



The Nature Center Stream

Summer

The Seasonal Newsletter of the MK Nature Center

2009

You Tube videos about the MK Nature Center have been filmed, edited, and posted by MKNC volunteer and Idaho Master Naturalist Glenn Mouser.

Go online to You Tube and search for MK Nature Center.



Beginning August 1, watch for our Facebook and Twitter, sites where you can become a fan or follower of the MKNC.

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BSU workstudy student, Joe Peterson, took this photo of our newest Nature Center "regular." Western screech owls are normally nocturnal, but this one rests regularly where we can see him in the day. Occasionally, we find him having a red-winged blackbird snack on a fence post.

Screech owls are one of seventeen species of owls found in Idaho. They are only about 8.5 inches tall with a 20 inch wingspan. Their sound is a series of short, high-pitched whistles that get slightly closer together toward the end of the series. Visit http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Western_Screech-Owl/sounds to hear a Western screech owl.

To see more of Joe's Nature Center photos, visit <http://www.flickr.com/photos/scen-ebyscenic/>.

Our Year in a Nutshell

July 1 marks the beginning of a new fiscal year at MK Nature Center. Naturally, we look back on fiscal year 2009 too see what we have accomplished.

- # of programs: 261
- # of people who attended programs: 9142
- # of unguided groups: 74
- # of people in unguided groups: 1928
- # of special events: 8
- # of people at special events: 8222
- # of MKNC staff members giving programs: 5
- # of full time staff at MKNC : 1



We Need More Than Two Cents!



MKNC Superintendent, Dave Canamella uses the great horned owl mount to give examples of adaptations and how they help animals survive in their habitats.

Here at the MK Nature Center, we are often asked about our funding sources. We have four sources of funding:

- 1) A Federal Aquatic Education grant through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Fish Restoration Act (≈ \$200,000);
- 2) "License" money- revenue from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses (≈ \$16,000);
- 3) "Non-game" money generated through the sale of wildlife license plates and the voluntary Idaho tax check off (≈\$50,000); and
- 4) Donations from the public including gift shop revenue, education programs and events, and out and out donations (≈\$50,000).

Therefore, our total annual budget is about \$315,000, every penny of which is spent because we still have more ideas than we can feed. I have spent more than a few days with my bosses trying to explain budget "overruns."

Boss: "Dave why did you overspend the budget?" :

Me: "Oh, that's simple, there's not enough money in it."

Notably, the federal grant requires a 3:1 match or about \$66,000 worth of donations. These donations take the form of volunteer labor and donations of cash, services, supplies and gifts.

This brief description of the budget illustrates just how important our supporters are: they not only provide our "match" for the grant, they also provide us with cold hard cash for our basic needs: personnel and operating money. We simply could not accomplish all that we do without them. We are very proud of increased "production" over the past several years and hope to continue the trend.



Nature NOW!

Whether it is a baby beaver eating aspen leaves on the lap of a volunteer, or a 33 inch Chinook Salmon swimming among the rainbow trout...there is rarely a dull day at the Nature Center! To keep up on the latest natural events, visit our NATURE NOW webpage! Visit: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/education/mknc/> and click on Nature Now at the TOP!



Volunteer Opportunities

Green Expo-Saturday, July 18 and Sunday, July 19
Salmon and Steelhead Days-September 9, 10, 11
MKNC Mule Deer Program -Saturday September 19

To find out more about volunteering at these events or to learn about other opportunities, contact Cass Meissner at Cass.Meissner@idfg.idaho.gov or 287-2901.



Camile Kirkpatric poses with her scarf, George. George, the gopher snake, often accompanies Camile on her daily chores.



Richard "Dick" Hahn/MK Memorial Scholarship

The Richard Hahn Family is a long-time and stalwart supporter of the MK Nature Center. Their support stems from their love of all things wild. Dick and Willow, along with their grandson Colton, were frequent visitors to the MKNC. Nature Center staff always enjoyed and looked forward to their visits. What a trio it was!

Upon Dick's passing in August of 2006, and in accordance with Dick's wishes, the Hahn family created a scholarship fund in Dick's name. Family and friends were asked to make donations to the scholarship fund to honor Dick. We remain humbled by their generosity and we continue to receive annual donations for the scholarship, the amount of which allows us to use only the interest for the awards.

The purpose of the scholarship, which we award annually, is to help fund the education of natural resource students. The Nature Center staff confers to select the deserving student(s).

This year we are pleased to present awards to Ashleigh Leathers and Julie Schommer, BSU students who work at MKNC as they attend BSU. Congratulations Ashleigh and Julie!



Summer is here and it's time to enjoy the outdoors! The Nature Center has a great selection of kid's outdoor activity books, birding books, and a variety of other field guides. Stop in and check them out during your next visit. Remember, all profits from our gift shop help fund our education programs.



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The MK Nature Center is a conservation education facility owned and operated by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. We serve close to 200,000 visitors each year and teach nearly 10,000 school children in our education programs. Our funding comes in large part from federal aquatic education grant monies, non-game funds from license plate sales, **and private donations from people like you.** Thank you for your continued support of the MK Nature Center.

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