Restoring Balance in the Badger Creek Wilderness

By: Yotokko Kilpatrick

The Badger Creek Wilderness in the Mt. Hood National Forest spans from the High Cascade Forest east of Mt. Hood’s slopes to the eastern Oregon ecology of the Columbia Plateau steppe. The transition zone in between these two distinct ecosystems consists of Oregon White Oak canyon-lands as well as Ponderosa Pine, Pinus ponderosa, and Oregon White Oak, Quercus garryana, savannas. At just thirty-six square miles, the Badger Creek Wilderness is relatively small for a designated wilderness area in Oregon. However, these unique ecosystems host an amazing array of biological diversity for such a compact area.

In the summer of 2013, with community support and support from the National Forest Foundation’s Wilderness Stewardship Challenge grant program, WRP took an inventory of invasive vegetation within and adjacent to the Badger Creek Wilderness. This project was accomplished through a partnership with the Barlow Ranger District of the Mt. Hood National Forest. Primary targets for removal included Spotted and Diffuse Knapweed, Centaurea maculosa and diffusa, as well as Canada thistle, Cirsium arvense. WRP crews also hiked trails throughout the wilderness to locate and remove additional species of vegetation currently problematic in the Barlow Ranger District. Additional species include Scotch Broom, Cytisus scoparius, St. John’s Wort, Hypericum perforatum, Sulfur Cinquefoil, Potentilla racta, and Tansy Ragwort, Senecio jacobaea.

The larger populations of invasive vegetation were located along the School Canyon Trail on the eastern side of the wilderness. This area also hosts an incredible array of botanical diversity and is noted for its impressive spring wildflower displays. Roughly a mile from the trailhead, an extremely large population of non-native thistles spanning over several acres threatens to tip the balance of this biologically significant area. WRP crews removed over 25 cubic yards of invasive vegetation to help restore balance along the School Canyon Trail. Unfortunately the size of invasive vegetation populations within this area was beyond the scope of efforts for the 2013 growing season. This fall WRP will develop a five-year action plan centered on controlling exotic vegetation within the Badger Creek Wilderness. The location and documentation of problematic vegetation during the 2013 growing season will be instrumental for such long range planning efforts.

The Badger Creek Trail runs east to west and is essentially the central trail in the wilderness to which all other trails connect. WRP crews located over half a dozen dispersed or rogue camps largely void of vegetation and suffering the impacts from backcountry over-use. While conducting invasive vegetation surveys along the trail WRP crews collected seeds of hearty native grass and herbaceous species and broadcasted them throughout these impacted areas to increase riparian structure and function adjacent to the central trail of this remarkable wilderness area. Additionally, WRP crews removed invasive vegetation populations at the outlet of Badger Lake, the headwaters of the Badger Creek Trail on the western edge of the wilderness. All efforts conducted during the 2013 growing season contribute to ecological balance and help provide a path forward for future habitat rehabilitation efforts within the Badger Creek Wilderness.
A Special Thank You to the following:

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Wes Messinger
Laura Warthen & Territorial Elementary
Carrie Patterson & Agnes Stewart Middle School
Matthew Bigonjiari
The Village School
Bruce Newhouse
Lorna Baldwin
Chuck Theobald
Jared Weybright, McKenzie Watershed Council
Lauri Holts, City of Eugene
Chad Hoffman, Lane County Public Works
Billy Hughes & The Network Charter School Urban Ecology Class
Paul Haley & Quiet Water Homeowners Association
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The Many Volunteers who came out this past spring and summer to restore our Local Open Spaces!

Join Us In Celebrating All Things Walama-esque Feb 1st

Author William Sullivan Headlines Our Family-Friendly Event

By: Doug Black

Walama Restoration looks forward to meeting folks of all ages Saturday, February 1st at 7PM at Cozmic (Pizza), 8th and Charnelton, as we celebrate “all things Walama”, now in our 12th year. Mark your calendars now, as headlining the evening will be Eugene’s popular outdoor guidebooks author William Sullivan, presenting “New Hikes in the Central Oregon Cascades.” Bill is the author of 16 books, including multiple editions of five sought-after regional hiking guidebooks on Oregon’s uncommon hiking trails.

