

# Making Tracks

e-zine of the Friends of Tualatin River NWR

January 2016

Here is what's happening on The Refuge.  
Not a member? [Click here to join now!](#)

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## From the President's Perch

*By Keith Mays, President of the Board*

On behalf of the board of the Friends, I hope you had wonderful days during the holidays spent with family and friends.

Nothing better after the holidays than a relaxing visit to your Refuge!

As most of us experienced, December brought lots of rain to the Washington County area and the Refuge had water everywhere, even covering some trails. The water is great for the refuge and wildlife, but it impacted what human visitors could do for a few days. The high water will require some repairs but it was minimal.

This month we will be hosting the Sherwood Area Chamber of Commerce to come out and see the wildlife and our Visitors Center.

Challenges with federal funding of our Refuge system continue but we continue to have great local leadership with Erin and we are hopeful to minimize impacts here as Dept of Fish & Wildlife go through their budget process.

Please join us with your good thoughts and prayers to a quick and safe end to the occupation, and return to normal operations at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge near Burns, Oregon.



**Bag It Forward at New Seasons Market**

 JOIN

 DONATE



New Seasons Market is launching a new program we're calling Bag it Forward, which offers customers an opportunity to donate their reusable bag credits (5¢ each) to a non-profit organization. Customers can choose from one of three beneficiaries representing New Seasons Market's tenets of giving: fighting hunger, supporting K-12 schools, and promoting environmental conservation. The beneficiaries will be selected by our customers during a voting process that will take place January 13th – 26th.

Friends of Tualatin River Refuge has been nominated to be on the ballot by the community coordinators at our Progress Ridge and Nyberg Rivers stores. The ballot will include four organizations per tenet for customers to choose from. Friends of Tualatin River Refuge will be one of four conservation organizations customers vote for.

The winning organizations will be notified on February 1st.

During the voting period (January 13 – 26), we encourage you to promote this among your supporters. Here's how we'll be sharing the excitement with our customers:

#### In-Store

Voting will take place at our Solutions Center. A poster will announce Bag it Forward and will list the nominees, with a brief sentence or two about the work they do. Customers will write in their votes on a ballot – one for each of the three tenets.

#### Advertising

Bag it Forward will be featured in our Weekly Flyer on 1/13 and 1/20, and we'll be encouraging folks to come in and vote. We'll also feature the news on our social media channels.

Bag it Forward will officially launch on February 8th. Customers will receive one coffee bean for every reusable bag we fill. They can place the bean into a marked mason jar, allocating that 5¢ refund to the organization of their choice. A chalkboard behind the three jars will provide information about the organizations they can choose to support.

Please note: our plan is to hold a vote and change beneficiaries twice a year. However, since this is a new program, we may determine that this frequency is not appropriate.

If you have any questions or concerns about the program, please contact Chenoa Philabaum at [chenoap@newseasonsmarket.com](mailto:chenoap@newseasonsmarket.com).

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## Nature's Overlook

**Ready for the Cold Weather? Neither are we.** But, we're ready to help keep you warm! Shop in the Nature's Overlook Store for the new gear that recently arrived. This includes fleece jackets, knit hats, knit beanies and rugby striped knit scarves in assorted sizes and colors.

### This Month's Events

Second Saturday Work Party  
January 9th 8:45AM-12:00PM

Store Committee Meeting  
January 7th at 5:00pm  
Riparian Room

Photo Society Meeting  
January 7th 7:00PM  
Riparian Room

Waterfowl Watch  
January 9th 10:00am-12:00pm

Puddle Stompers  
January 13th 1:00PM-2:30PM  
January 28th 10:00AM-  
11:30AM

Wildlife Roadways  
January 22nd 10:00AM-  
11:30AM

**Please see our Friends website calendar for more details.**



### SAVE THE DATE!

The 20th Annual Tualatin River Bird Festival is **May 21, 2016**.

Join the Planning Committee.  
We meet the first Tuesday of each month @noon.

Contact:  
[info@friendsoftualatinrefuge.org](mailto:info@friendsoftualatinrefuge.org)



Two of our best selling books now have follow up books. We were so excited when we heard these two new books were coming out! Living with Thunder, by Ellen Morris Bishop has more of her amazing photography. She has been a guest speaker for the Photo Society that meets at the Refuge. This new book of hers has up to date geologic survey of the Northwest, with exploration of past climate changes and their implications for our future. If you like volcanic heritage, you will like this book!



