

# Our Big Backyard



Metro

Spring 2018

## ‘The game changer’

Invasive ludwigia threatens to choke aquatic habitats, devastate ecosystems

**Page 8**

**4**

### Spring into nature

Spot colorful wildflowers, butterflies on your next adventure

**10**

### Tackle invasive weeds

Find tips for getting rid of weeds in your backyard

**14**

### MetroPaint behind the scenes

Learn about the popular program that teaches skills



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Parks and nature news 2

Field guide 6

Cover story 8

Destination guide 11

Get involved 12

Tools for living 14

Regional roundup 15

Share your nature 16

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

Tom Hughes

Metro Councilors

- Shirley Craddick, District 1
- Carlotta Collette, District 2
- Craig Dirksen, District 3
- Kathryn Harrington, District 4
- Sam Chase, District 5
- Bob Stacey, 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
- twitter.com/oregonmetro
- instagram.com/oregonmetro

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.

Parks and nature news



An estimated 334,000 plants went into the ground over the winter at 28 Metro parks and natural areas across greater Portland. Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area led the way, with 155,000 Columbia sedge plants now settling into their new home. The plants were grown from seeds previously collected at Smith and Bybee Wetlands and Multnomah Channel Marsh natural areas. Native plants play a crucial role in efforts to restore wetlands, oak woodlands, prairies and other habitats. The plants can help improve water quality, reduce erosion, and provide shelter and food for a variety of fish and wildlife. *Photo by Justin Cooley*

Follow OregonMetro on social media

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



Adult ladybugs huddle together for warmth and hibernate in the fall and winter. You can find them gathered under logs or leaves, in your home, or maybe even in the restroom at Sauvie Island Boat Ramp. *Photo by Bonnie Gilchrist*



Native salamanders are thriving at Canemah Bluff Nature Park. Volunteer Phil Nosler spotted a juvenile Oregon ensatina, pictured here, an adult ensatina and a Dunn’s salamander on the same day. *Photo by Phil Nosler*



Killin Wetlands just west of Banks looks peaceful in the winter mist. Construction will start in the spring to build visitor amenities at Killin Wetlands, which is scheduled to open in the summer. The site is popular with birders, and visitors will be able to enjoy light hiking and wildlife viewing. Learn more at [oregonmetro.gov/killin](https://oregonmetro.gov/killin) *Photo by Tannen Printz*



A photo in the winter magazine misidentified a nutria as a muskrat. The invasive nutria on the left has white whiskers, a rectangular head and a round, rat-like tail with no hair on it. The native muskrat on the right has a conical head, brown to light brown whiskers, a smaller snout and a triangular-shaped tail with hair on it. *Muskrat photo by D. Gordon E. Robertson*

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](mailto:ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov) or call 503-797-1545.

**On the cover:** Invasive ludwigia can double in size every two weeks, quickly overtaking waterways. Metro has been working since 2014 to control ludwigia at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area, where the plant can appear to stretch toward the horizon. *Photo by Justin Cooley*



# Metro Council approves Willamette Falls Riverwalk master plan

Story by Yuxing Zheng. Photography by Mark Gamba. Renderings by Snøhetta



Metro councilors in January unanimously approved the Willamette Falls Riverwalk master plan, the long-term vision that will guide development and public access at the former Blue Heron paper mill site in downtown Oregon City.

The riverwalk, trails, a public boat dock and other amenities will bring visitors up close to North America’s second most powerful waterfall, which has remained largely hidden behind industrial buildings for more than a century. The first phase of the riverwalk could open several years after permits are approved.

“I am more than pleased to support the master plan here and look forward to not just the riverwalk but the redevelopment of that entire site becoming the national destination that has been presented and envisioned by this group,” Metro Councilor Craig Dirksen said.

The project encountered a delay in September, and the four partner agencies sent a letter to Falls Legacy LLC, the private owner of the site, asking for the owner’s cooperation to move the project forward and apply for required permits. Falls Legacy had previously donated an easement for the riverwalk and agreed to contribute money toward design, preliminary engineering and maintenance costs.

Building the riverwalk is the first step in a larger effort known as the Willamette Falls Legacy Project, a collaboration between Oregon City, Clackamas County, Metro and the State of Oregon. Oregon City commissioners approved the master plan in February.

The riverwalk would be built in phases. The first phase includes repurposing the boiler complex and Mill H buildings to provide upper and lower scenic overlooks. It would also provide for some restoration work, public gathering places and the demolition of some of the more than 50 buildings to prepare the site for future improvements.

The first phase, including the planning work done to date, is estimated to cost \$25 million. Metro contributed \$5 million using money from the natural areas bond measure voters approved in 2006. Rediscover the Falls, the nonprofit friends group, is hoping to fundraise \$10 million for the first phase of the riverwalk.



“Based upon the support and interest secured to date, we are confident we can achieve this goal,” Shelly Parini, interim executive director of Rediscover the Falls, told Metro councilors at the meeting. “Selling the majestic Willamette Falls takes only one viewing. Once you feel the spray of the falls on your face and hear the wild roar of the river, you’re hooked.”

Future phases would be planned in coordination with the private owners of the site and would depend on available funding. Improvements would include trails along the Portland General Electric dam to allow visitors even closer views of Willamette Falls with an overlook at the Hawley Powerhouse foundation site. Additional work would complete the signature public gathering place nicknamed “the public yard,” convert Mill O into a sheltered gathering spot, restore the historic shoreline to support native plants and fish, and additional improvements.

“The Willamette Falls Riverwalk will connect the people of Oregon City to Willamette Falls and reconnect residents, businesses and visitors alike with a rich history of the area,” said Phil Lewis, Oregon City community services director.

Starting in winter 2015, project leaders and the design team of Snøhetta, Mayer/Reed and DIALOG worked on the riverwalk’s planning, design and community engagement. Through the process, project leaders and the design team held five major public events and more than 50 community conversations, hearing from thousands of community members to learn more about the types of experiences they want to enjoy at Willamette Falls. A tribal advisory board provides input from members of five tribes with historic and current ties to Willamette Falls. The design incorporates the



**Clockwise from top left:** The riverwalk would provide visitors with close-up views of Willamette Falls. Renderings of Willamette Falls show a trail out to a scenic overlook, a grove of trees in front of an overlook, “the public yard” gathering place next to a restored alcove, and the viewpoint from the Hawley power plant foundation looking toward Willamette Falls.

four core values of the project: historic and cultural interpretation, healthy habitat, public access and economic redevelopment.

“The benefits of redevelopment at the site will be significant. It will bring millions in tax revenue and involve greater visitor spending in the area,” said Don Krupp, Clackamas County Administrator. “Redevelopment can transform Oregon City’s already promising downtown to what will be a national-caliber destination.”

More than 600 people attended a June 2017 open house at OMSI to learn more about the riverwalk design.

Before any work would start, project officials would need to first obtain permits, complete preliminary design and engineering and develop construction drawings. Approval of the master plan is an important step to move the project closer to realizing the long-term vision for the site, said MG Devereux, deputy director of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

“It’s a special place to the heritage of Oregon and the people who were here before European settlers,” he said. “(The master plan) is a tremendous document and a great milestone in moving us forward.”

Learn more at [willamettefallslegacy.org](http://willamettefallslegacy.org)



# Spring into nature

As the days get longer, head outside and visit the colorful forests, prairies and woodlands throughout greater Portland. When you're out on your next adventure, see if you can spot these native wildflowers, butterflies, bees and dragonflies.

## Emerging in April



**PACIFIC BLEEDING HEART** Best viewed in April and May at Oxbow Regional Park, Graham Oaks Nature Park and Gabbert Butte Natural Area.



**SILVERY BLUE BUTTERFLY** Best spotted April and May at Howell Territorial Park, Blue Lake Regional Park and Cooper Mountain, Graham Oaks and Mount Talbert nature parks. Likes lupines.



**CARDINAL MEADOWHAWK DRAGONFLY** Best spotted April to October at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area, Blue Lake and Oxbow regional parks.



**PAINTED LADY BUTTERFLY** Best spotted April to September at Howell Territorial Park, Blue Lake Regional Park and Cooper Mountain, Graham Oaks and Mount Talbert nature parks. *Photo by Krista Lundgren*



**CAMAS** Best viewed in April and May at Canemah Bluff, Cooper Mountain and Mount Talbert nature parks. *Photo by C. Bruce Forster*

## Emerging in May



**WHITE-TAILED DRAGONFLY** Best spotted May to September at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area, Blue Lake and Oxbow regional parks. *Photo by Kristina Prosser*



**LUPINE** Best viewed in May at Howell Territorial Park and Cooper Mountain and Mount Talbert nature parks.



**GOLDEN PAINTBRUSH** Best viewed in May at Howell Territorial Park and Cooper Mountain Nature Park. *Photo by Curt Zonick*



**YARROW** Best viewed May to July at Howell Territorial Park and Cooper Mountain Nature Park. *Photo by Curtis Clark*



**METALLIC GREEN SWEAT BEE** Females emerge in spring; males in summer. Best spotted through September at Howell Territorial Park and Graham Oaks, Canemah Bluff and Cooper Mountain nature parks. *Photo by Steven Ellingson*

## Emerging in June



**WHITE ROCK LARKSPUR** Best viewed in June at Cooper Mountain Nature Park.



**WESTERN TIGER SWALLOWTAIL** Best spotted June and July at Howell Territorial Park, Blue Lake Regional Park and Cooper Mountain, Graham Oaks and Mount Talbert nature parks.



**LORQUIN'S ADMIRAL BUTTERFLY** Best spotted June to September at Howell Territorial Park, Blue Lake Regional Park and Cooper Mountain, Graham Oaks and Mount Talbert nature parks. *Photo by Calibas CC*



**BUMBLEBEES** Best spotted June to August at Howell Territorial Park and Graham Oaks, Canemah Bluff and Cooper Mountain nature parks.



**MEADOW CHECKERMALLOW** Best viewed June to August at Howell Territorial Park and Graham Oaks, Cooper Mountain and Canemah Bluff nature parks.



