



SUMMER 2017

TAMARAC TRACKS

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Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly photo by Jim Sinclair



THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

By Lee Kensinger, president 2017 Friends of Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge

and donating of the Discovery Center. Just a few more donations are needed for that final push to the finish. We are very grateful to the many Champions who have brought us this far. Thank you all!

As we complete our debt reduction, we have a new priority in our sights. The next big step for the Friends of Tamarac will be to find, hire, train, and finance an employee to coordinate the Environmental Education and other business needs of our organization. Planning for this eventuality has been going on for some time, but now we are nearing the financial ability to support this position. We will be looking for the perfect person in the very near future.

If you are familiar with the Friends of Tamarac you most likely know, or know of, Ron Jensen. Ron has been a driving force in creating the Discovery Center and most

all the activities of our group. For more than a year Ron has been running our gift store at the Visitor Center. In August, Ron will earn the title of "Retired Gift Shop Manager." I can't thank him enough for all the time and effort he invested to make the Friends of Tamarac a truly great organization!

So, with a need for a gift shop manager, a FOT/Environmental Education coordinator, and our need for volunteers to present our programs, we would love to hear from any of you Friends who are able to share your gifts and talents. When you see, and you will see, the looks on kids' faces as they discover something new at Tamarac, you will know that your time and effort are truly important.

Thank you all for supporting the Friends of Tamarac!

Summer is in full bloom! The long days, perfect sunsets, young birds screaming at their parents for food, fawns running in the fully blooming fields, and the smell of bug spray. Except for the bug spray, it's a great time to visit Tamarac!

The Friends of Tamarac are working to improve and to provide the best possible Environmental Education programs. With that in mind, we are very near the finish line in paying off the debt incurred by the building

PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

By Neil Powers, Tamarac Refuge Manager

Recently, Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge hosted U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program biologists from across Minnesota at the Discovery Center. Affectionately known as Partners Biologists, their title is a dead giveaway for the type of work they do for wildlife conservation--working with partners! These dedicated individuals work directly with private landowners by providing financial assistance and technical expertise in support of habitat restoration and enhancement projects. Projects frequently benefit a broad selection of wildlife, especially migratory birds and threatened and endangered species.

In addition to working with private landowners, Partners Biologists often work

in partnership with other county, state, and federal land management agencies as well as non-profit organizations. This approach has successfully magnified conservation efforts across a much broader landscape while linking private and public land interests in a united effort for wildlife conservation.

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year and the success of our program within the five county Tamarac Wetland Management District has been exceptional! More than 2,000 wetlands have been restored. This accounts for a thousand more acres of wetland habitat that provide direct benefits by reducing runoff and erosion and by improving water quality.



Become a Friend

Membership: \$25
Patron: \$100
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Friends of Tamarac NWR

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The Friends of Tamarac NWR is a 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to facilitate activities and programs that educate, interpret, protect and restore the natural and cultural resources of Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge.

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Vonnie Jacobson, Fran Mattson, Linda Brockmann, Justine Boots, Kelly Blackledge, Nancy Brennan, Janice Bengston, Terry Krile, Layout and design by Angie Pfaff (Loud Media)

Tamarac Tracks is a publication of the Friends of Tamarac serving both the Friends and the Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge. Tamarac Tracks is published four times a year, mailed to members and made available as an electronic PDF on our website. Please discuss article ideas in advance with the newsletter coordinator (jjacobson@arvig.net).

THANK YOU

to all of you who have committed to Friends of Tamarac.

You have joined a great group people who facilitate activities and programs that interpret, protect and restore the natural and cultural resources of Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge.

We are a part of a network of Friends groups nationwide committed to protecting and improving Refuge resources. Every member at all levels is welcome.

Please encourage your family and friends to come and join Friends of Tamarac with you.

