

Field Notes

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10th Annual Tanana Valley Sandhill Crane Festival August 24–26 at Creamer's Field

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By Melissa Sikes

August 24-26th, the Tenth annual Tanana Valley Sandhill Crane Festival features the return of Dr. George Archibald as our keynote speaker. Dr. Archibald was the speaker at the 5th annual Tanana Valley Sandhill Crane Festival. As co-founder of the International Crane Foundation (ICF), Dr. Archibald is widely considered one of the world's leading scientific authorities on cranes.

In 1973, Dr. Archibald co-founded ICF with Ronald Sauey, a colleague from Cornell University. At that time many of the world's 15 remaining crane species were on the brink of extinction. Since then, ICF has grown to become a powerful force in crane conservation, working in 45 countries to conserve cranes and their wetland habitats. ICF's mission is met through a creative combination of field research, help to local people living near the cranes, public education, habitat protection, and captive propagation and re-introduction.

Meet Dr. Archibald at a fundraising reception at the Alaska Bird Observatory on Friday August 24th,



Dr. George Archibald is the featured speaker at this year's Sandhill Crane Festival.

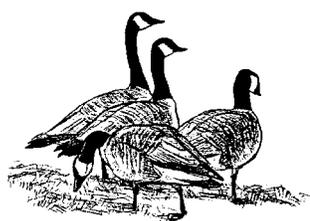
Photo courtesy of the International Crane Foundation

7:30–9:30 pm. Tickets are \$25/person (\$20 for members of Friends).

On Saturday August 25th, join Dr. Archibald for a walk at 10:00 am leaving from the Farmhouse Visitor Center. From 11:00 am–2:00 pm, he will sign copies of David Sakrison's book, *Chasing the Ghost*

Birds: Saving Swans and Cranes. At 7:00 pm, Dr. Archibald will give a presentation on "Bringing Back the Whooping Cranes" at UAF's Schaible Auditorium.

A complete schedule of events for the Crane Festival is on page three of this newsletter.



Our Mission

Friends of Creamer's Field is a community based, nonprofit organization dedicated to providing educational, historical, and interpretive programs throughout the year at Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge.

Support Friends' annual...

Quilt Raffle

Tickets \$5 each or 5 for \$20

Drawing August 26, 2007

details on page five

Exciting Trail News at Creamer's Refuge

By Alexis Runstadler

Improvements continue to be made on the Boreal Forest Trail. Our contractor, Simon McLoughlin of Alaskiwi Builders, has completed a boardwalk extension from the main boardwalk to the new observation platform. In the past, the trail to the platform was inundated with water and mud in the spring.

Simon is currently working on the wheelchair accessible trail extension that will run from the Farm Road Trail to the Boreal Forest Trail. The elevated boardwalk in this extension will be wider, have curbs along the sides, and will feature a passing bay near the middle of the span.

Local Boy Scout Ken Jewitt has installed new numbered sign posts along the Boreal Forest Trail, and new interpretive signage will be installed soon. The Boreal Forest Trail is currently open, but sections may be temporarily closed during the month of August for these upgrades.

Our continued thanks go to ConocoPhillips for their funding of the Boreal Forest Trail Reconstruction Project.

Alaska Bird Observatory Opens New Trail

The Alaska Bird Observatory (ABO) has opened their new Chickadee Loop Trail. The trail is accessed from the trailhead behind ABO's Center for Education and Research, located along the eastern edge of



Above, visitors walk on the new Boreal Forest Trail boardwalk. Below, a group pauses along the Farm Road.

the Refuge on the grounds of Wedgewood Resort. The 1/3-mile trail is an interpretive trail with an accompanying booklet detailing some of the habitats, plants, and animals of the boreal forest. Trail booklets can be picked up at the ABO trailhead, ABO'S Center for Education and Research, and Creamer's Field Farmhouse Visitor Center. ABO can be reached at 451-7159 or www.alaskabird.org.

Fountainhead Development to Open New Trails

Fountainhead Development is currently building two new walking trails and rehabilitating a gravel pit on 75 acres of an undeveloped 105 acres they recently acquired adjacent to Wedgewood Resort and Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge. The trails will be hard-packed gravel, making them wheelchair accessible. The 0.65-mile 'Taiga Trail' will loop

through a variety of boreal forest habitats and the 0.8-mile 'Lake Trail' will loop around a former gravel pit that is being enhanced for wildlife and already hosts waterfowl, shorebirds, and beaver.

