



FRIENDS OF SQUAW CREEK REPORTER Mound City, Missouri

Spring 2007

Volume 8 Number 1

SQUAW CREEK CALENDAR:

Spring Workday	April 21
Women in the Outdoors	April 14-15
Spring Migration	March 17-May 6
Migratory Bird Count	May 12

VISITOR OFFICE COMMITTEE

Vic Miles	816-444-2459
Amanda Griffin	660-572-0267

REFUGE WETLAND COMMITTEE

Vic Miles	816-444-2459
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EAGLE DAYS COMMITTEE

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PLEASE give the above committee chairpersons a call to assist them.

Items for the newsletter must be sent to George W. (Bill) Scheil at 7311 Ditzler, Raytown, MO 64133 or to him at gwsch@juno.com. The deadline for the next issue will be May 15.

DUES RENEWAL TIME

Time to renew dues. Check your mailing label. If it shows 01/07 or earlier, then it is time to send in your renewal. You may use the form on the cover. Note the 2-year and senior rates that are now available.

SPRING MIGRATION

The gift shop will be open on weekends from March 17th to May 6th during the spring migration. Volunteers are needed to staff the visitor office. Please contact the Visitor Office Committee members, Vic Miles (816)-444-2459 or Amanda Griffin (660)-572-0267, if you can help.

EAGLE POOL DRAWDOWN

The water level in Eagle Pool will be lowered starting in mid-March in order to restore the wetland vegetation after several years of relatively high water which reduced vegetation severely. The pool will be re-flooded in late summer for the fall migration.

New Product in Gift Shop

Check our gift shop for the new shade grown coffee freshly packed and shipped the last week of February 2007 in Costa Rica. This coffee was hand picked, washed, roasted and packaged on a 30 acre farm on the Caribbean side of Costa Rica. Linda and Ernie Carman bought the farm in 1980 after they retired from U.S. military service in Panama. The Carmans are growing shade-grown coffee the "right way". Their farm is called Finca Cristina (finca is Spanish for farm). In 1992 the Carmans pioneered an organic coffee farm. They planted native trees such as Coralbean, a neotropical legume which fixes nitrogen and enriches soil. The coffee plants were planted among the trees and would be grown free of chemicals and artificial fertilizers.

In talking to Linda, I was told that light, medium and dark roast determine the degree of actual coffee bean flavor that one experiences. The light roast allows full bean flavor. The dark roast masks the bean flavor. I opted for trying the medium roast for starters in whole bean as well as ground. If we have requests for light roast, then it will come in future shipments.

A chemical free farm with native trees supports a variety of songbirds including neo-tropical migrants and other native wildlife. With songbirds losing habitat daily from deforestation, every native tree counts when it comes to saving our songbirds.

For more information about their farm and a list of 87 songbirds which migrate from North American to their 30 acres, visit this web site:

<http://www.hiltonpond.org/ThisWeek070201.html>

Thirty acres doesn't sound like much, but it supports 272 species of birds seen at Finca Cristina.

Tommie Rogers

EAGLE DAYS REPORT

The Friends of Squaw Creek Food Booth at the annual Eagles Day event raised a little over \$1400. We expanded our menu and added Biscuits and Gravy, Vegetable soup, baked potatoes, salads, bread and cheese.

I'd like to thank the following who volunteered their time at the food booth:

June Land
Bill Scheil
Margaret Gunde
Ed Montgomery
David Norwood
Mary Broker
George Scheil
Charlie Clodfelter

I also want to thank Jim Voltz for being our "Main" Man at the box....circuit breaker box that is. Thanks Jim for resetting the breaker for us every time we blew it! Some mighty fine Jumbo too, Jim.

Thanks to the following who contributed money, food or needed items:

Sam's Club (St. Joseph)
Maryville Hy-Vee
George Scheil
Eagles Nest Truck Plaza, Mound City (thanks Jim)
St. Joseph Hy-Vee
St. Joseph North Wal-Mart
Maryville Wal-Mart
Dunkin Donuts
Alan from Sara Lee Bakery (St. Joseph)
Brian and Cindy Boultinghouse (The Club, Mound City)
Perkins
Topsys Popcorn (St. Joseph)
The Quick Zone, Mound City (thanks Mary)
Las Chilis, Raytown (thanks Steve)
McDonalds, Mound City
Randy's Grocery, Oregon
A1 Stop, Maitland
Mary Broker
Bill Scheil and Margaret Gunde
June Land
David and Kiki Norwood
MoDot
Ed Montgomery
Joannie Foster for spending all her money at our food booth and buying all the trail mix.

I also want to thank all our customers and supporters of Friends. We appreciate your continued support and business. A special thanks to James and Elsie Callow for braving the cold and stopping in for some Biscuits and Gravy and moral support.

I love and appreciate you all,

Jeanine Montgomery,
"Former" Eagle Days Committee Chair

(I am going to let someone else take on this exciting adventure. I've done it 5 years and it's time for someone else to have some fun. Anyone interested in this PLEASE let me know.)
Its been fun!

EAGLE DAYS

The annual Eagle Days was considered successful despite the weather conditions that hit central and southern Missouri at the end of November that significantly reduced visitors (as well as Service volunteers) from Kansas City and the surrounding area. A total of 684 students attended the Friday, December 1 school day while 4 schools were unable to attend due to the snow. In addition, the live eagle show from the World Bird Sanctuary, St. Louis, was unable to come for the Friday programs and barely made it in time for the weekend. There were 10 Fish and Wildlife Service volunteers that were able to make the trip from the following stations: Prairie Wetland Learning Center; Litchfield WAO and WMD; DeSoto NWR; Missouri Private Lands; and the Regional Office. There were 2,697 visitors that entered the office, 1,939 attended the live eagle show, 4,049 visitors drove the auto tour route, 1,172 made a stop at the spotting scopes and 439 took the guided bus tour. Overall, attendance was approximately 1,500 less than the long term average.

VISITOR RESPONSES

A compilation of visitor comments from October 1, 2005 to September 30, 2006 were summarized in December. A total of 669 individuals documented how they found out about Squaw Creek and approximately 53% said it was from friends or relatives or that they had been previous visitors. Obviously, if visitors had a good experience, they told others! Media (magazines, newspapers, television, radio) made up more than 15%,

internet/website about 6% and road signs more than 5%. Visitors that signed the log book came from 48 of the 50 states (Delaware and Hawaii the exceptions), 4 Canadian Provinces and 13 other countries.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The annual Christmas Bird Count was completed December 14 with near record temperatures. A total of 99 species were counted, a record for Squaw Creek and the highest in Missouri this year. There were several rare species identified. The previous record was 96 species.

WHITE-TAILED DEER HUNT

The annual antlerless muzzle-loader only white-tailed deer hunt was completed January 6-7. A total of 129 hunters of the 702 applicants were randomly drawn by the Missouri Department of Conservation. Hunters were permitted to take 4 deer. A total of 135 deer were harvested by 112 hunters that actually participated. Seventy of the 112 hunters harvested a minimum of 1 deer making the hunter success rate approximately 63%. Eight of the 70 took home 4 deer. The harvest was lower than the past few years but was probably related to the warm conditions and the significant amount of water in the north woods. The largest number of deer harvested was 192 in 2003.

MUSKRAT HOUSE AND BEAVER LODGE COUNT

If you thought you were seeing a lot of muskrat houses this year, you were correct in your observation. There were a total of 2,518 muskrat houses and 11 active beaver lodges. The largest concentration of muskrats was found in Pintail Pool with an average of 2 houses per acre. We still get a number of questions from visitors thinking the muskrat houses are beaver lodges. If that were the case, there wouldn't be any trees left in all of Holt County! The refuge planned to draw

down Pintail Pool in 2007 to control the vegetation. However, the muskrats seemed to have accomplished our goal for this year.

AUTO TOUR PULL OFFS/BOARD WALKS

The staff is planning to install a minimum of 4 pull offs along the auto tour route this year. Each pull off will have a bench, spotting scope and interpretive sign. We are also working on improving the present sites at the eagle nest and shorebird site on Cattail Pool. We intend to pour a concrete slab at each location for the bench to sit on and scope. This will eliminate the grass and weed problem and make them more attractive.

There should be a spot to pull off a vehicle as well. Signs are also being developed for each of the 4 new kiosks. Hopefully, most of this work will be completed before the fall migration. A board walk is also being explored and planned.

BANNERS FOR FOREST CITY

Forest City will also be celebrating their sesquicentennial in 2007. After seeing the banners in Mound City, the Mayor approached Refuge Manager Bell about the possibility of banners for Forest City. As a result, we were able to get the banners made and have been delivered to Forest City the end of January. As soon as the weather permits, they will be proudly displaying the banners.

SQUAW CREEK IS NOW A REGIONAL WESTERN HEMISPHERE SHOREBIRD RESERVE NETWORK (WHSRN) SITE

In mid-January, Squaw Creek was designated as a WHSRN site by the WHSRN Hemispheric Council. This designation is based on a key role for more than 20,000 shorebirds per year and our commitment as the responsible entity. Participation in WHSRN is an indication of a sincere,

voluntary commitment to accept responsibility for the sustainable management of Squaw Creek and to collaborate in a constructive way for the benefit of wildlife and society. The refuge staff is considering a formal dedication ceremony and erection of a all-weather sign.

JESSICA LEE

Squaw Creek will have a new employee added to the staff this spring. Her name is Jessica Lee. She is presently completing her Masters Degree and will work at Squaw Creek for a period of one year. At the end of her 12 months, she will have an opportunity to be added to the Regional Refuge System. Her primary duties will be biological but we are going to give her as many opportunities to be involved in all refuge programs.

My Thoughts

Eagle Days was a success although the weather did not completely cooperate. Many visitors were at hand on Saturday but their numbers dwindled on Sunday.

The bookstore enjoyed good participation by visitors and the food booth also had many customers on Saturday. Sunday had smaller visitors but it seemed the Eagle Show was enjoyed by all.

Again, as in the past. The Eagles Nest Truck Plaza furnished space for an off-site parking lot from which shuttle busses transported visitors for the 3 mile trip to the Refuge. Each bus was accompanied by a volunteer who spoke about the features of the Refuge. Viewing of Waterfowl was excellent and all enjoyed seeing the 155+ Bald Eagles.

Now for my negative thought. We were expecting a visit from the Regional Director but she did not attend. She has pledged to visit EVERY Refuge in the region and I have personally invited her to visit Squaw Creek. Maybe it was the cold weather or a plan conflict, we were never advised, as promised.

It would have been an excellent time for her to see visitors in the thousands. In an Email exchange, she has promised to be in attendance this year.

WE'LL SEE

We again had the 20 foot tall inflated eagle on the front lawn. Youngsters posed in front of it and a volunteer made a Polaroid photo which could be made into a pin-on button by another volunteer. We were blessed by the number of volunteers and staff from other Refuges and the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Possibly the number of happy shoppers in the book store were pleased by our procedure for handling credit card sales.

We had a sufficient number of volunteers in the office but it's getting difficult to get people to volunteer. Vic Miles, 816-444-2459 is primarily the contact for members in the Kansas City area & Amanda Griffin, 660-572-0267 is primarily responsible for recruiting office volunteers for St. Joseph to Mound City. Charles Marshall assists with his list of volunteers.

We desire to continue staffing the office, on weekends but,

IT'S UP TO YOU

Our food booth on Sunday needed more help but Ed and Jeanine worked like professionals but had no volunteers to close the food booth. More help is needed with set-up, gathering equipment & making the chili. Ed and Jeanine had to do all the clean up and arrange for storage or disposition of un- sold items. They are due a round of appreciation from all of us for their work. Jeanine & Ed have headed up this project for 5 years & they have indicated their desire to retire from this project.

The food Booth is one of our annual fund raising project that benefits the Refuge but, do we want to

maintain this tradition of raising funds for the Refuge?

IT'S UP TO YOU

As you all know, the Outdoor Classroom is complete except for much needed items for the use of students. We have circulated the list of needed equipment and supplies, without success. In addition to my personal contribution, we have had only 2 other donors and one of them was from a volunteer couple who recently moved to the east coast. Do we want a fully equipped facility or not?

IT'S UP TO YOU

George L. Scheil

Second Annual Women's Outdoor Skills Workshop

Saturday April 14, 2007

Last year this Squaw Creek NWR event was awarded the best new event in Missouri By The National Wild Turkey Federation. Forty three ladies from five states participated in 2006 and were overwhelmingly interested in returning.

