



# Slough News

Newsletter of the Columbia Slough Watershed Council

Spring 2008

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## *Adventures of the Wood Duck Nest Boxes*

*By Don Kangas— Eyes on the Slough Volunteer Monitor*

I volunteered to get up early on a Saturday morning, and drive out to the Columbia Slough Watershed Council's Whitaker Pond office. About two dozen people of all ages show up. It slowly dawns on me that I'm watching a few guys with little or no construction experience trying to learn and act like they know what they are doing at the same time.

Okay, so I'm willing to help, and we even have free coffee, so let's get building. We work happily and casually all morning and then before we know it, we have a big pile of about thirty-three completed nest boxes. We screw the sides of the boxes together, and drill big oval shaped holes for the birds to enter their new homes. We all have lots of fun, and get a big sense of accomplishment.



I take two boxes with me promising to place them out on the Slough the next weekend. I don't make it because I have a head cold, so the weekend after that, I haul out two nest boxes, and realize that they are just big enough that they don't fit on the floor of

my boat. I'd guess they weight about 5-6 pounds each. I balance them precariously across gunnels of the ship, and I paddle off with them about a mile upstream from Kelly Point Park canoe launch.



In most places on the slough you really want to be pretty careful when you step out of the canoe onto the mud bank. You might want to decide way ahead of time if you intend to go swimming, or take a cold mud bath that day, and then stick to that decision. I intended to just hang two nest boxes, but the risk to my dignity and warm dry clothing was noticeable.

I find two places that have a convenient tree. I put up both boxes and recorded the GPS coordinates. I take pictures with my trusty digital pocket camera, to record this historic event. I then spend a moment to imagine that I'm a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition...but current day, I am an Eyes on the Slough Volunteer Monitor. I will come back in a couple of weeks and watch for signs of new wood ducks living in the area.

*Photos by Karen Morehouse*

## *CSWC hosts visitors from Sakhalin, Russia*

This spring the Mapleton Community Foundation, the Siuslaw Institute and the Wild Salmon Center hosted eight Sakhalin-based government administrators and SSI Center representatives from island regions—Smirnihovsk, Aniva, Ulegorsk, Okha, Nogliki and Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. These administrators will take leading roles in watershed council work. Aniva, Nogliki, Okha, Ulegorsk and Smirnihovsk regional watershed councils will begin operations in 2008. The creation of an Oblast-wide council modeled after the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and based in the capitol city of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk is also foreseen.

During their eight days in Oregon, the delegation participated in a one-day educational seminar at the University of Oregon Center for Advanced Technology in Education, and visited



The group met at Whitaker Ponds before enjoying their tour.

local watershed councils including the Columbia Slough. Their visit to the Columbia Slough Watershed Council included a tour of the Ramsey Refugia Project and the Smith and Bybee Lakes water control structure. They also attended our March Council Meeting.

The visitors also met with the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, and worked with the Siuslaw Watershed Council and other local partners to develop planning and communications frameworks for their respective local councils.

# 2007 Slough Celebration Highlights

By Gail Shaloum

How do you thank someone for giving so much of himself or herself in a way that really makes a difference to the community or to the health of the watershed? On February 1<sup>st</sup> we gathered at the annual **Slough Celebration** to express our appreciation for the dedication these people have shown. "These community leaders remind us how important the Columbia Slough Watershed is to our region and the health of our ecosystem," said Jane Van Dyke, CSWC Executive Director. "It is important to take time to recognize their dedication and contribution to improving our community and watershed."



Richard & Gyrid Towle accept their Leadership Award

years of work on issues in the watershed and participation on the Watershed Council, the Cully Association of Neighbors, and on many committees and advisory groups related to the Portland Airport.

**Richard and Gyrid Towle** were recognized with a leadership award for their exceptional commitment to the Columbia Children's Arboretum, including projects that enhanced both the natural environment and community involvement. They also worked to secure funding for the Arboretum Improvements from the East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District and Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods program.

