



PARKS AND
RECREATION

Adopt the Greenbelt News

A newsletter for participants of the Adopt the Greenbelt program.

September, 2020

This month we are excited to welcome two new groups into the Adopt the Greenbelt program. The Boise Metro Rotary Club has adopted the south side of the Greenbelt from Ann Morrison Park to Main Street. The Laney Greens HOA is caring for the stretch from Willow Lane Athletic Complex to Wylie Lane on the north side. Thank you Boise Metro Rotary, Laney Greens HOA, and all our wonderful Greenbelt volunteers for dedicating your time and energy to keeping the Greenbelt beautiful!

FOCUS ON NATIVE PLANTS - *Rabbitbrush* and *Goldenrod*

Two bright yellow flowering plants that signal the fading of summer into fall in Boise are Rubber rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*) and Goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*). These species provide excellent late summer forage for a wide range of pollinators including bees, butterflies, beetles, flies, and wasps. Their sunny blooms provide a stark contrast to many of the other plants that are dying back this time of year. The name



Rabbitbrush



Goldenrod

"Rubber rabbitbrush" comes from the rubber like substance exuded from stems of the plant which has been studied as a potential source of commercial rubber. Goldenrod and rabbitbrush, both members of the Aster family, can be used for erosion control and habitat restoration in degraded landscapes. Next time you see

bright yellow blooms along the Greenbelt, take a closer look, you might get to witness a fascinating community of invertebrate life utilizing the pollen, nectar, and shelter provided by these important native plants.

NOXIOUS SPECIES SPOTLIGHT - *Spotted knapweed*



Spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*) is a relative newcomer in terms of noxious weeds in Boise. A biennial or short-lived perennial, spotted knapweed reaches two to three feet in height and blooms in its second year of growth. The pinkish-purple, thistle-like flowers, are positioned on the tips of the stems and bloom in late summer (visible now). Knapweed is a

prolific seeder and may exude chemicals through its roots that inhibit the growth of other plants (allelopathic). The grey-green foliage can cause skin irritation in many people. Fortunately, this plant can be controlled by hand-pulling prior to seeding, but gloves must always be worn and plants must be properly disposed of to prevent seeds from maturing. If you think you notice Spotted knapweed along your adopted Greenbelt section, please contact Kristin Gnojewski at kgnojewski@cityofboise.org.



Photo by Elliotte Rusty Harold

Double-crested Cormorant

If you have come across a large, dark colored bird perched with its wings stretched out, you've likely seen a Double-crested cormorant. Since cormorants lack waterproof feathers, they are frequently seen drying their wings after swimming and diving for prey. A cormorant's diet consists primarily of fish, but also includes insects and crustaceans. Cormorants construct a stick nest on the ground, in a tree, or even on a reef. Cormorants have a long bill with a hooked tip. While swimming, they sit low in the water, causing their head and neck to be the most noticeable parts of their body. Cormorants are frequent visitors to Esther Simplot Park, Marianne Williams Park, and other parks with large ponds along the Greenbelt.