

# Turnbull Wildlife Refuge Friends Newsletter

## Friends of Turnbull President 2021 Annual Report Spring 2022

by Lorna Kropp

### Spring Member Program on Zoom – March 31 – Making your yard more Friendly to Wildlife

Thanks to our presenters: Beth Mort from Snapdragon Flower Farm, Bea Harrison from Xerces Society Bumblebee Atlas Project, Audubon and FOT, Joyce Alonso, Audubon and FOT Board member and Volunteer, and John Barber, FOT Board member and Volunteer. We had a lively group of listeners on Zoom.

### Nature Store opens for season

Our Nature Store, located inside the Refuge Headquarters building, is open from 11 -4 on Saturdays and Sundays from April through October. The store is volunteer-staffed with our Nature Store Management Team as leaders. The Management Team members are: Heather Bosch, Lorna Kropp, Joanne Powell, and John Barber. In addition, we have a cadre of 10 Nature Store Volunteers. They are trained and enthusiastic and very valuable. We could still use 4 more volunteers to ensure that we can fill all the shifts each month and not burn out volunteers. Contact [nature-store@fotnwr.org](mailto:nature-store@fotnwr.org) to find out more about joining our team.

### New items in the store this year

We have a new unique set of bird and animal earrings from a small company called Jabebo. The earrings are crafted from re-cycled cereal boxes and exquisitely painted and clear-sealed.

We have a new mug design featuring photos from Carlene Hardt of two elk running, a Red-winged Blackbird, a coyote, and Ruddy Duck.

We have the traditional Turnbull T-shirt designs in new colors in both long-sleeve and short-sleeve styles.

We have several new titles of nature books for kids and adults.

Plus we have our usual stock of sweatshirts, hats, Audubon bird toys, picture magnets, postcards and bookmarks, insulated thermos bottles, and more.





**MayFest – May 7, 2022**

The FOT participated in the MayFest Day on 1st Street in downtown Cheney on Saturday, May 7. While the day was blustery, cold and rainy, with occasional sun-breaks, our volunteers greeted visitors and shared information about pollinators “making our yards more wildlife friendly”, and then invited kids of all ages to make a bee or bug hotel for their gardens. We had plans to share, lots of hollow stems and paper straws, other natural items and some containers to fill up and decorate.



**Breanna Hild, new seasonal park ranger, with visitors**

Photos of our table Pollinator information, making bee/bug hotels and new Refuge Park Ranger, Breanna Hild with the Refuge “Touch Table” at MayFest.

Watch for plans for activities at the Refuge for May/ June.



**Donna Burt, longtime volunteer, with visitor**

**In this Issue:**

**President’s Annual Report.....1**  
**Oh, the Delights of Being Outdoors..... 3**  
**Lisa Wilson, Refuge Manager .....4**  
**What can we do to make our own yards more wildlife friendly? .....5**  
**Pollinator Garden Project ..... 6**  
**The Great Egret .....7**

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# Oh, the delights of being outdoors!

Carlene Hardt

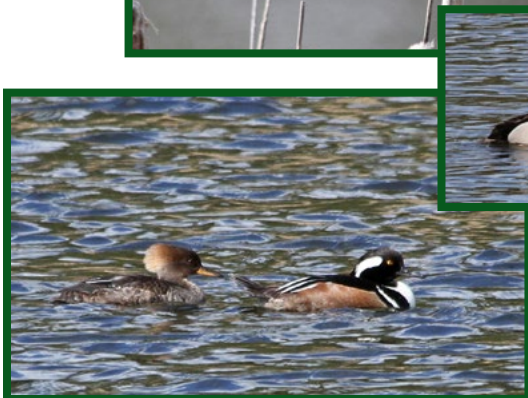
It is the end of April and the weather has mostly been cool and wet but springtime is here! I am seeing - and hearing - more and more animal activity.

As I was walking by Winslow Pool on Friday, something moved that caught my eye. We surprised each other and I got three camera shots off before the muskrat dove. In that brief moment I saw that it was dragging a cattail plant in its mouth. It either was going to later devour its favorite food or use it to build its lodge!

I saw a family with six goslings. I saw lots of Canada geese pairs on my walk, but only this one seemed to have babies. Aren't they cute? It wouldn't be spring without them. :) " Nancy Curry said that she saw several goslings on Swan Pond so these weren't the only geese with babies

Such a variety of ducks already! One of my favorites is the Green-winged Teal. The green on his head and wings is so eye catching!

The Red-Winged Blackbird sure does put his heart into singing! He is singing his sweet song to both attract a female as a mate, and to establish his nesting territory. Such a chorus of singing around this wetland.



## Introducing:

## Lisa Wilson, Refuge Manager

I came to Turnbull NWR as the Refuge Manager in October of 2019. Most of my time here has been affected by COVID. Many of the events the Friends of Turnbull usually support have not happened and I have not had an opportunity to meet most of the Friends members. I hope to be able to meet more of you soon!