TAMARAC IS ALL A BUZZ

By Kurt Svendsgaard, Tamarac Private Lands Biologist

The rusty patched bumble bee (RPBB-*Bombus affinus*) is creating quite a buzz on the Tamarac Wetland Management District. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officially listed the rusty patched bumble bee as an endangered species effective March 21, 2017. Amazingly, the rusty patched bumble bee is likely to be present in scattered locations that cover only about 0.1% of the species' historical range. One such "scattered location" happens to be on Tamarac's Wetland Management District in Beltrami County, and believe it or not, the place where it has been found is named Buzzle Township. With recent sightings in 2016 on a private landowner's property, this is considered a "high potential zone" and a top tier location in Minnesota to conduct management activities to protect, restore, and enhance this endangered species habitat. Plans are on the way through our Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program to work with the landowner to plant a diverse pollinator-friendly native prairie as well as monitor adjacent properties for any new sightings through non-lethal netting and photography. In June, volunteers Cathy Harrington and David Isreal took to the field with biologist



Private Lands Biologist Kurt Svendsgaard scoured fields in the Tamarac Wetland Management District with volunteers David Isreal and Cathy Harrington in search of additional locations of the rusty patch bumble bee. David's specialty in insect and macro photography is a great asset in this endangered species project.

Kurt Svendsgaard to capture and photograph potential rusty patched bumble bees. With so many variations of colorations in the type of bee (workers, queens, male and female), this bee is difficult to identify. It's exciting that we will be able to directly impact a species in such decline, as well as restore and enhance pollinator and grassland habitat for a multitude of other species on the Tamarac District.



Photo courtesy of Dan Mullen



Volunteer Cathy Harrington shows no fear in bee handling.

BEES, PLANTS, & POLLINATOR GARDENS

Book Review by John Boots

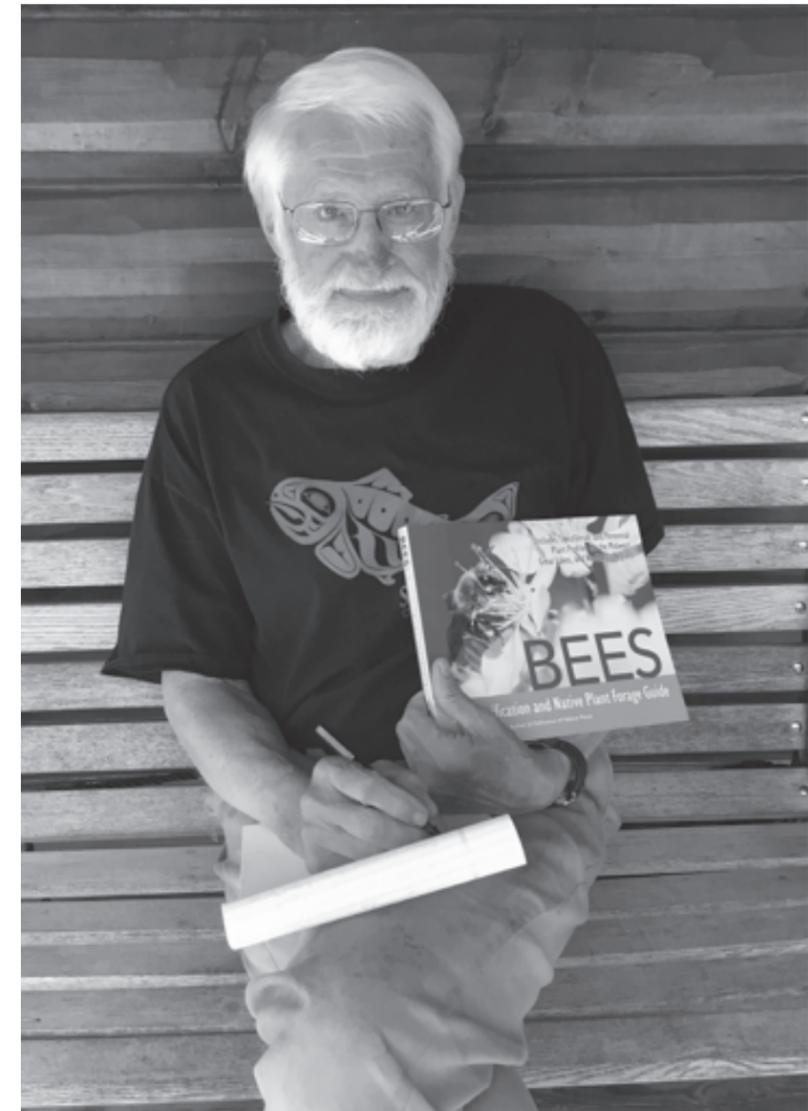
Here is a set of three facts that together explain the timeliness of Heather Holm's new book, *Bees: an Identification and Native Plant Forage Guide*. First, more than 30 percent of our human food crops rely directly upon pollination by bees to produce their edible fruits and seeds. When we consider the indirect benefits of bee pollination to our own food sources, that percentage rises to 70. Second, many bee species are in trouble, among them some of the most active pollinators. Those troubles come from several directions, including pesticide use, loss and fragmentation of bee habitat, and changes in plant phenology caused by global warming. Third, since our dependence on bees is a constant, and since bee numbers are declining, anything we can do to attract bees to our properties and communities and to make their lives easier will directly benefit the wider ecosystem and our own orchards and gardens.

