



FALL 2016

# TAMARAC TRACKS

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# FRIENDS OF TAMARAC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

By Vonnie Jacobson, President



As summer winds down, we realize that the Friends of Tamarac have had a very busy summer season, with some members taking on leadership roles. Our environmental

education volunteers have run amazing Wild Wednesday events under the direction of Connie Carlson. Many of our Friends took on the We Fest Clean Up with Fran Mattson leading the charge. A mobile photography program for youth was lead by Barb Habermann. The FOT volunteer workforce has tackled many other projects throughout the summer. To celebrate all of the volunteer efforts, Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge hosted a lively volunteer picnic in August.

Now fall is with us, and our 6th annual fundraiser "A Toast to Tamarac" is scheduled for September 9. It is a grand evening of food, fun, and games. It is designed to fund our mission of connecting children with nature.

Next up is our annual open house, which is free to the public. October 1st is the date for Tamarac's Fall Festival. The central theme this year will be "The Duck Stops Here." It is a great family event with loads of activities for children of all ages. You will find the details

for these events included in this newsletter.

The Friends of Tamarac annual quilt raffle is well under way, and the winner will be announced at the award ceremony for the Photo Contest later in October.

Our Photo Contest that winds down in October produces some simply stunning images taken on Tamarac. The photos will be on display at Tamarac's Fall Festival, and guests will have the opportunity to vote for their favorite.

Also included in this newsletter is a membership envelope. I hope you take advantage of this to become a member or renew your membership in Friends of Tamarac. Friends of Tamarac have been recognized this year by our National Friends organization, our local Chamber of Commerce, and our own Tamarac Wildlife Refuge as an effective, vibrant, and outstanding organization. We hope you will join us.



**Become a Friend**  
**Membership: \$20**  
**Patron: \$100**  
**Steward: \$250**  
**Life Member: \$500**



## Friends of Tamarac NWR

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 (218) 844-1767

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

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2016  
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Vonnie Jacobson, Fran Mattson, Linda Brockmann, Justine Boots, Kelly Blackledge, Nancy Brennan, Janice Bengston, Layout and design by Angie Pfaff (Loud Media)

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# Duck Stamps and Habitat Conservation



By Neil Powers, Tamarac Refuge Manager

but for different reasons and have enjoyed enough waterfowl openers to understand the connection of habitat and conservation to spending an enjoyable day in the marsh.

Minnesota is blessed with incredible wetland resources that attract and produce thousands of ducks and geese to the annual fall migration. Habitat is the key factor to any critter's survival, and waterfowl hunting enthusiasts have been at the epicenter of protecting habitat since the first Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp) was issued and required for hunting in 1934.

Funding raised through the sale of Duck Stamps is used to purchase National Wildlife Refuges, Waterfowl Production Areas, and conservation easements that protect critical

habitats for waterfowl, grassland birds, and water birds along with a whole host of other species. Refuges and Wetland Management Districts in Minnesota have acquired nearly 9,000 acres of habitat in the past three years with acquisitions in the Tamarac Wetland Management District accounting for nearly 800 acres.

The Duck Stamp has been heralded as one of the most successful conservation programs. So whether you're a waterfowl hunting enthusiast or a fan of elegant Monarch butterflies, the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp is an easy way to directly support wildlife.

The start of the waterfowl season is a significant event at our house. Planning begins for my sons in February (no exaggeration) with talk of places to hunt and strategies that will hopefully prove successful. I share their enthusiasm

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## FALL IS FRIENDS OF TAMARAC MEMBERSHIP TIME!

Please renew your membership now, or if you aren't a member this is the perfect time to join. To make it easy we have enclosed a membership envelope. You may also use this form to update your mailing or email address. The membership year runs from October 1<sup>st</sup> to September 31<sup>st</sup>.

Your membership dues fund this newsletter, environmental education activities for children, nature hikes, photography programs, Wild Wednesdays, Fall Festival and many other Friends activities. The programs would not happen without the support of Friends like you! Membership dues are only \$20.00, but please consider adding to your check so that we can add to our programs. Thank you.



