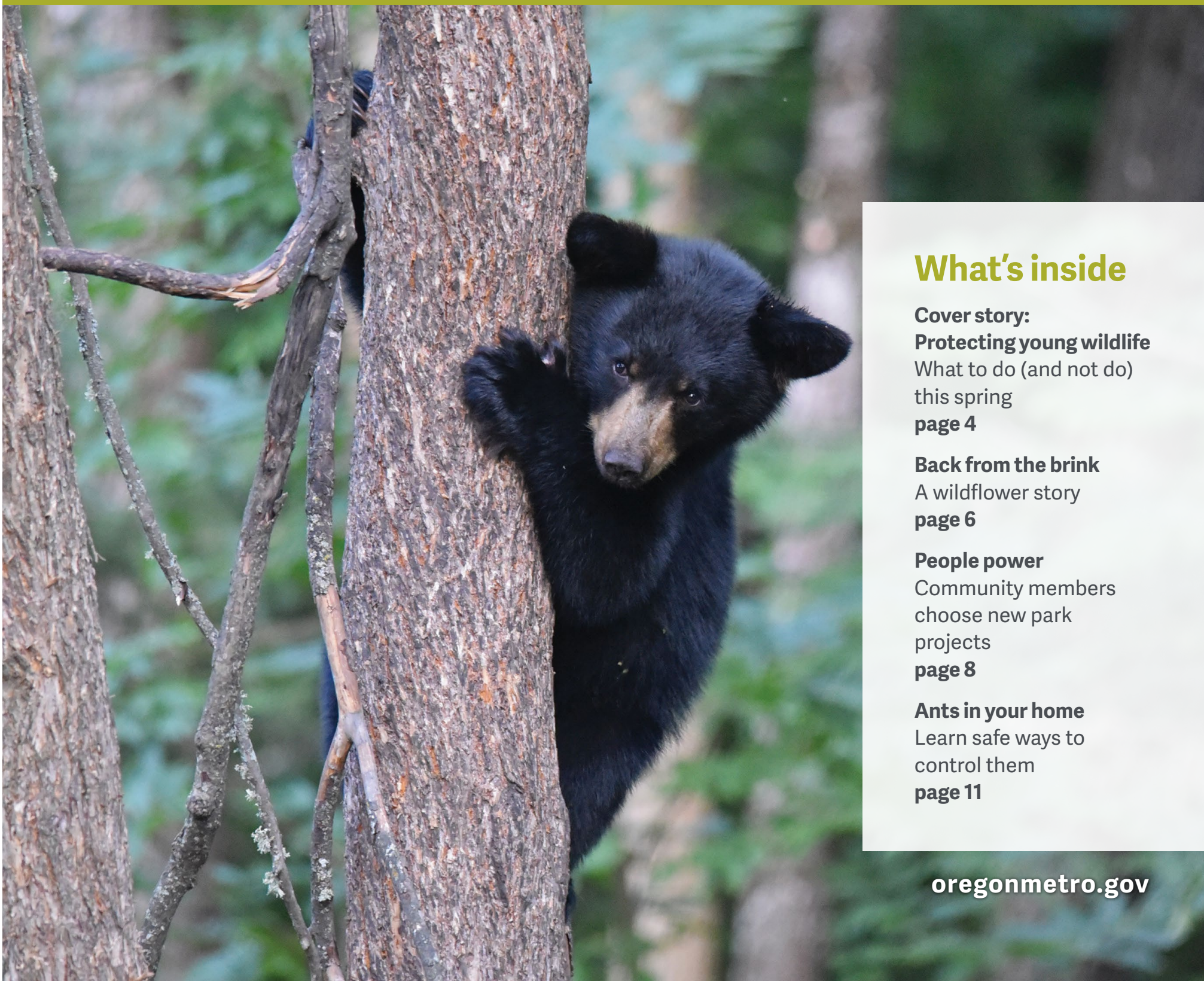


“Wild animals are generally terrified of humans and our presence can cause extreme stress.”



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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 Council President

Lynn Peterson

Metro Councilors

Ashton Simpson, District 1
Christine Lewis, District 2
Gerritt Rosenthal, District 3
Juan Carlos González, District 4
Mary Nolan, District 5
Duncan Hwang, District 6

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

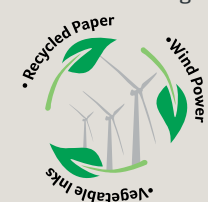
503-238-RIDE (7433) or trimet.org

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

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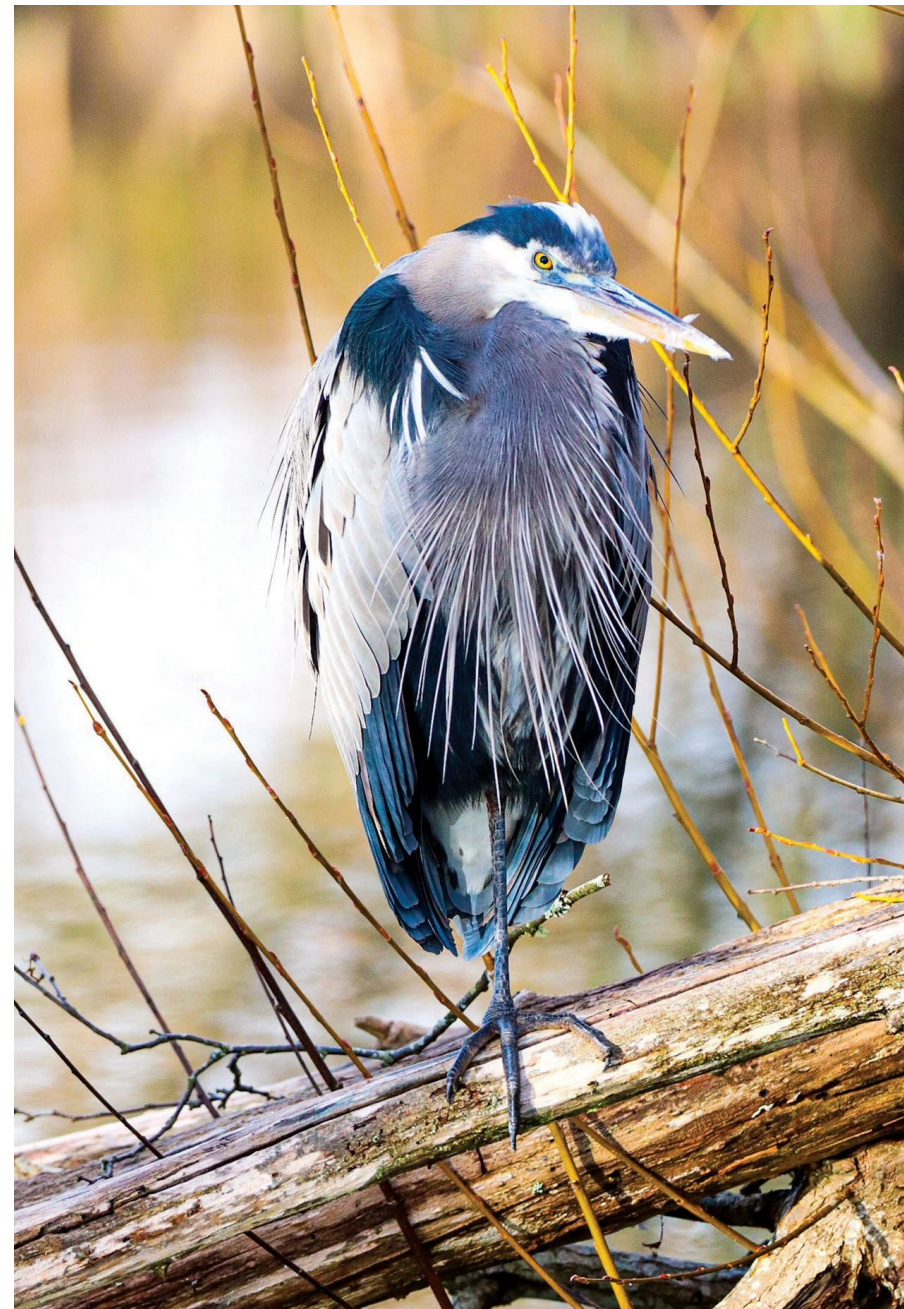
Pets policy