Access to the trails will be via the trailhead at the Alaska Bird Observatory or from Wedgewood Resort, and they will be open to skiing in the winter. The new trails are targeted to open in 2008.

Creamer's Refuge Trails Always Open

Remember, the trails at Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge are always open! Trail guides and maps are located at the trailheads and additional information and assistance can be found in the Creamer's Field Farmhouse Visitor Center.

No bikes are allowed on the trails and please keep dogs leashed when there are birds present.

Friends of Creamer's Field

Board Members

Jim Chumbley, Vice President

Bob Craig

Roxanne Creamer

Pat DeRuyter, Secretary

Ray Hadley

Kris Hundertmark

Donna Krier

Sherry Lewis

Gail Mayo, Treasurer

Herb Melchior

Joy Morrison, President

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E. Tom Robinson

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Alexis Runstadler,

Development Director

Melissa Sikes,

Program Director

Cathie Harms (ADF&G)

Mark Ross (ADF&G)

This issue of *Field Notes* was produced by Mary Zalar



2007 Tanana Valley Sandhill Crane Festival Schedule

All events are free of charge unless otherwise noted and marked.

*All events meet at Creamer's Field Farmhouse unless otherwise noted**.*

Friday, August 24

7:30–9:30 pm**

“Just Desserts” Reception & Fundraiser

Meet Dr. George Archibald at a reception at the Alaska Bird Observatory, 418 Wedgewood Drive. Tickets are \$25/person (\$20 for members of Friends of Creamer's Field.)

10:00–11:00 pm

“Cranes of the World”

Dr. George Archibald will present an outdoor slide show on the barn as the sun sets. See images of cranes from all over the world and learn about the conservation efforts to save endangered crane species.

Tex-Mex Dinner & Latin Music Fiesta!

Sunday, August 26, 2007

4:30–7:30 pm

at Creamer's Field,
back by the barns

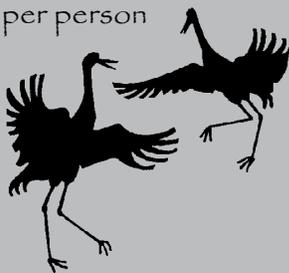
Enjoy south-of-the-border food (5–7:00 pm) and Latin music!

Dance and dine and observe the fall migration of Sandhill Cranes as they depart for Texas and parts of Mexico!

This fun and festive event is a fundraiser for Camp Habitat.

Minimum donation:

\$12 per person



Saturday, August 25

9:00 am

Bird Banding featuring live songbirds up close, weather permitting.

10:00 am Nature Walk

A walk with Dr. George Archibald.

11:00 am–1:00 pm

Crane Watch

Join Arctic Audubon guides at the Creamer's Field viewing platforms.

11:00 am–2:00 pm

Brunch with the Cranes

Sample Russian cuisine from the Kosmonaut Kafe and enjoy live music. \$8/person (\$6 members).

Book Signing with Dr. Archibald

Books and posters available.

12:00 pm

Crane Coloring Page Awards

12:30 pm

Crane Calling Contest: Kids and adults can try calling Creamer's cranes!

1:00 pm

Kids Crane Walk

Join a naturalist on a leisurely walk for kids of all ages.

Nature Photography Workshop

Join photographer Ken Whitten for tips on capturing images of cranes. Bring your own camera.

2:00 pm–4:00 pm

Crane Crafts for kids of all ages.

3:00 pm

Crane Sketching Workshop

Join Mark D. Ross in capturing Sandhill Cranes on paper. Bring your own pencils and sketch pads.

3:00 pm–5:00 pm

Crane Watch at the Creamer's Field viewing platforms.

7:00 pm**

“Bringing Back the Whooping Cranes” A presentation by Dr. George Archibald at UAF's Schaible Auditorium. Suggested donation: \$5/person.

Sunday, August 26

10:00 am**

Crane Walk

Join Dr. George Archibald for a walk amongst the cranes starting at the Alaska Bird Observatory.

11:00 am–1:00 pm

Crane Watch Drop by the viewing platforms at Creamer's Field.

1:00 pm**

Natural Sound Recording Workshop

Join Gail Mayo for a beginner's guide to recording natural sounds at the Alaska Bird Observatory.

1:00 pm

Kids Crane Walk

Join a naturalist on a leisurely walk for kids of all ages.

3:00 pm

Birds of Prey Program

Learn about birds of prey with the help of live birds.

