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www.tellerwildlife.org

To inspire,  
educate, and  
demonstrate  
conservation  
in action.

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT TELLER PROGRAMS AND  
PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR?

E-mail Lauren at [lauren@tellerwildlife.org](mailto:lauren@tellerwildlife.org) to sign up for Teller's  
E-newsletter, sent only semimonthly!



In addition to event and activity information, our  
Facebook page gives insight into everyday life  
here at Teller including up-to-date happenings on  
the property posted weekly by Teller staff.

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# Teller

WILDLIFE REFUGE

## TNT DINNER & AUCTION

See page 10

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Artwork by Corvallis Staff member Sam Chavez



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- Lauren Rennaker, Development Manager
- Pete Lindbergh, Lands Manager
- Karin Mayn, Administrative Assistant

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR: BUSY SPRING AT TELLER

One of the first questions that most people ask me when I tell them that I work at Teller Wildlife Refuge is, “What goes on at Teller?” My response is always, “A lot!” Especially for an organization that owns and cares for 1,200 acres, and has only four employees. This spring, “a lot” is a lot more than usual.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our many friends at last year’s TnT, we are repainting all four of Teller’s historic farm houses. Most of the painting funds were raised during the “Fund the Need” portion of TnT, where Teller requests support for a significant need we have identified within the organization. It feels good to know that these wonderful, historic structures will be preserved for future generations to enjoy.



At the same time, we are also building a new structure next to the Slack Barn – an indoor bathroom facility! We installed a new septic system as well, and look forward to having the bathrooms up and running soon.

In addition to these construction projects, we’re busy with our usual spring activities. Farm fields are being prepped and planted, and we held a successful Stewardship Day in April. Our 3rd Youth Conservation and Education Expo was held on May 9, and we’re gearing up for another enjoyable TnT Dinner & Auction on June 13. Our Nature Connections Summer Day Camps aren’t too far away, either.

There’s never a dull moment here! Read on for more details about our recent activities. I hope you’ll find a way that you can be involved in “what goes on” at Teller Wildlife Refuge.

*Kim Vietz  
Executive Director*



*Photo by Joe Butsick*

## Let us count the ways to GIVE

- 1 EMPLOYER GIFT MATCHING**  
Make an even greater impact with your employer’s gift matching program. Many companies want to support the causes that their employees care about, so they set up charitable giving programs through which they match employee donations to eligible nonprofits. Big companies, small companies, established corporations, and inspired start-ups around the world offer matching gift programs. Check with your employer’s HR department for a gift matching program to make your generous gift even greater!
- 2 MONTHLY GIFTS**  
We’re happy to introduce our Wildlife Sustainer monthly giving program. Your automatic monthly gift will help provide Teller with the financial resources to maintain healthy wildlife habitat. Each year Teller spends nearly \$40,000 on conservation-related expenses on its 1,200 acres. Wildlife-friendly farming and weed management are the largest of these expenses.  
  
Monthly giving is the easiest and most efficient way to support Teller. You can make your donation to Teller in monthly installments via a credit card. You can easily start, change or stop your gift at any time.
- 3 BEQUESTS AND ESTATE PLANNING GIFTS**  
Invest in Teller’s legacy by becoming a member of our Stewardship Society. By including Teller Wildlife Refuge in your estate plans, you can help protect a 1,200-acre Bitterroot paradise and sustain our mission of wildlife conservation and conservation education for the next generation. Simply name the Teller Wildlife Refuge as a beneficiary in your will, retirement plan and/or life insurance policy.
- 4 BECOME A VOLUNTEER**  
The Teller Volunteer Program is looking for people like you. Join a dynamic group of people who care about conservation, and participate in activities that directly benefit fish and wildlife habitat in the Bitterroot Valley. Whether you want to work outside and get your hands dirty, help make our events a success, become a lead project volunteer, or assist with office administration, we have opportunities for your talents and skills!

*No matter the means, we always appreciate your valuable investment in our mission! To join, or to learn more about any of these programs, please contact us at (406) 961-3507 or lauren@tellerwildlife.org.*

# 21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL TNT DINNER & AUCTION *June 13, 2015*

Overlook 800 acres of Teller and the Bitterroot Mountains beyond, as we celebrate 21 years of our annual gathering behind the historic Slack Barn. The TnT Dinner & Auction is Teller's signature fundraising event, consisting of gourmet hors d'oeuvres and a sit-down dinner, as well as split-the-pot, live, silent, and sealed bid auctions and raffles.

