

# Behind the Scenes “Lite”

April 2024



Dear Friend,

Spring has sprung! Before you delve into the latest issue of *Meanderings* on the following pages, check out how our restoration plantings are doing at Luckiamute State Natural Area. Now is a great time to explore this beautiful spot in the watershed! For other great watershed destinations, visit [LuckiamuteLWC.org/outdoor-recreation](http://LuckiamuteLWC.org/outdoor-recreation). Happy reading!

--Suzanne Teller ([Outreach@LuckiamuteLWC.org](mailto:Outreach@LuckiamuteLWC.org) or 503-837-0237)



## **Luckiamute State Natural Area Phase 5: A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words**

The LWC's "Phase 5" restoration site at LSNA is located within the former field at the center of the North Unit loop trail.



Neatly spaced rows of young trees and shrubs make weed control easier. As they grow, the grid pattern will get harder to see, eventually disappearing into a multi-layered forest habitat!



Fuzzy catkins earn all willows the name "pussy willows" this time of year. This Scouler's willow will grow to provide habitat for many species of wildlife.



The beautiful red-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*) is an important nectar source for many insects and hummingbirds. Their blue-black berries provide food for wildlife, as well.



Yellow violets (*Viola glabella*) are a cheerful harbinger of spring and can be found popping up in the understory this time of year. In addition to brightening your mood, violets also serve as a host plants for fritillary butterflies.



The common garter snake is a frequent visitor to wet meadows and forest edges. These harmless (to us) reptiles primarily eat slugs, snails and earthworms, but have been known to take down voles, frogs and even small fish!



Can you spot the ootheca (praying mantis egg case)? The Willamette Valley is home to two mantids—the non-native Chinese mantis and the California mantis, which is slowly migrating northward as the climate warms.



Spring  
2024

# LWC Meanderings

Watershed News & Reflections



## LWC MISSION:

To engage and assist landowners and communities in the voluntary protection, restoration and enhancement of the Luckiamute and Ash Creek watersheds.

## WHAT WE ARE:

The Luckiamute Watershed Council is a 501(c)3 non-profit comprised of stakeholders who live, work or recreate within the Luckiamute and Ash Creek watersheds.

## WHO WE ARE:

Karin Stutzman, *President*  
Monmouth

Britton Castor, *Treasurer*  
Pedee

Scott Youngblood, *Secretary*  
American Bottom/Buena Vista

Dave Ehlers  
Kings Valley/Hoskins

Nick Hazelton  
Kings Valley/Hoskins

Jackson Stalley  
Dallas

*The Luckiamute and Ash Creek watersheds are part of the ancestral lands of the Kalapuya Indians, who are represented today by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.*

## COUNCIL MEETINGS:

Typically held the second Thursday of even-numbered months from 6 to 8 pm. *Details and links posted at: [www.LuckiamuteLWC.org](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org)*

## Exploring "Hidden Worlds" at Winter Wildlife Event



The weather may have been a bit wet, but that didn't stop local families from heading over to Riverview Park for some fun wildlife-themed activities during Winter Wildlife Field Days!

*By Suzanne Teller, LWC Outreach Coordinator*

On Saturday, March 23, local families disregarded the drizzle and descended upon Riverview Park in Independence for Winter Wildlife Field Days (WWFD), a bilingual family-friendly event that happens throughout the month of March and all across the mid-Willamette Valley. Visitors of all ages were lured to multiple fun wildlife-themed activities, including a dragonfly magnet craft, a jumping spider challenge, and a build-a-beaver-dam stream table activity.

The consensus? Not only did lots of kids have fun building dragonfly magnets out of clothespins, they also loved touching a stuffed great horned owl's soft feathers and watching a just-caught tadpole wiggle its way around a holding tank. Adults and children alike enjoyed learning about local birdlife and other wildlife neighbors as part of the interactive experiences offered at each table. And even the most hesitant participants stuck their hands in (or should we say, stuck their paws in?) the water and had a blast building beaver dams in the stream table!

This last event in the WWFD series was hosted by the LWC, Polk Soil & Water Conservation District and Greenbelt Land Trust, in partnership with US Fish & Wildlife Service - which is the lead organizer for this month-long event designed to engage youth and adults in getting outside to learn about and appreciate the many different types of local wildlife that can be seen and heard during winter and early spring.

To highlight the vital, yet often unseen, creatures in our midst, the WWFD theme for this year was "Hidden Worlds." Many of the activities at the Field Stations were focused on connecting the community with these fascinating wildlife neighbors. Greenbelt's beaver-focused stream table display not only provided a fun way to see how beaver activity can alter the course of a river and create new wetland habitat, it also included educational information about the many benefits that beavers can bring to a landscape. OSU's Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Sciences displayed a tank containing a tadpole, dragonfly nymph, and other small creatures collected

## Winter Wildlife event, cont.

that morning from nearby Ash Creek. In the rush of daily life, it's easy to miss the teeming web of life that surrounds us. But the health of these tiny watershed residents can be a window into the well-being of the entire ecosystem, including the rivers and landscapes we rely on.

