

The Hourglass

Newsletter of Friends of the Dunes

Vol. 26 No. 1

February 2015



Annual Christmas Bird Count Data Released

On a beautiful early January day seventeen enthusiastic birders from all parts of the state gathered for the annual Great Sand Dunes Christmas Bird Count. The count is sponsored nationally by the Audubon Society and locally by Friends of the Dunes.

The Audubon Society proposed the count in 1900 as a holiday tradition to replace the then common Christmas Side Hunt in which groups would divide up into two teams to see which team could amass the most feathers in a one-day hunt.

Now in its 115th year and the longest-running winter bird survey in the United States, the CBC has provided valuable data for monitoring trends in bird populations and guiding conservation decisions.



Magpie wing print on the snow by Loreé Harvey. Article info from Loreé Harvey and the National Audubon Society

Species	Number
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2
Red-tailed Hawk	2
Rough-legged Hawk	4
Golden Eagle	2
American Kestrel	1
Prairie Falcon	1
Great Horned Owl	5
Northern Pygmy-Owl	1
Downy Woodpecker	1
Hairy Woodpecker	2
Northern Flicker	14
Gray Jay	4
Steller's Jay	18
Western Scrub-Jay	7
Pinyon Jay	7
Clark's Nutcracker	30
Black-billed Magpie	23
American Crow	6
Common Raven	28
Horned Lark	1
Black-capped Chickadee	3
Mountain Chickadee	33
Bushtit	47
Red-breasted Nuthatch	8
White-breasted Nuthatch	9
Pygmy Nuthatch	6
Brown Creeper	1
Mountain Bluebird	1
Townsend's Solitaire	2
Hermit Thrush	1
American Robin	14
American Tree Sparrow	3
Dark-eyed Junco	31
Dark-eyed (Gray-headed) Junco	13
Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco	15
Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco	4
Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco	13
Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco	1
Red Crossbill	1
Total Individuals	365
Total Species Reported	34

**Preserve America Youth Summit:
Developing Next Generation Stewards
August 4-7, 2015**

Next Generation Stewards: Celebrating Cultures is a four day program for Colorado middle and high school students and their teachers or service leaders at the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve and the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area in Colorado's historic San Luis Valley. Participants selected through a competitive application process are offered community service hours and full scholarships for all program costs, including meals, transportation and lodging. During the Summit participants will:

- Explore nationally significant historic properties
- Learn about the cultural heritage and people of the San Luis Valley
- Participate in hands-on learning activities
- Investigate interpretative approaches for National Parks and historic places
- Study new programs and approaches to preservation and archaeology
- Interact with other students and national and state leaders
- Serve on an ambitious service project
- Create recommendations for future generations
- Develop creative ideas for the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service
- Experience fun and unique activities



Students analyzing artifacts at the Preserve America Southwest Ancestral Landscapes Youth Summit, Mesa Verde Country, June 2014.

SPACE IS LIMITED!

Application deadline is April 24, 2015

Applications available online at:
www.preservationyouthsummit.org

For more information contact Jessika Buell at
youthsummits@conservationlegacy.org

Schedule of Events for April - September 2015

April

Saturday, April 18- Sunday, April 19 – **National Parks Fee Free Weekend**

Great Sand Dunes along with 133 National Park Service units will waive fees for visitors to experience America's treasures. Come and enjoy visitor center exhibits from 9am to 4:30pm and participate in a free ranger program or activity honoring the National Park Service.

May

Sunday, May 3 – **Music in the Park** – 3pm – 4:30pm

Great Sand Dunes welcomes acclaimed **singer/song-writer, Don Richmond**, to the park for a 1 hour performance. The Friends of the Dunes sponsored event will also include light snacks and hot beverages. This event is free to Friends of the Dunes members, and limited seating is available to the public for a small donation. **Anyone wishing to attend should contact the visitor center to reserve a seat.**

Friday, May 22 – **First day of Summer Ranger Programs** and extended Visitor Center hours

Great Sand Dunes will offer **daily ranger programs at the visitor center and amphitheater** starting Friday, May 22. All programs are free, fun, interactive, and designed to give visitors an understanding of all there is to see and do at Great Sand Dunes. This summer, in preparation for the **National Park Service Centennial Celebration** in 2016, the park will provide activities and programs for visitors to learn about the more than 400 national park units. For a detailed list of programs, visit www.nps.gov/grsa or call the visitor center at 719-378-6399.

June

Saturday, June 6 – **Junior Ranger Day** – 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Enjoy a morning full of junior ranger activities at the Visitor Center, Montville Nature Trail and Dunes Play Area. Kids of all ages can participate in a series of activities to **earn frisbees, t-shirts and other fun items**. This event is sponsored by the Friends of the Dunes. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/grsa or call the Visitor Center at 719-378-6399.

Sunday, June 14 – Thursday, June 18 – **Ambassadors for Wilderness Junior High Session**

Great Sand Dunes will welcome 10 San Luis Valley junior high students to participate in the park's immersive, outdoor leadership youth program. This program offers students the opportunity to explore the Sangre de Cristo Wilderness Area and participate in outdoor leadership skills while completing a service project. For more information, visit, www.nps.gov/grsa.

