



Walama Restoration Project

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www.walamarestoration.org

Issue #9

Fall/Winter 2009-10

New Approaches and Youth Stewardship in the Whilamut Natural Area

by Yotokko Kilpatrick

This past spring was an amazing season for butterflies, blossoms and volunteers. Thanks to all those dedicated individuals who helped make the latest expansion of the butterfly meadow a great success. Also special thanks to our former volunteer coordinator Liza Kachko who helped make this process so successful. Please look for upcoming work parties this spring (listed in this issue) and join us for the fifth year of habitat restoration in the park.

As we slip deeper into autumn the Butterfly Meadow of the Whilamut natural area prepares for its winter rest. This year the future stewards of our region have played perhaps the

most vital role ever in the reclamation of this natural area. From Looking Glass helping to clean native seed in the waning heat of summer, to Ceasar Chavez Elementary planting wildflowers amidst November's moist chill. The future of these imperiled ecosystems rests in the optimism and energy of youth. It is crucial, now more than ever, to expand the interest, knowledge, and involvement in these special places to our future generations.

This season WRP will begin applying some new restoration techniques in the park. This is the first season we have begun planting directly into sheet-mulched areas. Sheet mulching involves adding newspaper or cardboard on an area followed by organic materials such as leaves or wood chips. Our purpose is to suppress existing vegetation and begin with a clean slate to plant native prairie species. The jury is still out as to the effectiveness of this treatment, but stay tuned for an update on our progress in the spring.

Another restoration technique we will be employing is repeated shading. This method involves shading and allowing residual vegetation a chance to re-sprout followed by more shading. We are hoping to kill off more of the seed bank of undesirable exotic species. We will also provide an update of this process in the future. Our long term goal is to find the most feasible, cost effective methods of prairie restoration without the use of chemical herbicides.



Planting native wildflowers with Ceasar Chavez Elementary

**A special thanks to the following
volunteers, organizations and
businesses**

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Billy Hughes & The Network Charter School Urban Ecology Class
Willamalane Parks After School Program
Looking Glass
Cottage Grove High School
Al Kennedy High School
WRP Backyard Seeds Project Participants
Naomi Leavitt Photography
Tactics
Casper Candle Company
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Doak Creek Nursery
REI
Sequential Biofuels
Eugene Weekly
Emerald Valley Kitchen
The Bread Stop
The Wandering Goat
World Café
Eugene City Bakery
Robert Castlen

**The many volunteers who came out
to help restore our local open spaces,
Thank You!**

Outreach & Education Coordinator Spotlight



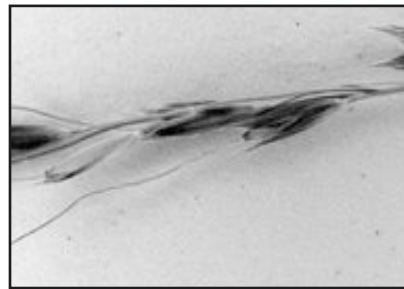
Heidi Vassel

New York and Bainbridge Island outside of Seattle. She has also spent three years in Malawi, Africa as a Peace Corps Volunteer. Heidi recently graduated from the University of Washington with her masters in Science Education. She is excited to work with school groups in and out of the classroom educating our future stewards about native habitat restoration.

Heidi Vassel, our current Outreach and Education Coordinator, thought she moved away from prairies when she left Kansas after completing her bachelors degree in Biology and Environmental Science. She is enjoying learning about the native plants and animals in the upland Prairie of the Willamette Valley. Heidi's past experience has focused on Environmental Education in

Species Spotlight: Lemmon's Needlegrass

Achnatherum Lemmonii



Lemmon's Needlegrass is also the host plant for the Common Wood Nymph, Juba Skipper and Ochre Common Ringlet butterfly. Distinguishing features include a distinct spike-like head and long awns (linear appendages that are 15-50mm but typically 20-35mm) on the seed that are bent twice and twisted at maturity. In our immediate area this species has become increasingly rare and is often confined to foothills and south slopes. Look for it on the top of Spencer's Butte and Mt. Pisgah in the southern Willamette Valley.

Lemmon's Needlegrass is a perennial bunchgrass native to the upland prairies and oak savannas of the Willamette Valley region. Ranging from British Columbia to Arizona this species has deep fibrous roots and is very drought tolerant. Lemmon's Needlegrass has good palatability for deer and its seeds provide an important food source for birds and small mammals.