4:00–6:00 pm

Crane Watch

Join Arctic Audubon guides at the Creamer's Field viewing platforms.

4:30–7:30 pm

Tex-Mex Dinner and Latin Music Fiesta Send the cranes on their southward journey. Enjoy good food (served 5–7:00 pm) and music from south of the border. Minimum donation: \$12/person. Proceeds benefit Camp Habitat.

7:00 pm

Quilt raffle drawing for the chance to win one of three quilts. Tickets are on sale daily at ABO and the Creamer's Farmhouse Visitor Center until 7:00 pm on August 26. Need not be present to win.

Those Among Us: Summer Camps Director Jenny Day

By Alexis Runstadler

The Creamer's Field Farmhouse is abuzz with activity this morning and it is only 8:30 am! Camp Habitat is happening on the Refuge, now in its 17th year of providing hands-on nature education to children ages 4–11 at the Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge. Using the back room of the Farmhouse to prepare their curriculum, camp counselors are hauling supplies up from the basement including a myriad of craft supplies, homemade posters detailing some aspect of the day's topic, and books. They are laughing and chatting, some eating a quick breakfast before the campers arrive.

Upstairs in the Friends of Creamer's Field office, Camp Habitat Summer Camps Director Jenny Day is making phone calls and completing preparations for tonight's campout on the Refuge. Next she goes back downstairs to do another review of the day's plans with the counselors before heading out to the picnic area to greet campers and their parents.

This intense activity continued for five weeks this summer as Jenny Day returned for a second year as Summer Camps Director. With Jenny, four counselors and four junior counselors (ages 16-18) led this year's program. This summer, 168 campers participated in Camp Habitat, and many volunteers served as guest speakers for the campers,

covering topics ranging from insects to forest succession. Through it all, Jenny was able to maintain a calm and relaxed attitude that enabled her to cultivate a positive team effort with the counselors and keep the activity in the Farmhouse from getting too frantic.

Jenny Day was born in San Diego and grew up in Sonora, California outside of Yosemite. She graduated from UC Santa Cruz with a B.A. in Environmental Science and an emphasis in Sustainable Agriculture and Environmental Education. After college, Jenny moved to Maine and worked a number of jobs around coastal Hancock County including substitute teaching, selling Christmas trees, and an apprenticeship with an art collective. Her time in Maine helped clarify her career goals, and she moved to Fairbanks in August 2005 with a strong desire to pursue a career in art and education. To that end, she is currently working on her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at UAF with an eye toward a Masters in Fine Arts. Besides attending school, Jenny has settled into living in Fairbanks. She and her fiancé Mike are building a cabin and currently raise chickens, goats, ducks, geese, and turkeys. They also have quite a few dogs as Mike breeds and sells sled dogs when not working for the Fairbanks Resource Agency.



Camp Habitat Summer Camps Director Jenny Day.

Photo by Alexis Runstadler

Jenny was very excited to return as Summer Camps Director this year and was able to more easily tackle the administrative details of preparing for camp, which include advertising, counselor recruitment, and camper registration. She then utilized her skills as an educator and concentrated more this year on curriculum planning, staff training, and guiding her newly hired group of counselors to work as a team. In previous years, the overnight for campers aged 8-11 took place at the Rose Hip campground, which was a bit disconnected from the week spent studying the plants and animals on the Refuge. This year, Jenny facilitated the overnight to occur at Creamer's Field, taking advantage of Camp Habitat's co-operative agreement with Fish & Game. The campout occurred off of the trails in the tussock-shrub habitat and was a big hit with the campers.

It was also easier for the parents, and the counselors were able to extend their curriculum themes into the evening hours and have more guest speakers.

We are looking forward to Jenny returning to the Farmhouse again next year for another successful summer of Camp Habitat!

Camp Habitat began as a Friends of Creamer's Field program and is currently co-sponsored by three organizations. The Northern Alaska Environmental Center provides the staffing and financial sponsorship, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game provides facilities support. Friends of Creamer's Field provides office and storage space as well as funding for Camp Habitat scholarships. Many wonderful volunteers support Camp Habitat as well as an Advisory Board made up of community members and representatives from all three co-sponsoring organizations.

Thanks to Donors & Volunteers

Many thanks to the following volunteers and donors for supporting various Friends of Creamer's events!