# Removal of 4 Brigman Creek dams improves Johnson Creek water quality, habitat

Story and photography by Kate Holleran, Metro senior natural resources scientist



One day in 2014, Metro scientists visited a newly acquired 17-acre natural area in Gresham where Brigman Creek flows into Johnson Creek. As I walked along the edge of Brigman Creek, non-native bull frogs leapt into a muddy-bottomed pond rimmed with non-native plants.

We were thinking about how to restore habitat for native plants and animals and improve water quality along Johnson and Brigman creeks. Decades ago a former owner used chunks of concrete and asphalt, rocks, logs and plastic lining to construct four small dams along 300 feet of the creek. The dammed creek could not provide a refuge for salmon, and the stagnant waters behind the dams made poor habitat for native fish and macroinvertebrates. The fix for improving Brigman Creek was obvious: remove the dams, let the stream reclaim its path to Johnson Creek, and of course, plant native trees.

A river is fed by a network of smaller streams. The majority of these streams such as Brigman Creek are so small that a person can easily step over the stream. Though they may appear inconsequential, in this case, small is very good.

Native animals such as cutthroat trout, caddisflies and Pacific giant salamanders may spend all or part of their life cycle in or near small streams. Juvenile salmon move into them to find refuge from fast-moving waters. And natural pools in small creeks provide protection from the predators found in bigger streams. These step-over streams are excellent at slowing and storing organic matter, transforming large wood, dead leaves and dead animal bodies into bits of food. Birds and bats benefit from a rich mix of insects found in and above the plants next to the stream.



Improving water quality and habitat along Johnson Creek means improving tributaries like Brigman Creek.

We spent a year developing the Brigman Creek dam removal plan and securing the necessary permits, using money from the natural areas bond measure voters approved in 2006. In-stream restoration work is usually scheduled for late summer during low water conditions to protect fish. This prep work and timing helps us minimize the short-term negative impacts that might happen when restoration work takes place in stream channels.

Though it took a year of planning, removing four dams from Brigman Creek was less than a full day’s work. By mid-August 2017, the materials and equipment needed for the project were on site and we could begin. Erosion control materials were in place. Wildlife within the work area, including cutthroat and sculpin, were collected and released into Johnson Creek. The excavator dug into the first dam, and the creek restoration began.

Piles of manmade debris grew as the excavator scooped and pulled the dams from the stream. Immediately after the first dam was taken out, native signal crawfish began to move into the flowing water. As each dam was removed, the water continued cutting through the deposits of mud, rediscovering its natural channel. In a few more days the project wrapped up. Through this past fall and winter, I’ve been monitoring the changes in the stream as storms send pulses of higher water down Brigman Creek.

It may take a few years for the stream to settle into the new channel. But after more than 40 years, this little stream is flowing free again – good news for wildlife and water quality.



## 3 questions with Masaaki Muroi

Story and photography by Yuxing Zheng

Masaaki Muroi is the general manager of TOK America, a Japanese chemical company with American headquarters in Hillsboro that supports the semiconductor industry. He’s also the vice president of the Japanese Shokookai. The Shokookai, founded in 1966, funds the Japanese School for the children of expatriates who will eventually return to Japan to continue their education.

The Shokookai is also involved in various community activities and provides members with social opportunities. One of those activities is an annual summer picnic, now going into its 10th year. For the past six years, the group has held its picnic at Blue Lake Regional Park.

Last summer dozens of families gathered at Blue Lake’s Celilo picnic shelter, where people enjoyed traditional Japanese foods, watermelon and more. In the grass nearby, children climbed into an inflatable bounce house and threw balls at a target linked to a dunk tank, sending volunteer parents crashing into the water. During Muroi’s turn in the dunk tank hot seat, he jokingly kicked water at the kids before the children exacted their revenge and sent him plunging into the water.

**Q. Tell me more about the Japanese Shokookai and what it does.**

A. The purpose of our welfare committee is to promote friendship among members. It is our goal to provide many activities for our members and their families during their stay in the U.S. These events are planned and conducted by members. We plan monthly activities. There are golf tournaments March through November, bowling, tennis and softball tournaments. We have also had trips to Mariners baseball games, picnics and the Christmas party.

**Q. Why does your group return to Blue Lake for its annual picnic?**

A. It’s a good event, so we decided to continue this event every year. We live in Portland, Beaverton, all over. Blue Lake is not far away, and it’s easy to reserve. There’s a picnic shelter, and we can have our dunk tank.

**Q. Do you have any favorite memories of group picnics at Blue Lake?**

A. Every year, we spend good time here. Every year, good memories. We are hoping to continue this event in the future. I would recommend this area.

**RESERVE A PICNIC.** *Enjoy a group picnic or celebrate a special occasion. Reservations for picnic areas and shelters are available at Blue Lake and Oxbow regional parks, Howell Territorial Park, and Scouters Mountain and Graham Oaks nature parks. For details and information about special-use permits, please visit [oregonmetro.gov/picnic](https://oregonmetro.gov/picnic)*



# Field guide

## CANEMAH BLUFF NATURE PARK



Story by Ashley Conley

The drive into Canemah Bluff Nature Park offers a clue that this park is unlike most others. Situated on top of an ancient landslide, Canemah is one of the oldest-mapped neighborhoods west of the Mississippi River. The narrow neighborhood roads eventually level out and showcase eye-popping and unexpected vistas. From Oregon white oak and madrone woodlands to vibrant upland prairies brimming with spring wildflowers and birds, you can experience a diversity of habitats in a relatively short walk.

