

Field Notes

May 2024



Greetings Friends!

We have lots to share with you this month.

First, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game will be conducting prescribed burns in conjunction with the Alaska Division of Forestry and Fire Protection. They could be starting as early as Monday, May 13. You can read more about the scope and purpose of the prescribed burns below.

The Design Alaska Wild Arts Walk is also just around the corner. We will be hosting over 30 artists on the Refuge this year. If you are or know an artist who may be interested in applying, be sure to check out the application link below. Applications are due by May 24th.

Camp Habitat has a few more spots available. Be sure to check out the open programs and register your campers for a week full of fun this summer!

See you at the Refuge!

Grace & Melanie
Friends of Creamer's Field Staff

Photo: February vs. late April on Jussila Creek. Photo by Melanie Graeff.

PUBLIC NOTICE: State to Conduct Prescribed Burns at Creamer's Field



FROM THE ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME:

The Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DOF) will be partnering with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to conduct multiple prescribed burns at Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge near Fairbanks starting as early as Monday, May 13 – weather and fuel conditions permitting.

The burn total will be approximately 40 acres on the 2,500-acre refuge, and will occur on the main refuge fields, to the east of the farmhouse and barns. Burning the dried grass now will enhance waterfowl and wildlife habitat, while also reducing the potential for wildfires later this summer when conditions are hotter and drier.

"These prescribed burns are a valuable tool for habitat management," said Nate LaShomb, a wildlife technician with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Fairbanks. "Prescribed fire mimics the results of naturally occurring wildfires in a more controlled setting; the fires enhance soil quality and promote native plant diversity. Post-fire conditions benefit many species and results in more nesting habitat for migratory birds and increased browse for our resident moose."

Smoke from the fire will likely be visible throughout Fairbanks during the burn, but efforts will be made to minimize smoke impacts to the public. The refuge will remain open during the prescribed burns, but specific areas may be closed for firefighters and public safety. Signs will be posted at trailheads to alert visitors of any closed areas.

The prescribed burn also provides valuable, hands-on training for DOF's wildland firefighters as they prepare for the upcoming wildland fire season. It takes about 12 people to light and monitor the fire, and fire managers expect the project to take one or two operational periods to complete.

"Burning the grass at Creamer's Field helps provide our firefighters with an excellent opportunity to put their training to work in advance of the upcoming fire season," said Fairbanks Area Fire Management Officer Gordon Amundson.

Firefighters will not start the burn if the temperature, wind speed and direction, relative humidity and other conditions exceed the parameters laid out in the burn plan. A test burn will be conducted to make sure conditions are favorable on the day the burn is scheduled.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game manages the Creamer's Field refuge to provide habitat for migratory waterfowl and for compatible public uses including wildlife viewing, research, nature education and other forms of nonmotorized recreation.

Contact:
Clint Cooper, Department of Fish & Game, 907-459-7223, clint.cooper@alaska.gov
Lily Coyle, Division of Forestry & Fire Protection, 907-725-9382, lily.coyle@alaska.gov

UPCOMING EVENTS & PROGRAMS

Join the Friends of Creamer's Field for our 17th annual Design Alaska Wild Arts Walk.

Walk the Creamer's Field trails amongst the birds and flowers beneath the warmth of the summer sun and immerse yourselves in artwork from over 30 local artists! They will be showcasing and selling art of all kinds. You can find that perfect artwork to take home or find gifts for friends and family. Choose from unique paintings, prints, pottery, photography, and more.

Watch local artists race against the clock to complete a masterpiece at the Quick Draw Event, starting at 1 p.m.

Admission is \$5.00 per person for 18+, 17 and under are FREE. Upon admission, each family receives a collector's edition Wild Arts Walk mug courtesy of Design Alaska!

All proceeds go to support the Friends of Creamer's Field year-round educational programs and our wonderful local artists!

Applications Open Design Alaska Wild Arts Walk

Are you or do you know an artist? Join Friends of Creamer's Field for the 17th annual Design Alaska Wild Arts Walk! Applications are now open.

This annual community event that promotes the unique qualities of Creamer's Field as a venue for nature observation and artistic inspiration. Our goal is to encourage visitors to explore the Refuge beyond the front fields. The event is a fundraiser for Friends of Creamer's Field's year-round programs and events that promote environmental stewardship and lifelong learning through experience, awareness, appreciation, and conservation of the natural and historic resources of Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge.



Donor Spotlight: Lotto Alaska

We send a heartfelt thank you to Lotto Alaska for their generous donation to Friends of Creamer's Field in support of our programs and the Refuge! We are so excited to start a summer full of free community programs and projects to improve the Refuge. THANK YOU!

Photo: Executive Director Grace Nelson accepts check from Alaska Lotto's Dave Lambert.