Ladies had the opportunity to participate in nineteen different classes and three group activities. This event was designed to introduce women to outdoor activities. It was a fun, friendly, non-competitive week-end, comparable to a grownups' day camp. The mood of the event was exhilarating!

This year the Women in the Outdoors Event is offering 28 classes and four group activities. "Grab your mom, sister, friend or co-worker. Bring them to Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge in Mound City for a fun and exciting day of learning. Bring your check book or charge card too for special raffle games and a silent auction!"

Courses offered:

Birding Techniques- 3 hour, learn from the experts the techniques of birding and take your skills out to practice them on the refuge. (Bring binoculars if possible)

Dutch Oven Cooking- 3 hour, cook delicious Dutch oven recipes in cast iron Dutch Ovens over hot coals. You won't go hungry in this class!

Feather Painting- 3 hour, even if you can't draw a stick figure, learn to paint a wildlife scene on a wild turkey feather.(add. Cost of \$2 for supplies)

Pioneer Skills: 1½ hr. Learn how to use basic Pioneer saws and axes to cut wood for clearing trails or for wood burning.

Flower Beds to Food Plots-1½ hr. Learn what flowers are native to Missouri and how when, and what to plant for food plots.

Wetland boating: 1½ hour, learn about layout boats, how to use them and how to utilize them for hunting or photography. Take a short tour using the boats.

Mushroom Hunting – 1½ hour, learn how to find those delicious morel mushrooms and how to identify the good from the not-so-good mushrooms.

Turkey Fan Taxidermy; 1½ hr, learn how to preserve that trophy turkey tail for your spring hunt.

Turkey Hunting 101- 1½ hr, learn the skills necessary to get close enough to a wild turkey for hunting or photography.

Waterfowl hunting 101: 1½ hr, learn about decoy spreads, what type of camo to wear and how to select a good place to hunt ducks or geese.

Wetland Plants- 1½ hr, learn how to identify native wetland flora and characteristics of their essential habitat.

Wildlife Biking- 3 hr, take a 5 mile guided interpretive ride on a closed section of the refuge. (bring your own bicycle, ride is relatively flat).

Wildlife Photography- 3 hour, learn the techniques for good wildlife photography and take your new skills out on the refuge for practice. (bring your own camera)

Waterfowl I.D.: 1½ hr, learn how to identify the many waterfowl that visit and make their homes on the refuge.

Shorebird Ecology:1½ hr. identification and management of shorebirds.

Aging & Scoring Deer & Turkey: 1½ hr learn how to age deer and turkey, also how to score your trophy.

Skull I.D.: 1½ hr, learn how to identify skulls that you may find in your wanderings in the woods.

Wood Carving: 3 hr, learn how to begin woodcarving from an expert woodcarver.

Archery – 1½ hour, learn how to shoot a bow and arrow and the difference between recurve and compound bows.

Shotgun shooting: 1½ hr learn shotgun shooting techniques and practice your new skills on flying clay targets.

Rifle Marksmanship: 1½ hr. Learn how to shoot a rifle and how to sight in a scope.

Women's Handguns: 1½ hr. learn the difference between a revolver and a pistol and learn to shoot both.

Vineyard in the Loess Hills: 1½ hr. learn what it takes to start a vineyard by helping to plant a new vineyard then take a tour of an established vineyard and visit with the winemakers in the area.

Fly tying: 1½ hr. learn the basics to tie your own flies for fly fishing.

Favorite Flies of the Midwest: 1½ hr. learn to tie warm water flies, like nymph & dry flies.

Fly casting: 1½ hr. learn the art of casting a fly rod for exciting fishing, on your next fishing trip out.

Mosaic Flower containers: 3 hr. Learn from Ginny Vernon of Tomboy tools how to use tools specifically made for women to make your own mosaic flower container. (add. cost for supplies.)

ATV safety & driving: 3 hr. learn how to safely drive an all terrain vehicle through a variety of obstacles and terrain, off of the Refuge.

Early Morning activities: take a walk on the wild side and either get an up close & personal look at wild turkeys or go on a bird watching walk. (groups will meet at 5:15am at the Squaw Creek Visitor Center).

For More information contact:

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from Tommie Rogers