

# Behind the Scenes

November 2023



Dear Friend,

Have you noticed new activity outside over the past couple of weeks? If you put out bird feeders, you may have noticed that dark-eyed juncos and Townsend's warblers have returned to our area. In the world of blooms, coyote bush (*Baccharis pilularis*) is providing an important source of late-season nectar for insects of all kinds right now, and silk tassel (*Garrya elliptica*) and many manzanitas (*Arctostaphylos* spp.) will soon follow suit as we move into the winter months. If you missed the local Soil & Water Conservation District native plant sales last month, don't worry - you can still stock up on your favorite native trees, shrubs, bulbs and seeds at some of our fantastic nurseries located around the valley. The Native Plant Society of Oregon has a great list of Oregon nurseries at <https://www.npsoregon.org/landscaping5.php>

In addition to getting outside as often as possible, I hope you plan to join us for one or both of the exciting events coming up this month! On November 10, Leila Philip - award-winning author of *Beaverland* - will be speaking at Whiteside Theatre in Corvallis. Then, on November 28, Emily Fairfax will be presenting her research on beavers and wildfire during a virtual Sips 'n' Science webinar. More information for both events are below! Also, make sure you check out this recent CBS Sunday Morning news clip featuring both Leila and Emily talking about why beavers are key to more resilient ecosystems. <https://www.cbsnews.com/video/beavers-a-rodent-success-story/>

Happy reading! --Suzanne Teller (Outreach@LuckiamuteLWC.org or 503-837-0237)

## Beaverland: An Evening With Author Leila Philip



**BEAVERLAND**  
AN EVENING WITH  
AUTHOR LEILA PHILIP  
NOVEMBER 10 • 6:00 - 8:00PM  
\*\*DOORS OPEN AT 5:00\*\*  
WHITESIDE THEATRE  
381 SW MADISON AVE., CORVALLIS, OR 97333

Thanks to Grass Roots Books, 10% of all book sale proceeds benefit local Watershed Councils!

FREE TICKETS AVAILABLE AT [TINYURL.COM/BEAVERLAND](https://tinyurl.com/beaverland)



When: November 10 @ 5:00 - 8:00pm

Where: Whiteside Theatre, Corvallis

Join the Luckiamute Watershed Council and Marys River Watershed Council for an evening at Whiteside Theatre with *Beaverland* author, Leila Philip! Doors will open at 5pm, with Grass Roots Books - a locally owned, independent Corvallis bookstore - selling copies of *Beaverland* at the event. More details and FREE tickets at <https://tinyurl.com/beaverland>

Thank you to Grass Roots Books for donating 10% of all book sale proceeds to LWC and MRWC!

## Sips 'n' Science Webinar: Smokey the Beaver: How Beavers Build Fire-Resistant Landscapes



When: November 28 @ 5:30 - 7:00pm

Where: Zoom webinar

Dr. Emily Fairfax will discuss how beaver-built wetlands can provide refuge for plants and animals during wildfire, and protect riparian landscapes from wildfire damage. Perhaps instead of relying solely on human engineering and management to create and maintain fire-resistant waterways and riparian zones, we could benefit from partnering with beaver's ecosystem engineering to achieve the same goals at a lower cost. More details and FREE registration at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/smokeythebeaver.html>

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

# Watershed Notes

## LWC Helps Lead Master Naturalist Training Session at Luckiamute State Natural Area



LWC Project Manager Aubrey Cloud leads a group of Master Naturalists on a tour of the floodplain restoration project site within Luckiamute State Natural Area's North Unit.

On Friday, October 13th, at the Luckiamute State Natural Area (LSNA), the LWC helped lead one of the OSU Master Naturalists' fall 2023 Mid-Valley Ecoregion field courses. The focus of this outing was on rivers, riparian areas and fish. Field courses like this one provide on-the-ground experience in natural history and resource management, and are part of the requirements to be certified as a Master Naturalist.

During the LSNA session, staff from Oregon Parks & Recreation Department (OPRD) kicked things off with a walking tour along LSNA's North Unit trail that explored the history of Euro-American exploration and settlement in the Willamette Valley. Topics included the use of the Willamette River by French fur trappers, as well as how changes in land management and increasing settlement and development pressures affected river health over the centuries.

From there, United States Geological Survey (USGS) Research Wildlife Biologist Joan Hagar spoke about the methods and results of the USGS bird banding research happening within LSNA. Because birds are so responsive to environmental change and are relatively easy to observe, they are excellent indicators of ecosystem health. At LSNA, the USGS bird-banding study began in 2018 and is helping researchers better understand the condition of riparian (stream-side) forests that are located within the park, and how restoration efforts are making a difference in bird activity and abundance. For more information about this fascinating, ongoing study, refer to the video linked here: <https://youtu.be/-rOyHsNp1cM?si=mklyoGksmnPp8h7o>

LWC Project Manager, Aubrey Cloud, closed out the field day with a tour of the LWC's most recent phase of restoration at LSNA that is taking place within the 60-acre field that sits within the middle of LSNA's North Unit. In 2019, OPRD initiated the transition of this field from leased agriculture to floodplain forest habitat - which had historically covered this area. Since then, the LWC has been awarded grants from Portland General Electric's Habitat Support Program, Bonneville Power Administration, Meyer Memorial Trust, and North American Wetlands Conservation Act (through Ducks Unlimited) to complete this work. A total of 186,745 native trees and shrubs were planted here since 2022, and are now rapidly establishing as a young, healthy, and vibrant addition to the floodplain forest. This restoration effort adds to the 289 acres of restoration the LWC has already implemented during the earlier phases of work at LSNA that started in 2010. This phase of restoration at LSNA North is especially important because it expands the footprint and core habitat area of what is already the largest remnant of floodplain forest along the entire Willamette River. In addition to the tour, Aubrey discussed how the LWC is tackling large-scale restoration efforts like this one, and gave an overview of the challenges of scaling up from smaller restoration projects.

Learn more about LSNA floodplain restoration at [LuckiamuteLWC.org/luckiamute-state-natural-area-enhancement](https://luckiamuteLWC.org/luckiamute-state-natural-area-enhancement)

You can learn more about the Master Naturalist Program and how to get involved by heading to the OSU Extension website at <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mn/become-master-naturalist>

## Upcoming Partner Events

**Thinking of leasing out your farmland?**  
Join us to explore questions you should be asking!  
Polk County Museum - Rickreall, OR  
Nov. 16, 9:30am-11:30am  
\*Meet & greet with coffee & light snacks at 9:30am.  
Program starts at 10am.

**When: Thursday, November 16th, 9:30am-11:30am**

Meet and greet with coffee and light snacks starts at 9:30am; presentation starts at 10:00 a.m.

**Where: Polk County Museum - 670 S Pacific Hwy W, Rickreall**

**Presentation topics include:** site readiness and assessment, contract building, farmer perspectives and relationships, succession planning and more.

**Participating Organizations:** Oregon Agricultural Trust (OAT), OSU Extension Small Farms, Friends of Family Farmers, Polk Soil and Water Conservation District

**Register at** <https://www.polkswcd.com/leasing-your-farmland.html>