

Conservation Connections

Newsletter of Plateau Restoration from Moab, Utah

Summer/Fall, 2006

Engaging the Public in the Long-Term Care of Native Habitats since 1995

www.plateaurestoration.org

Coming to Conservation Connections soon.....

- * *Tamarisk and "the beetles"*
- * *Cheatgrass - A Growing Concern*
- * *The Powell Society - River History*

A Burrow or Not A Burrow - That is the Question.

Our colleague, Georges Odier has just published his latest book, "The Jurassic - The Mammal Explosion". In this, he documents evidence for massive colonies of burrowing mammals during the Jurassic Period.

We have been working with Georges on this field project that is "challenging the conventional view of our ancestors from the Early Jurassic". We plan to post a page on our website in the near future on this important new discovery, and will be conducting field trips to examine these features that are revising our view of mammal evolution.



Field researcher, Georges Odier ponders burrow casts in the Navajo sandstone near Moab, that suggest a vastly different Jurassic biota than previously thought.

College Service-Learning Programs take on International Flair

Alternative Spring Break programs were once again filled this past March. These programs provide students, who are interested in a week with volunteer service, outstanding educational opportunities, a chance to explore, meet new friends and contribute to the health of our public lands near Moab. Groups this year included Northern State University of South Dakota who were with us in 2005, University of Texas at Austin joining us for the fifth time and Brookhaven College of Dallas, Texas making their first visit to Canyon Country.



Sukhyun Kang (R) from Korea and Lin Lin (L) of China help remove knapweed in Castle Valley.

This spring a number of international students participated via exchange programs, adding a one-world flair to the programs. Students from Korea, Taiwan and China shared in the service learning experiences along side students from throughout the country. Lin Lin, pictured above, recently let us know she returns to China at the end of the year. She wrote: "*I often think of you and the lovely time in Utah with you and our team. It is one of my sweetest memories in my life. I had many trips during the year, to the East Coast, to the large cities, to Disney, but the volunteer trip is the most meaningful one. I will never forget you and that trip. I will also tell people in China how important it is to protect our environment.*"

Our service projects included knapweed monitoring and removal in Castle Valley and a major fence construction and revegetation project at Ken's Lake BLM (Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management) Recreation Area just South of Moab.

Students provided nearly 1200 hours of service to our land management projects and shared their thoughts on regional, national and global environmental concerns. Board members Pam Hackley and Herm Hoops participated this year. Pam was a field leader and instructor on the Castle Valley project and Herm was a guest speaker and evening entertainment at Ken's Lake.

More under "Alternative Spring Break" on page 2.....

2005 in retrospect - Executive Board Report

Plateau Restoration is showing some encouraging growth thanks to our expanding public support. After 2004, there was a dramatic loss in Federal funding support, which we had generously underwritten our projects at some level every year since 1996. In 2005 we saw almost 50% increase in revenues over the previous 5-year average. Part of this is that we have increased the staffing coverage and therefore able to increase overall activity. However, most of this is attributable to an increase in our programs and community grants. One of our major projects included weed management at the BLM Sand Island Recreation Area near Bluff, UT and along the San Juan River. This project suffered a complete loss of Department of Interior funding. We are pleased to note that the public is picking up this loss of funding, primarily through our Conservation Adventure programs, but also with new members and generous donations.

"With public sentiment nothing can fail. Without it, nothing can succeed."

Abraham Lincoln

Conservation Adventures

Our Conservation Adventure Programs include educational hiking trips through the National Parks and National Forest as well as float trips on the Colorado River. This year we have expanded this aspect of the program dramatically, reaching young "science geeks", developmentally disabled adults, seniors, as well as visitors seeking a more educational trip. We've also added day trips that focus on geology. These programs help underwrite our service-learning projects and are a great way to learn about the natural history of the Colorado Plateau through the eyes of our experienced naturalist guides, who are also long-term Moab residents.

Inflatable kayaks are a great way to experience the Colorado River. These are utilized on both educational and service programs that include one-day and multi-day self-support "duckie" trips.



Inspire, Involve and Influence

Alternative Spring Break

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Nicole from Brookhaven College, TX, transplanting native shrubs at Ken's Lake

Snow was the theme of this spring's project weeks. The UT, Austin students, who camped at Ken's Lake, arrived to find four inches of fresh snow where they planned to pitch their tents. The snow was promptly gathered to form snowballs and snowmen, before it melted the next day, allowing for a productive fencing, trail-building and restoration project.

During a mid-week break, the students took time to explore Arches National Park in a series of interpretive hikes with Plateau Restoration field leaders and instructors. Topics included history of Arches and the Moab area, geology, natural history and resource management issues of public lands.

Northern State junior Erin Dreis summed up her week this way: " *I gained more knowledge in the past 5 days than I could have ever imaged. I thought the time I was able to spend talking with your leaders while working on the land and environmental issues were very important. It made everything real for me because I could see things happening before me, not just from a textbook*".

Thanks to Erin and all the students for another great spring break! And many thanks to Marilyn Peterson and Ed Stone of the BLM, Pam Hackley, Herm Hoops, Castle Valley Mayor Damian Bollermann, Jack Campbell and the Castle Valley Home Owners Association and Tim Higgs of the Grand County Weed Department for help with funding and facilitating this project!