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.



Printed on recycled-content paper, 30 percent post-consumer waste. 24008

Share your nature and win!



From left:

Winner: Sandy Berger, Hillsboro

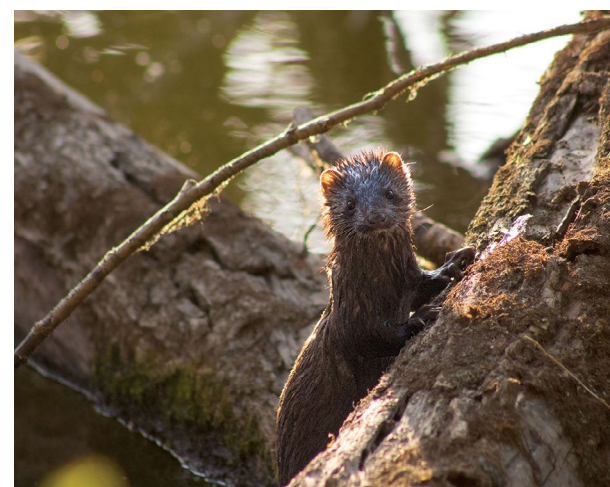
I came upon this Great Blue Heron at the Dawson Creek park by Hillsboro Brookwood Library. This trail is a favorite of ours and our Great Dane.

Finalist: Meng Vue, Portland

While birding at Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge, I stumbled upon a mink. It popped out from the nearby shrubs, hopping over a fallen log and slightly wet from taking a quick dip in the water, it paused and stared at me once it realized that I was standing in front of it.

Finalist: Richard Scheideman

The activity of these squabbling pelicans at Tualatin River Wildlife Refuge this fall caught my attention as I was walking the seasonal trails before they closed for the fall migration.



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 1 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: black bear cub courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Parks and nature news

Register for events at oregonmetro.gov/guidedactivities 503-220-2782
Children must be accompanied by adults



Get involved

CLASSES AND EVENTS

SAT. MAY 11

Hedge parsley tending at Oxbow

Join Metro as we tend invasive hedge parsley in the Ancient Forest area at Oxbow Park. Participants can choose between mapping hedge parsley with a free phone app called iNaturalist, or pulling/ disposing of hedge parsley flower heads to prevent their spread. Advance registration is required.

Oxbow Regional Park
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Free. Parking fee: \$5 car/\$7 van or bus.

Registration required
Ages: high school students, adults
Difficulty: easy to moderate

SAT. MAY 18

Douglass Cemetery tending

Join Metro staff at Douglass Cemetery to tend to the site and headstones. Participants will learn about a few of those resting at the cemetery as well as some of the meanings of the headstone symbols on site. All supplies to tend to headstones (removing soil, moss) will be provided, including refreshments. Activity is low-to-moderate intensity, may require bending or kneeling for periods of time.

Douglass Cemetery
10:30 a.m. to 1:30pm
Free. Parking: Free.
Registration required
Ages: all ages
Difficulty: moderate

SAT. MAY 25

Hedge parsley tending at Oxbow

This is a continuation of the May 11 parsley project. Participants may pull and/or map those areas not reached on May 11. You do not need to have participated in the May 11 event to participate in this one. Advance registration is required.

Oxbow Regional Park
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Free. Parking fee: \$5 car/\$7 van or bus.

Registration required
Ages: 14+ with adults, adults
Difficulty: easy



SAT. APRIL 20

Redefining our relationships: our winged neighbors

Join local nature educator Gladys Ruiz on a journey to discover Cooper Mountain and explore the ways that we each have forged a relationship with birds. We will challenge conventional notions of birding by honoring multiple ways of knowing, including the complexity and diversity of knowledge that exists outside of western science. We'll amble through this amazing oak prairie habitat and share stories of birds, migration, and community. Space is limited and advance registration is required.

Cooper Mountain Nature Park
10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
\$6/person, fee waivers available. Parking: Free.
Registration required
Ages: 14+ with adult, adults
Difficulty: easy

SAT. APRIL 20

Fire-building class

In this hands-on class, learn how to build fires safely with modern tools and classic techniques. We'll be using modern approaches rather than low-tech fire-building techniques. We will go over basics like using magnesium fire starters and bundling kindling, as well as the safety precautions you'll want to take. We will provide all materials needed. Space is limited and advance registration is required.

Oxbow Regional Park
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
\$6, fee waivers available.
Parking fee: \$5 car/\$7 van or bus
Registration required
Ages: all ages
Difficulty: easy

SAT. JUNE 1

Drop in and chill out: hammocks, art and more

This program will have several hammocks, field games, music, and other relaxing activities available for drop-in enjoyment. Participants do not need to stay for the entirety of the event. This is an opportunity to celebrate just "being" in nature, and for folks to meet some Community Education and Stewardship team members in an environment free of expectations.

Oxbow Regional Park, Group Camp 1
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Free. Parking fee: \$5 car/\$7 van or bus.
Registration not required
Ages: all ages
Difficulty: easy

SAT. JUNE 29

AquaFest: celebrating water, community, and safety

Metro invites you to a celebration of water safety education. Join us at this beautiful park in Fairview for culturally rich workshops, fishing, canoeing, games, and music. Metro staff and partners will provide information on water – how to protect it, conserve it, and be safe around it. Attendees can receive a free life jacket while supplies last.

Blue Lake Regional Park
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Free. Parking fee: \$5 car/\$7 van or bus
Ages: all ages
Difficulty: easy

Free Parking Days

Get out and explore nature this spring! Enjoy free parking at Oxbow and Blue Lake* regional parks, Broughton Beach, M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp and Chinook Landing Marine Park on: April 18; May 16; June 19 and 20; July 18; Aug. 15; Sept. 19; Oct. 14 and 17; Nov. 11, 21 and 29; Dec. 19.

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

*Blue Lake Regional Park is closed until spring 2024. Check current park status at oregonmetro.gov/bluelake

Living with wildlife: young animals



by Alex Hasenstab and Hannah Erickson

If you encounter young animals in the wild, it may be tempting to approach them or even try to touch them. After all, they're cute! Plus, maybe you're concerned the animal is hurt or lost and you want to help it. But interfering with young wildlife is almost always a bad idea, for a variety of reasons.

Many species of animals leave their offspring alone for periods of time. Moving or touching those young animals while the parents are away could put them at risk of abandonment, injury or even death. And in the case of some species, a protective parent may be nearby – putting you at risk of injury!

Even getting close to wild animals can cause them stress – so please, no selfies with the fawn. Most of those amazing “close-up” wildlife photos you see online were taken with long-distance telephoto lenses. If you're close enough to have a wild animal fill the frame on your phone camera, you're probably too close for that creature's comfort.

Scientists and park staff agree that in almost all cases, the best thing you can do for young wild animals is to leave them be.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) biologist Tessa Ott warns people not to put too much stock in what they see about wildlife “rescues” on social media. “While often portrayed in videos as cute, wild animals are generally terrified of humans and our presence can cause extreme stress,” says Ott. “This stress can resolve in what we refer to as ‘capture myopathy,’ meaning that the stress from being handled by humans is enough to cause death.”

These are some reasons why taking young wildlife home is illegal, regardless of one's intentions. Removing wildlife from the wild and keeping it in captivity without a permit is considered a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$6,250 fine.

Of course, sometimes a young wild animal may actually need help. So how do you tell? Below are some tips to handle each situation:

What to do when you see a young wild animal

In almost every situation, young mammals – including deer, rabbits, squirrels, beavers and other common local wildlife – should be left alone. Approaching or touching the animals can put them at risk of being abandoned by their parents. However, if a young animal is noticeably injured or if you are able to see that their parent is dead, you can reach out to the ODFW (866-968-2600) or a local wildlife rehabilitation center for help. If you're at a Metro park or natural area, you can look for a park ranger.

What to do when you see young birds

You may see young birds on the ground as they are learning to fly. This does not always mean the bird fell out of the nest: They may just be making a practice foray out of their nest. A fledgling – a young, feathered bird – may spend days on the ground during their development. Their parents are probably still nearby, stopping by to feed them. During this time, it's important to keep the area clear of pets and other disturbances.

“Most baby birds need to come out of the nest at a certain age so they can learn to forage,” says Metro Parks and Nature natural

resource scientist Katy Weil. “If songbirds stayed in their small nests all the way through adolescence, those tail feathers would never fit!”

If you see a very young bird – in other words, one without many feathers – you can look for its nest nearby and return the baby bird to it. Despite what you may have heard, birds won't abandon a nestling because it smells of human.

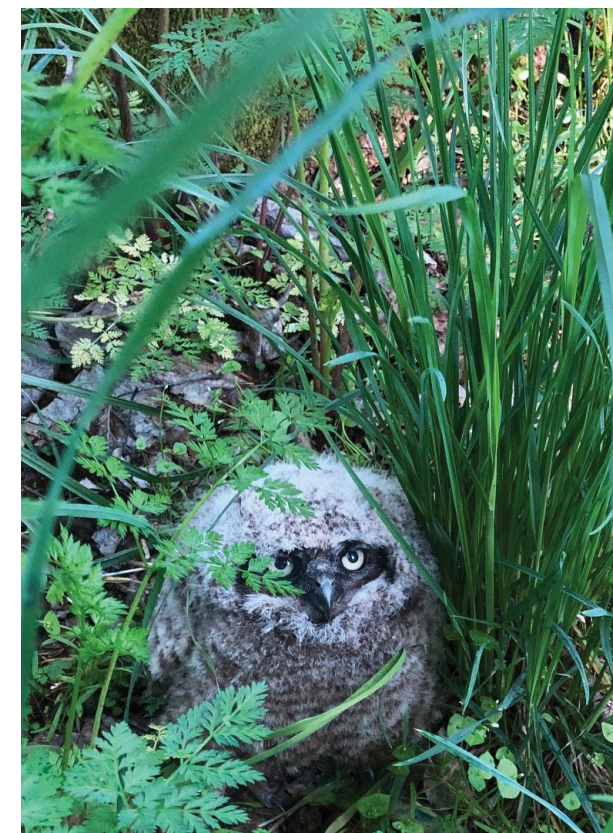
“Birds have a diminished sense of smell, so if absolutely necessary and advised to do so, people can gently put baby birds back into nests if the situation allows,” says Weil. “This applies to those nestling birds, without enough feathering yet to stay warm.”

If you see a young bird that is clearly injured or in distress, contact ODFW or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. If you're at a Metro park, contact park staff.

What to do when you see bear cubs, cougar cubs, or other predators

Stay far away from these young, as their mother is likely nearby. Mother bears and cougars can be especially aggressive if they feel their offspring are threatened. If you stumble on these young animals by accident, leave the area slowly while carefully observing your surroundings. If you are at a Metro park and see young predators, let park staff know as soon as possible.

