



THE BALTIMORE WOODS-WORKER

Welcome to the Spring 2017 edition of the Friends of Baltimore Woods e-newsletter. It's time again to share news of our ongoing work to bring a native oak woodland to the riverbank in St. Johns. We invite your feedback and participation.



Penstemon ovatus in Baltimore Woods Meadow

FoBW Native Plant Sale!

The Friends of Baltimore Woods annual native plant sale is coming to the St. Johns Plaza on March 25!

The sale will offer a wide variety of affordable native plants suitable for white oak woodland and oak meadows, because those are the ecosystems in the Baltimore Woods corridor, and they are particularly threatened in the growing metro area. There will be sun and shade plants, and hummingbird, butterfly, and bee favorites. In addition to beautifying your garden, by spreading these native plants out into people's yards, we hope to encourage a broader urban restoration effort beyond Baltimore Woods itself, and promote the expansion of wildlife habitat in St. Johns.

The Backyard Habitat Program will have an information table and plant expert on site, along

with a representative from the Native Plant Society of Oregon. The plants for the sale come from Bosky Dell Native Plants and the Scappoose Bay Watershed Council.

New Trees on the Block

By Lea Wilson, Portland Bureau of Environmental Services Tree Program

This winter, you may notice some new additions to Baltimore Woods: small groupings of red-barked broadleaf evergreen trees planted in neat rows. So what are they, and why are they planted like that?

These beautiful native trees are the one-and-only Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*). With a distinctive form, peeling bark, evergreen leaves, and clusters of white-to-pink flowers and red-to-orange fruit, the madrone provides some interest in every season, not to mention value for birds and pollinators. As an evergreen, it also provides

Upcoming Events:

**FoBW
Native Plant Sale
March 25, 2017
10 am to 3 pm
St. Johns Plaza**



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great value as a stormwater manager. Our goal is to test how best to plant and grow madrones so we can plant more of this desirable native.

You may already be familiar with Environmental Services' mission to protect the quality of surface and ground waters by promoting healthy watersheds. The Environmental Services Tree Program contributes to this mission by providing opportunities and incentives to plant trees along streets and in yards throughout the urban landscape.

Trees in the "upland" slow down, filter, and absorb stormwater to contribute to clean rivers downstream. The Tree Program is conducting this study in partnership with the Watershed Revegetation Program and Portland Parks and Recreation Lands Stewardship Division.

in light and mechanical damage. Mechanical damage combined with changes in humidity from irrigation could open trees up to fungal invasion. We have, unfortunately, seen high mortality in previous attempts to plant Pacific madrone in Portland.

For the madrone study in Baltimore Woods, we'll be looking at exposure to sunlight, watering frequency, seed source, and size at planting. Six plots are spread out through the main meadow and up into the old orchard, north of N Catlin Ave. Another



New madrone seedling in Baltimore Woods Meadow



Madrones ready to plant in Baltimore Woods

three plots are located south on N Decatur St. Survival and growth will be monitored for at least three years. The trees will remain a part of Baltimore Woods following the study.

For questions or comments, call the Environmental Services Tree Program at 503-823-2255 or email us at itreepdx@portlandoregon.gov.

January Weed Removal Work Party

By Caroline Skinner

More than 20 people showed up to help at the FoBW volunteer work party on Saturday, January 28. Since we missed our earlier date, on January 14, because of heavy snow, it felt good to get back in the saddle. The weather on January 28 turned out to be nice, about 45 degrees and sunny, so it was pleasant as long as you kept moving. And keep moving we did.



Madrone seedlings in Baltimore Woods Meadow

The Pacific madrone is notoriously difficult to transplant. At first glance, the madrone seems like a perfect candidate for tough urban conditions: it's naturally found on dry, rocky sites and south facing slopes. In practice, however, madrones have proven particularly sensitive to human-caused disturbance. Madrones have thin bark that may make them unusually sensitive to changes



PP&R removing cottonwoods from Baltimore Woods Meadow



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We met by the tool box in Baltimore Woods Meadow. We worked in a nearby gully to finish weed removal to be ready for the planting planned for March 4, in concert with the Columbia Slough Watershed Council. While we took out English ivy and

above the 2015 gross of \$1,334 and also slightly above 2014's gross of \$1,737. Yay team! As cashier Martha Shelly put it, "This was pretty darn good." Funds raised will be used for natural area restoration at Baltimore Woods.

Once again, it took a cast of thousands—well, seemed like it, anyway—of volunteers to help make the sale a reality. Starting with a big set-up on Friday night, the sale from 10-5 on Saturday, and break-down on Sunday, we are deeply grateful to all who came to help. Special thanks go to book sale organizers Sylvia Allen, Kelly Derr, and Mark Hill, and to FoBW volunteer co-ordinator Laura Largent for filling in the blanks with volunteers to cover so many book sale shifts.

The Cathedral Park Place (CPP) atrium was the perfect space to put out a couple of thousand books and then browse through them on a chilly December day. Live music was a real bonus, making shopping even more enjoyable. The concurrent CPP open house was a lot of fun too. Thanks again to all who helped, shopped, and contributed.

Good-bye to the Book Sale

By Howard Harrington and Sylvia Allen

We are sorry to announce that our 2016 book sale was the last one. After years of donating space, both for the sale and for the storage of books between sales, Cathedral Park Place (CPP) informed us this year that they are no longer able to spare the space for storage. The sale has grown every year, and in recent years we have stored literally several tons of books at CPP between one sale and the next. These are books saved from the previous sale for one more go-around as well as books donated during the course of the year.



Volunteers at the weed removal work party on January 28

blackberries by hand, a Portland Parks & Recreation employee used a chainsaw to cut down cottonwood starts on the far side of the meadow, in an area intended for the madrone-planting study.

While trains clanked along on the rail lines below us, at times giving royal-sounding clarion calls on their horns, we worked to root out unwanted weeds. It's a good feeling to know that we created a blank canvas, soon to be filled with healthy new native plants. One of the day's participants even brought a small group of friends to help her celebrate her birthday at the outdoor event. It was a pleasant way to spend a Saturday morning outside on a nice day, and we are thankful for all who joined us.

So Many Books, So Little Time

By Caroline Skinner

We offered a book-lover's paradise on Saturday, December 3, 2016 at the final annual FoBW book sale. With a big boost from Nena Rawdah and her generous donation of books from the closing of St. Johns Booksellers, we had plenty of material to choose from, priced as always at just \$1 per book. We are happy to report gross sales of \$1,771 this year, well



A volunteer at the FoBW book sale in December



Customers browsing the FoBW book sale in December



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Even if we could find storage for that many books offsite, it would take an overwhelming amount of resources — trucks, equipment, and volunteer hours — to move the books from CPP to storage after the sale, and then from storage to CPP the following year. The book sale already used an enormous army of volunteers to move books around for each event. Moving the storage offsite would double that requirement. It just wouldn't be workable, so we are sadly saying "good-bye" to the FoBW annual book sale.

We are deeply grateful to CPP for the use of the storage space, and of their beautiful atrium for the event itself, for so many years; to that army of volunteers who made it possible; and to the army of book lovers who made the sale a very successful fundraiser for FoBW.

Native Plant Appreciation Week

By Alexandra Danielsen, NPSO

Native Plant Appreciation Week (NPAW) is April 22-29, 2017, and is celebrated throughout Oregon. The week is packed with events that serve to promote a greater

appreciation and knowledge of our local native plants, and highlight the importance of protecting and preserving these valuable species.

NPAW is put on by the Native Plant Society of Oregon (NPSO), which has been working tirelessly since 1961 for plant and habitat restoration. NPAW PDX is supported by the Portland chapter of NPSO, which works to protect and conserve threatened and endangered species, carrying out rare plant surveys and monitoring programs, developing guidelines and policy in regards to native plant gardening, ethics, grazing, mining, and forest management, and working on plant salvage and re-introduction. The chapter also sponsors field trips and work parties to involve members in conservation of Oregon's diverse plant heritage.

Programming is in the works for NPAW PDX. Find the most up to date information at npawpdx.org.

What's so Great about Native Plants? Or... What's Not to Love?

Condensed from the East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District's website

Native plants provide multiple benefits to people and wildlife, while contributing greatly to healthy soil and water in urban and rural areas.

Native plants help you use less fertilizer. Vast amounts of fertilizers are applied to lawns. Excess phosphorus and nitrogen (the main components of fertilizers) run off into lakes and rivers, causing excess algae growth. This depletes the oxygen in our waters, harms aquatic life, and interferes with recreational uses.

Native plants help you use less pesticides.



Ninebark, a plant native to the Willamette Valley



Native big-leaf lupine in Baltimore Woods Meadow



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Nationally, over 70 million pounds of pesticides are applied to lawns each year. Pesticides run off lawns and can contaminate rivers and lakes. People and pets in contact with treated lawns can be exposed to pesticides.

Native plants help you use less water. In urban areas, lawn irrigation uses as much as 60% of the water consumption on the West Coast. The deep root systems of many native plants increase the soil's capacity to store water. Native plants can significantly reduce water runoff and, consequently, flooding. A variety of natives makes for a beautiful groundcover layer that will require very little maintenance over time!

Native plants help you keep the air around you cleaner. Natural landscapes do not require mowing or very much maintenance. Lawns, however, must be mowed regularly. About forty million lawnmowers consume 200 million gallons of gasoline per year, while overall, gas-powered garden tools emit 5% of the nation's air pollution. One gas-powered lawnmower emits 11 times the air pollution of a new car. Excessive carbon from the burning of fossil fuels contributes to global warming, while native plants sequester (remove) carbon from the air.

Native plants are essential for native and migratory pollinators. They attract a variety of birds, butterflies, and other wildlife by providing diverse habitats and food sources. Natural landscaping is an opportunity to reestablish diverse native plants, thereby inviting the birds and butterflies back home.

Native plants promote biodiversity and stewardship of our natural heritage. In the U.S., approximately 20 million acres of lawn are cultivated, covering more land than any single crop. By including a variety of plants of different sizes and heights in your yard, you can mimic the natural features that provide food, habitat,



Native iris in Baltimore Woods Meadow

and structure for wildlife. Manicured lawns, and gardens that mostly feature non-native species of plants, are often of little benefit to wildlife.

Native plants have been shown to save money in many different ways. One study by Applied Ecological Services (Brodhead, WI) of larger properties estimates that over a 20 year period, the cumulative cost of maintaining a prairie or a wetland totals \$3,000 per acre, versus \$20,000 per acre for non-native turf grasses. The economic benefits of native plants can also be measured against the damage that certain non-native plants do. According to another study, the presence of invasive species (including animals) costs Oregon an estimated \$125 million a year.

Snow In The Meadow





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Weed Watch: American Pokeweed

Information from the East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District

Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) was brought to this region from the southeastern United States, where it is native,



Pokeweed

Pokeweed is easiest to remove in the spring when the shoots are young.

as an ornamental and as a potherb. New to the Northwest, it is commonly found in disturbed areas and increasingly in urban landscapes. Once established, pokeweed can be very difficult to eradicate. It is considered aggressive and invasive but with vigilance, we can stop or slow this weed before it becomes established in this region. Many parts of this plant are highly toxic and may cause death if eaten.

Pokeweed is a perennial forb that grows two to eight feet tall. Stems, leaves, and flowers die back to the ground each year, but the roots live through the winter, so the plant re-emerges the following spring.

- The stem is smooth, stout, hollow, and purplish.
- The leaves are large and egg-shaped with pointed tips and smooth edges, and are alternate on the stem.

- The flowers are white or green and form elongated clusters that hang from branches in early summer.
- The fruit are hanging clusters of very dark, purple berries with a crimson juice that stains.
- The large, white, fleshy taproot is carrot-shaped when the plant is young, growing to the size of a bowling ball when the plant matures.

Pokeweed is easiest to remove in the spring when the shoots are young. The following removal techniques will make removal and eradication more successful:

- **Tools:** You'll need gloves, a hand spade or shovel, and trash bags.
- **Removal:** Small plants can be hand pulled, while large plants will need to be dug out with a shovel or a weed wrench. Be thorough in removing the *entire* root, as new sprouts may grow from any root fragments left behind. (If the rootstock is impossible to remove due to pavement or another difficult situation, please contact your local soil and water conservation district.)
- **Disposal:** Flowers, seeds, and berries should be bagged and disposed of in the trash. Any other portion of the plant can be composted.
- **Replant with natives!** After the bulk of the invasive plant has been removed, replant that area with native plants. This will help to repopulate the area with desired species and prevent new and recurring invasions. Consider native blue elderberry (*Sambucus cerulean*) or red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*), which are fast growing, deciduous shrubs with creamy white flower heads and berries that are edible to wildlife.
- **Monitor:** Check back every 6-12 months to reassess the area and to pull any re-growth that may have sprouted. This will effectively prevent re-infestation.
- **Prevent future spread:** Remove this plant as soon as it is identified, as it will be more difficult to remove if it is allowed to reach maturity, and if it is allowed to flower and seed it will be spread by birds.

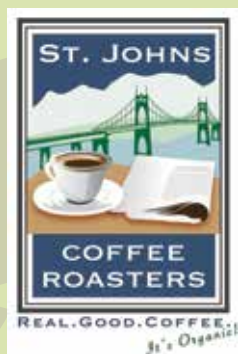
For more information, see www.emswcd.org.



FRIENDS of
BALTIMORE WOODS

Coffee Donations Keep Us Perking Along

It has been said that an army runs on its stomach. In our case, we seem to benefit from the consumption of coffee. We'd like to thank the following local businesses for coffee donations that help keep things perking along at FoBW volunteer work parties:



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Butterfly Release Called a Success

By Kale Williams of
The Oregonian / OregonLive.com

The Oregon silverspot butterfly used to spread its wings across much of the Northwest, from the northern California coast clear up to British Columbia, but the species has struck dire times, with its natural habitat decimated along with the plant required for breeding, the early blue violet. That's why last summer's release of nearly 450 silver-spots reared at the Oregon Zoo in Portland, which culminated with the final release last week on Mount Hebo north of Lincoln City, has been hailed as such a success by zoo officials and conservationists.

"It was the perfect time of year to be out there, right in the middle of the flight season," Karen Lewis, a zoo conservation research associate, said in a statement. "Adult silverspots were flying all around us and flitting across the meadows."

Officials from the zoo had been making daily trips to sites along the coast, taking butterfly pupae to the headlands and salt-spray meadows that they instinctively call home. It's at these release sites that the insects completed their metamorphosis from caterpillar to butterfly, inside mesh pens designed to protect them from predators like voles and white-crowned sparrows.

Those lucky enough to emerge as adult silverspots will need to go about their business quickly, though. The silverspot has an average lifespan of about two weeks, during which they need to mate and find a suitable patch of violets for their eggs before they die.

Conservationists are encouraged by their progress along the Oregon coast. During the last release, a newly emerged female was

observed fluttering to a nearby flower where she was joined by a male just a few minutes later, "which, you know, is the whole point!" said ecologist Kaegan Scully-Engelmeyer, who manages the weekly releases.

The Oregon Zoo has been a leader in silverspot recovery efforts, with its program dating back to



The Oregon silverspot butterfly

the late 1990s. Every year, experts collect female butterflies from Mount Hebo and bring them back to the zoo so they can lay eggs in a conservation lab. After the eggs hatch into larvae, they are kept safe at the zoo over the winter months so they can grow in the spring and be released back into the coastal meadows in the summer.

"Mount Hebo is where these pupae's parents originally came from," Lewis said. "Essentially, we're putting back what we took and adding quite a few more." The Oregon silverspot is listed as threatened under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, but despite a drought-caused decline in the flowers they require for breeding on Mount Hebo, Lewis said she was confident that the zoo's efforts were having an impact on the imperiled species.

"The goal of the recovery program is to help each population grow large enough to be self-sustaining," she said in a statement. "If it weren't for this program, three of the five remaining silverspot populations would likely be extinct."



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Dig In Trains Stewards

By Caroline Skinner

Once again, we'd like to thank Steve Kennett, formerly of SOLVE, for leading the Dig In stewardship training of FoBW volunteers at the end of last year. With two in-class sessions followed by a field day, FoBW now has a group of five



Dig In training in Baltimore Woods

individuals who are certified to serve as stream team captains (STCs).

We hope to re-start our one-hour work parties again in May, to be held on Thursday evenings all summer. Having the STCs ready to go will enable us to get out there every Thursday from May through August, if all goes well and barring any weather-related off days.



For me, the Dig In training offered an enjoyable review of native and non-native plant species commonly found in North Portland, including my nemesis, pokeweed. It also gave me a stronger appreciation of the value and importance of volunteers. We could not achieve our stewardship goals without our wonderful volunteers. Watch for summer work party information in our next newsletter, and I hope to see you in the field.

Spring 2017 Event Information

March 25, Saturday, 10 am to 3 pm

FoBW native plant sale in the St. Johns Plaza, at N. Lombard and Philadelphia, near the east end of the St. Johns Bridge. See page 1 for more information.

April 22, Saturday, 9am to noon

Be good to your mother! Join FoBW and SOLVe for an Earth Day work party. Pre-register at www.solve-oregon.org, or check FoBW's website to confirm the location.

April 22-29

Native Plant Society of Oregon's Native Plant Appreciation Week—a week of walks, hikes, and ways to learn about native plants in their natural settings. And have fun! For more information on specific events, see www.npawpdx.org.

Thursday evenings in May

Meet us at the tool box in the Baltimore Woods Meadow for our one-hour work parties every Thursday evening. We work from 6:30 to 7:30pm in May, and then shift to 7-8pm in June. It's easy and so much fun. Join us!

May 16, Tuesday, 6:30-8pm

Friends of Baltimore Woods general meetings are on the third Tuesday of each month at the BES water lab at 6543 N Burlington Ave, Portland 97203. All are welcome!

Late May

Watch for another Saturday morning volunteer work party at Baltimore Woods. Check our web site for date, time, and location at www.friendsofbaltimorewoods.org.

Newsletter Contributors

Spring 2017

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