Canemah Bluff is located less than half a mile upriver from the largest waterfall by volume in the Pacific Northwest, Willamette Falls. Thanks to the nearby falls and a natural harbor with deep, placid water, Canemah was a major canoe landing and continues to be a significant gathering location for Native Americans. The area was also the focus of early European American settlement in the Willamette Valley during the mid-1800s, with the Oregon Trail ending in Oregon City.

A trip to the natural area also brings you up-close with a famous Oregon resident: Sam Barlow, who helped to scout a new overland route of the Oregon Trail to take pioneers around the south side of Mount Hood. The Barlow Road allowed settlers to avoid the



**In the neighborhood** Nestled in the historic Canemah neighborhood, the nature park is a short drive from downtown Oregon City. Fuel up for your hike at Loncheria Mitzil, 212 Molalla Ave. in Oregon City. After exploring, grab a bite at the Highland Stillhouse, 201 S. 2nd St.

treacherous journey down the Columbia River and encounters with Celilo Falls, which was a costly and sometimes fatal journey. Barlow retired in the town of Canemah, and his family is buried in the historic pioneer cemetery.

Shaped by the forces of geology and rich in cultural history, the landscape of Canemah Bluff invites all who want to experience its natural beauty firsthand.

### Canemah Bluff Nature Park

815 FOURTH AVE., OREGON CITY

**DRIVING**  
At the end of Fourth Avenue, park in the small lot at Canemah Children's Park, which serves as a gateway to Canemah Bluff. Please be respectful of neighbors and do not block driveways.

**KNOW WHEN YOU GO**  
Open sunrise to sunset. No bikes or dogs, please. Be aware of poison oak.

**AMENITIES**  
Basketball hoops, a playground and picnic shelter are located at the children's park, which is managed by Oregon City; a bathroom is open seasonally. Interpretive signs welcome you to Metro's nature park.

[oregonmetro.gov/canemah](http://oregonmetro.gov/canemah)

### Season-by-season highlights

**SPRING:** Spring brings an abundance of color to the upland prairies. Many native wildflowers bloom from March to May, including common camas, Brodiaea lilies and white rock larkspur. Warbling vireo and black-headed grosbeaks vocalize along the trail to the cemetery. Turkey vultures can be seen popping up from below the bluff and riding the thermals to higher elevations. Osprey commonly perch in trees along the edge of the bluff, waiting for the right moment to dive into the Willamette River in search of a meal.

### Be on the lookout!



RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKER



COMMON CAMAS AND WHITE FAWN LILY



OREGON SUNSHINE



BRODIAEA LILY

**FALL:** Western gray squirrels and black-tailed deer are just a couple of the creatures that take advantage of Canemah Bluff's mast crop of acorns. Hidden from view much of the year, the fruiting bodies of mushrooms suddenly appear above ground. Look for the other-worldly elfin saddles hidden amongst the leaf litter. Make your way to the upper trails of the upland conifer forest and search for antler rubs on small, prominent trees. Bucks scent-mark trees in this fashion, announcing their presence to other deer.

**WINTER:** Take a walk back in time and search for remnants of Oregon's ancient past. The bluffs are formed from Columbia River basalt, most of which flowed from Eastern Oregon 15 to 17 million years ago. More recent Boring lava flows also reached this land, pouring out of shield volcanoes to the east. Several large chunks of this gas-pocked lava can be seen along the trails, most likely broken off in landslides triggered by the Missoula Floods that swept into the Willamette Valley 15,000 to 20,000 years ago. At the overlook in the prairie, check for stunning views of High Cascades volcanoes.



DISCOVER

FIND HIDDEN TREASURES



DAYCATION

OUTSIDE YOUR FRONT DOOR

# GEMS OF GRESHAM

DAYCATION BY BRIAN FLORES GARCIA

----- ENJOY A CURATED TOUR OF HISTORIC GRESHAM, -----  
FROM SMOOTH JAZZ AND CHILL VIBES TO STUNNING SUNSETS



Download on the  
App Store



FIND THIS ADVENTURE AND MANY MORE IN DAYCATION,  
NATURE'S TREASURE MAP IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND.

----- VISIT [DAYCATION.INFO](http://DAYCATION.INFO) OR DOWNLOAD THE APP TODAY! -----



# ‘The game changer’



## Invasive ludwigia threatens to choke aquatic habitats, devastate ecosystems

Story by Yuxing Zheng

Photography by Justin Cooley, Marci Krass, Matt Mellenthin, Travis Williams, Elaine Stewart

**This page, counterclockwise from top:** A Willamette Riverkeeper volunteer and Rich Miller from Portland State University wade through a dense mat of ludwigia while they collect aquatic invasive plant samples at Willamette Mission State Park near Salem. Before and after photos from the same spot show the effect of a glyphosate-based herbicide treatment at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area.

