

WILD GOOSE TALES

SUMMER QUARTER 2017



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President's Column

Dave Landkamer



They say that time flies when you're having fun. Or to put it more pragmatically, the Friends organization is having a great time this summer, so the time has been flying by. And, it seems to be rather a universal phenomenon. Everybody's summer seems to have flown by at an exceedingly rapid rate. June was gone, July disappeared, the grass on the refuge fields is cut and baled, and by the time this newsletter circulates, the long-anticipated eclipse will have briefly blinked across the nation. Soon August will be all over as well. Finally, as our summer draws to a close, the end our annual fiscal year also nears its cyclical end. Looking back at that 2016-

17 fiscal year, I realize that we have had a lot of fun, and we've accomplished a number of significant results in the process in support of our valley refuges.

In the first place, our Wild Goose Store at the William F. Finley National Wildlife Refuge head-

quarters just keeps on improving its inventory and increasing sales, thanks to the dependable, creative, and diligent efforts of our dedicated volunteer managers, Jeanne Taylor and Lena Proebsting. These two altruistic unsung heroes provide the basis of the month-by-month steady income for our organization so we can fund so much of what we do in support of our refuges. They keep the store staffed and open, and run a smooth, efficient business operation on our behalf, which always keeps us smiling. The fun they have is decidedly contagious, and helps to make our time fly by. Even more importantly, the store volunteers that they recruit and train provide a valuable contact and information service for refuge visitors, especially on weekends when refuge staff are often not available. Thanks to all of our store customers for your support. And members, don't forget your membership discount when you're looking to buy nature-related products. (continued. On Page 14)

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.*



2017 Solar Eclipse At the Willamette Valley NWRC

About 7000! people gathered at our three refuges to experience the eclipse together. They traveled from as far away as Japan, Australia, Europe, South Korea, and many states, from Massachusetts to Hawaii. It was a great opportunity to introduce the refuges to people, including those who came from around Oregon. Many folks were first time visitors, and lots of them commented on how beautiful the refuges are. Some were interested enough to enquire about volunteering. Many people thanked us for being open and welcoming to the public, and for organizing the event well.



I still get goose bumps thinking about taking my eclipse glasses off and seeing totality in all of it's glory and white glow. We all had an amazing time; it was an experience we won't soon forget.

To all who gave of their time—thank you very much. We could have not done this without you Your efforts reached thousands and made new Refuge friends and fans. There will be many positive aftershocks and ripples from this spectacular event.

**Samantha Bartling,
Visitor Services Manager**





Bird Lovers! The 2nd Annual Benton County Big Sit September 23, 2017

A fundraising event to support bird conservation

Come sit with us and count the bird species

Can't sit? Pledge money to support the sitters

Location: Cabell Marsh Blind, William L. Finley NWR

Time: 6:35 AM to 7:35 PM

Join us for as long as you can!

All of the money raised will be evenly divided between:
Friends of the Willamette Valley NWR complex
Friends of Malheur NWR
Corvallis Audubon
Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Last year's sit was a huge success, with 72 species identified and \$2722 raised! This year our goal is to raise over \$3000, so please help us out by donating and telling friends! To donate you can either come to the Cabell Marsh Blind on 9/24, where we will have a donation box and pledge sheets, or email us at Bentoncountybigsit@gmail.com for a downloadable pledge sheet. For more info, visit our website at <https://bcbigsit.blogspot.com> Also we are very excited to welcome Ben Frueh onto the Big Sit Team!



Cheldelin Middle School students visited Finley Refuge in June.

Staff and volunteers from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Benton Soil Water Conservation District, the Corvallis Audubon Society, and the OSU Extension 4-H joined our own Refuge staff and the Friends to welcome the students and introduce them to the NWR system.

The students rotated through stations at Woodpecker Loop and the Refuge Headquarters. They learned about Willamette Valley habitats and native prairies. They also had an introduction to soils and their importance in the ecosystem. Bats were the topic at one station, and at another they learned to identify native trees and shrubs. They came away with a greater appreciation of the nature of our valley.





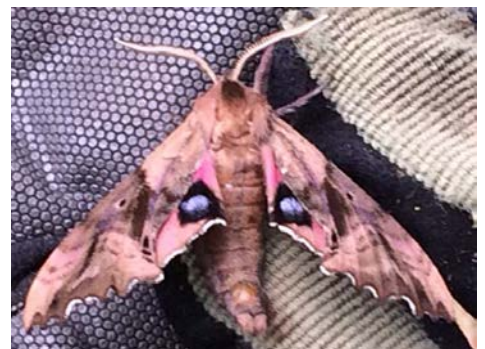
A beautiful environment



Nice people!

Summer Work Party

Heaps of gratitude to the volunteers who came out on June 10th to clear brush from the Beaver Pond and Cattail Pond trails in the south part of Finley refuge. The volunteers entered at the Bruce Road trailhead, and cut back blackberry bushes and other encroaching brush. The excess foliage had interfered with the efforts of Refuge personnel to maintain trail access. **Another example of volunteers and scientists working together to preserve and enhance our refuges.**



Friendly locals!





Dinner at Phi Delta Theta

by Azizah Mohd



The dedicated young men of Phi Delta Theta Fraternity at OSU have been instrumental to the success of the Friends Elk Survey, and they have learned about the Valley refuges and wildlife in the process. On Thursday June 8, they organized a dinner of chicken wings and strawberries & cream. Project Leader Damien Miller represented the Willamette Valley National Refuge Complex, to thank them for their important contributions to our conservation efforts.

Altogether, the fraternity men have conducted nearly one third of all of the completed elk surveys. The elk spotters who attended the dinner meeting were Riley Beiber, Max McCutcheon, Ever Calderon-Valverde, Johan Forsberg, Evan McFadden, and group leader Austin Soto-Maio. The students took advantage of the meeting to learn a lot from Damien about wildlife careers, job opportunities, professional advancement, and the local refuges.

What a great group of passionate, hard working, dedicated and friendly guys. I look forward to working with them and other students from the fraternity in the future.— Damien Miller



William L. Finley NWR Elk Survey: Year One

by Azizah Mohd, Friends Biology Chair

The elk survey began on 26 August 2016; through July 2017. A total of 121 surveys have been completed and tabulated in the following data summary:.

Month	Total # of Surveys	Surveys during which Elk Were Seen
August <u>2016</u>	2	1
September	3	0
October	9	6
November	18	7
December	4	2
January <u>2017</u>	9	3
February	9	4
March	14	4
April	14	5
May	18	11
June	11	4
July	10	
Totals (41%)	121	50



Thirty Eight Volunteers Collected data: including Friends members, Board members, family members, OSU Phi Delta Theta fraternity men, and non-members.

Most elk seen in one herd: 129 (25 February 2017, stop 12)

Month with highest percent of surveys with observed elk: May, 2017 (61%).

Stops with the most elk: stops 7, 12, 4, and 10. Elk were seen at 9 of the 12 stops.

Other animals seen: bobcats, coyotes, deer, rabbits, beavers, ground squirrels, chipmunks, slow elk (cattle), newts, turtles, snakes, and all kinds of birds (eagles, hawks, falcons, harriers, owls, vultures, geese, swans, mergansers, ducks, coots, rails, herons, egrets, bitterns, pelicans, turkeys, woodpeckers, jays, crows, hummingbirds, blackbirds, assorted songbirds, etc.

These data provide a rich and continuing source of information for refuge biologists about the elk and other species, which will contribute to the understanding and management of the resources at our wildlife refuges. Thanks to all the volunteers!



Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge Open House



Join us for a day of wildlife, celebration, family-friendly fun and nature adventures at your local wildlife refuge!



Where: Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge

2301 Wintel Rd S / Jefferson, OR 97352

The address takes you near the popular Rail Trail on Wintel Road. The Refuge is 2,796 acres in size, so don't just stop there! Enjoy special activities at each of your favorite Refuge overlooks, pull-outs and trailheads

When: Saturday, September 23rd from 11 am—3 pm

Thank you to our generous partners: Salem Audubon Society, Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex and the Audubon Society of Portland



Habitat Detective by Diane Young

You stand by a beautiful marsh and see Pigeon Butte in the distance. What refuge are you in and what trail are you on?

(The answer is at the bottom of page 14.)





Celebrate Volunteers!

We want to ***thank you*** for all of your help, hard work and volunteerism. Please join us for a **Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon** in your honor!

You are at the heart of all we do. And that's just it—you're all heart!



Gifts!

Free Food and Games!

Enjoy a FREE catered lunch and let us cheer to you and all that you do for the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges!

Where: Finley Headquarters

When: Sunday, October 1st from 12—2





Refuge Updates

Information provided by Laila Liensch

Refuge scientists have been very busy this summer. Here are a few of their many projects.

