Volunteers for a great job mowing in preparation for activities held at the Refuge. Also, our deepest appreciation goes out to everyone who worked behind the scenes over the past several months to make this event possible and to Joanne Powell who was indispensable in finding a food vendor and putting together the flyer and brochure.

Channeled Scablands Cooperative Weed
Management Area
Cheney May Festers
Cheney Merchants
Cheney Parks and Recreation
Ducks Unlimited
Eastern Washington University – Biology Department
Eastern Washington University – Office of
Community Engagement
Eastern Washington University -snyamncut
Ecological Services - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Friends of Turnbull
Ice Age Floods Institute, Cheney-Spokane Chapter
Inland Northwest Land Conservancy
Inland Northwest Wildlife Council
Inland Northwest Wildlife Refuge Complex Fire
Fighters
National Weather Service
Spokane Audubon Society
Spokane Carvers
Spokane Clean Air
Spokane County Noxious Weed Board
Spokane County Water Resources
Turnbull NWR Staff & Volunteers
Washington Native Plant Society
Washington Service Corps
West Plains Beekeepers Association

West Valley Outdoor Learning Center
Melanie Bell
Jim Dalton
Buck Domitrovich
Christine Haines
Linda Long

Brian Maebius
Bob Michels
Joanne Powell
Tom Munson
Deanna and Joe Veilleux
Ron Wheeler



2017 Floods, Flowers and Feathers Festival and MayFest (S. Rancourt)

Riparian Restoration

Eagle Scout Project

Eagle Scout candidate Jared Folsom from BSA Troop 405 led a troop of fellow scouts potting over 500 willow cuttings. Jared quickly organized a group to complete the potting project before the hot weather hit. He lined out his help with tasks necessary to complete the project including mixing the soil, potting techniques, watering and organizing the potted plants in the nursery. He also procured donations of peat moss for the project. The plants look great and will be used for future refuge and private lands riparian restoration projects improving habitat so important for many wildlife species.



Eagle Scout candidate Jared Folsom (3rd from left) with BSA troop 405 ready to start on their potting project (S. Rancourt)



Jared instructing fellow scouts on how to pot the bare root stock. (S. Rancourt)

EWU snyamncut

Another group that hosted a fundraiser in support of Turnbull was snyamncut. EWU snyamncut residents raised over \$400 at their Valentine's fundraiser. This was a very successful project by the students led by Brock Sieb, Area Coordinator for the snyamncut. Snyamncut, a residential hall at EWU, has partnered with Turnbull for the past several years and it has been quite the partnership. They also hosted an interactive booth at our Floods, Flowers and Feathers event in May. The funds raised by snyamncut will be used in support of our riparian restoration efforts at the Refuge.

EWU Earth Day Potting Project

EWU's Office of Community Engagement, SAIL (Student Activities Involvement and Leadership) and the Office of Sustainability partnered with Turnbull on a service project in celebration of Earth Day. Twenty students worked with bio tech Dustin Cousins and biological AmeriCorps member Hans Lohmeyer on this project on Saturday, April 22. They potted 200 native bare root chokecherry, aspen and red-osier dogwood seedlings. The students did excellent work and in about a year or two, we will use the seedlings for our riparian restoration efforts at the refuge and private lands.

Daisies Sub Unit 454

In February, the Daisies Sub Unit 454 held a penny drive to buy trees to be planted at Turnbull. They collected almost \$60 from this fundraiser in support of Turnbull and its habitat restoration program. This was not the first time the girls had visited Turnbull. They have participated in our community planting events, and thought of Turnbull for their penny drive. The Daisies presented refuge staff with a very impressive "large" check. This was a very thoughtful project for the girl scouts to do. Their donation will be used to purchase trees for our fall community planting event.