**Opposite page, clockwise from top:** Ludwigia has completely infested a side channel at Black Dog Landing near Albany. Ludwigia hexapetala leaves can appear more rounded when growing on water, and Ludwigia peploides montevidensis leaves can appear more pointed when growing on land. Small fragments of ludwigia can easily spread and grow, causing new infestations downriver.



At first glance, the delicate yellow flowers appear rather pretty. But glance up, and you realize the plant's green leaves and branches stretch all the way to the horizon, blocking out most everything else. In just two weeks, this green monstrosity has doubled in size, growing into a thick, dense mat on the shoreline along Bybee Lake and into the water.

This is invasive ludwigia, an aquatic plant native to South America that is threatening to choke backwaters, oxbow lakes and warmer river channels in Oregon. Ludwigia could destroy these habitats and harm water quality, damaging native plants, amphibians, fish, birds and other wildlife. It's not too late to avoid the worst, and a network of groups is battling ludwigia, including Metro at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area in North Portland.

Ludwigia is the worst invasive aquatic plant in the state, said Glenn Miller, an invasive plants specialist at the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

“As I say to people in lectures, this one is the game changer,” he said. “It is so impactful that you’ll see open bodies of water that just convert to anaerobic mudholes in probably 20 years and really exclude most other life. No other aquatic plant we have had in the state does that.”

State officials first noticed a significant increase in invasive ludwigia about five to seven years ago when it started infesting Willamette River backwaters, such as Delta Ponds in Eugene. Since then, there have been



infestations at Willamette Mission State Park near Salem, near Willamette Falls, Smith and Bybee Wetlands and other parts of the Willamette River system. Infestations have also been spotted in the Columbia Slough in Portland, Rogue River system in southern Oregon and in central Oregon.

“The entirety of western Oregon and up through the Columbia River system and some parts of central and northeastern Oregon could be really susceptible to it,” Miller said.

Experts suspect ludwigia arrived in Oregon through the aquarium and aquatic garden trades. The plant is popular in aquariums, which often get dumped into local waterways when people no longer want them.

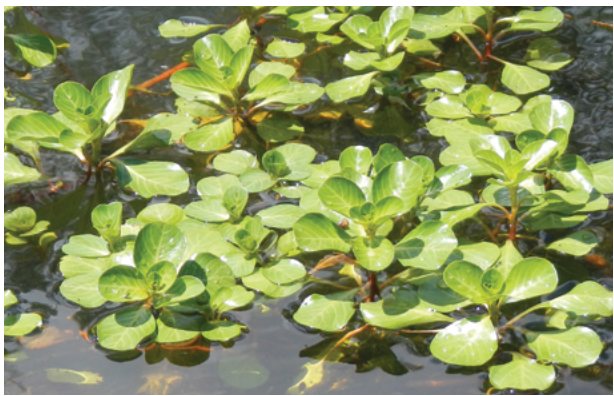
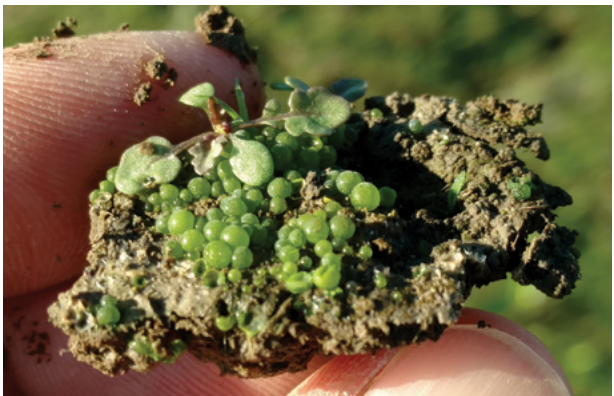
### Devastating impacts

Ludwigia has the potential to devastate aquatic ecosystems.

“You’d most likely see a decline in the native populations of turtles, amphibians, and fish in the Willamette and Rogue systems,” Miller said. “These are unique habitats that were formed when the river meandered, and we’re losing them.”

Native plants form the basis of healthy habitats that provide food and shelter for native animals. For instance, Smith and Bybee Wetlands is an important stopover for migratory birds to rest and refuel as they fly to and from the Arctic. But when invasive ludwigia covers an area, migrating shorebirds can’t stick their beaks in mudflats to eat bugs,





and wintering ducks and waterfowl find less rice cutgrass and other native seeds and plants.

Ludwigia can also lead to poor water quality, said Elaine Stewart, a senior natural resources scientist at Metro. The mat of ludwigia on the water surface and decomposition as it dies deplete oxygen from the water. Low oxygen is bad because native fish and invertebrates that live in the wetlands need it. It could also make water quality bad for salmon.

“Ludwigia can throw an entire ecosystem out of balance,” Stewart said. “Complexity is good in an ecosystem, and ludwigia simplifies it.”

A network of people is trying to prevent that from happening in the Willamette River system. Formed in 2014, the Willamette Aquatic Invasives Network meets quarterly, and members represent more than 60 government agencies, land trusts, nonprofits, universities, businesses and community members. The network is forming a steering committee to develop a comprehensive aquatic invasive species action plan, said Marci Krass, network coordinator and restoration program manager at the nonprofit Willamette Riverkeeper.

