



Walama Restoration Project

Issue #2

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Spring 2005

News from the Field

Walama Restoration Project crews welcome spring after the busiest twelve months since our incorporation as a non-profit. We have been able to greet each season with the following stewardship projects and contracts:

Spring 2004 ~ WRP began an intensive weeding project supported by the City of Eugene, The Nature Conservancy, and Eugene BLM at Willow corners in west Eugene. Willow Corner rests aside the Nature Conservancy's Willow Creek Preserve, **which is prime habitat for the endangered Kincaid's lupine and Fenders blue butterfly**. WRP crews selectively removed well over a dozen exotic species of flowering and non-flowering forbs and grasses. Weeding efforts will help expand the forage range for Fenders blue butterflies.

Summer 2004 ~ During the long, warm and dry days of the summer months, WRP crews spent endless mornings in roadside ditches searching for important native upland and wet prairie seeds. Tragically, the Willamette Valley's once vast prairies have now been relegated into random patches along roadsides or on undisturbed ridge tops. The scarcity of prairie plant communities signals an immediate need for the collection and large-scale grow-out of many diminishing species. With clearance from the BLM, City of Eugene, and some private landowners near Eugene, WRP was able to collect over 30 species of native Willamette Valley seeds. The seeds are now thousands of young seedlings, ready to be planted at our wet prairie and upland stewardship sites.

Autumn/Winter 2004-05 ~ Crews worked diligently for six straight months pulling weeds and planting trees in public open spaces. WRP partnered with the Mid Fork Willamette Watershed Council to enhance riparian habitat at seven sites along Lost Creek. Blackberries were cleared to make way for an array of native shrubs and trees along this salmon-spawning tributary of the Willamette River. WRP also worked with the McKenzie Watershed Council to expand the once abundant bottomland hardwood forests along the river's edges. Crews planted, mulched, and staked over two thousand trees near the McKenzie River and its tributaries. Restored site locations ranged from east of Thurston to the confluence of the McKenzie and Willamette rivers north of Eugene. Re-vegetation projects in Eugene include a one-acre planting project at Lambs Cottage in Skinners Butte Park. WRP planted a diverse assemblage of over 3,500 plugs (of native grasses and forbs) near the Willamette River.



Riparian enhancement along Cedar Creek in Marcola.



Winter 2005 ~ WRP crews returned for our third year to Hendricks Park and cleared three new acres of English Ivy. Areas cleared include some of the park's highest quality pockets of native plants. With ivy's creeping tendrils kept at bay, rare plants such as tall bugbane and shield fern will have leeway to expand their populations. **For the first time ever, the City of Eugene secured funding for WRP to implement a re-treatment protocol at the park.** Crews returned to areas previously cleared of ivy and blackberries to remove re-emerging exotic species. Tenacious non-native species such as herb Robert and nipplewort were beginning to spread over areas of ground where blankets of ivy once prevailed. Although new exotics were emerging, the amount of natives returning to areas that were once ivy 'deserts' was astounding! WRP re-treated over fifteen acres in the park that WRP crews and Friends of Hendricks Park volunteers formally restored. WRP was able to apply re-treatment protocols to additional open spaces including areas at Skinners Butte Park and East Alton Baker Park. **We are hoping we have got the ivy for good now...**

Luke Tabor weeding near Willow Creek Preserve.

Riparian Resurgence at Maurie Jacobs Park

If you ever find yourself on the bicycle path by the Valley River footbridge, you will see a first-hand account of how restoration efforts can transform a formally blackberry-ridden riverbank into a diverse functional ecosystem. WRP is now into its fourth year of riparian rehabilitation along a 250-foot riverside stretch at Maurie Jacobs Park in Eugene. This past year, crewmembers removed re-emerging blackberries and other exotic species that have escaped from neighboring yards. Bare root thimbleberry and osoberry, two beneficial wildlife shrubs, were planted on the upper slopes of the site. Additionally, over 50 cow parsnip seedlings that were collected just upstream and propagated by WRP staff were planted in scattered clumps along the steep banks. Finally, over 2000 pounds of native blue wild rye straw were mulched to prevent erosion and help expand biodiversity along the river. This riparian area has come a long way considering nothing

but a head-high stand of blackberries stood here only four years ago. Now alders and cottonwoods stretch their leaders toward the sky. Snowberries are sending up suckers while willows and dogwoods begin forming thickets along the Willamette River's edge. For more information or to participate in this project, contact Yotokko Kilpatrick at 484-3939.



We Thank You For Your Support!