Snag Boat Bend: Staff restored fish habitat by digging a shallow channel that allowed fish to move freely in and out of the Willamette River. They also moved berms from old hunting ponds, filling the ponds in so the fish would not get trapped. The riparian environment is being restored, with thousands of native shrubs planted and invasive plants removed. (Thanks to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and Long Tom Watershed Council for the funding grant.)

Baskett Slough: A joint effort between the Partners for Fish and Wildlife and Refuge personnel restored oak savannah/prairie habitat on a Wetland Reserve Program easement adjacent to Baskett Slough. This area is the home to the endangered species Fender's Blue Butterfly and Kincaid's Lupine. The team also procured donated logs to provide loafing/basking structures.

Ankeny: Wigeon Marsh is a 33 acre seasonal emergent wetland that has become dominated by invasive reed canary grass and non-native English Hawthorne after 15 years of not being managed.. This season starts a 2—year project to remove these plants.

Finley: The channel into McFadden Marsh is being re-contoured. Currently, there is a deep hole that traps fish as the water dries up in the hotter months. The hole will be filled so that it is level with the channel that connects to the main water control structure. Fish will then be able to migrate out of the marsh as the water levels decrease.

All Refuges: Bat detectors are being deployed in the refuges for the second season as part of the North American Bat Program. Last year, 12 species of bats were confirmed on the refuges.



Fender's Blue Butterfly (Pinterest.com)



Kincaid's Lupine (coursehero.com)



Large Brown Bat (pinterest.com)



**Wild Goose
Nature Store
at
William L Finley NWR**

**Open Fri, Sat, Sun
All year
10AM — 4 PM**

The eclipse brought a flood of visitors to the store. The weekend sales were above average due to visitors scouting out Finley NWR for viewing areas. On Eclipse Monday, 233 people visited the store! Sales were strong and the lobby donation box was full. Visitors showed their appreciation and praised Finley NWR.



Besides books and souvenirs, (like the beautiful textile above), the Wild Goose also has an excellent assortment of paper goods .

Express your appreciation for wildlife and beautiful art with notecards. The birds (and fern) pictured are just some of the animals featured on the cards.





Trails of the Refuges

Ankeny NWR: The Rail Trail Loop in Summer



This level 1.5 mile loop has something for everyone: cool forest trails, a scenic wetland, and a sunny prairie. You start on a gravel forest path; it connects the parking lot to the Rail Trail Boardwalk, which leads you through an ash woodland. Interpretive signs along the way introduce you to the wood ducks, rails, and other birds that call this area home. Benches give you a chance to rest and enjoy the birdsong around you. The boardwalk leads to the Wood Duck Pond observation blind, then continues onward until it ends at the top of a dike. You have many options at this point. Take a right turn to walk along the pond to an open prairie. The mowed trail will lead you back along a hedge-row to the gravel path to your car.

Even in the dry days of summer, Ankeny refuge offers the hiker many scenic options. Come to the Ankeny Open House on Sept. 23rd, and stay to enjoy the Rail Trail.

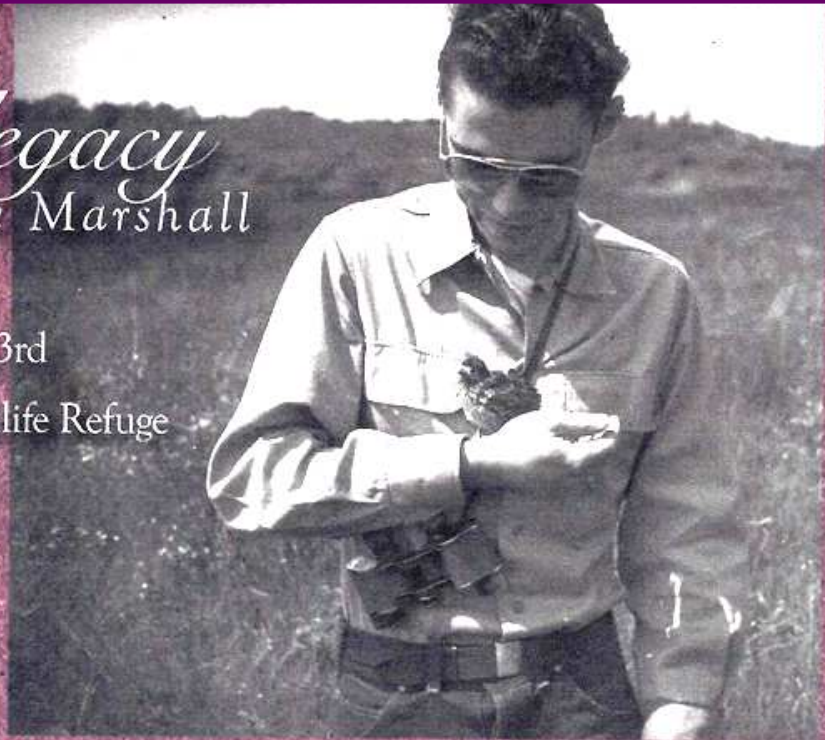




You are invited..... On September 23rd, come early to the Ankeny NWR, and help to honor someone who was instrumental in establishing all of the Willamette Valley refuges.