“There’s a lot of enthusiasm in helping to save these backwater habitats,” said Matt Mellenthin, a network member and a habitat restoration coordinator at Integrated Resource Management, a company based in Philomath. “Just about everybody in the environmental field clearly sees how important the habitats being taken over by ludwigia are. Whether it’s for salmon rearing or water quality, there are just a lot of partners working on this stuff together.”

Metro has hired Mellenthin’s company to help control ludwigia at Smith and Bybee Wetlands – and it’s not the only target.

“The first year we worked at Delta Ponds (in Eugene), it was the first large-scale ludwigia treatment in Oregon,” Mellenthin said. “In a five-year span, we’ve gone from one project to 13 large projects throughout the Willamette Valley, from Eugene to Smith and Bybee.”

Invasive ludwigia can also significantly reduce recreational opportunities. Infested areas often cannot be accessed by motorized or nonmotorized boats.

### Protecting Smith and Bybee Wetlands

Seemingly hidden among industrial warehouses in North Portland, Smith and Bybee is one of the largest urban wetlands in the country. At nearly 2,000 acres, the natural area is home to beavers, river otters, black-tailed deer, western painted turtles, blue herons, osprey, bald eagles and many other animals. It’s also a popular paddling destination in the winter, and people walk the trails year-round.

Metro staff first spotted invasive ludwigia at Smith and Bybee Wetlands in the mid-2000s, said Justin Cooley, a natural resources technician at Metro who has coordinated the efforts to control ludwigia. Metro and Portland State University experimented with control efforts beginning in 2010.

Large-scale treatments started in 2014, thanks to money from the parks and natural areas levy approved by voters the previous year. In 2014 and 2015, intense treatments from July through September helped keep ludwigia under control. In 2016, crews faced their biggest challenge, tackling a 60-acre monoculture that had developed on Bybee Lake. The goal is to contain ludwigia and prevent it from spreading further, but it’s unlikely that it will be eradicated.

“We are doing everything we can to try to get this down,” Cooley said. “Right now we’re at a point where we can manage it.”

The fight isn’t easy. Ludwigia is hardy and stubborn. It typically starts growing along the shorelines and quickly makes its way into lakes and rivers.

“It’s an early colonizer as the mud flats are exposed,” Cooley said. “It can outcompete any of the native plants, such as the forbs, sedges and rushes.”

*Continues on page 10*

## What is ludwigia?

Invasive ludwigia is an aquatic plant native to South America. Officials in Oregon started noticing a dramatic growth in ludwigia about five to seven years ago, likely after people dumped out aquariums with ludwigia in local waterways.

Ludwigia has several species and subspecies. Most of the ludwigia found along Willamette River backwaters is *Ludwigia hexapetala*, sometimes called water primrose or primrose willow. The kind found at Smith and Bybee Wetlands is *Ludwigia peploides montevidensis*. *Ludwigia peploides* is sometimes called floating primrose willow.

One kind of ludwigia is native to Oregon – *Ludwigia palustris* – but the plants are much smaller than the invasive varieties, and they do not compete with other native plants. The native ludwigia is sometimes called eastern false loosestrife or marsh seedbox.



# Getting rid of invasive weeds in your backyard

Story by Elaine Stewart, Metro senior natural resources scientist

Any home gardener knows that pesky invasive plants can appear anytime. Here are seven invasive plants that gardeners can tackle in the spring, before they bloom and scatter seeds.



**TREE OF HEAVEN** This fast-growing tree spreads quickly by dozens of root-suckers, re-sprouts and by producing enormous quantities of seeds. Because it can grow 10 feet a year, it’s best to identify and control it early. When they are too big to pull, contact an arborist or your local weed control program listed below. *Photo by Dalgial*



**SPURGE LAUREL** Spurge laurel can irritate your skin and cause respiratory issues in sensitive people. Always wear gloves and cover arms and legs. The berries, leaves and bark are all poisonous; this is not a good plant to compost. Remove all berries and flowers and bag them and toss in the trash. Pull small plants in spring or winter when soils are soft. Dig out larger plants with roots that are hard to pull. *Photo courtesy of the City of Portland*



**LESSER CELANDINE** Lesser celandine is sometimes misidentified as the native marsh marigold. If you have a small infestation, you may be able to dig and gather all the small bulbs and tubers. Do not compost or put in yard debris; they should be bagged and thrown away. For larger infestations or along streams or in wetlands, contact your local weed control program for help. Digging plants in these vulnerable areas can cause soil disturbance and damage. *Photo by Bob Routledge*



**GARLIC MUSTARD** Hand pull and remove small plants; these can go in compost or yard debris. Older plants, if they have bloomed or begun to produce seed, should be bagged and put in the garbage after pulling. *Photo by Frank Mayfield*



**ITALIAN ARUM** To control Italian arum, carefully dig out plants as soon they are identified but expect the bulbs and roots to be buried deep. Remove orange seedpod clusters to prevent additional spread. Don’t compost any parts of the plant; toss it all in the trash. And most importantly, don’t share or swap this plant. *Photo by H. Zell*