Thanks to all the  
***volunteers***  
that helped with the  
WE Fest Clean Up  
fundraiser!

The Tamarac quilt  
**"Aspen Dreams"**

created by Janet Bridgers is on display in the Washington Square Mall. Raffle tickets are available for \$1.00 each at White Drug or call (505) 433-9565. The drawing will be October 16<sup>th</sup> at the Washington Square Mall where the Tamarac Photo Contest winners will be announced. Need not be present to win. The proceeds will be used for environmental education to connect children with nature.



## *Waterfowl on the Move*

By James Kawlewski, Park Ranger Technician

As autumn nears, local waterfowl like the blue-winged teal, wood duck, and hooded merganser begin their annual flight south.

Blue-winged teal are the most abundant native duck in North America. Look for them in early autumn because they are among the first to migrate south. Abundant wild rice makes up most of their fall diet.

The wood duck is a colorful sight in a local beaver pond or perched upon a tree. They begin their migration shortly after blue-winged teal. Insects and duckweed are part of their fall diet but they particularly enjoy red oak acorns. Their legs are near the center of their body making them agile on the ground when searching for acorns on forest floor. Wood ducks also have highly developed toes and claws allow them to grasp and perch on tree branches.

Hooded mergansers migrate late in the season, sometimes right before winter ice. They may migrate north in some cases to spend the winter on the great lakes. A serrated bill and eyes capable of seeing underwater make them effective while diving for foods like fish, crayfish, and amphibians.

Tamarac offers thousands of acres of habitat for migrating waterfowl. A portion is open for duck hunting. Other areas offer a quiet place resting and feeding along the migration route.

# DEWEY'S DUCK CAMP

By Tom Fritz



Before Tamarac became a waterfowl refuge, a number of duck camps were inside the present boundaries. Many were small and humble, but a few of them belonged to the very wealthy. The one common thread is that little is known about them. A half dozen of us high school buddies hunted the refuge lakes and heard a few bits and pieces about the old duck camps, but most of our questions did not have answers. So, I've tried to keep my ear to the ground to pick up any information on these camps. When a life-long friend of my family just happened to start telling a story of his hunting at a Tamarac Lake Camp in 1932, he had my full attention.

Forest Pfeifer graduated from Detroit Lakes High School with the great class of 1932. Many of that class stayed in Detroit Lakes, raised fine families, and became successful businessmen and good citizens. Forest, without a definite life plan, started as a cook in a downtown cafe. After work each evening, he'd walk out the door and look at the sky to see if it were cloudy and windy. If so, he'd go home, grab his shotgun, a box of shells and a blanket, and head out to Dewey Dietlein's Duck Camp. Years later, after hearing Forest's stories and retelling them time and again, I decided to see what I could find about this Dewey Dietlein.

After a number searches in my 1929 plat book, I found a Phillip Dietlein on Tama-

rac Lake. I had been looking for Dewey and Debtline (as it is pronounced), not the Phillip Dietlein the property was registered under. Further research had him born on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1880, in Perham Township. His parents were born in Germany, so they named him Phillip instead of Pat. The Record of Becker County, December 15, 2013, retold the story of the March 22, 1891 fire that burned down a whole block of Washington Avenue in Detroit Lakes. Some of the businesses destroyed in that fire included First National Bank, Blanding & Smith & Co., Teague's Drug Store, and A. Dietlein's Saloon. The family probably moved to Detroit Lakes while Dewey was a youngster.

Deed records show that Dewey purchased 5.5 acres on Tamarac Lake for \$75.00 on August 29, 1924 from the Wadena Realty Co. That property today is about where the landing is on the northeast side of the dike on Tamarac Lake.