Refuge Hosts Needed

Creamer's Field is looking for volunteer Refuge Hosts! The volunteer timeframe is May 18 (or earlier) until June 24. Duties include staffing and greeting visitors at the Farmhouse Visitor Center, minor clean-up/maintenance, mowing, and trimming of the 8 acres near the historic farm buildings. Amenities include a full-hook up, sewer, electricity, and a quiet idyllic residence site at the refuge!

If you are interested, please contact Mark Ross at (907) 459-7301 or mark.ross@alaska.gov.

at Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge

Refuge Host Wanted

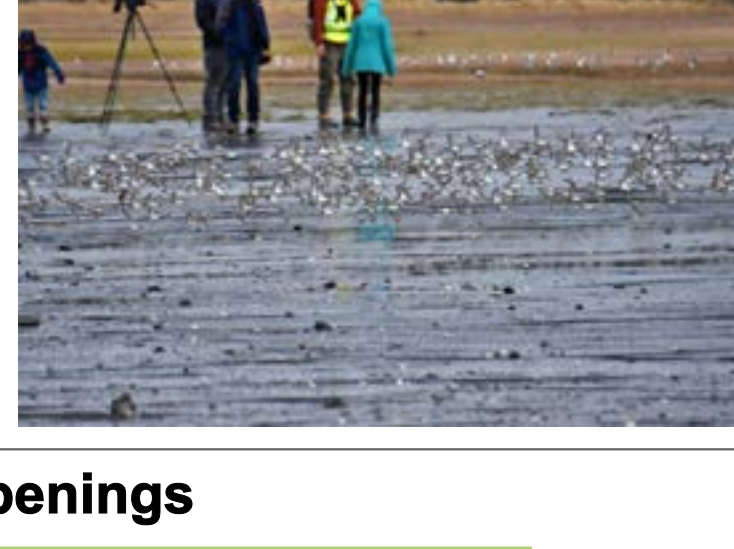
May 18 (or earlier) until June 24

- Amenities include:** full hook-up: sewer, electricity, and quiet idyllic residence site.
- Duties description:**
- Staff the Farmhouse Visitor Center on Sat, Sun, Mon from 9:30am-5pm.
 - Greet visitors to the refuge,
 - sell gift shop items,
 - maintain visitor use logs,
 - minor clean-up/maintenance.
 - Grounds keeping: mowing and trimming ~8 acres near historic farm buildings.

Alaska Birding Festivals

Alaska's annual birding events honor culture and art, benefit tourism and local economies, highlight conservation issues, and truly celebrate birds!

View the festivals happening in 2024 here:



Other Happenings



Spring Birds at Creamer's Field Arctic Audubon
May 11, 2024 | 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Meet at the Farmhouse parking lot. We will explore the ponds and ephemeral wetlands of Creamer's Field for returning waterfowl, raptors, and songbirds, as well as check for lingering waterfowl in the front fields. Trip led by Jeff Walters.

Birding by Ear at Creamer's Field Arctic Audubon
May 18, 2024 | 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

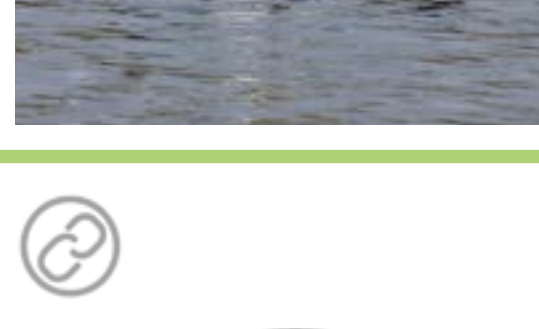
Meet at the farmhouse parking lot. What do you hear? Returning songbirds stake out nesting territory by singing, and this is a hopping time of year! Learn more about identifying birds by sound. Trip led by JJ Frost.

Fairbanks Birding Challenge Alaska Songbird Institute May 1 - 31, 2024

Register now for this year's Fairbanks Birding Challenge! This month-long, all-ages, all-abilities, outdoor scavenger hunt takes place during spring migration throughout the Fairbanks North Star Borough. It is open to everyone from beginning birdwatchers to seasoned pros. Participate as an individual, or as a team/family. All proceeds support the Alaska Songbird Institute's Creamer's Field Migration Station.

Thank you for being a Friend!

As a 100% community funded organization, your support allows us to offer free educational programs to the Fairbanks community and its visitors. This year we intend to expand our educational outreach, resurface the parking lot closest to the barns, improve trail accessibility, and update our interpretive signage throughout the Refuge.



Our Contact Information
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Mission Statement
"Inspiring environmental stewardship and lifelong learning through experience, awareness, appreciation and conservation of the natural and historic resources of Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge."