

Fall
2022

Friends of Trempealeau Refuge

Friends Focus...

Volunteers are an essential part of the work we do at Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge (TNWR), playing a vital role in helping the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service meet its conservation goals. During the month of August, we all gathered for our annual volunteer banquet to celebrate the outstanding contributions our



volunteers make to the refuge. We had a wonderful evening. We played a game and enjoyed a meal together. This year TNWR volunteers have donated their time and hard work through the contribution of 400 hours. Volunteers help in many ways at TNWR from greeting refuge visitors, to helping with keeping our recreation areas mowed or helping with our conservation efforts by doing wildlife surveys. The 2022 Outstanding Volunteer Award was received by Darlene Ritter and Jim Kinscher. Outstanding Volunteer Award honors a volunteer who has taken the concept of giving back to the highest level. Darlene Ritter has been volunteering at NWR for the past 30 plus years and has been a dedicated Refuge volunteer.



Darlene Ritter



Jim Kinscher

For many of those years she has volunteered on the observation deck greeting visitors and sharing her knowledge of nature and the local area with others. Jim Kinscher is an active volunteer and made substantial contributions of time and energy, showing up reliably throughout COVID times the last couple years to assist the refuge maintenance program. Jim is always willing to help. Many of the hours he has volunteered have been spent helping with projects such as: mowing, painting, clearing refuge roads, trail maintenance, wood cutting, signage posting, maintenance to birdboxes and more. Both, Darlene Ritter and Jim Kinscher, have been exceptional volunteers!

On another note, fall has arrived at TNWR! Many birds are on their southbound migration to their nonbreeding grounds. Warblers are arriving at the refuge as they continue their journey. Find American white pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Pintail and more. TNWR is an amazing place to experience nature, come and visit us!

Dana M. Schelling
Refuge Ranger

Note from the Friends President

Hello Friends!! I'm happy to say that this past summer the Friends of Trempealeau Refuge hosted several well attended programs at the OWL Center. In June River Valley Raptors from Buffalo City, WI brought in a live owl, falcon, and hawk and shared many fun facts about them. In August Allen Sheldon, a Trempealeau resident, shared photos and stories about reptiles and amphibians he photographed for his latest field guide book. It's for sale at the Friends Nature Store.



Heather Kaarakka, a Wisconsin DNR bat expert, did a program about Wisconsin's native bats. Participants finished the evening watching the bats emerge from the bat house behind the maintenance building. Hundreds of bats were in attendance too! In September Scott Lee, a retired teacher, presented a program entitled "The Unhuggables." He shared

interesting facts about wolves, skunks and spiders. He also brought in a live Ball Python which a few brave kids got to hold. The Friends also co-hosted a program with the Trempealeau Lions Club featuring Shannon Columb, The Blind Naturalist, who shared her amazing story and ways she has adapted to be able to explore the outdoors along with helping the visually impaired experience nature.

Lastly, two Burr Oak trees will soon be planted near the Observation Deck. They were donated in memory of Michael Owecke and Ruth Wolfram by their friends/ family. Thank you donors!

That's all for now!

-Val Critzman, Friends President

Best of Trempealeau Wildlife Refuge 2023

**Amateur photo contest
for youth and adults is
being planned.**

**Details will be coming
soon.**



Friends of Trempealeau Refuge
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<http://www.friendsoftrempealeaurefuge.org>



Would you like to contact the
refuge? Here's how!

Call 608-539-2311

For more information visit our website:

<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/trempealeau/>

Or the refuge Facebook page:

[https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/TrempealeauNWR)

TrempealeauNWR

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The [Friends of Trempealeau Refuge](#) is committed to providing an independent citizen voice for the protection, conservation, and enhancement of fish and wildlife and their habitats at Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge.