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# The Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge

The latest updates | June, 2022

## From the Friends



I have had the privilege of having lived most of my life on a bluff next to the Columbia River floodplain. I live in a community that is a gateway to one of the premier national wildlife refuges in our nation's system of 560 refuges. One evening last fall I heard a large group of migrating swans reach Carty Lake just after nightfall. You could tell that they had travelled a long distance and were clearly delighted to have arrived at their destination. The ruckus they created sounded like a party, a family reunion with their large wings slapping the lake's surface and their voices carrying into town and homes along the bluff. It was a reminder for me of how essential refuges are, and how much the Refuge has to offer

to Ridgefield and Ridgefield to the Refuge. Our communities are joined.

Wildlife refuges exist to protect both the habitat and the wildlife and plants that depend on them. For many refuges, like Ridgefield, it's also about providing a space for people to interact and engage with nature in meaningful and memorable ways.

What we all must realize about refuges is that they are not parks, they are designated areas of critical habitat set aside for animals, plants, and nature, with designated allowed uses for humans that are

compatible with the conservation objectives for a specific refuge complex. I love this about refuges. I am humbled when I think of how important a place refuges are to a bird that has just flown non-stop from its nesting ground in Alaska, to grace us with a stop in our community, and to rest and get a bite to eat. I can walk down to our town's waterfront and see thousands of birds resting and feeding on Carty Lake, drive the auto tour route and see more birds on Rest Lake, or hear them at night as I drift off to sleep.

Refuges also provide people with opportunities to engage and interact with nature and wildlife that no other place can. The Portland-Vancouver Urban Refuge program recognizes the need for people to have experiences in nature. The Refuge has taken great strides when it comes to carefully allowing people to use these special places, in a way that minimizes wildlife disturbance and allows migrating species like swans, Sandhill Cranes, ducks, geese, and neotropical songbirds, the opportunity to stop, rest, feed, and catch up with relatives. Resident animals like otters, beavers, deer, coyotes, and eagles are with us all year round. It is a privilege to be allowed in that space that is these plants and animals' homes, in a way that provides them with the protections they require for their continued existence.

The Urban Program at Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge is a unique opportunity to reach everyone in the region and beyond and to provide meaningful outdoor and educational experiences to people of all ages, over multiple generations, of all backgrounds. The Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge's mission is to support the Refuge and help to provide these opportunities to people of all ages through access and education. Together, our work can reach more people, and help them to not only better understand and appreciate nature, but also protect it.

**-Jim Maul, Friends of Ridgefield NWR Board President**

[Contact the Board](#)

image: A family checks out binoculars from the Refuge, 2016, credit FWS

## 2022 Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Photo Contest

Submit your favorite nature images taken within the boundaries of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge to the 16th Annual 2022 photography competition!

### CATEGORIES:

BIRDS  
WILDLIFE  
PLANT LIFE  
LANDSCAPE & STRUCTURES

### ADULT CATEGORY PRIZES:

1st Place [in each category]:  
\$150 Pro Photo Supply Gift Card\*  
Inclusion in Gallery Showing at Pro Photo Supply.  
12 x19 high-quality digital print from Gallery Showing at Pro Photo Supply

### Honorable Mention:

Inclusion in Gallery Showing at Pro Photo Supply.  
12 x19 high-quality digital print from Gallery Showing at Pro Photo Supply

### YOUTH CATEGORY PRIZE:

1st Place:  
\$75 Pro Photo Supply Gift Card\*  
Inclusion in Gallery Showing at Pro Photo Supply.  
12 x19 high-quality digital print from Gallery Showing at Pro Photo Supply

### Honorable Mention:

Inclusion in Gallery Showing at Pro Photo Supply.



