



Idaho Naturalist news

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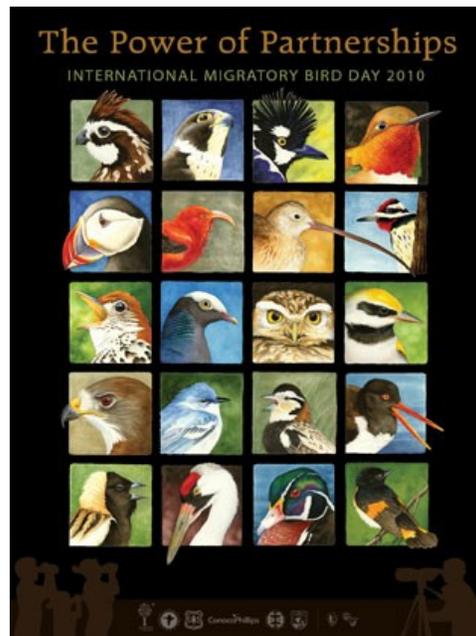
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International Migratory Bird Day 2010



International Migratory Bird Day will be celebrated all over the world on May 8th, 2010.

This annual celebration has a theme each year. This year's theme is, "The Power of Partnerships."

Many programs that are in place to protect, monitor, and create habitat for birds are done collectively as agencies and organizations pool their resources.

Visit <http://www.birdday.org> for a list of celebrations throughout the state. Also on the site, you can order the beautiful poster, buy bird-related gifts, and learn more about the celebration.

Your regional IDFG nongame biologist will know if there are local volunteer opportunities. This is a day to officially recognize migrating birds, the problems they encounter, and their amazing life cycle.

IMNP Policy Manual Update

The Policy Manual for the Idaho Master Naturalist Program has been updated. You can find a copy of this riveting document on your webpage under the title FORMS YOU NEED. Please take time to skim this document, for it lays out official policies and procedures for chapters and participants. If you have questions, comments, or concerns, please contact Sara Focht at Sara.Focht@idfg.idaho.gov.

The Idaho Naturalist News is a quarterly newsletter of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program.

Edited by Leanne Lloyd-Farey, Linda Kahn, Sara Focht.

For questions & comments contact Sara Focht at Sara.Focht@idfg.idaho.gov.

Send contributions to Linda Kahn at hmc214@yahoo.com.

Master Naturalists Visit Banff Film Festival

Wendy Brockish, Upper Snake Master Naturalist



Wendy Brockish and Leslie Piscitella, members of the Upper Snake Chapter stand by their Master Naturalist information booth at the Banff Mt. Film Festival.

Members of the first graduating class (July 2009) of the Upper Snake Chapter of Idaho Falls did a marvelous job of promoting the IMNP at the February sold-out event of the Banff Mt. Film Festival in Pocatello. Scoring a prime spot to promote the IMN Program with an engaging display in the Colonial Theater Lobby, it was a very successful evening with new recruits signed up. Several others pitched in and helped that evening, including Roger Piscitella (MN), Wendy's husband Tim Brockish, and Clarke Kido (MN). Meanwhile, member Ron Walquist was busy across town, promoting the program at a Master Gardener Round Table. Excellent work, Upper Snake Chapter!

Poetry Page

This World

I would like to write a poem about the world that has in it
nothing fancy.
But it seems impossible.
Whatever the subject, the morning sun
glimmers it.
The tulip feels the heat and flaps its petals open
and becomes a star.
The ants bore into the peony bud and there is the dark
pinprick well of sweetness.
As for the stones on the beach, forget it.
Each one could be set in gold.
So I tried with my eyes shut, but of course the birds
were singing.
And the aspen trees were shaking the sweetest music
out of their leaves.
And that was followed by, guess what, a momentous and
beautiful silence
as comes to all of us, in little earfuls, if we're not too
hurried to hear it.
As for spiders, how the dew hangs in their webs
even if they say nothing, or seem to say nothing.
So fancy is the world, who knows, maybe they sing.
So fancy is the world, who knows, maybe the stars sing too,
and the ants, and the peonies, and the warm stones,
so happy to be where they are, on the beach, instead of being
locked up in gold.

Mary Oliver

A Glimpse into The Sage School Master Naturalist Program

Lisa Huttinger, Environmental Resource Center, and a leader of the Wood River Valley Chapter

So far this winter, I have had the good fortune to spend more than 40 hours with the students and staff of The Sage School in Hailey, Idaho. Under the auspices of the Wood River Valley IMNP Chapter, all of the staff and students of this remarkable new school will be certified as Master Naturalists. The following items are glimpses into their thoughts on the experience thus far.