WRP would like to thank the following organizations that granted us funding in 2004/2005 for our stewardship projects:

The Spirit Mountain Community Fund granted us \$7,500 in matching funds last June to support upland restoration projects in the Southern Willamette Valley. Funding helped initiate the coordination and facilitation of our fall educational seed saving program at three public schools in Lane County. Funds additionally aided in establishing our 2004 summer native seed collection program and 2005 prairie solarization project in the Whilamut Natural Area.

Recreational Equipment, Inc. granted us \$4,000 to help purchase project materials and equipment for the following: seed saving materials for The Native Seeds to Native Lands Watershed Awareness Program; a native seed collection pilot project with the McKenzie Ranger District in the Three Sisters Wilderness; and "outreach through sustainable action," which supports WRP with the supplies to facilitate land restoration in the most environmentally sound way possible.

Friends of Hendricks Park granted WRP \$1,000 to implement a fall education program at Edison Elementary School. The fall program will engage participating classrooms in hands-on classroom activities and field trips focusing on the native ecology and preservation of Hendricks Park.

Over 900 WRP members in Eugene have helped leverage our resources to coordinate, buy materials, and develop our programs. Our membership base is the backbone of our organization.

We would also like to thank the following businesses and individuals who have contributed time, funding, and other extremely valuable assets to our group:

Dave Bontrager, Jesse McAlpine, Think Electric, Inc., Dolly Woolley, Fred and Sandra Austin, Dave Stein, Down To Earth, Miguel Hatfield, Jason Blazar, Oshana Catrinides, Pamela Reber, Doak Creek Native Plant Nursery, Dan Stein, Friends of Gudu-Kut, Lorna Baldwin, Trevor Taylor

Native Seeds to Native Lands Local Youth Planting For the Future

Did you ever want to know how to save some seeds? Well, over 150 elementary school students could now show you how to save them from start to finish. Students from Eugene Family School, The Village School, and Territorial Elementary School all had a chance last September to collect, clean, and plant native seeds that were previously collected by WRP crewmembers and volunteers. The purpose of the workshops was to introduce a crucial and awe-inspiring component of land restoration ~ saving seeds to increase native plant populations for wetland and upland land enhancement.

Our fall seed saving workshops included visiting native Willamette valley habitats resembling intact wetlands and wet prairies. Prior to the visits, WRP staff facilitated classroom activities covering the value of prairie habitats in our bioregion and their historical/cultural roles in the Willamette valley. WRP introduced the concept of native seed collection and propagation for the continuation of maintaining our valley's fragile ecosystems. Eugene schools visited Gudu-kut Natural Area, a local wet prairie located near City View street, and Territorial School, rurally located in Cheshire, visited Kirk Park, a wetland adjacent to Fern Ridge Reservoir. At both sites, students learned names of plants and wildlife found specifically in wetland-related habitats. With the support of the Army Corps of Engineers and the City of Eugene Stream Team Stewardship Program, WRP staff engaged students in native wetland ecology, food chain games, and proper seed collection techniques at both parks.



Third graders practice winnowing native prairie seeds.



When students returned back to school, WRP staff had set up 'seed cleaning stations' that were all fully equipped with multi-sized screens, sifters, buckets, bowls, and fans. Before students began the task of processing seeds, WRP staff presented an overview on seed cleaning that taught students how to plant species separate from each other, the art of winnowing (meaning "to separate the seed from the chaff"), and how to be respectful and careful about handling the seeds when cleaning. Then the real fun began. With face masks on (those seeds can be pretty dusty), bags of very unclean seeds in hand, gloves for crushing seeds through screens, and lots of enthusiasm for becoming official '*seed savers of the valley*', students broke into groups of 4-5 and worked closely with a WRP volunteer to achieve their mission. Over twelve native species of plants that included tall lupine, self-heal, and checker mallow, were successfully cleaned and sealed in packets for future planting and propagation. Students also directly planted native Roemer's fescue and tufted hairgrass into plug cells.

Our fall 2004 seed saving workshops were a component of our new Native Seeds to Native Lands Watershed Awareness Program. The Native Seeds to Native Lands Watershed Awareness Program provides first-hand experiences in applying scientific inquiry and cultural connections to interactions with the natural world while conducting land restoration in local open spaces to instill a sense of place for participants. Students take their experiences from the field and expand them in interactive classroom activities ranging from native seed saving; to closely studying characteristics of native soils; to understanding human relationships with the land and the roles of indigenous practices in the Southern Willamette Valley prior to Euro-American settlement.

WRP is partnering with the following organizations to implement our program: Camas Educational Network, City of Eugene Stream Team Stewardship Program, and 4-H Wildlife Stewards Program. Participating students gain career-related skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, and team collaboration when working together on restoration, habitat assessment, and garden design projects. If you would like your child's school to become involved the Native Seeds to Native Lands program, please contact Stephanie Schroeder at 541-484-3939.

English Ivy Removal at Hendricks Park

By Michael Robert

Walama and Hendricks Park are such a great combination; from the start, when I met Yotokko Kilpatrick in the park, a mutually positive relationship began. I have been pleased to be a part of Walama's growth in Eugene and to be the beneficiary of their great work in restoration for Hendricks Park and other Eugene parks, regional parks, and natural areas. As the manager of Hendricks Park, I worked closely with Yotokko, Stephanie Schroeder, and Heather Lintz to develop strategies to study and manage invasive plants and approach the giant task of removal with limited resources, and to create outreach efforts to the community, especially school children.

Walama has been integral to the public education about restoration and to the reclamation of the natural areas of Hendricks Park. Even prior to the park's plan for management of the natural areas took effect, Walama had been an active part of the park's community by educating neighbors about restoration and management of native plant communities.

Following the Eugene City Council's acceptance and funding of the Hendricks Park Management Plan in 2001, Walama was contracted to implement the most important management goal for the natural areas of Hendricks Park: to remove invasive species, especially English ivy, and to accomplish this in the most effective and least trampling way, again implementing a new plan to manage the park with the best scientific tools and practices.

The skill, talent, and great dedication of all of Walama's workforce, and their close cooperation with the park's staff, made this first implementation overwhelmingly successful, dramatizing the profound effect of restoration efforts. As the crews worked, we cooperatively built standards of restoration protocol. In 2002, through a competitive bidding process, we negotiated a more formal and enduring price agreement with Walama to continue the reclamation work.

In the first year, Walama cleared about 5 acres of the park's forest of invasive species along the park's main road. The removal of the invasive plants revealed the beauty of our local natural area. The emergence of native plants in the following spring was dramatic. Walama and Hendricks Park have built a consistent and ever-better partnership each year since the onset of our

partnership. During the following three years, Walama has cleared invasive plants, adding about 5 acres each year. Now, nearly 20 acres of the forest have been treated. We originally estimated that more than 45 acres of Hendricks Park were covered with 50 % of English ivy and the task appeared daunting. Fortunately, the consistent work of Walama has shown the real possibility of restoration of the forest. Their work has also inspired neighbors of Hendricks Park to remove ivy in their adjacent yards and raise funds for additional clearing in the park.

Walama has helped to implement many of management plan's goals, including education and partnerships with the neighborhoods and schools. They have established an active relationship with the Friends of Hendricks Park also in their efforts. Walama has led and joined in activities that brought in school age children for educational activities, plant identification, and seed collection for the propagation and planting of native plants.

Walama has been a partner in researching an ongoing assessment of Hendricks Park's management tools and strategies. The work of Walama included some research soon to be published by co-founding board member, Heather Lintz. This work studied the impact of invasive plant removal, which measured the populations of native and non-native plants in the months following invasive plant removal. This preliminary research led to additional scientific research and involvement with the Environmental Studies Dept. at the U of O, whose research confirmed results of a secondary invasive species. Results

aided in the revision of protocols in the management of the native plant communities and removal of invasive species.

The partnership of Walama and Hendricks Park helped to implement another of the forest management plan's goals, which was to make the restoration of natural areas in Hendricks Park a model for the other natural areas of the city's park system. Walama and Hendricks Park developed photo and written displays edu-

cating the community about protocols of invasive species removal in the forested areas of Hendricks Park. The displays were shown at the Environmental Law Conference, Wild Flower shows at Mt. Pisgah and at the Mending Natural Systems Conference held in Eugene in October 2002.

It's hard to imagine restoration of the forest in Hendricks Park without Walama and their great partnership. They have worked with the park's staff and Friends of Hendricks Park to bring a spirit of renewal and hope to park's community, adding dignity to the hard work of science, education, restoration and community building.



Stark contrast between native species and English ivy

MAKE SPACE FOR NATIVES

BY RACHEL FOSTER

Moist soils and cool temperatures make this spring a great time to work with native plants. The sooner you get them in, the better established they will be when spring rains stop, so planting now is especially valuable in areas with minimal summer irrigation. So seize a mild afternoon and improve your personal habitat! Local nurseries are your best source for native plants, and you'll probably find they have a good selection even in winter, especially of trees and shrubs. Woody plants form the backbone of a beautiful, wildlife-friendly native garden. Small yards may have room for only a few of the less bulky choices, but the average suburban lot has room for one or two wild corners that might accommodate elderberry, serviceberry or Pacific ninebark.

