



# WILD GOOSE TALES

JULY 2019

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KEVEN KEYS

## *President's Column*



**Dave Landkamer**

### **Our Wildlands Legacy**

Most of us in the Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex nonprofit group have a strong and often longstanding connection with wild lands and nature. This connection inspires us to visit natural landscapes frequently for rejuvenation, enjoyment, and recreation, and to donate our time, energy, and resources to conservation efforts and organizations like The Friends. . Last weekend when I visited William L. Finley to do an elk

survey as the sun was setting, I reflected on the places where we go to experience nature, and how special and important they are to our wellbeing and national cultural identity.

As Americans, we have a long history and vibrant culture of valuing and conserving nature, natural habitats, and wild places. As a result, we have many places to go where wildlife and natural resources are protected, and we also provide leadership for conservation around the entire world. Among the numerous ways that we conserve nature, I thought of four established, quintessentially American conservation systems that exemplify our culture; the National Wildlife Refuge System, the National Park System, the Wilderness System, and the Nature Conservancy. Each one protects and manages natural

### *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.*

natural places in its own unique way.

The flagship institution of our wildlife conservation systems is arguably the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) of the US Fish & Wildlife Service. More than any other organization, the NWRS is "Where Wildlife Comes First", and all management actions and other uses are considered only when compatible with this guiding principle.

(Continued on page 15)



## Entomophiles Meet Their Insect Neighbors

By  
Kris Ebbe

I first met **Kendra Deltoro** through the Corvallis Audubon education team doing programs out of Audubon's Hesthavn, Winter Wildlife Day, and Get Outdoor Day. Kendra is a OSU Entomology senior with a love for insects that is contagious and I knew she would be a wonderful presenter for our refuge programs. On July 7<sup>th</sup> at Snag Boat Bend Kendra was there with her wonderful display of an assortment of insects, both alive and dead. Kendra and her insects were surrounded by enthusiastic folks from beginning to end. Folks of all ages were there and fired off questions that kept Kendra busy the whole program. Some of the children had nets that caught residence bugs in to bring to Kendra for identification. Thanks to Kendra it was a wonderful experience to learn about the world of insects and how to have your own collection. Snag Boat Bend is a lovely area with lots of bird life and western pond turtles, and of course many insects to discover on your own.



**Our fledgling outreach program is almost a year old and we would love to hear feedback from our members.** What do you think? How can we improve? What topics would you like to see in our programs at the refuge? Also, if you or someone you know could be a speaker and put on a program for our outreach program, feel free to contact us at [fwvnwrc.outreach@gmail.com](mailto:fwvnwrc.outreach@gmail.com)





No, your eyes are not deceiving you.

**Historic Fiechter House was repainted recently**, and now looks bright and clean. It also has better year-round protection against the weather. The carriage house was also painted.

**Thank you, Friends members and Wild Goose Nature Store shoppers! Your memberships, donations, and purchases**

**funded this project, helping to preserve this important piece of Oregon history into the future.**

Great Egret

**Keep your calendars open! The Friends of the WVNWRC Annual Meeting, BBQ, and Potluck will be Saturday, October 5.** There will be a short business meeting, followed by a whole bunch of delicious food. BBQ meats (and veggie meats) will be provided. The potluck will be for desserts and side dishes. If you have questions, email [secretary.riends@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.riends@gmail.com)

