

WILD GOOSE TALES

WINTER 2017



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DEBBIE MAYNARD

President's Column

Dave Landkamer



The sudden arrival of our long-awaited spring suits me just fine; I am energized by the welcome sunshine, the longer days, our energetic and committed volunteers, and the possibilities that are springing to life this time of year. On the refuges in our valley, the winter-to-summer transition is in full swing. The dusky Canada geese, for which our valley refuges were established, departed for their nesting grounds in the Copper River Delta and the offshore islands of south-central Alaska. Cackling geese have gathered by the thousands in the refuge fields, and flown northward in big V formations to their respective nesting grounds along the northern Arctic Ocean

Fringe of North America.

At the same time, many songbirds are returning to the refuges to stake out their nesting territories with color and song. For example, horned larks began returning to all three refuges; look for them in open, sparsely vegetated fields. My personal favorites are the red-winged and yellow-headed blackbirds, and of course, the melodic meadowlarks. The fields are swelling with fresh grasses and blooming wildflowers, and the trees are budding and leafing out to harvest that oncoming sunshine too. The revived landscape displays at least a hundred shades of green. All the refuge trails opened for hiking on April 1st, so it's a great time to get out for a wild walk. Everything seems to be energized!

Friends volunteers have been getting busy this spring as well. We offered fun activities at two popular outreach events this spring. The Winter Wildlife Day at Finley National Wildlife Refuge on March 18 brought hundreds of families out to interact with displays including live birds, water critters, plants for pollinators, and owl pellets.

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)



Winter Wildlife Field Day 2017

Finley Refuge welcomed over 300 people on March 18th for a day of fun and learning. There were water and soil critters to explore, seeds to plant, and nature drawings and crafts to make. Children got a close look at live birds courtesy of Chintimini Wildlife Rescue Center. They were also able to see and touch animal fur, bones and feathers. Volunteers from the Audubon Society took families on forest and marsh bird walks.

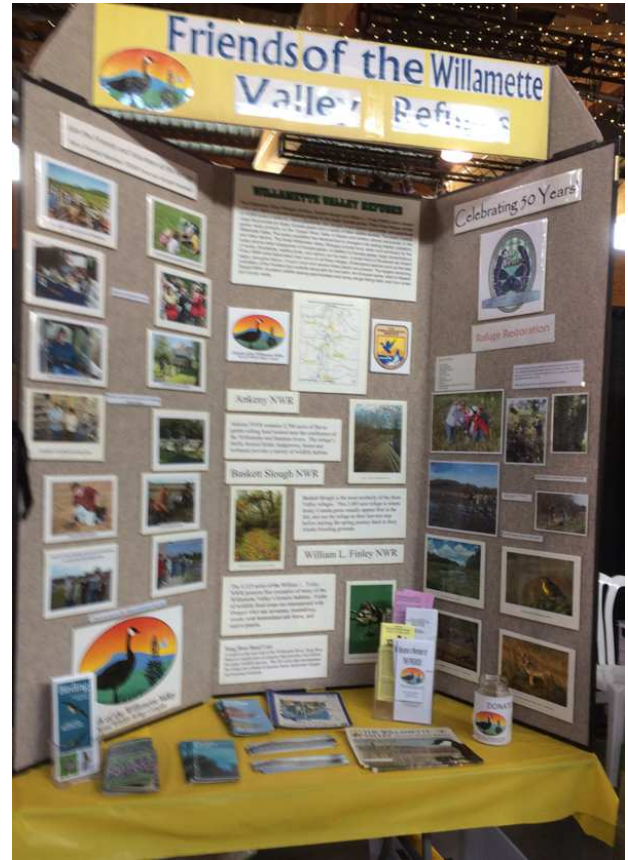
Our successful event was made possible by the volunteers who donated their time to help out. Thank you!

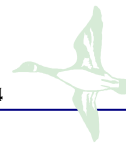




Earth Day at the Oregon Garden

Our Friends booth on Earth Day was very popular with the hundreds of children and adults who visited us. Debbie and Bruce discussed pollinators and gave away showy milkweed and sunflower seedlings. Janine was swarmed by children as she showed them how to make duck hand puppets. Dave, Teri, and Doug did outreach to people about the refuges and the work of the Friends. Our literature display provided people with information they could take home. We reached many people—a successful event!





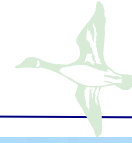
Well Done!

Isaac Denzer and Kai Frueh were honored by the Friends for organizing a Big Sit!!! event at Finley NWR. Their group identified 71 bird species, and ,through pledges, they raised \$680 for the Friends and the refuges. The Friends gave them a gift and one year's membership.



Habitat Detective by Diane Young

On what popular seasonal trail can you experience these breathtaking views in summer?



The Woodpecker Loop Observation Deck Renovation by Dave Landkamer

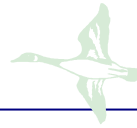
Our Woodpecker Loop Observation Deck renovation project is moving forward nicely. Years of savings from the Wild Goose Nature Store, coupled with donations from many generous Friends members and benefactors, provided the funds needed to get our project off to a great start. These assembled seed funds, along with our volunteer hours, allow us to seek additional grant funding to match what we have already put together, so our funds can go much further.

The existing observation deck on the popular Woodpecker Loop Trail at Finley National Wildlife Refuge was in need of maintenance and repairs from years of weather, wear and tear. The huge, old oak tree in the center of the observation deck had lost some big limbs and would likely drop more on the deck at some point in the future. We also dreamed of having a larger, covered space where trail walkers could seek shelter from the weather. In addition, the refuge's new, energetic visitor services specialist, Samantha Bartling, was hoping for a sheltered space where groups could gather for educational and interpretive activities. We decided to build a safer, sheltered observation deck that would keep the spectacular view of the valley and Cascade Range.

During the last two months, we put together the project design details, identified the best location just north of the existing deck, and searched for experienced, local contractors who were interested in helping us make our dream project a reality. Our project requirements have gone out to contractors for bidding, and we expect to choose one of them soon for the project.

The new observation deck will be completed this summer for all to enjoy. We plan to host a opening ceremony and party on the deck for our members and the broader conservation community. Watch for your invitation in our summer Wild Goose Tails newsletter, and get ready to enjoy the new observation deck on the Woodpecker Loop Trail!

Our sincere gratitude goes out to everyone who has contributed to this exciting project.



Friends Secretary Sandy Kuhns, A Shining Example of Volunteerism

by Dave Landkamer

This spring is a time of both celebration and some sadness for our Friends Board, as Sandy Kuhns retires from her long-time, dedicated role as Secretary of the FWVNWRC. Sandy came to the Friends Board in 2012 with a wealth of experience with wildlife and administrative work, as has been a mainstay of our organization in keeping our communications lines open, and recording the minutes at our meetings. Our May Board meeting was her Board "swan song", or "Wild Goose" song, as it may be.

Sandy was at all of our meetings like clockwork, laptop computer in hand, to deftly document our dialog and activities, and to keep us on course during and between official gatherings. In fact, she attended an incredible 54 consecutive meetings without a single absence! Her dedication and constancy across the winds of change have been like a rudder on a ship for our organization, and we have benefitted greatly from her selfless volunteerism. It goes without saying that we will greatly miss her reliable services to our Board and volunteer organization.

Sandy exemplifies the volunteer spirit of selfless giving, and serves as an inspiration to us all. Where did Sandy find her spirit of volunteerism? She served in the Peace Corps in Thailand in the late 70's. In the early 80's she lived in Alaska working as an animal caretaker for polar bear, wolves, and foxes at the NARL Naval Arctic Research Facility. She also worked with reindeer at the University of Alaska, assisting a veterinarian working on the development of a brucellosis vaccine. Currently, Sandy has worked for the past 32 years as a CMA in a medical office, where she still works full-time, while spending her free hours at Finley NWR birding and hiking. She is active in the outdoors birding, hiking, and cross country skiing and enjoys reading during down time. Sandy will be missed at our meetings, and at the same time, we wish her the very best in all of her future conservation endeavors. Best Wishes, and Thank You Sandy!



The 2017 solar eclipse is a once-in-lifetime event and its path will cross all three of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges: Ankeny, Baskett Slough and William L. Finley! If you plan to view the eclipse from your local Wildlife Refuge, we hope you'll understand that the viewing opportunities are limited; along with parking and facilities.

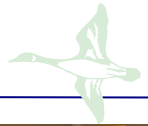
We are stewards of, and provide homes for, rare and endangered plants, wildlife and habitats. **For Monday, August 21st 2017 some sensitive habitat areas will be closed (see maps!) and our limited first-come-first-serve parking will fill-up fast.** Thank you in advance for understanding, for parking only in designated areas, and respecting the one-day closure areas.

Keep in mind:

- The Refuges will open at dawn (~6 am) and close at dusk (~8:30 pm)
- William L. Finley Refuge will allow 200 cars to enter the east and west entrance gates, after which the gates will be closed until 10:30 am
- Baskett Slough Refuge only has room for 55 passenger cars and Ankeny Refuge room for 130 . August is peak fire season so please use caution and remember, no fires are allowed • As always, no camping. This means no arriving early and trying to camp-out!

Please be safe!

- Protect your eyes during the eclipse. You will need special eclipse viewing glasses, which are available online
- Please pack out anything you bring along. August is usually hot and dry, so don't forget your water
- Our region is expecting unprecedented numbers of visitors for the solar eclipse (millions!). Travel will be difficult and emergency services are going to be stretched incredibly thin. Be prepared and be smart

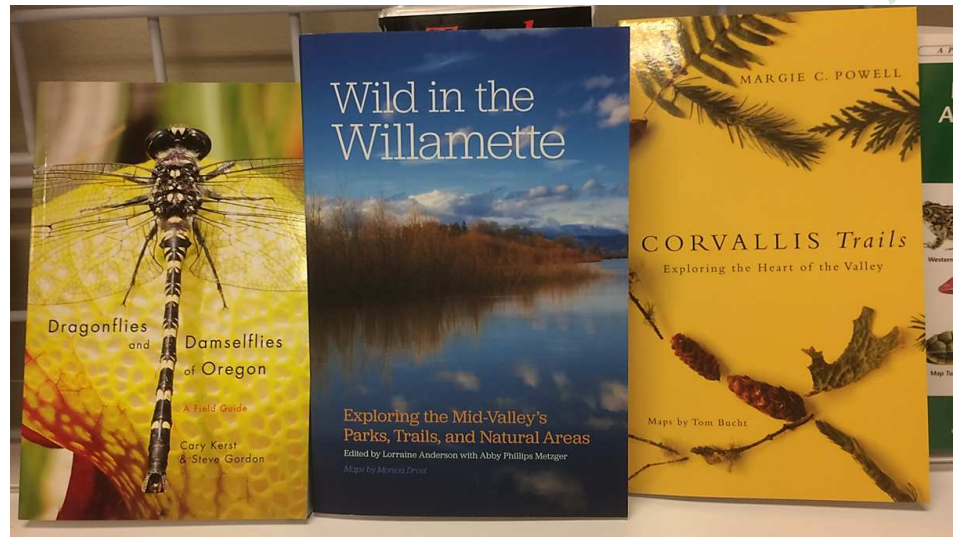


Wild Goose Nature Store

**Located in
William L. Finley
NWR**

**Open All Year
Friday, Saturday,
and Sunday**

10 AM to 4 PM



On the Trail... of a book

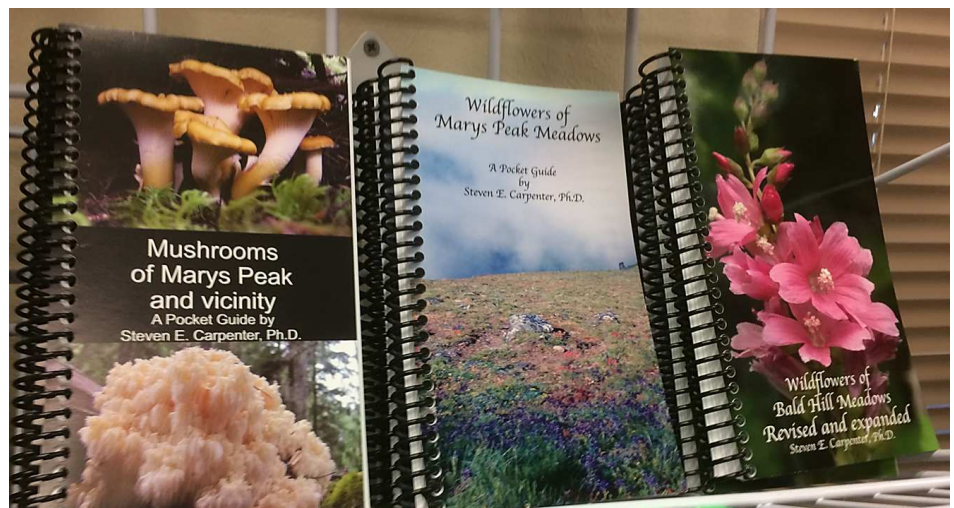
Sometimes we managers have to “go the extra mile”.

Several months back, visitors asked if the Wild Goose Nature Store carried the book *Wild in the Willamette*. We had to say, “Unfortunately, no. Since our local book distributor went out of business, we have been unable to find that book for a reasonable price.” The book was published by OSU Press, but sadly, it doesn’t distribute it. It is available through the University of Chicago Press and one of the giant book distributors that we don’t use because their minimum order is too large.

Fortunately, one of Jeanne’s friends in yoga class is a retired OSU librarian and she volunteered to contact a friend at OSU Press. The Marketing Manager at OSU Press, working with the University of Chicago Press, was able to offer us a discount on the price & shipping of *Wild in the Willamette*. It was a one time deal, so we ordered a good supply of the book along with 2 other OSU Press books, *Corvallis Trails* and *Dragonflies & Damselflies of Oregon*.

Any time of year, books are always in season.

It’s wild flower season! Just out is an updated version of *Wildflowers of Mary’s Peak Meadows* by local author & botanist, Steve Carpenter. Sometime in the future he will be bringing out a book on the wildflowers of the Finley NWR. The refuge hosts several rare/ endangered species.





Refuge Trails: The Snag Boat Bend Unit



It's small, but that's not all!

Snag Boat Bend Unit is located on Peoria Road 11 miles south of Corvallis, near the town of Halsey. It is 341 acres of riparian habitat and wet prairie next to a bend in the Willamette River. Many kinds of wildlife can be seen here, including deer, otters, Western pond turtles, red-legged frogs and several species of birds. Wood ducks, great blue heron and belted kingfisher are here, as well as red-tailed hawks, hummingbirds, and prairie songbirds.

The trail is 2.6 miles out and back. It is flat the whole way, and easy for hikers of any skill level. The walking surface is sometimes a boardwalk, and at other places a mown grass path, or a gravel road. There is an observation blind for observing wildlife, and a table by the Willamette River to enjoy a picnic.



Snag Boat is next to the road, so you can hear cars go by.

Sometimes high water closes the refuge in the winter, so check before you go during the wet season.

**Checker Mallow****Camas****Buttercups**

WILDFLOWERS OF THE OAK SAVANNA PHOTOS BY LIDIA WATRUD

Oak savanna habitat is characterized by widely spaced Oregon white oak trees with upland prairie in between. These open spaces support native prairie grasses as well as several species of wildflowers. Before European settlement, oak savanna was widespread in the Willamette Valley. The Kalapuya Indians used periodic burning to maintain the open spaces and suppress trees and shrubs. Today, only 1% of upland savanna remains due to fire suppression. The oak savannas of the Willamette Valley are important for many reasons; one of which is that they provide vital habitat for the endangered Fender's blue butterfly. Part of the mission of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex is to preserve, restore and enhance habitats such as the oak savanna.

**Golden Paintbrush****Iris****Sea Blush**



Sights of the Refuge: Battling Elk at Finley NWR



Greetings elk spotters!

I hope everyone is out enjoying the beautiful spring in the valley. I want to share with you this information about Finley from Refuge scientist Laila Lienesch.

The refuges are in transition, awash with song and color. The geese have left for their summer breeding grounds, and in their place are migrating shorebirds such as the Virginia Rail, and songbirds such as the yellow-headed blackbird. Pelicans have returned to Cabell Marsh

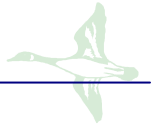


The elk have shed their antlers and in a couple of months calves will appear. The grass in the fields has survived the onslaught of hungry geese and are thriving with the continued rain. Wildflowers abound in the prairies and oak savanna.

Elk spotters!

Come to the refuge and do some spotting together. Thank you!

Azizah Mohd



President's Message (continued from Page 1)

Then we took our outreach display on the road to the Oregon Garden for Earth Day on April 22, and passed out showy milkweed, camas, and sunflower starts to throngs of visitors, while also sharing information about our valley refuges and the Friends organization. We've also made excellent progress on our keystone project for 2017; the Woodpecker Loop Observation Deck Remodel (more on that later inside this newsletter!).

Altogether, our long, wet winter has cycled back to a vibrant, verdant spring once again here in the Willamette Valley. Be sure to take full advantage of this surge of energy, and visit your valley National Wildlife Refuges to soak up the sun, the song, and the natural high.

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

These beautiful views can be seen from Pigeon Butte Trail in Finley Refuge, located off of Bruce Road

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

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