

WILD GOOSE TALES

WINTER 2017



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President's Column

Dave Landkamer



January is always a time of hope and renewal, as the New Year begins and the days of our wet Oregon winter grow progressively longer, and hopefully a little brighter! The Friends Board is energized by the generosity of our membership and conservation community, and the migratory winter birds are abundant and active on the refuge wetlands and fields. Beginning in November and throughout the holiday season, we experienced an unexpected surge in support through donations from our members and like-minded conservationists. A pair of young bird-watchers donated an incredible \$680.50 that they earned from pledges during the Big Sit bird watching event. We received a generous donation of \$1,000 from an anonymous donor through the Oregon Community Foundation. And in December, we sent out an appeal letter to our membership to ask for donations toward

our priority 2017 project of renovating the Woodpecker Loop Observation Platform. To date, we have received an amazing \$2,235 from this appeal to fund this needed renovation! This financial support, and the many volunteer hours that are donated by members, has inspired and allowed us to move forward quickly with many of our conservation-oriented goals for 2017.

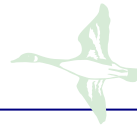
Now is a rewarding time to go for a wildlife drive through any of our mid-valley refuges (Finley, Ankeny, Baskett Slough, or Snag Boat Bend), or for a hike on one of the refuge trails. The wetlands and fields are often covered with huge flocks of waterfowl. I like to watch the throngs of Canada geese feeding in the fields and the bright swans on the lakes, but my personal favorites are the large groups of elegant pintails on flooded marshes and ponds. Last week, I watched a pair of eagles strafing the marshes together to eventually catch a duck. A small group of colorful wood ducks swam in Muddy Creek at the bridge crossing. Large herds of elk, up to 200 at a time, are often seen in the fields along Finley Road as it winds through the refuge.

FRIENDS' MISSION

The Friends of the Willamette Valley Refuge Complex is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to:

- *Promote the conservation of the natural resources of the Refuge Complex*
- *Foster awareness and appreciation of the Complex through educational and recreational opportunities*
- *Participate in activities that help the Complex achieve its goals.*

(Continued on Page 12)



VOLUNTEERS!

Come be a part of Winter Wildlife Field Day - March 18th

Everyone is invited to a free, family friendly, and fun day exploring our local wildlife at Finley National Wildlife Refuge on Saturday, March 18. The 2017 Winter Wildlife Field Day runs from 10 am to 2 pm with 9 separate activity stations at the refuge headquarters and a wildlife watch on the Homer Campbell Trail.

Children can visit several stations and earn an Explorer Patch while they:

- * learn how to help the pollinators that are critical to our lives
- * see live birds from the Chintimini Wildlife Rescue Center,
- * explore the forest and marsh with experts from the local Audubon Society,
- * get personally acquainted with critters in the pond and the forest soil,
- * touch wild animal fur and bones,
- * dissect owl pellets and
- * let their creative side fly!

Volunteers are needed between 9 am and 2:30 pm to help guests explore Nature and earn their Wildlife Explorer Patches.. If you can help from 2-6 hours, please contact

Teri Engbring at chateditors@gmail.com.

Children with their Wildlife Explorer Patches at Winter Wildlife Field Day in 2016.

Article / Photo
by :
Teri Engbring





Join the Fun and Learn
about Pollinators at the 3rd Annual

WINTER WILDLIFE FIELD DAY

Saturday, March 18
10 am - 2 pm



For "Kids" of
All Ages!



William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge
26208 Finley Refuge Road
9 miles south of Corvallis off Highway 99 W



Earn a Wildlife Explorer Patch -
participate in activities including:

- Live Birds
- Water Critters
- Nature Drawing
- Refuge Pollinators
- Owl Pellets
- Bird Walk
- Animal Skulls/Pelts
- Make-and-Take Projects



¡Bienvenidos! ¿Sabía que las aves, los insectos, y murciélagos son polinizadores? ¡Acompáñenos a explorar la importancia de polinizadores con actividades para toda la familia!

