

May 2020

MAKING TRACKS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE TUALATIN RIVER NWR

JOYFULLY CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY WITH THE WONDER OF THE REFUGE



We are happy to announce that the 2020 Tualatin River Bird Festival is going virtual! We have partnered with US Fish and Wildlife Service to bring you 5 days of online learning and fun. Head to our official [Bird Festival page](#) to stay up-to-date and get the latest content.



Virtual Bird Festival Calendar

May 12th - 16th

Time Slots	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00 am	Welcome Introduction Video!	Story time	Story time	Story time	Story time
10:00am	Story time	Teddy Roosevelt Show!	Which House are you?	Bird Misidentification	All About Birds Playlist!
11:00pm	Ask an Expert: Kids edition	Ask an Expert: Kids edition	Ask an Expert: Kids edition	Ask an Expert: Kids edition	Ask an Expert: Kids edition
12:00pm	Bird Festival Scavenger Hunt!	What's Your Ranger Name?	Raptor ID Bingo	Bird Festival Word Scramble	Which Habitat on the Refuge are you?
1:00pm	Submit your best awkward animal photo to be featured in our highlights video!	Beak Adaptation Challenge!	Tennessee Wildlife Refuge: Birding 101	Virtual Wagon Ride	Mind Blowing Factoid
2:00pm	Crafts: Build a Bird Challenge!	Origami	Crafts: Decorative Bird Houses	Crafts: TP Hummingbird	Origami
3:00pm	Questionable Trivia: Submit your funny answers!	Bird Misidentification	Mind-blowing Factoid	Mind-Blowing Factoid	Eloise Educates!
4:00pm	Ask an Expert! Adults Edition	Eloise Educates!	Ask an Expert! Adults Edition	Ask an Expert! Adults Edition	Ask an Expert! Adults Edition
6:00pm				Live Trivia Event!	Highlights Video

For Refuge updates, please visit the [FWS.gov](https://www.fws.gov) website.

We encourage you to STAY HOME and STAY SAFE.

If you do visit the Refuge please know that all facilities are closed- the restrooms, the buildings, and the parking lot. You may park below the gate and walk up to access the seasonal and year round trail. Please do not block the gate or park on the grass. If parking is not available, please come back at another time. Pets are not permitted on the Refuge, and use social distancing when walking the trail.

Visitors to the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge,

We are suspending Visitor Center operations due to a lack of volunteer staff availability. The majority of our volunteer staff at this location meet the at-risk profiles in the public health advisories. Should you have questions, concerns, or comments please contact our Deputy Project Leader Eva Kristofik at Eva_Kristofik@fws.gov or our Project Leader Larry Klimek at Larry_Klimek@fws.gov or [\(503\) 625-5944](tel:5036255944).

If you have Urgent Questions about the FRIENDS, please send those to Info@FriendsofTualatinRefuge.org. These would include questions about Board Meetings, Membership, Advocacy and the nature store. All other questions should be directed to USFWS.

As a 501(c)(3) the Friends of Tualatin River NWR applied for and received funding from the Payroll Protection Plan Loan from the Federal Government.

Donations to help us continue our work to support the TRNWRC are more important than ever as our Natures Overlook Store is closed.

PRESIDENT'S PERCH

By Alan Christensen, President of the Board



Like the rest of you I am restless at home after about the sixth week of “stay at home” and the constant barrage of COVID 19 news. It seems that the appetite for news updates on the pandemic are limitless and relentless. My wife and I have binged on the endless movies, serials, and documentaries on TV to the point that our interest is waning. I miss our planned trips to the coast for razor clams, up the Gorge for our regular spring wildflower hikes, and to central Oregon for the sun and the call of western meadowlarks in the morning.

For most of my life Spring has been marked by awareness and joy at seeing the first osprey, the first trillium and the earliest seed in my garden to sprout up. My wife and I walk daily, mostly in our neighborhood of Maplewood, and we know where to look for the few trilliums that have survived the onslaught of ivy and blackberry. In our walks we notice the first forsythia and the first dogwoods to bloom. Recently, during the “stay at home” period, we have seen a big change in the number and makeup of walkers in our neighborhood. Getting out with families, walking dogs and biking around seems more popular than ever. I like to think they enjoy the new blooms also. This is one good thing we can do to relax our minds and bodies.

While thinking about this month’s Perch article I decided to share my need of staying connected with nature while having to stay close to home and how important it is to realize that despite the terrible events that are unfolding now, trilliums bloom on schedule and warblers pass through your yard on their semiannual migration. I think it’s important to look for and anticipate the arrival of flowers, the coming and going of birds, and to listen for Sandhill cranes that circle and call repeatedly over our city. Nature continues to follow patterns that have evolved over eons and which reassure us that despite our changing society some things continue on without needing our involvement. I give thanks for that.