12 x19 high-quality digital print from Gallery Showing at Pro Photo Supply

\*Gift Cards from Pro Photo Supply

**Submission Deadline: September 10, 2022**

[Find out more & submit photos...](#)



## Ridgefield Refuge Complex News & Events

Gate times for both units 6:00 am - 8:30 pm

**Seasonal Trails re-open May 1st. \*NOTE: The Kiwa Trail will NOT open on May 1st, 2022 due to Sandhill Crane nesting activity. A colt has been spotted as of the middle of May! Stay tuned for more updates\***



### Celebrate and navigate change - Together as a community

June always brings an increased feeling of change to our communities. We are saying goodbye to another spring, another school year, and for some, joyous transitions in the form of graduations, weddings, and retirements. We are saying hello to the possibilities of summer, returning to our favorite outdoor spaces and activities, and to growth all around us. As spring transitions into summer, we celebrate the changes in

plants, wildlife, and ourselves. Change, the thing we so often resist and recoil from becomes a joyous adventure.

Your local refuges are places of natural and joyous change as well. Some changes we are accustomed to and find comfort in - the budding of long-dormant trees, hatching and raising of young birds, and the cycles of wetlands filling and drying. Even the seasonal changes in human activity...**keep reading...**

#### **-Josie Finley, Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Services Manager**

image: Volunteers pause during a training hike at Steigerwald Lake NWR to engage with a family on the trail, April 2018

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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](http://Refuge2020.info) website for project updates on all our Refuges in the Ridgefield Complex.

## From the Contact Station

### Riding with Roger

It was a day that promised to be nice for us and the birds, even though it started a bit chilly in the high 40s. I met Roger at the dog park parking lot at 7:30 am. Roger Windemuth is a long-time volunteer with the Refuge. You might have seen him pre-covid on Wednesdays in the Kiosk or riding around the River S. What you may not know is that Roger has been doing the weekly bird survey going back seventeen





years now. In the past, I have featured a few of the contact volunteers in this column. I was thinking about including Roger about two years and three months ago when, well, you know what happened. Now, being fully vaxed and really wanting to start up again, I contacted Roger with a request to ride around River S on his next survey. Roger quickly responded 'yes' so we met and started out with our very first stop...keep reading...

**-Susan Setterberg, Contact Station Volunteer**

image: Roger Windemuth by Susan Setterberg



## Habitat Restoration Updates

### Restoring Habitat by Removing Invasives

After several volunteer work parties and even a few solo trips for me to the Turtle Lake restoration site, we have successfully removed nearly all of the flowering Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) through hand pulling and digging. Scotch Broom is a Washington state Class B noxious weed and is prohibited to transport, buy, sell, or distribute within the state.

Unfortunately, Scotch Broom tends to spread aggressively, forming dense monocultures which quickly displaces native plant species. They are often found along highways, waterways, and busy roads; once you recognize them, you will see them everywhere (i.e. I-5). Fortunately, I was able to break out the kayak in order to cross Turtle Lake to access the Scotch Broom on the other side of the shore; it's never a bad day when you get to kayak for work!



This has been an exciting time for native plant identification. Now that plants are displaying their flowers and leaves, we can not only enjoy their beauty, but they are much easier to identify with confidence. This provides me with the ability to harvest new cuttings to be propagated in the high tunnel, such as Vine Maple (*Acer circinatum*), Bigleaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), Oregon Ash (*Faxinus latifolia*).

Through trial and error, I am learning when and how to harvest certain plant species and that not all plants are easily propagated through cuttings like Oregon Grape (*Mahonia spp.*) and Pacific Wax Myrtle (*Morella californica*). As summer progresses, I plan to collect native fruits and seeds to try my hand at seed propagation too.



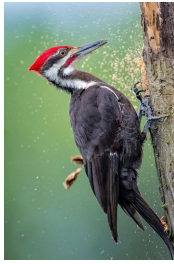
**-Justine Casebolt, Habitat Restoration Technician**



Pictures:

1. Volunteer Grace digging up Scotch Broom
2. Close up Scotch Broom plant (for reference)
3. Justine kayaking across Turtle Lake
4. Blooming Service Berry on the Refuge
5. Blooming camas on the Carty Unit

## Birding Enthusiasts



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

## Ridgefield First Saturdays - Big Paddle June 4, 2022

Celebrate the Lewis River to Vancouver Lake Water Trail and our natural environment with a paddle on Lake River.