**Individual Dinner Tickets: \$75 | Event Sponsor: \$500 | Wildlife Table: \$2,500**

## Become a TnT Sponsor

### \$500 Event Sponsor Benefits

- Charitable gift in support of Teller's mission
- Two (2) dinner tickets
- Reserved parking pass near event location
- Sponsor recognition in the local newspaper, at the event, and Teller's Facebook, newsletter, and website
- Raffle Item – Drawing for a one night stay at the historic Slack House (accommodates up to 8 guests) or one day rental at the Slack Barn (accommodates up to 200 people)

### \$2,500 Wildlife Table Sponsor Benefits

- Charitable gift in support of Teller's mission
- Eight (8) dinner tickets
- Reserved parking pass near event location
- Sponsor recognition in the local newspaper, at the event, and Teller's Facebook, newsletter, and website
- Raffle Item - Drawing for half-day birding, fly fishing or waterfowl hunt for two people on Teller



### Auction Items include:

- Hot air balloon flight for 4
- Deer archery hunt on Teller
- San Francisco getaway package
- Case of Bucklin wine
- Handmade hardwood wood duck nesting box by Mark Dickerson
- Glamping (luxury camping) experience for two with Storm Creek Outfitters
- One month each of guitar and banjo lessons with Mark Dickerson
- Waterfowl hunts on Teller
- Two University of Montana Canyon Club football tickets
- Rooster Ridge membership with 2 pheasant hunts
- The Spa at The Peak pampering package
- Original artwork by Dave Harper
- Full-day guided fishing float with Osprey Outfitters
- Original handmade side table by Tom Latourelle
- Handpainted rosemaling by Christine Gunvaldson-Waltz
- Fishing trips
- Elk giclee by Cynthia Fisher
- Lunch and plein air painting with instruction by Brent Cotton at Teller's Gird Creek
- Teller carriage tour and catered dinner for 12
- The Complete Fly Fisher 3 night lodge stay and 2 days guided fishing
- And much MORE!



**YOU CAN NOW PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS ONLINE!**  
For sponsorships, tickets or donations call (406) 961-3507  
or visit our website at [www.tellerwildlife.org](http://www.tellerwildlife.org).

# 28<sup>TH</sup> HAMILTON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

By John Ormiston

December 20, 2014 - What a great day! A record setting day, a fine day to spend looking for birds, counting birds, and enjoying the company of congenial folks. The weather cooperated and so did the birds. We saw 77 species - only one less than the all-time record from 2013. We had one new species, a grebe sp. (either a Western or Clark's) on the Daly Mansion Pond.

There were 30 field observers and 23 feeder watchers. We covered about 216 miles driving and 11 walking; there were 8 parties in the field.

We saw new record highs for 8 species: Gadwall, Bufflehead, Red-tailed Hawk, Magpie, White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-winged Blackbird, Red Crossbills and tied the "record" of 1 for Great-gray Owl. The number of Red-tailed Hawks, 95, exceeded the number of Rough-legged Hawks for only the fourth time. It was a great day for raptors, as we saw every one of the species that normally winter here including Prairie Falcons, Merlin, and Kestrel, and all the Accipiters for only the sixth time. We saw



Photo by Steve Albre

**10,484 birds**, 53% of them waterfowl. We've seen 31 species every year and 21 species only once. With the addition of the Grebe sp., we have seen a total of 129 species in the Hamilton CBC Circle.

All in all it was a great day, thanks to those who spent their day helping add to the data base.

Special thanks to Colleen Powell for coordinating Feeder Watchers and Bill Good for the outstanding chili and Oreos lunch served at Teller's Slack Barn, both for the 27<sup>th</sup> time. Save the date for next year's CBC - December 19, 2015!



Photo by Patrick J. Chapman

*On Teller alone, 1,833 birds and 44 species were counted!*

GREBE sp. ....	1	PRAIRIE FALCON. ....	2	BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE. ....	277
GREAT BLUE HERON. ....	22	GRAY PARTRIDGE. ....	5	MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE. ....	18
TUNDRA SWAN. ....	2	CALIFORNIA QUAIL. ....	222	RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH. ....	107
CANADA GOOSE. ....	2078	RING-NECKED PHEASANT. ....	39	WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH. ....	46
GREEN-WINGED TEAL. ....	8	RUFFED GROUSE. ....	2	PYGMY NUTHATCH. ....	35
MALLARD. ....	1598	WILD TURKEY. ....	270	BROWN CREEPER. ....	6
GADWALL. ....	2	AMERICAN COOT. ....	29	MARSH WREN. ....	2
AMERICAN WIGEON. ....	4	SANDHILL CRANE. ....	1	AMERICAN DIPPER. ....	5
RING-NECKED DUCK. ....	11	KILLDEER. ....	3	GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET. ....	2
COMMON GOLDENEYE. ....	41	WILSON'S SNIPE. ....	2	TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE. ....	1
BUFFLEHEAD. ....	21	ROCK PIGEON. ....	133	AMERICAN ROBIN. ....	4
HOODED MERGANSER. ....	2	MOURNING DOVE. ....	48	NORTHERN SHRIKE. ....	4
COMMON MERGANSER. ....	1	EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE. ....	447	EUROPEAN STARLING. ....	555
RUDDY DUCK. ....	1	GREAT-HORNED OWL. ....	10	AMERICAN TREE SPARROW. ....	4
BALD EAGLE ADULT. ....	18	GREAT GRAY OWL. ....	1	SONG SPARROW. ....	23
BALD EAGLE IMM. ....	5	LONG-EARED OWL. ....	1	WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW. ....	1
BALD EAGLE UNK. ....	5	BELTED KINGFISHER TOTAL. ....	6	DARK-EYED JUNCO TOTAL. ....	121
BALD EAGLE TOTAL. ....	39	DOWNY WOODPECKER. ....	30	RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD. ....	1699
NORTHERN HARRIER TOTAL. ....	29	HAIRY WOODPECKER. ....	23	PINE GROSBEAK. ....	6
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK. ....	2	NORTHERN FLICKER. ....	81	CASSIN'S FINCH. ....	8
COOPER'S HAWK. ....	4	PILEATED WOODPECKER. ....	3	HOUSE FINCH. ....	723
NORTHERN GOSHAWK. ....	1	STELLER'S JAY. ....	19	RED CROSSBILL. ....	286
RED-TAILED HAWK. ....	95	BLUE JAY. ....	1	PINE SISKIN. ....	27
ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK. ....	60	CLARK'S NUTCRACKER. ....	19	AMERICAN GOLDFINCH. ....	78
GOLDEN EAGLE. ....	1	BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE. ....	502	EVENING GROSBEAK. ....	1
AMERICAN KESTREL. ....	14	AMERICAN CROW. ....	4	HOUSE SPARROW. ....	379
MERLIN. ....	3	COMMON RAVEN. ....	127		



# MEET A FRIEND OF TELLER

**Chuck Burrier** is a retired electrician who lives in Stevensville, MT, and a long-time Teller volunteer.

***What is the motivation for your giving in general?***

Giving is a frame of mind. Early in life, I learned that you can't outgive God. I try to support as many reliable and needy organizations as I can. Teller provides so much to so many. Our programs for the local school children are most noteworthy. So much wildlife benefits from our conservation programs here at Teller. It's wonderful to visit in the fall when the waterfowl are using the fields to rest and eat. These programs are most worthy of our support.

***Why do you volunteer your time at Teller?***

Now in my 12th year at Teller, I'm still excited about every visit. Most times I'm not sure what our chores/projects will be for the day, but I do know it will be for the betterment of the refuge. The volunteers that I work with each week are unequalled in their dedication and enthusiasm. Several of my favorite projects are the servicing of the goose nests in the spring and preparing the duck blinds in the fall. The many things about the refuge and wildlife in general that my close friend and former Director of Conservation, Sam Lawry, taught me has helped me to be a better steward of this wonderful property. I love this place.