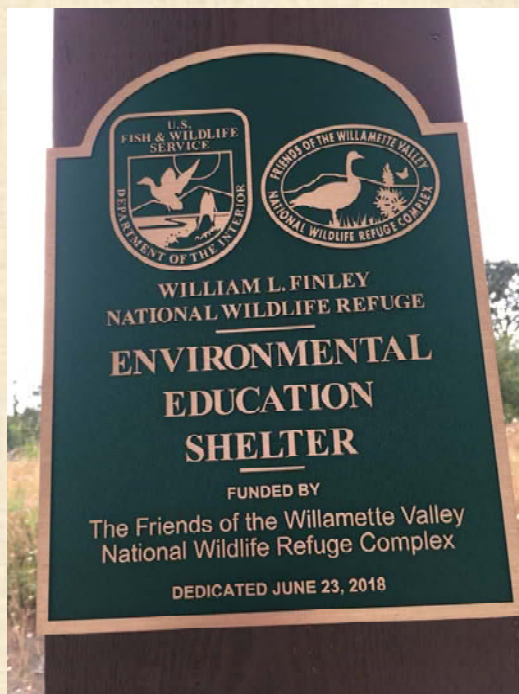




## The Ankeny Nature Center Opens Next Year

We will have to wait a little longer to enjoy the Ankeny Hill Nature Center. The construction of much of the infrastructure associated with the center, such as roads, parking lots, and other structures, is overseen by the U.S. Highway Administration. They have decided to increase safety and efficiency by postponing work until the weather is drier and by combining Ankeny and Baskett Slough NWR projects. This will delay the start of their work for six months. That means the Nature Center will open in the summer of 2020.

If you would like more information about the Nature Center, you can go to the July-August newsletter of the Salem Audubon Society, "*The Kestrel*" at <https://salemaudubon.org/newsletter.html>



The plaque is up!  
On the post next to the bench of the Finley EE Shelter is a permanent display of gratitude that acknowledges the contributions of all of the members of the Friends.

Thank you members, for all that you do to preserve and enhance our precious Willamette Valley refuges!







## Refuge Visitors Hit Paydirt with Talk by OSU Soil Science Professor

By Kris Ebbe

June 2<sup>nd</sup> was our soil program at Finley given by OSU Soil Science professor James Cassidy, and if anyone can make a soils talk downright fascinating and interesting it was James. James is such a dynamic speaker with a love for soil that he is happy to share with folks, and he had a willing audience. It was so interesting how he connected soil to everything that is important to life, and it is truly common sense if we take the time to think about it. All life is connected to the soils from the beginning to the end. And soil has a story to tell about the history of our planet, such as how our Willamette Valley was formed and the surrounding hills. James had such an easy way of explaining things to us that it all just made sense. James dug up some soil samples to show us, and from the different colors and texture he was able to tell us the composition of what was going on in that segment of the sample. Each sample had a story to tell to the microorganisms, the elements, moisture content, and composition. Some of the folks in the audience have heard James speak before and came to hear him again. And lucky for us James said he would be glad to come back and do another soils program for us in the future.







## Critters in Clay 2019

How can you connect with nature, learn about refuge animals, and enjoy creating artwork all at the same time? Local children had that experience at the third annual Critters in Clay workshop, led by Sandy Houtman and Anthony Gordon (in the red box)

On a pleasant afternoon at the Finley Headquarters patio, the children learned the characteristics

of the animals they wanted to make, then created their own small sculptures of their chosen animal. The clay figures are then fired by Sandy and Anthony so the children can have them as a keepsake of their own.