Master Hunter Projects

Gary Frampton in the Master Hunter Program volunteered over 20 hours on some much needed projects. Gary is a skilled carpenter, and our EE shed needed some fixing up for some time now. He replaced one of the doors and fixed the other so that it opens more easily. Gary also monitored over 35 wood duck nest boxes for Turnbull. He cleaned boxes, repaired and/or replaced those that were worn out and monitored the wood duck boxes throughout the nesting season which included taking thorough and detailed notes.



Daisies presenting their check to the Refuge (S. Rancourt)



Master Hunter Gary Frampton installing a new door for our EE shed. (S. Rancourt)

Environmental Education & Outreach

It is already that time of year when we wrap up our spring field trip program. By the time everyone reads this, we will be well into our summer program. To help us through our very busy spring field trip season, we welcomed on board Annea Brown. She was selected as this year's Environmental Education (EE) SCA intern. Annea started in mid-April and was with us through June. It is amazing just how fast 12 weeks goes by. I was fortunate to have AmeriCorps member Colton Hodgson for a second term of service. Colton, a seasoned veteran in our EE program, Annea, our long term refuge volunteers Joyce Alonso, Fran Haywood, Chuck Kerkering, Jan and Ed Reynolds, Linda Long, Diane Latta, Stacy Selcho, Seth Flanders, and refuge staff did a great job presenting programs for children of all ages during the spring.

A Tribute to our Long Term Refuge EE Volunteers

What would we do without them? Our long term refuge volunteers are not only indispensable but cherished. We couldn't ask for better volunteers to assist us with the EE program. Each one brings a unique flare along with many talents which makes our program so good. They also provide a much needed consistency. With increases in class size and class numbers, we need to draw upon their help more often to lead a class, and lead they do. Our long term volunteers are here because they want to be here. They truly believe in what they do and it

shows. The programs they facilitate are full of energy and passion and that enthusiasm is what energizes even the most cavalier attitude among participants. Their reward is connecting students of all ages with nature while doing it in a beautiful setting like Turnbull. Finally, each and every one has a great personality - all so very different and truly the salt of the earth. We value each for his or her unique spirit and the distinctive ways each volunteer supports our conservation efforts.



Chuck's enthusiasm for aquatics always shines through. (S. Rancourt)



Fran telling the Ice Age Floods story. (S. Rancourt)



Fran emphasizing aspen regeneration at a riparian stop on the nature walk. (S. Rancourt)

Linda Long and Jan and Ed Reynolds provided the public a close up look at what lies beneath the waters during the FFF Festival (S. Rancourt)



Joyce Alonso presented several programs for FOT's Beginning Bird Walk Class held once a month during the spring. (S. Rancourt)

Cheney High School Environmental Education and Stewardship Program

To start off our spring Field Trip Program, Cheney High School returned for their 13th year in late April. Although they usually visit during the fall, the teachers wanted the students to experience Turnbull's EE program during the spring when they were more prepared through classroom instruction. Over 275 high school sophomore biology students participated in this 2-day EE stewardship program. In the past, when Cheney High School participated in the fall, things were much drier, so an early spring visit from the school presented some challenges on our end. We moved the usual study site from the Windmill Pond area to Headquarters where things were not as wet. The program was run without a hitch, and the weather was perfect. We conducted our special program with the group rotating the classes among 3 study sites. Mike Rule, the refuge biologist, instructed the students on the importance of riparian habitat, restoration, monitoring and potting techniques. The high school students potted 1,800 red-osier dogwood, aspen, elderberry, and choke cherry plants. Brian Walker made arrangements with the Lands Council to get all that bare root stock for potting. At the aquatic invertebrate study site, I got an opportunity to play in the water and had the pleasure of instructing students on aquatic invertebrates, their ecological importance, and the role they play in monitoring water quality. EE contractor Kylie Gaard, Colton and Annea went over the sampling protocol with the students. The students, donned in chest waders, collected aquatic invertebrates in both a wetland and stream system for comparison where they identified, classified and quantified the invertebrates collected. Spokane Conservation District (SCD) partnered with us for a 2nd year on this program. Stacey Selcho and Seth Flanders shared their expertise on water quality. They always come well prepared going over the newest sampling technology with the students. The students are also provided work booklets developed by refuge staff with input on the water quality section from the SCD. Back in the classroom, the teachers can work with students to compile and analyze data collected at the water quality and riparian stations and determine the health of an aquatic ecosystem based on the abundance and

diversity of aquatic invertebrates collected. Other much appreciated assistance was provided by biological AmeriCorps member Hans Lohmeyer and long term refuge volunteer Diane Latta. Friends of Turnbull generously offered to cover the cost for the bus travel for this important EE/stewardship event.



