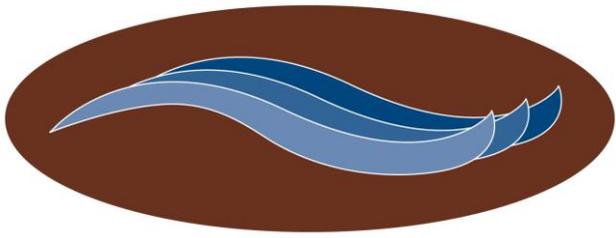


# WEST MULTNOMAH



SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## Summer 2014 Newsletter

***Sun-rain combination makes for a good growing season!***

### Invasive Species

#### ***Garlic Mustard Continues Overall Decline***



For the third straight year, garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) continues to decline on controlled sites in the District. This trend is reflected in impressive statistics, with affected acreage down by over half from last year:

2013: 35 gross acres, 15 net acres (120 sites)

2014: 15 gross acres, 2 net acres (150 sites)

Our surveys show that several sites that used to be covered with large stands of garlic mustard now only have scattered new plants. You can see the difference in the “before and after” pictures below

This year, the District’s continued outreach resulted in the discovery of a few new key infestations in upper Balch Creek and Tryon Creek watersheds. All appear to be contained. A total of 250 properties and 750 acres were surveyed! *If you find garlic mustard, please report it to [oregoninvasiveshotline.org](http://oregoninvasiveshotline.org).*

#### ***New Patch of Orange Hawkweed Found***



Orange hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*) is a high-priority invasive species in our district and across the state. The Oregon Department of Agriculture has designated it as both a Class A and Class T species (the highest priority designation given).

Currently, there are only two known infestations in our district; both in the west hills.

A very small population was discovered a couple of years ago on a restoration site and has received two years of manual control. This year, there were no new plants found at the site! A much larger infestation was discovered in May—just before flowering and during the optimal window for control. Five weeks following initial treatment, the population was reduced by 95%. We are monitoring the site for new seedlings.

Adjacent properties, as well as others in the watershed, were also surveyed, but so far the infestation appears to be isolated to the one property.

Orange hawkweed is a perennial herb that spreads by aboveground runners and wind-dispersed seeds. Flowers are bright orange and bloom in June and July. Its leaves are lobeless, have long hairs and are exclusively basal (NO leaves are located on the stem). The stem is covered in coarse black hairs and contains a milky white sap. Because orange hawkweed is capable of forming dense mats and thrives in coarse-textured soils, it poses a particular threat to alpine meadows and other types of woodland openings. In residential settings it easily invades lawns, gravel areas, or other disturbed places. *Please report to [oregoninvasiveshotline.org](http://oregoninvasiveshotline.org) if found!*

## Restoration

### *How to Green Up Your Lawn*

Ok, not all these suggestions will make your lawn greener in color, but they will help make Portland's watersheds cleaner and help you cut down on all that yard work! Now, take out a cool beverage and enjoy your "greener" lawn by considering the following tips:

- 1) Restore your soil! Incorporate compost to help with soil and plant health and improve infiltration. Using homemade compost can also save you all the money you might have spent on expensive chemical fertilizers. For information on how to restore your soil go to: <http://greengirlpdx.com/JOBS/FHHOA/CS3RestoreDisturbedSoils.pdf>
- 2) Don't overwater (even better don't water at all after plants are established) - overwatering doesn't just waste water. It can also impair the health of the plants in your landscape, even killing some that don't like wet feet.
- 3) Minimize pesticide use and always follow label directions! More is not better
- 4) Consider converting your lawn to a native meadow that incorporates native bunchgrasses and wildflowers. Not only are "meadowscapes" beautiful, but they provide habitat to a host of wildlife including important pollinators that need more habitat to make your garden fruitful! For more on meadowscapes please go to: <http://www.wmswcd.org/content.cfm/What-We-Do/Urban-Programs#Meadowscaping>



### *Improving Your Streams*

If you live along Abbey, McCarthy or Rock Creek or along a waterway on Sauvie Island, the Conservation District has financial and technical assistance to help you enhance these areas. We help by identifying and controlling invasive weeds and planting native plants in their place. We provide free site visits, a customized and voluntary plan for your approval, and paid crews to battle the weeds – we do maintenance, too! Our Healthy Streams Program covers **100% of the costs** if your property is on one of these main stem creeks (Abbey, Rock, McCarthy, or Gilbert on Sauvie Island) and at least 50% of out-of-pocket costs for tributary landowners.