**We met at Snag Boat Bend**

**Fun With Fishes 2019**

Brian Bangs had many specimens, including this bryozoan



**Brian and Ray searching for other samples**



**Brian temporarily collected many fish to show us.**



**Ray Temple spotted a turtle with his lens**



**And this tadpole with developed back legs**

**For more pictures and fish info, go to Page 12**





## Jewels on the Wing



Tree swallow

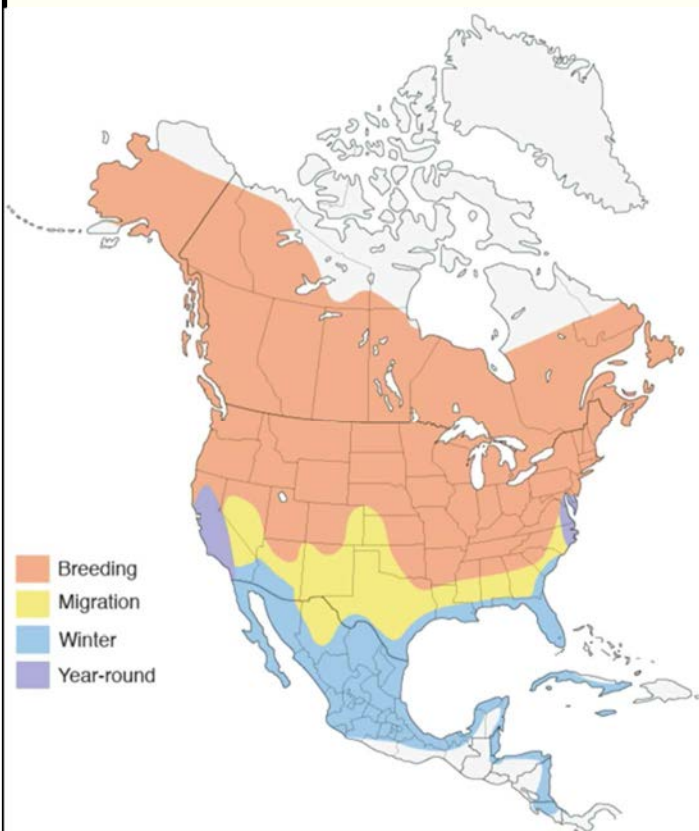
*Tachycineta bicolor*

Photos by  
Chris Quinn

Tree Swallows are a familiar sight in summer fields and wetlands across northern North America. They chase after flying insects with acrobatic twists and turns, eat berries, and nest in tree cavities or nest boxes.

Tree Swallows winter farther north than other American swallows and return to their nesting grounds long before other swallows come back. Migrating and wintering Tree Swallows can form enormous flocks numbering in the hundreds of thousands. They gather about an hour before sunset and form a dense cloud above a roost site (such as a cattail marsh or grove of small trees), swirling around like a living tornado. With each pass, more birds drop down until they are all settled on the roost.

Tree Swallows have helped researchers make major advances in several branches of ecology, and they are among the best-studied bird species in North America. Still, we know little about their lives during migration and winter.



[https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Tree\\_Swallow/maps-range](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Tree_Swallow/maps-range)

Excerpted from: [www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/)





### Linoleum Rug from the Cabell Era

Making one material imitate another is a great tradition in old houses. Can there be any finer form of fakery than the linoleum rug? Imagine, the visual loveliness of a woven or knotted carpet without the vacuuming, shampooing, and worrying about spills—just damp-mop and you're done! The typical rug was a movable rectangle with a border in standard rug sizes.



Kathleen demonstrates simple thread and button toys used by pioneer children.



The long process of cloth making involved washing, carding, spinning and weaving the fibers used to make clothing.

**Fiechter House had it's annual Open House** in May. Kathleen Schulte, Isabel Justiniano, and Samantha Bartling introduced visitors to the Fiechter and Cabell families who lived there as well as the daily activities of life in pioneer Oregon.



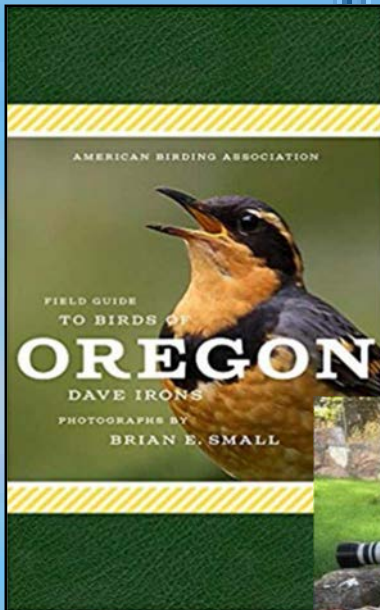
Fire provided heating, lighting, and cooking.