Forest told of his first hunt at Dewey's Camp. Unfortunately, the feisty little guy had run low on shells. As they were all geared up and ready to go out the door, Dewey asked to see that box of shells Forest had in hand. Dewey set it on the table, opened it up, and took five shells out. Then he took another five shells. Forest interrupted saying, "I'm not going to have any shells!" Dewey proceeded to take 5 more shells out and said "If you can't shoot 15 ducks with 10 shells, you shouldn't even be out here!" That was Forest's welcome to Dewey's Camp. After that, Forest only brought a half box of shells into Dewey's Cabin and smuggled the other shells. [1]

Dewey's clients were primarily employees of a large insurance company in Minneapolis. Four or

five insurance men would come in, hunt a few days, and then another group from the same office would follow. It sounded like the whole office rotated through. Some could make multiple trips. They loved Dewey. He was their leader. In their corporate world, he was the "Chairman of the Board" of the duck camp. Guys fresh back from the camp would have to fill in office on the hunt and "How was Dewey?" With 15 per day limits, there had to be a lot of ducks taken back to the Twin Cities.

Part II: To be continued in the winter edition of the Tamarac Tracks.

[1] 15 ducks? When I heard that, I thought this was a camp of outlaws. But years ago I obtained a copy of the 1932 Minnesota Hunting Regulations from Wilbur Joy, and sure enough, the limit was 15! After the 1934 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act, the daily duck limits were greatly reduced to 6 or 4 from 15. I wonder how it affected business at Dewey's camp. The boys were returning home with 8 ducks instead of the 30. The limit is currently six, four of which may be mallards.



# The Best Student Fieldtrip

By Cecilia Bringer

I believe Tamarac Refuge is the best place to visit on a fieldtrip with my students for several reasons. The quality of the Environmental Education program at Tamarac is exceptional. Kindergarten and third grade students from area schools visit Tamarac three times a year: once in the fall, winter and spring. Each experience scaffolds upon the previous one, strengthening students' knowledge of and connection to nature. Students learn through a series of stations that deliver curriculum through carefully planned age-appropriate activities. Learning objectives are aligned to the MN State Standards and local curriculums. Students complete the majority of these experiences outdoors, immersed in the natural environment of Tamarac.

This natural environment close to home is another reason Tamarac is the best place for a field trip. The learning that takes place at Tamarac cannot happen in a classroom inside a school. Student learning is heightened and enhanced through all five senses while learning about the wonder that exists right in their backyard! Hopefully, students will keep coming back to Tamarac and will grow up valuing and preserving the environment.

The Discovery Center is a wonderful addition to the Environmental Education Program. Before it was built, staff, volunteers and students endured challenges and cancellations due to the weather and a lack of adequate facilities. Now, there is a place

to come to get out of bad weather. There is a place to eat lunch and use proper restroom facilities. Because of the Discovery Center, the Environmental Education Program can continue through any kind of weather, and it provides a suitable space specifically for school groups.

Finally, I believe Tamarac is the best place for a field trip because each child creates personal memories that instill an appreciation of the natural environment. Here are some of my students' "favorites of Tamarac" from our visit last spring. "My favorite part about visiting Tamarac is learning about frog sounds." "My favorite part about visiting Tamarac is taking pictures of the swans." "My favorite part about

visiting Tamarac is picking off ticks!"

I would like to sincerely thank the Friends of Tamarac, all of the volunteers and the refuge staff, who donate their time and talents to deliver this high quality educational experience to the children of this area. Our kids are truly blessed to have this program to instill in them a LIFELONG love of nature, and they will ultimately carry this personal connection with them beyond the boundaries of Tamarac.



# THE DUCK STAMP

By Janice Bengtson, Tamarac Park Ranger

The “Duck Stamp” was originally created in 1934 under the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. In signing this act, one of the first and most successful of conservation programs in this nation’s history was begun.

This Act mandates that all waterfowl hunters 16 years of age or older purchase a duck stamp. Proceeds from sales are used to purchase wetlands and grassland habitats for inclusion in the National Wildlife Refuge System creating habitat for migratory birds.

