

July 2016

Tips for Summer Refuge Visits



The Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge want to share some tips for a successful and fun visit to the refuge this summer:

1. Water: Make sure to bring water with you whether you are planning a long or a short visit, it

is going to be a hot summer and there is no access to drinking water on the refuge.

- 2. Restroom facilities: There are restrooms at the trailheads of both the Carty and River 'S' Units, and one stop right before the Kiwa Trail on the River 'S' Auto Tour Route, but there are no other facilities available to the public.
- 3. Bring a Snack: Just like with water, we want you to stay healthy and happy, plan to bring a snack on longer walks, but keep in mind there are no picnic areas on the refuge.
- 4. Trash Receptacles: There are no trash cans available so please pack out anything you bring in with you, we really appreciate it, and the wildlife does too!
- 5. Appropriate Shoes: If you plan to walk anywhere on the refuge, we recommend wearing shoes that protect your feet. While refuge staff strive to keep grasses, poison oak and stinging nettle back from the trails, they are always around, as well as fallen branches, rocks and more.
- 6. Fire: Fireworks and burning are strictly prohibited on the refuge, please protect our wildlife.
- 7. Ticks: Ticks are crafty, even on open trails they can find their way onto humans, so make sure to check yourself after a visit to the Refuge.

Fun Facts:

From now until September 30th, you can walk along the River 'S' Unit Auto Tour Route. So now you can get out of your car and see more wildlife up close!

Dragonflies are out in abundance this time of year and can be seen everywhere on the refuge!

The Purple Martins are nesting in the hanging gourd shaped houses provided for them near the head of the Auto Tour Route and can be seen during the day.

And once again, don't forget to bring water! Thank you and we hope you have a great summer at Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge!

New Faces around the Refuge

The Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge would like to

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Support While You Shop

Support the Refuge & Become a Member

Join or Renew

Joining comes with great benefits including perks like 5% off at the Sportsman's Steakhouse & Saloon in downtown Ridgefield just for being a member of the Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge! Check out the Benefits of Membership below to find out more.

Events

Volunteers Wanted!

Wednesday and Saturday volunteer crews are being put together to search out and pull Ricefield Bulrush (*Scirpus mucronatus*, *an invasive species*) from mid-June through early September.

introduce two more new faces around the refuge:

Lindsey Karr, Bulrush Coordinator:

Lindsey will be helping us to conserve our wetlands by leading volunteers in the removal of ricefield bulrush and other non-native plants. She comes to us with a background in invasive plants and outdoor guiding and is excited to spend her summer working at Ridgefield! Come help her keep our wetlands healthy and get a unique view of the habitat that usually only wildlife get to see!

Alexandra Danielsen, BirdFest and Bluegrass Coordinator:
Alix has signed on to be our new Coordinator for BirdFest and
Bluegrass 2016. She will be working with the BirdFest Planning
Committee to plan and execute all that is needed to make BirdFest a
success. Her background in marketing, event management, and
project management-- as well as time spent working with and on
programs focused on sustainability, conservation and environmental
awareness-- will be a great addition to our committee, and we can't
wait to see what she does!

Columbia Land Trust Project Benefits Sandhill Cranes

"Noshing local cuisine is one of the pleasures of travel, and soon hungry migrating sandhill cranes will have another menu item to choose from during their stopovers in the Vancouver area."



Starting mid-June, farmers began

plowing property to plant a variety of vegetables including com, peas, and soghum to get ready for the migrating Sandhill Cranes. To find out why, and to learn more about this project, check out the Columbian Article:

To see the original article click HERE

First Plankhouse Docent Social

Our first Docent Social took place on May 14 at the Historic Reserve in Vancouver!



Our outing started with a great meal at The Grant House where we were able to get to know one another a little better. We specifically enjoyed sharing stories of where we had traveled, past careers and educational backgrounds, as well as, what draws us to our local Refuges. Afterwards we met up at the

Pearson Air Museum where we were fortunate enough to have Dr. Bob Cromwell, the Site Manager for Pearson, give us a personalized tour and take us through the exhibits.

This was the first event of its kind and a bit of an experiment. Originally our intent was to provide social opportunities centered around our local natural and cultural resources in the region for those that are involved in volunteer work associated with the Cathlapotle Plankhouse. However, word got out and interest grew... So while this reoccurring event is referred to as a "Docent Social" all of our community volunteers, staff, and board members from both Ridgefield NWR and Steigerwald Lake NWR are invited to attend.

The next Docent Social will be on July 23 and activities will include a tour through the Two Rivers Museum and a brief naturalist hike at Steigerwald Lake NWR, as well as lunch at a local business. Please contact Juliet McGraw at plankhouse@gmail.com if you are interested

Check out the Habitat and Restoration section of this newsletter for more info and who to contact to sign up.

Night Hikes:



A unique opportunity to see the Ridgefield Refuge at night! The following are led by our Education Specialist Aiden Forsi, start at 9pm, and last about two hours. Limit is 15 people per hike.

7/19 - Oaks to Wetlands Trail 8/02 - Kiwa Trail

RSVP to Aiden_Forsi@fws.gov For the FWS official page dick here PHOTO CREDIT: Gerry Ellis/Minden Pictures

Ridgefield First Saturday: Red, White and Blue Historical Fun



Saturday, July 2, 2016

Gain a new understanding of old Ridgefield on this day full of play and discovery. Red, white & blue costume contest, games, icy kid & adult treats, a heritage-based scavenger hunt, convening with town elders, wine & beer garden and live music. A history lesson has never been so much fun.

9:00AM @ Overlook Park Shop the Farmer's Market, Cool off with the Misting Tower, Ride a Surrey, Enjoy a refreshing homemade root beer float, old fashioned fun & games -- horseshoes, gunny sack, 3-legged races

Ridgefield Art Association - interactive arts & historic flags Pop-Up Museum - sponsored by Clark County Historical Museum History Scavenger Hunt

10:00AM @ Old Liberty Theater -- Conversation Corner

Photo Credit: MichaelbBishap.wardpress.com

Help Represent the Friends and the Refuge at Community Outreach events!

We are looking for a few dedicated volunteers who love the refuge and would like to help others discover what makes this place special. Outreach volunteers are needed to help staff Friends and Refuge booths at events in our community from Ridgefield to Portland. Outreach volunteers work alongside Refuge and Friends staff to answer questions about the Refuge, provide information about what visitors can do at this Refuge, and act as ambassadors for one of our region's best kept secrets. Interested in learning how to get involved? Contact Park Ranger Josie Finley at Josie Finley@fws.gov or call (360) 887-4106.

Steigerwald Events and News



Camas Days is coming up: July 22 - 23
This event hosts thousands of visitors and is a great opportunity to teach locals about our Refuge. They are looking for trained volunteers to help! Contact Jared_strawderman@fws.gov

Sightings:

Fun sightings recently include long-tailed weasels, lazuli buntings, bitterns, bullocks orioles nesting at river side of seasonal trail, fun interactions between ospreys and kestrals near osprey nest, hooded merganser female with babies, willow flycatchers, yellow warbler, cinnamon teal with babies, as you know the list can go on and on!

Check ebird for more current bird sightings: http://ebird.org/ebird/hotspot/L150417

Info on Steigerwald National Wildlife Refuge and upcoming Columbia Gorge Refuge Stewards Events and more here

From the River 'S' Contact Station



Meet Eldon Schmidt

If you have done the Auto Tour on the River 'S' Unit of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, chances are you have seen or spoken with one of the volunteers who staff the contact station. Most days have

11:00AM @ Overlook Park stage -- Live Music

Noon @ Overlook Park -- Wine & Beer Garden

1:00PM @ Overlook Park - Constume Contest

Wear your favorite red, white & blue outfit and come on down for public judging.

For more info check out the City of Ridgefield First Saturday page <u>HERE</u>

Ridgefield Fourth of July Celebration

Sponsored by the Port of Ridgefield



7am - 10am: Pancake Breakfast Firefighters Association Ridgefield Community Center 210 N Main Avenue

8am: Fun Runs

10K - \$30 / \$40 with tech shirt 5K - \$20 / \$30 with tech shirt Day of race additional \$5. N Main Avenue & Simons Street

10:15am: Pet & Kid Pre-Parade Along the Parade Route Gather at comer of Pioneer Street & Main Avenue Free Admission/No registration required

11am: Fourth of July Parade-Theme: GO FOR THE GOLD-TEAM RIDGEFIELD Sponsored by Corwin Dist. Main & Division to N 8th Street & Pioneer Staging in Abrams Park

12pm-3:00pm: Salmon BBQ Lions Club Community Center at Main and Mill

12pm - 6pm;

Kids Day - sponsored by UNFI & Dollar Tree Following the parade Ridgefield Refuge Overlook Park (Pioneer & Main) Face Painting, Magician, Childrens Inflatables and more! (\$5 Wrist Bands: includes all activities for all day)

Entertainment:

Tony Starlight 12:00 - 2pm The Strange Tones 3:30 - 5:30pm

Pie Eating Contest - free to under 18

coverage at least for three or four hours. Volunteers come with many interests and backgrounds.

In this column, I want to introduce you to Eldon Schmidt.

Eldon is the Friday morning volunteer. He has been at his duty station for more than six years. Born and raised on a Kansas farm, Eldon is familiar with many of the furry critters on the refuge, such as cottontails and muskrats. But he also fondly remembers the Mockingbird doing a loop-d-loop from a post and singing up a storm and Cardinals, Meadowlarks, and doves, which he enjoyed without binoculars as a boy. He has always loved the



outdoors, transitioning early in life from a hunter to an observer. Eldon's career was as a middle school PE teacher.

He spent a number of years in Southern California, then moved to Beaverton as his wife was a native of Astoria and wanted to return to the Northwest. After retirement, he followed his outdoor interests and became a volunteer at Ridgefield NWR. He says what he likes about the work is meeting a lot of good people, enjoying conversations and learning from others. While we were talking, he had two visitors who were checking out the refuge for the first time. One couple was from Nevada looking for birds as they drove north with their trailer, visiting married children along the west coast. The other couple was from Georgia and the gentleman stopped long enough to relay a story about a mama grizzly and her three cubs in Yellowstone.

Eldon usually does a drive around the refuge on Fridays, stopping to walk the Kiwa Trail when it is open. He enjoys that walk the most, as he finds birds are still a challenge to learn and very enjoyable to watch. From the contact station, he keeps tabs on the Purple Martins' arrival, watching them take care of the new broods and then leaving the gourd nest when the babies fledge. A favorite time of year for him, is during fall with the migration, watching the ducks arrive from the northern breeding grounds.

Eldon joins other members of the volunteer team to count bird species on Fridays. He is one of the volunteers who helps generate the sightings list posted on the window of the contact station. So take advantage of Eldon's long tenure in the contact station, and knowledge about the critters you might find here, he is eager to get to know even more good people who visit the refuge.

Reporting from the River 'S' Contact Station- Susan Setterberg, Volunteer Contact Station Photo By: Samantha Zeiner

Ridgefield Refuge Complex News & Events



Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge

years - 2:15 at stage. Sign up at souvenir booth.

12pm - 6pm: Food, Drink and Craft Vendors In and around Ridgefield Refuge Overlook

5:30pm - 9:30pm: Dancing in the Park - High Fidelity Entertainment Refuge Overlook Park (All ages invited, free admission)

Fireworks Display -Will not occur this year. Please check back the following year for updates.

For contact info, sign up forms and more dick HERE

Species Spotlight

Sora Porzana carolina Virginia Rail Rallus limicola



Summer residents in the marshy areas of the Refuge, these two rails share secretive habits that make them hard to see. While you're exploring the Kiwa Trail on the River 'S' Unit, however, you can quickly tell if they are present by their unique calls. The Virginia Rail has a sharp, quick call that sounds a bit like "ticket, ticket", while the Sora's call is either a two-note call that sounds somewhat like "sor-ah" or a laughing whinny.

Virginia Rails are slightly larger than Soras, but they are both rather small birds. The Virginia Rail, about 7 ½" in length, has a rusty breast, grey cheeks and a long, slender bill perfect for foraging in the mud. Soras, about an inch shorter, are gray with a distinctive black facial pattern and a very short yellow beak like a chicken.

Both birds have long legs for wading and short, pert tails. While they can easily dart through the underbrush, they usually fly only in short bursts. This behavior is readily understandable as rails have the highest ratio of leg to flight muscles of any bird. Interestingly, Virginia Rails are also able to use their wings to swim underneath the water to escape predation.

The Refuge is a popular breeding site for

Urban Wildlife Conservation Program Update



Connecting urban audiences to nature is one of the biggest 21st Century challenges facing the US Fish and Wildlife Service. How are our urban refuge surrounding the Portland-Vancouver metro area refuges tackling this challenge?

We are pleased to share with you <u>Urban Refuge Program of the Portland-Vancouver Metro Area: 2015 Report Building Relationships.</u>

Scroll through the link (or stop by the main Sherwood office for your own paper copy) to learn more about our inaugural year.

Questions? Want to get more involved? <u>Contact Kim Strassburg</u> Urban Refuge Coordinator Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge 19255 SW Pacific Hwy Sherwood, OR 97140

Thank you for visiting the refuge and supporting conservation. If you have any questions regarding activities and regulations on the refuge, call the office Monday through Friday 7:30am to 3:30 pm at 360-887-4106.

Cathlapotle Plankhouse Update & Events



Second Sunday Event: Contemporary Native Art Inspired by Cultures of the Columbia River

Join us for a mask exhbit and artist talks by Lillian Pitt and Bill Rutherford. Renowned Native Artists and Friends, Lillian Pitt and Bill Rutherford will speak on their creative process, how they draw inspiration from Native Cultures of the Columbia River, and why they use masks as a medium of artisitic expression. There will also be mask collections from each artist on display throughout the day.

The Plankhouse will be open for visitors from 12pm-4pm, and there will be activities for kids as well.

both types of rails. Sora nests are actually built and float on the water, while Virginia Rails construct nests on land nearby water. Clutches can be anywhere from four to a dozen eggs, and young of both rails are born with black down and leave the nest within one day. Both rails dine on insects, but Virginia Rails also enjoy small snakes, frogs and fish and Soras like seeds.

Soras and Virginia Rails are found across North America and are currently not considered at risk, however, there are concerns about their ongoing health. That's just one more reason our wildlife refuge is so important!



Did you know: Some people believe the expression "skinny as a rail" came from the fact that the birds appear so thin when viewed head-on, but linguists say the phrase refers to wooden rails. Go out and look for rails on the Refuge and decide for yourself!

Photos by Dave Menke, USFWS



Birding Enthusiasts



See what is being seen at the refuge this week at our Weekly <u>Sightings</u> page, or get a summary of the year's sightings so far on the <u>2016 Sightings</u> page.

The Benefits of Membership

In addition to receiving the monthly E-News with Refuge updates, upcoming events and wildlife news, members enjoy member- and volunteer-only events. Also, with any \$50 membership,



(Click this poster for a link to our website)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to providing access to this event for all participants. Please direct all requests for sign language interpreting services, closed captioning, or other accommodations needs to Juliet McGraw, 360-887-4106, Plankhouse@gmail.com. TTY 800-877-8339 with your request by close of business one week before the event.

Upcoming Events and Exhibitions:

Intro to Chinuk Wawa Where: Cathlapotle Plankhouse When: August 6, 13, 20, 27

10am-12pm Cost: FREE

In this 4 part class, participants will gain basic knowledge of chinuk wawa, the contemporary Native language of Chinookan peoples of the Lower Columbia. This class will cover the history of the language, how language and culture go hand in hand, and will learn pronunciation, sentence structure, and useful phrases.

Class will occur in the Cathlapotle Plankhouse at the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge four Saturdays in August. Participants must attend all four sessions. *RSVP by July 6th to plankhouse@gmail.com*

2016 Paddle to Nisqually Canoe Journey

Canoe Journey 2016, Paddle to Nisqually, continues an inter-tribal celebration and annual gathering of Northwest Indigenous Nations. The annual tribal journey in the Pacific Northwest region was began with the Paddle to Seattle in 1989 and over 20 Canoe Journeys have been held since 1993. The Canoe Journey has grown to include over 100 canoes and the participation of Canoe Families from other Native canoe cultures, including Native American tribes, First Nations peoples, Alaska Natives, Inuit, Maori, Native Hawaiians, and other indigenous peoples from across the world.

Some of the Canoe Journey events are open to the public, and this is a great opportunity to see thriving canoe culture first hand.

Stay up to date on Canoe Journey activities on the official website: http://www.paddletonisqually.com/index.php/about/

Questions? Contact Sarah at <u>Sarah Hill@fws.gov</u> or call (360) 887-4106

you will receive an annual Refuge Pass, which covers entrance fees.

Don't forget to glance at the <u>Refuge</u> <u>calendar</u>, your one-stop shop for fun activities and volunteer opportunities!

Discounts at Local Businesses for New and Renewing Members:



Would you like to enjoy a cup of coffee from Ridgefield's Seasons after a morning hike on the Refuge? Or perhaps breakfast before you head out on the auto tour route at Pioneer Street Cafe? Lunch at Vinnie's Pizza in-between the River 'S' and Carty Units? Dinner and drinks at the Historic Sportsman's Restaurant and Lounge after a busy day of wildlife viewing? Or maybe you would like to get a discount on some supplies at Shorty's or Backyard Bird Shop?

Become a Friend or renew your membership today, and receive a member card with great discounts at these wonderful local businesses! Feel free to contact us for any questions or inquiries.









Our Sponsors

Habitat Restoration Updates & Events

As spring warms into summer on the Refuge volunteers and staff are busy with our annual Ricefield Bulrush (Schoenoplectus mucronatus) eradication project. Wetlands are being searched and plants are being pulled.

If you have not yet participated in one of our Wednesday bulrush events there are still plenty of chances to get signed up. We will be adding Saturday events starting July 2nd, just in time to volunteer your vacationing friends and family. If you have a big group looking for an activity, but can't make a Wednesday or Saturday event, we can schedule a special bulrush excursion to a scenic wetland complete with gloves, boots, and snacks.

For more information contact ridgefieldbulrush@gmail.com.

Get Outdoors and Gain Experience

at the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge



Work alongside your fellow conservationists in this beautiful location while learning about native wildlift management. Volunteers are key to helping biological staff keep wellands healthy by searching for and removing invasive plants. Be active, make a difference, and gain real world experience.

Volunteer Opportunities (9:00AM - 12:30PM)

Wednesdays, July 6,13,20,27 Saturdays, July 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30

September Saturday, September 3

we will meet at the visitor klosk on the kiver "S unto 1 the ketuige (see daddress above). Please arrive prior to 9:00AM if you are a first time volunteer to fill out needed paperwork. Youth under the age of 18 must have their volunteer paperwork signed by a parent/guardian in order to volunteer. Pre-registration is encouraged, but not required.

To Learn more visit: www.fws.gov/refuges/Ridgefield or http://ridgefieldfriends.org



(click this poster to go to our website for more info) To volunteer contact: ridgefieldbulrish@gmail.com

You might have also noticed a crew of young folks with tools in hand cutting back vegetation, dearing trails, and other general outdoor maintenance projects. These 15-18 year olds, under the care and supervision of crew leader Kate, are spending part of their summer on the Refuge as a YCC crew and we are happy to have them. If you see them feel free to wave or tip the cap, and of course keep your distance since they are teenagers with sharp tools.

As we move farther into July we will be on the look-out for one of our late season bloomers, purple loosestrife (Lythrum salicaria). This invasive plant grows in wetlands and along waterways and is listed as a Class B invasive by the state. This plant is hard to control and generally requires herbicide treatment. We will post images and some identifying characteristics of this plant on the refuge kiosks and if spotted please feel free to notify the refuge or leave a message at 360.887.3883.

For more information or to sign up please





































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Online Store Now Open!

The Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge are proud to announce the opening of a new webstore! Now you can order our 50th Anniversary Gear- including the Pelican Brewing Company 50th Anniversary T-shirt and Pint Glass, as well as our Chinookan Steller's Jay T-shirt, all online!

Check out our **Shop** for links to the store and more info, or dick HERE to go directly to the store!

Proceeds help support our unique education and restoration programs at Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge!

Follow the Friends on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram!

Want regular updates on Refuge events and happenings? Follow the Friends on your favorite social media by dicking the logos below to stay connected even when you are off the Refuge.



Help the Friends and the Refuge When You Shop Online



When you link your Fred Meyer Rewards community Card to the Friends, you help us earn rewards donations from Fred Meyer Community

Where shopping & giving unite

Rewards. It doesn't change your regular

personal shopping and fuel rewards, but it does make a meaningful contribution to our work on the Refuge.

It's easy to sign up. Just go

to www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards. You can search for us by our name, Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, or by our non-profit number, 89824. Then, every time you shop and use your Rewards Card, you are helping the Friends earn a donation to support the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge. If you do not have a Rewards Card, they are available at the Customer Service desk of any Fred Meyer store.

You Can Also Shop and Give Online at AmazonSmile.com

Log on to smile.amazon.com, shop as you usually would and .5% of your purchase will be donated directly to the Friends. Use the special link, smile.amazon.com, with your existing user name and password.

To set up your AmazonSmile account, click this link: http://smile.amazon.com/ch/91-2018749. When prompted to select a charity, choose the Friends of Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge. Begin shopping as you normally would and the Friends will receive 0.5% of eligible purchases.

Thanks for being an EcoShopper and helping the Refuge!

Mention

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