Metro | Our Big Backyard Parks and nature news and events

Spring 2021

Metro

“There's so much history that's left to be told.”

Block 14 memorial garden gains funding

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Metro | Our Big Backyard Parks and nature news and events

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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

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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.

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Share your nature and win!

Winner: Rick Hafele, Wilsonville

At Graham Oaks Nature Park, I walked by this patch of lupine. I tried to imagine what they'd look like with a dramatic sunrise. I finally saw my chance and arrived in time to set up just as the clouds lifted enough for the first rays of morning sunlight to do their thing. Follow Rick on Instagram @rickhafele

Finalist: Brent Dahmen, Gresham

I was going on a walk at Blue Lake Regional Park and I spotted the bright colors of a few wood ducks hanging out in a tree. I started walking very quietly using the trees for cover, and I was able to get a few pics before they got startled and flew off.

Finalist: Astrid Melton, Happy Valley

It was a crisp morning with frosted grass and lingering fog over the soccer fields. Couldn't resist stopping to snap a photo of the rising sun blending several hues of color in the winter sky.

Submit your photo

Win an annual parking 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.

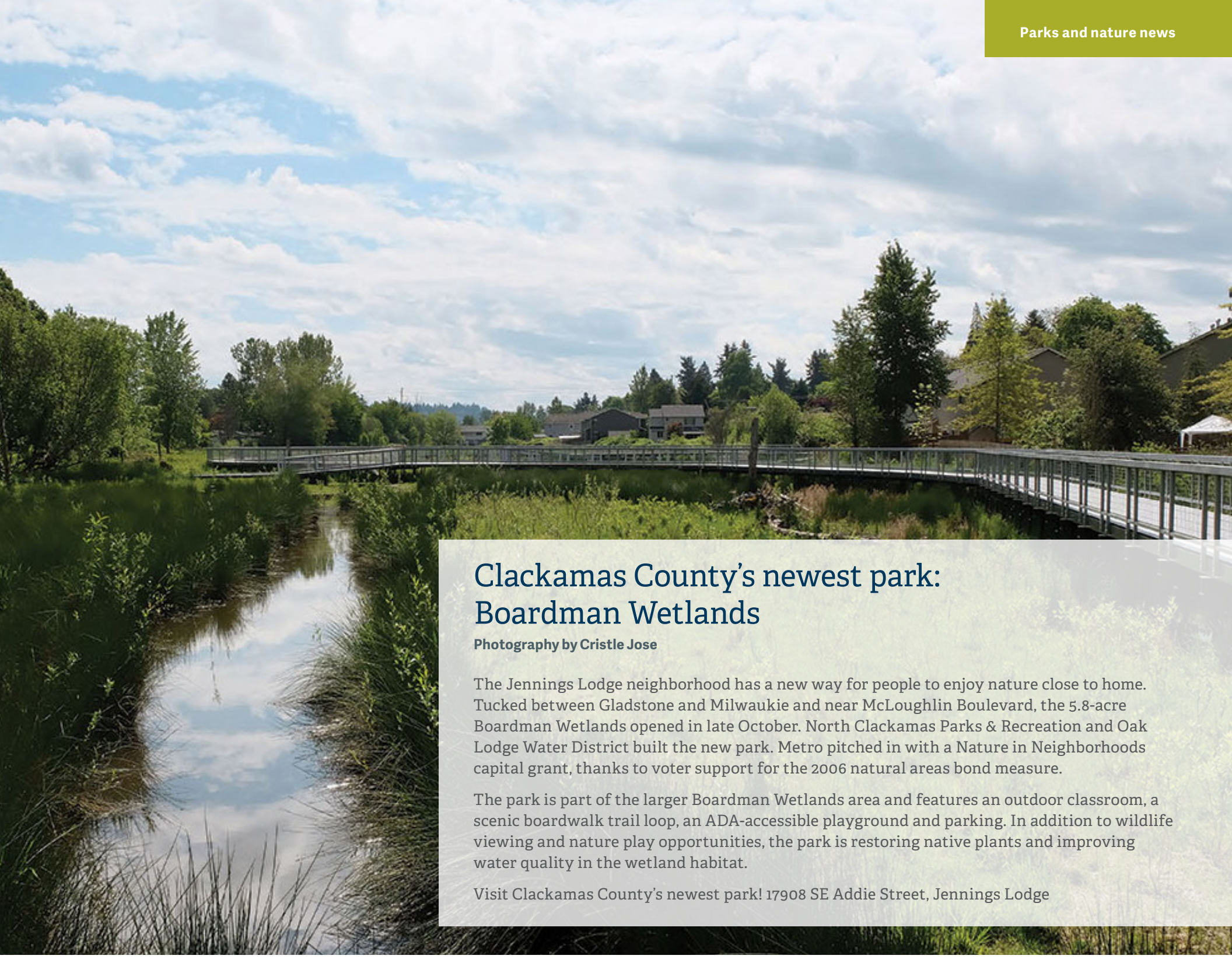
To enter, submit a photo taken at a park or natural area in greater Portland – your friends and family, a view of wildlife or a sunset, for example. Include a 50-word description of your experience. Where were you? What were you doing? What captured your attention?