Events like this are an excellent opportunity to highlight the interconnectedness of the plant, animal and human communities that live in and depend upon healthy rivers and landscapes, and can inspire a new appreciation for even the smallest of critters that make their home in the watershed. Building stronger relationships between people and place is what the LWC's *Love Your Watershed* program is all about, and we were honored to be included in this fantastic event again this year!

In addition to all the families and individuals that stopped by Riverview Park to enjoy this event, a HUGE shout-out goes out to the many volunteers who helped set up and take down the tables and tents, guided event-goers through the activities, and answered questions of all kinds. Seeing volunteers in action allows community members to witness the rewards of giving back to the watershed firsthand, inspiring them to learn more and take action. We are so grateful for the time, energy and enthusiasm that helped make this event - and all of our community events - possible!

If you missed it this year, mark your calendars for March 2025 and be sure to follow Winter Wildlife Field Days - Willamette Valley on Facebook and Instagram!

## The ED Search Continues!



**Ready to make a difference?** Want to dedicate yourself to noticeably impactful work in the trenches (well, valleys), and love making sure things are done properly? You might be the person we are looking for!

We have partnered with Nonprofit Professionals Now to find our next Executive Director, and we've just **released an updated job description**. Want to learn more and perhaps even throw your hat in the ring for this exciting and one-of-a-kind role? Head to our website (<https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/employment.html>) for all the details and how to apply! Know someone who might be a great fit? Share this opportunity with them too!

*Photo credit: "Song Sparrow Sitting in a Bush," by Sam Oliveros (Wildlife Category winner of our 2021 Photo Contest!)*



## February and March 2024 Sips 'n' Science talks now on YouTube!

*Did you miss one of our Sips 'n' Science talks? No worries! You can now sit back with a favorite beverage and view our latest pub talks on the LWC YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@luckiamutewatershedcouncil>*

**Cultivating Harmony: Vegetation Management for Beaver Coexistence** (with George Kral)  
[https://youtu.be/26PCQ23KqAw?si=dALhg1k\\_B6MXCn8](https://youtu.be/26PCQ23KqAw?si=dALhg1k_B6MXCn8)

**Secrets of the River: The Weird & Wonderful Lives of Oregon's Native Freshwater Mussels** (with Emilie Blevins and Jack Fetters) - <https://youtu.be/tBMNPZEFuu4?si=i5bKN-lf2nxoymNQ>



## Unveiling the Oaks: Earth Day Ivy and Invasive Tree Removal Event

**Date:** Monday, April 22 @ 1 - 4pm

**Time:** 1:00 - 4:00pm

**Place:** South Fork Ash Creek, Independence

Join us on Earth Day (April 22) to remove ivy and invasive bird cherry trees from a beautiful grove of oaks along South Fork Ash Creek. This Earth Day volunteer event follows two earlier ivy removal efforts at this location and will help us protect these amazing trees and the surrounding native plant community from these damaging invasive plants.

See the details and sign up at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/earth-day-ash-creek.html>



## LWC Staff Members to Present at CONNECT+ Conference



Every two years, conservation practitioners from all over the state come together to share knowledge and strengthen connections at CONNECT+. This year, the conference will take place from April 16 - 18 at Sunriver, and will include presentations by two LWC staff members - Maya Cook and Aubrey Cloud. Below is a summary of their topics. If you'd like more details, the full agenda is available at <https://www.connectoregon.net>

### "Strategic Knotweed Control in the Mid-Willamette Valley: Persistence and Adaptive Management"

Aubrey Cloud, Project Manager for the Luckiamute and Marys River Watershed Councils, will share lessons learned from 14 years of sustained knotweed control in the Luckiamute and Marys River basins. This legacy of work has yielded triumphs and challenges, and has demonstrated what is and isn't possible when committing to long-term management of a priority invasive species on the landscape scale.

### "The Workplace Ecosystem: Management Tools for Employee Satisfaction and Retention"

Maya Cook, LWC Operations Coordinator, will lay out an approach to leadership that can increase staff productivity and unlock the full potential of your team. Discover some free or low-cost resources you can use to create a positive work environment that empowers employees, fosters a sense of belonging, and ultimately reduces turnover.

## Save the Date: McMenamins Friends & Family Night on May 15!

**Wednesday  
May 15  
5 - 10pm**

**EAT. DRINK. SUPPORT YOUR  
LOCAL WATERSHED COUNCIL!**

This is the night to grab your family and friends (even your furry ones!) and join us at McMenamins Corvallis Pub! **A full 50% of all sales will go to support both the Luckiamute and Marys River Watershed Councils!**

save the Date!

