

# Tamarac Tracks

FRIENDS OF TAMARAC NATIONAL Wildlife Refuge



*The beautiful forests at Tamarac are especially vibrant and glorious in the fall. Tamarac has a number of driving trails as well has hiking trails to view the fall colors. Photo by Robb Larson*

## TAMARAC IS BACK!

After two years of our pandemic slow down, Tamarac is on the go again and is just finishing up a very busy and active spring and summer season. Thousands of children and their teachers from area schools spent whole days learning about everything from birds, lake critters, honeybees (did you know that bees travel 500 miles in their lifetime?), orienteering, hiking and even journaling and sketching. Dozens of "Friends of Tamarac" volunteers took part in teaching. Hundreds of visitors hiked, fished, and enjoyed the wilderness habitat. Now we are moving into many exciting events for the fall. See insert for details.

- Toast To Tamarac at Richwood September 9
- Fall Festival September 25
- Red Carpet Movie Premier October 13 at the Fargo Theater



# A LASTING LEGACY

## President Bill Henke



conjunction with West Central Initiative in Fergus Falls. It is my sincere hope that you our supporters, members and friends will consider this fund an opportunity to pass on a heritage to future generations who will hold a reverence for living in harmony with nature. Stay tuned as we initiate the

fund's campaign and provide supportive materials.

Thank  
you so  
much!



**A Lasting Legacy!** I suspect that many if not all of us have pondered what our legacy to future generations might look like. I know that I saw many awe-inspiring examples this past spring and summer at our beloved Tamarac. I witnessed it as the Friends of Tamarac NWR renewed its commitment to our partner schools in providing quality outdoor education to children of various ages and capabilities. I saw determination to make a difference as the board committed to establishing and sustaining the position of an environmental education coordinator, and in the passion that Marnie Larsen brings to that role. I noted legacy building in the work of our wonderful volunteers and staff that taught countless eager and excited youth and rallied to help support those that needed additional aid. There are a myriad of other fine examples.

Bearing this in mind, the Friends chose "A Lasting Legacy" as the name for our new endowment/agency fund. It is now fully established in

### Friends of Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge, Inc.

35704 County Hwy 26, Rochert MN 56578

(218)844-1767

Website: [www.tamaracfriends.org](http://www.tamaracfriends.org)

Email: [info@tamaracfriends.org](mailto:info@tamaracfriends.org)

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### Refuge Advisors to the Board:

Kent Sundseth, Tamarac Refuge Manager 218-844-1752  
Kelly Blackledge, Tamarac Visitors Center 218-844-1757  
Nancy Fischer, FoT Office Manager: [nancy.fischer@tamaracfriends.org](mailto:nancy.fischer@tamaracfriends.org)  
Mary Amundson, Tamarac Tracks Editor: [mlamundson5@gmail.com](mailto:mlamundson5@gmail.com)





## A Meaningful Legacy of Wildlife Resources



Kent Sundseth

### Kent Sundseth, Refuge Manager

Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge was established nearly 85 years ago. It took several decades to secure the 42,000 acres we all cherish today. Through thoughtful habitat management and careful planning for public use that puts wildlife first, the Refuge will continue to be a place where people can enjoy a legacy of healthy lands and waters with diverse wildlife they support. Over time we have recognized that fulfilling a meaningful legacy of wildlife resources for future generations would require working beyond the Refuge borders.

Through our **Partners for Fish and Wildlife** program, the US Fish and Wildlife Service works with private landowners to restore and enhance habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife. We also acquire perpetual

conservation easements on private lands to ensure the legacy of wildlife will be here forever. Last month we welcomed a new Private Lands Biologist to our staff at Tamarac Refuge. **Darren Wheeling** comes to us with more than a decade of experience in wetland management and habitat restoration in North Dakota and the Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District. He is already busy working with private landowners to restore drained wetlands, reconstruct prairie habitat, and connect with livestock producers on grazing plans that benefit wildlife as well as cattle. His recently restructured work area includes nine counties in northwest and north central Minnesota. Our wildlife legacy continues with Darren's work.



Biologist Darren Wheeling

## Tamarac's Environmental Education Program...A legacy of Conservation...Park Rangers Kelly Blackledge and James Kawlewski



Kelly Blackledge

Staff and volunteers of Tamarac's education program are leaving a legacy as they share their passion for conservation to a younger generation. As more students experience meaningful outdoor programs through their school years, a new wave of young people graduate as future stewards. The education program has been in place for over 15 years and continues to grow. This program is not just a one time visit to the refuge. Instead, students from 10 local school districts participate in all day programming 3 times per year in the fall, winter and spring. They also return at different grades 2, 3 or sometimes 4 grade levels during their time in K-12 schools. Research indicates that this expanded contact in outdoor programming creates a more meaningful connection to nature. While not many will actually become biologists or refuge managers, they all in some way will be making decisions about our public lands and wild spaces in the future. The legacy goes beyond the children. The volunteers delivering these programs are passionate about educating our youth and it gives them a deeper purpose that they are leaving a legacy of future conservation stewards. You are invited to be a part of this important program by becoming an education volunteer.



