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The Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge

The latest updates | March, 2022

From the Friends

A Message from the (past) Executive Director

It was so meaningful to be able to gather our staff, board members, Refuge employees, and Friends members in one place (Zoom) on January 29. Even though it was (another) virtual annual meeting, being able to see photos and videos from the Refuge and hear the sound of cranes made me feel like I am part of a very special club. I was so grateful to be able to share that time with you all and to be reminded about the focus of all of our work - the Refuge, and the plants and animals that thrive there.



During that meeting, I let folks know that I would be stepping down as Executive Director and moving on to another organization. I started at the Friends as a board member in 2019, moved into the Board President role in 2020, and became Executive Director last February. I've learned so much during this time, and I am inspired daily by the dedication of this team, working in partnership and in the service of this place I have truly grown to love.

I'm leaving the day-to-day work of the Friends in Samantha Zeiner's capable hands. Please feel free to send her words of encouragement as she gets the hang of things! I know I'm leaving behind a

strong organization, still full of so much potential, staffed by some amazing people, and led by a dedicated group of board members.

Maybe I'll see you out on the trail one of these days,

Anna Wilde
Executive Director

[Contact the board](#)



Ridgefield Refuge Complex News & Events

Gate times for both units 7:00 am - 5:30 pm

Don't forget that the Carty Unit Oaks-to-Wetlands Trail, within the Oak Restoration area, is generally closed Thursdays for trail maintenance, watch for signs.

NOTE: The Washington State Discover Pass is not valid on Federally managed public lands, including National Wildlife Refuges. Find out more about [fees & passes here](#).

Check the [Refuge2020.info](#) website for project updates, like the Steigerwald Lake reconnection project, Carty Unit Oaks-to-Wetlands Trail developments, and more!

To feel more connected to nature and the Refuge while staying home, stay tuned to the Friends Social Media streams on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram - we are working to share activities, videos of nature on and off the Refuge, and more. Social links can be found at the bottom of this newsletter.

From the Contact Station

An Unexpected Sighting + Golden Eagle Species Spotlight



I am coming up on my ninth anniversary of moving to Ridgefield and enjoying the Refuge. In fact, the Refuge is the reason I ended up here in Southwest Washington. A tour or walk on the refuge is always a pleasure, anytime and any weather. But not infrequently, it hands you an experience that will be seared on your memory's photo album forever. I won't need to scroll through tons of snapshots on my cell phone, it will instantly come from memory whenever I cross through the same spot again.

It was a Friday morning, February 4th, and we were doing goose and raptor surveys. We were having a series of dense fog mornings, and although the roads on the ridge above the refuge were quarter-mile visibility, the fog was lifting off the fields on the Refuge, so we had good sightlines for counting. We identify and count geese twice a month and raptors once...[keep reading...](#)

-Susan Setterberg, Contact Station Volunteer

image: Adult Golden Eagle by Mary Rumple



Preserve America is a national initiative in cooperation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation; the U.S. Departments of Defense, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, and Education; the National Endowment for the Humanities; the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities; and the President's Council on

Environmental Quality. [RNWR Page here](#).

Habitat Restoration Updates & Events

Weed of the Month - Yellow Flag Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*)

I would say the invasive that best defines a love/nonlove relationship here on the refuge is Himalayan blackberry. The love comes in the form of a tasty summer treat, and a plant that helps shield some of the bigger ash tree trunks from beaver. The nonlove is the pain associated with working on or around not just patches, but individual stems that will grab your foot and pull you to the ground when you least expect. With the ability to spread and aggressively outcompete native species, Himalayan blackberry is one of our most visible and widespread invasive plant species...



[Keep reading for the Yellow Flag Iris fact sheet...](#)

-Keith Rutz, Friends of RNWR Habitat Restoration Coordinator

Photo caption: Yellow Flag Iris

Refuge Volunteering

Is it Spring yet?



The lovely weather we have gotten in the month of February has made me eager for spring. I have missed the smell of flowers and the sight of bright green foliage. I even noticed daffodils popping up along I-5, so I am not the only one confused by the unseasonably nice weather. I hope that the plants and pollinators are resilient enough to hold up through the frosts.

As COVID-19 cases are plunging downward in Clark County, the volunteer program is revving up efforts to prepare for the first round of onboarding core volunteers by April 2022.

There are no official plans for when we will start recruiting from the public, but stay tuned for updates. With COVID permitting you can hope to see friendly faces in our contact station and trails this spring!

Stay safe out there!

-Elena Tinoco, FRNWR Volunteer Coordinator

image description: Snowdrop blooming Feb 2022

Update for the Gorge Refuge Stewards/ Friends, February 2022

February has begun and what a time of changes it is, among our ongoing challenges. The green stems of the daffodils in my backyard are emerging from the soil below after being dormant for many months, and bees were happy to pollinate the white blossoms in my front yard this last sunny weekend.

When witnessing the first blooms of the New Year, it is often hard not to get excited about the coming of springtime and all it might hold.



things...[keep reading...](#)

As I can imagine, spring means many different

-Mesha Wood, USFWS Park Ranger for the Refuge Complex

image: Daffodils emerging from the soil at Ridgefield NWR

Birding Enthusiasts

Check out what species are being seen on the Refuge [here](#).



Ridgefield First Saturdays - Arts Month Kickoff & Color Run March 5, 2022

Kickoff Ridgefield Youth Arts Month with a 5K run or walk in Downtown Ridgefield! Youth Arts Month is a partnership between Ridgefield School District and the Ridgefield Art Association encouraging young people to take part in artistic endeavors including literary, visual, musical, and performing arts. Youth Arts Month happens throughout the month of March with events taking place at all four district schools as well as at community businesses and organizations.



[Details and more...](#)

Species Spotlight

Check out the "From the Contact Station" section above for species spotlights going forward!

Become a Business Alliance Member!

As a member of the Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Business Alliance, you invest in one of our urban metropolitan area's most unique and diverse natural and cultural resources. [Click here to find out more](#)



Board Seeking New Members Or, Join a Committee

The Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge is a non-profit dedicated to promoting educational and cultural programs of the Ridgefield NWR, and protecting and enhancing its wildlife habitat. We are currently seeking

Supporting the Ridgefield NWR

As a member of the Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Business Alliance, you invest in one of our urban metropolitan area's most unique and diverse natural and cultural resources.

Your annual Business Alliance Membership connects you with:

- 200,000+ visitors annually;
- 5,000 students participating in field trips and educational programs;
- 4,000 visitors to BirdFest & Bluegrass;
- 3,000 attendees at Plankhouse events;
- 1,200 monthly newsletter readers;
- 1,100 monthly weekly visits;
- and 250 community volunteers who provide more than 10,000 hours of work.

The Banning on Nature study released in 2013 reports that an average of \$4.87 is returned to local economies for every dollar Congress provides in funding to run the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Your partnership with the Friends helps ensure the future and success of this breathtaking natural resource. Invest in your community by becoming a part of our Business Alliance today!

Photo credit: Douglas Ingle, Angie Vogel, Don Hooten, Paul Hansen.



Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge
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Join our Business Alliance!

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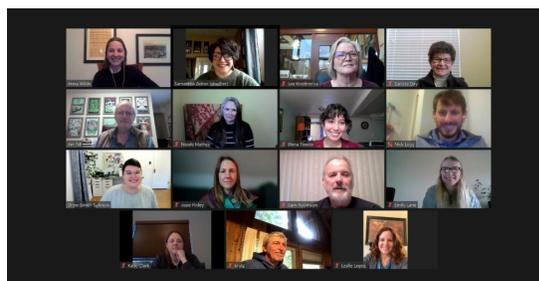
candidates to serve on our board of directors. We are recruiting candidates with diverse backgrounds and skills for several open board positions, in addition to candidates interested in serving on a committee (board membership not required).

Find out more, and [contact us here](#)

Friends Board Meetings

Join the Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Board for their monthly meeting. Meetings start at 5pm every **third** Monday of the month and will be **on Zoom until further notice**, [contact us](#) to join in!

2022: March 21, April 18, May 16, June 21*, July 18, August 15, September 19, October 17, November 21, December 19
(*moved due to federal holiday)



2022 Merch



Check out our NEW store items, with more being added all the time! We have mugs that change colors, tote bags, sweatshirts, and more, all featuring our 2019, 2020, AND 2021 Refuge Photo Contest winning photos, 2021 Spring Break Youth Art Contest art, *as well as* the 2021 BirdFest & Bluegrass button image, and the "Back to the Refuge" logo!

START SHOPPING!

Get your friends and family (or yourself!) a gift that will remind them of nature's beauty and support a wonderful cause!

Let us know if there is something you'd like to see.

If there isn't something you like, you can always donate, or buy a membership to the Friends in someone's name - an annual gift program that supports wildlife, habitat, volunteers, education, and more.



Support While You Shop

When you link your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to the Friends, you help us earn donations from Fred Meyer Community 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 click here](#). You can search for us by our name, Friends of Ridgefield NWR, or by our non-profit number,



PK822. Then, every time you shop and use your Rewards Card, you are helping earn a donation to support the Friends and Ridgefield NWR. If you do not have a Rewards Card, ask at the Customer Service desk of any FM store.



Log on to smile.amazon.com and shop as you usually would - .5% of your purchase will be donated directly to the Friends! Use the link with your existing user name and password. When prompted to select a charity, choose the Friends of Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge.



Giving Assistant makes it easy to donate to Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge! Simply shop online, earn cash back, and donate as much as 30% of your purchase price - Giving Assistant facilitates the whole process. Now, you can help change the world for free while saving money at over 3,000 popular online retailers like Home Depot, ULTA, and Macy's! [Start HERE!](#) Thanks for being an EcoShopper and helping the Refuge!

Would you like to enjoy a cup of coffee from Ridgefield's Seasons Coffee after a morning hike on the Refuge? 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 (5% off a meal with member card!)? Or maybe you would like to get a discount on some supplies at Shovel & Thumb or Backyard Bird Shop? How about a night out at ilani?

[Find out more, 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.

Benefits of Membership



The Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge promote the enjoyment, understanding, and protection of native and endangered birds, other wildlife, and their habitats. We focus on our local community and the Pacific Northwest.

Sponsors

Business Alliance Members:



In-Kind Support:



BirdFest & Bluegrass:



Granting Organizations & Partners:



Header Photo Credit: Sandra Michaelis, 2018, 2nd place Plant Category, Refuge Photo Contest

**FRIENDS OF RIDGEFIELD
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**



[Contact Us](#) | [Website](#)

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