**YELLOW ARCHANGEL** Like many garden invaders, yellow archangel can spread by stems, roots and seeds and can escape to natural areas by the improper disposal of yard waste. If your plants have seeds, clip the seed heads carefully and put them in a plastic bag that can be sealed and thrown in the trash. Do not compost or put in yard debris if plants have seeds. Dig carefully in spring to remove all plant parts above and below ground. *Photo by Rosser 1954*



**POKEWEED** With striking magenta stems, pokeweed may be shared by neighbors or at plant sales and swaps. It has many toxic parts. It is much easier to control pokeweed when it is small; pull or dig plants and watch for regrowth every year. Flowers, seeds and berries should be bagged and put in the garbage; other parts of the plant can be composted or disposed along with your yard debris. *Photo by Kathy Shearin*

For more information on these and other weeds, check out the 4-County Cooperative Weed Management Area’s website: [4countycwma.org](http://4countycwma.org)

Not sure whether something you want to plant may become a problem? The Portland Plant List provides extensive information on native and invasive plants in the area: [goo.gl/MKt3zC](http://goo.gl/MKt3zC)

Need to talk with an expert? Contact your local soil and water conservation district (SWCD): [goo.gl/NLWVRs](http://goo.gl/NLWVRs)

Sign up for the Backyard Habitat Certification Program: [backyardhabitats.org](http://backyardhabitats.org)



**Above:** Ludwigia has taken over many off-channel habitats downstream from Albany. The middle reach of the Willamette River has ideal conditions for ludwigia to thrive.

Ludwigia will spread on the surface of the water, and parts of the plant will drop down. Eventually the roots are attached to the bottom of the lake or river. Special roots even feed oxygen to the plant in low-oxygen environments.

Each year, contractors start by hand pulling and spraying a glyphosate-based herbicide on ludwigia growing around the lake. The first round of treatments usually occurs in late June using canoes to reach floating mats away from the water’s edge. The herbicide prevents floating mats of ludwigia from taking root on the lake bed as the water level drops, ensuring migrating birds will have access to open water and mudflats to feed on native plants.

As new plants grow on the exposed lake bed, crews strap on 4½ gallon backpack sprayers and walk around to treat the ludwigia. At the height of the growth, crews use a 700-foot hose connected to an ATV to reach patches far from solid ground, Cooley said.

“It’s tiring work,” he said. “The crew is wearing chest waders and slogging through mud.”

Herbicides are the most effective method of treating ludwigia, especially on a large site, but they’re used with caution. The weed killer used to treat ludwigia is approved by the Environmental Protection Agency for use in and near water.

Hand pulling ludwigia is not feasible as the only tactic at a large site like Smith and Bybee Wetlands. It must be done with care, since hand pulling can spread ludwigia, which easily grows new colonies from small fragments that break free and float away. It also spreads by seeds.

Come June, another round of treatments at Smith and Bybee Wetlands will start in the ongoing effort to control ludwigia.

“I’m hopeful we’ve turned the corner and are pushing ludwigia down,” said Stewart, the Metro scientist. “Invasive species are forever. It takes a lot of resources.”

## Help tackle ludwigia

Interested in joining the fight against invasive ludwigia?

Please clean, drain, and dry boats and gear after all outings on water.

If you spot invasive ludwigia, report it to the Oregon Invasive Species Online Hotline: [oregoninvasiveshotline.org](http://oregoninvasiveshotline.org)

Join the Willamette Aquatic Invasives Network and contribute to a community map of ludwigia: [cascadepacific.org/smartlist\\_111](http://cascadepacific.org/smartlist_111)










# Destination guide

	<b>Restrooms</b>		<b>Playground</b>
	<b>Picnic facilities</b>		<b>Camping</b>
	<b>Trails</b>		<b>Wheelchair accessible</b>
	<b>Classes events volunteer</b>		<b>Cost</b> \$5/car, \$7/bus (free with annual pass)



1

**Blue Lake Regional Park**  
Enjoy a fun game of disc golf, or explore a nature-themed playground, a discovery garden, sports facilities and a wetland with a viewing platform and trail.



2

**Broughton Beach**  
Head to one of Portland's best urban beaches and enjoy a picnic, beachcombing, or a stroll along the Columbia River.








3

**Canemah Bluff Nature Park**  
Gaze at the Willamette River below, marvel at oak trees overhead, hike and admire colorful spring wildflowers.






4

**Cooper Mountain Nature Park**  
Hike or jog more than three miles of trails, watch wildlife or enjoy views of the Chehalem Mountains and Tualatin Valley.






5

**Farmington Paddle Launch**  
The launch site accommodates non-motorized watercraft.





6

**Glendoveer Golf Course & Nature Trail**  
Tee time: playglendoveer.com  
Play a game of golf, footgolf or indoor tennis, or enjoy a stroll on the two-mile nature trail.





7

**Graham Oaks Nature Park**  
Ride bikes through a restored oak woodland, stroll through a conifer forest and spot birds from a wetland overlook.






8

**Howell Territorial Park**  
Watch for birds that flock to the park's wetlands, enjoy a picnic, and explore a piece of the region's natural and cultural history.





