

MARCH 2017

MAKING TRACKS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE TUALATIN RIVER NWR

JOYFULLY CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY WITH THE WONDER OF THE REFUGE



PRESIDENT'S PERCH

By Tom Hartz, President of the Board



[This article was written during the depth of sadness brought on by the deluge in February. The trails are now open! Hopefully, we can all get a much needed dose of outside and refuge.]

Enough already! The trails have been closed for two weeks and counting. Folks continue to stop by, hoping to take a walk between downpours, only to find that for their safety and that of the refuge, the trails remain flooded. I guess if we have to have lots of rain, it should go ahead and set a new record. Apparently, we now are surviving the wettest February on record (hurray).

The annual migration continues, although the number of waterfowl arriving daily has declined. Swallows are feeding in large numbers as the thawing has put more insects into the air. Other spring arrivals, such as songbirds, are showing up in number. We'll see more when we can finally get out onto the trails. OK, I'll stop complaining.

The Urban Program Team continues to work with the Friends to identify ways to bring a commitment to nature conservancy into our communities. A very positive initiative of the Program is that we collaborate more closely with our partners at other refuges in our region. A group of Friends of TRNWC met with Friends of Ridgefield and Steigerwald Lake to develop logistics for distributing transportation funding for programs sponsored by all of our facilities. As we witness successful activities or ones that don't quite resonate as we would have hoped, we will share our experiences and continuously improve our offerings.

We are approaching the busy season for schools and other organizations to plan field trips to TRNWR. To assure that we maintain adequate responsiveness to the requests for naturalist-led visits, this year's Volunteer Naturalist Training began on February 23rd. This year's class of 16 candidates is very enthusiastic and will bring lots of energy and a variety of experiences to our volunteer staff.

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MARCH EVENTS

[Photo Society Meeting](#)
Mar. 2, 7:00pm

[Waterfowl Watch](#)
Mar. 4, 10am - noon

[Puddle Stompers](#)
Mar. 8, 1 - 2:30pm

[Restoration Work Party](#)
Mar. 11, 8:45am - noon

The Friends have been awarded a grant from **Grasmajeto Fund of The Oregon Community Foundation** to support our efforts to offer "Alternative Outdoor School" programs. The passage of an Oregon initiative in 2016 to offer middle school students an Outdoor School opportunity for a week created a niche in which we are well-suited to participate. There are children who cannot, for various reasons, attend a week-long overnight camp. Traditionally, these students spent that week in "study hall" while their classmates had a week to remember for the rest of their lives. Our Volunteer Naturalists and Environmental Education Specialists have connected with schools in the past to provide an outdoor program for these kids. This year, thanks to the efforts of the Visitors Services Team and their connections beyond the Refuge, we will partner with a couple of middle schools to offer a memorable week for students who don't attend overnight camps. These kids will spend a day at the new educational facility at the Oregon Zoo, a day at Wetzel Woods, a family-owned natural area near Sherwood, a day at our Refuge, and a day at their own school property. These children will also get a week in nature that they'll remember for the rest of their lives by way of Alternative Outdoor School.

As I mentioned last month, winter is a planning time for the Friends. This year is no exception. Yeah, the weather has kept us off the trails, but our planning has been going on in spite of that. We'll be ready for Spring and Summer!

NATURE'S OVERLOOK STORE

New Items in the Store

Earrings made by a local artist.
Steller's Jay, Merganser and Pileated Woodpecker



[Puddle Stompers](#)

Mar. 14, 10 - 11:30am

[Bioswale Work Party](#)

Mar. 24, 9 - 11:00am

[Friends Board](#)

[Meeting](#)

Mar. 28, 6:30pm



SOCIAL MEDIA



Socks



Wear in the World

Friends volunteers Tobbyn and John (wearing new Friends logo hat) visiting Buenos Aires NWR in Arizona.



HELP THE
FRIENDS WHILE
YOU SHOP



PROGRAMS

Environmental Education

The USFWS Migratory Bird Program has been working in partnership with Ockley Green Middle School in North Portland for a few years in the Bird by Bird Program. Staff participate in a program at the school teaching students about birds and why they are important. This year they will again bring an entire class to visit Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge over two days to test and expand their birding knowledge. We are lucky to have a location that is in the same region as this school yet provides a totally different habitat for students to experience birds in.

--Seth Winkelhake

Interpretation

Interpretive and Outreach Informational Meeting

Saturday, March 18th 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM Wildlife Center Classroom

Do you want to get more involved? Like doing interpretation, outreach, creative writing, or research? Come to this meeting and learn more about volunteer opportunities coming soon.

Contact Rachel Dunham at Rachel_dunham@fws.gov.

Restoration

Second Saturday Work Party

Looking to get involved on the refuge and want to get your hands dirty? Come out to our Second Saturday Restoration Work Party! Each month we pick an activity such as caring for trees, planting, invasive species removal, trail maintenance, etc.

We meet at 8:45 am at Refuge HQ and then head to our work site at 9:00am, with work wrapping up at 12:00. These work parties are a great opportunity to see portions of the refuge that are closed to the public, as well as a great way to get an understanding of what's going on at the refuge from the Field level.

Please wear sturdy shoes and bring a water bottle. Email Habitat Restoration Specialist Sarah Williams at SWilliams@friendsoftualatinrefuge.org with any questions. Hope to see you there!