*Healthy Streams Program* projects offer many benefits including erosion control, enhanced aesthetics and property values, greater wildlife appreciation and habitat value, and less work to maintain the land over the long-term. It benefits both the landowner and the ecosystem. For more information, including neighbor references, contact Senior Conservationist Kammy Kern-Korot; [kammy@wmswcd.org](mailto:kammy@wmswcd.org)

## Native Plants

### ***Attract Butterflies with Showy Milkweed***



Showy milkweed, or *Asclepias speciosa*, is a great plant to use to attract pollinators like hummingbirds, butterflies, honey bees, native bees, and other beneficial insects. But it's especially good for monarch butterflies as the milkweed plant is the only larval host for monarchs. Monarch butterflies get chemicals from the milkweed plant that makes them distasteful to predators. You can use this perennial forb in butterfly gardens, borders, meadows, or native plant landscaping. Just remember, it's important to have large, dense clumps of milkweeds for monarch caterpillars.

North American indigenous tribes have used milkweed plants for fiber, food, and medicine. California tribes used the stem fibers to make cloth, string, and rope. The sap of showy milkweed was used by some desert tribes to heal sores and cuts, and to cure warts and ringworm. The seeds were also used to heal wounds and were boiled to draw the venom from rattlesnake bites. Tea made from the rhizomes was a remedy for measles or coughs and mashed rhizomes were used as a poultice to reduce swelling.

Showy milkweed is a native herbaceous perennial from widespread rhizomes. It can grow up to 5 feet tall in summer. The gray-green oval leaves are 4 to 7 inches long and are covered in velvety hairs. You'll see the milky sap if you cut the stems or leaves. Flowers, which produce from May to September, are in loose clusters at the top of the stems and are a beautiful rose-purple color. In the fall, you'll see thick pods that contain flat reddish-brown seeds that are dispersed by the wind.

Showy milkweed grows in well-drained soil in full or nearly full sun, in pastures, meadows, forest clearings, untilled fields, roadsides, and ditch banks. Milkweed stems die in winter, and new stems emerge in spring.

## Education & Outreach

### ***The Fear of Bees***

It is common for children, particularly 3-6 year olds, to fear bees. During this time, children start to cultivate anxieties as their awareness grows of the things around them that can't be controlled. Out of the blue, you may hear your child say that he or she is "afraid of bees/dogs/monsters/thunder." She may have overheard a classmate or friend commenting on a bee allergy or have seen something on a video.

Here are a few suggestions to manage and ultimately dispel your child's fear:

1) Validate the concern and be sure not to pass on your own fear (if you have any). Respond with something like, "Yes, bees can sting and it can hurt, but bees only do this when they are disturbed or afraid." If your child mentions that people can die from bee stings, be honest, and note that some people can die if they have a severe allergy to bee stings, but that there is medicine to help people with those allergies.

2) Teach your child how to be around bees safely. Let them know that "You can respect and observe bees safely from far away with just your eyes (rather than your hands)." If your child feels like he or she is too close to a bee, model how to walk away from the bee with your hands at your side, calmly rather than swatting frenetically.

3) Compliment your child for his or her achievement, by saying, "I noticed that you are watching the bees in our garden very closely. You must feel brave," or "You can hear the bees and see them in the flowers from where you are standing. You are able to stand so close to them and you are safe."

Once your child starts to lose fear, you can introduce them to all of the wonderful things bees do in the garden, and note how bumble bees remind you of teddy bears! Hopefully, not only will your child be less afraid of bees, but perhaps he or she can start to monitor them in the garden and become a bee scientist!

Below are some great children's books about bees and pollination that may assist in cultivating your child's appreciation for our friend, the bee.

*The Bumblebee Queen*; Text by April Pulley, illustrations by Patricia J. Wynne

*The Reason for a Flower*, by Ruth Heller

*The Beautiful Bee Book*, by Sue Unstead

## Forestry

### ***Increased Logging Activity***

Driving around the rural west hills of Multnomah County this spring and early summer we're seeing more



logging than in the last several years. With that come more calls from landowners who have questions about it. There are a couple reasons for the increased activity.

First, over the past few months timber prices have been much better on average than they've been in years. At the heart of the recession, prices were very low and not many people were logging. Over the last couple years, there have been times where prices would be high temporarily, and then they'd decrease sharply for a few months. It was hard to hit the market at the right time. Now, prices are better, and while they still fluctuate, they're more stable than they've been.

Second, we've had a mild May and June in terms of rain. Loggers have been able to keep their commitments to local landowners and get jobs done early in the season before some of their bigger jobs occur in other

regions. Typically, many logging roads are too wet this time of year and loggers have to wait until they've dried out in August or September, but that's not the case this year. Also, it's not uncommon for a logger in the middle of one job to be approached for hire by neighbors who get interested by all the activity. While all the equipment has been mobilized and moved into the area, the logger is often happy to add a second project if time permits while they're in the area.

We've had some calls from neighbors concerned that the logging may be occurring without Forest Practices Notification, or that the logging may be damaging streams. If you have concerns, contact the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) at their Forest Grove Office (503) 359-7426. This is where landowners in our area need to file a notification that they plan to harvest timber. To date, we have not had a landowner call and report a harvest that was not properly permitted. In all cases ODF has been aware of the harvest, and to the best of our knowledge, all harvests have met or exceeded standards. One of the more confusing points is logging near streams. The Forest Practices Act requires that buffers (or areas where we retain trees) be left along fish bearing streams. Buffers may be 50-100 feet wide depending on the stream size. However, small, non-fish bearing streams do not require a buffer of trees. Many streams in our District are small non-fish bearing streams and therefore don't have that requirement. These logging jobs will have a replanting requirement unless the project is converting land to non-forest use. That means a landowner must replant at least 200 trees per acre, and often more than 400 per acre.

The Conservation District helps landowners to craft management plans, and we are in favor of landowners harvesting timber to earn some income off their land. We promote selective harvesting where some trees are harvested and others are retained to grow larger. When cutting larger patches, there is a requirement to leave some trees under the Forest Practices Act. We recommend that these trees be retained near non-fish bearing streams or other sensitive areas such as springs. We encourage landowners to think ahead and do some planning with their objectives in mind rather than rush to a decision to clear their land because a logger happens to be working nearby. Talk to your neighbors. If several of you are interested in logging in the next few years, you can find a logger interested in working with all of you. Contact Forest Conservationist Michael Ahr at 503-238-4775, ext. 109 or [michael@wmswcd.org](mailto:michael@wmswcd.org) to work on some management planning and focus on finding a logger next summer.

### ***Oak Mapping Project***



The Conservation District and local enthusiasts are helping map the presence of Oregon white oak trees in our district and throughout the Metro region. Starting July 4, volunteers have been active in Helvetia and SW Portland and are gearing up for inventory in and around Linnton and Sauvie Island. The project, called Oak Quest, is a fun and easy way for citizens to get involved in increasing awareness and promoting conservation of this important native tree species and habitat type, which is in severe decline in the Willamette Valley.

The volunteer citizen scientists use a simple smart phone "app" to note specific locations of mature white oaks. They receive training and work with one or more partners, on their own schedule, to map oaks visible

from public rights-of-way and parks. They need more volunteers, so if you're interested, you can register here: <https://tedlabbe.wufoo.com/forms/oakquest-volunteer-registration/>.

OakQuest is a collaborative effort of a large group of local parks districts, conservation and community groups, and the Native American Youth and Family Center. Goals include increasing involvement of Native Americans and other citizens in conservation, as well as creating a high-quality map of the area's imperiled native oak habitat to guide conservation and improve **connectivity** for oak-associated birds, mammals and other species.

The 2014 project area and live-feed of points where volunteers have mapped oak trees and stands, thus far, can be viewed here:

<http://kingfisher.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=24e25d5dee5f455dbb405be33dc0184a>.

And if you're not up to volunteering, but know of mature Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*) trees in our District, send the locations to Senior Conservationist Kammy Kern-Korot; [kammy@wmswcd.org](mailto:kammy@wmswcd.org)

## ***Sturgeon Lake Restoration***



We have some good news to share regarding the Sturgeon Lake Restoration Project and our search for funding support. The Conservation District has been meeting with public and private organizations on the federal, state, and local levels for the past nine months to gain support for the restoration of Sturgeon Lake on Sauvie Island. The \$7.5 million dollar project is a collaborative one, primarily with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which is contributing \$5 million dollars. The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) has pledged \$1 million toward the project. Multnomah County is including \$300,000 in its FY 2014-15 budget, to help replace the failed county culverts at Dairy Creek at Reeder Road. In addition, the District has applied for a \$400,000 grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) and a \$100,000 grant from Portland Metro.

In an exciting development, the Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation has agreed to work with the District on a Foundation-sponsored campaign to raise \$365,000 toward the restoration project. Sturgeon Lake is a critical bird and waterfowl habitat area that is important to Oregon Wildlife's members as well as wildlife enthusiasts around the region. Oregon Wildlife has produced an engaging video and marketing package for this important endeavor. Learn more about it at [www.savesturgeonlake.org](http://www.savesturgeonlake.org).

In addition, the Conservation District seeks financial support from state agencies that have responsibility for Sturgeon Lake and surrounding lands, the Oregon Department of State Lands and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. The District continues to meet with potential funders from the public and private sectors.

We are making progress, but our job is not done. We wait for final approval of budget and grant requests and turn our attention to the cost of long-term maintenance and management. We are grateful for all the support from our regional conservation allies.

# Calendar of Events

## August 16

### ***Multnomah Days – All day long!***

S.W. Capitol Highway, in Multnomah Village

Join the friendly and vital Multnomah neighborhood in SW Portland for the Annual Multnomah Days Parade and Street Fair! Watch the parade and take part in activities for the whole family. **Come visit our booth** – we'll have all kinds of information on invasive weeds, native plants and other conservation issues. For more information on the event, go to [www.multnomahvillage.org](http://www.multnomahvillage.org).

## September 4

### ***Conservation District Annual Meeting***

5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Hoyt Arboretum, Bill deWeese Classroom

If you own land in West Multnomah County, we'd like to meet you and have a chance to chat at our Annual Meeting! You'll find out what we're up to in your neighborhood and have the chance to meet our 2014 Stewardship Award Winners. Each year we choose a different location in our District and this year we'll enjoy the beauty of Hoyt Arboretum. We hope to see you there!

## August 23

### ***Rural Living Field Day***

8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Howell Territorial Park, Sauvie Island

WMSWCD is partnering with Tualatin and Columbia SWCD's and Oregon Small Woodlands Association to offer this fun and informative event for folks who live in a rural setting or just have a fair bit of land to take care of. Class sessions offer the latest information for landowners with woods, farms, pastures and streams. We'll have non-profit groups offering information that you can use to improve your garden, meadow or woods. Meet neighbors and friends, enjoy our fall weather along with a catered lunch, and learn about new ways to improve your land. Register now by clicking "Events" at [www.wmswcd.org](http://www.wmswcd.org). We look forward to seeing you there!

Check out our website to learn more seasonally friendly tips and let us know how we can help you care for your land,

*Dick Springer*

**District Manager**