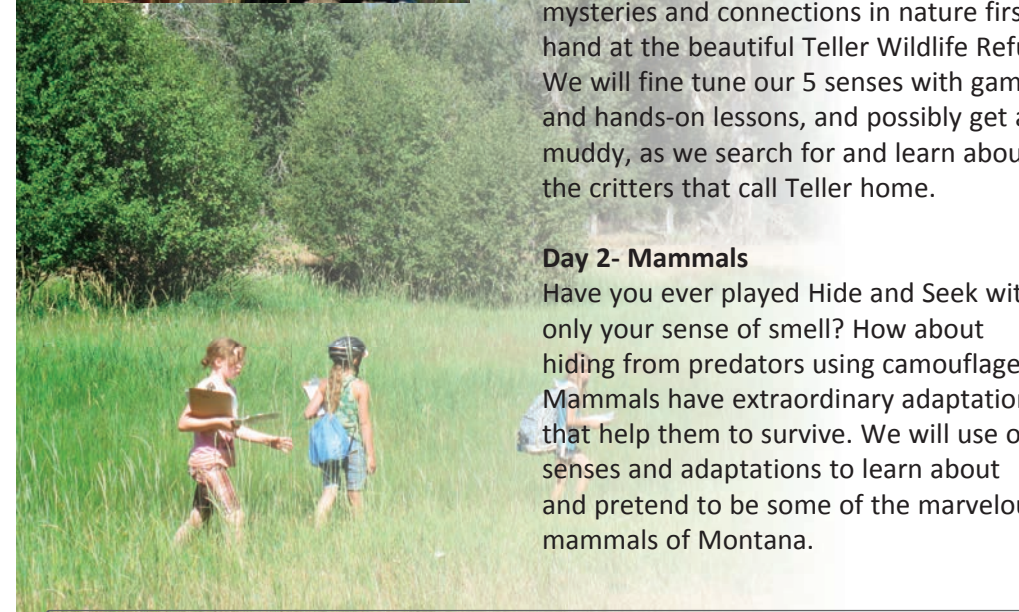
***What is the best part of volunteering at Teller?***

The best part of volunteering at Teller is being able to work with the four principals – each one a true professional in their own right. It's fun to step back and see the progress made each month. No other entity in the Bitterroot Valley provides such a wonderful place to learn, stay, visit and enjoy.

## Nature Connections Camp at Teller Wildlife Refuge

Registration Open Now!

Amanda Bestor, Camp Director



Camp fee: \$40 per child (entering 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade)  
Camp dates: choose July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015 or August 3–6, 2015  
Camp Schedule: Monday – Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Day 1- Nature Detectives**

Do you have what it takes to be a Nature Detective? Well, grab a magnifying glass and field journal and join us to explore the mysteries and connections in nature first-hand at the beautiful Teller Wildlife Refuge. We will fine tune our 5 senses with games and hands-on lessons, and possibly get a bit muddy, as we search for and learn about the critters that call Teller home.

**Day 2- Mammals**

Have you ever played Hide and Seek with only your sense of smell? How about hiding from predators using camouflage? Mammals have extraordinary adaptations that help them to survive. We will use our senses and adaptations to learn about and pretend to be some of the marvelous mammals of Montana.

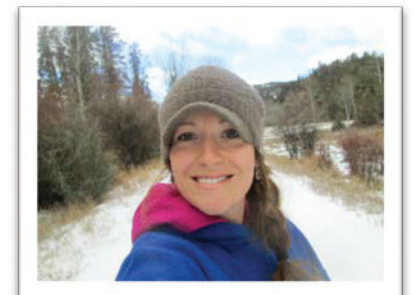
**Day 3- Birds**

Summer mornings on Gird creek are a wonderful time to get acquainted with birds. Through a series of hands on activities and labs; we will explore the world of birds. We will look, listen, and “speak” to them as we explore the Birds of the Bitterroot.

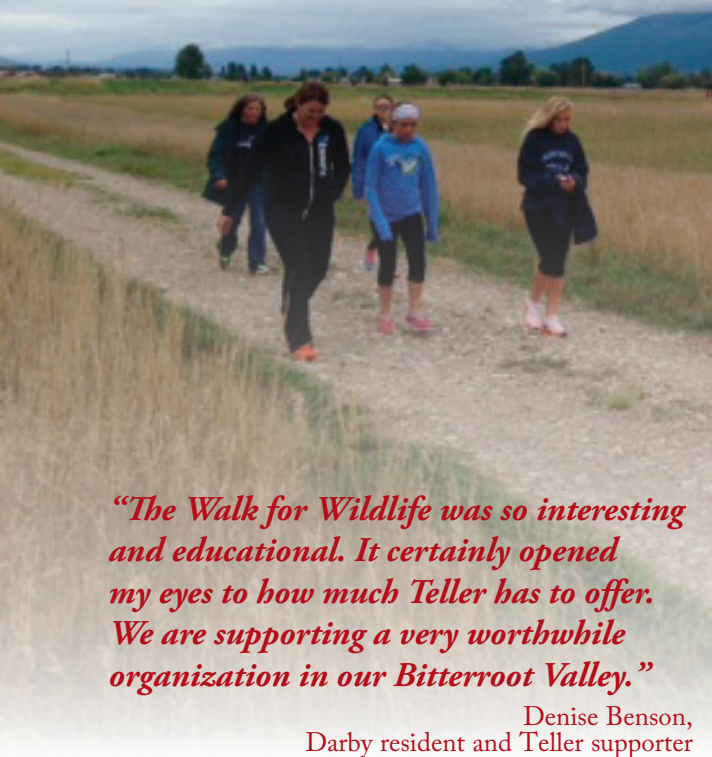
**Day 4- Insects**

What kind of insects live at Teller? Let's catch some creepy crawlies and look at just how cool they are. We will be taking a closer look at some of the little lovelies found all around us and their relationships with nature.

About the Camp Director: Amanda Bestor is a 5<sup>th</sup> grade science and math teacher at Corvallis Middle School. She holds a B.S. from the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point in Natural Resource Management with an emphasis in Environmental Education and Interpretation as well as a M.S. from the University of Montana. One of her passions is working as an outdoor educator with pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.



For more information, please visit [www.tellerwildlife.org/Summer\\_Camp](http://www.tellerwildlife.org/Summer_Camp) or please call Teller's office at 406.961.3507



## TELLER'S FIRST WALK FOR WILDLIFE

On September 28, 2014, Teller held its first Walk for Wildlife, a 2-mile or 5K Family Fun Walk or Run. Over 40 participants of all ages learned about wildlife, habitat and Teller programs at four informative stops while enjoying the scenery on our main property. Although the Teller Trail, located along the Bitterroot River, is open year-round, the location of the walk is not normally open to public walking. While it was a small fundraiser, the main purpose of this event was to showcase Teller and its primary reason for existing; for the benefit of fish and wildlife. Teller's mission "to inspire, educate and demonstrate conservation in action," was certainly on display. Many of the wildlife habitat enhancement projects completed on the property were seen along the walk route. Participants not only learned about the organization's accomplishments, but hopefully picked up a few tips to use on their own properties. Staff and Teller volunteer, Sherry Ritter, manned the informational stops to provide details and answer questions about what the participants were observing, including a variety of deer exclosures, native plantings, food plots and restored ponds and wetlands. Many participants told us how much they enjoyed this family-friendly educational event and appreciated the wildlife-viewing and recreational opportunities it provided. The first 30 paid registrants also received a free Teller water bottle!

*"The Walk for Wildlife was so interesting and educational. It certainly opened my eyes to how much Teller has to offer. We are supporting a very worthwhile organization in our Bitterroot Valley."*

Denise Benson,  
Darby resident and Teller supporter

## LODGING AT TELLER WILDLIFE REFUGE

*Teller's historic farm houses and rustic fishing cabins are booking fast for the 2015 season!*

*There are plenty of great dates remaining, but the time to reserve is now.*  
For rates, details, calendars and online booking, please visit:  
[www.bitterrootcabins.com/teller-wildlife-refuge](http://www.bitterrootcabins.com/teller-wildlife-refuge)

Teller Lodging is proudly managed by:  
Bitterroot Cabins, LLC • 866-992-2246 • [info@bitterrootcabins.com](mailto:info@bitterrootcabins.com)

## CONSERVATION CORNER: CHEATGRASS REDUCTION



Teller will be experimenting with a cheatgrass hotspot this spring. Cheatgrass is an aggressive noxious weed that thrives in dry soils. You may know it as the uncomfortable seeds that poke in your socks. Stewardship Day volunteers cleared a couple acres near Gird Creek of downed trees and sticks to prepare the project site. After a controlled burn of the cheatgrass, the remainder will be sprayed with Roundup. The burn and weed spraying will reduce the cheatgrass seed bed. Pete Lindbergh, Teller's Lands Manager, will then use a mulcher to break up the surface of the soil, being careful not to disturb the soil too much. He will then use a push-seeder to broadcast a drought-resistant wildland grass seed mix over the prepared area. The hope is that once these new grasses are established, they will out-compete the cheatgrass. Thanks to Teller's former Director of Conservation, Sam Lawry, and Stacy Pease of NRCS for consulting on this project!