Our Mission

Walama Restoration Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to environmental stewardship and biological diversity through education and habitat restoration.

Volunteers Make a Difference



2009 has been an active year for WRP volunteers. Monthly work parties have occurred at Morse Ranch, Maurie Jacobs, Edgewood, and East Alton Baker parks. Projects have included invasive vegetation removal, stream enhancement, bottom-land hardwood forest and upland prairie restoration. Volunteering in ecological restoration projects is a great way to meet caring members of our community, get some exercise outdoors, learn more about native plants and their habitats, and help restore some of the most imperiled ecosystems in the United States.

Planting a future at Morse Ranch Park

Volunteer Opportunities for 2010

Maurie Jacobs Park- Downstream of the Valley River Foot-Bridge (River road side). We will be planting and mulching native shrubs to help expand riparian forest habitat. Please join us on these dates- January 16th February 20th & March 13th.

Edgewood Park- At the dead-end of Hilyard Street directly south of 43rd street. We will be working to protect this parks biodiversity by removing competing exotic vegetation. Please join us on January 24th.

Whilamut Butterfly Meadow- In East Alton Baker Park directly between the west side of the dog park and the Willamette River. Please join us to help restore critically imperiled upland prairie habitat. This is also a great way to learn to identify many grasses and herbaceous plants both native and exotic. Please join us on the following dates- April 24th May 8th & 22nd June 5th & 19th July 10th & August 7th.

Gudu-Kut Natural Area- On the east side of City View Street directly across from 14th Street. We will be working to restore imperiled wetland habitat. Please join us on June 12th.

All work parties will occur from 9:30am to 12:30pm. Items to bring to work parties include sturdy shoes, work gloves, raingear or sun protection when necessary. Tools, gloves, and snacks will be provided.

Special Thanks to everyone who came out to help in 2009. We look forward to seeing everyone in 2010.

To volunteer or for more information please contact Heidi Vasel at 484-3939 or heidi@walamarestoration.org

WISH LIST

If you are willing to donate anything on our list, please let us know! All of your donations are always fully tax deductible.

- A donated or low-cost space to house a small office and shop to store our equipment. Ideally, the space is within biking distance from downtown Eugene and has a parking spot for our work truck.
- A PC laptop in good working condition; a newer, multi-use printer, scanner, fax, copy machine; office chair; color printing services; one-sided paper; small/children's gardening tools; plastic plant identification tags (used is ok!)

Restoration from the Cascades to the Coast Range

by Yotokko Kilpatrick



Delta Ponds after Invasive Vegetation Removal

for the critically imperiled Fender's Blue Butterfly.

The control of False Brome has been another large focus this year as well. Populations were removed in the McKenzie, Santiam, and Willamette watersheds. The control of this species is imminent as the spread unfortunately seems to widen annually which poses a significant threat to the intact ecosystems throughout our region. In the summer of 2009 it was open season on the Yellow Flag Iris along Buckhead Creek in the Middle Fork Willamette watershed. This project will help to improve habitat for imperiled western pond turtles.

This year WRP also reached out to more watershed councils throughout our region. This past summer, we began our first projects with the Siuslaw Watershed Council. WRP crews have been active releasing canopy species from competing vegetation to help provide needed shade to the Siuslaw river and its tributaries. We are currently working to control sixteen acres of exotic vegetation at Delta ponds a little closer to home here in Eugene. We have also been working with Lane County Public Works planting 48,000 camas bulbs in the Camas Swale area south of Eugene.

From the prairies to the riparian forests edge, the Walama Field Crew has been actively working to help restore our regions ecological integrity. As usual, due to our regions climate, much of our efforts have been in the control of exotic vegetation. Despite the difficulties of this rigorous work, it is extremely rewarding to watch our region's ecology come back one site at a time.

This past spring our crews remained engaged in the McKenzie and Mohawk watersheds. At various sites throughout the region, Reed Canary grass was controlled by the placement of a shading fabric. These sites will be ready for the planting of riparian species beginning next fall. Our crew battled exotic grasses and mosquitoes to help release populations of Kincaid's Lupine near Fern Ridge Reservoir. This project will help improve habitat

“Going to Bat for Habitat; Understanding the Vital Links Between Bats & Native Willamette Valley Habitat”

with Pat Ormsbee , *Bat Specialist, US Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service and Walama Restoration Project supporter*

Tuesday, February 2, 2010; 7-9PM

Training Center meeting room

EWEB North Building

500 E. 4th Ave.

Eugene, 97401

EWEB furnishes public meeting rooms as a community service and does not sponsor or endorse activities or groups using EWEB's public facilities.

Restoring Biodiversity with the Future Stewards

by Heidi Vasel

In the 2009-10 school year, WRP is reaching out to more future stewards. Our goal is to plant seeds in more young minds. The critically imperiled ecosystems of our region require active habitat restoration in the present and the future. Here are some highlights of what WRP is doing to insure the participation of future generations.

We are involved in restoration education with four schools in Eugene and Springfield. One sixth grade class at Hamlin Middle School, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders from Walterville Middle School, and two classes from Looking Glass participate in WRP education programs every week. A class from Network Charter schools works with Walama every other week.

Hamlin and Walterville Middle Schools have in class time learning about upland prairie habitats as well as hands on experiences with seed processing. Already they have cleaned a wide variety of seed and prepared the seeds for cold stratification. They will continue the seed process in November and December by preparing pots with soil. In January the seeds will be pulled out of cold stratification and planted in the prepared pots. Later in the year, the seedlings will be planted in restoration sites. Walterville students planted over 300 plants at a restoration site near their school with plants that the class raised working with WRP last school year.

The focus for Network Charter School and Looking Glass is hands on restoration work, the majority of which has been in the butterfly meadow in the Whilamut Natural Area. They have weeded invasive species and worked hard at getting rid of blackberry



Students in Walterville Planting Native Prairie

roots. They also pulled up some of the shade tarp and tacked it down again in a new location. Both schools have been active in planting native plants as well. Network charter school has also cleaned seeds and weeded at Gudu-kut Natural Area.

Two field trips of students came to butterfly meadow this fall. In late October, a class from North Eugene High School came and removed shade tarp, weeded and planted 30 native plants from the nursery. In early November, 43 fifth grade students from Cesar Chavez Elementary school came to the butterfly meadow and planted over 900 plants.

Bringing these projects full circle through engaging the students in growing and planting helps to deepen a sense of ownership necessary for a long-term stewardship ethic. We are enjoying the effort during this school year and look forward to continuing it.

Sequential Biofuels & Buffalo Exchange Teaming up with Walama!

by Alison Rajek

Sequential Biofuels Station on McVay Highway in Eugene will donate 5 cents for every gallon you pump into your vehicle and 5% of all store purchases to Walama Restoration Project. You must mention WRP when you make your purchase! Sequential Biofuels provides a cleaner alternative for every vehicle.

From January through June 2010, WRP is participating in the Tokens for Bags Program at Buffalo Exchange on 5th Street in Eugene. Every time you choose *not* to use a bag or bring your own to the store you will receive a token worth 5 cents that will go to a local non-profit. Choose WRP and choose to support

environmental education and habitat restoration within our community.



Weaving a vision for the Whilamut Natural Area

by Yotokko Kilpatrick

What do the Walama Restoration Project (WRP), the Whilamut Natural Area (WNA) and the I-5 Bridge over the Willamette River have in common? The current construction of the Willamette River Bridge (WRB) is due for completion in 2012. Along with the bridge come artistic and ecological enhancements to the WNA and the East Gate Woodlands. WRP is part of an artistic design team that has been chosen to develop a conceptual plan for enhancing the area surrounding the bridge in the WNA and East Gate Woodlands.

Restoration in this area presents great opportunities to reestablish critically imperiled plant communities historic to the Willamette Valley. The theme set for the project is the Whilamut Passage to honor the original inhabitants of this region. Along with ecological restoration rests artistic opportunities to honor Kalapuya culture. Education through art or reclaimed ecosystems remains a key component to the long-term survival of our valleys imperiled habitats.

Restoration strategies employed at the Butterfly Meadow further West in the WNA could be utilized. The size of the project also presents vast opportunities for service learning programs with local schools and youth groups. The artistic design team WRP has partnered has been dubbed "The Weavers". The Weavers are Tulsi Wallace of Litus, LLC. (Project & Artistic Lead), Erin Lamb of Nearby Nature (Education Lead), Bill Shaw (Architectural Lead), and Yotokko Kilpatrick of WRP (Restoration Lead).



Community Stewardship at the Gudu-Kut Natural Area

by Yotokko Kilpatrick



WRP and Network Charter School Shading Exotic Vegetation

Prior to Euro-American settlement, the Willamette Valley was a mosaic of prairie, savanna, and woodland habitats. The Kalapuya people managed this region using fire as a tool to promote a landscape conducive to their foraging and hunting lifestyle. The absence of regular burning intervals coupled with agriculture and development have largely displaced the valley's historic ecology. Prairie habitats have gone from covering roughly half the valley to less than half of one percent. In a period of less than two hundred years, many species have been pushed to the brink. Willamette Valley prairie habitats now rank among some of the most critically imperiled in the nation.

Sandwiched in between residential apartments in

West Eugene seems an unlikely location for one of the most imperiled habitats in the United States. This is exactly the case of the Gudu-Kut Natural Area off of City View Street. Once slated for development, Gudu-Kut came into public ownership in 2000 as a result of a community-based campaign organized by at least 37 neighborhood households.

Walama Restoration Project began involvement in the restoration process at Gudu-Kut in 2004. Since then, we have facilitated restoration with community work parties and service learning programs with local schools. Gudu-Kut is the eastern most section of the West Eugene Wetlands. Four distinct wetland habitat types are present within this 6.4 acre natural area. Gudu-Kut's ecological diversity and relatively close location to Eugene's center have made this a great destination for educational field trips.

Over the past several years, exotic species have taken their toll on Gudu-Kut's native plant populations. Reed Canary grass briskly consumed some of the highest quality portions of the site. WRP worked with students from the Network Charter School to shade out this aggressive species. In spring 2010, we will encourage the community to join us in a restoration work party at the Gudu-Kut natural area. We will target exotic species with the most potential for displacing native plant populations. The workparty is from 9:30am to 12:30pm. on June 12th 2010. We will provide gloves, tools and snacks. Meet on the east side of City View Street directly across from 14th street.

Grow Native Plants Close to Home: Join the Backyard Seeds Project

by Yotokko Kilpatrick



Dragonfly and Lupine at Whilamut Butterfly Meadow

Join Walama Restoration Project to help grow out imperiled prairie plants in your own yard. Participants will need at least a three by three foot section of garden space designated for growing native plants. Walama will provide seed and basic propagation instructions. Participants are encouraged to donate seed produced from their backyard plot to further local restoration efforts. Bring beauty, diversity, and hopefully pollinators to your backyard while helping expand native habitat locally.

Join us January 6th 2010 upstairs at Growers Market 454 Willamette Street. We will be disseminating seed between 6pm and 8pm.

Contact Heidi Vasel for more information at 484-3939 or heidi@walamarestoration.org

STREAM Students in Action

Stephanie Schroeder, STREAM Project Coordinator, Walama Restoration Project



Despite the brisk, wet, and rainy weather, more than 170 middle school and high school students braved the rain to learn about watershed health in Cottage Grove's East Regional Park. On Monday, October 26th the Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council brought together biologists and experts in water quality, wildlife ecology, and habitat surveying, to professionally train 13 students from Al Kennedy Alternative High School and Cottage Grove High School. The all-day clinic sampling for aquatic macroinvertebrates, identifying local birds and their habitats, learning the life history of western pond turtles, and establishing transects to determine the impact of invasive plant species.

Not only did the students leave the clinic with a new ecological understanding of the park, they took their knowledge and created a clinic of their own-- to teach local watershed health at

East Regional Park to the entire Lincoln Middle School seventh grade.

On October 29th, more than 150 seventh graders arrived in three separate groups, and visited the ponds in the park throughout the day. High school students were ready at their stations to collect macroinvertebrates, help conduct surveys for invasive species, facilitate habitat 'scavenger hunts', and inspire seventh graders to gain interest in the local ecology of their nearby park. Middle School students rotated through three clinics, and gained hands-on experience in topics that will extend to their science classes at Lincoln Middle School this year.

By the end of the day, smiling seventh graders were loading the busses with images of dragonfly larvae and pond turtles along with handmade clipboards filled with completed habitat data sheets and wildlife worksheets.



Walama Restoration Project
 PO Box 894
 Eugene, OR 97440

Walama Restoration Project relies on community support to continue facilitating our educational programs. If you would like to become involved by volunteering at a work party or by making a tax-deductible contribution, please fill out this form and send to:

Walama Restoration Project
PO Box 894
Eugene, OR 97440

Yes! I would like to be a supporter!

- Limited income \$15
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***You can also donate on the web at www.walamarestoration.org**

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