“Our team works to keep both humans and animals safe,” says Metro parks operations manager Monty Woods. “Often the animals will move on after a few days – heavily used parks are usually too busy for these larger animals' comfort.”



Ready for their not-so-close-up: Photos like these are usually taken with telephoto lenses from a distance to minimize stress on the animals.

Clockwise, from opposite page: coyote pups at St. Johns Prairie by Metro; black-tailed fawn by Lindsay Somers, ODFW; hummingbird chicks by Judy Bevilacqua; goslings by Kathy Munsel, ODFW; red fox kit by Charlotte Ganskopp, ODFW; duckling at Blue Lake Regional Park by Monica Gration; fledgling owl by Jonathan Todd; bear cub, ODFW.

“Encounters with wildlife are one of the most fascinating parts about visiting a park,” adds Woods. “I encourage visitors to learn about what type of wildlife is active in a specific area and how to best be prepared for an encounter.”

A good resource is the ODFW's “Living with Wildlife” web pages: dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/living_with. If you're visiting a Metro park, you can check that park's web page at oregonmetro.gov to learn about any active alerts regarding wildlife sightings.

Have questions about how to interact with wildlife? Send them to ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov



Back from the brink

HOW METRO PLAYED A ROLE IN BRINGING TWO FLOWERS BACK FROM THREATENED STATUS

by Alex Hasenstab

During the 51-year history of the U.S. Endangered Species Act, fewer than 60 of the species it has listed as threatened or endangered have recovered enough to warrant being taken off the list. But last year, two flowers found in the Pacific Northwest achieved delisted status: the golden paintbrush and Nelson's checker-mallow. Their stories show how cooperation, effort and community support have drastic impacts when it comes to conservation and restoration work.

In both cases, the flowers' recovery plan was overseen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Institute of Applied Ecology in Corvallis. They, in turn, enlisted a wide range of groups to help in the effort: government agencies, tribal governments, conservation nonprofits, private landowners, universities – and Metro.

"I felt very excited and a little bit of pride that our program was able to contribute to taking a species away from the brink of disappearing from the planet," said Metro science and stewardship division manager Jonathan Soll. "We weren't the leader, and we weren't even one of the most important partners necessarily, but we played a good role."

The golden paintbrush is a bright-yellow, long-stemmed perennial that does, indeed, resemble a paintbrush reaching toward the sky. It was listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in 1997. At one point, there were no wild populations in Oregon at all.

Golden paintbrush thrives in sunny, open upland prairie – the most endangered type of habitat in the Willamette Valley, due to ranching, grazing and development. In 2010 the USFWS unveiled its plan to recover prairie species in western Oregon and southwest Washington. It identified Metro as a potential partner for repopulating species.



Metro Parks and Nature identified three parks with proper habitat and soil conditions to plant golden paintbrush: Howell Territorial Park, Graham Oaks Nature Park and Cooper Mountain Nature Park.

Metro and partners across the Pacific Northwest planted and managed the seeds given to them by USFWS. In total, 48 sites were established. The plants especially thrived at Howell Territorial Park, with nearly 50,000 plants counted in 2018.

The second recovered species, Nelson's checker-mallow, is a pollinator-attracting magenta flower that grows in wet prairie land.

The flower was listed as threatened in 1993 after struggling due to unmanaged wetlands, habitat loss from logging and agriculture, and competition from invasive species.

Metro had a more-active role in the recovery of the checker-mallow. Metro's Native Plant Center provided the seeds distributed to partners by the Institute of Applied Ecology and USFWS.

"I think that we have a moral responsibility as human beings to protect the diversity of life on Earth that we inherited," Soll said. "More

Top: Nelson's checker-mallow growing at Metro's Native Plant Center.

Bottom: Golden paintbrush seen in the wild (Mosa Neis/Pacific Rim Institute)

practically, we never know when a species is going to serve a particular value to humans, and we never know the role of a particular species in how the ecosystem works."

Both flowers bloom in late spring to early summer. Metro's work in repopulation programs was supported by funds from the voter-approved parks and nature bond and levy.

"It shows that the investment that our community has made in the parks in nature program was a real contributor to the health of the larger ecosystem," Soll said.

How to protect wildflowers

1. Stay on trails to avoid harming habitat.
2. Use boot brushes to prevent bringing invasive species' seeds into parks.
3. If you want a memento of the flowers you see – take photos, don't pick them!

Metro bond supports new park in Tigard

by Alex Hasenstab



Thanks to funding from Metro's voter-approved 2019 parks and nature bond, people in an underserved area in northwest Tigard will soon have convenient access to nature. Metro Council has approved around \$1.5 million in the bond's Local Share funds to partially fund a new park on Steve Street in the northwest section of the city.

The park will offer picnicking, a loop trail, community garden plots, and natural and traditional play areas. It's expected to be open to the public by the end of 2025.

The park is an example of how city and regional planning are crucial to making the most of taxpayer dollars. At the city level, it meets the goals of Tigard's recently updated park plan, which largely focuses on ensuring that all neighborhoods have access to at least one park or natural area within walking distance.

"We wanted to ensure that we were delivering our park services equitably," said City of Tigard project manager Carla Staedter. "So we did an analysis of the city's existing parks and trail systems and where they were located, and then we did an analysis of which households could access those parks within a 10-minute walk."

The city found around one dozen "gap" areas that were not able to access a park or natural area within a 10-minute walk. The city noticed a trend in some of the neighborhoods, including the one this new park, temporarily called Steve Street Park, will serve. These areas are more diverse, hold more multi-family homes, and the average income is lower than in Tigard as a whole. According to Staedter, this is why the Steve Street Park is being prioritized over other parks in the plan: "so that we can continue to balance the tables and provide equity."

The project also fits well within the goals of the voter-approved 2019 Metro parks and nature bond, and specifically its Local Share program. This program allocates \$92 million for greater Portland's 27 park providers to protect and restore habitat and clean water and to build and care for parks and trails that connect people to nature close to home.

"When the Local Share funding showed up, it was clearly the perfect match for this project," Staedter said.

Local Share is one way the bond puts money into local communities so they can build

Above: Currently an empty field, the yet-to-be-named "Steve Street Park" in Tigard will include paths, play areas, a wetlands, and picnic space.

projects that are important to them. At the same time, the bond criteria ensure that projects meet regional goals, including community engagement, racial equity, and climate resilience.

The site is adjacent to a stream system that is a tributary to Ash Creek, one of two fish-bearing streams in the city; restoration work at the park will help keep the water cool and clean.

"It will also provide critical wildlife habitat within a highly urbanized neighborhood," said Metro Local Share program manager Antonia Machado.

The city reached out to community members to determine what other features and activities will be available at the park. It will also be conducting community outreach to choose an official name for the park.

"The city is really being very responsive to our criteria, both the community engagement criteria and the criteria around centering historically marginalized communities," Machado said.

The City of Tigard was allotted a total of \$3.1 million in Local Share funding, about half of which is being used to build the new Steve Street park. The city plans to apply to use the rest of their funds to build a second park in another underserved area. This park is informally named Bagan Park. Ultimately the city hopes to have a dense park system that connects neighborhoods to each other and to nature.

Local Share funding has been supporting parks and nature projects since 1995. By allocating funds to park providers all over the Portland metro area, developing suburban areas can get access to nature.

"We in parks and nature know the myriad of benefits that come from having parks and open space," Machado said. "A lot of those benefits, we know, are not equally distributed or haven't historically been equally distributed throughout our metro area."

Now, careful planning and partnership between government agencies is working to change that.

Project Updates



Above: A photo from the early 1900s shows offerings being made at the altar that once stood in the Chinese section of Lone Fir Cemetery. Courtesy of Oregon Historical Society.

Lone Fir Cemetery

Work on a memorial continues at the site of the historic Chinese section of the cemetery. This winter, community members provided feedback on two design options. That feedback is being used to develop a design that creates a space for learning, reflection and healing. Meanwhile, the Lone Fir Cemetery Foundation has received a \$20,000 grant toward a proposed project to conduct community-based archeology at the site of the altar (pictured here) that once stood at the eastern edge of the site.

Learn more:

oregonmetro.gov/lonefirgarden



Blue Lake Regional Park

The park is scheduled to reopen in late spring or early summer after a parkwide project to replace and improve the water and sewer systems. When the park re-opens, small non-motorized boats will be allowed access to the lake year-round. A maintenance facility hub that serves Metro's entire park system has also been torn down and is now being rebuilt, and the fishing pier is being renovated. This summer, Metro will reach out to community members to learn more about what a re-envisioned park should look like.

Learn more:

oregonmetro.gov/bluelakeplan

Willamette Cove

Metro is working to create a nature park at this former industrial site in North Portland. Metro and the Port of Portland are working together to make Willamette Cove safe for people, plants and animals. This summer, Metro will begin outreach to community members to develop a master plan for the future nature park.

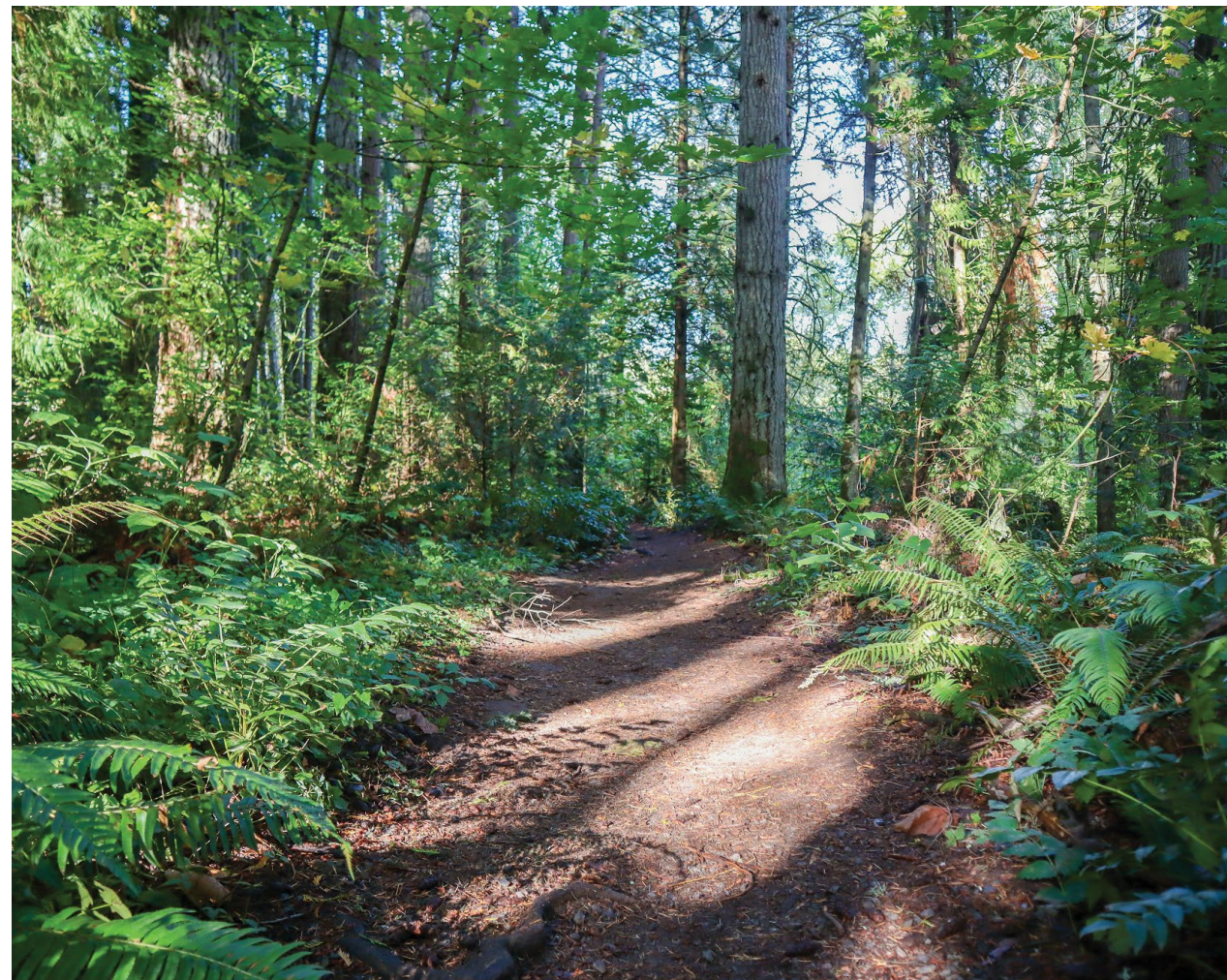
Learn more:

oregonmetro.gov/cove



Chosen by the community

A NEW PILOT PROGRAM FUNDS 15 PARKS AND NATURE PROJECTS



Nature in Neighborhoods community choice grants recipients

In Aloha:

- Connecting people and habitat at Recuerdo Park

In Beaverton:

- To make it all good again at Tualatin Hills Nature Park

In Cornelius:

- Keeping it rustic at Steamboat City Park
- Pocket forest at Tarrybrooke Park

In Forest Grove

- Wetland restoration at Kyle Park
- Pollinator pathway on the Forest Grove Loop Trail
- Re-Indigenizing the Forest Grove Loop Trail

In Hillsboro:

- Enhancing Shute Park
- Nature play in Evergreen Park
- Native plant gardens at Rood Bridge Park
- Covered outdoor play at Evergreen Park
- Serenity Park in Orenco Woods Nature Park

In Rock Creek:

- Asian Produce Garden in North Bethany
- Pollinator pathway on Rock Creek Powerline Trail
- To make it all good again at PCC Rock Creek

Learn more about community choice grants at oregonmetro.gov/communitychoice

By Cory Eldridge

In February, the Metro Council awarded grants totaling \$2.3 million to 15 parks and nature projects that community members imagined, developed and voted for. The awards were the culmination of the pilot round of Metro’s Nature in Neighborhoods community choice grants program, a new approach to grant-making that put community members in the lead during each step of the process.

The grants, ranging from \$88,400 to \$166,667, were possible thanks to voters investing in nature by passing the 2019 parks and nature bond measure. The pilot round of funding focused on Metro Council District 4, which includes the Washington County cities and neighborhoods along Highway 4.



County. One of the goals of the community choice grants program was to make it as easy as possible for community members to participate. Throughout the process, Metro staff attended community events to gather input on the projects and, eventually, help folks vote.

A particular effort was made to attend events by and for communities of color. Historically, Black and Brown communities have been underserved or even harmed by government investments. The 2019 parks and nature bond has racial equity criteria for all of its programs, in part to undo past injustices like these.

Most of the initial ideas for projects were only a few sentences long or a simple drawing, so community members then worked with park planners and landscape architects to take these ideas and develop them into project concepts. The workshops were held at community centers and libraries in District 4.

The design workshops produced 44 parks and nature projects, which then went to a first vote. Anyone 11 years old or older in District 4 was eligible for the first vote. After that vote and another round of development, 27 projects went to a final round of voting, which was open to anyone 11 or older in greater Portland.

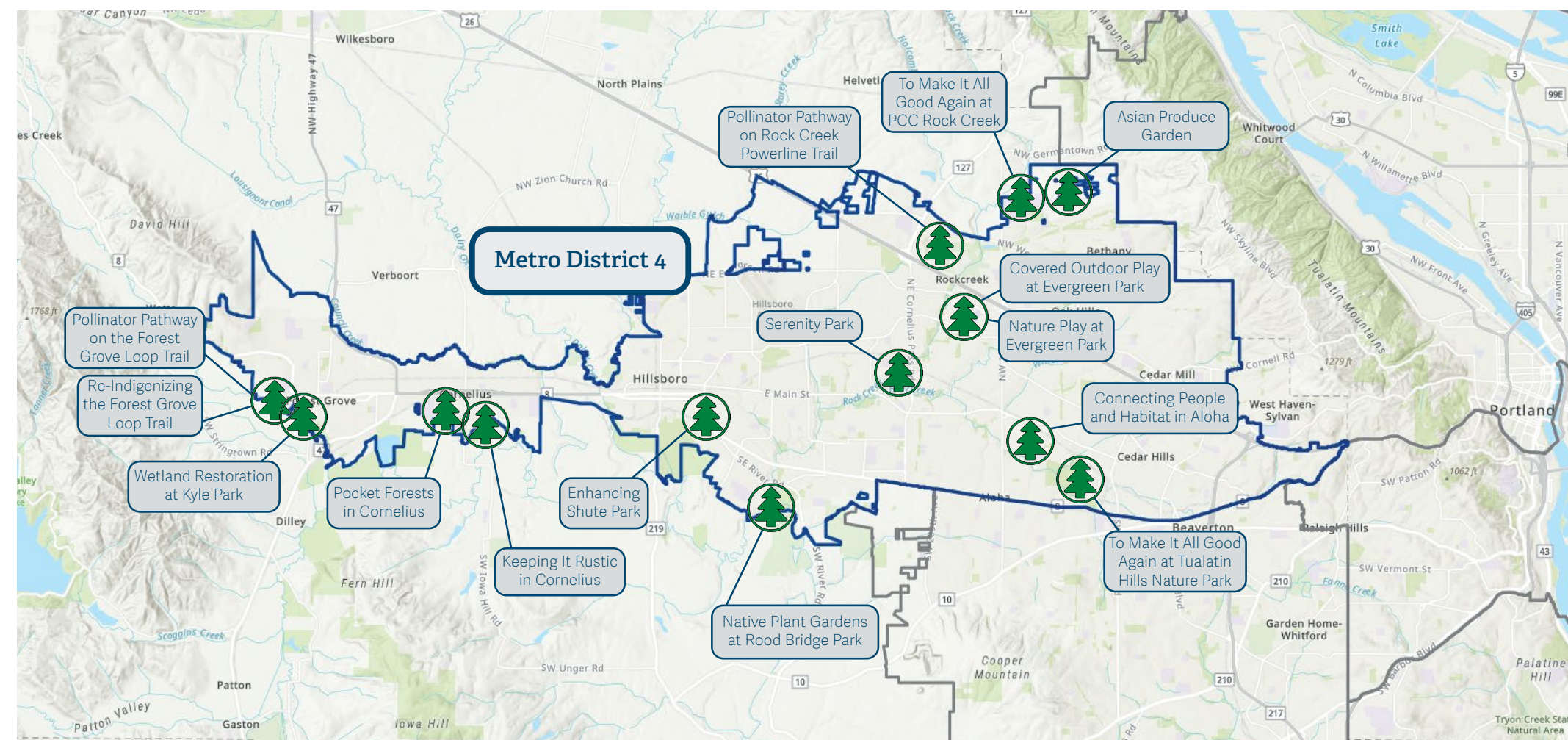
Community members cast over 1,600 eligible votes. This incredible turnout, according to Gabrielle Brown, a program manager at Metro, compares favorably with other participatory

projects across North America. It was particularly encouraging for a pilot of a unique type of program in the region. Along with the community voting, a couple other factors influenced which projects were awarded grants. The biggest was the state rules governing bond funded projects. The 2019 parks and nature bond can only fund projects that result in a physical thing – like a playground, boardwalk or salmon-passable culvert – that is owned by a local government. The projects also need someone to build them, so Metro worked closely with local parks departments and districts to determine which projects could be built and maintained.