Great Egret



Isabel relates the stories of the Fiechter and Cabell families.





Depositphotos.com

<https://eugene.wbu.com>



Dave Irons

## Watching the Birds at Ankeny

On a sunny day with great visibility, about 25 people joined Dave Irons, author of *Field Guide to Birds of Oregon*, at the Eagle Marsh Overlook Shelter at Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge. Many brought their binoculars and spotting scopes in hopes of sharing a glimpse of our wetland birds. Dave recounted his evolution as a birdwatcher, sold some copies of his book, and then generously donated five copies of his book to the Wild Goose Nature Store.

Alas, the marsh itself was empty of birdlife. Luckily, a group of ducks and shorebirds had gathered across the road, in a shallow pond in a field, and provided the watchers with identification fun



Cindy Kugel

Cynthia Donald



## Reaching Out to Riders

The 2019 Willamette Valley Bike to End Multiple Sclerosis event circled around communities in the Salem area, including a leg of the route that went through Ankeny NWR. Determined not to miss an outreach opportunity, the Friends were there. Cindy Kugel and Cynthia Donald set up and ran a table full of information about the Refuges as well as interpretative exhibits from refuge wildlife. They were in a good position to chat with bikers who stopped to rest and hydrate during the ride.

Reaching out to participants at events like the bike ride helps to publicize our refuges to people who may know little about them.



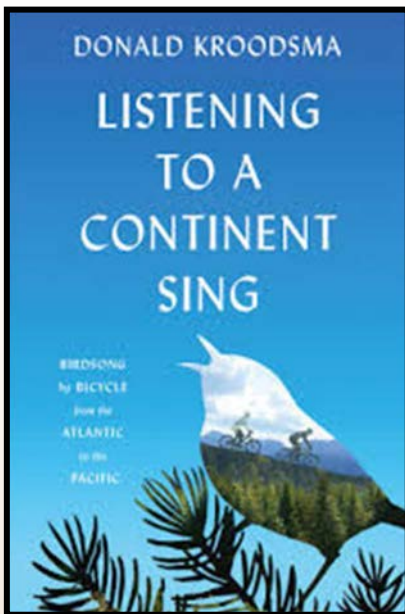


## Wild Goose Nature Store

William L. Finley NWR HQTRS

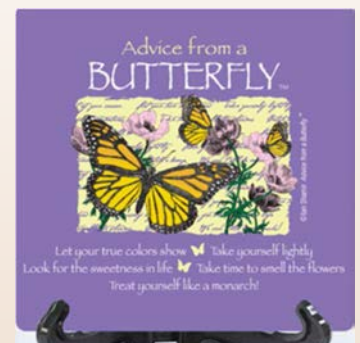
Fri., Sat. and Sun. 10 AM to 4PM

Open All Year

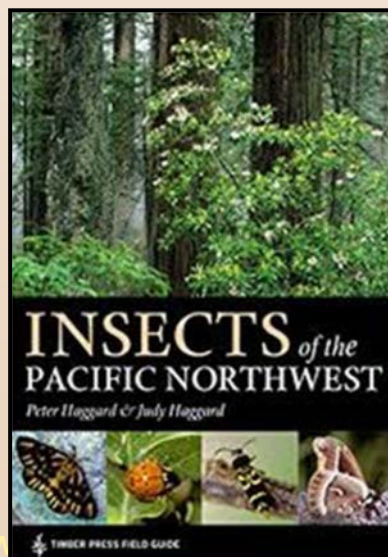


**We have two new books:**  
**"Listening to a Continent Sing"** - a father & son bike across America listening to birdsong; and  
**"The Nature Fix"** - the importance of nature to human mental & physical health.

**The new stone coasters have been very popular.** They are absorbent and have "Advice from Nature" quotations & art on them. With about 18 different designs available, people can mix & match. They are good for gifts or for your home!