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 May 27 to: **ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov**

Like what you see?

Sign up for the print edition of the quarterly magazine, change your address or save paper by switching to a digital subscription. Email *ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov* or call 503-797-1545.

On the cover: Miyo Iwakoshi, on left, poses in front of a massive log for a family photo with her grandchildren and her daughter, Tama Jewel Nitobe. *Photo courtesy of the Japanese American Museum of Oregon.*



Clackamas County's newest park: Boardman Wetlands

Photography by Cristle Jose

The Jennings Lodge neighborhood has a new way for people to enjoy nature close to home. Tucked between Gladstone and Milwaukie and near McLoughlin Boulevard, the 5.8-acre Boardman Wetlands opened in late October. North Clackamas Parks & Recreation and Oak Lodge Water District built the new park. Metro pitched in with a Nature in Neighborhoods capital grant, thanks to voter support for the 2006 natural areas bond measure.

The park is part of the larger Boardman Wetlands area and features an outdoor classroom, a scenic boardwalk trail loop, an ADA-accessible playground and parking. In addition to wildlife viewing and nature play opportunities, the park is restoring native plants and improving water quality in the wetland habitat.

Visit Clackamas County's newest park! 17908 SE Addie Street, Jennings Lodge

Work to begin on Lone Fir Cemetery's cultural heritage garden at Block 14

Story by Kelsey Wallace
Photography by Cristle Jose

With input from community members, the Lone Fir Cemetery Foundation, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association and the Mental Health Association of Portland, Metro has dedicated $4 million to build a cultural heritage garden at Block 14 in Lone Fir Cemetery. The money comes from the Metro park improvements program of the 2019 parks and nature bond measure.

"We're delighted that Metro has prioritized this project and is funding it," said John Laursen, president of the Lone Fir Cemetery Foundation. "The garden will be a place that tells the story of people who were marginalized or forgotten."

Currently, Block 14 is an empty lot in the southwest corner of the tree-filled Lone Fir Cemetery. But from 1891 to 1928, more than 1,131 Chinese people were buried there. Even earlier, it is believed that more than 200 patients of the Oregon Hospital for the Insane, the state's first psychiatric hospital, were laid to rest in various areas of Lone Fir Cemetery, including the eastern part of Block 14.

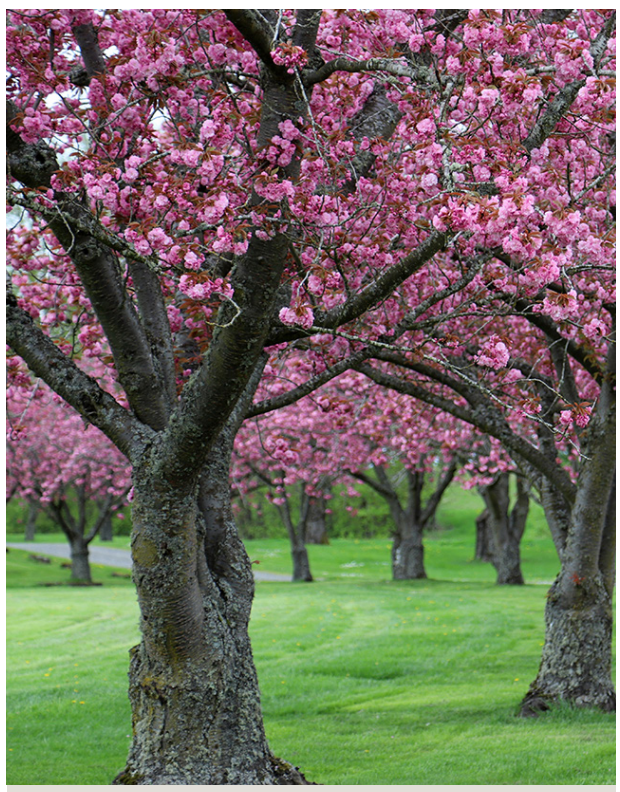
"There's so much history that's left to be told," said Marcus Lee, a member of the board of directors of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. "This is a great way to

be able to share one part of that, one chapter of that history."

Metro acquired Block 14 from Multnomah County in 2007, a decade after the county had transferred the other parts of the cemetery to Metro.

The Block 14 project has been in the works at Metro for a long time. After a process of community engagement in 2008, a Lone Fir Block 14 Master Plan and design were created. When complete, the cultural heritage garden will feature memorial elements for the people once interred there, as well as a new pedestrian entrance into Lone Fir Cemetery with signs and artwork providing information about the history of the site.

"We're excited to be able to take the next step with this project," said Metro Council President Lynn Peterson. "We look forward to making Block 14 a place to help reimagine the role of public space as the region confronts new and old challenges."



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 April 15; May 20; June 19; July 15; Aug. 19; Sept. 16; Oct. 21; Nov. 11, 18 and 26; and Dec. 16.