July

Sunday, July 12 – Saturday, July 18 – **Ambassadors for Wilderness High School Session**

Great Sand Dunes will welcome 10 San Luis Valley high school students to participate in the park's immersive, outdoor leadership youth program. This program offers students the opportunity to explore the Sangre de Cristo Wilderness Area and Great Sand Dunes Wilderness Area and participate in outdoor leadership skills while also completing a service project. For more information, visit, www.nps.gov/grsa.

Saturday, July 18 – **Friends of the Dunes Community Work Day**

The Friends of the Dunes and Great Sand Dunes will identify a park enhancement project to complete alongside 20 community members. The Friends of the Dunes will also sponsor a lunch after the project. To sign up to volunteer, contact the visitor center at 719-378-6399.

Sunday, July 26 – Friday, July 31 - **Ambassadors for Wilderness Advanced Session**

Great Sand Dunes will welcome graduates of the Ambassadors for Wilderness program to participate in the park's advanced outdoor leadership youth program. This program offers graduates the opportunity to explore wilderness management in depth through hands-on seminars and exploratory field trips in the Sangre de Cristo Wilderness Area and Great Sand Dunes Wilderness Area. For more information, visit, www.nps.gov/grsa.

August

Tues., August 4 – Friday, August 7 – **Great Sand Dunes/Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Youth Summit**

Great Sand Dunes in partnership with Conservation Legacy, the State Historical Fund and the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area will be hosting a **4-day Youth Summit for 40 junior high and high school students from Colorado**. The Youth Summit, Celebrating Cultures: Next Generation Stewards, will allow participants to visit prehistoric and historic archeology sites and participate in cultural demonstrations to enhance their understanding of the myriad of cultures that called the San Luis Valley home while also understanding how current generations are preserving their heritage. For more information, contact the visitor center.

Saturday, August 15 – **Friends of the Dunes Community Work Day**

The Friends of the Dunes and Great Sand Dunes will identify a park enhancement project to complete alongside 20 community members. The Friends of the Dunes will also sponsor a lunch after the project. To sign up to volunteer, contact the visitor center at 719-378-6399.

Tuesday, August 25 - **National Park Service Birthday**

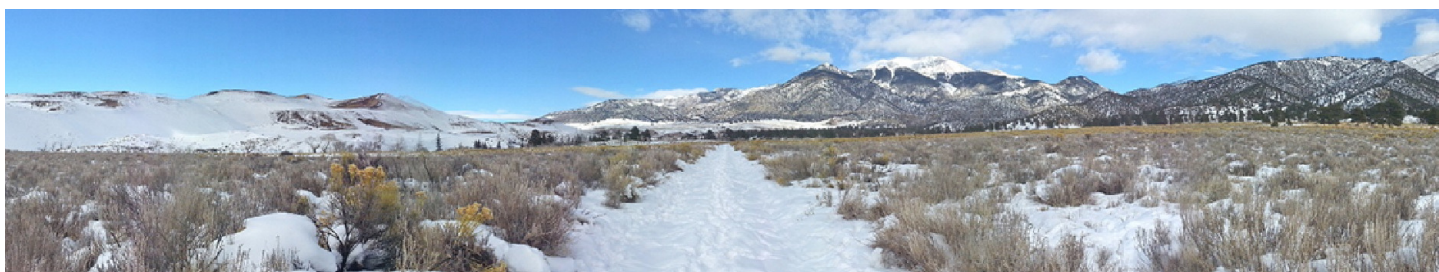
Enjoy a **fee-free day** to celebrate the birthday of the National Park Service. On this day in 1916, the National Park Service was established as a federal agency of the Department of the Interior, responsible for protecting national parks and monuments.

September

Saturday, September 26 – **National Public Lands Day**

Explore a new park or protected area for free during National Public Lands Day. Seven federal agencies as well as nonprofit organizations and state, regional and local governments participate in the annual day of caring for public lands.

Time and location of events and programs are subject to change, for more up-to date information, visit www.nps.gov/grsa or call (719) 378-6395



Membership and Contact Information

Come join us in protecting and enjoying
a unique and special place.

I would like to join or renew my membership in Friends of the Dunes
at the following level:

- Friend \$25
- Associate \$50
- Family \$75
- Patron \$100
- Lifetime \$1000

I'd also like to contribute \$_____ to the following:

- Wheelchair Fund
- Student Research Grant Fund
- General Operations Fund

Contact information: Check here if label is correct;
 otherwise, please complete:

Name _____

Street _____ DATE _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Email _____

(Please print clearly enough for someone not familiar with the address to read) 😊

Check here to receive the Hourglass newsletter by email instead of by hard copy through postal mail.

NEW Friends Members receive
the following for joining as a

- ⇒ **FRIEND**—Great Sand Dunes
pin, triannual newsletter, ad-
vanced notices and invitations to
special events.
- ⇒ **ASSOCIATE**—Copy of *The
Shape of the Wind* by Stephen
Trimble.
- ⇒ **FAMILY**—Annual pass to Great
Sand Dunes
- ⇒ **PATRON**—All of the above.
- ⇒ **LIFETIME**—All of the above
plus a special gift from the Great
Sand Dunes bookstore.

Friends of the Dunes Board of Directors

Lucy Adams, President (laadams@adams.edu) • Lynne Young, Treasurer • Dirk Oden, Secretary (wdoden@gmail.com) • Reginaldo Garcia • Loree' Harvey

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Contact the Friends: fotd@friendsofgreatsanddunes.org

Visit us online: www.friendsofgreatsanddunes.org