- Farmhouse Visitor Center staff and summer walk volunteers:

Kelly Balcarczyk
Nancy Bayer
Kyle Campbell
Susan Campbell
Betty Carlson
Bob Craig
Roxy Creamer
Pat Degen
Sarah DeGenarro
Ray Hadley
Aaron Hall
Jessica Hightower
Sherry Lewis
Gail Mayo
Jeanne Ringstad
Mark Ross
Brenda Sadler
Tami Seekins
Steve & Judy Sharpe
Bill & Joanne Stowe
Kathy Taylor-Yokel
Marilyn Whitehead
Mary Zalar

- A very big thank you to the Fred Meyer Corporation for their grant of \$2,500 to Friends of Creamer's Field for the

purchase of new educational materials and sampling equipment.

- Thanks to Hot Licks Ice Cream for donating ice cream coupons that we have used for many of our programs this year.
- Thanks to Sherry Lewis, Jude Czopek, and Sue Finsrud for making lovely crane potholders to sell in the gift shop.
- Many thanks to Mary Zalar for producing our newsletter and helping to redesign this year's Friends of Creamer's Field rack card.
- Thanks to Jim Logan for updating and maintaining our web site.
- A big thank you to Barry Holmes for the donation of a grain separator to use at future History Day events.
- Many thanks to Jim Klaich and his crew from the Fairbanks Youth Facility for their hard work removing old boardwalk sections from the Boreal Forest Trail.

Friends of Creamer's Field...

Quilt Raffle

Tickets \$5 each or 5 for \$20

Drawing August 26th, 7:00 pm

Three beautiful quilts are being raffled this year and are on display at Creamer's Field Farmhouse Visitor Center. Raffle tickets are on sale daily at the Alaska Bird Observatory and Creamer's Farmhouse Visitor Center until 7:00 pm on August 26th. You need not be present to win.

Photos by Melissa Sikes



Queen-size quilt by Karen Kiss (detail below right)



"Plover Pasture" by Melissa Sikes



Detail of large quilt

Anna Creamer Garden Update

The Anna Creamer garden at the Farmhouse is really lovely this year, and all of the garden volunteers have been doing a tremendous job! Spinach, turnips, and lettuce have already been harvested and donated to the Stone Soup Cafe.

With all of the rain this summer, the garden hasn't needed much watering, but it is in need of continued weeding. If you are craving a change of pace from pulling your own garden's weeds or would like the opportunity to get your hands in some dirt—come by the Farmhouse and spend a few minutes in the Anna Creamer garden to help with the weeding effort!



"Ree's Pintail with a Twist" by Terra Shideler

Successful *Design Alaska Wild Arts Walk*

Membership Perks

Friends of Creamer's Field is now accepting VISA and MasterCard payments for membership renewals, donations, new memberships, and purchases in our gift shop!

Your yearly membership dues support our many popular programs and provide the resources needed to launch exciting new programs and activities. Friends of Creamer's Field never shares or rents our mailing list. As a member, you receive the following benefits:

1. our informative quarterly newsletter *Field Notes*,
2. advance notification via mail or email of upcoming programs and events,
3. one dollar off all purchases made in the gift shop, for every ten dollars you spend,
4. discounted admission to some of our programs including the Crane Festival Reception and Brunch.
5. access to our extensive natural history library,
6. invitation to our annual membership picnic at Creamer's Field in September.

About 350 visitors joined us on a gorgeous, sunny and hot June 2nd for the second annual *Design Alaska Wild Arts Walk*. It was a very successful fundraising event for Friends of Creamer's Field. Around 40 artists, including five musicians, came out for the day to share a wide variety of artistic interpretation of the beauty of the Refuge with the visitors.

A big thank you goes out to Design Alaska for envisioning and supporting this wonderful event. We also thank the Fairbanks Art Association, Lulu's Bagels, Bun on the Run, and Safeway for their support for this event. We are so grateful to our very helpful volunteers without whom this event could not have happened. We really appreciated all your cheery smiles and great attitudes. Thank you to:

- Tricia Blake
- Katie Callahan
- Kyle Campbell
- Jeannie Creamer
- Roxanne Creamer
- Jim Chumbley
- Mike Dean
- Pat DeRuyter
- Marilyn Fye
- David and Rebecca Gregoroff and Family
- Ray Hadley
- Sherry Lewis



- Gail Mayo
- Patty Piersol
- Tom Robinson
- Mark Ross
- Jon, Ethan & Vreni Runstadler
- Steve and Judy Sharpe
- Derek, Nina, Kaley, and Amelia Sikes
- Sonia Schumacher
- Betsy Smith
- Jack Wilber
- Mary Zalar