For more information,
call 541-757-7236

Thanks to Our Volunteers and Partners:



OSU BIRD NERDS





Volunteers! Join the Friends Table at the Oregon Garden for Earth Day, Date: April 22nd from 10 AM – 4 PM

Help us staff the Friends table. Help for part of the day, and then spend time touring the beautiful gardens for free. It is a fun time in a beautiful place.

Our theme this year: Native Wildlife. We will have fun educational projects for kids and pass out information about the Refuge Complex and the Friends.



The planet, wildlife, NWR's & public lands and volunteers - everyone will agree that these things are now more vitally important than ever.

Doug Spencer is the contact person for the event; he and his wife have "manned" the table for past events. He can give you more information and answer any questions you might have. Please send him an email! [<dgspencer1630@gmail.com>](mailto:dgspencer1630@gmail.com)



Swan Photo:
Cowli
Villiardos



Habitat Detective by Diane Young

On what Finley trail are these April and October views located?
See page 12 for the answer.



Last September, the Friends Biology Committee initiated a new Elk Survey Project to help Finley National Wildlife Refuge staff collect more data about the Roosevelt elk that frequent the fields and forests of the refuge, and to give our members an opportunity to take part in an important and enjoyable field biology study. Now, nearly six months later and in spite of severe weather in December and early January that prevented planned surveys, the data from over 35 surveys is starting to accumulate. The fun experiences of the volunteers as they do the surveys are accumulating as well.



Priscilla Seaman photo

**Elk Survey Picking up Steam and Data
by Azizah Mohd and Dave Landkamer**

The elk survey involves stopping at 12 specific viewing spots along the refuge roads to look for elk, count their numbers, and make notes of other interesting birds or wildlife that are seen. Volunteers choose when they want to do the survey, and usually take about two hours to complete it. A quick review of the data shows that the elk can be seen any time of day, most often in fields along the edges of the forest. Elk were sighted in nearly 1/2 of the surveys, which shows that careful observation often reveals their presence.

Seeing the elk is always a thrill because of their impressive size, and because they are most often seen in large herds. Most of the elk seen during the surveys have been cows (females), but herds usually have at least a few bulls (males) mixed in also, and sometimes the bulls have huge antlers. This winter, in addition to the elk, survey volunteers are seeing large flocks of water birds that are over-wintering in the valley, such as Canada geese, tundra swans, Northern pintails, Northern shovelers, and American coots. Bald eagles can often be seen hunting the flocking birds.

We are very fortunate to have the help of an unexpected group of

volunteers; the young men of Phi Delta Theta Fraternity at Oregon State University. Twelve members of the fraternity have completed over half of the surveys, more than doubling the data that has been collected thus far. In addition to gathering lots of useful data, the students are learning and having plenty of fun (see the quotes and photographs in the boxes). The students have also offered to assist with data entry and analysis. We are pleased to have these university students join our conservation community of volunteers, and are very grateful for their support of the wildlife refuges in our area.

In contrast, only a few Friends members have joined in the survey effort; a few board members and one new member who drives all the way from Salem to do the surveys. This has been surprising as we thought that many of our members would jump at the chance to help with the elk field survey.

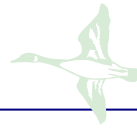
If you would like to participate in the elk survey project, please contact Azizah (azizahmohd@yahoo.com) to learn how you can join our elk survey team.

“Elk Spotting has given me the opportunity to get out of the city and go enjoy the fresh air while helping serve the community.

I love getting up early on the weekends and going out to see some elk while taking some photos.

I have started to teach myself different types of hawks so I can spot them and name them while I am at the refuge.”

Austin Souto-Maio



Meet Beatrice Serrano-Martinez,

our Willamette Valley NWR Complex Intern. She was born in Portland, and graduated from Oregon State University with a B.S. in Natural Resources. Before coming to the WVNWRC, she interned at the Yaquina Head Outstanding

Natural Area for the Bureau of Land Management, and in Bandon for the Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

Under the guidance of Samantha Bartling, the Complex point person for Outreach and Education, Beatrice has taken leadership for developing a Latino Outreach Program to increase Latino community participation in the Refuge Complex, and to help that community see the refuges as resources, not just places. To inspire interest and connection

between the community and the refuges, Beatrice has developed bilingual nature walks, where both English and Spanish would be spoken. They will begin on Saturday, Feb. 11 (weather permitting).

