

Our Big Backyard



Metro

Fall 2019

Salmon Homecoming

Indigenous community members incorporate their traditions in popular annual event.

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Parks and nature news

From January to April over the past five years, Metro has collaborated with Clean Water Services, The Wetlands Conservancy, Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, and (most recently) the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge to survey frog and salamander eggs in natural areas across the region. This year 62 volunteers surveyed 17 sites, completing a total of 525 hours in the field tracking northern red-legged frogs and northwest salamanders. The amphibians serve as indicator species, which can be used to gauge whether restoration efforts are helping more native amphibians thrive. **Turn to page 8 to learn how you can help with the next counts.**
Photo by Diego Gioseffi

Follow OregonMetro on social media

See more photos from Metro parks and natural areas by following OregonMetro on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.

If you picnic at Blue Lake or take your kids to the Oregon Zoo, enjoy symphonies at the Schnitz or auto shows at the convention center, put out your trash or drive your car – we’ve already crossed paths.

So, hello. We’re Metro – nice to meet you.

In a metropolitan area as big as Portland, we can do a lot of things better together. Join us to help the region prepare for a happy, healthy future.

Metro Council President

Lynn Peterson

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- Christine Lewis, District 2
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Auditor

Brian Evans



If you have a disability and need accommodations, call 503-220-2781, or call Metro’s TDD line at 503-797-1804. If you require a sign language interpreter, call at least 48 hours in advance. Activities marked with this symbol are wheelchair accessible:

Bus and MAX information

503-238-RIDE (7433) or trimet.org

Stay in touch with news, stories and things to do.

- oregonmetro.gov/parksandnaturenews
- facebook.com/oregonmetro
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Pets policy

To protect plants, wildlife and people, Metro does not allow pets at most regional parks and natural areas. Pets can damage sensitive habitat and threaten wildlife the region has worked to protect. In natural areas where pets are not allowed, people see more wildlife and get closer to it. Seeing-eye dogs or other service animals are allowed. Please bring cleanup materials.



Scouters Mountain Nature Park is a great place to see wildlife, including this deer spotted last spring near the picnic shelter at the top of the park.
Photo by Cristle Jose



More than 300 people attended the Star Party at Glendoveer Golf and Tennis Center July 13. Lindsey Murphy, the creator of The Fab Lab with Crazy Aunt Lindsey, was a hit with the kids, along with the viewing of the moon, Saturn and Jupiter. *Photo by Cristle Jose*



Metro and Clean Water Services are collaborating to improve habitat at Metro’s new Beef Bend Natural Area on the Tualatin River. Early work is focusing on riparian habitat near the river, reducing invasive weeds and increasing native plant cover and diversity. *Photo courtesy of Sheepscot Creative*



This great horned owl fledgling was spotted this spring at a Metro natural area on Sauvie Island. When these owlets are 6 to 8 weeks old, they venture from their nest and appear to have fallen. However, they’ve actually fledged. In natural areas, bushes and smaller trees allow the birds to climb and develop their leg muscles until they can fly and catch their own prey. If you come across a young owl, let it be. Its parents are likely watching over it nearby. *Photo by Jonathan Todd*

Like what you see?

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On the cover: Judy BlueHorse Skelton, Nez Perce/Cherokee, leads a native plant walk at Salmon Homecoming last year. *Photo by Joshua Manus*

Parks and nature bond measure



If passed, proposed \$475 million bond on November 2019 ballot would protect water quality, restore fish and wildlife habitat, improve access to nature

Voters across greater Portland will be asked in November 2019 to consider a property tax measure that, if passed, would be used to purchase land, restore fish and wildlife habitat and complete trails through Metro’s parks and nature system. Metro manages 17,000 acres of regional parks, trails and natural areas, and provides funding for local parks and nature projects.

If passed, the bond measure would maintain the current tax rate of \$0.19 per \$1,000 of assessed value. Community members gave input on the \$475 million proposal, which would fund projects across Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties. If the bond passes, criteria for selecting projects would include reducing impacts of climate change and implementing Metro’s Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

If voters approve a parks and nature bond renewal in November, how would Metro spend the money?

Land purchase and restoration, \$155 million

Metro would purchase land from willing sellers and restore it to improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat. Projects would be selected from 24 distinct geographic areas based on attributes such as the potential to restore stream banks, oak and prairie habitat, or their cultural significance.

Metro park improvements, \$98 million

Metro would complete nature parks such as Chehalem Ridge in Washington County, increase access for people with disabilities and maintain water systems, trails, bathrooms and other amenities at parks such as Oxbow and Blue Lake.

Nature in Neighborhoods grants, \$40 million

Metro would award grants for capital projects to purchase land, restore fish and wildlife habitat, or provide access to nature. Priority would be given to projects that reduce the impacts of climate change and implement Metro’s Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Local parks and nature projects, \$92 million

Metro would distribute money to cities, counties and park providers across greater Portland to purchase land, restore fish and wildlife habitat, and build and maintain parks in local communities.