The guiding premise of Holm's book is that we need to help the bees out, and that one of the most efficient—and pleasurable—ways to do that is to plan and plant bee-friendly "pollinator gardens." It is to this project that the book is dedicated.

The book is a lavishly illustrated field guide that falls into two equal sections. The first section is a field guide to the 27 genera of native bees that inhabit the American Midwest. The second section is an identification and cultivation guide to the native plants that bees favor. The bee section is heavily infused with information about the feeding habits and forage favorites of our native pollinators. The plant section is similarly infused with information about which bees the plant attract. The book's single subject, then, is the nexus between native bees and native forage plants.

The emphasis in both sections of the book is on native. One of the interesting facts that Holm points out is that the imported European honey bee has until recently received too much credit as a universal pollinator. It turns out, however, that there are many crops—including the tomatoes, eggplants, and peppers that grow in our own gardens—that can only be pollinated by native bees.

This is not a preachy book. It is a rigorously scientific field guide that makes its argument largely by implication. It presents the facts that show why pollinator gardens are beneficial, and it provides practical guidance that will enable interested readers to plan their own. The book is available in the Tamarac gift shop. We will all be lucky if it sells well.



DON'T FORGET! Tamarac's Annual Photo Contest

Categories include:
Wildlife, Scenic, Nature's Abstracts,
Recreation, Plant Life.

For more information and entry forms, go to the
Friends of Tamarac website:

www.tamaracfriends.org.

Entry forms are also available at the visitor
center. All photos will be on display at the
2017 Fall Festival, September 30.

Photos Due on September 15

AQUATIC INSECT EDUCATION

By Tina Pierce

One of the newest education programs at Tamarac is called Macroinvertebrate Mayhem. Macroinvertebrates are organisms that lack an internal skeleton and are large enough to be seen with the unaided eye. They are an integral part of wetland and stream ecosystems, providing food for fish and waterfowl. Examples of macroinvertebrates include aquatic insects (like mayflies and dragonflies), mollusks, crayfish, scuds, worms, and leeches. Through this program, students will use dip nets to obtain samples from the Ottertail River and use keys to identify which organisms were collected. They will then learn how to identify macroinvertebrates and how to use that identification to determine water quality. Macroinvertebrates are indicator species that give hints about the health of the ecosystem. This summer activity will also help introduce youngsters to aquatic invasive species and the threats they pose to our pristine waters. The Becker County Coalition of Lake Associations is helping Tamarac Refuge kick off this new program for youth.



Seasonal Park Ranger Tina Peirce collects macro-invertebrates for youth to explore up close.

