



Making Tracks

Highlights of the Friends of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge

March 2007

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Web Pages of Interest

[Friends of the Refuge](#)
[Tualatin River NWR](#)

[U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Region](#)

Picture of the Month



Refuge Visitors Service Manager, Kim Strassburg, and Steve Engel worked together to design the animal track stories that are on the river and wetland overlooks. The tracks "stamps" were created from casts of real animal prints in the wild. Photo by Janice Jenkins.

News from the Knoll

Construction Update

Changes can be seen daily at the Wildlife Center and Administrative Building construction site. Despite the dust and midden of any construction project, the interiors of the buildings are beautiful. The windows are almost finished, and even without electric lights installed yet, the natural light gives the interior wooden posts and beams a warm glow. Refuge staff are working with a contractor to design and install an audio-visual system for the multi-purpose room—complete with a sound system,

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wireless microphones, and a ceiling projection system.

Outside, the fee booth at the entrance to the parking lot is going up. Soon, the plaza will get its pervious pavers and the framework of three interpretive kiosks will be installed. While the curved portions of the buildings just received their metal roofing, the flat portions of the roofs are covered in pea gravel to provide nesting habitat for killdeer. Our alternatives were composite roofing (which absorbs too much summer heat) or a reflective light-colored roof (which, to waterfowl trying to land on a moonlit night, could have looked too much like water). This is just one example of the many environmentally sensitive approaches the Refuge has undertaken in developing this project.

For more information, please call Kim at the Refuge: 503-590-5811.

Volunteer Update

Second Saturday Work Party Schedule

March 10, 2007

The March work party will be devoted to maintenance on some little trees at two or three sites on the refuge. Some of the protective tubes have popped open or been damaged and some bamboo stakes have broken. We will be fixing up or replacing the tubes on these little trees so they will grow into healthy trees and shade out blackberries and other invasives.

We start at 9:00 on Saturday, March 10 and work until about noon. Children are welcome along when adults come to supervise. Meet at Refuge HQ. The driveway is at the intersection of Beef Bend Rd and Roy Rogers Rd., across the road from Al's Garden Center. Check the Friends website for information:

<http://www.friendsoftualatinrefuge.org/volunteer.html>

Future Volunteer Work in Nature's Overlook Store

If you are interested in volunteering at the new Wildlife Center's store, contact Carolyn Penner: carolynpenner@comcast.net or phone: 503-579-5822. Training for store and visitor center volunteers will be held this summer. Read below for more details.

Refuge and the Community

The View from Nature's Overlook

Nature's Overlook, the Friends' sales outlet, will open in the visitor's center in the fall. If you are interested in volunteering at the store, you can add your name to the list by contacting Carolyn Penner by e-mail: carolynpenner@comcast.net or by phone: 503-579-5822. Training for store and visitor center volunteers will be held this summer and the store will begin full operation following the Grand Opening of the Visitor Center.

The store and visitor information area will be staffed by volunteers whenever the Visitor Center is open. The center will be open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Volunteers will be asked to take shifts of between 4 and 5 hours at a time. While the number of shifts that a volunteer works each month will be flexible, it is hoped that workers can

commit to several shifts each month.

The store committee is diligently working on developing a business and marketing plan to guide the development of the store. If anyone would like to join the committee, meetings are held monthly, the 2nd Tuesday, before the regular FOR Board Meeting, at 12:00 noon at Refuge Headquarters off Roy Rogers Road. We are especially in need of people who have business development or marketing experience.

Spreading the Word

FOR volunteers and/or Refuge staff often make presentations at community events to share information about the Refuge. Watch this space in future editions of the e-newsletter to find out where you can learn more if you're new to the Refuge. We're also looking for volunteers to make these presentations at future events, so if you're interested, call Norman Penner at (503) 579-5822 or cell (503) 504-4814.

Friends New Website Up and Running

We've changed the look and features of our website. Some of the new features are a Calendar of Events and a Photo Gallery where visitors can post photos taken at the Refuge. The Home Page includes a photo of the month and brief highlights of news, activities and important notices. Please take some time and explore this site. You can use the navigation bar on the left-side of the page to find your way around the site. Enjoy!

Working with PGE

Over the past several years the Friends were given a small grant by PGE as the result of a program where they encouraged their employees to support local non-profits. The Friends Group currently does not have a contact at PGE but would like to continue working with PGE towards obtaining financial support for the Friends monthly newsletter.

Are there any current FOR members who are employees of PGE that can help out with this? If you can help, please contact Norm Penner (503-579-5822) or if have any suggestions as to where we might find some support.

Sunset Magazine Honors Refuge

Sunset Magazine honors the West's top 10 environmental successes including Tualatin River national Wildlife Refuge in an article entitled Environmental Awards: Paradise Preserved. To read and learn more visit: <http://www.sunset.com/sunset/>

Upcoming Events

Volunteer Trail Rover training - March 31

The Refuge is offering Volunteer Trail Rover training on Saturday March 31, 9:00am-12:00pm. This training will provide you with the tools you need to interact with Refuge visitors, understand the rules and regulations of the Refuge, learn the history of Tualatin River NWR and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and we will rove the Refuge training day to point out

features of the landscape and practice on visitors. There will be other learning experiences provided throughout the year for all Refuge volunteers - they are recommended but not required. You can also shadow current volunteers for more practice.

Please RSVP for the training by March 16 as space is limited. For more information as to whether this is something you are interested in and would love to get involved with or to RSVP, please contact Janice Jenkins at Janice_jenkins@fws.gov or 503-590-5811

Spring Birds of the Refuge with Doug - April 11 & 14

FOR member and Refuge volunteer Doug Robberson will be presenting "Spring Birds of the Refuge" class at Refuge Headquarters off Roy Rogers Rd., Wednesday April 11, 7:00-9:00pm. The follow-up walk will be at Atfalat'I Unit of the Refuge off Hwy. 99, Saturday March 14, 7:30am. Reservations required, open to Refuge volunteers and Friends members, 30 maximum participants, and you must attend Wednesday's presentation to take the Saturday walk. Call Billie Farrell or Janice Jenkins to reserve your spot: 503-590-5811.

Migratory Songbird Festival - May 12

The Songbird Festival is scheduled for Saturday May 12, 2007. We need your help to get this wonderful event planned. Get involved, meet new people, and have fun! Give Kim Strassburg a call for more information: 503-590-5811.

Wildlife Highlights


Refuge Biologist Pete Schmidt conducts periodic Refuge waterfowl counts throughout the winter. This season's waterfowl population counts began at average levels, building from 4,000 birds at the end of October to over 17,000 by mid-November. January's freeze caused a drop in bird numbers on the Refuge—down to about 5,000. But numbers shot back up to almost 18,000 birds by early February. This winter Pete spotted several tundra swans on the Atfalat'i Unit and well as other units of the Refuge.

Curious to learn more about volunteer opportunities with the Refuge's biological program? Contact Pete at 503-590-5811.

Membership Watch

Current membership = 377. You can find a form to join or renew your membership with Friends of the Refuge by going to the [Membership Page](#) on the FOR website.

REMINDER: If you received a shockingly bright postcard recently, it was a friendly reminder to renew your membership to Friends of the Refuge. If you have any questions or can't remember if you received that postcard, please call or email Carolyn Uyemura: 503-925-1294 or carolyn.uyemura@verizon.net.



Why join FOR? Here's our mission: Friends of the Refuge is a community-based volunteer organization supporting the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge. We are dedicated to protection and restoration of the Refuge for the benefit of fish and wildlife, and for public education and recreation.