Walking and biking trails, \$40 million

Metro would secure rights to build new trails and construct missing sections, completing projects identified in a regional plan for a network of walking and biking paths.

Complex community projects, \$50 million

Metro would provide funding for public projects that also address other community issues such as jobs, housing and transportation. This program area would include \$20 million to help provide public access to Willamette Falls in downtown Oregon City.

Funding amounts from Metro Resolution 19-4988. All numbers are approximate. If the bond measure does not pass, the property tax rate for Metro’s parks and nature bond program would drop to \$0 per \$1,000 of assessed value by 2026 and the above projects would not be completed.



How the bond would work

If passed, the bond would:

- Continue a property tax at the current rate of \$0.19 per \$1,000 of assessed value
- Cost about \$4 per month for a home assessed at \$250,000
- Raise \$475 million
- Fund projects in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties
- Be distributed to six program areas

oregonmetro.gov/parksandnaturebond
oregonmetro.gov/equity



3 questions with Violeta Rubiani

Story by Izzy Escobar
Photography by Jonathan Mayer

Violeta Rubiani serves on Metro’s Parks and Nature Equity Advisory Committee. She was born and raised in Paraguay and has lived in Oregon since 2000.

She is the grants director at the MRG Foundation and previously worked as a program associate at Meyer Memorial Trust. Rubiani is a graduate of the Pan Immigrant Leadership and Organizing Training (PILOT) at Unite Oregon, a nonprofit working to build an intercultural movement for justice.

Q. Why were you interested in serving on the committee?

A: I thought it was a great opportunity to have my voice, my perspective or my community’s perspective heard at Metro. At that time, I had been working on equity issues at Meyer Memorial Trust for a couple of years, and I sort of started to understand how marginalized communities hardly ever have a seat at the table. It’s important that when we have the opportunity, that we show up. Change is not going to happen only from person to person, but it has to happen at the institutional level.

Q. How does your work outside of the committee bring perspective to decision-making?

A. Because the committee is so diverse and includes so many voices, we are able to give the full picture of what’s problematic about (an issue), how it came to be like that or ask questions about why the decision is being made. Because of the work I do outside of the committee, I’m bringing a lens or an understanding of some of the issues that affect all marginalized communities. Every member of the committee probably has expertise. But when you take all of those individual perspectives and take into account the larger voice, that’s where I think our work could be really impactful.

Q. What does an equity lens mean to you?

A. Equality is giving everybody the same. To me, equity is giving people what they need. I don’t think you can have equity without listening to diverse perspectives. I think for so many of our institutions, that has been the reason why systematic inequities are perpetuated, because we don’t have enough voices at the table. If we don’t understand where our communities are coming from, what their lens is, then how are we going to be able to serve them? I read recently that equity is the ability to have options. If you really want equity, then you really need to understand what would bring people to the table, assuming they want to be at the table.

Equity Advisory Committee provides diverse views on Metro’s parks and nature policies

Story by Cristle Jose. Photography by Erich Pacheco



Faridah Haron has been involved with the refugee community in Portland for many years. Born in Malaysia and raised in Singapore, she’s lived in Portland for 30 years. She was always interested in the parks system but noticed “missing pieces” whenever she visited a park, like the lack of translations for signage and programming.

When she heard about Metro’s Parks and Nature Equity Advisory Committee, she thought it could make a difference in how communities of color experience parks.

“I want the park to be a meaningful place where people can go and say, ‘I belong here. This is my place. This is my home. This is my park,’” Haron added.

Since January, Haron and 14 other people representing diverse groups have been sharing their input as part of Metro’s new Parks and Nature Equity Advisory Committee. Metro staff play a supporting role while committee members provide feedback, adding a community-led racial equity lens to shape the department’s planning processes, policy formation, and outcomes on projects and system-wide efforts.

The Metro Council approved the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in 2016, committing the regional government to address systemic inequities using a racial equity strategy. The new committee is one way that Metro is working to increase equity, diversity and inclusion in its parks and nature work.

From nearly 40 applicants, 15 people were selected to serve two-year terms with the option to renew up to two times. At least one member of the committee must be an immigrant or refugee, American Indian or Alaska Native, a senior, a young adult, a person living with a disability, and a person who works in the natural resource, park or environmental education field.

The committee started in January and meets once a month for two hours. Within the first four months, members provided input on four big projects: the special-use permit process, the parks and nature bond measure on the November ballot, restoration contracts, and the Community Partnerships program with community-based organizations.

“That was a lot,” said Gaylen Beatty, the parks and nature special projects manager overseeing the committee. “They said that

From left to right: Front row: Violeta Rubiani, Alexandra Richardson, Sprinavasa Brown. Back row: Saara Hirsi, Dasha Foerster, park ranger Mallory Crozier, Joannie Tang, Jessica Rojas, James Holt, Gerardo Lemus, Taren Evans, Raishel Covington, Chariti Montez, Parks and Nature director Jon Blasher. Not pictured: Kim Cameron-Dominguez, Faridah Haron and Kolini Fusitua.

rush of time is really hard, and we need to slow down, build relationships, continue the trust building and develop the shared analysis so we can work on these root causes of inequity.”

