



FRIENDS OF WILLAPA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Summer 2021 Newsletter

Inside:

President's Corner....Wings Over Willapa Festival 2021....Feature Article - Kayaking the Willapa....Pics and Poets....Willapa Nature Notes....Volunteer Opportunities....EcoSense....AmazonSmile

President's Corner

By Charles Pelizza

It's summertime! The long-awaited reprieve from chilly temperatures, cloudy rainy days, and the almost weekly gale winds, is finally here. Our northern migrants prolonged their trek to northern climates this year. Notably, I watched the plumage of dunlins change from a few small, black spots to large, ebony streaks that look painted by an artist's widest brush. In the next few months, we will begin to see smaller groups of non-breeding shorebirds return on their southern migration. It's time for us to change our patterns of activity as well.

As we emerge from our pandemic bubbles, and our comfort level with being out and about increases, many of us look forward to travel. If you are heading outdoors to a nearby state or national park, do not forget the network of national wildlife refuges to explore. There are 567 refuges, at least one in every state, five marine national monuments, and 38 wetland management districts. Start here with our own Willapa Refuge, but do not forget the others.

Refuge trails have finally dried and the waters of Willapa Bay are warming up. And as you will read, taking to the water in a kayak is a great way to experience our natural wonders. Just remember to pay attention to the tides and weather to keep your adventures safe and enjoyable!

I would again like to encourage you to pass along your inspired prose and

pictures to include in our Poets and PICS section. We have a new contributor this issue that I hope you will enjoy. And what easier way for you to be published, than to send us what your pen, brush, or camera has created for us all to enjoy.

Look for what you can do to encourage wildlife to visit your home in the EcoSense article about backyard wildlife habitat. Not only will you like watching the antics and beauty of our wild fur and feathered neighbors, but you will be providing them with some often needed resources. Just remember that we want to attract visits by wild critters by providing habitat and possibly some supplemental food (i.e., bird feeders), but we do not want wildlife to develop a dependence that causes them to become a nuisance or safety concern.

And last, a hearty thanks to you all who have renewed your memberships and provided donations. And a special thanks to those who have supported the restoration of the Art Trail. There has been considerable work done to reopen the trail, though replacing the art pieces is still in the planning stages. Another way you can help is to sign up with the Amazon Smile program, highlighted later on in this newsletter. Stay tuned for other local shopping opportunities to benefit the Friends and the Refuge.

So, till the fall season rolls around with our next newsletter, be safe, be happy, and get outdoors! Make sure to spend some quality time each day appreciating and experiencing the natural wonders that surround us all.

Photo by Pat Welle



Wings Over Willapa (WoW) Festival 2021

It's back! One of the finest Northwest Birding and Nature festivals returns for its third year.

Come join other outdoor enthusiasts on September 24, 25, and 26 for a variety of outdoor events on the Long Beach Peninsula. Right now we have 18 trips, two art classes, and three presentations scheduled with more to be added. Appropriate pandemic precautions will be implemented as needed at the time.

Registration begins August 1. Events such as the Pelagic Boat Trip and trips to Long Island sell out fast, so mark August 1 on your calendar and look for registration reminders. Festival registration is \$5.00 per person with additional costs for some individual events.

Our Nature Play Day will offer free activities for children and families at the Veterans Field, in downtown Long Beach. from 10 am to 2 pm on Saturday, September 25.

This year we will hold an online auction, which will feature quality items and events from donors across the Northwest and will close at noon on Saturday, September 25. If you are interested in donating items or events for the auction, please contact Sylvia Pelizza at 808-772-1675 or sylviapelizza@gmail.com.

Don't miss this opportunity to visit the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, which the New York Times featured in this article, "Birds by the Billions: A Guide to Spring's Avian Parade". <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/15/travel/birding-america.html>.

Feature - Kayaking the Willapa

By David Campiche

Willapa Bay unfurls in the first dawn light. The water is still, for now. Three friends launch their kayaks at the Riekkola Unit, one of the boating access points at the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. The Riekkola Unit, near the new Refuge Headquarters, offers an easy entrance into one of the most beautiful estuaries in the country. Other access points are on the bay's east shore off Route 101 and the Nahcotta Port.

Morning moves as smoothly as the kayaks, each slipping through the saltwater estuary with all the fluid motion of a seal. In front of the boats, waterfowl explode, darting through the salty air in twists and turns. As the tide ebbs we are carried toward bigger water, into Willapa Bay. In the distance, Long Island extends its bountiful landscape. We paddle on. The bay is large, nearly 30 miles from here to Tokeland on the county's north end. Leadbetter Point, at the northern tip of the peninsula, offers fine hiking, bird watching and ample adventure.