## BITTERROOT BARN WEDDING

AT TELLER WILDLIFE REFUGE

### 2015 WEDDING PACKAGE

Our wedding package includes use of the historic Slack Barn and acres of surrounding grounds for an entire weekend, along with lodging for 14 people at our heritage homes.

Host a rehearsal dinner, ceremony, reception and your family or friends all in one place!

Also included in the package:

- Park-like grounds with volleyball, horseshoes and croquet
- New tables and chairs for 200
- Assorted wooden benches, tables, chairs and stands
- Dance floor
- Trash removal
- Indoor restroom facilities

**Package Cost - \$3,999**  
(Paid in 3 installments)

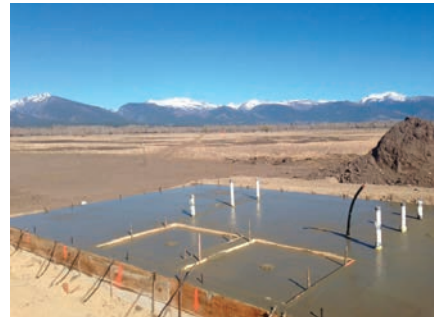
### CONTACT BITTERROOT CABINS

Call Sherrie at 406-363-2258  
[sherrie@bitterrootcabins.com](mailto:sherrie@bitterrootcabins.com)  
[bitterrootcabins.com/weddings](http://bitterrootcabins.com/weddings)  
[facebook.com/bitterrootbarnwedding](https://facebook.com/bitterrootbarnwedding)

## NEW RESTROOM UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT TELLER



April brings a symphony of bird song to the Teller Wildlife Refuge every spring, and this year is no exception. The chorus is somewhat louder than usual, however, because the Sandhill crane, pheasant and blackbird calls are accompanied by the rumble of heavy equipment and the ringing of hammers.



Thanks in large part to the generosity of donors (including Rich Patterson of PCI Construction and Randy Sacks of Sacks Concrete), Teller is constructing a brand new restroom facility at the historic Slack Barn site. This 550 square foot, state-of-the-art building will boast both men's and women's restrooms with... drumroll...hot and cold running water!



At press time, the below grade plumbing is complete, the cement slab is poured, the walls are framed and – thanks to a crew of stewardship day volunteers – the roof trusses are in place. We are also the proud owners of a brand new septic system. Stay tuned on Facebook for construction progress reports!



## VOLUNTEERS TRIUMPH AT STEWARDSHIP DAY

On Saturday, April 25, volunteers gathered together to tackle important projects on Teller property. Thanks to these volunteers, last year's garden debris was raked and piled, the noxious weed, houndstongue, eradicated along ditches and creeks, a safety-hazard downed tree removed and the roof trusses were added to our new bathroom facility. Many thanks to Hamilton's Marketplace for providing juice and fresh doughnuts. A BIG thank you to these volunteers who spent a morning improving wildlife habitat and lending a hand to Teller projects!

Our 2015 Volunteer Calendar is now available! If you would like to volunteer at Teller this year, please contact Lauren at [lauren@tellerwildlife.org](mailto:lauren@tellerwildlife.org) or (406) 961-3507.



# YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNT

Teller and Ducks Unlimited partnered once again to host 10 lucky youth for a morning waterfowl hunt on Teller property. Most of the happy youth hunters were successful and were able to take their fair share of shots. What a special opportunity for our local youth!



*Many thanks to our partners in conservation, Pheasants Forever and Ducks Unlimited!*

# YOUTH PHEASANT HUNT

*By Mitch Hockett, Pheasants Forever*

On September 28th, 2014 the Five Valleys chapter of Pheasants Forever held the annual youth pheasant hunt at Teller Wildlife Refuge. There were 8 young hunters, 5 volunteers, and a few brave pups. While we saw a number of birds, only one was downed by an amazing flyover shot. Overall, the day was wildly successful and we introduced a few new kids into the hunting world.