Serving on the committee provides a unique experience, said Dasha Foerster, a first-generation immigrant from Ukraine.

“Seeking perspectives and input sometimes means discovering great fellowships, but other times it means having hard conversations,” Foerster, who is representing the Slavic community, wrote in an email. “It takes consistency, willing presence and accountability for trust to manifest, but it is worth it! The incredible people who participate on the committee and facilitate and support the work of the committee are getting it right, and I have great hopes for the outcomes of this Equity Advisory Committee’s work.”

In June, the group met at Graham Oaks Nature Park in Wilsonville so Metro staff and committee members could get to know each other better.

“They have hope, and they have concern,” Beatty said. “They’ve been in committees before, and so where is the realm of influence, especially in those leadership positions?”

“I was wondering how far this committee would go,” Haron said. “The committee would ask difficult questions and raise difficult issues, but the Metro staff were committed to the goals of the EAC, and they would struggle with us together and try to address those issues. If they do not know, they would go to other resources that can help guide us.”

The group has also spent time learning about the history of the conservation movement in America, which has its roots in taking land from Black and Indigenous people to create public parks and spaces intended for white settlers. In the coming months, there will be smaller projects, possible training and leadership opportunities, Beatty said.

“I am excited in exploring the things that we don’t know,” she said. “I don’t know what we’re trying to get to. All I know is we’ll know it when they see it in their community.”

Portland woman gives birth to breech baby at Blue Lake Regional Park

Story by Cristle Jose. Photography by Cristle Jose and Matan Gold



On a hot and sunny day on June 11, Delilah Villegas and her family visited Blue Lake Regional Park for a barbecue gathering and for the kids to cool off at the splash pad. The Southeast Portland family frequents the park every other week, and this particular visit came a week before the mom of two was scheduled to give birth to her third child via cesarean section.

The unborn baby had other plans.

Villegas’ water broke shortly after they arrived, while she was using the bathroom at Blue Lake.

“I couldn’t stop peeing,” she said. “I got up and went to the next bathroom and was crying to my sister-in-law, ‘Can you guys help me?’ and then I saw his legs hanging out from me, and that’s when everybody asked for help.”

One of her sisters-in-law, Jeceri Mayo, noticed a few of her family members grouped around the bathroom stall, so she went to check out what was going on.

“I was like ‘Really?! Are you going to have a baby right here?’ and she’s like, ‘Yeah!’” Mayo recalled.

After that, Mayo says Villegas screamed in pain. The baby was in the breech position, with the legs coming out first instead of the usual head-first position.

Park ranger Rena Shereck heard the scream while patrolling a nearby parking lot and rushed to the scene.

“I knew that kind of scream because I’ve heard it before, but this was the first birth that I’ve actually been able to assist (with),” Shereck said.

She called 911 and relayed instructions to Mayo and a couple of women who came over to help. When the baby was born, he initially wasn’t breathing.



Shereck instructed the women with different approaches to get the baby to breathe before they would consider attempting chest compressions.

“I put my finger in (his mouth) to try to get the stuff that was blocking his airway,” Mayo said. “When I felt him breathe a little bit, I tried to get the rest of the stuff out, and (one woman) was patting his back to get him to wake him up.”

After a few nerve-wracking moments, he started to breathe.

Shereck said waiting for the baby to start breathing and crying was probably one of the scariest moments of her life.

“People who work in labor and delivery do this on a daily basis,” Shereck pointed out. “When you come out to a park like (Blue Lake) where it’s family friendly and you’re out for a barbecue and having a good time, you don’t expect something like that to happen. To be able to assist in something like that is just absolutely amazing, and it’s an experience I will take with me for the rest of my life.”

When paramedics arrived, they confirmed the baby and mom would be fine and took them and the baby’s father to Randall Children’s Hospital. They named the baby Levi after his father and nicknamed him Baby Blue.

Villegas is also mom to Maribel, 5, and Alevina, 2. She said Levi is a calm boy who



Clockwise from top: Jeceri Mayo holds her nephew, Levi, as he sleeps. Park ranger Rena Shereck, Levi, Mayo and Delilah Villegas meet up in the picnic area where Villegas’ family had gathered June 11. The bathroom where Villegas gave birth to Levi is in the background. Villegas hugs Shereck.

doesn’t cry much and sleeps through the night, especially in comparison to his two older siblings when they were babies.

“He only wakes up when he’s hungry or (needs a diaper change),” she said. “(My older children) are happy with him. They like everything about him.”

The stay-at-home mom returned to Blue Lake three weeks later – the first time since delivering Levi. During the visit, she also introduced Levi to Shereck for the first time.

“(Coming back here) doesn’t feel weird or anything,” Villegas said. “It’s just crazy because I had a baby in the bathroom, and I didn’t even think that was going to happen. I’m really happy because if it wasn’t for Jeceri, I don’t know where I would be or my son would be. She’s the one that saved his life.”

For Mayo, visiting Blue Lake from now on will be different.

“I can’t come here and not think about what had happened,” she said as Levi slept soundly in her arms. “I know it’s going to be something far more special to us than what it is now.”



Salmon Homecoming

Salmon Homecoming grows with Indigenous traditions over the years

Story by Cristle Jose
Photography by Elayna Yussen
and Joshua Manus

This page, clockwise from top: Ed Edmo, Shoshone-Bannock, shares traditional Indigenous stories about salmon. A woman shows her salmon etching. A child looks at developing salmon eggs in test tubes.

Opposite page, clockwise from top: Savahna Jackson prepares salmon soup for volunteers at Salmon Homecoming last year. Clifton Bruno, Wasco, demonstrates the traditional Salmon Bake. A Bow & Arrow Culture Club volunteer prepares fry bread. Visitors get a closer look at a mushroom and enjoy a stroll at Oxbow.



At Salmon Homecoming every autumn at Oxbow Regional Park, visitors can hear the birds singing, the Sandy River flowing and the wind rustling through the trees. Once the event is underway, visitors can smell the salmon baking, soup cooking, and hear the sounds of children playing and laughing along with traditional songs. People are also gathered along the Sandy River, looking to see if the salmon have returned home to spawn and complete their life cycles.

Two years ago, Indigenous community members helped re-envision Salmon Homecoming to incorporate their cultural traditions into a popular event that, for decades, had been framed around western concepts of nature education. Now the two-day event includes Indigenous storytelling, tea preparation, drumming, a Salmon Bake, and native plant walks introducing people to Indigenous perspectives on plants, animals and water.

“(This event) is an invitation to deepen understanding of Indigenous cultures and practices,” said Judy BlueHorse Skelton, an assistant professor of Indigenous Nations Studies at Portland State University. “It’s an experiential event. People are invited to participate, observe and experience our traditional practices when it comes to salmon.”

At gatherings like Salmon Homecoming, prayers and songs are offered. The care and the tending that’s practiced with land and salmon are cultural protocols that are being



followed, said BlueHorse Skelton, who helps plan the event.

“They may not be obvious to some, but part of coming and participating in Salmon Homecoming is to be part of honoring the salmon,” she said. “We are in salmon nation. Salmon is our relative. We have a responsibility to protect and instruct others and make sure salmon will be here for future generations.”

Christine and Clifton Bruno started hosting a booth in the mid-90s, when the event was called Salmon Festival. As Indigenous artists, they brought photos and information about salmon, demonstrated bead work and basketry, made and sold arts and crafts and shared information focusing on Native American culture.

Compared to Salmon Homecoming, the festival was bigger but not necessarily better, Christine Bruno said. For instance, Salmon Festival added a stage for speakers as the event grew, but she saw that as a performance, which was unnecessary.

“Today, we want more focus on salmon and nature,” Christine Bruno said. “We want storytellers standing on the ground (rather) than on the stage. We’re really focusing on people coming out, not for a big show, but for an experience.”

As the event grew over the years, the Brunos added a Salmon Bake demonstration and also made salmon soup.

“Soup will be made from salmon heads and backbones, which is very healthy and shows how



no part of the salmon goes to waste,” Christine Bruno said in an email. “Our son, Joshua, is one of the younger story carriers, bringing traditional teachings – focused on Northwest culture – to today’s generation.”

There was no large-scale salmon celebration between 2009 and 2017, when Salmon Homecoming started. During the gap, Metro offered guided salmon viewing and education programming.

Prior to the Indigenous community overhauling the event in 2017, Metro staff planned most of the event. Staff realized that their western ways for teaching environmental education did not include telling accurate histories and stories of Indigenous celebrations.

“In nature education, you’re inherently speaking about the land and the natural elements of the land,” said Alice Froehlich, nature education supervisor. “As an education team, none of us were Indigenous people, (and) we’re not from here.”

To bridge that gap, Metro hired resource specialists to improve the nature education programming to be more respectful and accurate when speaking about Indigenous peoples, places and traditional uses of plants.

“Those relationships led to work on Salmon Homecoming,” Froehlich said. “We contracted to co-create the event with members of the community. That’s when the Salmon Bake came back and other elements that they would like to share.”

Salmon Homecoming is just one of many experiences the Indigenous community prepares for each year.

The community also plans the Indigenous People’s Day Celebration, which includes storytelling, drumming, dancing and craftmaking at the Oregon Zoo. The Brunos also help plan Salmon Celebration at Westmoreland Park, which celebrates the restoration of Crystal Springs Creek that brought wild salmon back to the city. Metro Nature in Neighborhoods grants have supported the restoration of the creek. The Brunos have been involved with multiple events at Tryon Creek State Park.

