



# FOOTPRINTS

SEASONAL IMPRESSIONS OF CLARK COUNTY WETLANDS PARK



## SUMMER 2019

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

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## THE NATURE STORE HAS ARRIVED!

The long-awaited Nature Store has opened at Clark County Wetlands Park! The Nature Store was originally included in the vision for the Wetlands Park Nature Center. With more than 300,00 visitors each year, the store has been one of the top requests by Park visitors.

Located in front of the Nature Center at the top of the ramp, the Nature Store has something for everyone, young and old.

"We wanted to provide a place for our visitors to purchase a souvenir or guide book to remember and enhance their visit to Wetlands Park," says Ben Jurand, Program Supervisor. "The store allows us to provide additional services to our visitors by combining the information kiosk with the Nature Store. Visitors can come in and get a map and park information, as well as buy a post card or a snack before heading out on the trails."

All of the products offered in the Nature Store are related to the Park, programs, history, and resources. From hats to t-shirts, nature guide books to jewelry, water bottles to sunscreen, the Nature Store has it all. The finger puppets attract adults as well as the

little ones.

One of the top selling items for locals and tourist are the WP logo items, such as hats, pins, and T-shirts. This will help spread the word about Wetlands Park not just locally, but nation-wide and internationally, as many out-of-state visitors have discovered that Wetlands Park is a great place to stop before heading to the airport.

Purchases are tax free and all proceeds from sales support Wetlands Park. Summer Store hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday. As the success of the store continues to grow, the hours may be expanded. Be sure to come in and browse and take home something to remember your visit to the Wetlands Park. 🌿



Photo by S. Glennie

Visitors browsing the new Nature Store.

# SEASONAL FLORA & FAUNA FORECAST

Summer is when all animals, including humans, take advantage of the warmer weather. It is the hottest of the four seasons, where days are longer and nights are shorter. For many, it is a time of vacations and outdoor fun. Plants grow and provide food for herbivores. Herbivores gain weight and provide food for carnivores. Mammals and birds raise their young. Insects go through their life cycles and lay eggs. So get out there and take an early morning or evening hike in the Park, when it's cooler out. Here is a sampling of what you may encounter this time of year:

**FLORA:** Look for plants to bloom, such as sacred datura, salt heliotrope, sunflower, and desert willow. Look for green-leafed plants, such as salt grass, arrowweed, and Gooding's willow.

**FAUNA:** Look for lots of **insects**, such as ants, aphids, bees, butterflies,

dragonflies, damselflies, funnel spiders, tarantula hawks, and wasps. Insects attract bats.

Look to the **ground** for Gambel's quail, greater roadrunner, and desert cottontail.

Look to the **water** for American coot, common gallinule, green and great blue herons, and turtles.

Look to the **trees and the sky** for black-tailed gnatcatcher, great-tailed grackle, hummingbird, northern mockingbird, verdin, and turkey vultures. 🐾

## RED-EARED SLIDERS



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 Summer Spottings

American Coot  
Mallard  
Gambel's Quail  
Red-winged Blackbird  
White-faced Ibis



White-faced Ibis by S. Glennie

## NATURE CLOSE-UP: SNAKES OF WETLANDS PARK

In addition to the many different birds, insects, mammals, and lizards commonly spotted in the Park, you may be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of one of our resident snakes. They can sometimes be seen soaking up the sun or searching for prey alongside a trail. You might even see one stretched out across a bike path.



Photo by J. Walker

**Gopher snake on a trail at Wetlands Park.**

What kinds of snakes are most commonly seen in the Park?

Non-venomous types reported seen within the Nature Preserve include the gopher snake, often mistaken for rattlesnakes, they are usually 3-5 feet in

length; red racers (also known as coachwhips), slender and fast, they can exceed 5 feet in length; and the California kingsnake, striking in appearance with alternating black and white bands.



Photo by S. Glennie

**Close up of King snake near Nature Center.**

Less commonly seen, venomous snakes are most often spotted in the more remote desert scrub lands of the Park. Two you might see are the western diamondback rattlesnake, 3 – 4 feet in length with black and white bands near the rattle; and the Mojave Desert sidewinder, typically less than 1.5 feet in

length with horn-like scales above the eyes and a sidwinding locomotion.

What do you do if you see one?

As with any wild animal, keep your distance and admire it from afar. Most of the snakes seen in the Nature Preserve are non-venomous, but approaching any wild animal can be risky for both you and them. If you are able to get a photo or video, consider sharing it to the Wetlands Facebook page or emailing it to us at [Wetlands@ClarkCountyNV.gov](mailto:Wetlands@ClarkCountyNV.gov). We always enjoy seeing our visitors' photos and what you are seeing in the Park! Next time you are in the Park, keep your eyes open for these exciting reptiles and you may have the chance to see one for yourself! 🍀



Photo by R. Bailey

**Red Racer snake crossing a trail at Wetlands Park.**

# AWESOME IN ACTION: WETLANDS HANDS ON!

During the cooler months, September through April, volunteers of all ages participate in outdoor stewardship projects through a program called **Wetlands: Hands On! (WHO)**. This program is designed to involve community members in meaningful stewardship projects throughout the Park. Once a month, community members are invited to engage in projects to restore habitats, remove invasive species, improve trails, plant native vegetation, or clear trash. Anywhere from 20-200 participants are expected to volunteer for each WHO event, making this is an exceptional opportunity to engage a vibrant group of people and build community by connecting people to nature and to each other.