All smiles potting bare root seedlings for our restoration projects. (S. Rancourt)



SCD Stacey Selcho (under canopy) and Seth Flanders instructing students on water quality sampling. (S. Rancourt)



Sampling invertebrates at Headquarters Pond. (S. Rancourt)



The water ran swiftly, but was no deterrent for the students. (S. Rancourt)



CHS students getting a close up look at what they caught. (S. Rancourt)

Additional Outreach

Earth Day Spokane, Camp Bear Lake, Science and Service Learning Fairs

During late winter and spring, Turnbull participated in several science and service learning fairs. These included: Moran Prairie Elementary Science Fair, Trentwood Science Fair and Spokane Falls Community College Service Learning Event. Colton and Hans did exceptional service staffing interactive and informative booths at these events. Other events Turnbull participated in included; EWU's Earth Day, Earth Day Spokane, and of course, our Floods, Flowers and Feathers Festival. Colton, Annea, and Kylie made many animal tracks out of Plaster-of-Paris for hundreds of participants at these events. We also partnered with National Parks Services this year on their Bald Eagle Festival in Davenport. Colton and Hans presented the refuge's owl program for 4 groups of students that were rotated throughout the day. Feedback from the Park Service was very positive about their presentations. Turnbull also participated in Mead's 5th Grade Environmental Days at Bear Lake Park north of Spokane in June. Colton and Annea provided hands-on aquatic invertebrate lessons for 5th grade students from Colbert and Evergreen Elementary. This provided a nice break from our standard field trips for the facilitators, and they reported having a very enjoyable time with the students.



Colton lending a hand to supplement the catch of 1st grade students from Progress Elementary (S. Rancourt)



SCA intern Annea Brown leading the classroom presentation (S. Rancourt)

Wildlife Observations

Mike Rule

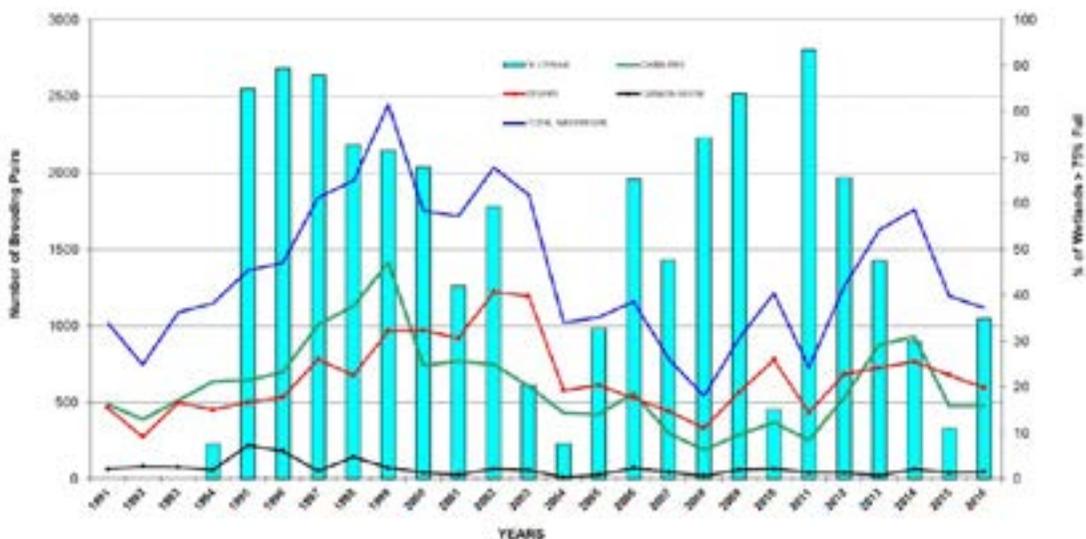
As always spring and summer are very busy months for the refuge biological program. We have completed several long-term surveys that provide us with important information on the condition of refuge habitats, wildlife population trends and species response to refuge management programs. As always volunteers many of whom are FOT members play a critical role in the continuity of these surveys. Wildlife surveys that have been completed so far include; spring waterfowl migration and breeding pair surveys, landbird point count surveys in pine and aspen, marshbird call/response surveys, and wood duck nest box monitoring. Surveys that are still in progress are; bluebird nest box monitoring, annual bird banding efforts as part of national MAPS program and several habitat surveys that include water level monitoring, aspen stand condition and browsing impacts, weed surveys, and rare plant surveys.