In the 82 years since its creation, the Federal Duck Stamp has collected over \$800 million for the acquisition of more than 5.7 million acres of land. More than 300 national wildlife refuges were created or have been expanded using duck stamp dollars. In addition to wa-

terfowl, numerous fish, amphibian, reptile, and mammal species that rely on these wetland and grassland habitats have prospered. Among the non-game bird groups that have directly benefited from Stamp revenues include grebes, bitterns, terns, rails, shorebirds, raptors and many songbird species. Plus, an estimated one-third of this country’s officially endangered and threatened species find food or shelter in National Wildlife Refuges established through stamp funds.

Many of the nation’s most popular wildlife watching and birding destinations are refuges that have grown as a direct result of revenues collected through the stamp. Some of these include Aransas and Santa Ana in Texas, Ding Darling in Florida, Bosque del Apache in New Mexico and Great Dismal Swamp in North Carolina.

But what about here in your own back yard? Did you know that Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge was 98% funded with stamp funds? Other area refuges that benefited from the program include Hamden Slough near Audubon, Agassiz near Thief River Falls and Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge near St. Cloud. Today, for every dollar you spend on Federal Duck Stamps, ninety-eight cents go directly to purchase vital habitat.

Fortunately, Duck Stamps aren’t just for hunters! All citizens can purchase the stamp. It is a way for you to do your part to permanently conserve wildlife habitat for future generations. Though still referred to as the “Duck Stamp,” its name was formally changed in 1977 to the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp to reflect its growing value as a conservation tool.



# Meet Resident Volunteer Wayne Beckett



Wayne arrived in late July and has been working as a maintenance assistant. He has been busy keeping the Visitor Center, Discovery Center, and shop grounds looking awesome. He has also assisted with mowing our public accesses and has spent a significant amount of time doing storm clean-up on trails and roads.

Wayne grew up on a farm outside of St. Joseph, MO. After high school he was in the Navy for 4 years; 3 of those living in Spain where he worked as an aircraft structural mechanic on C 130 Hercules airplanes. During the following years, his work took him into many areas of construction from rough carpentry to trim and siding, to interior work, to cabinetry. He even helped construct skyscrapers in downtown Kansas City. He is a skilled heavy equipment operator, and he has worked in the heating and air conditioning field and has done electrical work as well. His most recent job was working for a contracting company that

maintained railroad tracks for all the major railroads. This job took him all over the country.

Wayne has three children (two daughters and a son) who reside in Kansas and Arkansas and five grandchildren. His partner Jackie and their miniature pinscher Baby are his traveling companions. Wayne and Jackie enjoy fishing and being in the outdoors. Here they enjoy wildlife watching, including the hungry hummingbirds just outside their camper. Life on the road suits them. Wayne's future plans include a drive down the entire west coast with a stop to see the Giant Redwoods, a bucket list item.

This is Wayne's first volunteer assignment with the Fish and Wildlife Service. Previously he was a maintenance assistant for the Army Corps of Engineers at Gull Lake near Brainerd. We are fortunate to have a volunteer with so many skills!

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## Mattson Named VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Ken Mattson began volunteering in 2008. Since that time, he has taken on many roles. He is quite skilled with a trash grabber and has been a regular participant at our Spring Clean-up Day. Anytime he can be near or on the water, he's there to assist with water quality monitoring, conducting loon, grebe and tern surveys, and educating local anglers about invasives. Ken is just as happy in the woods conducting grouse drumming surveys or maintaining a trail. This past summer, he attended two intense training courses and became certified in motorboat operation and chainsaw operation. Recently Ken logged in many hours clearing downed trees on trails and roads due to the impact of several severe storms. Ken is also a great event host as he welcomes visitors, parks cars or grills hotdogs. In 2016, he donated over 250 hours and has accumulated over 1000 hours. He is a great steward of the refuge, making it a better place for wildlife and people. Congratulations Ken!