Many thanks to the talented artists that shared their creative work:

- Kathy Baker-Addy
- Cabin Fever Quilters Guild
- Philip Carrico
- Betsy Chronic
- Randy Compton
- Fairbanks Watercolor Society
- Fred Freer
- Myra Jane Helmer
- Sarah Holm
- Deb Horner
- Shane Hurd
- Dan Kennedy
- Jean Lester
- Jeannie Mars-Armstrong
- Peggy Martin
- Jean McDermott & Friends
- Herb & Hilda Melchior
- Debbie Miller
- Amy Noon
- North Star Needlework Guild
- Jen Otey
- Lisa Rogers
- Tamara Sayre
- Ruth Segler
- Derek Sikes
- Nancy Sopp
- Christine "Okiku" Thomas
- Laura Vines

Above right, visitors stroll along the paths at Creamer's Field visiting various artists' displays. At right, Sarah Holm displays her work.

Photos by Melissa Sikes



Summer Sightings at Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge

By Melissa Sikes

It has been a hot but wet summer here at Creamer's Field. June saw lots of rain in the beginning of the month, refilling the almost dry seasonal wetlands. Water has remained in the seasonal wetlands through all of this summer, providing a great home for a brood of Mallard ducklings and their attentive mother. Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary



Sandpipers, and Northern Shovelers have also been regularly seen there. Beavers were spotted out by the crane pond by our June refuge hosts.

At the beginning of June, two bears were reported seen on the north and east side of the Refuge. Also in June we had an unusual song bird visitor out on the Boreal Forest Trail near the burn platform. A Least Flycatcher, a common bird in the Lower 48 but rarely seen in Alaska, was spotted and heard there for about three weeks. We have had a steady group of non-breeding cranes hanging out on



the field and the constant aerial swooping of breeding Tree, Violet-Green, and Cliff Swallows kept visitors pointing with excitement.

We are all now gearing up for the annual fall migration and looking forward to seeing lots of old friends returning to the fields once again.

Above, a beaver swims across a pond. Photo at left is a Northern Shoveler.

Both photos by Ken Whitten

Membership Response Form

Become a member of Friends of Creamer's Field, make a donation, or renew your membership.

(Please check the renewal date in the corner of your mailing label.)

New Member

Renewal

Donation \$ _____

\$15 Students & Seniors

\$20 Individual

\$40 Family

\$75 Supporter

\$100 Contributor

\$250 Steward

\$500 Patron*

\$1000 Lifetime*

Patron and Lifetime: please check here if you would like to receive a historic Randall Compton print of Creamer's Dairy signed by the Creamer family with your membership (valued at \$150).

Payment: Cash Check Credit card Visa or MasterCard (circle one)

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____ VCode*: _____

*3 digit code on card back

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

This is a gift membership for the above name from _____

I have a new mailing address, phone, or email.

I would like to receive my newsletter via email.

I would like to volunteer. Please contact me with information about upcoming volunteer orientation sessions.

Friends of Creamer's Field is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your donation is fully tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Friends of Creamer's Field

P.O. Box 81065

Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

907-452-5162 (office)

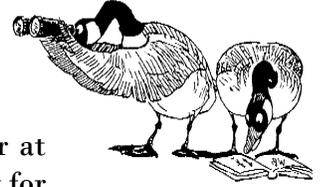
907-459-7309 (Visitor's Center)

email: creamers@ptialaska.net

website: www.creamersfield.org

Upcoming Events at Creamer's Field

All events begin at Creamer's Field Farmhouse Visitor Center, 1300 College Road, back by the barns. Call 452-5162 for more information.



Nature Walks led by trained naturalists are offered throughout the summer at 10 am on weekdays and Wednesday evenings at 7 pm. This is a great activity for your summertime guests!

Saturday Mornings with an Artist, 10 am–2 pm, are an opportunity to meet and support Fairbanks artists. Every Saturday a local artist will display and sell their artwork and, in some cases, demonstrate their techniques.

August 11th Deb Horner Watercolor paintings of Alaskan scenery.

August 18th Betsy Chronic Carved wooden boxes of chickadees, caribou and other wildlife.

September 1st Mark Ross Field sketches of Creamer's wildlife.

Friends of Creamer's Field Membership Picnic, September 8th, 2–6:00 pm

Watch your mailbox for our special invitation!

Fall Equinox Walk: Come out and see the autumn splendor at Creamer's Refuge by joining us September 22, 10 am–Noon.

Is it time to renew
your membership?



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