

Nature Notes

NEWS FROM DURANGO NATURE STUDIES



FALL 2004

TOP 10 REASONS to become a Volunteer Naturalist

10. Be a nature geek with newly learned natural history facts, not to mention the “scat” song.

9. Have an impact. Though our volunteers may move on to other things, they continue to make an impact with their newfound knowledge, like ripples in a pond.



Volunteer Tami Bradshaw teaches a group of youngsters about plants. Note the striped sock on the outside of the child's shoe. That's his "seed collector."

8. 100+ page training manual, covering everything from natural history to child development to games to play when you want to teach 1st graders about plants. It's yours to keep.

7. Career advancement. We have trained many a college student in the art of interpretation and environmental education. We often write letters of recommendation for our volunteers.

6. Challenge yourself. “[This is] not something you just dabble in – it’s a commitment that you gotta see through to the end. [It was] fun at times, challenging at times – always well worth it and rewarding.” Spring 2004 volunteer training alum.

5. Make new friends. Some of our volunteers have become fast friends, and we even unwittingly played matchmaker for a couple.

4. Meet cool people. We never cease to be amazed at the diversity and caring of our volunteers which include a pilot, local artists, teachers, a chemist, organic growers, landscapers, and local business owners, just to name a few.

3. Undying gratitude. National estimates value volunteer time at over \$17 per hour. At this rate, our volunteers provide tens of thousands of dollars in in-kind donations of time and expertise. With a staff of three, we simply could not do what we do without our volunteers.

2. Get outside & play with kids. “Children are so eager to absorb information. It is pretty amazing how little experience many kids have with

the outdoors and nature.” Spring 2004 volunteer training alum.

And the number one reason to become a Volunteer Naturalist...

Give back to the community. “Nothing feels better than introducing new concepts or ideas into these bright youngsters. Hopefully we have sparked an interest or maybe just a little respect and awe for the outdoors, both big and little, beautiful or ugly, awesome or simply awe-struck.” Spring 2004 volunteer training alum.

Volunteer Naturalist Training: Fall 2004

Join the more than 250 community members who have participated in this program since 1994.

Pagosa Training:
August 25th & 28th

Durango Training:
September 8th,
10th & 11th

Contact Jennifer at
382-9244 or
jen@durangonaturestudies.org
for more information

Celebrating 10 years of bringing nature into the lives of all people.

DURANGO NATURE STUDIES

Nature Notes · Fall 2004

MISSION

Durango Nature Studies is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to increasing awareness of, knowledge of, and respect for the natural world by providing diverse and hands-on learning experiences for all ages.

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Program Director

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Community Resource Coordinator

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Project Director, Dgo Nature Center

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DURANGONATURESTUDIES.ORG

BRINGING NATURE INTO THE
LIVES OF ALL PEOPLE

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This fall promises to be a busy time for Durango Nature Studies staff, as we kick off our 21st season of the Children Discovering Nature field trip program. We anticipate that more than 1,200 elementary school students will join us in the next few months to explore and learn in nature's classroom. They'll catch insects, search for animal tracks, and get their hands dirty with some good clean fun.

But what purpose do such experiences serve? Like all DNS programs, these school-based programs help participants develop a sense of awareness and respect for their natural surroundings. But they also support the important work area educators accomplish in their classrooms every day. Because all DNS school programs are tied to local and state educational standards, they reinforce classroom learning and help prepare another generation for life's many challenges. To keep these programs accessible to the broadest possible audience, DNS relies on the generous support of community members like you.

There are many ways that you can become involved. If you're not a member, consider joining our family of more than 300 member households. If you are currently a supporter, you might surprise a friend with a gift membership, or increase your own level of giving. Local businesses may choose to demonstrate their community goodwill by becoming a corporate member or underwriting a particular program or event. A gift to the DNS endowment fund provides a great way to ensure the longevity and continued vitality of our organization. And, as our cover story illustrates, volunteer time is one of the most precious resources that you, as a community member, can provide.

Whether you choose to give of your time and talents or to make a financial contribution, the support of civic-minded people like you is what keeps Durango

Nature Studies going strong!



Lisa K. Branner

Lisa K. Branner

New & Renewing Donors

May through July 2004

\$2,500 +

BP America
Jacob and Terese Hershey Foundation
Kinder Morgan Foundation

\$1,000 +

Terese Hershey

\$250 +

Jerry & Charlotte Fischer
Kiwanis Club of Durango
San Juan Audubon Society
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Sue & Walker Wallace

\$100 +

Will Bussard • Winston Dines • Mariel Johnson
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\$10 +

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Volunteer Members

Chester Anderson • Tanya Bartow
LaVonne Boyle • Lynn Deering • Diane Downing
Jennifer Drozd • Flo Gaia • Ted Hanson
Eilene Lyon • Kerrie Neet • Anne Rapp
Joel Richards • Stacey Simperts • Christine Siodla

Corporate

Christine Waddell

Fall 2004 Calendar of Events

Take a Walk on the Wild Side

Come out to hike the trails, enjoy a picnic, and soak up the sights at Durango Nature Center!

Hours: Sat.: 10am - 4pm from Sept. 11- Oct 30.