## Join the FRIENDS OF THE LWC!

What does it mean to be a **FRIEND OF THE LWC?**

- Monthly "Behind the Scenes" Bulletins
- Early access to event registration
- Discounts on workshops and our online store
- *Knowing that you are helping improve the health of your watershed!*

Find out how to join the Friends of the LWC at [www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/Friends](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/Friends)

**Thank you to our supporters!**

We welcome donations\* of any amount at [www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/Donate](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/Donate)

If you prefer to donate offline, you can mail a check to: **165 D Street, Independence, OR 97351**

\*Your contribution may be tax-deductible. The LWC will provide a letter of documentation early the following year.

## Upcoming Council Meetings

Join us for our LWC Monthly Meetings, typically held the second Thursday of every even-numbered month. Our meetings are always open to the public and discussion topics include local watershed issues and actions. Details, driving directions, and/or Zoom links are posted at [www.LuckiamuteLWC.org](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org)

April 11 @ 6:00 - 8:00pm (Zoom only)

June 13 @ 6:00 - 8:00pm (In-person, TBD)

August 8 @ 6:00 - 8:00pm (In-person, TBD)

# THANK YOU TO OUR MOST RECENT DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS!

We are so grateful to the following donors and volunteers who have contributed their dollars, in-kind donations, and their time and energy to our conservation and community education goals from January 1 to March 31, 2023. Your support of the LWC makes a BIG difference, and helps us achieve our goal of *a healthy watershed for all*. **THANK YOU!**

## Special Recognition to the LWC's Bedrock Society

*A special note of thanks goes to our donors who are opting to make automatic monthly contributions to the Luckiamute Watershed Council! Like the bedrock that underlies every stream of our watershed, recurring donations provides a foundational layer of support for our organization with a steady stream of income that we can count on every month to advance our mission. For the first quarter of 2024, the combined total of Bedrock Society donations was \$820! Find out how you can become a part of our Bedrock Society at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/donate.html>*

**Anonymous Donors (2)**  
Judy Beebe  
Michael Cairns & Gail Oberst  
Maya & Jim Cook  
Verna & Dale Curry  
Whitney & Ron Francis  
Jeremy Gordon  
Charlie & Hollis Holstine

Stephen & Ava Howard  
Renee Jaffer  
Becky & Jon Jay  
Paige Jenkins  
Deb Merchant  
Leanne Merrill  
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Erin Murphy

Terry Murphy  
Eric Noel  
Caleb Price  
Linda Samuels  
Scott Youngblood

### January 1 - March 31 Donors

**Anonymous Donor**  
Ash Creek Animal Clinic  
Auer Farms LLC  
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Daughters of the American Revolution - Susannah Lee Barlow Chapter  
*In Honor of Kelly Wiggins*  
Corinne DeAngelis  
Kathi Foisie

Divine Distillers  
Ken & Paula Hale  
Cliff & Gay Hall  
Kathy Patterson  
William Pearcy  
Sharon Safina  
Stephen Scheck  
Beth Thiel  
Ann Wichmann

### January 1 - March 31 Volunteers

Ashley Almon  
Brian Bangs  
Judy Beebe  
Marc Bell  
Britton Castor  
Heidi Christensen  
Jim Cook  
David Ehlers  
Dan Farnworth  
Douglass Fitting  
Derek Godwin  
Nick Hazelton

George Kral  
Phil Larsen  
Morgan Neil  
David Olson  
Misha Pierce  
Chris Seal  
Jackson Stalley  
Karin Stutzman  
Sarah Willis  
Scott Youngblood  
Lauren Zatkos

**THANK YOU,  
Fred Meyer Community  
Rewards participants!**

Your purchases earned us  
\$34.64 for the third and  
fourth quarter of 2023!

If you shop at Fred Meyer, you can link your Community Rewards card to the LWC using these steps:

Sign in to your Rewards account at [www.FredMeyer.com](http://www.FredMeyer.com), then click "Community Rewards" on the lefthand menu. Follow the steps to link your card to the LWC using our organization number: **Q1717**



*Want to be a part of our amazing network of volunteers? Check out all of our current volunteer opportunities at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/volunteer.html>, and get on our mailing list to receive Volunteer Alert emails directly to your inbox at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/subscribe.html>. We hope you will join us!*

### Donor Spotlight



We'd like to thank the Susannah Lee Barlow Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution for their generous donation to the LWC in March, and to volunteer Kelly Wiggins for suggesting a gift to the LWC in lieu of receiving a speaking fee! Our donors and volunteers are instrumental in helping us achieve a healthy watershed for all, and we are so grateful for your support!

### Luckiamute Watershed Council Staff



**Executive Director:** [Apply here if interested!](#)  
**Operations Coordinator:** Maya Cook  
**Outreach Coordinator:** Suzanne Teller  
**Project Manager:** Aubrey Cloud  
**Monitoring Coordinator:** Jonah Nicholas

### THANK YOU, BUSINESS CIRCLE DONORS!



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