I am originally from Pennsylvania but have traveled around the country for school and various seasonal jobs. I started undergrad at NC State University and finished at The University of Montana with a degree in Wildlife Biology, where I studied the breeding ecology of Columbia spotted frogs. I completed a Master's degree at George Williams College in Recreation Administration and another Master's at Valdosta State University in Biology, where I studied thermal tolerances, diet, and chytrid fungus in Cuban treefrogs. Between semesters and between degrees, I worked a variety of seasonal jobs with the US Forest Service, US Geological Survey, state wildlife agencies, and non-profits as a biologist and in environmental education. The most interesting was an internship in Costa Rica, where I helped protect nesting leatherback sea turtles and taught Costa Rican and American students about sea turtles and tropical ecology.

I started with USFWS as an 11-month AmeriCorps intern at Conboy Lake NWR. I was hired back on as a bio-tech for a year, then hired into a permanent position as the Refuge Manager. Conboy Lake is a beautiful refuge, home to nesting greater sandhill cranes, Oregon spotted frogs, and a sizeable elk herd. We completed a lot of projects to improve habitat for Oregon spotted frogs and cranes. From there, I took a position as the Refuge Manager for Toppenish, Columbia, and Conboy Lake refuges, and later, Hanford Reach. They are all very different and have unique challenges. Columbia supports a very large population of migratory and overwintering birds, including several thousand lesser sandhill cranes during the spring migration. Toppenish also supports large numbers of migratory waterbirds for being quite a small refuge. At Toppenish, we completed important

habitat projects to improve survival of Federally listed steelhead as they move through the refuge. Both Columbia and Toppenish provide valuable native upland habitat and support a variety of public uses.

Since my arrival at Turnbull, we have continued important fuels reduction and forest restoration within the ponderosa pine forests through the work of our fire program executing thinning projects and prescribed fire. We have worked to improve wetland habitat through different methods, such as removing the leaky structure from 30-Acre Lake so it holds water longer, diking Wheeler Pond to reduce reed canarygrass and promote vegetation that is of higher value to waterfowl, and drawing down Windmill Pond to replace the structure and provide food resources for birds.

The last six months here at Turnbull have been a time of change. We had four long-time employees retire from the refuge complex – Alice Hanley, Project Leader for the refuge complex; Mike Rule, Refuge Biologist; Sandy Rancourt, Visitor Services Manager; and Jerry Cline, Refuge Manager for Little Pend Oreille NWR. Our new Project Leader, Kelly Moroney, and Refuge Biologist, Molly Dixon, have recently started, and we should have a new Visitor Services Manager in the coming months. These folks will all bring new ideas to the refuge, so you may see some changes in the habitat work we do, the programs we offer, and the public-facing facilities. The focus of our efforts at the refuge will continue to be, as always, to protect and restore habitats for wildlife and plants. We will continue to restore wetlands, uplands, and forests: complete biological studies to help us make management decisions; work with partners to promote conservation; provide a safe and enjoyable place for people to observe wildlife; and engage the public through a variety of methods to foster an appreciation of Turnbull NWR, the National Wildlife Refuge System, and wildlife and their habitats.



# What can we do to make our own yards more wildlife friendly?

1. Provide habitat that is friendly by growing native flowers, shrubs and trees that will provide food, and shelter for insects, birds, and other creepy crawlies. Learn more about habitat through the WA Department of Fish & Wildlife Habitat at Home program.
2. Within the habitat make space and food for native bee populations by planting a diversity of native, perennial wildflowers to provide a succession of blooms that will ensure adults have access to nectar and pollen from early in the spring until late fall. (Penstemon, milkweed, wild bergamot, dotted mint, New England aster, and goldenrod.)



Tiger Swallowtail©  
WSU



Goldenrod  
© Monrovia



Wild Bergamot  
© Monrovia



Red Admiral  
© Jenny Bailey

3. Provide a water source for birds and insects through water features, plant saucers or shallow bird baths.
4. Provide nesting habitat by leaving field borders and garden edges untilled and unmown, creating brush piles, maintaining snags, stumps, and rotting logs. Dead wood, such as hollow logs and tree stumps, provides nesting areas and shelter for bees, wasps, and beetles. Bee and insect houses also provide nesting sites - you can purchase or make your own.
5. Plant native pollinator plants in 3-foot clumps or pollinator patches, which makes them more visible; spread the flowering season of the clumps to have food for the whole growing season, (i.e., include 2-3 spring clumps, 2-3 summer clumps and 2-3 fall clumps in your pollinator garden). Encourage your neighbors, and local groups to plant also, and then use these gardens for educational demonstrations to educate others on the importance of pollinators and their habitat.
6. Choose a variety of flower colors, shapes and heights; flowers in shades of blue, purple, white, and yellow are better to attract bees. Red, yellow, orange,

pink, and purple blooms are better for attracting butterflies.

7. Protect bees, caterpillars, butterflies moths and dragonflies from pesticides. Avoid insecticides, which have a lethal effect on bees, etc. and avoid the indiscriminate use of herbicides that can reduce the abundance and diversity of flowers available as forage.
8. Choose a sunny spot: Collecting nectar and spreading pollen is arduous work. Locate your pollinator patch in a spot that gets ample sunlight, since many pollinators are energized by the warmth of the sun. Also provide rocks to serve as warming and resting spots.
9. Make room for host plants for larval species and expect that some of the leaves will get eaten and no longer be "perfect".



**Honey Bee**

© Meghan Murray

10. Join the Friends of Turnbull and become an advocate for being wildlife friendly - <https://www.fotnwr.org/membership.html>

a. Create a Habitat at Home by certifying your yard with WA Fish & Wildlife - <https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/living/backyard>

b. Sign the Pollinator Pledge of the Xerces Society - <https://xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/pollinator-protection-pledge> or

c. Join The Audubon Society, or

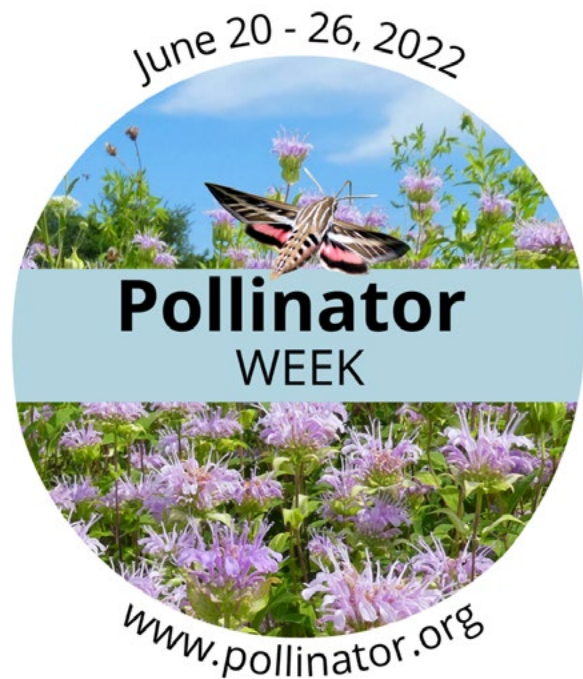
d. look into “Homegrown National Park” - <https://homegrownnationalpark.org>

e. look up the National Wildlife Federation - <https://www.nwf.org/CERTIFY>

f. look up native plant lists from the Washington Native Plant Society, NE Chapter - [https://www.wnps.org/plant-lists/list?Turnbull\\_National\\_Wildlife\\_Refuge](https://www.wnps.org/plant-lists/list?Turnbull_National_Wildlife_Refuge)

## **New Project for Turnbull: an educational demonstration Pollinator Garden near the Environmental Education Classroom**

Pollinator Week is coming up in June – June 20 – 26, 2022. Interested in helping with a new project? We are forming a new taskforce to research, plan and organize a demonstration Pollinator Garden at the Refuge. If you are interested in getting in at the beginning, let the FOT Board President know (email – [president@fotnwr.org](mailto:president@fotnwr.org)). Early organization meetings may include a “Flower Walk” at the refuge; Zoom sharing meetings, doing some research, and presenting ideas to Refuge staff, planning and organizing work parties.



**Pollinator Garden  
WSU**



# The Great Egret A May Walk at Turnbull

By Carlene Hardt

On May 4th as I was walking down the path to Middle Pine, I looked up and saw a white bird cruising above. As it got closer, I realized that it was smaller than a swan and began to snap pictures of it. The long neck was tucked in and its legs extended far beyond the tip of its short tail. It landed on a tall pine tree on the small island of Middle Pine. It was a pristine white Great Egret! Its flight was powerful, with about two wing beats per second. Soon after, it flew down to the island and preened. What a lovely sight to watch?



Here are some interesting facts about the Great Egret:

- "The Great Egret is the symbol of the National Audubon Society, one of the oldest environmental organizations in North America. Audubon was founded to protect birds from being killed for their feathers."
- Egrets are shorter than herons. Also, the leg color of the egret is usually black with little white, while the heron's legs are light, either gray or brown.
- Weight 1.5 – 3.3 lbs.
- They are 31-39 inches long
- They are 36 inches tall
- Cruising speed is around 25 miles an hour
- The average lifespan is up to 5 years of age.

"According to the records of the National Audubon Society, the oldest great egret lived up to the age of 22 years!"

The elegant Great Egret is a dazzling sight in many a North American wetland!



All photos by Carlene Hardt

Friends of Turnbull NWR  
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*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