Another new book, Wild in the Willamette, is a follow up to Wild in the City. This one looks at the watershed of the Willamette between Portland and Eugene. It connects residents and visitors to the best biking, paddling and hiking opportunities the mid-Valley offers. There are natural history sidebars and essays by notable local authors sprinkled throughout.

### "Wear" in the World

We are looking for photos of people wearing their Friends of TRNWR logo wear at other natural areas. Please send your photo to [info@friendsoftrnwr.org](mailto:info@friendsoftrnwr.org) and you might just be in the next Making Tracks e-newsletter.

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## Waterfowl Watch

Waterfowl Watch  
Saturday, January 9th 10 AM – 12 PM

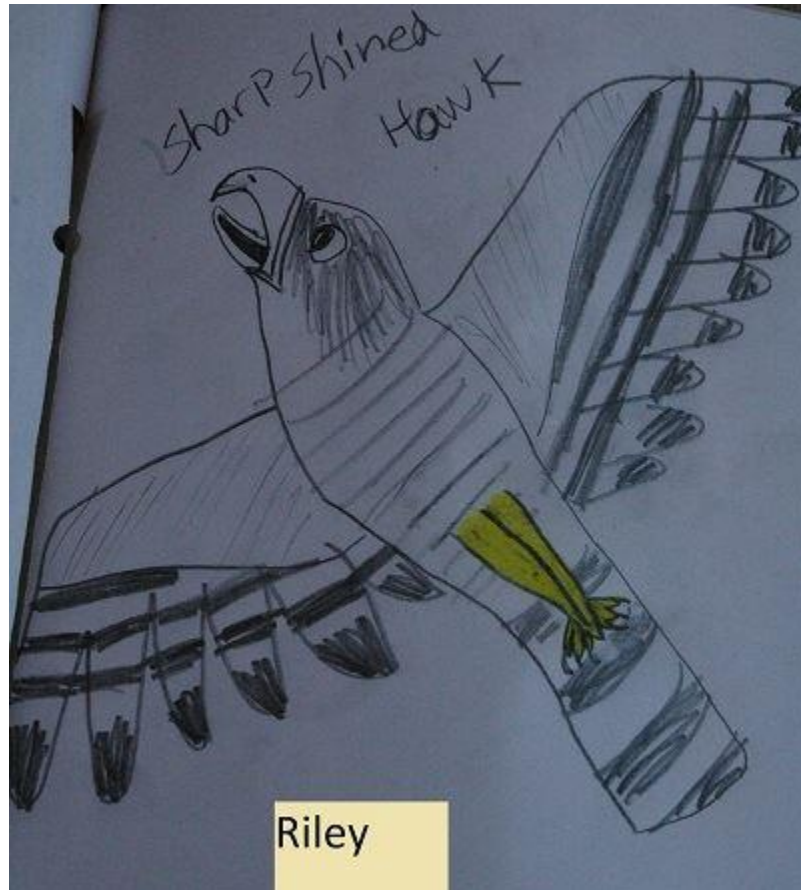
The ducks and geese are flocking to the refuge! Come learn about how to identify them with USFWS Biologist, Michelle McDowell. Start with a presentation on waterfowl watching and then venture out on the refuge to see them in the wild! Please bring binoculars and a bird guide if you have them.

Limited space available. To register, go to [www.friendsoftualatinrefuge.org/mainca](http://www.friendsoftualatinrefuge.org/mainca)  
Questions? E-mail Rachel Dunham at [Rachel\\_dunham@friendsoftualatinrefuge.org](mailto:Rachel_dunham@friendsoftualatinrefuge.org)  
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## Kids' Corner!

Hey Kids! Bring your parents to the refuge - then tell us what you have seen. Take a photo, draw a picture, write a short story, pen a poem. With your parents permission and help, send us your imaginings. Our newsletter will include a Kid's Corner imagining every month. See you on the refuge!

For more information, contact: [members@friendsoftualatinrefuge.org](mailto:members@friendsoftualatinrefuge.org)



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## Wildlife Center, Trail Rover & Interpretive Program

Thank you Tobyn B. for doing such a great Guided Nature Walk in November! Visitors learned all about how to see nature with new eyes by walking the trail from the perspective of an animal or plant!

Thank you Dawn S. and Ruthann P. for creating the station Bills vs. Beaks – What do they eat? The display was a hit with Wildlife Center visitors and extremely engaging. I hope to see the display being used often!