CHILD, PARENT, TEACHER, VOLUNTEER THE MAGIC LIVES ON

By Janet Bridgers, FOT Volunteer

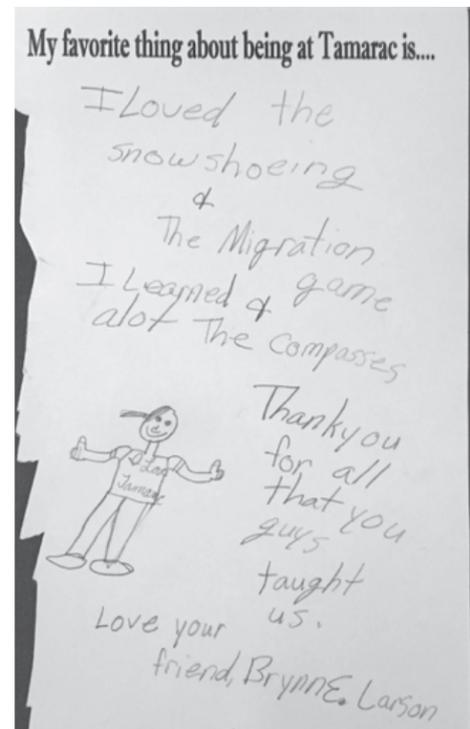
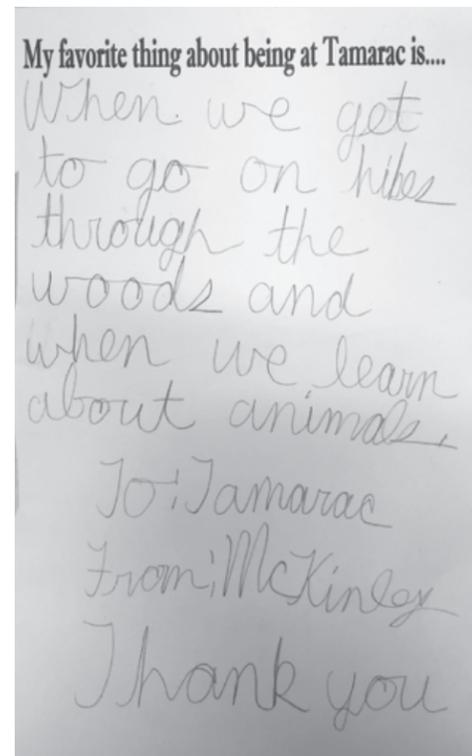


It began when I was a child in the 1960's. Company comes to the lake cottage. We all pile in the car for our adventure to Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge. I experienced the first touch of souls as we pondered the Spirit Houses by Tea Cracker Bridge. We gazed at the green patches of wild rice, ponds of lily pads, and glimpsed an occasional deer leaping in the woods. Magical.

Returning to Tamarac as a parent, our city-dwelling children experienced the coziness of animal hides, felt a cracked turtle shell, and watched the birds as they fed at the feeders. It was always a great place to come on a rainy day to get the kids out of the house and give the grandparents a respite from chattering voices. Our children never forgot to bring their allowance because the gift shop would have a treasure that they could take back to school for show and tell. Magical.

Pursuing a teaching career, lessons taught in my elementary classroom came from experiences, lessons, and books that I received from Tamarac. Children from New Mexico discovered a world beyond the desert--a world of frogs, swans, eagles, and loons. As a retired teacher, I have nurtured my passion for education by assisting with the Environmental Education Programs and Wild Wednesday classes. Magical

One of the best benefits of volunteering at Tamarac is the weekly experience of ISR--what I call Instant Stress Relief. Whether I'm overwhelmed with gardening, remodeling, cooking or playing hostess, the minute I enter the Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge, the stress melts away. When I'm working with other adults whose goal is the betterment of our world, the camaraderie is.....Magical.



WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT ON THE REFUGE

By: Olivia Walton



Olivia Walton collecting data.

reviewed before departure. A GPS device is used to navigate to the same location in the water every month, where the vessel is tied to a buoy, and the biologists begin collecting the required data.

A long PVC tube with rubber stoppers on each end - called an integrated sampler - is used to collect water representative of an entire water column. That water sample is then placed in 3 different sterilized bottles, which are labeled and put on ice to be delivered to RMB lab for analysis later that same day. The clarity and depth of the water is measured using a Secchi disk, which is an 8 inch white circular disk lowered into the water on a metered string until no longer visible, and then

again until it touches bottom. Lastly, a device called a sonde is used to measure temperature, turbidity, ph levels, and dissolved oxygen. The data collected with the sonde, as well as the water samples analyzed by RMB lab, give the scientists information about the levels of nutrients, including phosphorus and nitrates, available in our lakes.