During Salmon Homecoming in 2017, torrential rainfall led to the cancellation of the second day. This inspired Indigenous community members to gather fallen cedar trees to build a traditional cedar plank shelter for future events at Oxbow. As a traditional practice, cedar logs are split into planks by hand and put together into a shelter, when needed.

In the future, they hope to provide a cultural educational experience for schools and the public at Oxbow or another site. This can include anything related to salmon culture and botany, such as presentations, storytelling, games and a Salmon Bake.

“There are so many things Oxbow has to offer, and it would be really nice to do more of that,” Christine Bruno added.

| SAT. OCT. 19 | SUN. OCT. 20 |
|--|--------------|
| <h3>Salmon Homecoming</h3> <p>Witness the ancient cycle of Chinook salmon returning to the river of their birth to spawn, creating the next generation. Salmon Homecoming is a collaboration with the Native American community to honor the salmon by sharing traditional sciences, stories, songs and a Salmon Bake. Come out to Oxbow Regional Park to spot the salmon in the Sandy River, a designated National Wild and Scenic River. Learn about and enjoy the 1,000 acres of old-growth forest, hiking trails, river beaches and wildlife.</p> <p>All activities</p> <p>Oxbow Regional Park \$5/car, \$7/bus. All ages. Registration not required. Difficulty: easy.</p> <p>View salmon</p> <p>Join Metro staff, volunteers and community members at the river’s edge. Get help spotting spawning salmon and learn about the behavior and life cycle of salmon. Borrow a pair of polarized glasses for the best fish viewing.</p> <p>Oct. 19 and 20, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.</p> <p>Hot drinks</p> <p>Enjoy a cup of hot chocolate or cider. Guaranteed to take the chill off and lift your spirits for a walk in the autumn woods. First-come, first-served.</p> <p>Oct. 19 and 20, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.</p> <p>Plant walks</p> <p>Come participate in a native plant walk led by an Indigenous community member and learn more about the unique ecology of our region.</p> <p>Oct. 19 and 20, meet at Alder Shelter 1 to 2:30 p.m.</p> <p>Sandy River restoration walk</p> <p>Take a walk along the Sandy River and learn about the restoration work happening to improve water quality and restore habitat for native fish, such as salmon, steelhead and Pacific lamprey. On this walk, participants will look for native fish spawning in the river and learn the characteristics of healthy fish habitat.</p> <p>Oct. 19, meet at Alder Shelter 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. or 3 to 4 p.m.</p> <p>Lichen and moss</p> <p>Diminutive but darling, Northwest mosses and lichens are renowned for their abundance and diversity. Grab your hand lens and join a naturalist in taking a closer look into the enchanting world of mosses and lichens. Learn about their ecology and how to identify them.</p> <p>Oct. 20, meet at Alder Shelter 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. or 2:30 to 4 p.m.</p> | |



Get involved

CLASSES AND EVENTS

SAT. NOV. 9

Fall planting at Oxbow

Metro is looking for volunteers to plant native plants in the forest and along the Sandy River. More than 1,000 plants will be installed during this event. No experience is needed. Gloves, tools, training and plants are provided. Rain or shine. Free hot cocoa and roasted marshmallows!

Oxbow Regional Park
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Free. All ages.
Registration required. Difficulty: easy.

SAT. OCT. 5, 19 SAT. NOV. 9, 23
SAT. DEC. 7, 14

Volunteer ventures

Help care for rare native seeds, bulbs and plant materials that support regional restoration projects. Fall activities include harvesting and planting native bulbs, cleaning seeds and transplanting seedlings. No experience is needed. Gloves, tools, water and snacks provided.

Native Plant Center
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Free. All ages.
Registration required. Difficulty: easy.

SAT. NOV. 2, 9

Lichen of the Pacific Northwest

Diminutive but darling, Northwest lichens are renowned for their abundance and diversity. Grab your hand lens and join a naturalist to take a closer look into the enchanting world of lichens. Learn about their ecology and how to identify them.


Nov. 2:
Cooper Mountain Nature Park
Meet at the Nature House
11 a.m. to 1 p.m. or 2 to 4 p.m.
\$10/person. All ages but geared towards adults.
Registration required. Difficulty: moderate.

Nov. 9:
Oxbow Regional Park
1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
\$6/person, \$11/family; \$5/car, \$7/bus.
All ages but geared towards adults.
Registration required. Difficulty: easy.

THU. NOV. 7

Introduction to mushrooms

Have you ever seen a mushroom in the woods and wondered what it was? In this talk, mushroom enthusiast Leah Bendlin will teach you the basics of mushroom identification. Learn how to start sorting species by their physical characteristics and ecology. Bring in your own finds for hands-on practice.