Joining Bill in the program will be notable local environmental educator Bruce Newhouse. Bruce’s knowledge pertaining to the flora of the Southern Willamette Valley will be on display in his presentation. Bruce is perhaps the most noted botanist/naturalist of our local area with many years of professional experience involving rare and invasive plant surveys and mapping, comprehensive natural resource inventories, restoration and management planning, environmental planning and special natural resource projects such as butterfly host plant analysis.

Feel free to visit, meet and hear more on WRP’s popular experience-based education program “From Seed To Habitat” (now in its 6th year). More is planned, from live music (to be announced) to a silent auction.

So make a bee-line to your calendar and mark it for February 1st. We look forward to seeing you!

Species Spotlight:

Chocolate Lily, *Fritillaria lanceolata*

Growing from bulbs that resemble small grains of rice, the unfurled petals of the Chocolate Lily remain one of Oregon’s springtime wonders. Though the stems may only grow from 10 to 120 centimeters, there is nothing small about this amazing species in terms of sheer beauty. Chocolate or Checker Lily has leaves in whorls and mottled petals ranging from greenish-brown to yellowish to purplish-black. In spring they are a delight in the understory of oak or pine scrub woodlands throughout the Pacific West and Northwest United States. Making a palatable and nutritious food source when cooked, the bulbs were utilized by indigenous inhabitants of our region. Look for these gorgeous displays in the Whilamut Natural Area next April.

SeQuential Biofuels Station on McVay Highway in Eugene will donate 5 cents for every gallon you pump into your vehicle and 5% of store purchases to Walama Restoration Project.

You must mention WRP when you make your purchase!
The From Seed to Habitat Program is underway again this fall at Network Charter School, Agnes Stewart Middle, Territorial Elementary, and The Village School. Fall activities started off with students learning about botany, the life cycle of flowering plants, and the ins and outs of seed cleaning. Field trips to plant last year’s starts commenced in early November. Additional groups that will be partnering with the education department for fall plantings and possibly spring field trips include the Lane Metro Youth Corps and Center Point School students, both part of Looking Glass Youth and Family Services.

The turnout at Network Charter School’s Community Service Day on October 18th demonstrated the school’s continued commitment to environmental stewardship at the Butterfly Meadow, where they host a variety of classes out of the yurt, including an Urban Ecology class taught by Billy Hughes. NCS Students recently removed Armenian blackberry, Queen Ann’s Lace, Canada Thistle, and Plantains to ready the site for fall plantings. Shade tarp is being applied by NCS students in the coming months to the southern edges of the field to expand the project to meet the Douglas fir forest known as Wildflower Hollow.

At Agnes Stewart Middle School in Springfield, plantings have already begun. Starts of Fringe cup, *Tellima grandiflora* and large leaf avens, *Geum macrophyllum* were carefully planted by seventh grade students of Carrie Patterson’s science class in the wetlands behind their school. During plantings, a Black Salamander, *Aneides flavipunctatus*, Pacific tree frogs, and copious amounts of earthworms were discovered, capturing the fascination of the students and attesting to the success of the habitat restoration effort. The rest of the starts propagated by Agnes Stewart Middle School went into the ground at the Butterfly Meadow on November first.

WRP is enjoying our last year with Territorial Elementary’s 5th grade teacher Laura Wharton, who is retiring this spring. Thank you for many years of collaboration and support! The education department looks forward to meeting a new instructor along with the new batch of fifth graders next year. Territorial’s field trips are scheduled to visit the Fisher Butte site again this year, where students enjoy getting muddy in the clay soil of the wetlands managed and funded by the Army Corps of Engineers.

The hoop house at The Village School is full of Lupine destined to be planted at the Butterfly Meadow on November 26th. Please contact the Education Coordinator at nicole@walamarestoration.org to volunteer as a chaperone at this event. The Village School is now participating in the From Seed to Habitat Program for its second year. Last year, Matthew Bigongiari began the process and currently Susana Romatz is continuing the program with the fifth grade, which has generously donated part of the profits from the annual Walk-a-Thon to Walama Restoration Project again this year. Thank you!
During the 2013 growing season WRP engaged in habitat rehabilitation and enhancement efforts from the floor of the Willamette Valley to the Cascade crest, to the edge of the estuaries of the Siuslaw River. Habitat improvement efforts included collection, propagation and planting of declining prairie species native to the Willamette Valley and the management of introduced species with the potential capacity to further erode the framework of intact ecosystems in western Oregon.

