

Bitter Lake News

Fall 2023

UPCOMING EVENTS AT BITTER LAKE

Sept. 8, Dragonflies Presentation & the Night Sky with Roswell Astronomy Club 6:30 p.m.

Sept. 9, Dragonfly Festival 9:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Oct. 6, Annular Pre-Eclipse Presentation with Roswell Astronomy Club 6:30 p.m.

Oct. 14, Annular Solar Eclipse! (No special event but refuge offers a great viewing location for eclipse)

Nov. 4, Cranes and Cocoa 3:00 p.m.

*More information can be found on <http://www.friendsofbitterlakenwr.org/>

Dragonfly Art Contest

Over 400 elementary students entered the art contest for the Dragonfly Festival last spring. The excited winner was Emilio Valenzuela from Valley View, who won the grand prize of \$125. He was presented his award and the check by Steve Alvarez during a school-wide assembly. The runner ups, who each received \$25, were Harper Pack of Gateway, Zoe Ortega of East Grand Plains, Kendall Downs of Gateway, Adylenne Garcia of Pecos, and Summer Tew of Military Heights. It is always exciting to see the children's work, and the creative ideas they have when thinking about dragonflies and Bitter Lake. We thank all the kids who entered the contest for their hard work and creativity! Winners and runner-ups will have their work on display at the Dragonfly Festival.





Grant Prize Winner: Emilio Valenzuela from Valley View Elementary

President's Corner

by Meredith Hildreth, President

It's been a long hot summer here in the Pecos Valley. The dragonflies are enjoying the heat; I see them flying everywhere! We humans, however, are looking forward to cooler weather and the annual Dragonfly Festival on Saturday, September 9, 2023 at Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge outside Roswell, NM. If you are interested in volunteering during the Festival, call Steve Alvarez at the Refuge (575) 244-6256. I want to thank Steve and Don Weld and other Festival Committee members for all their work organizing the Festival!!! Jana has stocked the Nature Store with wonderful items that you may purchase before, during, and after the festival. Thank you to the many Sponsors who made this festival possible. We have a good line up this year again with speakers, activities, kids art, and Monarch butterflies that will be released. Thank you in advance to all those who will participate in making the Festival a success: Bitter Lake Staff and volunteers, volunteers from the other Refuges in New Mexico, tour guides who travel from near and far, scouts, state and federal agency staff who will provide exhibits and activities, non-profits, and vendors. I hear there will be ice cream this year! Thank you again for all you do to share the importance of conservation with the community.

I'd like to remember artist Marti Zelt who recently passed away. You can see one

of Marti's beautiful tile murals on the outside of the Biology Building at the Refuge. Another of Marti's murals is above the doors into the Exhibit Hall at the Roswell Convention and Civic Center. Marti loved the natural world, and celebrated the area's geology, vegetation, and wildlife in her work.

We look forward to seeing you at the 2023 Dragonfly Festival!



The Legacy of Marti Zelt

As Meredith mentioned in the President's Corner, Roswell will be missing the gifted Marti Zelt. A two-time grant recipient of the Don Anderson Artist - in - Residence Program, she freely shared her talents with the Roswell community. Her unique tile mural at Bitter Lake, "Habitats of Bitter Lake" demonstrates the heart she had for the wild world and the animals who live in it. The mural



can be seen if you drive past the Visitor Center on to the bike trail parking lot. There is a box in front of the mural containing fliers that explain what the different mosaics on the mural represent.

A BEAUTIFUL BANQUET FOR MIGRATING BIRDS!

Jennifer Brito, Refuge Assistant Manager



When our feathered guests arrive this fall after their trips of many thousands of miles, they will find a wonderful gift of food planted by the Bitter Lake staff. While agriculture is essential for providing food to people around the world, farming practices can also be used to grow important food sources for wildlife. Bitter Lake NWR often plants traditional grain crops in specific areas on the refuge,

like in its moist soil units. During the summer, refuge staff spent two weeks planting millet in 22 acres of moist soil units. This work started with plowing up the existing vegetation in the fields using a tractor and offset disc to prepare the soil. Millet seed was then planted across the fields using a seed drill, and the fields were later flooded to water the seeds and encourage germination. Refuge staff will continue to water the fields throughout the summer in hopes of producing a substantial grain crop in the fall. Other native vegetation will also grow in the moist soil units because of the soil disturbance and access to water, and shorebirds, dragonflies, and other wildlife have already been using the fields this summer when they are being watered. Once the millet has matured, the refuge will flood the moist soil units to create small wetlands in the fall and winter. This will encourage migrating waterfowl like ducks, geese, and sandhill crane to use the units and forage on the millet. These moist soil units can be viewed from the east side of the refuge's wildlife drive, and the public often has good opportunities to spot a variety of bird species in this area.

Friends of Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge

4200 E. Pine Lodge Rd., Roswell, NM 88201 Contact phone: 575-244-6256

e-mail: bitterlakefriends@gmail.com, <http://www.friendsofbitterlakenwr.org/>



Friends of Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge

2023



DRAGONFLY FESTIVAL

SEPTEMBER 9th SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



Artist
Emilio
Valenzuela

TOUR SCHEDULE

SATURDAY TOURS

SEPTEMBER 9th

EARLY BIRD TOUR

6:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

DRAGONFLY TOURS

8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

WILDLIFE TOURS

8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

12:45 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.

3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

SUNDAY TOURS

SEPTEMBER 10th

DRAGONFLY TOURS

9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Reservations Start
August 1st

TOUR DESCRIPTIONS

DRAGONFLY TOUR

Our most popular tour! Join professional dragonfly experts and see some of over ninety species of dragonflies and damselflies that inhabit the refuge. Capturing wild specimens, the guide will give you an up-close experience with these fascinating insects.

BIRDING TOUR

Join some of our local bird experts and discover some of over three hundred and fifty bird species that visit the refuge. Named as "Wetlands of International Importance," Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge provides an outstanding bird watching opportunity for both beginning and experienced bird watchers.

REFUGE WILDLIFE TOUR

Join a wildlife biologist on this hands on tour and experience where many wildlife species call home. Visitors will be led to a variety of wildlife field stations where they will observe some of the unique wildlife that inhabit the refuge. Stations include a reptile display tank, fish trapping and invertebrate display.

Great Family Fun!

Live Butterfly Release Event

Kids Fishing Pool

Arts & Crafts

Children's Scavenger Hunt



Live Bird & Bat Programs 11:00 a.m. & 2:00 p.m.

www.fws.gov/refuge/bitter_lake/

For Reservations Call (575) 244-6256

Friends of Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge



Membership Form

- Individual \$10 Family \$15
 Student \$5 Business \$50

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Mail to:

Friends of Bitter Lake NWR
 4200 E. Pine Lodge Rd.
 Roswell, NM 88201

Friends of Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge
 Membership Form Instructions



Just two easy steps to join:

1. Complete the form on the left side of the sheet and mail it with your dues to the Refuge.
2. Complete the Membership Card below and keep it for your records.
3. Membership includes 10% discount at the Nature Store.

(Fold Here)



Friends of Bitter Lake
 Membership Card

www.friendsofbitterlake.org
 (575) 244-6256

Name: _____

Date: _____

*Membership expires 1 year from above date.

Friends of Bitter Lake NWR
4200 East Pine Lodge Road
Roswell, NM 88201