Oregon Zoo Education Center
7 to 9 p.m.
Free. Ages 12 and older.
Registration required. Difficulty: easy. 

SAT. NOV. 9

Moss of the Pacific Northwest

Diminutive but darling, Northwest mosses are renowned for their abundance and diversity. Grab your hand lens and join a naturalist in taking a closer look into the enchanting world of mosses. Learn about their ecology and how to identify them.

Oxbow Regional Park
10 a.m. to noon
\$6/person, \$11/family; \$5/car, \$7/bus.
All ages but geared towards adults.
Registration required. Difficulty: easy.



Help find frog and salamander eggs

From late January through April, volunteers pull on chest waders and visit wetlands throughout the region to search for four types of frog and salamander egg masses. The four amphibians serve as indicator species, which can be used to gauge whether regional restoration efforts are helping more native amphibians thrive. It also helps scientists survey their numbers as well as the overall health of wetlands. Learn more and sign up to be notified when the volunteer orientation is scheduled: bit.ly/2wjMtJT

Registration, accessibility information

Unless otherwise noted, register and pay at oregonmetro.gov/calendar

Registration and payment required at least 48 hours in advance for all classes. Classes with low enrollment will be canceled. For more information or to request communications aids, sign language interpreters and other modifications: Nature education team, 503-220-2782.

For additional nature classes, volunteer opportunities and events, please visit oregonmetro.gov/calendar



Free Parking Days

Get out and explore nature!

Enjoy free parking at Oxbow and Blue Lake regional parks, Broughton Beach, Chinook Landing Marine Park, and M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp on Oct. 17; Nov. 11, 21 and 29; and Dec. 19.

Parking at all other Metro parks and boat ramps is free year-round.

SAT. DEC. 7

Westside wetland adventure


On the western outskirts of the urban growth boundary sits a Willamette Valley peat wetland, where birds abound and elk move silently across the landscape. Join a naturalist on a late autumn walk exploring the natural history of Metro's newest nature park.

Killin Wetlands Nature Park
10 a.m. to noon
\$6/person, \$11/family. All ages.
Registration required. Difficulty: easy.

SAT. JAN. 11

Winter pruning techniques

Join Metro arborist Howard Rasmussen for a two-hour classroom session on the many aspects of pruning trees in the winter. Emphasis will be placed on fruit trees, but the basic principles apply to ornamental and wilderness trees. Subjects will include safety, tools, terminology, desired outcomes and how to get there. Optional one-hour winter twig nature walk to follow the classroom session. Meet at the Nature House. The classroom session is wheelchair-accessible, but the nature walk is not.

Cooper Mountain Nature Park
1 to 4 p.m.
\$10/person. Ages 16 and older.
Registration required. Difficulty: easy. 



Field guide

ORENCO WOODS NATURE PARK

Story by Ashley Conley. Photography by Sofia Basto

Rock Creek, home to winter steelhead, cutthroat trout and Pacific lamprey, gives life to the 44-acre Orenco Woods Nature Park. A partnership between Metro and the City of Hillsboro, the park is bisected by the Rock Creek Trail, providing the community bountiful ways of connecting with nature.

Indigenous peoples, including the Kalapuya, inhabited this area since time immemorial and used fire to manage the white oak savannas that historically covered much of the region. The land provided a rich supply of acorns, camas, hazelnuts and wildlife. In the 1800s, white settlers forcibly relocated Indigenous tribes to reservations. Today, Indigenous community members continue to care for this place and to reconnect their culture with the land.

In 1906 the Oregon Nursery Company moved here from Salem. The nursery, which the town of Orenco is name after, developed a versatile apple used for desserts and ciders. In the 1910s, one million Orenco apple trees were planted with plans to sell them overseas. World War I led to setbacks for the nursery, which closed in 1927. The town of Orenco dissolved in 1938.

The site morphed into a golf course for several decades. Plans to build a housing development in 2006 stalled during the recession, allowing the land to become a nature park. When the golf greens were removed, historic acorns sprouted and began growing into oak trees.

Today, the park boasts an impressive art display by Patrick Dougherty. Made of woven willow and red dogwood branches,



Orenco Woods Nature Park

7100 NE BIRCH ST., HILLSBORO

DIRECTIONS

From U.S. 26, take the Northwest Cornelius Pass Road exit and head south. Take a right on Northeast Cornell Road, then left on Northwest 231st Avenue, which will be renamed Northeast Century Boulevard. Take a left on Northeast Birch Street; the park is at the end of the street. The Orenco stop on the MAX Blue Line is a short distance away.

KNOW WHEN YOU GO

Park open sunrise to sunset. Pets allowed on leash on Rock Creek Trail only. Hillsboro Parks & Recreation Department provides day-to-day management.

