

SUMMER 2015



Volunteer News

TIME FOR A

PICNIC

The word "PICNIC" is written in large, bold, orange letters with a black outline. Each letter contains a black silhouette of a picnic-related activity: 'P' shows a person carrying a tray; 'I' shows a person sitting on a bench; 'C' shows a picnic table with a basket; 'N' shows a person holding a child; 'I' shows a person grilling; 'C' shows a person playing a game; 'N' shows a person playing a game; 'I' shows a person playing a game; 'C' shows a person playing a game.

Summer is a great time to gather and celebrate all you do for the Natural Areas Department. Bring your family and join us!

- Date:** Saturday, August 1
Place: Spring Canyon Park
Schedule: 9:00: Hiking with a staff member
10:00: Games begin
11:00: Food served
Featuring: Dessert contest and Cowtown Band



RSVP required!
Watch your e-mailbox in July for
the invitation

WELCOME NEWBIES!



Meet Caitlin Ceci

Caitlin Ceci is the Community Programs Educator. She spent the last seven years gallivanting around the country working as a ranger and naturalist for the National Park Service. Her love of wilderness and the natural world was born on her first trip west from her home in Trenton, New Jersey at age nine. She graduated with a degree in Evolutionary Anthropology from Rutgers University along with a strong interest in ecology. She moved to Fort Collins last year from Estes Park and is excited to live in such a vibrant community! Caitlin likes to spend her free time reading, exploring the backcountry, taking her dogs on adventures, and traveling.

Meet Gretchen Johnson

Aloha volunteers!

I had the great pleasure of becoming a Master Naturalist in 2014 and then starting as Education Assistant in February 2015.

My migratory path has taken me all around and now I have landed in fabulous Fort Collins. To sum it up I was born in Illinois, raised in New Jersey, and grew up in Florida. I attended the University of Colorado, Boulder (don't hate me), where I studied geography. From there I embarked to West Africa where I was a Peace Corps Volunteer. Then off to Hawaii for ten years, where I was an interpretive ranger for US Fish and Wildlife Service and a wildlife biologist for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. I mostly worked on tiny islands and atolls northwest of Hawaii where the populations varied from two–five people, 200 monk seals, and a few million birds. This is where my bird nerdiness set in and continues today. Since then, I have traveled around the world, worked at Mesa Verde, and now have made Fort Collins my home.

When I'm not working, you can still usually still find me exploring our natural areas—see you out there!



WELCOME NEWBIES!

Meet the new Master Naturalist class of 2015! They deliver high quality programming to diverse groups on the natural areas.

Diana Anderson
Rob Butcher
Denny Cook
Tom D'Albergaria
Jen Davis
Shawna Drewer
Jeni Goodnow
Dave Grossett

Norland Hall
Lisa Keeton
Teri Kman
Rusty Morehouse
Ryan Nicholson
Susan Panico
Sheila Webber
Georgia Wilson



Meet the new Master Naturalist Assistants class of 2015! The MNs depend on them to keep the programs rolling smoothly.

Becca Austin
Laura Davis
Patrick Hall
Ernie Pope
Rick Robbins
Susan Sharrock

Sally Skridulis
Michael Staiano
Jane Thayer
Brenda Tracy
David Tweedale
Blake Waller

**Volunteer Ranger Assistants
Top Ten for Contributions
To Date:**

Jay Adams*
Everett Carlson
Andrea Elson
Karl Krahnke
Lynn Larkin
Gene Packer
Doug Schmidt*
Linda Zimmerman
Indy Hart
Ritchie Clark

*Trained in February, 2015

WELCOME NEWBIES!

Meet the Restoration Corps of 2015! This group of river enthusiasts dedicate their time to restoration projects along the Poudre River twice a week, May through September. Volunteers work on projects such as planting, seeding, fence removal, weeding, and trail work.

Barb Kittell
Barb Maynard
Bill Hintze
Cara Doyle
Caroline Kane
Catherine Kane
Corinne Smith
Daniel Wightman Yacobucci
David Kepler
Ginger Stevens
Jammie Tovar
Jan Waterman
Jane Thayer
Jeannie Williamson
Jeff Buraglio
John S. Atkinson
Kimberly Nelson
Linda Latham
Lynn Latham
Mary Hanson
Meg Palmer
Michael Staiano
Mike Seifert
Nancy Yacobucci
Nicol Williams
Peter Haney
Rachel Tovar
Ray Hanson
Sarah Dentoni
Steven Caldwell

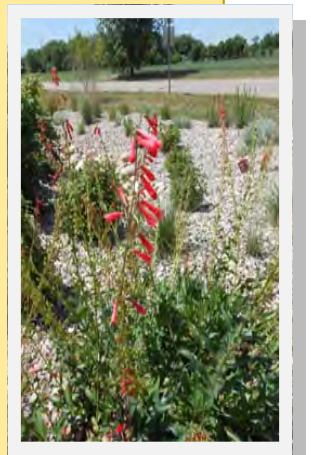


The Nix Farm Native Plant Gardens are looking amazing! Yes, the copious amount of rain had a lot to do with it but the new Nix Farm Gardeners of 2015 deserve copious amounts of credit too!

