Turnbull Wildlife Refuge
Friends Newsletter

Friends of Turnbull President/Board Report
Summer 2021

by Lorna Kropp

Annual Membership Meeting

The Friends of Turnbull NWR gradually is re-opening from 18 months of virtual gatherings on Zoom.

The Annual Meeting will be held "in person" this year at the Refuge outdoor classroom on September 24, 2021, from 5:30 – 7:30 pm. You are invited to bring along a picnic supper for your family group to eat at the picnic tables. We will have the West Valley Outdoor Learning Center raptor presentation during the meeting. You will not want to miss this; please mark your calendars now!!

The Annual Meeting will include the election of new Board Members, an annual financial report, and recognition for Roger at Copy Junction who has graciously taken on our Nature Store items for consignment sales during the time that the store has been closed due to the pandemic.

The Board is looking for new members with some bookkeeping or financial skills to take on the role of Treasurer/ Bookkeeper. We are looking to hire a part-time bookkeeper, 20 hours a month, paid at an hourly rate. Please contact current Treasurer, Molly Zammit, treasurer@fotnwr.org if interested, or if you know of someone to recruit. Additional Board members are needed, as well as Activity Committee members and Fundraising Committee members.

Nature Store preparing to re-open August 7/8, 2021.

Our Nature Store is following the guidelines which the Turnbull NWR Refuge staff must follow to open their Administrative Building. For the last 18 months, most NWR staff have been working from home. In order to re -open our Nature Store, we have agreed to follow these guidelines to keep volunteers and the visiting public safe:

Wear a mask
Wear gloves for currency exchange
Maintain social distancing
Sanitize high-touch surfaces regularly

The Nature Store committee currently is recruiting and training volunteers to take on the role of greeter/ sales person when the store is open on weekend days. The two shifts on Saturday and Sunday are Opening shift 11:00 am – 1:30 pm and Closing shift 1:30 – 4:00. Some volunteers like to take on both shifts when they come out to the Refuge. The training gives practice in using the store iPad and Square POS system for sales (mostly credit card sales), safely opening and closing the building, and general knowledge about store inventory items. This is a very important and enjoyable volunteer role for our organization. It is one main way that we reach out to the community and sales provide support for our fundraising for an Environmental Education Intern. The upcoming training sessions are:

July 31 10:00 – 11:30 am. And 1:00 - 2:30 pm
August 3 10:00 – 11:30 am and 1:00 – 2:30 pm

We hope to have three people for each of the four sessions. Please reply to Lorna Kropp at activities@fotnwr.org or 509-294-3642. New volunteers receive training, and are scheduled to work with an experienced Store Volunteer for additional supported hands-on practice as they learn the role. We need 6-10 new volunteers to fill out the monthly store-open-days schedule. We have 4 shifts each weekend and 4 weeks-ends in a month. You can do the math -- we need 16 volunteers to cover the shifts in a month.

Once again, plan to attend the Friends of Turnbull NWR Annual Meeting, September 24 from 5:30 -7:30. Following a brief membership meeting, our good friends at West Valley Outdoor Learning Center will present their raptor program with live birds. Bring along a picnic supper to the Turnbull NWR Outdoor Classroom. See you then!

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www.fotnwr.org

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Turnbull Butterfly Visit

by Carlene Hardt

The very young caterpillars of Tiger, Black, Spicebush, Anise and Giant Swallowtails all look like bird droppings. Some varieties have "false eyespots" at their rear end when they're a little older as a defense against attack.

All of them also have a fork-shaped gland (orange or reddish) behind their heads that they can stick out to repel attackers because it stinks. How's that for strange?

Swallowtail butterfly benefits include their work as efficient pollinators. They flit to flowers and reach in with their long curled proboscis to get the nectar, which energizes them for flight. … As they drink nectar from the flowers, they also pick up pollen, which they carry with them to other flowers.

They are extremely easy to attract, flocking to gardens that have an abundance of flowers. Their metamorphosis from caterpillar to butterfly is still not understood by scientists and is well-nigh miraculous in the radical change it brings.

All photos by Carlene Hardt

Refuge Happenings

by Sandy Rancourt
Visitor Services Manager

Reflecting on the past several years, it can sometimes be a challenge to stay optimistic. From furloughs to pandemics (and all the associated issues), to climate change bringing record-breaking temperatures, drought and fires, what's next? Asteroids are on my mind… No doubt many of us hold our breath wondering when and where the next fire will start. Fortunately, we have a great group of long term volunteers who are always up for the challenge. The summer, despite its extreme conditions, has been progressing well and refuge staff and volunteers are getting quite a bit accomplished.