Those same opportunities are available at Smoky Hollow on the east side of Long Island. From landing it's a short walk to the Don Bonker Cedar Grove, a natural wonder with ancient Western red cedars and a cornucopia of flora and fauna. There are a half-dozen designated camping spots on the island. A traveler can feel like Robinson Crusoe as they explore the coastline of the seven-mile island.

A northwest wind pushes us back to Riekkola, back to a warm home and maybe a meal of oysters or clams gathered on the shore. Come see us. Chase the mood. Chase your muse.

Don Bonker Cedar Grove on Long Island - photo by Pat Welle



Pics and Poets

Common Terns - photo by Pat Welle



[Submit pics or poems here](#)

Which shorebird is this?

So, what do you think? Yellowlegs or dowitcher? Light is not always perfect when trying to identify birds. Let us know what you think it is and we will let you know your responses in the next newsletter.

Photo by Pat Welle



Submit your thoughts on this bird ID

Nature Notes

By Bob Duke

Our weekly radio program, [Willapa Nature Notes](#), is entering its fourth year of bringing our wildlife refuge to the world. Listen to it every Tuesday morning at 8:42 AM and Saturdays at 1:00 PM on the radio at 91.9 FM, on your smartphone using the Tune-in app, and online at <https://coastradio.org/>. Our catalog of previous broadcasts can be [found here](#). Is there anything special you would like to hear on the program? Interested in writing a two-minute show? Contact the producer, Bob Duke, at beachduke@gmail.com.

- June 15-19, Summer Solstice
- June 22nd and 25 Our Musical Interlude bird calls part 1, Dr. Madeline Kalbach
- June 28 and July 6, Shorebirds by Jackie Ferrier
- July 13 and 17, Our Musical Interlude bird calls part 2, Dr. Madeline Kalbach

Volunteer Opportunities

The Refuge is looking for volunteers for 2021! Volunteers can work as individuals or in groups if they follow current COVID safety requirements. Each volunteer opportunity is different and may require varying skill and fitness levels. Some volunteer opportunities include:

- Photography of refuge lands and wildlife
- Writing (monthly "Nature Notes" series for local radio)
- Trash and litter cleanups
- Trail maintenance/ "Adopt a Trail" program
- Plantings
- Invasive Species Removal Work Parties
- Biological monitoring (water bird surveys, etc.)

For more information, go to volunteers@friendsofwillaparefuge.org

EcoSense

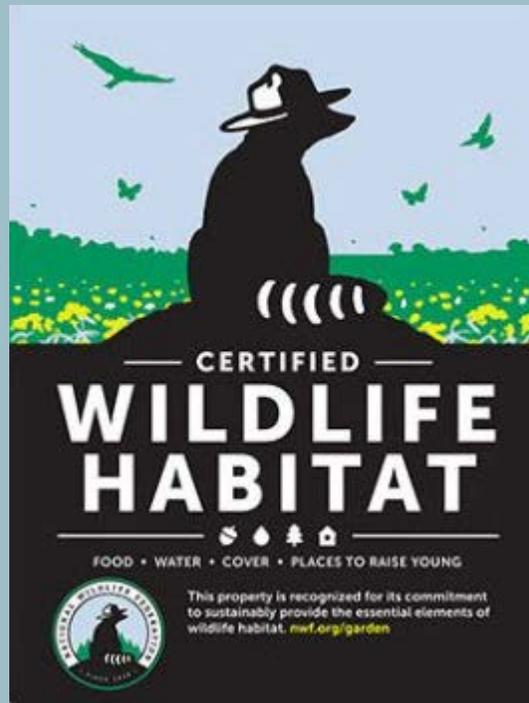
By Rebecca Lexa, Master Naturalist

Want to help the Refuge from home? Turn your yard or garden into a wildlife habitat! The more places wildlife can go, both on and off Refuge land, the more successful they will be. And since habitat loss is the leading cause of species endangerment and extinction, every piece of restored habitat counts, whether that's hundreds of acres of wetlands, or your own back yard.

These programs offer help. Washington State's Habitat at Home program offers some simple, accessible guidelines for making a yard a good place for wildlife; you can find out about it at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/living/backyard>.

The National Wildlife Federation's Certified Wildlife Habitat program promotes turning your yard, garden, even a container garden, into a safe haven for wildlife. Info is available at <https://www.nwf.org/garden-for-wildlife/certify>

So what are you waiting for? Get outside, and explore how your yard can be shared with wildlife for the benefit of all!



You Shop, Amazon Gives to Us

Want to help make a difference while you shop in Amazon, at no extra cost to you? Simply follow the instructions below to select "Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge" as your charity.

Go to smile.amazon.com on your web browser or activate AmazonSmile in the Amazon Shopping app on your phone within the Settings or Programs & Features menu. On your web browser, you can add a bookmark smile.amazon.com to make it easy to return and start your shopping with AmazonSmile.

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Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge
PO Box 845
Ocean Park, WA 98640-0845