Photo by WP Staff

## **Staff, Team Leads, and participants at the September 2018 WHO event.**

Projects are identified and planned in partnership with Clark County staff and partners. The program is designed to build community by increasing a sense of pride, ownership, and providing opportunities for involvement and input. To help accomplish this, Park staff and Volunteer Team Leaders facilitate and provide guidance during events so that participants have a fun, productive, and rewarding experience.

The 2018-19 season ended with a Team Lead wrap up, planting native species around the Nature Center. This allowed the Volunteer Team Leads to do the work themselves and reflect on the seasons accomplishments.

This season there were a total of 795 community volunteers which translates to 1,584 community volunteer hours. Now that is awesome in action! Thank you all for a great season of giving back. 🐾



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



**Volunteer Arthur McLaughlin at Wetlands**

**P**assionate volunteers are priceless. They are the heart and voice of Wetlands Park. Arthur McLaughlin is one such volunteer. We were able to catch up with him to find out what it is that keeps him coming back year after year.

### **What is your background?**

I was born in Kalamazoo, Michigan but I grew up in Liberty Center, Ohio. Most of my family is still in Ohio. I met my wife, Mary, in Ohio and about 32 years ago we decided to move to Las Vegas. We were married in Las Vegas 25 years ago. We have 3 cat children, Robby, Angel, and Pumpkin. They have us well trained when it comes to their snack time!

I went to work at Hoover Dam around 1986. I worked there for 10 years and

then decided to open my own repair business. I have been working in that business ever since.

### **How did you come to volunteer at the Park?**

I started walking in the Wetlands years ago. I love photography and this is a great place for pictures! I started to report to the administrative office about graffiti and other problems I found in the park. Eventually, about 5 years ago, Christie Leavitt asked me if I would like to volunteer officially.

### **In what capacities have you been volunteering at the Park?**

I recently joined the Wetlands Watch program and I also work in the Exhibit Hall one day a week.

### **What kinds of things do you do during a typical volunteer shift as a Wetlands Watcher or in the Exhibit Hall?**

My shifts are always different and unusual. In 2015, I was out walking along the wash looking for graffiti and I happened to spot something protruding out of the soil in the Grand Canyon area.

I like to look for fossils and unusual items while I am out in the Park and this looked very interesting! I told Crystal about it and she notified the archaeologist that had been working in this area. It turned out to be a pestle which is a grinding tool used by Native Americans to make flour.

### **Why do you like volunteering at the Park and what advice would you give someone thinking about volunteering?**

The Wetlands reminds me of the places I grew up. It looks like home! I love the outdoors and the animals. When I need to get away from the city, this is where I always come! I would tell anyone thinking about volunteering to just do it! We always need volunteers at the Park.

### **What is your favorite spot in the Park?**

The Big Bridge! 🌿



**BOR photo of the pestle Arthur found in Wetlands Park in 2015.**

# 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 73 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 **1,470 miles**.



Photo by R. Bailey

To learn more about the *Wetlands Walkers* program and the northern flicker, stop by the Exhibit Hall in the Nature Center.

## Northern Flicker Fun Facts:

- Northern flickers eat mainly insects, especially ants and beetles that they gather from the ground, where the nutritious larvae live. They hammer at the soil the way other woodpeckers drill into wood.
- Their tongues can dart out 2 inches beyond the end of the bill to snare prey. 🌱

# VOLUNTEERS GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

Last winter, during the annual volunteer appreciation dinner, many volunteers were honored for the numerous hours they have served. Some were honored for 500 hours and some for a staggering 1,000 hours of volunteer work. Those reaching 500 received a commemorative pin and those reaching 1,000 hours were

honored on a plaque which is on display in the Nature Center.

**500 VOLUNTEER HOURS:** Sandi A., Rod B., Jerry C., Muriel C., Bobbette D., Linda D., Chig F., Jean G., Nancy G., Ed H., Merlyn H., Lynn H., Wayne H., Audrey K., Evelyn K., Pam K., Greg K., Paul K., Dawn L., Philip M., Arthur M., Pat O., Anita P., Richard P., Uwe P.,

Sharon P., Dick S., Jeff S., Patrick T.

**1,000 VOLUNTEER HOURS:** Rose Marie P., Helen B., Billie D., William C., Gert K., Milt K., Linda W., Elizabeth P., Annette W., Sandy S., Dorothy H., Debbie O., Nelson F., Betty M., Pat K., Jan S., Marsha G., Gail R., Nancy E., Jerry S., Peter Piper B., Martin M., Joanne M., Anita T. 🌱

## CALL FOR WETLANDS PARK PHOTOS!

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

**Photo Subject:** "Camouflage"

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



Photo "Color in Nature" entry submitted by Donna Silva.



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