AMENITIES

Restrooms, picnic shelter, nature play area, trails.

oregonmetro.gov/orencowoods

In the neighborhood After exploring the park, head to nearby Orenco Station, where you can grab a bite at a restaurant, shop, enjoy a drink or participate in various community events. In late summer, enjoy a trip to the Oregon International Air Show, just a few miles away at the Hillsboro Airport. For those who want to spend an entire day in nature, head to Jackson Bottom Wetlands and Tualatin Hills Nature Park, both just six miles from Orenco Woods.

the temporary work consists of several large faces that peek out from a line of old-growth Douglas fir trees. Bring the whole family to enjoy the extraordinary art, a creative nature play area, spectacular new bridges spanning the creek, and trails through the oak savanna and upland forest.

For more details about all 19 Metro destinations, visit oregonmetro.gov/parks

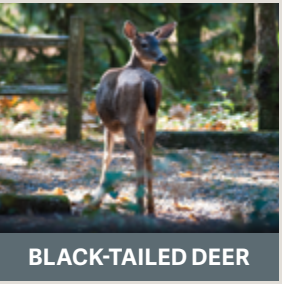
Be on the lookout!



GREAT BLUE HERON



RED-TAILED HAWK



BLACK-TAILED DEER



DOUGLAS SPIREA

Season-by-season highlights

FALL: With leaves falling along the creek's edge, animals can be more easily spotted. Industrious beavers leave their mark along the creek, with chewed sticks and territorial scent mounds. Dawn and dusk are great times to see these iconic Oregon creatures in their natural habitat. Black-tailed deer are often in small family groups this time of year, making them easier to spot.

WINTER: Red-tailed hawks can be seen throughout the year, and may be nesting in the tall Douglas fir trees. As winter settles in, the hawks start their courtship displays. Look for two or more large raptors effortlessly soaring in wide circles in the winter skies. You may see the big raptors dive or extend their legs in a dazzling display of skill and mastery of flight.

SPRING: With a suite of micro habitats, Orenco Woods offers migrating songbirds a place to rest and feed in the oak savannas, upland forest and riparian edges. Some may even decide to nest in this desirable location. Grab your binoculars and tune your ears to the vibrant sounds of spring that echo throughout the landscape.

SUMMER: Insects depend on outside sources for body heat, and they operate best when the temperatures are warm. Take an evening walk and listen to the hums of the pollinators as they search for delicious nectar. Look for the yellow-faced bumble bee on the south side of the trails that wind through the park.



Tools for living

GARBAGE PICK-UP SHINES LIGHT ON
STORIES WE CAN'T SEE

Story and photography by Faith Cathcart

Juan Garcia rises early each day to pick up garbage dumped in public spaces.

As a crew supervisor for Metro’s RID Patrol, he has helped clean up much of the 392 tons of trash that RID crews collected last year around greater Portland. Garcia is upbeat and brings optimism to his work. “I’d rather focus on the positive rather than the negative,” he says. “It makes the day go by easier.”

In addition to picking up items like soggy sofas and broken televisions that regularly get cast aside in neighborhoods around the region, Garcia has begun picking up white garbage bags with Metro’s phone number printed in bold on the side.

The bags are part of a new and growing program that brings garbage collection services to people who don’t have any – people experiencing homelessness.

Garcia says that his own life experience helps him relate to the people he meets on the job. He remembers a time when he was around 11 or 12 years old. His family was living out of a blue station wagon in a public park, he says. They would hang out in the park all day, eat outside, then pile into the car to make themselves comfortable for the night. Eventually, they moved into a house.



“I had no idea we had no place to go. I just assumed that it was the best my parents could provide,” he says. “I don’t know why my parents were in that situation. And that’s my starting point each day when I’m driving around on calls – I don’t know the stories of the people I meet out here.”

Garcia says that people living outside often offer to help him clean up. He recalls one site where a man was sweeping with a broom he’d made himself out of branches from a bush. “And he was literally making piles of rigid plastic and metal to recycle,” he adds.

On a recent morning, Garcia responded to a call to remove trash across from JOIN, a nonprofit serving the homeless population. Some folks were camping nearby. A number of them pitched in with the pick-up.



Richard Catlett was one of them. He helped fill 15 trash bags that Garcia hauled off.

“Homeless people aren’t trash. We aren’t worthless,” Catlett said as he pointed to some garbage on the ground. “This is a by-product of how we’re forced to live.”

After loading the bags, Garcia thanked Catlett for his efforts. Then he glanced at his tablet to see where his next cleanup was and hopped in the truck.

“I’ve experienced compassion from others and maybe I’ve never been able to say thank you to them,” Garcia says. “Showing compassion to others now is one way to express my gratitude.”

Recycling questions?

Ask Metro.