The City of Gresham-Keri Handaly and Kris Rein-received an achievement award for the **Fairview Creek-Burnside to Stark Restoration Project**. A key feature of this riparian restoration project was meeting with residents one-on-one to share educational materials and obtain participation.

The **Multnomah Youth Cooperative's** Rose Sandy and Jeff Walker were honored with an achievement award for the work of the Youth Watershed Restoration Crew. MYC students participated in watershed and wetlands restoration projects, including the Better Beaver Behavior project.

The Annual Awards Celebration recognizes people and projects that have made our watershed a better place. The event included award presentations, a silent auction, and a delicious dinner. Just over 200 people attended, representing those who live and work in the watershed from citizens to businesses to local and regional governments to consulting firms to elected officials. For many of us, this annual event gives us a chance to catch up with friends and colleagues.

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This year's event was held in the elegant and historic Acadian Ballroom on NE Alberta Street, near the edge of the watershed, a beautifully restored 1925 formal ballroom. The evening was expertly catered with delicious choices from appetizers to main course to desert.

Out of the many nominations, the awards committee had a difficult job in selecting the winners, but after much deliberation chose these exemplary people and projects:

**Erwin Bergman** was recognized with a leadership award for



"For many of us, this annual event gives us a chance to catch up with friends and colleagues."

## A special thanks to the 2007 Celebration Sponsors



**The Boeing Company**

## A special thanks to the 2007 Table Sponsors

- Arclin Surfaces
- City of Portland - Bureau of Planning
- East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District
- Owens - Illinois, Inc.
- Portland Water Bureau
- URS Corporation
- Daily Journal of Commerce

## Celebrate Earth Day

By Rachel Felice

April is a month of budding plants, confusing weather and great reasons to get in the outdoors. It is also the month when Earth Day is celebrated; this year Earth Day is officially Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008. In recognition of this day, many organizations will be hosting events throughout the month. One celebration that will be held in the Columbia Slough Watershed is the **City of Gresham's Earth Day Celebration on Saturday, April 19<sup>th</sup>**.

The City of Gresham Earth Day Celebration will be held from **10 am until 2 pm at Gresham City Hall Plaza**, 1333 NW Eastman Parkway. This event is free to the public and includes children's crafts and entertainment, exhibits, art and plant sales, live music, food, free electronics, cell phone and fluorescent tube recycling for Gresham and Wood Village residents (extended hours, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.), free 45-minute workshops at the top of the hour and earth-friendly vendors. Don't miss the Rockin' Water Road Show at 10 a.m. featuring Recycleman or the free 10K Significant Tree Walk of Gresham, hosted by the East County Wind Walkers (sign in and collect map at City Hall between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.). The Columbia Slough Watershed Council will again be present as

an exhibitor at the City of Gresham Earth Day Celebration. We will bring maps and information about the Watershed in addition to a hands-on activity for about birds of our region.

More information about the Earth Day Celebration is available by contacting Jill Bradley at 503-618-2420. Full event details on the City Web site: [www.ci.gresham.or.us](http://www.ci.gresham.or.us) (look for the Earth Day link on the right side of the page).

Please consider attending this event and getting there by public transportation; Gresham City Hall is a stop on the Blue MAX line. There will be both indoors and outdoors activities, so the celebration will be held rain or shine. We hope to see you there!



A budding horticulturist enjoys the 2007 Gresham Earth Day Festival

## "Stop the Invasion"

By Jane Van Dyke

Some of the most beautiful scenery in Oregon may not be as beautiful as you think. Strange, exotic, invasive plants are taking over the landscape. Birds, fish, and mammals have also come to Oregon. Invasive plants and animals take over new territory, crowding out natives, driving wildlife away, invading our waterways, and negatively impacting the economy.

A new statewide campaign is underway to get the word out about these plants and animals and to encourage action towards solutions. Oregon Public Broadcasting has produced a special program **The Silent Invasion** to document the economic, social, and environmental impacts of these invasive species.