In late spring WRP crews assisted Lane County in the procurement of Camas bulbs for prairie rehabilitation projects. WRP crews helped orient over forty participants from Kalapuya and Kennedy High Schools in Camas bulb collection activities. For students at Kalapuya High School, these service-learning efforts also integrated the historical significance of the indigenous food source to the peoples of the valley for which is their school’s namesake. These efforts also coincided with the traditional times of year utilized for the procurement of these historically highly valued bulbs. Over 15,000 bulbs collected during spring of 2013 are to be planted during the autumn months of 2013.

In the waning days of summer WRP crews traveled to Cox Island in the middle of the Siuslaw River to employ control efforts for Salt Meadow Chord Grass, *Spartina patens*. Cox Island is a one hundred and ninety acre preserve stewarded by The Nature Conservancy. This site contains the only known population of this species in the state of Oregon. The potential for the spread of this species is vast, considering it is located on an island in the middle of a river heading towards the Pacific Ocean. WRP crews surveyed the island in a grid formation to help cover the entire extent of the preserve. Located populations were individually covered with a shade fabric staked in place to kill the undesired species through the exclusion of light. These efforts serve to help prevent yet another problematic species of vegetation from negatively impacting Oregon’s coastal and riparian areas.

Additional warm season projects included the efforts to expand upon restoration efforts at Santiam Pass. WRP crews collected seed for an autumn sowing to further rehabilitate impacts from All Terrain Vehicles to the sub-alpine meadow habitats of the area. WRP is currently planning a large planting project involving schools from both the west and east side of the Oregon Cascades. WRP also worked to remove populations of Water Primrose, *Ludwigia hexapetala* from aquatic ecosystems in the River Road area of Eugene. This species has been highly problematic in Eugene’s Delta Ponds complex and has unfortunately spread with the potential to degrade additional aquatic habitats in the Southern Willamette Valley. WRP also assisted with habitat enhancement efforts adjacent to Dexter Reservoir and in Hendricks Park in Eugene. The control of exotic vegetation in Hendricks marks the thirteenth year WRP has provided invasive vegetation control efforts in Eugene’s oldest park.
Our Mission:

Walama Restoration Project is a Non-Profit Organization Dedicated to Environmental Stewardship & Biological Diversity through Education & Habitat Restoration.

WRP transitions to new Office Manager

WRP is saying goodbye to Alison Rajek, Office Manager since 2005. The parting is bittersweet, for although the team is very sad to see her go, we are also excited for her and the opportunities that lie ahead. Alison is stepping down to take a position as Office Specialist in the UO Environmental Studies Department. While taking on this career change, she will continue to work with her partner Stephen as a beeswax candle maker for Casper Candle Company. As the organization bids farewell to Alison, we also welcome Regan Watjus as her replacement. Regan is a recent graduate of the University of Oregon. She earned her M.A. in History this past June and then celebrated her departure from academia by hiking the Colorado Trail with her husband and dog this past summer. She is excited to learn more about Oregon's natural landscapes and to grow with WRP in its important educational and environmental efforts.

Purchase NW Native Plant Greeting Cards to Support Walama Restoration Project!

Walama Restoration Project has designed six native plant greeting cards that we are selling as a fundraiser for our organization. 100 percent of the proceeds goes directly towards the expansion of declining rare native plant species of the PNW and to the WRP From Seed to Habitat Education Program. If you would like to purchase greeting cards, they can be found at any of the following local businesses in Eugene. If you would like to purchase one or more sets, contact us at (541) 484-3939 or email: info@walamarestoration.org.

WRP Native Plant Greeting Cards can be found at:
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Friendly Street Market
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Kiva Grocery
First Alternative Cooperative (Corvallis)
New Frontier Market
Sundance Natural Foods
Smith Family Bookstore (downtown)
Sequential Bio-fuels
Kalapuya Books (Cottage Grove)

Thank you to all of these fantastic local businesses for your support!

Thank you, Members, for your continued support of Walama Restoration Project!
Walama Restoration Project relies on community support to facilitate our education programs. If you would like to make a tax deductible contribution or would like to volunteer with WRP, please fill out this form & send it to:

Walama Restoration Project
PO Box 894
Eugene, OR 97440

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