The parks and nature projects now move to their respective home agencies. Some of the projects fit neatly into existing plans, while others need more groundwork before moving forward. Progress should be made over the next few years to deliver these community-imagined and -designed parks, turning them from individual dreams into public resources.

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Field guide

COOPER MOUNTAIN NATURE PARK



On the southwest edge of Beaverton, nature flourishes. Nestled between farmland and neighborhoods and rising nearly 800 feet above the valley floor, Cooper Mountain Nature Park offers spectacular vistas, opportunities to view wildlife and a variety of habitats to explore.

Cooper Mountain's bedrock, formed from the Grand Ronde basalt flows, has been folded and uplifted over millions of years, giving rise to the mountain seen today. From the parking area, visitors can absorb a breathtaking view of the Tualatin River Valley and Chehalem Mountains. Even more outstanding nature awaits those who dive in and explore the 3.5 miles of hiking trails.

Walking along the paths in the 232-acre park, one enters a mosaic of rare habitats. Prairies and white oak woodlands abound, surrounded by conifer forests. Upland prairie habitats are rare in the Willamette Valley, and white oak habitats are among the most endangered ecological communities in the Pacific Northwest.

Cooper Mountain's prairies retain several native grasses and wildflowers, including the pale larkspur and golden paintbrush. Combined, oak-prairie habitats support 52 native wildlife species and are used by at least 156 more.

Cooper Mountain Nature Park
18892 SW KEMMER ROAD, BEAVERTON

DRIVING
From Southwest Farmington Road/Oregon 10, go south on Southwest 170th Avenue. Turn right at Southwest Rigert Road. Turn left at Southwest 175th Avenue. Make a right onto Southwest Kemmer Road. The park entrance is on the left in less than a mile.

KNOW WHEN YOU GO
Park open sunrise to sunset. No pets, please. Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District provides day-to-day management.

AMENITIES
Bathrooms, nature play area, picnic tables, demonstration garden, 3.5 miles of trails. The Nature House offers year-round nature classes and is available for rent: 503-629-6350.

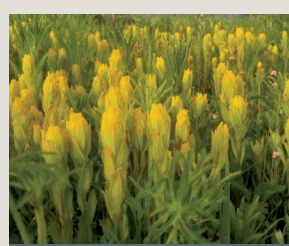
oregonmetro.gov/coopermountain

- Parking
- Nature House
- Restroom
- Nature play area
- Water fountain
- Trail

Many traditional Indigenous land stewardship practices incorporate fire. Fires promote growth, give nutrients to soil, and provide food for an abundance of animals, including humans. Indigenous people of this region have known these connections since time immemorial and use fire to work with and care

for the land. Since Metro acquired the site, fire has been incorporated as a restoration tool for the oak prairie ecosystem. By using controlled burns, the sun-loving white oaks flourish and produce acorns, wildflowers bloom and provide food to pollinators, and migratory birds stop to feed and raise their young.

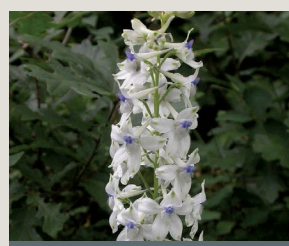
Be on the lookout!



GOLDEN PAINTBRUSH



WESTERN BLUEBIRD



PALE LARKSPUR



NORTHERN RED-LEGGED FROG

Season-by-season highlights

SPRING: From the violet hues of the Oregon iris to the delicate white racemes of pale larkspur, the colors of the state's finest wildflowers are well represented. Keep your ears tuned in to the songs of resident and neotropical birds. Colorful western bluebirds can be seen perched atop the tall grasses, while common yellowthroats sing the boundaries of their territory from elevated shrubs.

SUMMER: Long days and southern exposures make Cooper Mountain a great place to feel the warmth of Oregon summers. Sparkling vistas from atop the mountain offer views in all directions. Bring a picnic and enjoy the breeze. Then descend on the trails that wind through the oak woodlands. Look for western grey squirrels harvesting acorns in late summer and fall.

FALL: Listen for the calls of early nesting great-horned owls in late November. They begin to vocalize in late fall to establish their nesting territory and attract a mate. Nest sites of this nocturnal hunter can be found in tree cavities or old raptor nests, such as those used by red-tailed hawks.

WINTER: Lichen takes center stage on otherwise barren deciduous trees, allowing raptors to be seen with relative ease as they hunt for food. Red-tailed hawks cruise over the meadows looking for voles, while Cooper's and sharp-shinned hawks maneuver quickly through the trees in search of songbirds. Northern red-legged frogs usually begin breeding in February. They may be seen near small water sources in the park.



A new way to control pests

AND MINIMIZE PESTICIDES

Spring is a time for warmer days, restorative rain and the start of garden season. But, for many people, springtime means more pests as insects, plants and animals become more active.

Fortunately, there is a safe and effective way to deal with pests that helps lessen the use of pesticides: integrated pest management. Integrated pest management is a practice that focuses on pest prevention, combines multiple pest control tactics, and turns to pesticides as a last resort.

Oregon State University has created an online resource to tackle many common pests in the Pacific Northwest. Their new website, solvepestproblems.oregonstate.edu, provides effective, low-risk, science-based information for preventing and dealing with pests.

Solve Pest Problems shares recommended practices to deal with specific pests such as mice, rats, weeds, yellowjackets, spiders, ants, aphids, moss, mold and more.

How does integrated pest management work?

Let's look at how this practice would deal with ants. Ants are especially active in the spring when they are looking for a warm place to grow their colony. Often these colonies will send out scavengers to find food to take back to their home.

Once they do, they will bring more and more ants to the food source, leaving a distinct chemical trail along the way.

Step 1: Identify the pest. The first step is to identify what kind of ant you are dealing with. Solve Pest Problems has images and info to identify the two most common ants in our region, the odorous house ants (*Tapinoma sessile*) and pavement ants (*Tetramorium caespitum*).