Everyone who loves nature can agree that their love began by getting outside and experiencing it first-hand, especially in the company of friends. These guided walks will be a perfect opportunity to engage and excite visitors and pique their curiosity. Speaking Spanish will not only help break down the language barrier, but also help Latino families, especially the older members, understand better in a comfortable atmosphere.. Beatrice hopes that in her groups both English – speakers and Spanish – speakers will have a good time, learn something, reinforce their bond with nature, and strengthen the social bonds between us all, regardless of our language or ethnicity.

Corvallis Seniors Enjoy Winter Wildlife



Doug Spencer, at the request of Tom Nelson, has been giving refuge wildlife tours to groups of very interested residents from Stoney Brook Retirement Center in Corvallis. So far they have been to Finley and Ankeny NWRs. The minibus full of visitors enjoyed the ducks, geese and swans at Eagle Marsh, and Pintail and Egret Marshes at Ankeny. Next time the plan is to visit Baskett Slough NWR. The pictures above were taken by Doug during the trip to Finley NWR.



Discover your | Descubra su Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Join us for guided bilingual nature walks!

William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge

Homer Campbell Memorial Trail

Saturday, February 11 @ 10am

&

Saturday, March 25 @ 10am

Meet at trailhead parking lot

Baskett Slough National Wildlife Refuge

Rich Guadagno Memorial Loop Trail

Saturday, April 15 @ 10am

Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge

Auto-Tour

Saturday, April 8 @ 10am

Meet at Ankeny Hill Outlook

This is a free, family friendly event for everyone wanting to learn more about the Refuges, expanding your Spanish vocabulary, birding, getting outdoors, and making new friends. These one hour events will focus on introducing you to some of the popular trails within your local Wildlife Refuges. In addition, we will keep an eye out for wildlife and practice our Spanish. Binoculars will be available for use.

¡Acompáñenos para caminatas de naturaleza guiadas bilingües!

William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge

Homer Campbell Memorial Trail

Sábado, Febrero 11 @ 10am

y

Sábado, Marzo 25 @ 10am

Nos reuniremos en el área de estacionamiento

Baskett Slough National Wildlife Refuge

Rich Guadagno Memorial Loop Trail

Sábado, Abril 15 @ 10am

Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge

Recorrido en Coche

Sábado, Abril 8 @ 10am

Nos reuniremos en el Ankeny Hill Outlook

Este es un evento familiar, de todas las edades, gratis para quienes quieran saber mas sobre los Refugios, expandir su ingles, aves, salir al aire libre y conocer mas amigos.

Estos eventos de una hora se enfocaran a introducir unos de los senderos mas populares dentro de sus Refugios Silvestres. Incluso estaremos pendientes por vida silvestre y practicaremos nuestro ingles.

Binoculares estarán disponibles para su uso.

More information | Mas información

Beatrice Serrano-Martinez

Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex

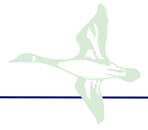
26208 Finley Refuge Road

Corvallis, OR 97333

(541) 757-7236

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/william_l_finley/





Wild Goose Nature Store

Located in the
William L. Finley NWR

Open All Year
Friday, Saturday
and Sunday

10 AM to 4PM



The Wild Goose Nature Store has had a successful year. We welcomed a total of 3768 visitors last year, and the store was able to make a big donation toward this year's main project—rebuilding the Woodpecker Loop's viewing deck. We have added some new volunteers to our group, too. We still see people who tell us that they are visiting the Refuge for the first time and they always have positive comments.

We are continuing to increase our stock of educational kids' books. We love to spark interest in our younger visitors. Books for all ages are a primary focus at the Nature Store. Also in stock for these frosty days, are new long-sleeved t-shirts in dark green with the Finley elk image, (matching the elk image on the caps) and printed locally. We have replenished our supply of Finley acorn woodpecker t-shirts. This popular shirt is our own design, also printed locally. Please stop by and see us on your next visit to Finley NWR.



