

# The Red Rock Rag

Volume 11, Number 3

July 19, 2010



FRIENDS OF RED ROCK CANYON

## *The President's Report — Summer 2010*

Greetings FoRRC,

As you can see The Red Rock Rag has a new look and a new publisher/editor, Connie Johnson. Connie is one of our newest Directors on the Friends of Red Rock Canyon Board. Thank you Connie for volunteering your time and ideas! A welcome to you and to our other new board members, Glenn Pressman, David Valier, and Bob Johnson.

Don Ellis has, until this issue, managed/published and been editor of the Red Rock Rag which he created in 2000. It began as a one page hand-out at a meeting with the Community and an interested in Red Rock Canyon developer at Manitou Springs City Hall. After that the RRRag became a monthly publication keeping the public informed about current Red Rock Canyon issues until 2003 when the purchase was

secured at which point it became a quarterly newsletter focusing on Red Rock Canyon and its Master Plan. Don has dedicated his energy, time and thoughts all those years, never missing an issue and always including articles that pertained to the whole community! FoRCC thanks you, Don, for all the years you have kept us in the know about not only RRC but Section 16 and White Acres as well.

The re-scheduling of the Annual Maintenance Workday on The Contemplative Trail will be announced on our website soon after the monthly meeting of FoRRC which is July 12.

Now is the time to sign up for our Codell Trail Building workday, September 18, 2010. We need volunteers to help improve the part of this trail that is already there and create new trail needed

around technical ground. See our website for Volunteer Opportunities to sign-up. This trail is on the far East side of RRC near the Hogbacks.

Not only has the FoRRC Board and Rag had changes, there have been changes within the City with new leadership regarding Parks and Open Space. Even with the excellence of those in new positions it will still take time for adjustments and some things may be done differently. Friends of Red Rock Canyon still has a Stewardship/Partnership with the City Parks System and is confident that both will work together to do the best we can to meet Red Rock Canyon's needs. Have a Wonderful Summer, Stay Safe and Greet Each Other on the Trails,

Karlee Thompson  
President  
Friends Of Red Rock Canyon

### Event Calendar

FORR Board Meeting	8/9
FORR Board Meeting	9/13
Codell Trail Building Work Day	9/18

Thank you so much for this opportunity to work on the newsletter for this wonderful club. I have taken over this job from Don who was very successful at publishing a great newsletter. I hope to follow his example and publish a good, informative and quality newsletter each quarter.

I will not be writing this newsletter alone. I will need your input on articles you would like to see, additional information I can include in our newsletter, etc.

To improve our newsletter, I have created a survey that I would love for everyone to take about 5 minutes to complete. The link to the survey is at:

### Word from the Editor

<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22AXRVQ7SCL>

Thank you very much for your input. I do appreciate the chance to improve our newsletter.

One thing that the survey will ask is how many members would like to receive their newsletter via email instead of U.S. mail. Email has a few advantages over the postal service: it has a faster delivery time, we can save paper because you will print it out only if you want to, we will save the cost of postage and printing for anyone who elects to receive it via email. Please indicate on the survey what your preference is. If you

do not wish to take the survey you can email me your email address directly at [Friends@RedRockCanyonOpenSpace.org](mailto:Friends@RedRockCanyonOpenSpace.org).

I am starting a yahoo group for Friends of Red Rock Canyon. I will invite anyone to join the group that sends me their email address. You will be able to not join if you do not want to. The yahoo group will send out updates on meeting information and cancellations, membership renewals and any new projects that we are coming up in the park.

Thank you. *Connie Johnson*

## TIDBITS — Tamarisk

While hiking in Red Rock Canyon, you might have noticed one or two shrubs or small trees with wispy foliage and tiny pinkish flowers on thin spikes at the ends of their branches. The foliage has small triangular overlapping scales which resemble juniper foliage. This is saltcedar or tamarisk.

Tamarisk was brought to the United States from the Mediterranean in the early 1800's as an ornamental shrub. Later in the 19th century it was planted a few places in the West along streams to stabilize the stream banks with its extensive roots. As people later learned, tamarisk is possibly the consummate invasive weed. Those tiny flowers on a mature tree can produce over half a million seeds. Some sources say as many as a million and a half. These seeds are dispersed both by wind and by water. If that was not enough reproductive capacity, tamarisk also propagates through its roots.

The deep roots of tamarisk take up salt from deep ground water. The salt finds its way to the leaves where it collects and drops to the ground as water is evaporated. Thus, the ground surface becomes so salty that other plants find it hard to grow near tamarisk. Because of the

high salt content in its leaves, tamarisk is somewhat hard to burn; and when it does burn it sprouts again from its root crowns.