One-third of Tamarac NWR is classified as a wetland, which is why the bio-staff and volunteers believe it's crucial to manage the refuge's water bodies for



Gina Kemper collecting samples.

The privilege of managing nearly 43,000 acres with the aim to "serve as a breeding ground and sanctuary for migratory birds and other wildlife," is a substantial responsibility. The biology team at Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge, which includes some very dedicated volunteers, takes great care in leading annual surveys, collecting samples in the field, and conducting other preventative management procedures. One of the management techniques that keeps the bio-team very busy from May - September is a monthly water quality survey, conducted on 11 lakes and 8 streams across the refuge.

Water quality is the physical, biological, and chemical conditions of a body of water, and at Tamarac NWR this is managed first and foremost for the benefit of the wildlife. A day out testing water quality begins with a great deal of preparation; all safety procedures and contacts are



COME AND SHOP THIS SUMMER AT THE TAMARAC GIFT SHOP

Open Monday-Friday 8:00 am-4:00 pm, Saturday & Sunday 10:00 am-5:00 pm. Proceeds benefit the refuge educational program.



VOLUNTEER VIBES

by Janice Bengtson (Janice_Bengtson@fws.gov or 218-844-1756)

Ahhh, it's finally summer! And that means it's busy on the refuge. Volunteers are keeping the refuge grounds looking great. They are presenting public programs including Wild Wednesdays, Thursday's Wildlife Excursions, Photo Safaris and more. Volunteers have also led several programs for Boys and Girls Clubs and senior groups. They continue to conduct wildlife surveys, monitor water quality, educate our local anglers on invasive species, host the visitor center, maintain trails, and manage databases.

Wild Wednesdays are going strong once again! Thanks to Connie Carlson, Denise Warweg, Becky Aarestad, Janet Bridgers, Rick Pechmann, Nancy Brennan, Jeanine and Luverne Ehnert, and Jude Gilford for being part of our WW team.

Mowing of our service trails was completed by our awesome team of mowers: Luverne Ehnert, Bill Wickum, Larry Aarestad, Bob Brockmann, Dean Kragerud, Art Bakker, Don Allen, John Harrington. All have attended training and are certified to operate the big Ag Tractor.

Thanks to volunteers who conducted the Loon, Grebe and Tern Survey: Steve & Arlene Furuseth, Larry Michelson, Fran and Ken Mattson, Steve and Diane Midthune, Art Bakker, Cathy and John Harrington, Jude Gilford, Don Allen, Mark Geihl, Pete Olson, Erin McMillan, Kay Lohman. They had some beautiful days to be out on the refuge. A special thanks goes out to Arlene Furuseth for coordinating the survey.

Volunteers are needed for these positions:
Environmental Education Assistants and Leaders- lead or assist with 25-45 minute activities. Our EE program is year round with our fall activities taking place mid-September to early October. Aquatic **Invasive Species Educators-** must be available some Saturday and Tuesday mornings- Come join the exclusive "A" Team. Work in pairs on a rotating basis throughout summer and early fall. **Wild Wednesday Assistants-** July and August are very busy! We need help with set-up, managing the group and providing individual attention to participants! WW is a one hour summer activity for children 3-7 yrs old. **Fall Festival planning committee members-** assist the staff and Friends in planning this annual family event which takes place September 30. Please contact me if you are interested in being part of the planning team.

The Volunteer Recognition Picnic will be held on Thursday August 24th. It is always a fun evening and one of the few opportunities for all our volunteers to get together and celebrate accomplishments. Details to follow!

Volunteers of the Month: Nancy Brennan was named the March Volunteer of the month for her many hours of detailed work on the herbarium. Ron Jenson received April's honors for coordinating four lunches for volunteer training and events. They were delicious! Both Ken Mattson and Mark Geihl were honored for May for all their time dedicated to wildlife biology – conducting waterfowl surveys, grouse drumming surveys, and water quality monitoring. Their skills were critical in obtaining accurate data during crunch time!

the RV was locked. They hadn't locked the door; the lock mechanism apparently broke when they had shut the door. To get it repaired, someone had recommended Wold's RV in Detroit Lakes. While in town, they decided to visit Tamarac. For them, it was love at first sight.