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

Correction: The last issue of Our Big Backyard misstated the last free parking day in November. It is the Friday the 26th.

Mussel bay

Freshwater mussels are our river's oldest animals and the most at risk

Story by Elaine Stewart
Photography by Cristle Jose

Metro's scientists work on more than habitat restoration. Sometimes we help conserve important wildlife and habitats in surprising locations. One such place is Chinook Landing Marine Park, a boat launch on the Columbia River that is one of Oregon's busiest.

The park's four docks sit in a bay carved out of the shore in the 1990s. The bay has been filling slowly with silt, and the muddy bottom could provide good habitat for freshwater mussels. Metro wanted to dredge the channel and boat basin for boater safety, but dredging suctions up the mud. That is deadly for mussels. So I worked with our construction team to see if mussels were present and, if they were, to stage a rescue mission.

Freshwater mussels are some of the most endangered animals in North America. We have found two clades (groups of closely related species) at Smith and Bybee Wetlands and in the Columbia Slough, so we thought they could be present at Chinook Landing, too.

Mussels are filter feeders, taking in water and eating tiny plants and animals before releasing the filtered water back into rivers and lakes. This filtering process is critically important for clear and clean water.

We know freshwater mussels are in trouble, but we know very little about their populations or where they live in our region. Easily overlooked, mussels bury themselves in river and lake bottoms and resemble rocks to the untrained eye. Once settled in, they may move very little for the rest of their lives, which can be more than 100 years for some species. Part of good stewardship is documenting what we have and taking care of it.

Mussels are sensitive to pollution because they ingest pollutants while filtering water for food. They also depend on fish for part of their life cycle. During reproduction, mussels cast their young into the water. These larvae, called glochidia, resemble tiny clams and they hitch

rides on fish before dropping to the bottom where they grow and mature. Not just any fish will do: some mussels will use only one species to carry their young. Many mussel species have incredible appendages that look like prey. When a fish bites at the lure, the mussel releases a cloud of glochidia into its mouth and the tiny mussels attach to the fish's gills temporarily. If the right species of fish is no longer available, the mussels cannot complete their reproductive cycles.

We know freshwater mussels are in trouble, but we know very little about their populations or where they live in our region.

Mussels are important beyond being water quality specialists. They have cultural importance as a first food to many different Indigenous peoples across North America, and in the Columbia River Basin tribes are working to restore mussels within their reservations and in lands that were ceded to the United States. Mussels are important food for birds, otters, raccoons and other wildlife, too.

In fall 2019, Metro hired invertebrate specialist Celeste Mazzacano to dive the boat basin and search for mussels. Within an hour, Celeste brought one to the surface to show us. Having documented the presence of mussels, we shifted our work to planning for their safety during the dredging work set for 2020.

We needed a plan to capture and move the mussels out of the area before dredging killed them. Although they do not move quickly, mussels can travel from one area to another.

Clockwise from top: Celeste Mazzacano, an invertebrate scientist, measures a freshwater mussel she transplanted from Chinook Landing to a stretch of the Columbia Slough in Portland.

That meant we could not catch and move them in fall 2019 but would need to do the work the following year, right before construction.

The rescue work took two days. Celeste and divers from Otak crisscrossed the boat basin methodically to cover the area. The silt stirred easily, clouding the water and making visibility as little as a few inches. We strung a rope across the boat basin, and the divers held the rope with one hand while gently probing the bottom for mussels. Divers relayed mussels to staff on shore who placed them in a mesh bag in the water to avoid stressing them.

We recovered a total of 23 native mussels. We moved them to a nearby slough with good habitat, where they were gently placed in the muddy bottom. All of the mussels were adults, and this suggests that the very fine silts in the boat basin were not ideal habitat for young mussels. The adults probably moved into the basin shortly after the previous dredging project, and the fine silts accumulating on the bottom made it less hospitable over the years. The dredging may remove the finest silts and leave better habitat for mussels when the work is completed.

Mussels grow slowly, so it will be several years before we can detect whether they move into the basin. It will be important to search again before the next round of dredging. We hope that searching for mussels and protecting them becomes standard practice for construction projects like these across our region.

Spring wildflower field guide

Story by Kelsey Wallace

The days are longer and the weather is (slightly) warmer, which means spring has finally sprung in greater Portland. Just like many animals venture out of their homes after a long winter – humans included – fields of beautiful wildflowers emerge in the spring. When you're out on your next adventure, see if you can spot these native wildflowers at your nearest Metro park or natural area.

Find your perfect park at **yourperfectpark.org**

Canemah Bluff Nature Park, Oregon City

Spring brings an abundance of color to the upland prairies at this nature park that overlooks the mighty Willamette Falls. Many native wildflowers bloom from March to May, including common camas (pictured), Brodiaea lilies and white rock larkspur.

Cooper Mountain Nature Park, Beaverton

From the violet hues of the Oregon iris to the delicate white racemes of white rock larkspur, the color spectrum of the state's finest wildflowers is well represented at Cooper Mountain. In fact, the upland prairie here fosters the Willamette Valley's third largest population of white rock larkspur (pictured), which the state lists as endangered.

