

Field Notes

September 2024



Greetings Friends!

The Refuge is now covered in beautiful shades of orange and yellow, and the usual sounds of cranes or ducks have been replaced by the gentle rustle of falling leaves and the light pitter-patter of rain on the Farmhouse roof.

August was an exciting month for the Refuge. We said goodbye to 1,600 cranes from Creamer's Field during the 27th annual Tanana Valley Sandhill Crane Festival. The festival featured keynote speaker Liliانا Naves from the Alaska Department of Fish & Game and Alaskan artist Kassandra Mirosh. Participants enjoyed crafts, nature walks, seminars, music, and of course, crane watching!

We're looking forward to our Halloween program, Creepy Critters: Masters of Disguise, on October 18th from 4 PM to 8 PM. We hope you'll join us as we explore the Alaskan animals who adapt to the seasons by changing their coat. Participants will enjoy activities, crafts, and treats.

See you at the Refuge!

Grace & Melanie
Friends of Creamer's Field Staff

Photo: Jussilla Creek Bridge, September 2024.

UPCOMING EVENTS & PROGRAMS

You can't see them, but they see you! Come to this year's Creepy Critters program, Masters of Disguise!

The event will be on October 18th from 4:00 – 8:00 pm at the Creamer's Field Farmhouse Visitor Center. Learn all about unique Alaskan animals that adapt their coats to blend into their snowy surroundings during the wintertime months! Come on by our FREE event to learn about their complex life cycles and habitats while enjoying activities, crafts, treats, and prizes!

Costumes are always encouraged! Try and spot the creatures hiding in plain sight!



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Co-op Market Grocery & Deli and the amazing shoppers who chose to round up in June to support our free community programs!

THANK YOU!



UPDATED HOURS: Farmhouse Visitor Center

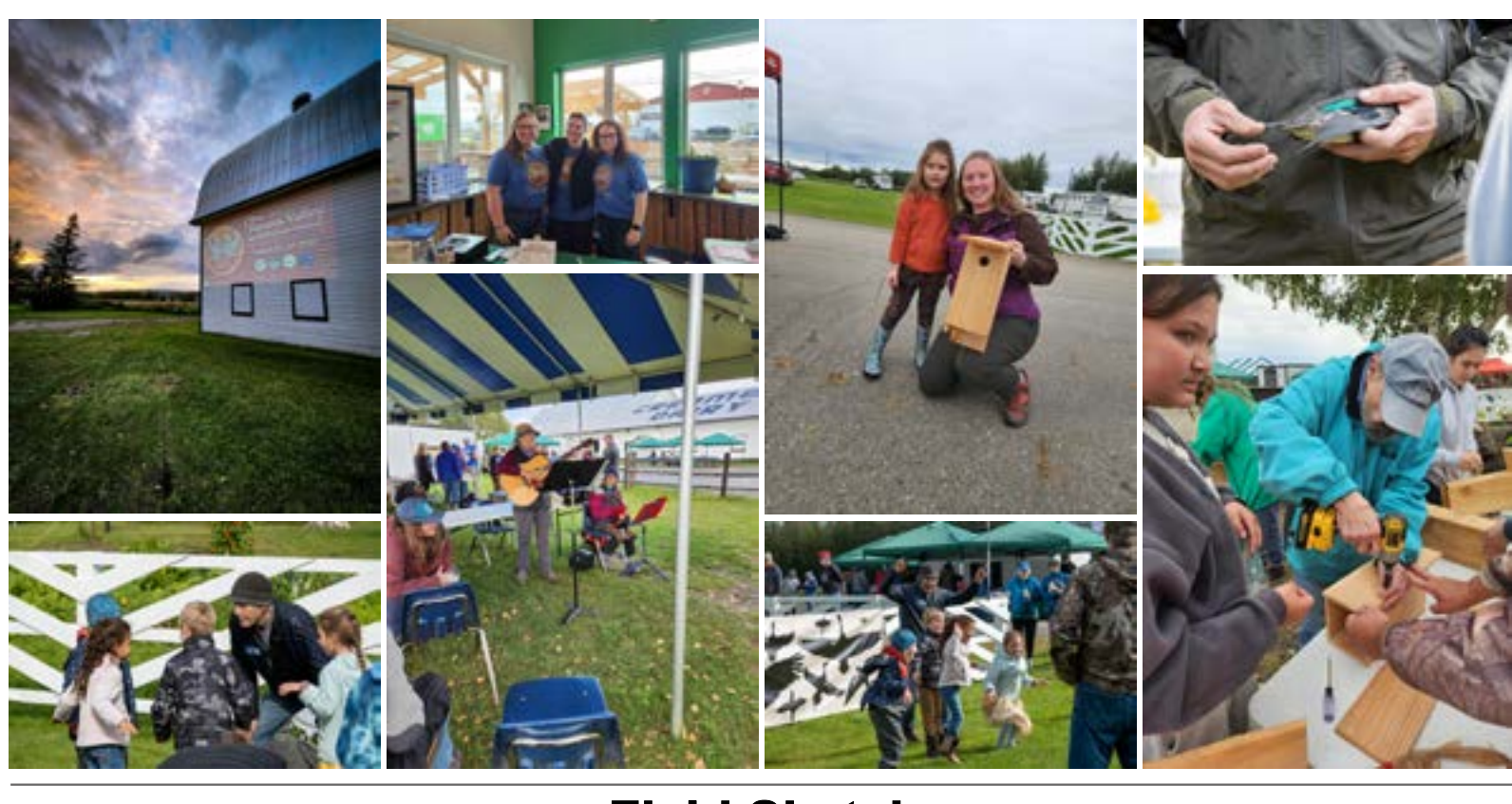
The seasons are changing and so are the operating hours for the Farmhouse Visitor Center!

Reminder that the trails are always open!



2024 Tanana Valley Sandhill Crane Festival Recap

Thank you to everyone who joined us at the 2024 Tanana Valley Sandhill Crane Festival. We had a peak of 1,600 cranes over the weekend. Human attendees enjoyed crane-themed crafts, nature walks, seminars, and music. We are already looking forward to next year's festival, which will take place from August 18 to 24, 2025!



Field Sketch

Presented by ADFG Biologist, Mark D. Ross

Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge
Field Sketches!
Mark D. Ross

Falconry, the art of training wild raptors to pursue and capture prey, is a style of hunting that began about 4,000 years ago... and continues today. Here at Creamer's Field the only type of hunting allowed in the fields along College Road is falconry. During fall you may see a falconer in the fields with a raptor flying free, hunting for waterfowl. Falconry birds are flown by folks that have an **Alaska Falconry Permit**, an **Alaska Hunting License** and the tested knowledge and housing to keep and hunt with birds of prey such as hawks and falcons.

Falconry is the only form of hunting in America where wild quarry is taken with another wild creature... and the wild raptor is flying free; free to return to the falconer or to the wild.

Learn more:
See: Falcon flights of Fall see Birds of Prey--LIVE!! at Creamer's Field

Flying Falcons at Creamer's Field

Not so long-ago Peregrine Falcon populations were in drastic decline.

During 1940' - 60", the falcons were ingesting the pesticide DDT that bioaccumulated in their prey. DDT reduced eggshell thickness. During incubation, eggs cracked and embryos died, resulting in widespread population declines for many raptor species. Some Peregrine Falcon populations, such as the eastern North American population, were extirpated (became locally extinct). All populations declined. DDT was eventually banned. Starting in the 1970's, biologists and falconers breed Peregrines in captivity and released the healthy birds into the wild.

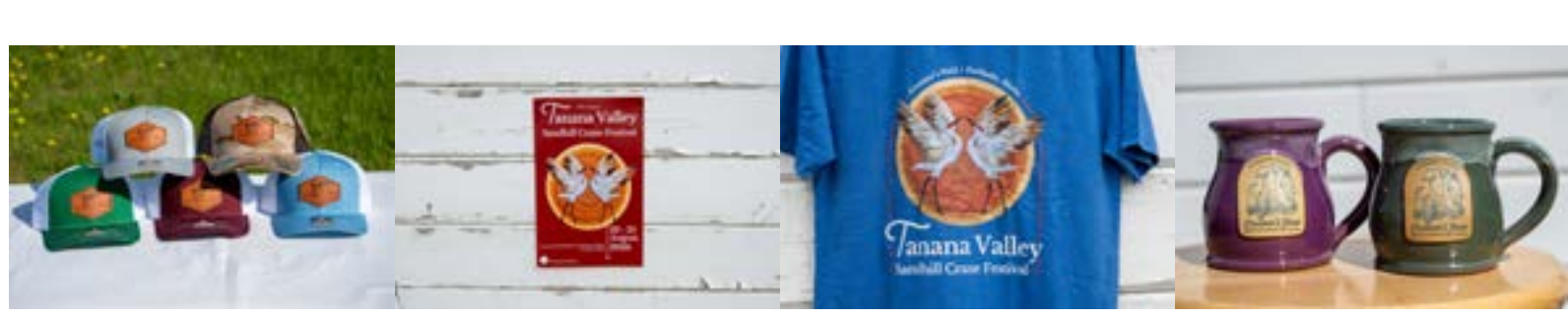
As a Peregrine dives pursuing its favored prey--ducks, a tremendous tearing sound is heard, like the ripping of a canvas sheet. These birds dive at speeds approaching 200 mph... or more. The sound, like a roaring wind, is one of the most spectacular sounds in nature.

Thanks to the work of falconers and biologists the introduction of captive bred peregrines to the wild was a success. In the year 1999 the Peregrine was removed from the endangered species list. Now, in the middle Tanana River Valley, nearly every cliff above a river has a Peregrine Falcon eyrie (nest site). In 2010 the United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) added Falconry to its "List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity".

Creamer's Field Online Store

Didn't have a chance to pick up a 2024 Tanana Valley Sandhill Crane Festival Shirt? No worries! You can now order all 2024 Tanana Valley Sandhill Crane Festival merch and so much more on our online store!

Visit the online store here:



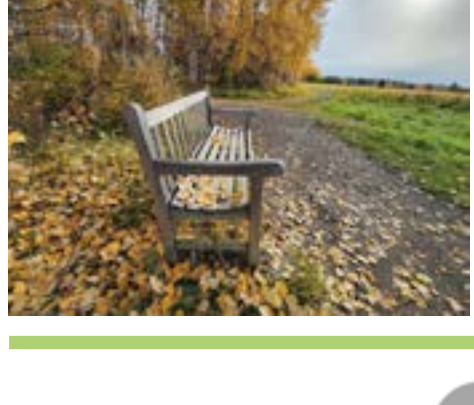
Other Happenings



Arctic Audubon: Feathered Finds of 2024

Join us for Feathered Finds of 2024, the first program of our Winter Speaker Series on Monday, October 7 at 6:30 PM at the Noel Wien Public Library!

This free program will feature local birders and photographers showcasing their best birding highlights of 2024! Listen to their stories of discovery while viewing their incredible photos.



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."