Tues. - Fri: 9 am - noon from Sept. 10 - Oct. 29

Durango Nature Center Workshops

• Early Childhood Teacher and Parent Nature Education Workshop: Project Wild

Join us for this exciting workshop. You'll leave with a 100+ page curriculum, and several ready-to-go activities for ages 3-8.

Date: Sept. 25th, 10am-4pm.

Registration deadline : Sept. 23rd

Cost: \$10 members/\$15 nonmembers



• Birding in Bondad

We'll explore the Nature Center and other southern La Plata County locations. Our eyes will be ready to spot land and water birds, area residents and surprise fall migrants. All level of expertise welcome. Saturday date and time in September TBA. Cost: FREE.

• Go Lightly into the Wilderness

Participants will collect wild edibles, make an ultralight backpacker's stove from recycled materials, and explore tarps and hammocks as lightweight tent alternatives.

Date: Oct. 23, 10am - 4pm

Cost: Free

• Traditional Living Skills

Adults and families, join us for a day of making fire without matches, making rope (cordage) from natural fibers, dying wool with natural plant dyes, animal tracking and more.

Saturday date in October to be announced, 10am - 4pm

Cost: \$5 to cover materials

Full Moon Hikes

• Hiking the Harvest Moon at Purgatory Flats

Date: Tues., Sept. 28, 6:30 - 8:30pm

\$3 members/\$5 for non-members.

• Hiking the Hunters Moon at Chris Park

Date: Wed., Oct. 27, 6 - 8pm

\$3 members/\$5 for non-members.

Other Events & Happenings

• Volunteer Naturalist Training

See front page article for dates and more information.

• Four Corners Folk Festival DNS Kids Tent

Visit Durango Nature Studies at the Kids tent on September 4 and 5 from 11am to 3pm for hands-on learning about plants and critters. Stories, games, and art projects abound! Visit www.folkwest.com or call (970) 731-5582 for tickets.

• A reading from *The Great Divide: The Rocky Mountains in the American Mind*

Join DNS and the Mountain Studies Institute for an evening with author Gary Ferguson (author of 14 books and articles in *Outside* and *Sierra* magazines). In discussing *The Great Divide*, Gary will spin magnificent tales about the vivid characters who have peopled our majestic region.

Thurs., Oct. 7th ,Time and ticket fees TBA.

Location: The Abbey Theatre

YES! I want to support nature education
in the Four Corners!



Name _____
Street Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
E-mail _____

Please send me e-mail reminders of upcoming DNS events and news.

STANDARD MEMBERSHIP

- Student \$10
 Individual \$25
 Family \$50

PREMIUM MEMBERSHIP

- Enos Mills Club \$100
 Aldo Leopold Club \$250
 John Muir Club \$500
 Rachel Carson Club \$1000

Please choose one (\$100+ donation only)

T-shirt (S, M, L, XL) Hat Mug No thanks

CHECK ENCLOSED CREDIT CARD (MC/VISA ONLY)

Please note that DNS loses 3.28% on every credit card membership.

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

MAIL TO: PO BOX 3808 DURANGO CO 81302

VISIT WWW.DURANGONATURESTUDIES.ORG OR
CALL 970.382.9244 FOR MORE INFORMATION

VALUABLE VOLUNTEER: LAVONNE BOYLE

LaVonne began volunteering with Durango Nature Studies shortly after she moved to Durango in the fall of 1999. However, it's only been recently that we have come to appreciate what an interesting woman LaVonne is when she isn't volunteering countless hours to DNS doing site maintenance, taking kids on nature walks, or helping with fund raisers.



Before retiring, LaVonne was a computer programmer in the Bay Area, starting out when they still used punch cards and keeping up as the industry evolved. She is also an accomplished pilot and is a certified flight instructor. She has three grown children and three grandchildren, of which she is very proud. Recently, she has been involved with Vision Quest, a personal spiritual retreat workshop, first as a participant and then as an instructor.

Retirement clearly hasn't slowed LaVonne down. In fact, she was recently lamenting that she hasn't gotten very far through her stack of summer reading. We, for one, are glad to hear it. Thanks LaVonne for all your help!

JR. NATURALIST CORNER: (FOR KIDS OR KIDS AT HEART)

Tape this list to a small container (a tin cup is great!) and head outside for an autumn scavenger hunt. Collect only objects that you can take without hurting any living thing. You are only borrowing these items. Return everything to nature except the last two things on the list, and have fun!

- A feather • A bone • A piece of fruit
- A seed that can be carried by the wind
- A seed that would stick to an animal
- A seed that would be eaten by an animal
- A piece of bark that is not on a tree
- An insect exoskeleton (outer shell)
- A white stone the size of your thumbnail
- Something perfectly straight
- Something that makes a noise
- A chewed leaf (not by you!)
- A chewed twig (not by you!)
- Something fuzzy • Something you like • An eggshell
- Something that smells good • A yellow leaf
- A piece of burnt wood • A thorn • A flower petal
- 5 pieces of litter
- A big smile



POST OFFICE BOX 3808
DURANGO, CO 81302

Join Us!

The support of people like you enables us to continue providing high-quality environmental education throughout the Four Corners. Join our family of 300 member households today and help us bring nature into the lives of all people! Call Jennifer at 970-382-9244.

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