**When possible, we stock books (and merchandise) pertinent to the Monthly Friends Events.** Recent books have included titles relating to beavers, Oregon birds (see page 10) and Pacific Northwest insects.



in the pond?



Photo by Lena Proebsting





(continued from page 7)

In the Willamette Basin ½ of the fish species are non-native. They range from game fish that were imported from the Midwest to aquarium fish whose owners dumped them in the river. During winter high-flow events, when river/stream water runs more rapidly, native fish retreat to backwater habitats, eddies, etc. There the vegetation slows the water, and the worms and insects the fish eat are more plentiful. Non-native fish don't retreat to backwaters and get flushed to other habitats. Hiding in eddies is a "high reward, high risk" strategy for native fish, because when the water eventually recedes, they could become trapped.

Here are two of the many native Oregon fish we learned about during the "Fun with Fishes" event:

<https://news.orvis.com/fly-fishing/>



### Sculpins

There are 7-9 sculpin species throughout Oregon, in many habitats ranging from estuaries, alpine lakes, the Columbia River, etc. They have many adaptations to match their specific local habitat. They are robust, head-heavy fish that can sprint quickly to catch prey. Their eyes are oriented upwards, which works well with their "sit and wait" predator strategy.

Prickly Sculpin

*Cottus asper*

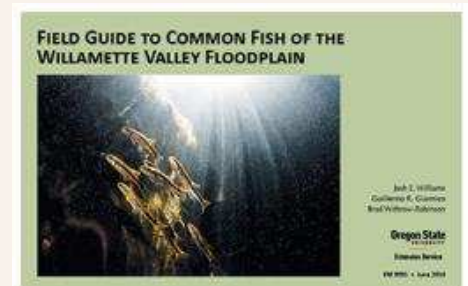


### Largescale Suckers

Largescale suckers are widely-distributed and prolific in rivers and constitute the main resident river biomass. Their mouths are on the bottom of their head for eating a variety of small organisms on the river bottom. They are part of the diet of osprey, eagles, otters, fish, etc.

Largescale sucker *Catostomus macrocheilus*

**Want more information?** The OSU Extension has a book: Field Guide to Common Fish of the Willamette Valley Floodplain  
<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9091>







## The Elk Bugle: Elk Spotters Report from the Field by Dave Landkamer

We don't always see what we're looking for, whether it's during an elk survey, or during our everyday lives. However, if we keep our eyes open, there is always something wonderful to see right in front of us. I was reminded of this (once again) as I conducted the elk survey on a late July evening this summer.

The sun had already set and dusk was thickening as I turned onto Finley Road from Belfountain to complete the final leg of the survey. Very few elk had been seen by our volunteer elk spotters over the course of the last two months, nor had I seen any that evening. Fortunately I was watching the road closely, because there in the gravel ahead of me, I saw a dark squiggly line and I knew it was a snake. I pulled over to have a closer look.



Most snakes will quickly move off and hide when approached, but this one stayed perfectly still as I walked up to it. I knew right away that it was a rubber boa (*Charina bottea*) by its uniform brown color and unusual, short blunt tail that resembled its small rounded head. Rubber boas are one of the most docile and slow moving snakes. They are rarely seen out in the open because they are mostly nocturnal and very shy, and they never strike or bite a human. In fact, the genus name *Charina* means "delightful" in Greek. The boa family of snakes consists of 43 species, all of which are nonvenomous constrictors. Most boas live in tropical climates, but the rubber boa species is the mostly northerly of all; some can be found as far north as British Columbia.

I did not want this gentle snake to be run over by a passing car, so I gently slid my hand underneath it to move it to a safer place far off of the road. As I carried it to safety, it hid its head as it coiled snugly around my hands and fingers.

We may not always get to see elk when we visit the refuges here in our valley, but if we take the time to look, we can always see something beautiful and fascinating, like the rubber boa. Please remember to drive carefully on the refuge and elsewhere, and watch for snakes and other animals (newts, quail, rabbits, etc.) crossing the road.