Where space is scarce, I'd give a high priority to red flowering currant, Oregon grape and Western mock orange. The first two are important nectar plants for early butterflies and hummingbirds, and all three are highly ornamental. Western mock orange is beautiful and very fragrant. Most gardens have room for a vine maple, too. This lovely little tree delivers the best native fall color in the Valley, and is adaptable to most situations, in sun or shade, if the soil is reasonably well-drained.

There are additional choices for a roomy yard or woodlot. Scouler willow, oceanspray and redstem ceonothus are all important food sources for butterfly larvae. For damp, heavy or poorly drained soils where some shrubs fail, try red twig dogwood, twinberry and wetland willow species (Sitka and Hooker's). Douglas spiraea and Nootka rose form thickets in open places with damp soil. If you are planting large areas, save money and labor by seeking out sources for bareroot plants.

Osoberry is a great choice for shady gardens and it's the first native shrub to break dormancy in late winter. Birds love the fruit. Red elderberry and red flowering currant will grow and fruit in brighter openings. Snowberry is an adaptable, thicket-forming shrub, relatively low-growing and good for erosion control. It is also an excellent source of nectar for rufous hummingbirds. Snowberry will grow almost anywhere, but looks its best in light shade. Low-growing evergreen shrubs for shade that combine well with taller growing osoberry and vine maple include long-leaf Oregon grape and salal.

If you are replacing English ivy or some other invasive ground cover, it is a good idea to replant promptly before weeds take over the area you disturb. It is often best to forget about finding a single native 'ivy substitute'. Most are less effective than ivy, and can be quite expensive to install. Mixed plantings look more natural, are easier to plant in stages and are better for wildlife.

WRP Staff Spotlight

Bonnie Abzug began working with WRP as a program assistant in September 2004, and can now be found anywhere from diligently cleaning native seeds with school groups to weeding invasive grasses in the West Eugene wetlands. Bonnie was born and raised in Eugene, and has spent much of her life as a devoted gardener digging her hands in various garden design projects. Her passion for working with native plants stems



from her permacultural perspective on integrating food plants with the native ecology of our local bioregion. She has brought valuable seed saving and instructional skills to WRP's educational program, and currently works closely with the WRP's program director on developing curriculum for classroom projects. In addition to teaching the entire workforce every Irish drinking song out there to sing along to, she has also proven herself to be a meticulous crewmember in the field and a person devoted to respecting the fragile landscapes of Western Oregon. When she isn't spending time crouching over weeds with WRP, she is known for tromping around the Central Cascades looking for medicinal plants, weaving baskets out of noxious weeds, reciting Richard Brautigan stories, and singing poetry with her guitar.

One strategy for garden-scale projects is to plant shrubs and woody ground covers first, then cover the area with a weed-free mulch. When the mulch is partially broken down, begin planting native perennials, ferns and bulbs as they become available.

Salal, kinnikinnick, evergreen ferns and low-growing forms of Oregon grape can all be considered for weed-excluding ground cover. Also effective under trees and shrubs, though not evergreen, are fringe cup, wild ginger, wood sorrel, false lily of the valley and inside-out flower. In sunny places where a tidy, evergreen ground cover seems essential, try combining beach strawberry with patches of compact Oregon grape (*Mahonia (Berberis) aquifolium 'Compacta'*).

Excellent native plant lists are available from Hendricks Park and Emerald NPSO websites. The latter also has a useful list of Lane County sources for native plants.



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Community Supported Rehabilitation and Native Re-vegetation of Our Watersheds

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**

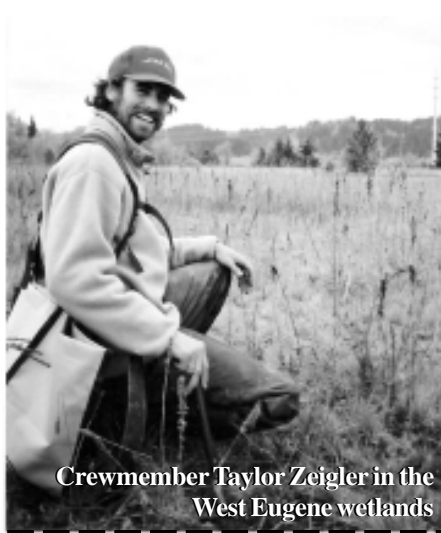
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Crewmember Taylor Zeigler in the West Eugene wetlands

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