Friends of Trees gift tree planting

Friends of Trees will be holding their second gift tree planting of this fiscal year on Sunday, March 19. These plants were purchased by citizens in memory of loved ones or to celebrate a special occasion. The plants will be going in along the year round trail down to the bus stop with the hopes of creating a buffer line between the refuge and highway 99. The refuge CCP calls for mixed forest habitat in the area and many of the species going in are your usual mixed forest suspects; Oregon White Oak, Snowberry, Oregon Grape, Douglas Fir etc. Please let Habitat Restoration Specialist [Sarah Williams](#) know if you have any thoughts or questions.

KID'S CORNER

Hey Kids! Bring your parents to the refuge and tell us what you saw. Take a photo, draw a picture, write a short story, pen a poem. Your creation could be published here in the newsletter, with your parents permission of course.

NWRA Action

[Sign up to receive alerts](#) from the National Wildlife Refuge Association on legislation that impacts the National Wildlife Refuge System.

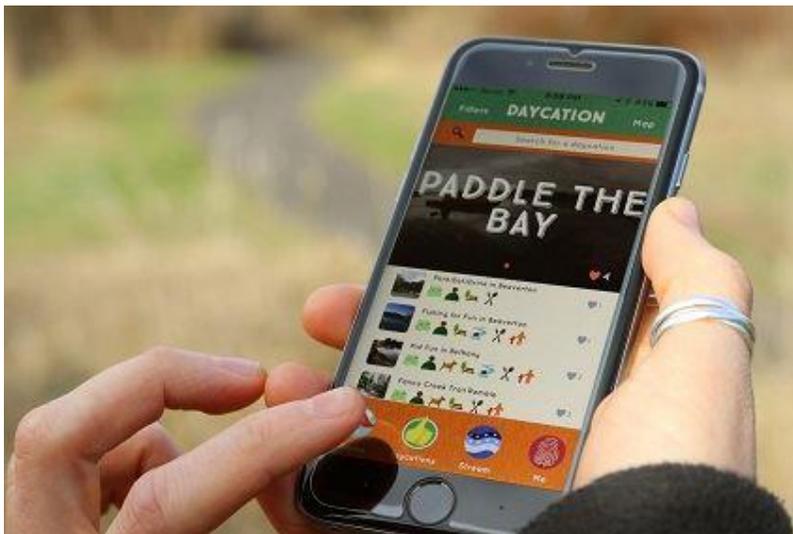
URBAN PROGRAM

Voices of the Urban Refuge Support Team

As the Urban Refuge Program continues to take shape, we want to support your understanding of this important, but sometime unfamiliar, work. We've collected some highlights from the last month below and encourage you to contact us anytime to learn more and explore ways to get involved.

Try Out “Daycation” Today

Ever heard of the “Ale Trail” in Washougal? Want to test your nature knowledge on Ridgefield NWR’s GeoAdventure? Curious about how to experience heritage trees and chocolate in one activity? All of these adventures await you in the Daycation Mobile App, now available in the Apple App Store as a “Beta Test” version. Through the Urban Refuge Program, the USFWS has been working with partners of The Intertwine Alliance for the past couple years to develop this fun, handy guide to nature in the Portland-Vancouver Metro Area. We are actively seeking “Beta Testers” — folks who are willing to download and give the app a try, then fill out a feedback form with their impressions. If you want to give this new, fandangled technology a try as a Beta Tester, check out the Daycation Website or directly contact Tara Wilkinson of The Intertwine Alliance at tara@theintertwine.org. To generally learn more, contact Pat at patrick_stark@fws.gov.



Ridgefield NWR Community & Nature Center Focus Group

Progress continues in envisioning a new public and staff facility at Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge — a Center developed not just for the community, but by the community. Public and partner input has been a key part of the "Imagine" phase of the project, as the Refuge works with an architectural firm on a conceptual design. The Urban Refuge Program and Friends of Ridgefield NWR supported the latest perspective-gathering effort on January 19th, facilitating a focus group of youth-serving organizations in the Clark County area. Nine organizations participated, engaging in a discussion of how a new Center can best serve youth in the region. The conversation was lively and enlightening, including much discussion around addressing potential barriers for new, urban audiences that have

varying experience and comfort levels with nature. Several attendees expressed interest in opportunities to further participate in the project. If you want to learn more, contact Pat at patrick_stark@fws.gov.

Engaging Our Community: From Professionals to Neighborhoods

Our Urban Wildlife Refuge's own, Dr. Jenny de la Hoz, spoke at the 15th Annual Urban Ecosystem Research Consortium (UERC), a gathering of environmental professionals focused on urban nature. She presented her dissertation work on Latinos' environmental identity in the Pacific Northwest. Her work showed that Latinos living in the Pacific Northwest have a strong environmental identity and enjoy exploring nature with families and loved ones. She also concluded that environmental values are stronger in older Latinos and encouraged organizations to support opportunities, like multigenerational activities, for older generations to pass along these values to other generations. To learn more, contact Jenny at jenny_delahoz@fws.gov.

FEEDBACK WELCOME

Please help us make this newsletter something you look forward to receiving by sharing ideas and suggestions to improve the content. This is a work in progress, and we look forward to hearing from you! [Click here](#) to email us.

CONTACT US

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