Marilyn E. and visiting PhD student from University of Maine, Kris H., stuffed a great horned owl and great blue heron! What a stinky process (literally) but resulted in some cool educational tools! Thank you both for your hard work!

Come January there will be a new Interpretive Exhibit in the Wildlife Center. Be sure to come check it out! The exhibit will rotate monthly.

by Rachel Dunham, Friends Wildlife Center & Interpretive Program Coordinator

## News from Environmental Education Programs

### Enrichment Opportunities Open to Public:

#### **Second Saturday Work Party**

Saturday, January 9th 8:45 AM – 12 PM  
Refuge Headquarters

Looking for a way to get involved in restoration? Come out to our Second Saturday restoration work party! For our January party we will be removing English ivy at a unit off Roy Rodgers Rd.

We will meet at refuge HQ at 8:45 am to get checked in and head to our work site around 9 am. Snacks and work gloves will be provided. Please wear sturdy shoes and plan for rain.

Email any questions to Habitat Restoration Specialist Sarah Williams at:  
[SWilliams@friendsoftualatinrefuge.org](mailto:SWilliams@friendsoftualatinrefuge.org)

#### **\*NEW\* Wildlife Roadways: A New Toolkit for Assessing Biodiversity Corridors in the Portland Metro Area Region**

Friday, January 22nd 10 AM – 11:30 AM  
Refuge Riparian Room

Four scientists are embarking on a multi-year project to create a tool which will assess how wildlife is moving through our urbanized areas in order to increase connectivity. Lori Hennings, Senior Natural Resource Scientist for Metro will be sharing about this exciting project that is currently focused on the Tonquin area from the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge to Metro's Graham Oaks Nature Park in Wilsonville.

Please register online at [www.friendsoftualatinrefuge.org/maincal](http://www.friendsoftualatinrefuge.org/maincal).  
Questions? Contact Rachel Dunham [Rachel\\_dunham@friendsoftualatinrefuge.org](mailto:Rachel_dunham@friendsoftualatinrefuge.org)

#### **Puddle Stompers**

Wednesday, January 13 1:00-2:30

Thursday, January 28 10:00-11:30

Do you have a little one who enjoys being outdoors? Are you wondering what they can do during the rainy season? Bring your littlest naturalist to the Refuge to stomp in puddles and learn to appreciate the wet weather that makes Oregon so green!

This preschool environmental education program invites children and their families to spend the afternoon learning about the natural wonders of the Refuge. Volunteer Naturalists will lead nature crafts, share stories, and guide hikes on Refuge trails. The Refuge supplies 'froggy' raingear for the kids, but adults should bring their own. Each date offers a different theme, so Puddle Stompers are encouraged to visit on multiple days.

This event is free & open to the public, but registration is required.

Questions? Please contact the Friends Conservation Education Lead Coordinator [Jenna Mendenhall](#) or call (503)625-5944.

#### **Other Volunteer opportunities**

There are many fun and rewarding programs and events that take place throughout the year. We would love to have you be a part of the refuge fun! Please visit [www.friendsoftualatinrefuge.org](http://www.friendsoftualatinrefuge.org)

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## **Riverboat Unit Oak Savanna Restoration**

By Curt Mykut, USFWS Wildlife Biologist

When the General Land Office (GLO) of the US Government was conducting land surveys in the mid-1800s, surveyors described large swaths of the Willamette Valley, including the Tualatin Basin, as prairie lands. These prairies were both wet and dry, were dominated by grasses and wildflowers, and supported very few tree and shrub species. Grazing by elk, as well as naturally occurring fires and low-intensity fires set intentionally by the Willamette Valley's indigenous Kalapuya people, were the primary forces shaping these open, mostly treeless landscapes. These open prairies in turn supported a wide array of plant and animal species that were important for Kalapuya subsistence and culture. While few tree and shrub species were hardy enough to withstand grazing pressure and periodic fires, one species in particular persisted and found its niche on many of the Willamette Valley's prairies, the Oregon white oak.

Both the oaks, and the native prairies that supported them, comprise one of Oregon's most imperiled habitat types known as oak savanna. Not surprisingly, many of Oregon's most sensitive plant and animal species are associated with oak savannas; like Kincaid's lupine, Fender's blue butterfly and the Western meadowlark. To address the loss of these rare systems and the plants and animals that rely on them, restoration efforts are occurring Valley wide, including right here in Sherwood at the Tualatin River NWR.