New gardeners include:

James and Kathy Bowers, Mary DeLong, Joyce Dempsey, Michael Holland Karen LaGoo, Karla Lauritsen, Chris Scheller, David Tippets, Bob Vocke, Greg White, and Jeannie Williamson.

Returning gardeners are David Tweedale and Nancy Courtney.



SERVICE LEARNING HIGHLIGHTS

This spring, 274 volunteers from local organizations pitched in to plant 2,554 shrubs in restoration sites along the Poudre River at Topminnow, McMurry, and North Shields Ponds natural areas. Volunteers braved the torrential rains, mud, mosquitos, and even bull snakes in order to improve the river corridor and give back to our community.

Partnerships are such an important part of the Service Learning Program and help us to accomplish an amazing amount of work. Many of these volunteers come back year after year, recruiting friends, co-workers, and family members to join in and take care of the natural areas they love.

Thank you to the following organizations:

Kinard Middle School
Earth Day Volunteers
CSUnity
Zeta Tau Alpha
United Way
Odell Brewing Company
Anheuser-Busch
City of Fort Collins Restoration Corps



THANK YOU, EVERYONE!

ARE YOU FACEBOOKING?

How about Twitter?

The Natural Areas Department is now on social media!

You can get timely updates, interesting tidbits and join the conversation with the Natural Areas Department. Like us on Facebook ([FCNaturalAreas](https://www.facebook.com/FCNaturalAreas)) and follow us on [Twitter@FCNaturalAreas](https://twitter.com/FCNaturalAreas).

Recent posts/tweets include trail openings/closures due to mud, upcoming volunteer project announcements, photos of educational activities, a link to the new fishing brochure and river video, and much more. You can be part of the conversation by using [#FCTrails](https://twitter.com/FCNaturalAreas) to mark your tweets updating trail conditions.

Remember to check trail conditions at fcgov.com/naturalareas/status.php before heading out.



NATURAL AREAS DEPARTMENT RELEASES NEW VIDEO



A more diverse and healthy Cache la Poudre river is a lasting conservation legacy for the Fort Collins community, the river, and the river's wildlife. Since 2011, the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department and its partners have been leaders in restoring and revitalizing the Cache la Poudre River through downtown Fort Collins and beyond. Now, after years of planning and federal permitting, the Natural Areas Department and its partners have completed three major river restoration projects. River restoration is underway right now and you are part of this inspirational work!

Watch a 3 minute video at fcgov.com/naturalareas. Please forward the video to your friends, family, and others who like you, value our Cache la Poudre River!

naturally yours

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Meet David Tweedale



If you've been out to Nix Farm lately, you've no doubt noticed how lovely the landscaping looks thanks to all the new garden volunteers.

David Tweedale has been their tireless leader this year.

David started volunteering with the Natural Areas Department in 2014 as part of the new Volunteer Restoration Corps program. He moved into the garden and has been dedicated to it ever since. He even kept up with the long list of tasks throughout the off-season. In addition to his outdoor work, David is also helping to edit a book about Soapstone Prairie and he regularly attends several Citizen Advisory board meetings to keep on top of conservation efforts.

David has had, by his own admission, an eclectic career life. He's done everything from working in a luggage factory to pulling wool from sheep pelts, to working for the phone company. His last job was with the Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands at CSU. To top it off he is also an Episcopal Priest and was a volunteer hospital chaplain for 10 years. His hobbies are dancing, photography, and reading. After he retired, David went on the City website and typed in "volunteer" and the Natural Areas Department came up. The rest, as they say, is history.

This year David has added Master Naturalist Assistant to his resume and he seems to be discovering some hidden talents. When asked what he likes most about volunteering with Natural Areas, he said "First and foremost, it is the people, both staff and other volunteers." He also likes the feeling that he is making a small difference.



**David, you are making a big difference!
Thank you!**

A River Runs Through It...

The City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department owns and manages 17 natural areas along 13 miles of the Cache la Poudre River. From Butterfly Woods to Arapaho Bend natural areas, this amazing waterway was even more amazing this spring when dozens of birders visited from across Colorado. The attraction? Neotropical migrant birds that sought refuge along the Poudre River as they made their journeys to breeding grounds. Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory ornithologist, Arvind Panjabi, noted that all the cool, wet weather in May pushed these birds down to low elevations, instead of passing high overhead.

Some highlights included: chestnut-sided warbler, magnolia warbler, American redstart, mourning warbler, black-throated gray warbler, green heron, olive-sided flycatcher, Swainson's thrush, black-headed grosbeak, willow flycatcher, dusky flycatcher, least flycatcher, yellow-billed cuckoo, and more. Some are rare here, some are not, but it was sure exciting this year!

David Leatherman, entomologist and local bird expert, noticed considerable migrant bird use of the boxelder trees (*Acer negundo*) along the river. He documented at least five different insects species in various life stages on these trees.

“Some insects, usually the larvae of moths, reconfigure the leaf around them, hold it in place with silk, and then eat their way out. Sometimes predators like birds with a search image for defective or abnormal leaves find them and eat them. When this happens early on, other insects (aphids, earwigs) or spiders may move into the pre-made structure. Birds that hunt defective leaves are often rewarded with these secondary insects if the original maker is gone.” Dave advises birders to get familiar with this tree and watch for birds as they hunt for these insect and spider treats.

All photos courtesy of David Leatherman