**Become an elk spotter! Add your observations to the information the refuge staff uses to manage and protect our Finley elk. Contact Azizah, at [azizahmohd@yahoo.com](mailto:azizahmohd@yahoo.com) to learn more about the survey.**





## Nature's Artwork



Photos by  
Chris Quinn



**(President's Message, continued from Page 1)**

The NWRS includes 566 refuges and 38 wetland management districts, encompassing over 150 million acres of land, freshwater, and marine habitats, making it the largest dedicated wildlife management organization on the planet. Each refuge has a statutory purpose to protect native species on its lands and waters. In this capacity, the refuges safeguard habitats for over 700 bird species, 200 mammal species, 250 reptile and amphibian species, 1100 fish species, over 7,000 additional marine species, and for many more insects, mollusks, and other kinds of organisms. In addition, refuges are particularly focused on protecting threatened and endangered animals and plants, and currently have 380 specific species plans for this purpose.

Our National Park Service (NPS) is the most iconic and widely recognized protector of our national heritage, including our wildlife and natural resources. In addition to National Parks such as Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, and Crater Lake, the NPS manages a wide range of units (19 different naming designations!) including Monuments, Historic Sites, Battlefields, Seashores, and Wild and Scenic Rivers; encompassing more than 88 million acres in 419 separate units. The NPS has a dual mandate to protect natural and cultural resources, *and* to provide opportunities for public use and enjoyment. This leads to a current visitation rate of over 280 million visitors/year to NPS units, compared to about 50 million/year for the entire NWRS system.

The National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) protects federally managed lands for their natural, undisturbed condition. In this system, wilderness is defined as "an area where the earth and community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain" and "an area of undeveloped land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent human improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed to preserve its natural conditions". These protected areas provide large tracts of native habitats where wildlife and plants can survive in relatively undisturbed conditions, free of direct human encroachment. There are currently 803 designated wilderness areas, many within the NWRS and NPS, comprising over 109 million total acres.

The fourth exemplary conservation institution is the Nature Conservancy (TNC), a nongovernmental, environmental nonprofit whose mission is "to conserve the land and waters on which all life depends" and "to conserve nature for its own sake and its ability to fulfill our needs and enrich our lives". The TNC is the largest environmental nonprofit in the Americas, has over a million members, and currently protects over 119 million acres globally through ownership or cooperative conservation agreements. TNC also partners with individual landowners, corporations, and governments to accomplish its environmental and conservation objectives.

These four systems manage over 307 million acres, which is approximately equivalent to an area almost five times the size of Oregon, or about 14% of the total area of the United States. This doesn't even include the conservation lands of the US Forest Service, the US Bureau of Land Management\*\*, the state lands that are managed for wildlife and habitat (such as Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife lands, Oregon State Parks, or Oregon State Forest lands), lands of other conservation nonprofits, or private lands that are managed for wildlife and habitat values. Altogether, we have declared our conservation values by the extensive public lands we have reserved for wildlife and habitats. These lands, and the systems that manage them, provide a guiding light for wildlife and habitat conservation around the world.

In spite of our successes in creating systems to protect our natural heritage for its own sake, for our benefit, and for future generations, threats to wildlands constantly emerge. Many of these are related to the continuous growth of human populations; the need for more resources and spaces in which to live, habitat loss and environmental changes on a global scale, more waste and pollution, and increasing conflicts between expanding cultural/political groups. Other threats come from special interest groups and are rooted in short-sighted economic gains and greed.

These threats elevate the importance of our ongoing efforts to protect our wildlands and our natural heritage, for the many benefits they provide for us, for our children's children's children, and for the future of all life on our planet. I commend every one of you who are members of the Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex in supporting our conservation mission and our flagship NWRS conservation system, and to all who contribute to the protection of our wildlife and natural resources in any way.



## 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.



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