One site in particular, the 117-acre Oleson parcel of the Refuge's Riverboat Unit (just to the NW of Sherwood), is in the early stages of prescribed management that will eventually re-establish native prairie and scattered oaks characteristic of the savannas that were once common place right here in our backyard. The USFWS actually began restoration efforts on this parcel during 2007 and 2008 by establishing thousands of Oregon white oak trees across the site. While oaks are very sparse on a typical Willamette Valley savanna, the Oleson site was overplanted to compensate for expected tree mortality. Fast forward to 2015, and most of the originally established trees had unexpectedly survived. In most restoration scenarios such a result would be cause for celebration; however, in this case the density of trees was far too high. To nudge the site closer to a typical oak savanna where 1-2 trees might persist per acre, Refuge staff recently began a project to thin the original plantings with help from local natural resource restoration firm Ash Creek Forest Management, LLC. In the coming years, our emphasis will shift to re-establishing native grasses and wildflowers that make up the prairie understory, and eventually transition towards long-term maintenance of an open savanna by periodically mowing, grazing, or even possibly prescribing low-intensity burns on the site. Eventually, the Oleson site will not only give us a glimpse of the area's ecological past, but with any luck (or careful restoration planning) breeding Western meadowlarks and large majestic oak trees!

By Curt Mykut, USFWS Wildlife Biologist

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## **New Role for Mesha Wood**

As of January 11, 2016, Mesha Wood, weekend USFWS Ranger at the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge will take on a new role here at the Refuge working with the Urban Program under the supervision of Kim Strassburg. She will be helping with outreach for the Urban Program. As a result, we will no longer have Mesha as our back-up in the Wildlife Center or her presence on the weekends here at the Refuge. Mesha has a great deal of experience working with the Visual Arts and this new opportunity will allow her more time to use those skills. We thank her for her work here and wish her the best of luck as she steps

into her new role. The Ranger position will not be backfilled at this time. Rachel, our Wildlife Center Coordinator, will continue to provide oversight on the weekends.

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## Photos by Friends

To see hundreds of photos of scenes on the refuge as well as refuge events, visit our FLICKR web site at [Friends FLICKR](#)

If you have a photo taken on the refuge and would like to share it with the Friends, email the image along with a brief note to [members@friendsoftualatinrefuge](mailto:members@friendsoftualatinrefuge).

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**YOU CAN HELP Friends of TRNWR EARN DONATIONS JUST BY SHOPPING WITH YOUR FRED MEYER REWARDS CARD!** We have seven members signed up already and have received donations!

Fred Meyer is donating \$2.5 million per year to non-profits in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington, based on where their customers tell them to give. Here's how the program works:

- Sign up for the Community Rewards program by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to Friends of TRNWR at [www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards](http://www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards). You can search for us by our name or by our non-profit number 93278.
- Then, every time you shop and use your Rewards Card, you are helping Friends of TRNWR earn a donation!
- You still earn your Rewards Points, Fuel Points, and Rebates, just as you do today.
- If you do not have a Rewards Card, they are available at the Customer Service desk of any Fred Meyer store.

For more information, please visit [www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards](http://www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards).

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## Support FOR While You Shop Online!

If you are a frequent Amazon shopper, here's a great way to support the Friends while you make your purchases! And the great thing is, there's no extra cost to you!

Simply go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and log in using your Amazon account, then type "Friends of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge" into the search box. Once it appears on your screen, check the "Select" box and you're ready to buy, buy, buy, while the Friends will receive a donation of .5% of every purchase from the Amazon Smile Foundation.

Bookmark [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) so you use it every time you shop and those cents will add up into dollars that will help the Friends support programs and projects on the Refuge. How easy is that!?

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## Connect with Us! Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr

We made it to 500 likes before the end of the year, thanks to you! Next goal is 1000, so check it out and repost, invite your Friends to like us too.

Not a Facebook user? Did you know that you can follow the posts to our Facebook page on our website Home Page? Point your browser to: <http://friendsoftualatinrefuge.org>.

You can now follow us on Twitter @FriendsTRNWR and Instagram at FriendsOfTualatinRefuge.



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### **Remember, Let Us Know What You Think!**

Thank you for taking the time to read through this newsletter. Please help us make it something you look forward to receiving by telling us what you want to know about, and how we can improve the look or content. This is a work in progress, and we look forward to hearing from you! [Click here](#) to email your thoughts.

### **Contact Info**

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[www.friendsoftualatinrefuge.org](http://www.friendsoftualatinrefuge.org)

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