James Kawlewski

A **fall orientation** will be held at the refuge on September 13<sup>th</sup>. Contact the refuge to learn more – [tamarac@fws.gov](mailto:tamarac@fws.gov) or 218-847-2641





# Tamarac Legacy Fund...

## A LASTING LEGACY

Ensure the future of Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge for your children and grandchildren and beyond. Please help us preserve this natural wonderland. Help us Build an endowment fund that benefits FOT activities and programs.



Summer joy

### Its All About the Kids...

Your generous gifts each year ensure the legacy of this land of magic, this natural wonderland for our friends and families and our communities for years to come. The Friends of Tamarac is grateful for your giving which allows not only the maintenance and continued enrichment of this beautiful land and its inhabitants, but also funds the environmental education and conservation of this land.

We now have another great source for your gifts. Its called Lasting Legacy Endowment Fund. It provides a great option for special donations, tax advantaged giving, or planned gifts in wills or estates. Together we can leave a legacy for our children and

all nature lovers. For more information please contact our Friends of Tamarac members:

**Jim Snyder, Chair**  
jameshenrysnyder@gmail.com  
218-289-2096

**Tom LaBarre**  
trlabarre@gmail.com  
612-386-0121

**Don Blanding**  
cdblinding@msn.com  
612-201-6793

**Bill Henke**  
wchenke1@gmail.com  
218-234-3517

**Janet Green**  
janetgreen@arvig.net  
218-850-2080



Students document observations in nature. The quiet time helps them connect to nature with creative writing, poems or songs.



Students identify and document aquatic species in a tub of collected



Tamarac's education program incorporates activities that address graduation standards and uses multiple tools



Detroit Lakes students in the Summer Sail program experienced a whole day of outdoor activities





# Volunteers Return to Tamarac!

## Janice Bengtson, Park Ranger

It is so awesome to have volunteers back on the refuge doing great things for wildlife and visitors. Volunteers have been busy in all areas including biology, maintenance, environmental education, visitor services and Friends of Tamarac activities. Since May volunteers have contributed over 2500 hours.



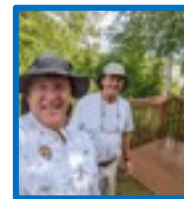
Janice Bengtson



Wild Wednesday team members include Deniser Warweg, Coordinator, Jane Kunz, Val Alland, Mari Bell, and Connie Carlson

**The Wild Wednesday Team** has been presenting two 1-hour long programs for preschool children each Wednesday. The Wild Wednesday program is coordinated by Denise Warweg and continues through August. Team members include Mari Bell, Val Alland, Shirley Strand, Mike Becraft, Janet Bridgers, Jane Kunz, Connie Carlson, Tony Mcleod, and Kiana Moon. This group is a creative bunch, putting in many hours of prep and presentation time to make it a memorable experience for both children and parents.

**The Maintenance Team** has been busy mowing the public accesses and recreation sites keeping them safe and inviting for visitors. Other projects include painting information kiosks, building and painting picnic tables, power washing viewing decks and completing landscape work around the visitor center. Also, kudos to the North Country Trail volunteers including Jim and Jeri Rakness, Karen Stenberg, Fran and Ken Mattson for working so hard to clear the trail after several severe storms blew through. And we can't forget the pollinator gardeners. Thanks to Diane & Dan Kuehne, Leslie Holen, Jerry Fredine and Jeanine Ehnert for keeping the visitor center gardens looking good.



Paul Nistler and Lee Wagners power wash overlooks



Jim Rakness mows on the North Country Trail Photo by Karen Stenberg



Craig Anderson paints a kiosk

**The Visitor Services Team** welcomes and orients visitors. They are unsung heroes!



John Hovdenes and Del Bergseth (center) co-lead a history tour.

Visitor center hosts play such an important role as they may be the only Fish and Wildlife Service representative visitors will encounter. They are that very important first impression! Cheers to our hosts: Del Bergseth, Lois Brantner, Margaret Kragerud, Claudine Anderson, Mary Amundson, Carol Nord, Sandi and John Wicklund, Pam Ludwig, SueBraun, Fran Mattson, Karla Nistler, Diane Kuehne, Connie Carlson, Justine Boots and Denise Warweg.



*Tyson Kahler has summer school students listen to a bird call on their birding hike.*



*Dave Friedl assists a student in search of aquatic invertebrates.*

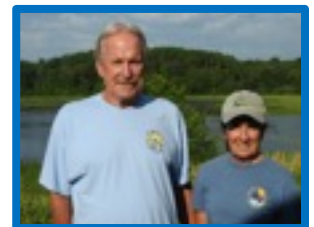
**Our Environmental Education Team** had a brief break after a busy spring and jumped back in to cover four days of summer school day camp during July. Students of the Detroit Lakes Summer Sail program learned about insects, aquatic invertebrates, habitats, trees, birds and more. Twenty-one volunteers donated their time.

**The Wildlife & Habitat Team** conducted summer loon, grebe and tern surveys, and has assisted with water quality monitoring and water level management. Thanks to our wildlife and habitat team of Chuck Becker, Ken Mattson, Mark Geihl, Larry Anderson, Larry Michelson, and Art Bakker. Also cheers to all who participated in the loon survey: Ken and Fran Mattson, Pete Olson, Art Bakker, Chuck Becker, Arlene and Steve Furuseth, Gary and Paula Christensen, Sue and Mark Geihl, Sandi Wicklund, Charles Leitheiser, Sel Jenkins, Emily Lehr, Steve Midthune, Tyson Kahler, Dan Thomby, Pam and Larry Michelson, Cora Faster, and Tony Mcleod.

**Resident Volunteers** John and Sandi Wicklund began their assignment in May. They host the visitor center on the weekends, take care of the center grounds, and keep the restrooms tidy at Chippewa Picnic Area and Pine Lake parking area. Sandi also presents interpretive programs including Saturday's "Critter Tales." The Wicklunds come with plenty of experience having volunteered at state parks, national forests and national wildlife refuges including Arapaho NWR in CO, Tetlin NWR in AK, Balcones Canyonland NWR in TX and Wallkill NWR in NJ. Steve and Louise Sebastian arrived in early July. They take care of the groundskeeping at the entrance areas, historical sites, lake accesses and public use areas. Steve and Louise have volunteered at several U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service hatcheries and refuges throughout the country including Harris Neck NWR in GA, Carson National Fish Hatchery in WA, and Dwight D. Eisenhower National Fish Hatchery in VT.



*John & Sandi Wicklund*



*Steve & Louise Sebastian*



*Kiana Moon*

Kiana Moon has been participating in the Wild Wednesday program and Environmental Education since she started school. "What I remember most about Wild Wednesday is all the fun activities and things I got to do with amazing people...my favorite EE class this year was looking for water creatures we found with nets and learning about them....I'd love to give back to Tamarac in the future with donating and volunteering". Kiana is 11 years old and a valued Friends of Tamarac volunteer.





## Rhythms of Refuge Movie Premier...

a Red Carpet event at the Fargo Theater on Thursday, October 13.



Photographer Chris Walker scopes out some action shots.

During National Wildlife Refuge Week we will be reaching out to the Fargo-Moorhead area with an introduction to the refuge.

**Rhythms of Refuge** is a cinematic seasonal journey through Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge. In this film, photographer Chris Walker takes you to the most intimate spaces of the refuge one season at a time. Photographer Jared Eischen looks at the habitat from a new perspective. Find your bliss in this visual experience into the wilds of one of the most diverse ecosystems of Northern Minnesota. From the awe inspiring colors of fall to the crisp cold winter lakes and the

symphony of spring, you'll be surprised by the seasonal rhythms that nature provides for wildlife and people. Invite a friend. This free event is sponsored by Friends of Tamarac, Minnesota State University Moorhead, and hosted at the Fargo Theater. You'll see photography display, a raffle and refuge information will be available. **SAVE THE DATE!**



### All About Monarch Butterflies...Mari

Bell, Friends of Tamarac Volunteer

A lucky group of Detroit Lakes students watched with awe as a hungry Monarch caterpillar was spotted on a partly eaten milkweed leaf at the Discovery Center. They watched a time lapse video of metamorphosis, nature's great miracle. They learned that 100 to 200 million monarchs migrate to Mexico each September. The Monarch was just placed on the endangered species list and needs You can help by growing milkweed which is the only plant they eat.



Mari Bell

### The Visitors Center

Lois Branter orients visitors on the large refuge map on a wall in the Visitors Center. The Visitor Center is open mid-May through mid-October 8am to 4 pm weekdays and 10 to 5 on weekends.

Check out the **Gift Shop** when you're there. Gifts galore from books to stuffed animals to shirts and mittens made from wool sweaters.



Lois Branter

Tamarac Tracks is a newsletter of the Friends of Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge.

Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge

35704 County Hwy 26

Rochert MN 56578

<https://tamaracfriends.org>

**218-844-1767**

**Mission:** Support Tamarac Wildlife Refuge through education, conservation, and advocacy to provide the foundation for a community bond that values the outdoors and the natural environment.

**Website** for Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge: [www.fws.gov/refuge/tamarac/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/tamarac/)



Tamarac Refuge provides mature forests that host nesting cavities, along with nearby quality wetlands. The wood duck is a common sight in this ideal habitat. In the fall these birds will head to southern gulf states for the winter. Listen for the winnowing call or whistle of the wood duck as it flies. *Photo by Robb Larson*



*Photo by Robb Larson*