With roots going down to the water table and taking up water which is readily transpired from its leaves, tamarisk takes up so much water that it has caused ponds and small streams to go dry and rivers to have reduced flow and narrowed channels. It's been estimated that if the 92,000 acres of tamarisk infested land in Colorado was restored to native vegetation, between 90,000 and 100,000 acre feet of water per year would be restored to our streams (enough water to supply a city with 470,000 residents). The economic loss resulting from the 1.6 million acres of tamarisk in the entire western United States has been estimated to be between \$127 million and \$291 million.

Dense stands of tamarisk host fewer reptilian and amphibian species and 50% fewer small mammal species than stands of native vegetation. Tamarisk stands also have a low diversity of insects and provide less food for birds. After an eight year effort led by The Nature Conservancy, 120 miles of the formerly tamarisk infested San Miguel River in Colorado have been re-

stored, the state's first such successful project. One very effective tool in the restoration of the San Miguel has been the tamarisk leaf beetle.

One bird which has successfully adapted to tamarisk is the southwestern willow flycatcher. Formerly, the southwestern willow flycatcher nested in native willows along streams. But, as the willows gave way to tamarisk, the southwestern willow flycatcher adapted and took to nesting in tamarisk. The southwestern willow flycatcher is an endangered species. So, taking care to see that it has places to nest is quite important. Rather than supporting the reestablishment of native willows, however, the United States Department of Agriculture notified state and local agencies on June 15 this year of its plan to stop using the beetle. Colorado's program involves both tamarisk eradication and restoration of native willows. State agriculture officials say this works just fine. So, Colorado has no intention to stop our own tamarisk leaf beetle program except in the southwestern willow flycatcher's domain.

By: Don Ellis

## What is happening with Section 16?

We have recently heard that the State Land Board is close to an agreement on its sale of Section 16 to the City. More details in our next newsletter. A \$1 million grant from GOCO will go towards the purchase.

Once Section 16 is purchased, GOCO will require that Section 16 be placed under a conservation easement for its permanent protection. The Palmer Land Trust will hold this conservation easement and will be raising funds to help pay the cost of creating and monitoring the conservation easement. Friends

of Red Rock Canyon will be helping Palmer with this fundraising effort and will need your help and support.

This has all been a long time coming. The acquisition of Manitou Section 16 has been considered a high priority since 1972. Since Section 16 connects Red Rock Canyon to Pike National Forest and Bear Creek Canyon Park, it will continue to be a vital link in our foothills backdrop open space.

- MEMBERSHIP FORM -  
**Friends of Red Rock Canyon**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City / State / Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I want to join Friends of Red Rock Canyon for the coming year  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Individual Member (\$10)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Family Membership (\$15) Other Family Members: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Organization / Business Membership (\$30)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to help even more with a contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to be involved in volunteer efforts:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Trail and stewardship volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ Educational Programs \_\_\_\_\_ Serve on Board of Directors  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Advocacy & Community outreach \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this membership form with your check to:  
**Friends of Red Rock Canyon**  
 P.O. Box 6754  
 Colorado Springs, CO 80904 -6754  
 (Friends of Red Rock Canyon is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax deductible.)

**Geologic Folio Sales Benefit Friends of Red Rock Canyon**

So far, 153 copies of the book "Geologic Folio - Red Rock Canyon Open Space - Colorado Springs Colorado" have been sold. Pre-publication sales have paid a major portion of the initial printing costs. And, now, net proceeds from additional sales are being shared between Friends of Red Rock Canyon and the Old Colorado City Historical Society which published the book and is selling it through their bookstore. Friends of Red Rock Canyon will receive just over \$385 as its share of the net proceeds from sales so far.

The benefit which both Friends of Red Rock Canyon and the Old Colorado City Historical Society are realizing from the book go beyond the money received from book sales. Both organizations have gained new friends who became acquainted with our organizations through our promotions of the book. More people, even people in other cities, have become aware of Red Rock Canyon. For the Old Colorado City Historical Society, sales of other books increased significantly as people came in to buy "Geologic Folio - Red Rock Canyon Open Space - Colorado Springs Colorado."

"Geologic Folio - Red Rock Canyon Open Space - Colorado Springs Colorado" is a 300 page compendium of information about the geology, paleontology, and history of Red Rock Canyon Open Space written by Ken Weisenburger, Sharon Milito, and Don Ellis. It is available from the Old Colorado City History Center bookstore at 1 S. 24th Street across from Bancroft Park. The bookstore is open 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Tuesday through Saturday.

THE RED ROCK MAG  
Friends of Red Rock Canyon  
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 **MEMBERSHIP  
RENEWAL DATE**

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*Friends  
of Red  
Rock Canyon*

**President: Karlee Thompson**  
**Vice President: Bob Johnson**  
**Treasurer: Don Ellis**

Board Members: Shanti Toll, Connie Johnson, Glenn Pressman, David Valier, Barbara Remy, Bob Johnson, Don Ellis and Karlee Thompson

EDITOR: Connie Johnson

We're on the Web  
[redrockcanyonopenspace.org](http://redrockcanyonopenspace.org)