We used to provide bird feeders in our back yard but, now, we only maintain lots of native shrubs, a bird bath and a hummingbird feeder. I recognize the “regulars” that are drawn throughout the year to our yard (eg, crows, Stellar jays, robins) and in the Spring am looking for newcomers that are passing through or arrive for the summer/fall. In early March I looked out our windows and was surprised by a hermit thrush. I have seen them a couple of other times and now recognize

JOIN

DONATE

RENEW

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friends Board Meeting

Virtual Meeting Planned

May 26, 2020 6:30 PM

Contact by 4/21/2020

Info@FriendsOfUlnRidge.org

if you would

like to receive an

invitation to attend our

ZOOM meeting.



SOCIAL MEDIA



their nervous and twitchy movements on the ground as they hunt for bugs and worms. They don't seem to stay long as I saw a hermit thrush over the next several days, then not again. Visits by such cryptic and unfamiliar birds is special in my Portland yard. As March progressed and shrubs began to bloom in our yard we began to see bushtits, lots of black-capped chickadees, song sparrows, Oregon juncoes, and spotted towhees. I love it when they begin to perch on the top of a shrub or our mailbox and call early in the morning. As flowers began to show, the regular visits to the feeder by Anna's hummingbirds slowed and nearly stopped when nectar and small insects became available and more to their liking.

Just this week I was in my backyard when I noticed a flurry of small birds. I got my binoculars and was rewarded by watching yellow rumped warblers going after some kind of bug hatch in the trees along our back fence. Consulting my bird book I realized that both myrtle and Audubon's were mixed together in the flock of about 15 as some had bright yellow throats and others a white throat. According to my Audubon's field guide they are really recognized as one species and are known to interbreed. We maintain a shallow pool of water in our bird bath and are rewarded nearly all year with many species coming for a drink or a bath. About a week ago I noticed two white crowned sparrows at the bird bath, taking relatively long turns flipping their wings and tails and splashing water. I don't see this species in my yard very often and when I do it reminds me of a summer job on Kodiak Island when white crowned sparrows called all day and into the twilight of the long mid-summer days.

I believe our connection with nature is deep seated, primordial, and that we should nurture that connection. During times like this it can reassure us that despite the current unpredictable news, the world goes on and there is another dawn tomorrow and the sun will rise and birds will sing and flowers will bloom.

Friends Receive \$30,000 Grant From Washington County Visitors Association

The Grand Opening for Wapato Lake National Wildlife Refuge, part of the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge Complex, is currently planned for September 26, 2020. The Friends of TRNWR applied for and received a grant from Washington County Visitors Association to help install almost 2 miles of assessable trail for public use at Wapato Lake NWR.

We are very happy to announce our contribution to this historic event. The opening and access to Wapato Lake NWR has long been anticipated. The addition of this accessible stretch of the trail is an

HELP THE
FRIENDS WHILE
YOU SHOP



important part of providing access for all to your National Wildlife Refuges.

Work will begin soon on the trail so check our website and e-newsletters for more information about the grand opening and allowed public uses for Wapato Lake NWR.

Friends Receive \$15,000 Grant From

The City of Sherwood

The Friends of TRNWR are excited to announce that they were awarded a Community Enhancement Program Grant from the City of Sherwood for the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year. The grant allows for support for many of the programs and events the Friends help provide for and coordinate at the Refuge. It will provide funding support for the 25th Annual Tualatin River Bird Festival on May 15, 2021. The Festival is the largest single day activity at the Refuge and is a free, family friendly community event.

Grant funding will also help support existing programs in environmental education, visitor services, interpretive activities and working with the Sherwood School District. Some of these programs include second Saturday work parties, library outreach events and the Sherwood Public School fieldtrips.

Friends Receive \$100,000 Grant From

Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District

A little over a year ago the Friends applied for and received a grant from Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District as part of the large restoration project of Lower Chicken Creek and its associated floodplain. The grant was a request for help funding one of the two bridges that will be part of the restoration project. The time is getting nearer for the placement of the bridge, as plans continue to come together. We look forward to the increased access and enjoyment by visitors to the Refuge, and are proud to add to the overall project success.

Chicken Creek Restoration Updates

To see and read about continued updates regarding the restoration project, and the positive impacts it will have on the fish and wildlife at the Refuge, we have created a comprehensive information resource, and blog, to keep you up to date with all the changes happening and pertinent news in the coming years. Please visit: www.Refuge202.info

CONTACT US

Friends of the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge
19255 SW Pacific Highway
Sherwood, OR 97140
503-625-5944 x227

info@friendsoftualatinrefuge.org