Managers Lena Proebsting and Jeanne Taylor send a heartfelt “Thank You!” to their outstanding crew of volunteers.



Fencing: Good, Bad and the Ugly

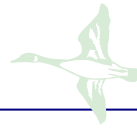
**by Douglas G. Spencer,
Board Member**

While you are visiting our three national wildlife refuges in the mid-Willamette Valley, have you ever thought about the fences you view along the roads, trails or in the marshes, fields and forested areas? I have and wondered why they are there. During the time when these lands weren't national wildlife refuges, many were owned by private individuals as homesteads and farms. Most of these people had livestock and to keep them confined, they erected either hog wire or barbed wire fences. Some of these fences ran along property lines for miles, others were shorter and divided up the livestock in smaller units for grazing preferences. Many of the time these fences traversed marshes, so livestock had a water source and sometimes went through forested areas, which isn't preferred but gave access to other habitats, such as the grasslands or prairies. After these homesteads were purchased for the establishment of the refuges, these fences were not a high priority by the refuge staff to remove and some of these fences are still used on the refuges for cooperative farmers to graze cattle on specially assigned areas of the refuges. The fences that remain many of have been grown over by vegetation or fallen down and are rusting away in the soils, while others hinder movement of wildlife.

Four courageous volunteers for our Friends organization have taken the task of pulling these unwanted, unsightly, and impeding fences out of the ground and hauling the remains to a pile for future recycling. Most of this work is going on at William L.

Finley National Wildlife Refuge, but future plans will be to remove fence from all the refuges and units. These volunteers first walk through the fields and forested areas to locate an old fence, then the hard part comes for the removal. Most all of the removal of fence is done manually, with the use of fencing pliers, brush clippers, axes, post pullers, hammers and shovels. When we find a fence and start the long task of removing it, many of the times the fence needs to be pulled out of the soil after wildlife have trampled it down or a fallen tree. A lot of the work has been along the west boundary of the refuge adjacent to Bellfountain Road, some behind the Cabell Barn and near Cattail Pond. Recently a fence was discovered on the southern boundary of the refuge between Mill Hill Trail and Gray Creek/Marsh. This fence was both hog wire and barbed wire with 6' steel posts and corners of 8x8 inch wooden posts. This entire fence was over 1500 feet long and had no purpose for the refuge; in fact it was impeding wildlife use to the waters of the creek and marsh. With help of our volunteers, most of this fence was removed. A section crossing the Gray Creek marsh is planned to be removed this coming summer, when the waters recede.

So to help our volunteers to locate further unneeded fences and posts, I give our readers a challenge, as you ride or walk trails within these refuges and you come across a fence, remember where this fence is located and provide this information to our refuge staff to record. If the staff decides this is a fence that needs to be removed, they will let our volunteers know. Lastly, I want to thank the volunteers that have been working so hard to remove our unwanted fences. Great job, thank you!



The Rich Guadagno Memorial Loop Trail Baskett Slough NWR

Oregon's recent Snowpocalypse did not deter hikers from enjoying the sights and sounds of the 1.0 mile Rich Guadagno Memorial Loop and the .75 mile trail to the Rich Guadagno Observation Platform. Both are year-round trails that provide opportunities for viewing wildlife in any season. The Loop trail passes through oak woodland, and mixed coniferous forests. The trail to the observation platform includes a moderate climb to the top of Baskett Butte, which overlooks the marshes, which fill with thousands of migratory water birds during refuge season, which is happening now.

Rich Guadagno was a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He was a dedicated conservationist who, for part of his career, worked at the Willamette Valley NWRC. He helped design and construct the trail that now bears his name. On September 11, 2001, was one of the passengers on Flight 93, which was hijacked and ultimately crashed near Shanksville, PA..





INFORMATION ABOUT THE ECLIPSE IN AUGUST



United States Department of the Interior



U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE
Willamette Valley NWR Complex
26208 Finley Refuge Road
Corvallis, Oregon 97333-9533
Phone (541) 757-7236
Fax (541) 757-4450

Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex 2017 Solar Eclipse Short-term Message – January, 2017

The 2017 solar eclipse is a once-in-a-lifetime event and its path will cross all three of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges: Ankeny, Baskett Slough and William L. Finley. We're excited, too! However, we have to limit viewing options because we are stewards of, and provide homes for, rare and endangered plants, wildlife and habitats. The potential short-term impacts of an event like this could result in lasting damage we can't undo. Thank you in advance for understanding and respecting the one-day closure areas at your Wildlife Refuges.