***There will also be two guided Refuge hikes, at 10 am and 1 pm! Check out the schedule below for details.***

[Schedule, details, and more...](#)



## Refuge Volunteering Volunteer Training!

I am thrilled to announce that we will be hosting a Refuge Ambassador Training on June 12th! Refuge Ambassadors are volunteers that help make the refuge an engaging and welcoming environment for visitors! The available positions are Trail Stewards, Contact Station, Board Members, and Nature Walk Host. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer this training will be open for you to attend! During this training, you will learn about what it means to be a Refuge Ambassador and how to inspire future conservationists in our community.

We will be sending out invites soon so stay tuned!

**-Elena Tinoco, FRNWR Volunteer Coordinator, [email me](#)**

image description: Volunteers on the Oaks-to-Wetlands Trail, Carty Unit, 2018



## Species Spotlight Anna's Hummingbird *Calypte Anna*

It is hard to spot a 4-gram mass in the wide-open refuge. Usually, it is the buzz of their wings that gets your attention. Anna's Hummingbird, named for the Countess of Rivoli (Italy) in 1829, can be found year-round on the Refuge. Its genus name, *Calypte*, is Greek for 'hood' in reference to the male's iridescent crown.



Having recently seen an Anna's on a nest, it is the female I want to talk about today. The pair-bonding is brief. The male attracts attention through their elaborate dive displays, in which they can ascend over 100 feet and then plummet toward their target making a variety of complex song and tail feather sounds...keep reading...

-Susan Setterberg, Contact Station Volunteer

image: Anna's Hummingbird by Jan Eklof, Adult 3rd Place, 2016 Refuge

Photo Contest

## 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](#)

**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+ attendees participating in field trips and educational programs;
- 4,000+ visitors to BirdFest & Bldgness;
- 3,000+ attendees at Planthouse events;
- 1,200+ monthly newsletter readers;
- 1,200+ monthly webinars visits;
- and 250+ community volunteers who provide more than 10,000 hours of work.

The Banking on Nature study released in 2013 reports that an average of \$4.87 is returned to local communities 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 invested in your community by becoming a part of our Business Alliance today!

Photograph Credit: Douglas Neal, Arnie Vogel, Osa Hopkins, Bob Hansen.

**Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge**  
P.O. Box 6522  
Ridgefield, WA 98642  
www.ridgefieldfriends.org

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## Board Seeking New Members Or, Join a Committee

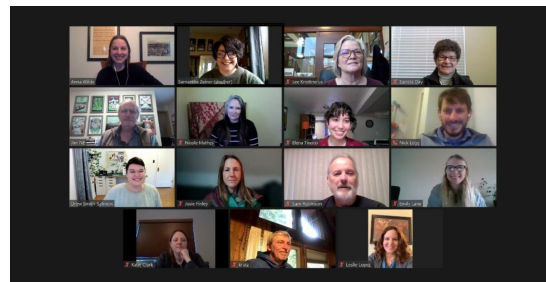
The Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge is a non-profit dedicated to promoting, protecting, and enhancing its wildlife habitat. We are currently seeking candidates to serve on our board of directors. We are recruiting candidates with diverse backgrounds and skills for several open board 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 5 PM every **third** Monday of the month and will be **on Zoom until further notice, contact us** to join in!

2022: June 21\*, July 18, August 15, September 19, October 17, November 21, December 19 (\*moved due to federal holiday or conflict)



## 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!

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](https://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.

Would you like to enjoy a cup of coffee from Ridgefield's Seasons Coffee after a morning hike on the Refuge? Lunch 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:

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BirdFest & Bluegrass:



**ilani**

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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.





Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge | PO BOX 1022, Ridgefield, WA 98642

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