Step 2: Assess benefits and risks. An important part of integrated pest management is deciding your threshold for action. Are the ants in the garden or are the ants in the kitchen? Ants are an important part of the natural environment, but they can be a nuisance, ruining your food and damaging your property.



Step 3: Take action? There are benefits and risks in both action and inaction. Solve Pest Problems suggests acting to address ants by cleaning their scent trail at a minimum. The risk of not acting means more ants will gather and the problem will grow.

Step 4: Solutions. The website emphasizes prevention practices as well as removal practices. For ants, that means sealing cracks outside your house to prevent their entry, addressing any moisture problems or water leaks that could drive ants into your home, and removing attractive food sources such as sugar crumbs.

After taking those steps, then monitor for foraging ants. Don't forget to check indoor plants for hidden ants. If you see a trail of ants, use an over-the-counter product that contains less than 5% boric acid ingredients. Ant bait traps are the most effective method for eliminating ants from your home. Wait 3-5 days for bait to work. In rare cases, add more bait and wait another 3-5 days. Then caulk and seal any gaps and clean the area with soap and water.

From top left to right: Joseph Berger, Bugwood.org; Michael Merchant, Texas Cooperative Extension, Bugwood.org; Janet Hurley, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service, Bugwood.org; Adobe Stock.

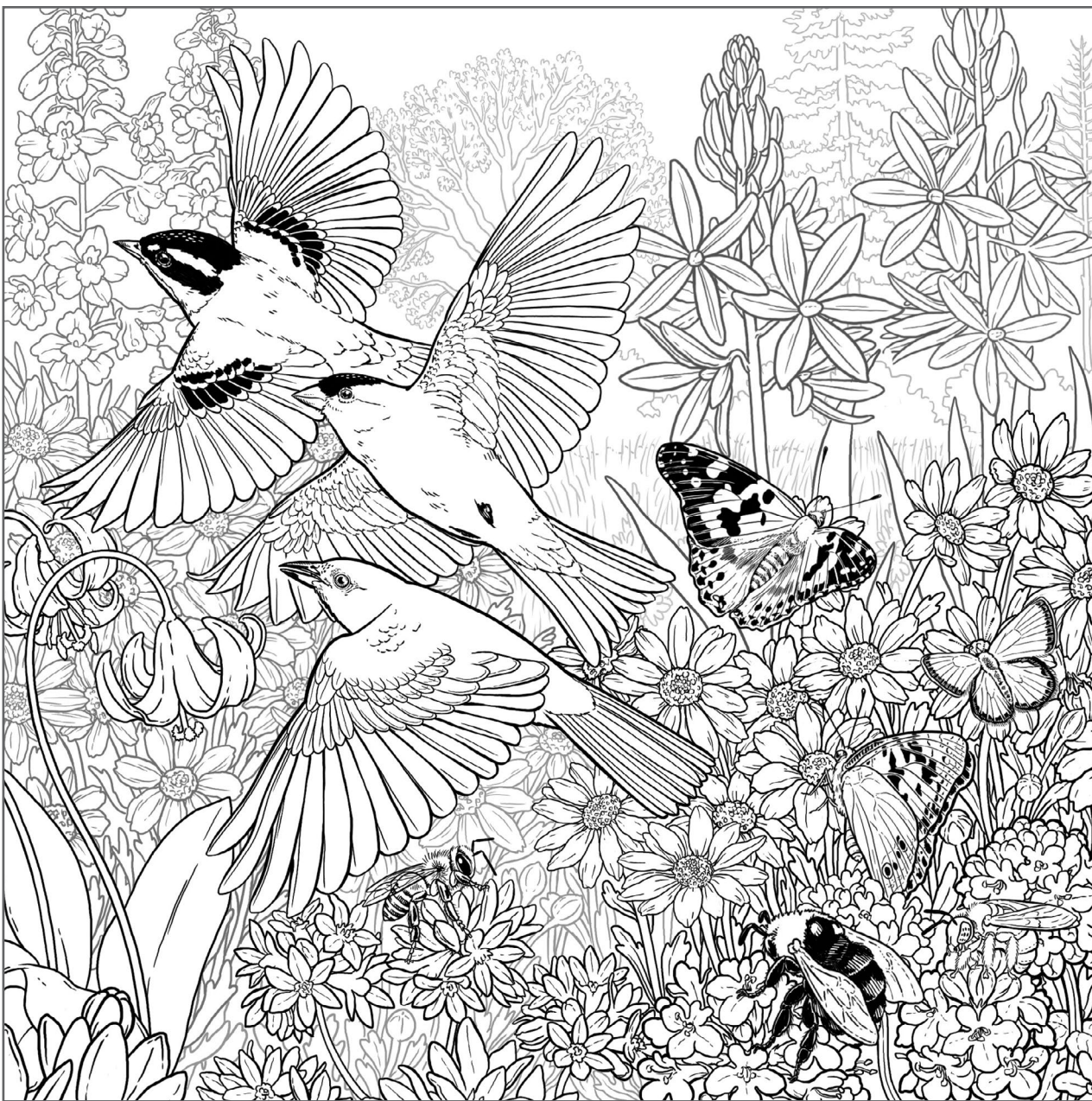
Spraying insecticides should not be considered for ants, as ants need to take the bait back to the nest to eliminate the issue. Solve Pest Problems recommends carefully reading the product labels and using personal protective equipment when using any potentially harmful material.

If you use insecticides, store them in a cool, dry place out of reach for children and pets. Never pour insecticides down the drain. If you want to dispose of unused insecticides, take them to one of Metro's household hazardous waste facilities.

For more tips to deal with ants and other pests, visit solvepestproblems.oregonstate.edu.

For information on household hazardous waste disposal, Ask Metro at 503-234-3000 or email askmetro@oregonmetro.gov.

Color and discover!



Wildflower season at Canemah Bluff

In spring, the meadows of Canemah Bluff Nature Park burst with color: purple camas and brodiaea lilies, white larkspur and fawn lilies, rosy plectritus, and yellow Oregon sunshine. Pollinators flit between the flowers – not just familiar bumblebees and honeybees, but also lesser-known varieties like metallic green sweat bees. As spring turns into summer, butterflies like the painted lady and the silvery blue join them. Birds are attracted to the bounty. Listen for the calls of the American goldfinch, western wood-pewee, and black-throated gray warbler.

Want to keep up on all the seasonal changes at Metro parks and natural areas? Follow @OregonMetro on Instagram and Facebook or visit oregonmetro.gov/parks