For Monday, August 21st 2017 sensitive habitat areas will be closed and there will be limited areas in which to view the eclipse at the Refuges, with very limited parking. These viewing and parking opportunities will be available on a first come, first serve basis and will have limited or no facilities. **Stay tuned and check our website and social media for information and maps detailing the limited viewing opportunities.**

Please keep in mind:

- The Refuges will open at dawn (~6 am) and close at dusk (~8:30 pm).
- August is peak fire season so please use caution and remember, no fires are allowed on the Refuges.
- As always, no camping is allowed. This means no arriving early and trying to camp-out!

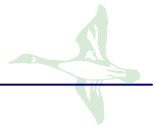
Please be safe!

- Protect your eyes during the eclipse. Looking at the sun can permanently damage your eyesight. You will need special eclipse viewing glasses, which are available online.
- August is usually hot and dry, so don't forget your water and please pack out anything you bring along.

For more information on the eclipse visit: <https://eclipse2017.nasa.gov/>

There are a number of events being planned for the big solar eclipse. To find one nearest you, check out these websites! <http://www.travelsalem.com/events/total-solar-eclipse-2017>
<http://visitcorvallis.com/visit-corvallis/corvallis-oregon-total-solar-eclipse-2017/>
<https://www.eugenecascadescoast.org/blog/post/total-solar-eclipse/>
<https://www.oregonsolarfest.com/>

No matter how and where you choose to enjoy the eclipse, we wish you happy and safe eclipse viewing!



President's Message (continued from Page 1)

Many trails at the refuges remain open year round, although some are closed seasonally in the winter to avoid disturbing the wintering wildlife. Winter trail walks often yield excellent wildlife and bird sightings because the trees and other plants have dropped their leaves, allowing for better visibility. Try one of these top winter walks at the refuges:

Finley Refuge: The: Homer-Campbell Boardwalk. There are lots of waterfowl on Cabell Marsh.

Ankeny Refuge: The Rail Trail Boardwalk to Observation Blind. Watch for beavers in the water.

Baskett Slough Refuge: The Rich Guadagno Memorial Loop. Enjoy the mixed habitats and great vistas.



**The Friends Board
needs new members**

**Come to a board meeting
and see if you would like to
participate.**

**Interested? Contact:
Dave Landkamer
djlandkamer@yahoo.com**

Habitat Detective: the Answer

This seasonal trail (April 1-Oct 31) is located off of Bruce Road and is called Cheadle Marsh Trail. This delightful loop trail or connecting trail to the Pigeon Butte trail has breathtaking, fenceless views of Pigeon Butte and the surrounding countryside. Maps and descriptions of Cheadle Marsh Trail and Pigeon Butte Trail are available throughout refuge kiosks and at the refuge headquarters.

Membership Form

☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Email: _____

☐ Please check this box if you **DO NOT** wish to share your information directly with the Refuge Volunteer Coordinator for additional volunteer opportunities.

I am interested in these volunteer opportunities:

- ☐ Work Parties ☐ Special Events ☐ Wild Goose Nature Store
☐ Education Programs ☐ Board Member
☐ Habitat Restoration ☐ Grounds Maintenance
☐ Other _____

Annual Membership Categories

- ☐ \$10 Senior / Student
☐ \$15 Individual
☐ \$25 Family
☐ Volunteer*

All contributions in excess of membership fees are tax deductible under corporation guidelines.

\$ _____ Tax deductible donation

Please make checks payable to FWVNWRC.

* Please contact the Friends Volunteer Coordinator to see if you qualify.



Friends of the Willamette Valley
National Wildlife Refuge Complex

P.O. Box 2238
Corvallis, OR 97339

secretary.friends@gmail.com

Phone: 541-757-7236 Ext. 224

**VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.FRIENDSWVNWRC.ORG**