Sagebrush
by *Julia Donovan 8th grade*

This is a photo I took on a beautiful, frosty morning walk. I think that icicles are extremely unique, in the sense that every one is different. The icicles in this photo are forming under snow and onto into the middle of the sagebrush. I am so grateful that I have an opportunity to take a picture like this. This photo was taken on Carbonate Trail in Hailey, Idaho.

Nature Poem
by *Chris Fuller Junior*

Most of the time
It seems dull and white
Yet they do not often tell
Of the mystical wonders
The wonders that lay in
the world out there
The wonders of the mountains
The wonders of the snow
The wonders of every thing
that has become a mystery to us
A mystery to the modern world
A mystery to all today.

Icicles
by *Zach Trautwein,
Sophomore*

Icicles dance in the light
They glimmer in your line of
sight

Like a stain on a t-shirt
They stay
Until washed away

Heat is a killer
Icicles are an upside down
pillar



Winter Leaves
by *Kate Nero, Senior*

This was a picture I took during the course of our Master Naturalist training. It stood out to me because of its great beauty and unique pattern of icicles outlining the leaves. As I looked more in detail at this I started thinking about what different types of snow crystals these could be. And how the snow affected the leaves. Then I realized I really was becoming a Master Naturalist. I enjoyed working and training with Lisa Huttinger. And I believe she really helped us understand how to become Master Naturalists .

Waxwing
by *Raleigh Grossbaum,
Sophomore*

OWLING

Harry Weekes, Head of School, The Sage School, Master Naturalist, Wood River Valley

There were four of us—three students and myself. Three 15 year-old boys and their teacher stood on a hard-packed cross country ski trail nearly two miles out Prairie Creek in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area, all naïve observers. When we got out of the car an hour previously, it was 20 degrees and dropping. We were armed with the most preliminary research equipment, a megaphone and an iPod, and enough horror stories to keep us alert and nervous.

We stopped at the mouth of Mill Gulch for our first call and went through all of the fumbblings of novices working in the dark. We had our protocol. Listen. Call. Listen. Call. Listen. Call. Listen. Move.

The call of the male Boreal Owl is described as a winnow. Sometimes, it is likened to a Snipe. This is great, if you are familiar with a Snipe. For us, it was an amplified sound that was quickly swallowed by the night and the towering spruce and pine. Were there fir trees out here, too? The call was loud and crisp, with each pause and every silence filled with the power of expectation.

Our second calling location we named “Split Tree” because the GPS was not working, and we thought we would be able to come back to this landmark if we had to. We duly sent out our first series of calls, then listened. The moon was bright enough to see each of our faces, and to watch as we strained to pick up sound. Two minutes. Nothing. We broadcasted again. Then listened. Eyes widened. Each of us leaned towards the northern hills, turning our heads to the faint repetition of the sound we only knew from our own clumsy blarings.



“Is that it?” someone whispers.

“It sounded right.”

“But muffled.”

“That was definitely the right pattern.”

“But it was so soft.”

“That was it, right?”

“This is awesome.”

We walked the rest of the way to the car, stopping three more times to call into the night, looking again to the dark forest to the north. We did not hear another Boreal Owl. If it is possible, though, everything felt a little bigger, and even though the night left us with more questions than we had when we started, somehow, we did not feel quite as naïve.

Boreal Owl. Photo courtesy Lisa Belmonte, USFS.

New! Rangelands Chapter Available

Sara Focht, Idaho Master Naturalist Program Coordinator

Thanks to the hard work of University of Idaho staff and students and the staff at the Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission, the Idaho Master Naturalist Program has a new section for the curriculum: Rangelands: An introduction to Idaho's Wild Open Spaces.

Considering how much rangeland Idaho has, this was an important and missing section of our curriculum. Writers and editors include Lovina Roselle, Karen Launchbaugh, Tess Jones, Ling Babcock, Richard Ambrosek, Andrea Stebleton, Tracy Brewer, Ken Sanders, Jodie Mink, and Gretchen Hyde.

The chapter is complete with a global and regional perspective on rangelands, their values, and how they are managed. A close look into rangeland plants and wildlife that use rangelands are included. The content overlaps perfectly with many other chapters in the curriculum, such as ecology, mammals, plants, geology, and management. There is even a neat glossary of terms in the back.

A heartfelt *THANK YOU* to the University of Idaho and the Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission from all of the Idaho Master Naturalists present and future for this amazing contribution.

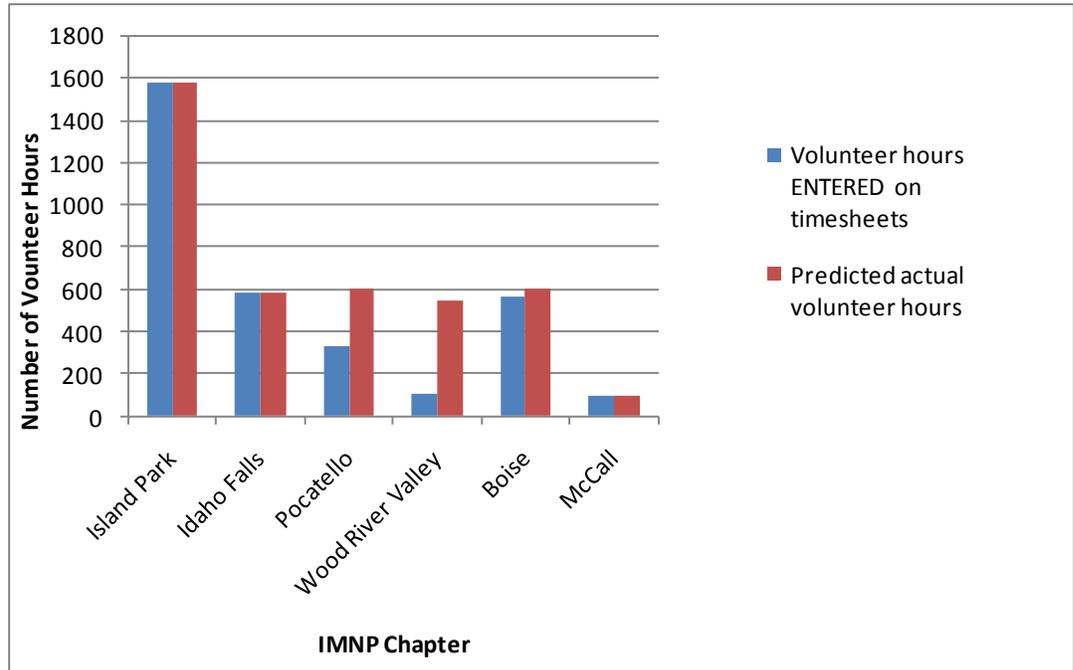


If your curriculum binder does not have this chapter in it, you can request an electronic copy from Sara Focht at sara.focht@idfg.idaho.gov. Photo above from Rangeland Chapter, p. 10.

Sara Focht, IMNP State Coordinator

If you have questions or problems with logging your volunteer or training time, please contact your chapter leaders or Sara Focht at sara.focht@idfg.idaho.gov.

Reported and Predicted Actual Volunteer Hours by Idaho Master Naturalists in 2009



The Idaho Master Naturalist Program grew from one chapter in 2008 to SIX chapters in 2009! What a growth spurt! More impressive were the number of hours for which Master Naturalists volunteered. The Idaho Master Naturalist time sheets indicate 3,289 hours were donated toward the stewardship of Idaho’s natural environment.

According to calculations based on how many participants certified in the program in 2009, the ACTUAL number of volunteer hours exceeds 4000. Unfortunately, only those hours entered by program participants can be reported to Idaho Department of Fish and Game managers.

Each chapter was at a different point in their training schedule at the end of 2009, so comparing the number of volunteer hours donated by each chapter is not an accurate representation of the rate of volunteer time given by each chapter.

2010 is a new year for us all. Please make sure to correctly log all your volunteer time on the timesheet provided for you online! This data is so important in helping report our successes and is vital for keeping the Idaho Master Naturalist Program funded!

Thanks for all your hard work out there!

McCall Chapter Master Naturalists Help Capture Deer

Cathy Them and Loretta McConnor, McCall Chapter Idaho Master Naturalists

Up long before dawn on the morning of December 28, we car pooled down to Brownlee Reservoir with Fish and Game employees and other volunteers, about 35 folks in all. We gathered needed supplies and received instruction at the Cecil Andrus Wildlife Management Area HQ. Then, off for the adventure of deer catchment! First requirement was to set up long runs of nets about 7 feet high down two draws and connected at the bottom. The helicopters then arrived to herd the deer and the action began. When a deer hit the net, the objective was to run up, remove them from the net, “spoon” with them and blindfold them. They were ear-tagged and collared. Measurements were taken of a leg and their chest, and fawns were weighed. The system worked well; a total of 15 fawns and four does were collared. The study is for over-winter survival which will help set next fall’s numbers. At 4pm we were fed a hot lunch, cooked right there at the sight. We then headed home, relaxed and content from a full day.



IDFG employees take measurements on the captured deer and tag their ears. Photos by Master Naturalist Loretta McConnor.



Go Outside and PLAY!

Vicky Runnoe, Conservation Education Supervisor for IDFG

This used to be the mantra of parents, but no longer. Instead, today's children spend an average of 53 hours each week with electronic media including television, computers, cell phones, and video games. In contrast, they spend less than 30 minutes each week engaged in unstructured outdoor play. Overscheduled kids and families, lack of outdoor play space, and fear of strangers have given rise to a generation of children who live indoors, and rarely go outside to play. Unlike years past, the natural world is no longer their playground. A virtual world has replaced the real world of trees to climb, dirt to dig in, fish to catch, space to run in, things to observe, and places to simply sit and soak up the world around them. Many of our children are no longer connected to the natural world.

The results of this disconnection can be summed up in three words---nature deficit disorder. Coined by author Richard Louv in his book, [Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder](#), this term provides a label for the problems caused by lack of outside play. These problems include rapidly increasing rates of childhood obesity and their associated medical conditions, childhood depression, and attention deficit disorders.

As Master Naturalists, how can you help the children in your communities re-discover their outdoor birthright? First, hearken back to your own childhood and reflect on the experiences that connected you to the outdoors. In all likelihood, your childhood experiences shaped your enjoyment of the outdoors today. In fact, research indicates that children who connect with nature grow up to be adults who care about nature. Encourage that connection by sharing your love of the outdoors with children you know. Take them outside. Become informed about the issue of nature deficit disorder so you can help parents learn about the importance of the outdoors to their children's health. Work with community leaders to keep open space part of your community so children and families have places to explore close to home. As a Master Naturalist chapter, offer outdoor opportunities for children and families. You will be helping indoor children come outside and helping parents reclaim their time-honored mantra of "Go outside and play!"

For more information, check out the Children and Nature Network website at www.childrenandnature.org and the Idaho Children and Nature Network website at www.beoutsideidaho.org.



BE OUTSIDE

Book Notes

Linda Kahn, *Idaho Master Naturalist, Sagebrush-steppe Chapter*

These two treasures, both around for some time, leave the reader with a keener insight and admiration for the world beyond our window.

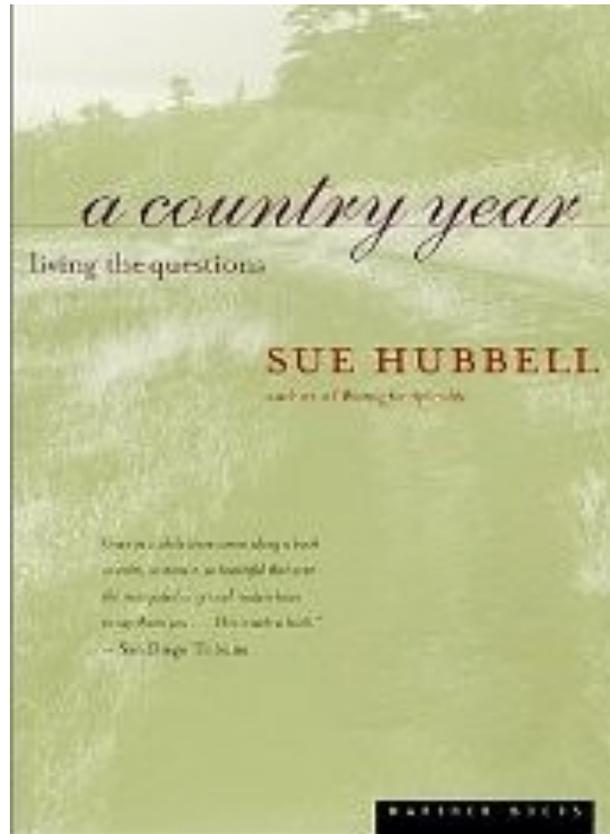
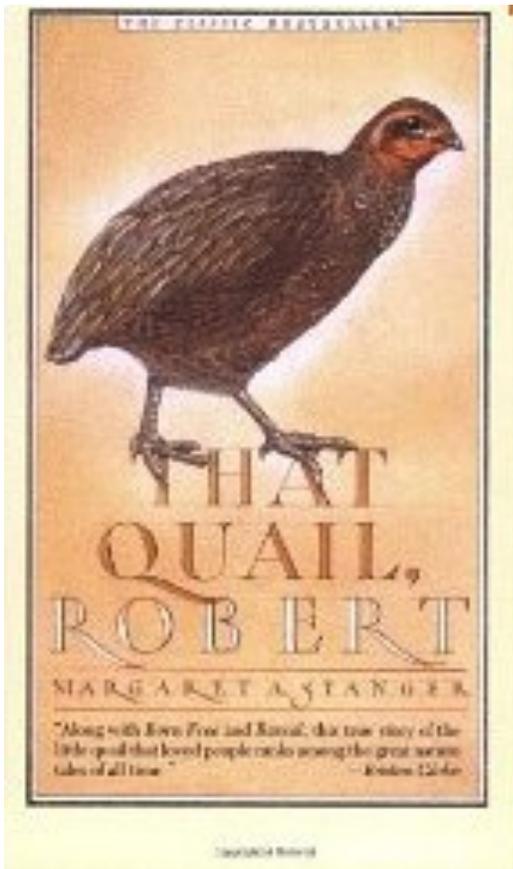
That Quail, Robert by Margaret Stanger

A true and heartwarming account of a young quail left behind in the nest and raised by a retired couple in Cape Cod. You'll never look at a quail again without thinking of Robert!

A Country Year: Living the Questions, by Sue Hubbell

Full of natural biology, this sparkling description tells of a year of beekeeping on a 100-acre farm in the Missouri Ozarks, an operation run by one woman alone.

Have you read a great book lately? Write a brief review and send it to us!



Master Naturalists Paint the Town!



Volunteers from the Sagebrush-steppe Chapter recently helped paint the Morrison Knudsen Nature Center Mural in downtown Boise . Those wielding a paintbrush included (left to right) Patty McGrath, Ken Coleman, Tim McNeil, Kathyl Glass, and Sharon Johansen. Kudos to all!

The Sagebrush-steppe chapter is sponsored by the MK Nature Center, the Idaho Botanical Garden and the Foothills Learning Center.



Did You Know?

- ... frogs and salamanders have to blink and invert their eyeballs to help them swallow their food?
- ... snakes can see through their eyelids?
- ... fleas can jump up to 30 cm, twenty times their own body length?
-the inside diameter of a hummingbird nest is 1.5 inches?

A Winged Adventure

Mike Treshow, Idaho Master Naturalist, Wood River Valley Chapter

The Idaho Bird Observatory (IBO) on Lucky Peak in the foothills east of Boise is one of Idaho's overlooked and seldom visited natural places. The IBO is one of the largest known raptor and songbird migration sites in the western United States. I joined the Winged Adventure trip organized by the Environmental Resource Center to the IBO this past fall.

September 26 We arrived at the end of the ridgeline dirt road up Lucky Peak in the middle of the day. The IBO songbird banding crew's five hour shift that starts at sunrise was finished and the crew was working in the diurnal raptor banding blind. The hawk watch crew on the top of Lucky Peak was in the middle of their 10am-6pm shift, using their amazing skill to identify distant raptors by their shape and flight behavior. The nocturnal owl banders were asleep, waiting for sunset to set up their mist nets and turn on the alternating Saw-whet and Flammulated owl calls that "serenade" camp and the surrounding area from dusk to dawn.



After some raptor watching, the three Master Naturalists working on their certification attended a bird identification and field markings class taught by Poo Wright-Pulliam (a Wood River Valley birder and artist). After dinner we met the owl banding pair and learned what to expect during the night. At dusk the owl calls and hourly mist net walks started. About 1am we were woken up to see and learn about a juvenile female, 3oz, mammal eating Northern Saw-whet owl. After releasing the owl we were sent back to sleep, dreaming about the new experience to everyone in our group.

Sunday, September 27 The day started with hourly walks of the songbird mist nets. A captured bird is gently removed from the net and placed in cloth bag. At the banding station the bird's species, sex, age, weight, physical condition, net number and a vertical location in the net are recorded before the bird is banded and released. The IBO staff takes the opportunity to share their knowledge of birds with the people that have gathered to learn and watch the banding.



On a ridgeline west of Lucky Peak is the IBO raptor banding blind. We were given the opportunity to take turns in the blind, to learn about capturing and banding raptors. Live doves, pigeons and sparrows are used as lures to attract passing raptors into the hoop traps and mist nets. Copper's hawks, Sharp-shinned hawks, and American Kestrels were captured and released while we were at the IBO.

Sunday evening was very windy from an incoming storm and we weren't sure if we would get a chance to see another owl. At about 2am the announcement of an "owl in a net" woke us and we were able to see a two ounce, insect-eating Flammulated owl. The owl

flew away as silent as a feather in a breeze.

Monday, September 28 The highlight of the morning songbird banding was the infrequent capture of a Steller's jay. The approaching storm front made the day windy and cool so, except for a group of 15 Turkey vultures, the raptor sightings were limited. By early afternoon our time with the hospitable and knowledgeable IBO crew was over.

Information about the Idaho Bird Observatory is at www.idahobirdobservatory.org.