# A Volunteer Roundup!

This year, volunteers attended a western-themed dinner to celebrate their accomplishments of 2016. As volunteers walked the pathway, they were thanked by many “wild west” critters for taking care of their home. The center was decorated with red and white gingham tablecloths, bandanas, and sunflowers in canning jars tied with baling twine. Many attendees wore their cowgirl and cowboy best. A hearty tasty meal was served up by Spanky’s. Sixty six volunteers, staff and family attended. Awards were presented to those volunteers who had reached key milestones. Art Bakker and Dave Schneider received the Assistant Regional Director’s Award for 500 hours. Luverne Ehnert, Cathie Ferguson, Denise Warweg, Mark Culley, Deb Culley, and Ken Mattson all received the Regional Director’s Award for 1000 hours of service. A special award, The Unsung Hero Award, was presented to Cathie Ferguson for her leadership of the AIS Education program and for her work in support of the Environmental Education program. To conclude the event, 2015 volunteer of the Year, Connie Carlson, presented this year’s award to Ken Mattson.

In 2016, Tamarac’s 186 volunteers contributed over 8155 hours of service in various areas including maintenance, wildlife and habitat projects, public programs and events, environmental education, cultural resources and more. Nationwide nearly 42,000 volunteers contribute in excess of 1.5 million hours completing more than 20% of the work conducted annually on national wildlife refuges. If you are interested in sharing your time and talents in support of conservation, contact volunteer coordinator, Janice Bengtson at [Janice Bengtson](mailto:Janice.Bengtson@fws.gov) at [Janice Bengtson@fws.gov](mailto:Janice.Bengtson@fws.gov) or 218-844-1756.

## 25 HOURS

Larry Aarestad  
Dean Kragerud  
Les Perry  
Ed Warweg  
David Israel

## 50 HOURS

Chuck Becker (25, 50)  
Nancy Henke  
Lowell Huwe (25, 50)  
Tim Kessler  
Kay Lohman (25, 50)  
Larry Michelson (25, 50)  
Wally Sizer

## 100 HOURS

Margaret Kragerud (50,100)  
Steve Midthune  
Carol Nord  
Dave McKenna (25,50)

## 200 HOURS

Bob Brockmann  
Becky Aarestad  
James Kawlewski  
Jim Rakness  
Wayne Beckett

## 300 HOURS

Cheryl Hall-Kippen  
Howard Lohman  
Janet Bridgers (200,300)  
Ray Vlasak

## 400 HOURS

Jim DuBay

## 500 HOURS ASST REGIONAL DIRECTOR’S AWARD

Art Bakker  
Dave Schneider

## 700 HOURS

Mark Geihl (600,700)

## 800 HOURS

John Hovdenes

## 900 HOURS

Justine Boots

## 1000 HOURS REGIONAL DIRECTOR’S AWARD

Luverne Ehnert (900)  
Cathie Ferguson (800,900)  
Denise Warweg(700,800,900)  
Ken Mattson (800,900)  
Mark Culley (800,900)  
Deb Culley (800,900)

## 2000 HOURS

Nancy Brennan  
Connie Carlson  
Vonnice Jacobson

## 2016 VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH:

Nancy Brennan  
Betty Gunderson  
Cathie Ferguson  
Jim DuBay  
Ron Jenson  
Mark Geihl  
Lois Brantner  
Arlene Furuseth

## NATIONAL RECREATION PASS AWARD ACCUMULATED 250 HOURS:

Janet Bridgers  
Arlene Furuseth  
Howard Lohman

## DONATED 250 HOURS IN 2016:

Connie Carlson  
Vonnice Jacobson  
Ron Jenson  
Denise Warweg  
Ken Mattson  
Mark Culley  
Deb Culley  
Wayne Beckett

# Duck Hunting Memories

By Mark Geihl

I have been enjoying duck hunting on Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge for 45 years. My favorite duck hunting spot is Tamarac Lake.

One of my memorable adventures on Tamarac Lake is a duck hunt where everything went right for a while, then everything went wrong. We set off before sunrise from the east access. My hunting partners were Bob and Matt Horner and, of course, my yellow lab Oscar. We set up our decoys near a small island. I remember Bob saying, "What a beautiful sunrise; it is just like a Terry Redlin painting." Once the decoys were out, the ducks started piling in. It wasn't too

long and we had our limit of ducks.

