



# Idaho Naturalist news

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## IMN Rendezvous

*Sara Focht, Idaho Master Naturalist Program Coordinator*

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I am pleased to announce the first Idaho Master Naturalist Rendezvous will be held at Harriman State Park, September 18-20, 2015. The Rendezvous details are currently underway. Master Naturalists from around the state will be invited to attend the meeting for a fee and participate in education sessions, field trips, socializing, volunteer work and more!

Harriman State Park and the surrounding area has diversity and beauty to offer our group. The park has meeting space and housing and happens to be the birthplace (location of the first chapter) of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program back in 2008.

Members of the Henry's Fork Chapter located in nearby Island Park, Idaho, and members of the Uppersnake Chapter in Idaho Falls have agreed to help plan and host the rendezvous.

Details and registration information will be available in the April edition of the Idaho Naturalist News. We hope you can join us!



*Henry's Fork Chapter Board members. Photo provided by Mary Van Fleet.*



*Master Naturalists finishing up the Jack Fence at Harriman State Park. Photo by Karen Davidson.*



*Sagebrush-steppe Master Naturalists taste mushrooms after a fungus program. Photo by IDFG.*



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

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# 2014 Volunteer Hours

2014 marks the highest number of volunteer hours the Idaho Master Naturalists have logged annually. Though it is not *about* how many hours an individual, chapter, or event the entire program donates...seeing the cumulative number is somehow satisfying and undoubtedly a quantitative measure of all the wonderful work done toward conservation in Idaho. Thank you to all who contribute a little or a lot!

Sagebrush-steppe Chapter	3552.00 hours
Henry's Fork Chapter	2038.75 hours
McCall Chapter	919.25 hours
Pend Oreille Chapter	1634.00 hours
Uppersnake Chapter	6611.25 hours
BYU Idaho Subchapter	164.00 hours
Wood River Valley Chapter	95.50 hours

14,850.75 hours in 2014!

## May the Mountain Bluebird Soar

*Steven K. Berg, Idaho Master Naturalist, Sagebrush-steppe Chapter*

It's called *Sturnus vulgaris* and I think I know why  
Too often one looks up and the starling fills the sky  
Back in eighteen-ninety it came from overseas  
A ubiquitous bird that eats caddis flies and bees  
And because *Ephemeroptera* is also on its menu  
I'd seriously prefer it would choose a diff'rent venue  
'Cause when I'm on the stream 'bout half past one  
I search inside my fly box for a pale morning dun  
And on a quiet stretch of a freestone river  
I'll select a blue wing olive in hopes it will deliver  
Oops, I've wandered from the subject – it's the starling I address  
Whose indiscriminate droppings create an awful mess  
That will eat away your car paint and make the sidewalk slick  
And carry salmonella that will make your fam'ly sick  
They contaminate the food troughs, steal grain and ravage crops  
Since their number is two million, it's a threat that never stops  
And further – maybe worst – they displace the native species  
Which is why, as I describe them, they're as loveable as feces  
They're a threat to Mountain Bluebirds, Purple Martins and more  
That may slowly fade to folklore with a whimper, not a roar  
'Cause the starling nests in cavities, it's crowding out the native  
Beside nets and deaf'ning gunshots we need solutions creative  
Thank God for Alfred Larson and his bluebird nesting trails  
Which will help preserve the species when all else fails  
There is prob'ly no solution to *Vulgaris* any more  
But we must pursue the mission so *Sialia* will always soar.



*Master Naturalist Steve Berg submitted this poem after attending a lecture by the producers of Bluebird Man, a documentary on the lifelong mission of Al Larson. Wild Lens Producer and biologist, Matthew Podolski showed Bluebird Man and a documentary on sagegrouse. For more information on these documentaries and other nature documentaries by Wild Lens, visit <http://www.wildlensinc.org>*

# Clark Fork River Delta Restoration Project

*Gail Bolin, Idaho Master Naturalist, Pend Oreille Chapter*

On a frigid November morning, 26 hardy souls from numerous organizations showed up at the Kootenai-Ponderay Sewer District's Willow Nursery to cut, bundle, and haul 10,000 willow poles to the Clark Fork Delta.

Due to the operation of dams since the mid 1950s, extensive erosion has occurred, resulting in the loss of approximately 5 to 8 feet of soil a year. The restoration project is being coordinated by Idaho Department of Fish & Game biologist Kathy Cousins, and involves a multitude of partners.

The goal of the restoration project is to prevent further erosion while improving and expanding key riparian and wetland habitats, and to restore ecological function in the Clark Fork River Delta. More information can be found at: <http://clarkforkdelta.org>.