The Headquarters area has been busy. We are making progress on reopening the public restrooms that have been closed for maintenance and repairs due a lightning strike late last fall. Some of you may have noticed that the Headquarter's Pond has been drained to replace the Windmill Dam, one of our very old structures. We are hoping to open the Visitor Center sometime in August or early fall, when the public restrooms are open and other current issues are resolved.

Replacing the old Windmill Dam with a new structure. (S. Rancourt)

Several biological surveys were completed by refuge staff and volunteers. Jerry Hickman, Buck and Sandy Domitrovich, Fran Haywood, Chuck Kerkering, Tim Holman, AmeriCorps member Erik Lewis, and bio tech Michael Ploegman monitored several bluebird nest-box trails on the refuge. Although bluebirds had a great start with earlier optimal weather, things quickly turned for the worse once the scorching heat arrived and did not dissipate. Fewer insects to feed the young and the relentless heat have taken a toll on nestlings and adult birds. A dead female bluebird was found on top of her dead nestlings. We also observed a young bluebird standing in a bird bath, reluctant to move, only to succumb shortly afterwards.

Russell and Marian Frobe completed the annual breeding bird survey, several songbird point counts and assisted refuge biologist Mike Rule and me with banding songbirds. Other long-term volunteers and refuge staff who completed songbird point counts were Kim Thornburn, Lisa Langelier, Mike and me. Several refuge staff completed the refuge-wide waterfowl pair surveys and EWU's ornithology class conducted an early pair survey to help students develop monitoring skills. Refuge and Rare Care staff and volunteers monitored three rare plant species; water howellia (recently delisted), yellow lady's-slipper (State threatened), and Spalding silene, a federally listed threatened plant species. Barbara and Gary Ford conducted a bumblebee survey at Turnbull as part of the Xerces Society's PNW Bumble Bee Atlas Project. Other biological surveys conducted by Erik and Michael Ploegman included marshbird surveys using broadcasts of recorded calls to illicit a response from these secretive birds, invasive species

surveys, and remote camera traps to determine the species and extent of browsing in aspen stands. On some of the hottest days of this summer to stay cool, they have both been catching up on data entry of survey work completed this year.

A beautiful morning to conduct a waterfowl pair survey on one of Turnbull's wetlands. (S. Rancourt)

A Wilson's snipe nest is just one of the pleasant surprises one can encounter during a waterfowl pair survey. (S. Rancourt)

Monitoring plot for Spalding's silene restoration plantings. (S. Rancourt)

Riparian Restoration Projects

Eagle Scout

Eagle Scout candidate John-Paul Lavoie from Troop 365 was recruited to pot several hundred bare root seedlings. It is always a pleasure to work with responsible young adults, and we are grateful that he accepted this project as part of his Eagle Scout requirement. John-Paul demonstrated great leadership abilities, organizing his crew and following safety protocol on refuge lands. John-Paul and his troop spent nearly 9 hours potting 500 bare root golden current, alder and mock orange seedlings. Luckily this project was done before the 90 ^{o}+ temperatures arrived, but it still was warm, regardless. All the bare root stock was very well potted, watered and arranged in an orderly fashion in our nursery. The newly potted seedlings are thriving.

John-Paul separating the bare root seedlings to demonstrate how to pot. (S. Rancourt)

John-Paul Lavoie (middle), his brother Matthew and father Mike. (S. Rancourt)

Hard at work and moving quickly. (S. Rancourt)

The finished project. Rows of newly potted golden current neatly arranged. (S. Rancourt)

Northwest Youth Corps. (S. Rancourt)

Northwest Youth Corps (NWYC)

I spent a very enjoyable morning with the NWYC. The young adults spent nearly two weeks working on fencing projects at the refuge, so they were ready to mix things up a little. We had ordered 1,500 bare root stock so this was a great opportunity to finish this project. The Youth Corps learned about riparian habitat and management, and how to pot the bare root stock. These young adults were exceptional workers, asked great questions, were good listeners and very polite. It was obvious that they enjoyed being outdoors and working at the refuge. The NWYC spent two days potting mock orange, aspen, red-osier dogwood and the majority of the cottonwood stakes.

Environmental Education and Outreach

Despite the pandemic and all the restrictions, it was another successful year for Turnbull's environmental education program. Although virtual programming is not the same as getting students out to the refuge or visiting schools during the winter, all things considered, it went very well. I was still scheduling programs late into May, and we provided virtual programs for students up until the last day of school. Over 3,800 students were provided environmental education virtually this year. Environmental Education included virtual programs on habitat, wetland ecology, animal adaptations, birds, owls, endangered species, animal tracks, camouflage, mammals, wild vs domestic animals, and crayfish dissection. In addition, Erik and I spent a day sampling aquatic invertebrates for Cheney High School's biology freshmen students. Under normal conditions, over 300 students annually participate in a 2-day environmental education and stewardship program at the refuge. This year we brought the aquatic

invertebrates to them. Kylie Gaard and I presented a virtual crayfish dissection program for twenty-five 5th grade students from Libby Center. This virtual programming is a great avenue to safely reach all, especially for students who have fish and shellfish allergies. Students were engaged and asked many questions. Overall, facilitators did a great job of presenting all those programs for the students, and teachers were very grateful to be given this learning opportunity.