**Metro**

Arts and events
Garbage and recycling
Land and transportation
Parks and nature
Oregon Zoo

503-234-3000
oregonmetro.gov

Report a bag

Anyone can report the white Metro trash bags for collection. Call 503-234-3000 or visit oregonmetro.gov/bagprogram

Regional roundup

INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES
AROUND GREATER PORTLAND

Story by Ambar Espinoza

Photography by Ambar Espinoza and Joshua Manus
and courtesy of Beaverton School District
Renderings courtesy of Hennebery Eddy Architects
and Holst Architecture

As the regional government serving more than 1.5 million people in greater Portland, Metro invests in communities to meet their goals and visions. Below is a sampling of projects that Metro programs and grants supports across the region. For future opportunities, visit oregonmetro.gov/grants

2040 planning and development Albina Vision Trust, \$375,000

The construction of Interstate 5, the Veterans Memorial Coliseum, the Moda Center and Legacy Emanuel Hospital disproportionately displaced Portland's Black community from the city's lower Albina District in the area now known as the Rose Quarter. As the City of Portland, the Oregon Department of Transportation and other community partners plan improvements in the area, Albina Vision Trust will lead a community dialogue to develop a diverse and inclusive neighborhood. The Trust will spearhead interactive community planning for the district and produce a plan highlighting investment opportunities and community benefits. Learn more at oregonmetro.gov/2040grants

Affordable housing

Home Forward, \$22.9 million

Home Forward will add 160 apartments at Dekum Court, a public housing complex in Northeast Portland built in 1972 with 40 homes. The new homes will feature two, three and four bedrooms, accommodating larger families better than the standard rental apartment. Home Forward, Multnomah County's housing authority, will reserve 65 homes for families earning annual incomes that range from \$18,480 to \$34,840 – or 30% of the area median income, depending on family size – and the remaining homes for people earning 60% of the median income. Learn more at oregonmetro.gov/housing

Metro Central Community Enhancement Community Alliance of Tenants, \$30,000

Community Alliance of Tenants worked closely with low-income renters on habitability and other issues in their building in Northwest Portland. CAT staff helped them understand their rights and responsibilities as tenants. Tenants learned how to organize in their own building, developing leadership skills



as housing advocates. In addition, CAT staff created a tenant handbook that breaks down the legal jargon found in landlord-tenant ordinances across the region. The handbook will serve as a critical training tool to continue developing future organizers among renters who are vulnerable to evictions, rent increases and unsafe living conditions. Learn more at oregonmetro.gov/metrocentralgrants

Community Placemaking Muslim Educational Trust, \$25,000

To build a better understanding about Islam, the Muslim Educational Trust created two exhibitions featuring Islamic art and culture: a permanent exhibit at its community center in Tigard showcasing art that includes Arabic calligraphy; and a mobile exhibit that will travel around greater Portland – from K-12 schools and colleges to libraries, festivals and art museums. The mobile exhibit's special focus is on the mosque as a sacred space and destination for community gatherings. With virtual reality technology, people can visit mosques around the world and experience what they would see, hear and feel. Learn more at oregonmetro.gov/placemaking

Regional Travel Options

Beaverton School District (Safe Routes to School), \$75,000

Beaverton School District Safe Routes to School staff worked closely with Sunset High School students to plan an intergenerational walk and bike rally. Sunset High students learned about transportation equity, and safe walking and biking. Then they shared what they learned with younger students to whom they promoted walking and biking to school at a May 2019 rally called, "Future Apollo Walk + Bike." More than 150 elementary school students from eight nearby schools attended the event, where they received free bike safety checks and helmet fittings, signed up for walking school buses, and took a bike challenge course. Learn more at oregonmetro.gov/rtogrants



Clockwise from top: A rendering of Dekum Court in Northeast Portland. Muslim Educational Trust President Wajdi Said wears a virtual reality headset, a part of the community center's mobile exhibit. Sunset High School students planned a walk and bike rally for elementary school students. An aerial rendering of Albina Vision's design concept for improving the Rose Quarter district.



A snapshot of efforts to diversify greater Portland's construction industry

Countless cranes dot the skyline as the region continues to see dramatic economic growth. At least 80 public construction projects, worth nearly \$7 billion, are planned in the region over the next several years. Such a strong lineup of projects will require a formidable construction workforce. Yet too few women and people of color are benefitting from the economic boom in construction jobs. Read Metro's latest Regional Snapshot about efforts to diversify the construction trades:

oregonmetro.gov/snapshot

Share your nature and win!



Katherine Takata

It was a cloudy, overcast, dreary day but we still went out for some outside time. Headed down to Dabney State Park for a wander through the woods and to the river. We love days like this – so peaceful, quiet and relaxing.

Submit your photo

Win an annual parks pass, a full-day picnic shelter reservation at Graham Oaks or Scouters Mountain nature parks, a tennis court session, or a round of golf for four people including cart at Glendoveer Golf and Tennis Center.

To enter, submit a photo taken at a park or natural area in the Portland metro region – your friends and family, a view of wildlife or a sunset, for example. Include a 50-word description of your experience. Where were you? What were you doing? What captured your attention?

The winner will appear in this space. By submitting a photo, you consent to Metro’s future use and publication of your photo. Send your photo and description by Nov. 15 to: ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov