

Center Attracts New Animals

Every now and then a black bear is spotted drinking from the creek, or a Red-tailed Hawk is seen flying from a perch by the road. These sightings are rare, however, and the animals are best viewed at a great distance, and are certainly never touched. A couple of very special donations to the nature center are about to change that. Several years ago, a black bear was brought down by a hunter in the Nestucca River watershed within the Siuslaw National Forest. While the bear met an unlucky end, its beautiful pelt has been in Wendell Larrew's family ever since. This year, Larrew generously offered it to the nature center for display. It is already hanging in the nature information center, and visitors may even touch the bear's fur.

Another animal that arrived at the center comes from a deadly run-in with a car about 12 years ago. The regal Red-tailed Hawk is now available for close inspection (but no touching this one, please). He had previously graced the library of Ninety-One Grade School, and still looks like he could fly away at any second.

Yet another interesting specimen that was collected just outside of Camp, right

Drift Creek Nature Center

is under the guidance of the Drift Creek Camp board of Directors.

DCNC committee members are: Mary Jane Eby, Bruce Flaming, John and Louise Gingerich, Tony and Brenda Kauffman, Mervin Kropf, Glen Oesch, Ken Snyder, Jon Yoder and Anna Williams.

📄 To learn more, visit us online at driftcreeknaturecenter.org



Red-tailed Hawk donated by Craig Gingerich

alongside the Trail to the Giants, is the skull of a complete elk skeleton. The skeleton appears to have been cleaned well by other animals before it was found, and Tony Kauffman had the foresight to retrieve the skull for the nature center. It will be further cleaned and sealed and put on display soon.

So why are we excited to have these dead creatures around the center? These animals are important learning tools, and upon close examination, they open up a world of discovery to visitors. By observing an animal's features such as coloring, claws or talons, teeth, and jaw structure, we can deduct clues to the animal's diet, specially developed senses, strength of bite, natural defenses and more.



Read the story about DCNC featured by the Mennonite Creation Care Network!
www.mennocreationcare.org/Church_Agencies

Meet the Riverkeeper

John Gingerich

On Saturday, March 22, the DCNC advisory board and guests had a very special opportunity to meet a young man whose footprints grace the Drift Creek Watershed. He has walked the entire stretch of Drift Creek, from the suspension bridge at Drift Creek Falls to the outlet in the Siletz Bay, and has over 5,000 slides of the watershed.

Conrad Gowell was first introduced to Drift Creek on a family fishing trip at the age of 10 and in the 10 years since, has spent countless hours on the stream. He is presently a junior at the University of Puget Sound studying the vitality of upper Drift Creek in comparison to the Sampson Creek tributary. Gowell plans to earn a graduate degree in Fisheries Ecology from the University of Washington. He has connections with many of the government agencies connected with the Drift Creek watershed and the conservation of the area is very important to him.



Conrad Gowell with the fish that inspire him.

We refer to Gowell as the “Riverkeeper,” and we appreciate and value his work in the area. You may see his little red pickup with the Drift-C license plate alongside the road to camp.

Footprints Newsletter appears inside each edition of the Drift Creek Camp Currents. The Footprints Editor is Anna Williams.

2008 DCNC Wish List

- Volunteer Grant Writer with Experience
- Pocket Magnifiers, 1 dozen (or gift of \$60)
- Birding Binoculars (or gift of \$75)
- Digital Camera (or gift of \$200)
- Stereomicroscopes (or gift of \$225)
- Birding Scope and Tripod (or gift of \$500)
- Digital Camcorder (or gift of \$400)
- Microvideo Camera (or gift of \$600)
- Laptop Computer: iBook or MacBook (or gift of \$1000)

(541) 996-3978

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First Bio-Blitz Comes to Camp

Footprints Q&A with Bruce Flaming

First you need to know what a Bio-Blitz is. A group of people descends on an area and records as many species as they can in a 24 hour time period. Of course, not every living thing will be accounted for, but in some cases a rare species may be uncovered!

Footprints: How large of an area do you anticipate covering?

Bruce: This Bio-Blitz event will continue our process of inventorying species in the Drift Creek Camp area and perhaps some of the favorite trail areas.

FP: Are you going to try for all of the visible kingdoms (plants, fungi, animals) and even some microscopic ones? Will there be experts in some of those fields coming to help with this?

Bruce: A major effort will be made to include at least one specialist or expert for each group of species (native plants, trees, lichens, fungi, stream life, birds, etc.) and as many interested volunteers as possible. Our goal will be to have a complete inventory that we can use in our learning and awareness activities. It will also allow us to monitor the individual species from year to year to see what effect we have on this site and/or how we may improve it.

FP: A Bio-Blitz sounds like something that will be fun to continue doing every year. This year's blitz is scheduled for **Saturday, May 24** during the work weekend. Anyone is invited to come join in.