

PHOTO ESSAY

Page 4



An "informal" gathering at the entrance to Malheur Cave, a lava tube created when Pleistocene-age lava flowed down a stream valley.



Close inspection of the famous "round barn" built by Peter French (Boss of the Blitz) in 1880 for the purpose of breaking horses during the cold winter months.

Photos and story by John Snively, Science Instructor



Learning to appreciate the power of a spotting scope to identify birds a long way off.

Exploring

Twenty-six CCC students recently returned from their four-day stay at the Malheur Field Station, where they participated in varied activities on the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge located 35 miles south of Burns, Oregon.

The trip was composed of students registered in Bird Identification, Malheur Field Trip, and Ginny Weber's Biology 213. The CCC Science Department offers two trips annually to the area—one in the spring, which has primary focus on the marshland offered by the wildlife refuge, and one trip in the fall, which is able to expand its range to the top and around Steens Mountain. Everyone is welcome to participate in the trip.

The Malheur National Wildlife Refuge is one of America's largest federal wetland refuges with thousands of acres of marshes and adjacent grasslands. While an easy day of birding on the refuge will net 80-110 species, over 235 species of birds have been reported on the refuge. Traveling the length of the refuge is like going on a safari. Instead of lions, flamingos, and elephants, you see a vast natural assemblage of ducks, geese, cranes, ibises, sparrows, warblers, and other "tweety" birds for the more advanced birder.

In addition to the abundance of wildlife, the region offers an abundance of outstanding volcanic and other geological features. The pristine playa called the Alvord Desert; the ninety-mile-long and two-mile-high Steens Mountain with its glacial canyons, streams, and Great Basin alpine vegetation; Pleistocene lake basins such as Catlow, Harney, and Malheur, all combine to give the visitor a concentrated form of the best natural history one could hope for.