Graham Oaks Nature Park, Wilsonville

This oak prairie habitat is home to a variety of spring wildflowers. Visitors will see magenta meadow checkermallow (pictured), tricornered trillium and pretty Pacific bleeding hearts among the prairie grasses. Picking wildflowers isn't allowed at Metro parks and natural areas, and it's especially important to leave trillium alone: removing the flower can seriously injure the plant and prevent future flowers from blooming.

Learn more about oak trees on page 6.

Howell Territorial Park, Sauvie Island

The grassy meadows that border Howell Territorial Park's farmlands are full of spring flowers like the brilliant purple lupine (pictured) and golden paintbrush. It's also home to many flowering fruits and tubers, like the dozens of blossoming apple and pear trees in the orchard and the flowering wapato found in the park's wetlands.

Bright life

Flowers aren't the only bright life you'll see at Metro parks and natural areas in the spring. Be on the lookout for these furry, feathered and winged friends as well:

Silvery blue butterfly

This lupine-loving pollinator is best spotted in April and May at Howell Territorial Park, Blue Lake Regional Park, and Cooper Mountain, Graham Oaks and Mount Talbert nature parks.

Wood duck

Adult wood ducks pair up in late winter and begin breeding in early spring. Look for their fluffy offspring later in the season at Blue Lake, Smith and Bybee Wetlands and Orenco Woods Nature Park.

Beaver

These affable rodents thrive in wetland habitats with plenty of aquatic plants for eating and trees for chewing. Though beavers can be hard to spot, they don't hide their evidence, so look for teeth marks in the trunks of trees as you visit Killin Wetlands, Orenco Woods, and Smith and Bybee.

Red-breasted sapsucker

These bright and cheery-looking woodpeckers live up to their name, drilling tiny holes in trees to feast on the sap and small insects inside. They nest high in deciduous trees, so be sure to look up next time you're at Graham Oaks, Scouters Mountain or Oxbow Regional Park.

Left to right: Lori Hennings and Ted Labbe looked at images similar to this one as they mapped the region's Oregon white oaks. There are approximately 40 oaks in this image. The heritage oak at Graham Oaks Nature Park in WIlsonville is a perfect example of an Oregon white oak in a Willamette Valley savanna. Photo by Megan Zabel Holmes.

Story by Cory Eldridge

The need had been well known for a long time. At least back to the early 1990s, conservationists and scientists in greater Portland talked about needing a good map of the region's Oregon white oak trees. The trees are the foundation of several types of habitat, including woodlands and savannas, and more than 300 plants and animal species rely on them. Conservationists had an idea about where rich remnants of the trees were, but a good map, a map that showed each and every white oak, would unveil connections and patterns; a good map would help focus restoration efforts.

But who would count the trees? Who would plot the data? Who would sit their bottom down and do the job?

Between costs, other restoration priorities, and a huge practical question of how to even do the count, the map remained unmade.

The need kept showing up.

Oregon white oak is the only oak native to this part of the state. Since time immemorial, Indigenous people in the region have cultivated oak habitats by using fire, which the thick-barked oak trees survived as it burned up competitors like Douglas firs. With the colonization of the Willamette Valley by white pioneers, the trees were cleared away for farming and homes. The stumps of Stumptown included lots of oaks. Now, the trees cover less than 10 percent of their former range, and they are the primary focus of restoration efforts across greater Portland.

In 2012, Metro decided to try to make the map. Metro scientist Lori Hennings and oak expert Ted Labbe, who now leads the Urban Greenspaces Institute, were hopeful they had a fix for the "how" question. The team, with help from modeling experts, planned to teach a computer to spot oak trees using aerial photographs and LIDAR images (which show topography like hills and even trees).

In an aerial photograph, it's impossible to make out all the usual features that help identify a tree. You can't see the leaves, the height is impossible to eyeball, and their shapes are all the same: every tree looks like a ball of moss. In forested areas, it's hard enough to tell where one tree begins and one ends, never mind what kind of tree it is.

It seemed like the perfect use of a computer's ability to find patterns and see what our impatient eyes miss. But first they needed good data on where oaks were, matching a GPS point to an aerial photograph so the machine could start seeing the patterns.

Hennings and Labbe began working with Sequoia Breck and Savahna Jackson, two Indigenous community members who, while college students, led a volunteer team of more than 100 community scientists to go around greater Portland, hold their phones next to oak trees and record the GPS data.

The team took all this data, collected with so much heart and care by so many people, plugged it into the computer, ran the cutting-edge learning program, and the computer … couldn't figure it out. It would miss oaks that were there and find them where they weren't.

Oaks are very deep green like broccoli, like a good, healthy head of broccoli.

Hennings tried to troubleshoot the program, refining the GPS data, coaxing the computer to find the trees. It just couldn't do it, not well enough to make a good map.

