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The Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge

The latest updates | July, 2022

From the Friends

Yes, You Can Walk the Auto Tour in the Summer!



A fun fact that many have just discovered this year is that the River ‘S’ Auto Tour of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge is open for walking visitation from May 1st to September 30th. Rules were a little confusing when the Auto Tour first opened in 2000, but were solidified in 2010 after the USFWS Comprehensive Conservation Planning process was completed, and the seasonality of the trails was established.

What does that even mean?

It means that during the summer, if you pull over and step out of your vehicle to get a clearer camera shot, park your vehicle and walk for a bit, or decide to walk the whole tour, you’re not breaking any rules or adding extra disturbance to wildlife.

The Auto Tour of Ridgefield NWR is closed to walking during the winter to protect all the migratory species that come to visit, or just pass through the refuge looking for a place to rest and have a meal. Because during migration birds use a lot of their energy to travel long distances every day and night, it is imperative that they have places they can orient themselves to, where they know they can be safe and undisturbed.

In the summertime though, migratory birds have all reached their destinations, nesting has completed or is wrapping up, and as long as visitors stick to the road as their trail- the Auto Tour is an awesome place to get a little nearer to wildlife.

Rick DeTroye and his wife, Mary Cal, discovered the Auto Tour a few years ago, around 2017...**keep reading...**

-Samantha Zeiner, Friends of Ridgefield NWR Administrator

image: a stretch of the River S Auto Tour leading to the restrooms about a quarter of the way along the tour, May 2017

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 5:30 am - 9:00 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*



Interns bring fresh perspectives to the Complex

This summer the Ridgefield NWR Complex has the honor of hosting three undergraduate-level internships. These hard-working students have joined us immediately after getting through finals and are dedicating 11 to 22 weeks to working, learning, and teaching alongside staff and volunteers. While the Refuge system and its partners have a lot to show in terms of future career paths, we have even more to learn *from* them. They are giving us fresh perspectives and new ideas on how we approach and improve projects and engage communities in meaningful ways.

About the programs that brought them here:

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has partnered with [Hispanic Access Foundation's MANO Project](#) to connect inspired, skilled, culturally, ethnically, and economically diverse young people with careers in natural resource conservation. This internship program was designed to introduce diverse college

students to careers by providing hands-on work and training by natural resource professionals employed by the Service.

The Service has also partnered with the [Student Conservation Association](#) (SCA) to offer one-of-a-kind, next-generation internship experiences through the Youth Employment Program (YEP). These placements are at flagship Urban National Wildlife Refuges like Ridgefield, Steigerwald Lake and Tualatin River NWR. The program seeks to help in our work to provide a welcoming environment for all visitors and build intentional relationships with historically marginalized communities. Participants have interest in community engagement work and furthering equitable practices in visitor services.

Meet our interns: ...[keep reading...](#)

-Josie Finley, Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Services Manager

image: All three interns in a collage, left: Abbie Funk, top: Tyler Funk, bottom: Ellie Watts

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 on all our Refuges in the Ridgefield Complex.

From the Contact Station

Yay! We are back!



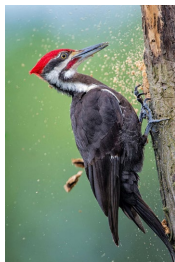
We are all so happy to be back at the contact station again, seeing old friends and acquaintances. It has been too long. We love hearing about your sightings and experiences on the refuge and we missed that. Come talk to Annette, Terri, Randy, Dave, Pete, Roger and Susan anytime. We are hoping to bring in more volunteers, including trail walkers, as we get back on our feet. Welcome back.

June-uary was the term used by one of our frequent visitors last month as we opened the Contact Station June 1st. If it weren't for the extended gate hours and long hours of light, it would be hard to know if we had emerged into spring yet. Notice I say light, not sunshine. Except for the glorious infrequent sunbreaks with rainbows and the amazing abundance of green, it has been wet and dreary. Yet, it looks like we are moving into summer. And, I have to say...[keep reading...](#)

-Susan Setterberg, Contact Station Volunteer

Text and photos by Susan Setterberg except where noted

Birding Enthusiasts

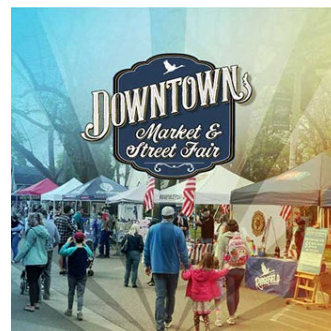


Check out what species are being seen on the Refuge [here](#).

Ridgefield First Saturdays - Downtown Market & Street Fair July 2, 2022

Kick off a celebratory, patriotic weekend with Farmers Market, vendors, and street sale in Downtown Ridgefield!

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



Refuge Volunteering Volunteer Happenings & Training!

The River S unit of the Refuge boasts a 4.2-mile driving (and, seasonally, walking) loop. Such a fun place to be! You can see about 60 bird species right now. If you have been to the Auto Tour route within the last two years you may have seen closed signs hanging in the windows of the small shed next to the bathrooms. That somber sign is now replaced by a friendly face waiting to say welcome! Now that we have volunteers at the Contact Station 7 days a week, you can visit and learn about the Refuge. Contact Station volunteers can tell you what's new, identify wildlife, understand recreation options, and even learn how to become a volunteer!

Restarting the volunteer program after closing for two years has been a tricky endeavor. I am thrilled to have volunteers back and to see the community connections being made!

Volunteer Ambassador Training

Have you been thinking of volunteering this summer to give back to your community? Not only does volunteering at the wildlife refuge give back to the community now, it also serves current and future generations to come! This can look like planting a tree that will provide cooling shade and shelter in 30 years. Or helping multiple visitors throughout the day connect with the wildlife and habitat around them. Now is the perfect time to sign up for volunteer opportunities! On July 17th, 9:30 am - 3 pm we will be hosting a volunteer training for Refuge Ambassadors. Email me to sign up!

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

image description: Fledgling Barn Swallow sits on the Auto Tour between flight lessons, June 2022



Species Spotlight Growing up Sandhill Crane



We are all waiting expectantly for the successful fledging of our second Sandhill Crane colt. We are also waiting eagerly to be able to walk our Kiwa Trail. So, what is taking so long? Well, it may not take a village to raise a Sandhill Crane colt, but it certainly takes a pair of adults a lot of time and attention.

How it starts: Before a nest is even started, the adult pair takes two to four weeks to establish a suitable territory. Our pair...[keep reading...](#)

-Susan Setterberg, Contact Station Volunteer

image: *Photo of two adult Sandhill Cranes and a colt; Anne Myers, July 2021*

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**

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 Flankhouse events;
- 1,200 monthly newsletter readers;
- 1,100 monthly monthly 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 of investment 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 Shel, Angie Vogel, Don Hoyle, Paul Hanks.




Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge
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Ridgefield, WA 98642
www.ridgefieldnwr.org

Join our Business Alliance!

100% Recycled Post-Consumer Waste, Premium Chlorinated Free and PVC-free.

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: 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 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:



In-Kind Support:



BirdFest & Bluegrass:



Granting Organizations & Partners:



Header Photo Credit: Oca Hoflein, 2018, 2nd place Landscape 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.