have experienced this past decade compared to the previous ten-year period when waterfowl numbers reached an all-time high. The extremely low water levels in 2015 with only 12% of the wetland surveyed being classified as more than 75% full in May, resulted in a very poor nesting year for waterfowl. Although conditions were somewhat improved in 2016, breeding populations remained low. The very high-water levels this year with over 80% of the surveyed wetlands being at or near capacity will likely improve nesting success, but the low population numbers from the previous year will probably result in only moderate increases next year. The reason for this is the philopatry waterfowl show for the nesting areas where they hatched. Increases in our populations depend greatly on locally produced birds.

Waterfowl pair surveys

Although waterfowl breeding populations have been on a slow recovery from the severe drought at the turn of the century. The slow recovery is likely the result of more variable conditions we

Annual Waterfowl Breeding Populations and May Pond Levels – Turnbull NWR 1991-2016



Songbird banding

We have completed 4 banding days so far this year with 81 birds from 20 species captured since June 16. This number is well above average for this time period. Most captures have been of birds in the top ten list including house wrens, black-capped chickadees, willow flycatchers, yellow warblers, black-headed grosbeaks, gray catbirds and song sparrows. Uncommonly captured species included a mountain chickadee, Hammond's flycatcher, a juvenile spotted towhee, Bullock's orioles, black-chinned hummingbird, McGillivray's warbler, and a warbling vireo.



Black-chinned Hummingbird

Swan update

It was an interesting spring for our trumpeters. As the nesting season approached, it appeared that we might have three pairs of swans as pairs were observed on the same day on Cheever, Middle Pine and McDowell Lakes. The pair on Middle Pine moved around quite a bit spending a good amount of time on Windmill and Upper Windmill Pond east of HQ. They were often accompanied by a single swan. On May 15th the pair on Cheever Lake was seen on a nest. The other pairs were still moving around, but never settled on one particular wetland. On June 19, the day after Father's Day, Nancy Curry reported seeing the pair on Cheever with 4 cygnets. As of July 10 there were still 4 cygnets. One of the other pairs has been regularly seen with a single swan on McDowell Lake. We know there are several more swans in the population that are roaming around the refuge vicinity. Hopefully next year we will have at least two pairs nesting and possibly three.

Rare Plant Restoration

This year the refuge received funding to help recover the threatened plant species Spalding's catchfly. The refuge has around 10 isolated populations with a total of about 100 plants. With the funding we received we are collaborating with the University of Washington, our Ecological Services Office, the Bureau of Land Management and 2 conservation districts to build up populations of this plant in 5 areas in eastern Washington and northern Idaho to create populations of over 500 plants in each area that are stable or increasing over the next 20 years. We will accomplish this by planting over 2,500 seedlings and direct seeding in several areas using seed collected from existing populations. The recovery plan for this species calls for 27 of these self-sustaining populations throughout its range which covers western Montana, northern Idaho, eastern Washington and northeastern Oregon.

Spalding's catchfly



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