



FRIENDS OF SQUAW CREEK REPORTER Mound City, Missouri

Summer 2008

Volume 9 Number 2

SQUAW CREEK CALENDAR:

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REFUGE WETLAND COMMITTEE

Vic Miles 816-444-2459

EAGLE DAYS COMMITTEE

Amanda Griffin 660-572-0267

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

Visit our website at www.squawcreek.org for recent bird surveys, events, etc.

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 August 15.

Women in the Outdoors – April 12

The 3rd annual Women in the Outdoors was a huge success despite the cold, wet (including snow flurries) weather. A total of 68 women signed up with 61 actually participating – nearly double the number from last year. Women came from 5 states including Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas, Illinois and Wisconsin. Because of the

weather, most events were held indoors utilizing every available refuge building. There was a Friday night mixer which gave women (35 attended) an opportunity to get acquainted and have a light dinner. A total of 29 different classes were offered ranging from Dutch oven cooking, to loess hill ecology, orienteering and field training dogs. The two most popular classes were willow furniture making and soap making. The event required more than 300 volunteer hours and was sponsored by 14 major sponsors including the Friends of Squaw Creek. This event will be accomplished again next year due to its popularity and opportunity to educate women about the outdoors and Squaw Creek.

Refuge Spring Interns

Two interns spent every Saturday and Sunday during the 8 spring open weekends providing programs for visitors as well as making contacts to visitors around the auto route. This was a very successful program and will be continued during the fall. It provides an opportunity for college students to get some field experience while providing a service to refuge visitors. This program was sponsored by the Friends of Squaw Creek.

New Faces at Squaw Creek This Summer

The next time you visit, you will probably see some new faces working on the refuge during the summer. Brian Lomas, a graduate student from Northwest Missouri State University, is working on his Masters Degree with the massasauga rattlesnake. He will be tracking the movement of 15 snakes with transmitters in Bigelow Marsh.

Carlie Babcock, a student from Northwest will be assisting him as well as Amanda Griffin. Mike Voltz, student from Missouri Western State University, will be working as a range technician (primarily on fire) this summer.

The refuge will also have another Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) with 4 youth 14 to 18 years old and 1 leader starting June 2 through July 25. The students are from Craig, Mound City and South Holt high school. They are Joseph Stone, Michaela Davis, David Taylor and Michael Huntsman. The leader, Michael Jeffries, is an undergraduate student from Missouri Western State University.

The refuge says good bye to Wildlife Biologist Jessica Lee. She completed her 13 month stint at Squaw Creek at the end of May and transferred to Illinois River NWR as a full time employee.

Refuge Manager Bell will get a new supervisor.

Jon Kauffeld, Refuge Supervisor in the Regional Office, announced his retirement effective June 27. He is building a house in Montana. He will continue to spend some time in Minnesota until his family is ready to move next year. He has been Manager Bell's supervisor since 2000. It is not known at this time who will be his replacement.

Squaw Creek Employees Receive Awards

Biologist Frank Durbian was selected as the Biologist of the Year 2007 in Region 3. He received the award at the end of February at the Regional Biologist Workshop in Moline, Illinois. A plaque with his picture presently hangs in the display room. Administrative Technician Joannie Jordan was recognized for all of her administrative support for Swan Lake NWR during the past year. Wildlife Refuge Specialist Corey Kudrna, Maintenance Mechanic Chip Lehmer and Tractor Operator Daryl Walker were

recognized for all of their work in preparation for the Women in the Outdoors event.

Ducks on a Stick

The next time you are in the office, notice the large sliding glass case in the display room. When completed, it will contain 16 dabbling ducks (8 male and female) on a stick. This is one of the memorial projects that was paid for by donations from the Gerald Ragsdale fund. The birds will be housed in the case but can be taken out and utilized when needed for interpretation and education. Maintenance Mechanic Lehmer is responsible for designing and completing this project probably finishing it sometime this summer.

Recycling Project

Squaw Creek has begun to recycle paper, cardboard and plastic thanks to the Craig High School Math club. The Math Club initiated the project at the beginning of the school year and has collected approximately 130,000 of paper and cardboard. The refuge is now saving cardboard, paper and plastic and donating to the club. The refuge has recycled aluminum, batteries, oil, light bulbs and antifreeze for a number of years.

Boardwalk

Work will begin this summer on the boardwalk. It will be built just north of the Davis Creek observation tower and will be constructed of recycled plastic. There will be a group of 10-15 youth including 4 adults from the McKnight Road Church of Christ, St. Louis, who will arrive July 13 and spend the week building the boardwalk. They will be assisted by the YCC and refuge staff as well. It will be approximately 350 feet in length and go from the gravel road to Eagle Pool.

Junior Naturalist Program

Amanda Griffin will be running the 2nd annual Junior Naturalist Program beginning May 29 to August 29. She has 14 programs scheduled every Thursday at 6:30 p.m. from birds to marshes to fish and reptiles just to name a few. It was a very successful program last year and will be even better this summer. The refuge has purchased a number of items for the programs this year.

Spring Workday

Squaw Creek staff members, Friends and volunteers joined forces on Saturday, April 19 for the annual spring workday. A total of 68 volunteers participated, the largest number to ever attend one of the workdays. This total included 43 boy scouts and leaders from Troop 261 from Bethany, Missouri and a number of students from Missouri Western State University. The scouts removed fallen tree branches and debris from the loess bluff and Callow hiking trails. The Missouri Western students worked on controlling the invasive garlic mustard plant in the loess bluffs. Other work accomplishments included headquarters lawn maintenance, correcting water drainage around the Biology Building and picking up branches around the auto tour route left over from the December ice storm. Ed McCullough served as the cook at lunch.

Spring Waterfowl Migration

The spring waterfowl migration was spectacular with a record number of geese utilizing the refuge wetlands. A record 1,466,500 geese were estimated on March 10. This included 1,425,000 snow geese, 34,600 white-fronted geese and 6,900 Canada geese. This did not include the more than 45,000 ducks. There were still more than 1 million birds around March 18. Trumpeter swans were present for most of the winter and the numbers increased nearly every week during February and March. A peak (and record) of 78 swans were counted February 24 and 77 on March 10.

Bald Eagles/Canada Geese

The nesting pair of bald eagles successfully hatched 2 eaglets this spring from the nest just south of the Squaw Creek water control structure. As of this writing, both eaglets appeared to have lost all of their down and are nearly fully feathered. A large number of Canada goose broods are beginning to show up and can be seen in Pintail Pool, Mallard Marsh and several of the wetlands on the east side.

Wetland Conditions

Spring drawdowns began in mid-March and have slowly progressed creating outstanding habitat for migrating shorebirds as well as waterfowl and other wading birds. Primary pools that are being drawn down include Eagle Pool, the Snow Goose Pools, south Mallard Marsh and a number of the moist soil units.

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FRIENDS OF SQUAW CREEK NWR

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& appreciate your membership and donations.

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