As Hennings and Labbe stared at the aerial photographs, knowing there was an oak there, lining the image up with GPS data that Breck and Jackson collected standing next to the tree, being able to see the tree themselves but unable to get the computer to see it, their own eyes became able to spot them. "One of the ways to recognize them is they're very deep green like broccoli, like a good, healthy head of broccoli," Hennings says. "You start to be able to get the color and the texture of these things, and I got better and better at it."

So they ran their process in reverse. Hennings scoured aerial photographs for oak trees while the team went to that section of the region and recorded what they found on the ground. Every so often Hennings would miss an oak obscured in a cluster of other oaks or growing under a Douglas fir, hidden from the aerial camera. Sometimes a tree had been cut down. But ultimately, Hennings' eye was way more accurate than the computer. Her eye could make the good map.

Labbe realized what this might mean for the next few years of his life. "I was skeptical, 'You're not thinking we can do this for the whole region,'" he recalls saying to Hennings. And she said, "'No, I think we can.' And I tried to talk her off the cliff."

Instead, he jumped off it right after her.

For the next two years, Hennings and Labbe spent hundreds and hundreds of hours staring at aerial photographs, clicking on oaks. Hennings alone found more than 100,000 trees.

"I've always loved oak trees, but I never really thought that, as a scientist, I would be spending hundreds of hours laboring over a hot computer screen picking out oak after oak, after oak, after oak," Hennings says. Luckily, she likes a good treasure hunt, and the micro-dopamine hits from finding the trees helped her through the tedium.

This type of science is not flashy, it's not charismatic. It's cubicle work. It's boring. It's invisible work. And in science, as in every sphere of American life, invisible work is most often done by women.

Until the film Hidden Figures, few people knew that Katherine Johnson and other Black women working in a segregated NASA crunched the numbers for Mercury and Apollo space missions. At Harvard, Williamina Fleming and Annie Jump Cannon led a lab staffed by women who mapped and categorized the stars, setting the stage for enormous breakthroughs in astrophysics. Marie Tharp processed mountains of sonar data that she turned into maps that helped her find continental rifts and built our understanding of plate tectonics.

And so another map has been produced from a woman's labor, not of the heavens or ocean floors, but our backyards and nearby woods. Hennings is quick to point to the collaboration that created the map: Labbe suffered through his own tedious hours, mapping roughly half the trees; Breck and Jackson's organization and work; and the 100-plus community scientists holding their phones next to an oak. "They started that data collection for us," Hennings says. "We really couldn't have done it without them."

The mapping is done now, which means the analysis can begin, which opens up new restoration strategies and priorities. The Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District is using the oak map to partner with private landowners to conserve oak habitat. A regional prioritization scheme is under way. Oak restoration workshops have been held. More projects will start soon.

The future of greater Portland's oaks will be guided, in large part, by this map. It will show up in reports and plans and stories, and it will seem like the sort of thing that must have always existed. But it was created, one click at a time.

Finding her story

Women at Metro's Cemeteries

Stories by Quinn Spencer

Additional research and data collection by Emma Williams

Metro's 14 historic cemeteries stand as the most visible landmarks of the beginning of the colonization of greater Portland by white pioneers, and the stories we have of the people buried at them are mostly of men, men considered important, men who left records. Their stories are available, so they get told.

For women to register similar historic records required incandescent lives like the one lived by doctor and suffragist Esther Pohl Lovejoy. For most, even death went unrecorded. Many of the cemeteries' female residents were buried under their husband's names, their death record calling them Mrs. Husband's Name, their own names never memorialized.

Throughout 2020, Metro dug into the historical records to learn more about some of the women buried at its historic cemeteries and make their stories known. A grant from the Oregon Heritage Commission allowed Metro to hire a researcher to compile material and write short biographies of these women.

Here are three of them.

The history represented at Metro's historic cemeteries is incomplete, beginning only with the arrival of white colonizers. Native people from many tribes and bands have called, and continue to call, these lands home since time immemorial.

For longer versions of these stories and more, visit **oregonmetro.gov/findingherstory**

Emma Gotcher: fighter for labor rights

Visit Emma
Lone Fir Cemetery
Section 34, lot 19, grave 1S

When Emma Gotcher showed up to her shift at Portland's Grand Laundry at what is now 320 N 17th Ave. on Labor Day in 1906, it was a mundane beginning to a chain of events that would put her name in national headlines. Only 16 years old at the time, she was about to be embroiled in a legal fight that would eventually reach the Supreme Court and change the face of labor and women's rights in the United States.

Little is known about Emma in the early years of her life. She was born in Wisconsin on June 15, 1890, and married young to Edward Elmer Gotcher, a leader in the Shirtwaist and Laundryworkers' Union, of which she soon became a member.

On that day in 1906, Grand Laundry overseer Joe Haselbock compelled Emma to stay past the legal 10-hour limit on her shift. Whether he did this knowing the full extent of the law is unclear, but Emma wasted no time bringing this to a local court, which found Grand Laundry's owner, Curt Muller, guilty of violating state labor laws. He was fined $10, about $300 today.

Furious at what he perceived to be government overreach into his private business practices, Muller secured financial backing from the local Laundryowners Association and appealed the case to the Oregon Supreme Court and eventually the U.S. Supreme Court.

