



FOOTPRINTS

SEASONAL IMPRESSIONS OF CLARK COUNTY WETLANDS PARK



FALL 2019

CONTENTS

- We're Growing** 1
- Flora and Fauna Forecast** . . . 2
- Nature Close-up** 2
- Park Artwork** 3
- Volunteer Spotlight** 3
- Wetlands Walkers** 4
- We Love Birds** 4
- Park Photos** 4

Clark County Wetlands Park preserves and enhances **natural** and **cultural** resources and provides **educational, recreational,** and **research opportunities** for the **public**.

Staff contributors include, Michelle Baker, Liz Bickmore, Sheila Glennie, and Jan Steinbaugh.

Cover photo by Jody Walker.

702-455-7522

www.ccwetlandspark.com

wetlands@clarkcountynv.gov

Send us your email address to join our mailing list

WE'RE GROWING!

The Wetlands Park is growing, not in acreage, but in all that we have to offer. Since the Nature Center's opening in April 2013, we have engaged, delighted, and connected with more than 80,000 participants in our interpretive programs, guided more than 30,000 people along our 20 miles of trails, and hosted more than 1,400,000 visitors in Wetlands Park.

The Park grounds have grown and matured since its establishment 18 years ago, and so too has the infrastructure and our land management needs. The number of species identified in the park grows every year, and so do the number of bird watchers and other nature enthusiasts. The Park has become an important part of the community and a destination sought out by travelers from all over the world.

Balancing the needs of the visitor with the protection of the Park's natural resources can be challenging. With a team of talented Park staff and more than 100 dedicated volunteers, the ideals envisioned in the Wetlands Park Master Plan guide our mission as we continue to grow.

We are introducing ways to bring in revenue to help expand our programs, improve our Park amenities, and maintain and protect our Park resources. We have instituted fees for some of our specialized programs, expanded our facility reservations, opened the Nature Store, and made it easier to make a tax exempt donation to the Park. We are excited to launch some of our most requested programs in a group package format, perfect for parties, scout troops, or a group of friends. You can take a guided hike, cart tour, or attend a children's program. To see the growth first hand, make plans to come visit Wetlands Park. 🐾



Photo by J. Walker

Group golf cart tours now available.

SEASONAL FLORA & FAUNA FORECAST

Fall is a transition time for many plants and animals, a time to fatten up and store food. Night arrives earlier, temperatures begin to fall, and deciduous trees begin to shed their leaves. Here is a sampling of what you may encounter this time of year:

FLORA: Look for plants to **transition from blooming & green to browning**, such as the Fremont cottonwood, marsh fleabane, tamarisk, and sandbar and seep willows. Some plants will remain green throughout the fall, such as salt grass and the iodine bush. Look for lots of seed pods either brown and/or opened, such as bulrush, four-wing saltbush, screwbean mesquite, quailbush, and milkweed.

FAUNA: Continue to look for **insects**, such as ants, butterflies, dragonflies, damselflies, grasshoppers, and wasps. In particular, keep your eyes open for monarch and queen caterpillars,

chrysalises, and butterflies.

Look to the **ground** for Gambel's quail, greater roadrunner, desert cottontail, and northern flicker. Look to the **water** for American coots, common gallinules, herons, double-crested cormorants, killdeer, and turtles.

Look to the **trees and the sky** for black-tailed gnatcatchers, hummingbirds, belted kingfishers, northern mockingbirds, phainopeplas, loggerhead shrikes, vultures, hawks, and falcons. 🌿

MONARCH BUTTERFLIES



Photo by S. Glennie

PHENOLOGY PHUN

Phenology Phun is an hour long, once a week, citizen-science bird count at the Big Weir Bridge. The focus group is made up of 24 specific birds. By gathering data for the past 3 years, we have a good idea what birds will be seen in the each season.

Top 5 Fall Spottings

American Coot
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Mallard
Red-winged Blackbird
Gambel's Quail



American Coot by J. Walker

NATURE CLOSE-UP: PEPSIS WASP

You may notice a large wasp with a blue-black body, long antenna, and bright orange wings as you visit the Park. This is the Pepsis wasp, also known as the tarantula hawk wasp. Adult Pepsis wasps do not hunt prey; they feed entirely on nectar and pollen.



Photo by P. Martini

Pepsis wasp on milkweed.

While not aggressive, this wasp holds the distinction of delivering one of the most painful stings of any animal in the world. Luckily, they rarely sting humans, as you have to be invading their space, trying to pick them up, or stepping on them, to receive a sting. While most predators avoid the Pepsis wasp and its



Photo by P. Martini

Female pepsis wasp on milkweed.

sting, roadrunners and bullfrogs have been known to tackle them.

Pepsis wasps are called tarantula hawk wasps because the females hunt tarantulas to serve as a host for their larvae. The female wasp will look for a burrow that contains a tarantula and disturb the webbing around the burrow to coax the tarantula out so she can sting the much larger spider on its underside to paralyze it. She will lay an egg on the paralyzed spider, drag it to a hole, bury it, and cover up the hole. When the wasp egg hatches, the larvae

eats the flesh of the living tarantula, then spins a cocoon and pupates over the winter.

Cool Fact #1: Only the female Pepsis Wasp stings. One of the ways you can distinguish the female from the male is that while the antenna is straight to gently arcing in males, only the female can tightly curl their antenna. *The stinger is a modified egg laying device. True or False. (Answer shown on page 3)*

Cool Fact #2: Tarantula hawks are found on every continent except two, wherever tarantulas are found. In the United States, they are found in the deserts of the southwest. *Can you guess which two continents the Pepsis wasp is not found on? (Answer shown on page 3)*

Cool Fact #3: The tarantula hawk wasp is the state insect of New Mexico. *Do you know what the state insect of Nevada is? (Answer shown on page 3)* 🌿

CALL FOR WETLANDS PARK ARTWORK!