Jude spent her first 56 years in San Francisco and worked as a marine insurance broker who traveled frequently for business on both coasts. Searching for more meaningful work, she started a money coaching business to help people get out of debt and begin to save. In 2004, she moved to Tucson and continued the business there. She met Don in 2006 where their partnership grew from a personal one to working together in the coaching business. Through business, they became very involved in the community. Jude served on the Board of the Tucson YWCA, and Don served with the Community Justice Boards.

In his former life, Don was a beer distributor and a professional fisherman in Jackson, Wyoming. (The places they visit usually have fishing opportunities!) One of his passions is to instruct people how to fish.



Meet Resident Volunteers Jude Gilford and Don Allen

Don and Jude arrived in May to begin their Tamarac adventure, but this isn't the first time they've been here. At the end of their first summer of RVing in 2013, they found themselves at Zippel Bay State Park near Lake of the Woods. It was a rainy Labor Day weekend, and most campers had departed early. They decided to go for a walk, and when they returned



David Israel mentors a "Nature Nerd Photographer" during a youth photography workshop for teens from the Detroit Lakes Boys and Girls Club.

Upcoming Training Opportunities: The Minnesota Dragonfly Society will be presenting a workshop August 13 from 12:00-5:00 pm at the Discovery Center. This is a great opportunity to learn about these fascinating creatures which are so important to wetlands. Master Naturalist credit is being offered. This is a free workshop. Sign up by calling 218-844-1756.

A Minnesota Master Naturalist Class will be offered here at Tamarac October 16-20! Several of our volunteers are certified master naturalists and some will be teaching part of this course. This course covers the Big Woods, Big Rivers biome. Stayed tuned for more information on this great learning opportunity.

He has presented workshops during his entire adult life. After living 30 years in Jackson, he moved to Arizona to obtain his Master's Degree in Social Work and Substance Abuse Counseling.

Their dream retirement plan was to get rid of their personal belongings, buy an RV, and hit the road. It wasn't easy to let go of things, but now they can't imagine life any other way. They have crossed the country three times, volunteering at parks in Maryland, Maine, and California. They also squeezed in a Habitat for Humanity build in New Mexico.

Don mows the shop grounds, residence areas, and RV pads. He also has been working on various maintenance projects including the re-routing on the Discovery Center Trail. Jude assists with light maintenance including the recycling program and keeping our public restrooms tidy. Every Wednesday morning, you will find her engaging with children and assisting with the very popular Wild Wednesday program. Both host the visitor center on Sunday afternoons.

MOVIES AND ACTIVITIES

Wildlife Excursions: Explore the refuge with a knowledgeable guide. Tours will be offered every Thursday June-August at 10:00 am. Search for wildlife and learn about the cultural and natural history of the refuge on this driving tour. Meet at the Visitor Center.

Wild Wednesdays: 10:00 am June –August. Explore the world of nature with your child during this hour long adventure geared for 3-6 year olds. Meet at the Discovery Center.

Sunday July 23, 2:00 pm
Movie: The Himalayas
Escape to the Himalayas! Born during the ice ages, they form the highest mountain range in the world, and reach across Asia for two thousand miles. Their great beauty may appear cold and forbidding, but the Himalayas are actually rich with a surprising array of plants and animals. Snow leopards, wolves, bears, remarkable monkeys, foxes, spiders, snakes, giant bees, and high-flying birds live here. These are mountains that will take your breath away! 50 min

Sunday July 30, 2:00 pm
Movie: Wolverines-Chasing the Phantom
This film will take you into the secretive world of the largest and least known member of the weasel family to reveal who this dynamic little devil truly is. Hard-wired to endure an environment of scarcity, the wolverine is one of the most efficient and resourceful carnivores on Earth. 55 min.

Sunday August 6, 2:00 pm **Movie: Snowbound- Animals in Winter**
You know it's coming! From the shelter of our homes, snow looks magical, but it's a harsh reality to many animals. Meet some of the most iconic snow animals from across the globe, from the penguins of Antarctica to the bison of Yellowstone to the arctic fox. Others animals include lynx, reindeer, and polar bear. Discover the incredible adaptations and strategies these animals use to survive. 50 min

Saturday August 12, 10:00 am
Flora Frolic
Discover the world of Tamarac plants. Look down on the forest floor and up to the sky. Identify late summer wildflowers on the ground, some shrubs and a few lofty trees of the forest. Learn how they create a unique habitat that is home to a variety of wildlife. Meet at the Old Indian Hiking Trail Head located on Cty Hwy 29 for this 2 hour hike.

Sunday August 13, 12:00-5:00
Dragonfly Workshop presented by the Minnesota Dragonfly Society
Discover the World of Dragonflies! This FREE workshop is a hands-on way to get introduced to the identification of dragonflies and damselflies. Come prepared for the weather, rain or shine! Also bring rubber boots or wading shoes, a lunch, water bottle and whatever else you will need for the day. Nets and field guides will be available for loan. Other supplies provided. This workshop will be conducted indoors and outdoors. Meet at the Discovery Center. Register by calling 218-844-1756.

Sunday August 13, 2:00 pm
Movie: Hummingbirds, Magic in the Air
Hummingbirds take extraordinary to a whole new level. By using cameras able to capture over 500 images a second, the hummingbirds' magical world can finally be seen and appreciated. 55 min.

Saturday August 19, 10:00 am-2:00 pm
Macrophotography Workshop
Capture images of a tiny world from insects to plants to dew drops. Learn the basics, then set out and look at nature in a whole different way! Bring your camera, insect spray, lunch and water. No special equipment needed for this beginner's class. If you have more than one camera, bring the one that you can focus closest with. To view your photos in a larger size, you may bring a laptop or Ipad to download images. Sign up by for this free workshop presented by David Israel by calling 218-844-1756. Meet at the Discovery Center.

Sunday August 20, 2:00
Movie: Disney Nature- Bears
Showcasing a year in the life of a bear family, their journey begins as winter ends. Emerging from hibernation, a mother and cubs face the bitter cold and an exciting but very risky outside world. As-



Kay Lohman surveys Lower Egg Lake for Loons.

tonishing footage captures the fast-moving action and suspense of an endearing family learning to live life to its fullest in the wilds of Alaska. 78 min.

Sunday August 27, 2:00 pm
Movie: Wild Ways
Four lane highways are a necessity to our society, but they can be a death trap for millions of animals that try to cross them. From Yellowstone to the Yukon, to Southern Africa's elephant highways, explore how newly established wildlife corridors may offer a glimmer of hope to endangered species. 55 min.

Sunday September 3, 2:00 pm
Movie: North America- Nowhere to Hide
A world of extreme storms and unpredictable blizzards, this land tests all those who set foot on it. From bunker building prairie dogs to the fastest land animals on the continent, the fight to survive shapes all who dare call this place home. 50 min

Sunday September 10, 2:00 pm
Movie- Great Migrations: Born to Move
From the tiniest butterflies to the largest wildebeest, life itself hinges on these traveler's ability to get up and go. Born to Move spans the globe, revealing four of the most remarkable animal movements: Sperm whales travelling over a million miles in a lifetime; monarch butterflies taking four generations to cross a continent; and wildebeest, every year rising above the gaping jaws of ravenous crocodiles. 55 min.

Sunday September 17, 2:00 pm
Movie: The Animal House
From a small depression in the sand to an elaborate, multi-chambered tunnel- animal structures can be simple or architectural marvels. These structures are sites of great dramas and extraordinary behaviors. From owls to beavers, Animal House provides a fascinating look at the homelife of wildlife. 55 min.

Saturday September 23
Fall Photo Safari 2:00-4:30 pm
Experience autumn on the refuge through the lens of your camera. Visit some unique areas to capture the changing color. Bring a snack, water and your creativity! Led by refuge volunteer guides and members of the Detroit Lakes Photography Club. Meet at the Discovery Center.

**NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS
OF TAMARAC NWR**

Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge
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Refuge Website:
www.fws.gov/refuge/tamarac



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2016 Photo Contest Grand Prize winner: Nature's Drilling Rigs by Jane Eastes