

Behind the Scenes

August 2022



Dear Friend,

After a month-long road trip adventure with my family to the East Coast and back again, my heart is full and I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to experience so many unique places and wonderful communities across the USA. Along the way, the realization struck me that as we travel, we take a small part of the places we've been and the people we've met with us – and, in turn, we leave a small part of ourselves wherever we've been. We are literally changing the world just by existing and engaging with each other and our environment on a day-to-day basis, both in the physical sense and the metaphysical sense. This is an empowering realization that means our individual actions and attitudes towards protecting and enhancing the places we value can and do make a difference!

Now that summer is in full swing and our region is in the midst of the dry season, one way we can have a positive impact on watershed health is by reducing water consumption at home and in our yards and gardens. Whether you focus on one or two small changes at a time, or make a sweeping overhaul to your day-to-day routine, your actions have a powerful effect. In addition to the direct benefits to watershed health, the steps you take to reduce the use of water within your household can also act as a catalyst for friends, family and neighbors to make similar changes to their water usage. If you'd like to see a list of some ways you can get started, visit <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/watershed-steward.html>

As I get ready to send out this issue of Behind the Scenes, I am noticing that we have included two articles about insects this month - one very positive and one very negative. The long-dreaded appearance of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in Oregon requires our full attention and special care to ensure that our ecosystems – and the beloved Oregon ash itself – will weather the devastating impacts of this insect pest. Your help in learning how to identify and report EAB sightings, and how to prevent the further spread of exotic insect pests like this one, is critical to helping prevent widespread damage to our forests and to our urban tree-scape as well.

Thank you, Friends, for all that you do in support of clean water and healthy watersheds for all. Happy reading!

--Suzanne Teller, LWC Outreach Coordinator (contact me at Outreach@LuckiamuteLWC.org or 503-837-0237)



Upcoming *Love Your Watershed* Event: Early-Bird Registration for Friends of the LWC



What: Ethnobotany Field Demonstration

When: Saturday, August 27

Where: Soap Creek Valley (details will be sent to your inbox upon registration)

Get the details and RSVP at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/ethnobotany-demo.html>

During this four-hour excursion within privately-owned properties in Soap Creek Valley, Grand Ronde member and Cultural Policy Analyst, Greg Archuleta, will introduce participants to the ways in which local Tribes relate to many of the plants that grow here - including harvesting techniques and both traditional and modern uses. Participants will learn how to identify many native trees and shrubs, and gain a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the rich relationships among plant, animal and human communities that continue to coexist within the watershed. In addition, landowners Janet Ohmann, Faye Yoshihara and Kevin Kenaga will share how they are restoring the tapestry of landscapes found within their properties, and how they have incorporated some of the principles of TEK to create healthy, thriving native plant communities.

Note: Early registration is limited to Friends of the LWC as a thank you for supporting the LWC. Please do not share this link outside of your household!

Your Land. Your Rivers. Your Community. Your Watershed.

Watershed Notes

Bird and Butterfly Walk at J₂E Tree Farm

by Kendra Callahan, Outreach Assistant

On the last weekend of July, participants from across the watershed braved the hot summer weather for a morning of outdoor exploration to learn about local moths and butterflies of the Luckiamute Watershed. Our fearless leader and expert for the day was Dana Ross, a Lepidoptera specialist who fell in love with all things that flutter at age four and has been studying butterflies and moths since arriving in Corvallis in 1981. His enthusiasm and knowledge for the subject was really appreciated – not only was he able to identify and share a wealth of information about almost every butterfly and moth species caught that day, he also identified several dragonflies and damselflies that were zipping around as we walked.



The event was held twice, on Saturday, July 30 and Sunday, July 31, at J₂E Tree Farm in Hoskins. Landowner and LWC Board member Dave Ehlers, was a terrific host for all of us – giving a summary and answering many questions about the extensive restoration and habitat enhancement work that he and his wife Sarah have done since purchasing the property. We got to see some of it firsthand as we made our way from one pond, through field and forest, to another. Each pond was gorgeous - edged with cattail, reeds and places for butterflies to get moisture and minerals from the mud along the edges.



As usual, the best part of the day for me was the enthusiasm and energy of the participants who came out for the day. They seemed so joyful walking or running through a field waving a net after a butterfly that just flitted by! I also love to overhear people making connections and sharing stories about the natural world - the hikes they have recently taken and are planning, the times spent playing along creek edges as kids, the animals they've encountered in the valley, the native plants that they love in their yards. It never fails to lift my spirits and as one participant said, "Just being in such a beautiful place fills me up!" I agree and thank Dave and Dana for donating their time to make it possible!

Note: A special thanks goes to Mallory Mead, who is studying horticulture and entomology at OSU and helped us identify native bees during Sunday's walk! We are also grateful to Benton Soil & Water Conservation District for providing funding that allowed us to make this event free for all participants. You can read an event report and get a full list of the butterfly, moth, dragonfly and bee species found during both days at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/event-archives.html>.

Emerald Ash Borer Update

You may have already heard the devastating news about the very first report of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in Oregon - just 60 miles north of the Luckiamute and Ash Creek watersheds in Forest Grove. This exotic wood-boring beetle is considered one of the most destructive forest insects in U.S. history, and has killed hundreds of millions of ash trees throughout 35 U.S. states and 5 Canadian provinces. Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*) is the only native ash found in our watershed, and it is highly susceptible to EAB. Without intervention, this invasive insect could ultimately cause the extinction of Oregon ash trees.



Although we are extremely saddened and disappointed that the EAB has reached Oregon, the news does not come as a shock. The Oregon Department of Forestry, as well as many other state and local agencies and organizations have been expecting this day to come and preparations have been underway for some time now - including gathering and saving Oregon Ash seeds from a wide variety of locations. For the past few years, the Luckiamute Watershed Council has also been preparing for the arrival of EAB by decreasing the proportion of Oregon ash planted within our restoration areas and continuing to monitor our project sites for any sign of this pest. Additionally, we are helping to get the word out about EAB, and working on the development of a rapid response protocol in the event that we do identify EAB within any of our project sites and need to remove them and replant with another species.

The best way to help minimize the damage caused by EAB is to remain vigilant, immediately remove any infested trees, and report any new sightings to the Oregon Invasive Species hotline. EAB can also infest other trees in the ash family, including olive trees and white fringetree (*Chionanthus virginicus*). If you have either of these species on your property, be sure to keep an eye out for signs of infestation, such as the telltale "D" shaped exit holes. More details, identification tips, and instructions for reporting can be found at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/emerald-ash-borer.html>

Note: The OSU College of Forestry is providing a free Oregon Forest Pest Detector (OFPD) training course that prepares you to identify and report high-priority exotic forest pests, including EAB, Asian longhorn beetle and gold spotted oak borer. Learn more and register at <https://workspace.oregonstate.edu/course/Oregon-Forest-Pest-Detector>