Drupal Website

A new website platform for Turnbull and the Fish and Wildlife Service should be up by next year. I'm starting to lose count how many web platforms I have worked on at this point, but I would like to personally thank photographers Tom Munson, Chuck Kerkering and Buck Domitrovich for providing incredible photos and for their patience in working with me on the new photo-size requirement of this platform.

Cornell Lab of Ornithology Bird Identification

Cooper's Hawk vs. Sharp-shinned Hawk

Sharp-shinned (Accipiter striatus) and Cooper's (Accipiter cooperii) hawks commonly prey on feeder birds, and are frequently reported by FeederWatchers. Despite their common occurrence, these hawks present a significant identification problem for many beginning and intermediate (and even more advanced!) birders. There is great variation in plumage and in size for these two species. Therefore, perhaps more than any other similar-looking birds, no single field mark is likely to distinguish one species from the other. Instead, the careful observer must use a combination of field marks and draw from the overall "gestalt" of the hawk for proper identification. No field guide will substitute for plenty of practice in the field.

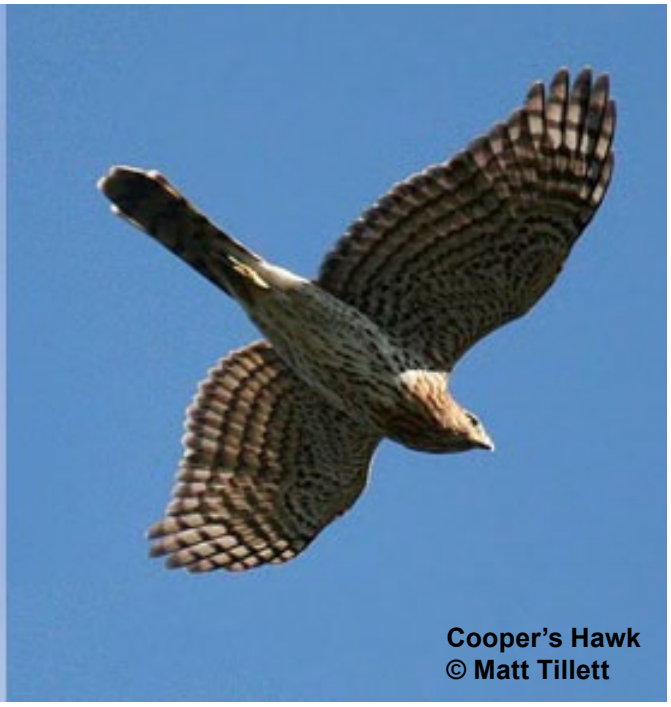
Cooper's Hawk

Sharp-shinned Hawk

Courtesy Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology

Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
SIZE	Similar in size to a jay or dove (avg. 10-14″ long). Female is larger and can be as large as a male Cooper's Hawk.	Similar in size to a crow (avg.14-20″ long). Male is smaller and can be as small as a female Sharp-shinned Hawk.
TAIL TIP SHAPE	Tail typically has square tip, showing prominent corners. The outer tail feathers are usually the longest (or nearly so). Note: tail tip of soaring bird appears rounded.	Tail is usually rounded at the tip. The middle tail feathers are usually the longest. Note: When the bird is perched, the shorter feathers are often tucked inside of the longer feathers making them only visible from the front.
ADULT "HOODED" OR "CAPPED"	The feathers on the crown and the back of the neck are dark, giving the bird a "hooded" appearance. Note: This field mark applies to adult-plumaged birds only (see Identification Tips window for more information).	The feathers on the crown are darker than the feathers on the back of neck, giving the bird a "capped" appearance. Note: This field mark applies to adult-plumaged birds only (see Identification Tips window for more information).
SHAPE IN FLIGHT	When the bird is soaring, short rounded wings are pushed forward at the wrists so that the small head barely extends past the wings.	The large, angular head projects far beyond the wings when soaring, giving the bird a cross-like appearance.

Sharp-shinned Hawk
© Steve Berardi



Cooper's Hawk
© Matt Tillett

Friends of Turnbull NWR
P.O. Box 294
Cheney, WA 99004

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