Have you created artwork in one of our Studio WP Art Programs that you would like to share? Want to see your artwork featured in an upcoming newsletter?

Submit your high resolution artwork(s) in digital format to: wetlands@clarkcountynv.gov

Include your name, date and the Studio WP art program in which the piece was created.



JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL FALL EVENT
HAUNT THE WETLANDS
Friday
October 25, 2019
Spooktacular Daytime Fun
12pm-3pm
Nighttime Activities
5pm-8pm



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Volunteer Teresa and Richard Munoz

Passionate volunteers are priceless. They are the heart and voice of Wetlands Park. Teresa and Richard Munoz are two such volunteers. We were able to catch up with them to find out what it is that keeps them coming back year after year.

What is your background?

We are both from Los Angeles and decided to retire in Las Vegas about eight years ago. We have three children who live in California, Arizona, and Laos, Southeast Asia. We also have three grand kids.

Are you currently working, retired, or going to school?

I worked almost 40 years in labor management and Teresa in the credit industry.

How long have you been volunteering at Wetlands Park?

Teresa and I have been volunteers for two years in October.

How did you come to volunteer at the Park?

We were looking for places to take our grand kids and found Wetlands Park. We've taken our youngest granddaughter to the Nature Center and the walking trails several times. She loves the backpack filled with things to do, such as the binoculars and magnifying glass. A volunteer pointed out an owl in the tree, which is her favorite bird. This really excited her! She loves the bike trail and we take her with us as often as we can. We thought this would be a great place to volunteer. We

became part of the Wetlands Watch program.

In what capacities have you been volunteering at the Park?

We monitor the trails and talk to visitors that we meet on the trails. We pick up trash and take pictures of graffiti and anything that needs repair. Occasionally, we will hand out maps and help with directions.

Why do you like volunteering at the Park?

The outdoors!! We love to see all the wildlife and walking the trails and people are so nice, but it is the outdoors we love the most.

What advise would you give someone thinking about volunteering at Wetlands Park?

It's fun! It's rewarding! People are great! Just do it! It's our way of giving to the community.

What is your favorite spot in the Park?

Bostick Interpretive Area is so peaceful and quiet and usually no one is there. 🌿

ANSWERS FROM PAGE 2:

1. True
2. Europe and Antarctica
3. Vivid dancer damselfly

WETLANDS WALKERS ON THE MOVE

Walking is good for one's physical health, and a walk in nature is even better!

Wetlands Walkers, a group of 95 health and nature oriented individuals, track their miles whenever they walk Park trails and earn rewards at various milestones. As a group, their mileage is tallied to reach a yearly goal matching the migration distances of one of the Park's visiting species. In 2019 the Walkers are recognizing the northern

flicker and have a collective goal of trekking 5,000 miles. To date, the walkers have traveled **3,676 miles**.



Photo by R. Bailey

To learn more about the Wetlands Walkers program, come to the Wetlands Walkers 2019 Reception on Nov. 9, 2019 at 1pm at the Nature Center.

Northern Flicker Fun Facts:

- Both sexes help with nest excavation.
- Northern flickers usually excavate nest holes in dead or diseased tree trunks or large branches. Look for an entrance hole about 3 inches in diameter.
- Nests are generally placed 6-15 feet of the ground, but on rare occasions can be over 100 feet high. 🌱

WE LOVE BIRDS!

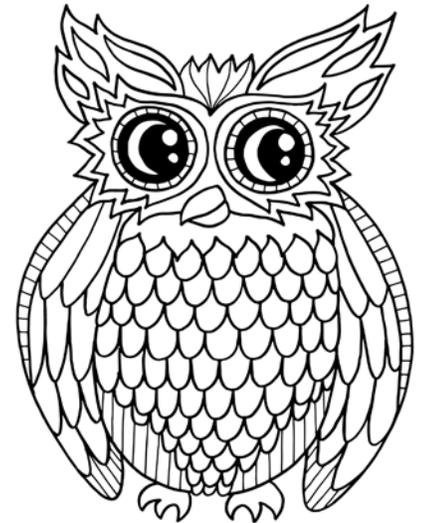
Wetlands Park is home to more than 300 species of birds. These birds rely on our efforts to protect and preserve them and their habitat in order to survive. Here are some ideas on how we can help protect birds in Wetlands Park.

- Never feed bread or other human food to birds. Nature provides the right food for them.
- Don't disturb nests or move ducklings. Sometimes maternal birds have to leave them for a

short time and they will be back.

- For small birds, put a birdbath in your yard. Consider a hummingbird feeder.
- Keep cats indoors.
- Plant native plants in your yard.
- Make your windows visible to birds to avoid strikes. Buy decals, put up shapes, or use highlighter pens.
- Be careful not to litter. Sometimes birds and other animals can mistake small bits of trash for food.
- Learn more about birds! 🌱

COLOR OLIVER THE OWL



CALL FOR WETLANDS PARK PHOTOS!

Want to see your Wetlands Park photo featured in an upcoming newsletter?

Photo Subject: "Black & White"

Submit your high resolution photo(s) to: wetlands@clarkcountynv.gov by 5pm on Nov. 15, 2019 to be considered. Include your name, date, and location of the photo.



Photo "Camouflage" entry submitted by Donna Silva.



Clark County Board of Commissioners

MARILYN KIRKPATRICK, Chairman
LAWRENCE WEEKLY, Vice-Chairman
LARRY BROWN • JAMES B. GIBSON • JUSTIN C. JONES
MICHAEL NAFT • RICHARD S. SEGERBLOOM
YOLANDA KING, County Manager



ClarkCountyNV.Gov/parks
ccparks@ClarkCountyNV.gov