So it was time to pick up our decoys. This is when everything started to go wrong. We had failed to notice the change in the weather. A really strong northwest wind was blowing across the lake. As we struggled to pick up the decoys, an oar lock broke. So I thought, no big deal, we will start up the motor. It wouldn't start. We tried to get our decoys with one oar and the push pole; then the other oar lock broke. Bob's brand new Ducks Unlimited hat blew off, and when he lunged for it, he nearly tipped the boat. Finally I said, "Let's not take any more chances. Let's let the

wind blow us across to the other shore." Once we reached the south shore of the lake we had a long walk in our waders back to the public access.

This is just one of many adventures on the refuge. I look forward to making more duck hunting memories this fall.



# MOVIES AND ACTIVITIES

## Sunday Movies 2:00 pm

**September 18:** The Himalayas

**September 25:** The Original Duckumentary

**October 2:** The Private Life of Deer

**October 9:** Birds of the Gods

## Tamarac Discovery Center

Bring a camera or phone or borrow one of ours. We'll share tips on how to take great nature pictures that tell a story. You'll also create a photo album to take home. All ages are welcome. An optional Photo Safari will follow 2:00-4:30pm.

## Saturday September 17, 2:00-4:30 pm

### Fall Photo Safari

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.

## Saturday, September 24, 9:00 am-3:00 pm

### National Public Lands Day- Save the Seedlings,

### Collect Native Seeds!

Staff and volunteers planted over 15,000 pine trees on the refuge to restore acres of red, white & jack pine habitat. We need your help to protect the trees from deer browse. Wear long pants, sturdy shoes, and bring water for a day in the field. Bring a lunch and stay for the day! Join our fun crew to learn about pine and prairie habitat, bud capping trees, and collecting native seeds at Tamarac. Meet at the Visitor Center.

## Saturday October 1, 10:00- 3:00 pm

### Annual Fall Festival – The Duck Stops Here!

Spend a beautiful day on the refuge and celebrate the Duck Stamp. Find out why they're not just for ducks! There will be children's activity trail, puppet shows, duck calling demonstration, annual photo contest exhibit, guided tours and more! Lunch will be available for sale by the Friends of Tamarac

## Saturday, October 8, 12:00-4:00 p.m.

### Lichen Workshop

### Tamarac Discovery Center

Join Dr. Theodore Esslinger, retired professor of the NDSU Department of Biological Sciences, as he shares his passion for lichens. After an introduction to the biology of lichens, we'll explore the ecology and identification in the field. You'll be amazed by the secret life of this partnership of fungus and algae. Dress for the weather, bring water and a snack. For more information call Tamarac Refuge at 218-847-2641.

## Saturday, October 9 – 1:00 - 2:00 pm

### Fall Family Hike

Kick through the leaves and enjoy nature's beauty on a one-hour easy hike through the forest with a Park Ranger. Learn about the ecology of the forest and win prizes using what you've learned. Wear long pants, sturdy shoes, and receive a free water bottle. Backpacks are available for young naturalists who participate. We'll finish up in time for the Sunday 2:00pm movie. Meet at the Visitor Center.

## National Wildlife Refuge Week

### October 10-16.

Visit the Detroit Lakes Washington Square Mall to see all the Photo Contest entries on display. Cast your vote for People's Choice! You'll also be able to purchase a chance on the beautiful wildlife quilt that the Friends of Tamarac are offering as a raffle fundraiser. Photo Contest Awards presentation on Sunday October 16 at 2:00 pm at the mall.



To all the generous volunteers and businesses that donated time and treasure to make

## "A TOAST TO TAMARAC"

a great success.

This is our 6<sup>th</sup> annual fundraiser to support our mission of connecting children with nature. The Friends of Tamarac board and refuge staff truly appreciate your support!

**NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS  
OF TAMARAC NWR**

Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge  
35704 County Highway 26  
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*Friends of Tamarac NWR's mission is to facilitate activities and programs that interpret, protect and restore the natural and cultural resources of Tamarac Wildlife Refuge.*

Refuge Website:  
[www.fws.gov/refuge/tamarac](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/tamarac)



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*Stretching by Dale Rehder*