Above: Miyo Iwakoshi, the first Japanese person to immigrate to Oregon, holds one of her grandchildren. Here, she poses with other members of Oregon's Issei community, the first generation of Japanese immigrants. *Courtesy of Japanese American Museum of Oregon.*

Seeing that their movement might hinge on the success of this case, labor activists hired attorney Louis Brandeis – later a Supreme Court justice – to write a brief in defense of the State of Oregon. The Brandeis Brief, as it is now known, insinuated that women had less physical and emotional capability for day labor. The defense held that protections for women were therefore necessary in order to conserve their ability to bear children.

Muller's brief, on the other hand, appealed to the right of men and women to receive equal treatment under the law. He argued that state restriction of a woman's right to make labor contracts was fundamentally an issue of gender equality. However, he had overestimated the court's willingness to hear out an argument built on equal rights at a time when this was still a controversial notion. At the time, only six states had even granted women suffrage (Oregon wouldn't for three more years in 1912).

The Supreme Court's final verdict upheld the law restricting women's working hours. Despite the stereotypes the defense conjured to make its case, progressive women and labor leaders across the nation celebrated the victory. Precedent-setting not only legally but as a benchmark for women's advocacy, it cemented Gotcher as a prominent figure in the early years of the fight for protections in the workplace.

Hattie Redmond: suffragist and founder of Portland's Black community

Visit Hattie
Lone Fir Cemetery
Section 11, lot 51, grave 2S

At the start of the 20th century, Black Portlanders had made a small but well-established community of several thousand. Despite racist laws that prohibited Black people from residing in Oregon, Black families built lives in what is now Old Chinatown and the Pearl District and along Williams and Vancouver avenues. Clubs and churches formed the social bedrock of the community, bringing people together to care for their neighbors and listen to speakers advocating the pressing issues of the day. A mainstay at the lectern was a longtime Portlander, fierce advocate for her community and champion of women's rights: Harriet Redmond, who went by Hattie.

Hattie, the first of eight children born to Reuben and Lavinia "Vina" Crawford, was born in 1862 in St. Louis. Around 1868, when Hattie was 6, her family left Missouri for Oregon. They first lived in Hood River, but within a year they were in Portland.

Reuben worked in ship-building; the Oregonian even named him "the best known ship caulker on the West coast," and he was active in his community and the Caulkers Union. As a child, Hattie often accompanied her father to his meetings.

As she grew older, she joined the women's auxiliaries of several social clubs and fraternal organizations. These organizations gave Hattie the opportunity to participate in a community of civically engaged Black women. They discussed issues like suffrage and temperance, and mounted campaigns to elevate these issues to the public forum.

Because of racism and sexism, she could not specialize in a trade like her father. Like many Black women, she worked as a domestic laborer, which was grueling and rarely well-compensated. While she didn't attain the professional reputation of her father, she continued his legacy of advocacy for Black Portlanders.

Around 1912, Hattie helped found the Colored Women's Council with a broader focus on the issues facing "poor and unfortunate women" in their community. Hattie acted as secretary and spokesperson of the council from its formation.

Ultimately, Hattie's decades of advocacy paid off when women's suffrage was officially ratified by Oregon's (male) voters. Hattie celebrated by registering to vote as soon as she was able, in April 1913.

Above: Hattie Redmond, one of the first Black Portlanders and a community activist and suffragist.

Hattie passed away of bronchial pneumonia on June 27, 1952, at the age of about 90. Excluded from the history of suffrage in Oregon until recently and with no relatives to tend to her gravesite, her headstone sunk or was lost within a few years of her death.

In 2012, on the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage in Oregon, the Friends of Lone Fir erected a headstone in her honor.

The marker reads, "Harriet 'Hattie' Redmond. Black American Suffragist."

Miyo Iwakoshi: the first Japanese immigrant to Oregon

Visit Miyo
Gresham Pioneer Cemetery
Lot 85, grave 3E

When Miyo Iwakoshi arrived in Oregon in 1880, she became the first Japanese immigrant to set foot in Oregon. She was part of a massive cohort of emigrants leaving Japan for new homes around the world.

At around the age of 27, she met a 58-year-old Australian-Scottish man named Andrew McKinnon, who taught animal husbandry near where she lived.

The details of Miyo and Andrew's relationship are a mystery, since they never married (at least not officially) and never had any biological children. Another relationship mystery is her adopted daughter, Tama Jewel Nitobe, whose arrival in Miyo's life is unclear.

No matter the paperwork status of these relationships, Miyo, Tama, Andrew and Miyo's younger brother, Riki, traveled to Oregon and settled in the outskirts of Gresham. They built a steam sawmill on their property, which they relied on to sustain themselves. They named their property Orient Mill, which gave the unincorporated area of Orient the name it has today.

About six years after setting foot in Oregon, Andrew passed away, leaving Miyo, Tama and Riki to fend for themselves in an unfamiliar country. Fortunately, they were no longer the only Japanese settlers in the state.