Wildlife legacy honoring Dave Marshall

Saturday, September 23rd
Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge
Jefferson, Oregon



Wildlife legacy

We are excited to invite you to join us as we pay tribute to Dave Marshall and dedicate the Dave Marshall Outdoor Classroom at Peregrine Marsh, Saturday, September 23rd from 10 am - 11 am at Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge in Jefferson, Oregon.

Dave was instrumental in establishing the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges and the Study Site and Outdoor Classroom at Peregrine Marsh will carry on his love of wildlife. His conservation legacy will be passed on to the next generation as they discover and learn about the natural world they live in.



Reception starts at 9:30 am:

Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge
Ankeny Hill Road
Jefferson, Oregon

President's Message (continued from Page 1)

Our keystone project for the year, the Woodpecker Loop Observation Deck Renovation on Finley National Wildlife Refuge, is on the verge of breaking ground as our summer end draws near. We have hired a contractor, finalized a project design, and are now ironing out the final details to begin construction. I can't wait to show our members and all of our supporters the wonderful structure that will soon come from the culmination of this project. It will give us shelter and use for decades to come.

Meanwhile, in Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge, our partnership with the Salem Audubon Society has been working through the much bigger and more complicated process to approve and build the Ankeny Nature Center, which will provide a needed interpretive centerpiece, education center, and outdoor classroom for another refuge in our Willamette Valley Complex. The leadership of the Salem Audubon Society, and that of Doug Spencer, our past president, have patiently brought this complicated and lengthy process forward toward completion. Once again, this summer's quick passage has seen plenty of forward progress on that front.

Almost one year ago, Azizah Mohd, our Biology Chair, initiated a elk survey project to support the refuge's desire for more on-the-ground observations of the resident elk herd at Finley NWR. At our last Board meeting, she summarized the outcomes to date of that project. During the 11 months up to and including July 2017, 121 surveys have been completed and added to our growing data base of information about our elk herd. At last count, 39 individuals have taken part in the elk surveys. Elk were sighted during 41% of these surveys. At our Board meeting, we watched a June 2017 video taken during one survey in which a large herd of more than 100 elk were seen, including 28 calves.

In addition to the elk, surveys spotters also saw bobcats, coyotes, deer, rabbits, beavers, ground squirrels, chipmunks, newts, turtles, snakes, and all kinds of birds (eagles, hawks, falcons, harriers, owls, vultures, geese, swans, mergansers, ducks, coots, rails, herons, egrets, bitterns, pelicans, turkeys, woodpeckers, jays, crows, hummingbirds, blackbirds, assorted songbirds, etc. The data from this project provide a rich and continuing source of information for the Biology Committee and refuge biologists about the elk and other species, which will contribute to understanding and management of the resources at our wildlife refuges. The elk survey project is not only demonstrating the biological diversity of our refuges, but it is also engaging our membership and community members in the enjoyment and appreciation of our natural resources.

Finally, our ongoing search for new, talented Board members to guide our organization into the conservation future struck the jackpot at our August meeting, when we welcomed three new Directors to our leadership team. Cowli Villiardos will take over bookkeeping duties as our new Treasurer, Katie Bernstein from Eugene adds her educational talents and passion, and Skip Volkmann brings his writing, outreach, and birding expertise to our group. More about them will be forthcoming in upcoming newsletters. This will be the first time in recent years that we have had a full compliment of 12 Board members, which makes me really happy and excited for the progress in the times ahead of us.

All-in-all, this summer has gone quickly with all of the good news and success. It looks to me like our time ahead will be picking up speed and flying by even faster as we expand our capacity to support our refuges, and have even more fun doing it. I encourage any of our members and new prospects to get involved in our fun efforts to help our refuges in their conservation efforts. **Please contact us if you are interested in participating in any of our projects.**

Habitat Detective: the answer

You are standing on the beautiful Cheadle Marsh trail in William L Finley NWR.

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