*Loading willow poles. Photo by Gail Bolin.*



*Volunteers bundle the willow poles for transport to the Delta. Photo by Gail Bolin.*



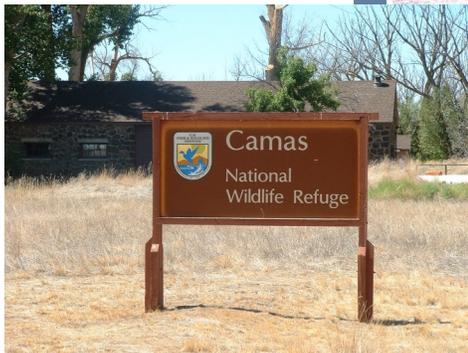
*Learning the art of willow cutting and bundling. Photo by Gail Bolin.*

# Changes Ahead for Camas NWR

*William Lloyd, Therese Lloyd, Mary Dolven, Idaho Master Naturalists, Upper Snake Chapter*

Camas National Wildlife Refuge is about to make a quantum leap forward regarding reception of and facilities available for visitors. Last year a 30' x 44' concrete floor pad was poured south of the refuge headquarters area. Recently, Friends of Camas NWR received a generous grant from the CHC Foundation. Retractable barn-door style sides, a roof, a lockable storage area, and electrical wiring will complete the pavilion. With the addition of picnic tables inside, lectures will be scheduled, and other amenities will be available for visitors. Friends of Camas expects to have the construction of the pavilion completed in time for International Migratory Bird Day in May 2015.

Members of the Upper Snake Chapter of Idaho Master Naturalist have conducted educational events at Camas National Wildlife Refuge for the past several years. An average of 200 youth per year have taken part in completion of Naturalist badges for the Boy Scouts, participated in day camps with the Museum of Idaho, toured the refuge with members of their family, or participated in school field trips under the direction of members of the Upper Snake Chapter of IMN. The completion of the pavilion at Camas NWR will further advance educational opportunities at the refuge.



*Camas NWR sign located near the entrance. Photo courtesy USFWS.*



*Camas volunteers and employees, Darren Clark, Barbara North, Steve Butterworth, Brian Wehausen, Farrel Downs, TracyCasselmann, Chuck Trost, Therese Lloyd, Tim Reynolds standing near the concrete slab for the new building. Photo courtesy USFWS.*

## Monarch/Milkweed Workshop Registration Open

Idaho will host a Monarch and Milkweed monitoring workshop in Boise on June 19 and 20, 2015.

For more information, click on the link below and scroll down to the second workshop listed. <http://monarchjointventure.org/news-events/events/>. This workshop is open to the public and will train volunteers to help with a state-wide Citizen Science Project.



# Archaeology Support for the BLM

*Pegge Steele, Idaho Master Naturalist, Upper Snake Chapter*

During the summer of 2014, five Master Naturalists from the Upper Snake River Chapter assisted BLM archaeologist Marissa Guenther on several survey projects in southeast Idaho. The projects included:

A survey of the off-highway vehicle (OHV) roads on the desert between Menan Buttes and the Deer Parks and Market Lake Wildlife Management Areas.

A survey of a portion of Cedar Butte, a small butte southeast of Big Southern Butte.

A dig on the grounds of Fisher Bottoms, an early 20<sup>th</sup> century homestead, which was the childhood home of the author Vardis Fisher, located on the South Fork of the Snake River.

The purpose of the Menan Buttes survey was to identify sites which might be endangered by traffic. A total of 414 acres beside several OHV roads were surveyed by the end of August. The results of these surveys were the discovery, documentation, and inventory of five historic dumps and four prehistoric sites. The findings in the historic dumps included soldered metal cans, cone-top cans, broken glass, broken ceramics, a 1927 Idaho license plate, and a wood-burning cook-stove. The prehistoric sites contained lithic debitage (stone flakes resulting from the making of projectile points) and some broken tools of obsidian, quartz, and chert.

At Cedar Butte, the IMNs traversed 200 acres around an area where Marissa had found some prehistoric tools a few years ago. Four historic dumps, which included soldered metal cans, broken glass and a piece of wood and metal equipment (horse-drawn sled?), were identified and documented. About eleven prehistoric sites, which consisted of lithic debitage, including flakes and some broken tools of obsidian, quartz and chert, were also documented. One of the finds was a complete point made of chert. The type is Rose Spring and is probably from an arrow or dart. Another find was the bottom half of a large point of unusual stone (petrified wood?). The type has not been definitely identified, but the size indicates a lance point.



*Tony Appelhans, Dale Claflin, Bob Anderl (pictured), Teresa Meachum, and Pegge Steele were the Master Naturalists who helped with this project. Photo by Marissa Guenther.*



*Point found at Cedar Butte. Photo by Teresa Meachum*

The Fisher Bottoms dig was conducted to document an area around a structure before it was stabilized by a group from Oregon. This involved classic dig procedures of excavation and screening. In addition to typical materials, such as broken pottery, glass, and old building materials, one IMN found a 1940s Cracker Jack toy (green plastic milkman).

All of the IMNs thoroughly enjoyed the work and look forward to assisting the BLM in future years.

# Is Idaho Ready for Conservation Education?

*Christine Gertschen, Idaho Master Naturalist program participant, Wood River Valley Chapter*

Aldo Leopold spoke of “some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot.” I am one of those “cannots.” Fortunately, there is a growing movement toward what conservationists are calling *rewilding*. Conservation biologists are speaking about rewilding as a way of repairing wounded ecosystems.

Rewilding might be on-the-ground habitat work to repair ecosystems and providing better habitat for wildlife. Rewilding might also be a little less tangible. Maybe it comes in the form of reconnecting people with nature. This is where I come in! I have spent the last 25 years helping others connect with nature and I do not intend to slow down! You can call it Environmental Education, Conservation Education, Outdoor Education, Conservation Biology...there are many names that describe this work. How can we teach others about nature in an attempt to help “rewild” their minds?

In 2014, the Idaho Chapter of the Wildlife Society was hearing from its members that they wanted to be more involved in outreach and education. I was one of those so I volunteered to help to organize an education network, a sort of clearing house of folks who were interested in volunteering for wildlife and education. What this looks like is anything but clear to me, but it seems that the first step is to identify people who have something to give and those who need what we have to give. What if we were to conduct a sort of regional gap analysis of conservation education programs and volunteers?

I can't think of a better place to start than with the Idaho Master Naturalists. So this is your invitation to participate! Please send me a note of your interest in being involved. Your involvement may be extremely minimal. We won't ask you for more than you have to give. Let's begin the discussion. You may contact me at: [cgertschen@cox.net](mailto:cgertschen@cox.net) or 208.309.0901.



*Rewilding can be as simple as getting people outside discovering new things in their environment. Sagebrush-steppe Master Naturalists look for aquatic insects in the Boise River. Photo by IDFG.*



*Kids get their hands dirty in a worm program provided by IDFG. Photo by IDFG.*



*A young girl finds and learns how to hold a crayfish near the Boise River. Photo by IDFG.*

# Remembering Ken Coleman 1945-2014

*Sara Focht, Idaho Master Naturalist Program Coordinator*

I met Ken Coleman when he joined the Sagebrush-steppe Chapter of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program in 2010. He was a little overqualified! When he joined, he had already been volunteering for IDFG and MK Nature Center for three years. He had hiked, hunted, and traveled all over Idaho, and was an Eagle Scout. Ken had a lot to offer his classmates in the IMNP, getting them connected with IDFG volunteer projects he knew about and enjoyed, such as sagebrush seed collecting and bitterbrush planting. He also participated in the physically rigorous mule deer capturing and collaring projects, which he loved. Prior to the MN program, Ken helped with garden clean up days at the Nature Center, bringing his own trailer with a hydraulic lift, loading filling, and hauling! For eight years, he donated Missouri Iris to the Native Plant Sale. (Iris were one of his passions).

After his first year in the program, Ken offered to photograph the 2011 class. His photographs documented the entire experience as a Sagebrush-steppe Master Naturalist and have been used to promote and celebrate the program ever since. He continued to volunteer for MK Nature Center, the Foothills Learning Center, and IDFG.

Ken attended most of the continuing education sessions....usually arriving early to help me move benches and get ready. He always came to our social events and was so popular not only among his 2010 classmates, but among members of other classes.

At the Nature Center, Ken enjoyed volunteering for Class in the Creek, where we get kids in the river and collect aquatic insects. One day, he showed up to Class in the Creek with Plexiglas-bottomed plastic bins. He had cut the bottoms out of these bins and sealed Plexiglas to the bottom so kids could use them as underwater viewers. An instant sensation...and the contraption was named, "the Coleman." Ken was also an active participant in the Wildlife Summit in Boise, in 2012.

Ken passed away December 11, 2014, after battling bladder cancer for 5 years. During that time, Ken volunteered over 350 hours for the Idaho Master Naturalist Program and certified every year, except in 2014.

I will miss Ken as part of the Master Naturalist family here in Boise. But more importantly, I will proceed, having learned from Ken. Ken



was an example of how to live a life of service, physical activity, kindness, comradery, and learning. When I think of Ken, I am reminded of all the wonderful, diverse, interesting people I get to meet and work with through the Idaho Master Naturalist Program. I will pause at the irises that grow in our Native Garden, donated by Ken. I will use the "Colemans" each and every Class in the Creek and enjoy the kids' screams when they see a crayfish or fish underwater, just as Ken wanted them to do.



*Photos from top to bottom: Sagebrush-steppe Master Naturalists at Snow School at Bogus Basin. Photo by Ken Coleman. Screech owl at the Foothills Learning Center found during a MN training session. Photo by Ken Coleman. Ken Coleman (second from left) in front of a mural painted by Master Naturalists in downtown Boise. Photo by Sara Focht. Far left: Ken Coleman at MN fall dinner, 2011. Photo by Sara Focht.*

# Winter Birding



## Idaho Master Naturalist Chapter in Lewiston

An informational meeting will be held at the IDFG office in Lewiston, Idaho on February 19th at 6:00 pm. If you are interested in learning more about this chapter, please attend. Contact Jennifer Bruns at [jennifer.bruns@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:jennifer.bruns@idfg.idaho.gov) for more information.

*Idaho Master Naturalist Bob Ellis sent in these photos. Northern hawk owl (above) found near Bellevue, Idaho. The northern hawk owl is not normally found that far south. A pine grosbeak (below) eating winter fruit.*