In the wake of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 – which forced many Chinese immigrants, including their American-born children, to leave the state – the West Coast experienced huge labor shortages.

This significant vacuum in the workforce drew immigrants from other parts of Asia, in particular Japanese workers, who were still denied citizenship but were not subject to the same racist immigration law.

During this growth of Japanese immigration to Oregon, Miyo became an important resource for new or prospective immigrants to the region. She proved quite generous with aid and useful advice, as well as providing contacts in the area. Her giving spirit and intimate knowledge of the region earned her the title of "Western Empress" among the Oregon Japanese immigrant community.

In 1885, an importer and merchant named Shintaro Takaki arrived in Portland. He found this business so lucrative that he was able to open a restaurant in 1889. He met Tama (who by this time went by Jewel McKinnon), and soon the two became the first Japanese couple to wed in the state of Oregon.

Above: Miyo Iwakoshi, holding baby in white dress, with grandchildren and daughter, Tama Jewel Nitobe. *Courtesy of Japanese American Museum of Oregon.*

Between Shintaro's business and Miyo's charity, the extended Iwakoshi family established themselves as the social nucleus of Nihonmachi, Portland's emergent Japantown, which thrived for half a century in Northwest Portland.

Miyo died in 1931 and is buried in Gresham Pioneer Cemetery, near her husband, Andrew. There is a Japanese cedar on her grave that was her only memorial until 1988. Her headstone was dedicated to her on May 29, 1988 by the Japanese-American community and the Gresham Historical Society.

You don't float. Life jackets do.

Wearing a life jacket is the best thing you can do to stay safe in water. The jacket has to fit to do its job. Here's how to find the right jacket for the right fit.

1 Size

Life jackets are made for people of different sizes and weights.

Check the label for the jacket's weight range and chest size.

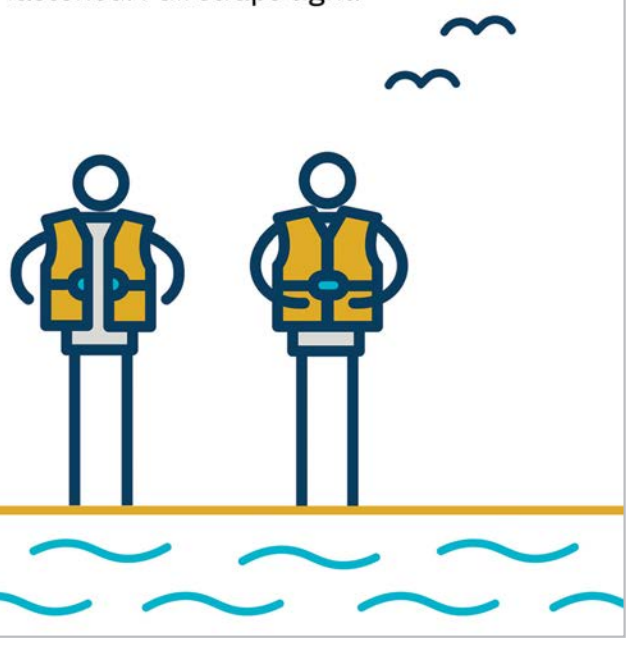
2 The kids

Life jackets for children include a leg strap.

Life jackets for infants also have a collar.

3 Zip, click, pull

Make sure all zippers and clips are fastened. Pull straps tight.

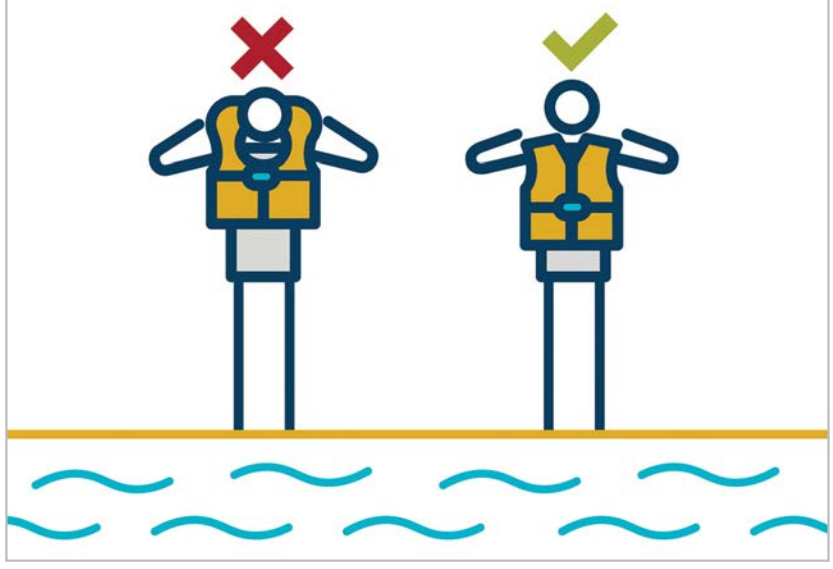


4 Shoulder test

Pull the jacket up at your shoulders.

If it slides up to your ears, it's too big.

If it stays tight, you are ready for the water!



Questions?

Contact Metro staff at 503-797-1545.
For updates on Metro parks visit **oregonmetro.gov/parks**

Metro essential worker profile: Sasha Goddard

Story by Katie Hentges
Photography by Faith Cathcart

Across the greater Portland area, essential workers are keeping the region running. Many Metro employees – from park rangers to animal keepers to MetroPaint workers – report to their worksites every day to provide services to communities in the Metro region.

Sasha Goddard, a household hazardous waste technician at Metro Central, is one of those employees. She and her teammates are responsible for helping to ensure that hazardous materials stay out of the water and soil.

"Every day we are open to the public and receive household hazardous waste like paints, pesticides, acids, bases, cleaners, batteries, oils and antifreeze, fuels and aerosols."

Goddard and her colleagues use their technical skills and scientific knowledge to identify and process hazardous waste safely. "Everything we do requires different levels of personal protective equipment."

Things like acids, bases and pesticides are sorted into drums to be disposed of safely. Other waste – like fuels – are shipped off to be put to a new purpose. Sometimes they test unidentified waste in their on-site lab to ensure they're handling it properly.

"I love my job because every day is so varied. Some days, I crush aerosol cans. Some days, I'm in the customer service role. Some days, I drive truckloads of latex paint to the Paint facility." Before the pandemic, Goddard also visited schools' to talk about hazardous waste.

Goddard also serves on her department's equity and reuse committees – she sees both as ways to "help take care of people who don't have access to resources." She delivers half-used or full propane canisters collected at transfer stations to Dignity Village, and distributes other materials that can be reused to community organizations that need them.

"I feel really good about giving away stuff for free that would just be tossed and find its way to a landfill."

Reporting to work during the pandemic hasn't been easy, especially in the early days when there was limited understanding of the virus. "In March (of 2020), it was really scary. It's hard to believe how scared I was then compared to now when numbers are greater."

Clockwise from left: Sasha Goddard crushes empty aerosol cans on a hydraulic machine. Household hazardous waste technicians load materials onto a cart for later sorting. A technician sorts a gallon of latex paint to be later recycled at MetroPaint. Workers unload household hazardous waste from a customer's car at Metro South Transfer Station.

And, like many people, she's lost a loved one due to the pandemic. Her father passed away after contracting the virus, and she has not been able to hold a memorial service or visit his graveside.

Still, Goddard is thankful for the stability and fulfillment that her work provides. "I'm grateful to go to work. I have friends who were laid off from Metro. If I was in my former field I would be laid off from work."

"I'm glad to have a job that feeds the nerd in me."

Spring cleaning? Toss things out safely

Is that half-empty bottle of brake fluid bringing you joy?

Before you declutter items into the trash, make sure they aren't hazardous.

Common products like pesticides, paint and many types of batteries all stay out of the garbage. Instead take them to a hazardous waste facility.

When you're loading up the car, keep products in their original containers, sealed, and upright to avoid dangerous mixes or spills.

For more information on what hazardous waste is, where to take it and how to get it there safely, visit **oregonmetro.gov/hhw**

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Color and discover!

Drawing by Zoe Keller

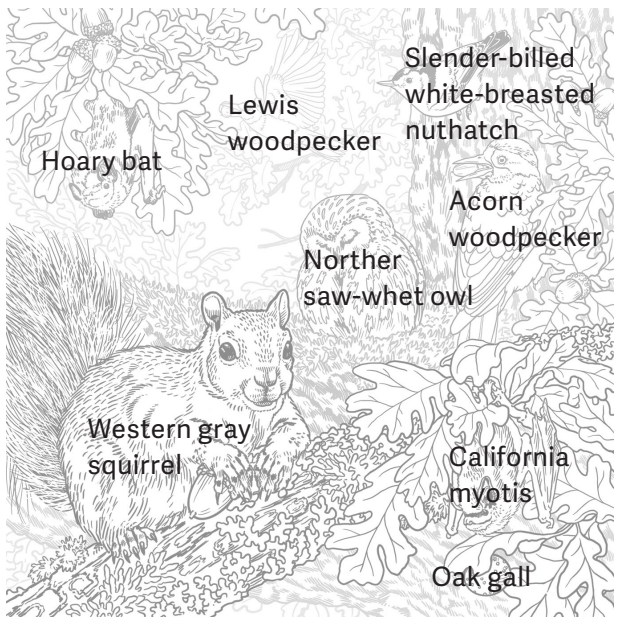
The canopy of an Oregon white oak

Up in the gnarly branches of an Oregon white oak, there's a whole neighborhood of activity. Bats and birds and squirrels and more make their home in the canopy of these trees that once covered the Willamette Valley. A sub-species of white-breasted nuthatches, called slender-billed, only live in Oregon white oaks.

Along with acorns, oak trees often bear spotted balls. They're sometimes called oak apples, but they're not a fruit. They are galls created when tiny wasps plant their eggs in the tree's leaves.

Learn more about these amazing trees on page 6.

Share your coloring creation with Metro! Snap a picture and tag **@OregonMetro** on Instagram or Facebook.



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