Camping Out With the Broads

In June, Plateau Restoration partnered with the Durango-based Great Old Broads for Wilderness in the La Sal Mountains on one of their Broadwalks. Fifty "seniors" from the Four Corners and beyond, camped near the base of South Mountain for four nights, spending the days monitoring trails and removing user-created ATV trails. During the evenings, the group enjoyed a wide variety of presentations on wilderness issues from representatives from motorized recreation clubs, conservation organizations and the Federal agency. Those that participated in the restoration project built a small fence, dug trenches to reduce erosion, transplanted and hauled branches over the trail to help restore the impacted land. Thanks to the National Forest Foundation for their generous grant support of this project.



Men and women members of the Great Old Broads for Wilderness work on rehabilitating a new unapproved, user-created trail near South Mountain, Manti-La Sal National Forest.

EPA grant should expand service-learning programs

Plateau Restoration received an Environmental Education award this summer from Environmental Protection Agency to develop a service-learning component to the outdoor science school program of Canyonlands Field Institute. We have just released and are distributing a new postcard, partly funded as a collaborative project with CFI by Utah Dept. of Tourism, to reach a greater audience for this program.

Monitoring projects with the BLM, USFS and NPS

We have been involved in several monitoring projects this year, documenting OHV impacts in the Manti-La_Sal National Forest, and monitoring recreational impacts at BLM campgrounds. Tamsin McCormick has also been assisting the Park Service in developing strategies for monitoring change in riparian vegetation by collecting data in Arches NP, Natural Bridges and Canyon De Chelly.

Board of Directors

Executive Board

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Plateau Restoration, Inc

A 501(c)3 tax exempt non-profit.

Mission:

To protect and restore native habitats of the Colorado Plateau through hands on education, landscape restoration, revegetation and research.

Plateau Restoration is a licensed and insured landscape contractor with the State of Utah and is a licensed and insured outfitter with the Bureau of Land Management and the National Forest Service.

Membership and Fund Raising Update - Conservation Team Members:

Don And Denise Oblak <i>Canyon Voyages</i> Moab, Utah	Carrie Darcey Moab,Utah	Paul and Kim Zilis Boulder, CO.	Ron and Peggy Godin Hotchkiss, CO	Joseph Smyth Boulder, CO
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John & Faye Geiger Moab, Utah	Bob Lillie Philomath, OR.	<i>Moabutah.com</i> Moab,Utah	Herm and Val Hoops Jensen, Utah	Robert & Deanne Wood Sedona, AZ.
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Wayne Ranney Flagstaff, AZ	Lanette Smith Basalt, CO	Pam Hackley and Bob Lipman Castle Valley, Utah	Sue Shrewsbury Moab, Utah	Michael Dean Smith Moab, Utah
Mary Jo & George Latulippe Ogden, Utah	Andy Shuckra Arlington, VA	Dan Norris <i>Ancient Images</i> Moab, Utah	<i>Tamarisk Coalition</i> Grand Junction, CO	Tamsin McCormick Moab, Utah

BECOME A CONSERVATION PARTNER

Join our organization for any amount from \$5 to \$25 and show your support. Memberships are good for one year. You may also take advantage of a lifetime membership for \$295.

Member benefits include: our quarterly newsletter in the mail; first opportunity to sign up for trips, programs, events; invitation to "members only" trips; discounts on outdoor "Plateau" clothing, equipment, native plants and seed through our members purchase program, use of our "Harare House" guest facility in Moab and rental of outdoor equipment.

SPONSOR A VOLUNTEER, SPONSOR A PROJECT

Friends who wish to help further can directly sponsor our volunteers and restoration projects. Contributions over the \$25 membership are applied towards our Nature's Legacy Fund, inspired by our former BLM advisor, the late Linda Siebert. Plateau Restoration uses this fund to identify, plan and implement conservation projects and to underwrite our student service-learning programs. As a token of our gratitude, we offer a Plateau Restoration baseball cap, visor or T-shirt for contributions of \$50 or more.

Your donation not only offers a powerful learning opportunity for our future leaders, educators and land managers, we stretch your dollar by contributing volunteer labor to direct conservation work on our public lands. For example, \$25 sponsors a student volunteer for 1/2 day, providing a \$50 value in labor, a 2:1 match.

Plateau Restoration is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt non-profit organization and contributions are tax deductible. To make a contribution, please fill out the following form and mail it, along with your check payable to Plateau Restoration, to: Plateau Restoration, P.O. Box 1363, Moab, UT 84532

Feel free to contact us by phone at (435) 259-7733 or toll-free at 1-866-202-1847 or by email at info@plateaurestoration.org. Also, visit our website at www.plateaurestoration.org and contribute on-line.

Yes, I'd like to join or renew my membership. Enclosed is my contribution of: \$_____ (amount)

I want to sponsor volunteers and conservation projects at the following level: _____(amount)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Specify one (for contributions of \$50 or more, including membership):

Baseball Cap Visor T-shirt: Size: med. large X-large