Special screenings The Silent Invasion will be shown in several cities around the state. In case you did not catch the screening at the Oregon Zoo on April 14<sup>th</sup>, fear not. You can tune in to OPB on Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 8:00pm. The program will examine invasives like red-eared sliders, spartina, ivy, and purple loosestrife and how they are impacting our state.

Additionally, OPB has joined with SOLV, the Nature Conservancy, Oregon Invasive Species Council, the Salem Statesman Journal, City of Portland, Portland State University, Oregon Sea Grant, and Oregon State University to promote the campaign and involve all of us. The goal of the campaign is to protect Oregon from invasive species. Together we can "stop the invasion".

This will mark the official launch of the "Stop the Invasion

Campaign," which includes organizations and individuals all across Oregon and southwest Washington. The success of this statewide campaign depends on getting the public engaged in the fight against invasive species.

### Find out what you can do:

- Please forward this information to any individuals and organizations that might be interested. More information on both the documentary and the campaign can be found at: [opb.org/silentinvasion](http://opb.org/silentinvasion) or call the hotline at 1-866-invader.
- Refer to the GardenSmart Oregon guide on the website to help you select and plant non-invasive plants appropriate for your area.
- Participate in a volunteer event, such as a Columbia Slough Watershed Council's Stewardship Saturday removing ivy and blackberry from a natural area.



The Silent Invasion airs

Tuesday, April 22, at 8pm on OPB TV.

## Portland's Festival of the Birds *By Sue Thomas - Portland Parks & Recreation*

Weary birds are just now reaching the Portland area after long journeys from more southern climes along the Pacific Flyway. Some species are beginning to nest while others are feeding and resting before a continued flight further north or into higher elevations for the hot summer months that lie ahead. But we humans have much to rejoice that these birds have reached Portland despite the many hazards in their travels.

For the last five years Portlanders have celebrated the return of migratory birds on the second Saturday in May which is designated **International Migratory Bird Day**.

Portland's Festival of the Birds is held in Sellwood Park with birding walks going into Oaks Bottom every half hour. The festival is sponsored by the City of Portland, Audubon



Society of Portland, U.S. Fish & Wildlife and the Columbia Slough Watershed Council along with many other partners in the Urban Bird Conservation Treaty Program.

This group has been working together to educate people about the needs of urban birds through events and outreach efforts along with publicizing restoration and lobbying activities.

The Festival of Birds scheduled for **Saturday, May 10** this year, will include bird craft activities for children and adults, storytelling, singing, live birds up close, and sightings of many bird species. Join us in **Sellwood Park** between **10 am & 4 pm**.

Bird Crafts

Hands-on Activities

Storytelling

Singing

Live Birds

Birding Walks

Check out [www.portlandmigratorybirds](http://www.portlandmigratorybirds) for directions and more information. We'll see you there!

## Join us for the Great Slough Clean Up!

*By Jesse Rosenbluth*

Paraphrased from Ken Kesey's *Sometimes a Great Notion*, it is said about Oregon that "You have to live through a winter here" to understand it. Following the washed-out paths of Whitaker Ponds these past weeks have underscored that idea.

As Red-Flowering Currant burns with Anna's and Rufous Hummingbirds, and the Oregon grape pushes up against the winter worn walkways, it occurs to me that it is a really good thing that the Stewardship Saturdays Volunteers assembled here at Whitaker Ponds on April 12<sup>th</sup> to re-chip the paths after the winter rains.

I think forward to May 10<sup>th</sup> when more volunteers will join me at the Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant to remove non-native, invasive weeds to help the native species thrive.

On a whim I follow a solitary Tree Swallow, one of the dozens now scissoring above the pond in acrobatics. I watch this small fellow slit from a Cottonwood to a blackberry patch still snarled in a fiendish rendition of an irate octopi; a lone hold-out from the Enviro-Corps crews and Student groups that have reclaimed the banks lining Whitaker Slough.

My sight crawls up the trunk of a near-by tree choked in English Ivy and I mumble a gratitude that more troops of eager students and volunteers are already scheduled to pull that Ivy down.

My eyes are drawn to sights of some careless leavings and debris floating against the bank and I sigh in great relief and thanks knowing that the **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Great Slough Clean-up** is coming soon and that a flotilla of friendly forces are forming

**2nd Annual Great Slough Clean-Up!**  
**Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**9am-12pm**

*Whitaker Ponds Nature Park*  
*7040 NE 47th Avenue, Portland, OR 97218*

as we speak to leave a pristine paddlers paradise behind. It serves as a reminder to myself that there is more yet to be done. I remind myself to prepare fabulous prizes for the most interesting and largest pieces of garbage removed, and to be sure to pick up refreshments and coffee to serve to the wonderful people who will come.

It becomes difficult to contain my excitement because it promises to be a fantastic day on the water clearing the Slough of garbage and debris. I'll be ready for your call or email to sign up for the **2nd Annual Great Slough Clean-Up**. See you there!

To sign up for this fine event, contact Jesse at 503-281-1132 or email [Jesse.Rosenbluth@columbiaslough.org](mailto:Jesse.Rosenbluth@columbiaslough.org).

**Don't have a canoe?  
There may still be a few  
of ours available for  
you to reserve. But  
please call soon  
because they go fast!**



## 2007 Slough Celebration - Continued

The Housing Authority of Portland, Steve Fancher, and KPFF Consulting Engineers received an achievement award for the green streets and stormwater management facilities at the **New Columbia** development. The New Columbia system uses low impact strategies such as topography, vegetation, and soil to infiltrate stormwater into the ground.

The Council honored **Northwest Discoveries** - Ken Barker and Jerry Lanz - an outdoor adventure company with an achievement award for *Canoe Week* and *Explorando el Columbia Slough Paddle Guides*. For five years they have worked to lead canoe trips for more than 1,500 students, many of whom are in a small boat for the first time.

Proceeds from the silent auction raised a total of \$3,385 for the Council. Donations included artwork, aquarium, museum and zoo family passes, a Reiki healing session, a bike commuters' basket, guided outdoor adventures, restaurant gift certificates, ski passes, and more. One of the most unique donations came in each of the eco-friendly Gardeners Delight Baskets. Ben Carlascio, owner of a new company called Envirowize Green Earth Recycling & Disposal Inc. donated a gift certificate for each basket (\$100 value) that could be used towards the pick-up and disposal of yard debris or other debris or household items. Their focus is on ecologically responsible recycling and disposal of yard debris, and other debris—basically any item that someone wants to get rid of. They separate out all reusable materials and

donate them to non-profits. All recyclable materials are recycled; and yard debris is collected and turned into compost.

Thank you to the very creative award presenters for creating and presenting the fun skits and songs. Through these entertaining presentations, we found out how Irwin Bergman creates his network to get things done, were inspired by the perseverance of Dick and Gyrid Towle, and even participated in singing about sustainable stormwater solutions at the New Columbia development. Thanks also to Katie Meckes and the entire Watershed Council staff for working through so many details to bring us an enjoyable evening.



The Silent Auction attracted many bidders to the table!

### **Many thanks go out to the businesses and individuals who's generous contributions made the Slough Celebration a great success!**

Al's Garden Center	lulu lemon	Portland Closet Company
Arthur Murray Dance Studio	Marbott's Greenhouse	Portland Nursery
Audubon Society	McMenamins	Portland Parks - Heron Lakes Golf Course
Back Yard Bird Shop	Metro Parks	Portland Parks & Recreation Aquatic Division
Beaumont Hardware	Mio Gelato	Portland Rock Gym
Bed Bath & Beyond	Mirador Community Store	Portland Spirit
Breitenbush Hot Springs	Mt. Hood Meadows	Rachel Felice
Bridgeport Ale House	Multnomah County Drainage District	REI Portland
Camellia Pure Beauty	Muse - Art + Design	Rejuvenation
Chris Corich	Music Millenium	Safeway Bakery
Casa Bruno Wine Distributors	Nature Services - Elaine Murphy	Saint Cupcake
Cork Wine Shop	New Seasons Bakery	Sheraton Portland Airport Hotel
Delphina's Bakery	OMSI	Simpatuca Catering
Garden Fever	Oregon Coast Aquarium	Starbucks
Glendoveer Golf Course	Oregon Zoo	Steve & Amanda Fritz
Grand Central Bakery	Patagonia	Suzi Cloutier
Higgins Restaurant & Bar	PBS Engineering & Environmental	The Beadwife
Hopworks Urban Brewery	Peets Coffee	The Bike Gallery
Interstate Special Events	Pittock Mansion	The Halton Company
Jane Van Dyke	Poppi Swimwear	The Meadow
Laughing Bird Adventures	Por Que No Taqueria	Think Green
Leatherman Tool Group, Inc.	Port of Portland	Wanderlust Tours
Linda Robinson	Portland Center Stage	Whole Foods
Living Colors	Portland Childrens Museum	Working Class Acupuncture
Lost Mountain Clay	Portland Classical Chinese Garden	Yoga in the Pearl

## GET INVOLVED - VISIT, PARTICIPATE, VOLUNTEER, ENJOY!

### Volunteer at Stewardship Saturdays!

On the second Saturday of each month, from 9am until 12pm, volunteers gather to do great things for the Slough! Here's what's happening next month:

#### May 10th - Stewardship Saturday at New Columbia

Bring the whole family to this fun morning amongst the trees! We'll help native species stay healthy by pulling weeds and cleaning up. Afterwards, we'll take a short tour of this beautiful hidden park. Dress for the weather. We'll bring everything else you'll need to have a great time outside - right in your backyard! Come right at 9:00 a.m. to enjoy free food and drinks! We can accommodate families and children with advance notice.

**When:** Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Where:** Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant, 5001 N Columbia Blvd.

**To RSVP:** Call (503) 281-1132 or email [jesse.rosenbluth@columbiaslough.org](mailto:jesse.rosenbluth@columbiaslough.org)

Mark your calendar for more Summer Stewardship Saturday fun!

June 14

July 12

### CSWC Spring & Summer Event Calendar

For more information about Columbia Slough Watershed Council events, call 503-281-1132, email [katie.meckes@columbiaslough.org](mailto:katie.meckes@columbiaslough.org) For detailed event descriptions, visit [www.columbiaslough.org](http://www.columbiaslough.org)

#### May

9	11:30 to 1	Brunch with the Birds at Whitaker Ponds
17	9 to noon	Great Slough Clean Up at Whitaker Ponds
28	6 and 7	Evening Canoe the Slough at Whitaker Ponds
31	8:45 to 1:30	Wetlands 101 Workshop at Smith & Bybee Wetlands

#### June

14	9 to 1:30	Cycle the Well Field at Parkrose Transit Center
21	1 to 5	Explorando El Columbia Slough at Whitaker Ponds

#### July

27	9 to 1	Columbia Slough Regatta at Water Bureau Boat Launch
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#### August

15	11:30 to 1	Subs on the Slough at Water Bureau Boat Launch
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7040 NE 47th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97218

Phone: 503-281-1132  
[www.columbiaslough.org](http://www.columbiaslough.org)

### Other Volunteer Opportunities in the Columbia Slough Watershed:

**Celebrate Earth Day with SOLV at Wilkes Creek!**

**Saturday, April 19th from 9am-1pm**

This project is part of an ongoing restoration effort at Wilkes Creek by SOLV's Team Up for Watershed Health program. By removing invasive plants, planting native trees and shrubs, and maintaining the site, volunteers improve habitat and water quality. Activities will include: Cleanup, Invasive Plant Removal, Mulching Around Plants and Trail Maintenance.

For more information, contact the project coordinator, **Brett Lyon** at 503-844-9571, ext. 332. or email [brett@solv.org](mailto:brett@solv.org)

**Site Address:** 15416 NE Fremont St. Call for directions.

**Meeting Location:** Park along the NE Fremont St.