9

**Lone Fir Cemetery**  
Enjoy a stroll or jog in this tree-filled community greenspace, one of Oregon's most treasured historic cemeteries.






10

**Mason Hill Park**  
At this charming, one-acre park, bicycle through the rolling hills beyond Forest Park, take in spectacular views of the Tualatin Valley and picnic under the shelter.








11

**Mount Talbert Nature Park**  
Slip into the forested oasis to explore four miles of trails, enjoy gorgeous views, and keep an eye out for deer, pileated and hairy woodpeckers, white-breasted nuthatches and Western tanagers.










12

**Orenco Woods Nature Park**  
Enjoy a leisurely jog, stroll or bike ride on a network of trails while taking in views of the gently rolling hills, open meadows and forests. Children will have fun exploring the nature play area.







13

**Oxbow Regional Park**  
Explore 15 miles of trails through ancient forests, camp year-round or find the perfect adventure on the Sandy River.



14

**Scouters Mountain Nature Park**  
Climb the steep, fir-lined road to the top of this extinct lava dome to enjoy unrivaled views of Mount Hood.



15


**Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area**  
Take the Interlakes Trail or go by kayak to explore one of America's largest urban wetlands while spotting beavers, otters, deer, osprey, bald eagles and turtles.



**Boat ramps** [oregonmetro.gov/boats](https://oregonmetro.gov/boats)


16

**Chinook Landing Marine Park**



17

**M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp**



18

**Sauvie Island Boat Ramp**







# Get involved

CLASSES AND EVENTS

WED. MAY 2      SAT. MAY 12

## Learning the language of birds

Through vocalizations and movement, song birds are broadcasting daily stories happening on the land. Come to the evening lecture to find out how birds act as an alarm system for the forest and how you can tune in. Sign up for the series to practice decoding bird language by listening, sitting, and sound mapping in one of Metro’s off the beaten path natural areas.

### May 2 lecture

Oregon Zoo Education Center  
7 to 8:30 p.m.  
Free. Ages 12 and older.  
Registration required.  
Difficulty: easy. ♿

### May 12 field class

Location provided to registered participants.  
9 a.m. to noon.  
\$10/person. Ages 12 and older.  
Registration required.  
Difficulty: moderate.

Photos by Tom Koerner, Jennifer Wilson, Gaylen Beatty



SAT. APRIL 14      SAT. APRIL 28

## Mushroom discovery hike

Discover the fascinating and weird world of mushrooms! Join local mushroom guide Leah Bendlin on this woodland hike. We’ll learn about the ecological roles of fungi, their forms, and how they eat and reproduce. We’ll have hands-on activities and learn how to identify mushrooms. Field guides will be provided.

April 14, Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area  
April 28, Oxbow Regional Park  
9:30 a.m. to noon or 1 to 3:30 p.m.  
\$6/person, \$11/family; Oxbow: \$5/car, \$7/bus.  
All ages welcome but geared toward adults.  
Registration required. Difficulty: easy.

SAT. APRIL 21

## SOLVE-it for Earth Day!

Oregon’s largest Earth Day event needs you! Pick your favorite park and join Metro rangers, neighbors and friends in a day of work and fun. Gloves, tools, training and snacks are provided. Visit [oregonmetro.gov/calendar](https://oregonmetro.gov/calendar) for location information.

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

SAT. APRIL 7, 28      SAT. MAY 5, 19      SAT. JUNE 2, 30

## Volunteer ventures

Help care for rare native plants that support regional restoration projects. Spring activities include planting bulbs and seeds and maintaining wildflower seed production beds. No experience is needed. Gloves, tools, water and snacks provided.

Native Plant Center  
2661 SW Borland Road, Tualatin  
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Free. All ages.  
Registration required. Difficulty: moderate.



Volunteers at Native Plant Center

WED. APRIL 11, MAY 9      SAT. APRIL 21, MAY 19

## Free kids golf and tennis clinics

Has your child expressed an interest in tennis or golf and have they been wanting to give it a try? Your child will learn to play golf or tennis at a free beginner lesson taught by an instructor! No tennis racquets or golf clubs required.

Glendoveer Golf and Tennis Center  
Golf clinics: 4 to 5 p.m. April 11, May 9  
Tennis clinics: 1 to 2 p.m. April 21, May 19  
Free. Ages 5 to 13.  
Registration required at [playglendoveer.com/events/event-registration](https://playglendoveer.com/events/event-registration)  
Difficulty: moderate.



Volunteers at SOLVE-it for Earth Day



# How to register

Unless otherwise noted, register and pay at [oregonmetro.gov/calendar](https://oregonmetro.gov/calendar)

Registration and payment required at least 48 hours in advance for all classes. Classes with low enrollment will be canceled; registered participants will receive full refunds. For more information: Nature Education team, 503-220-2782.

SAT. APRIL 21

## Spring lichen ramble

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

Scouters Mountain Nature Park  
10 a.m. to noon.

\$6/person, \$11/family.


All ages welcome but geared toward adults. Registration required. Difficulty: easy.

WED. APRIL 25 SAT. APRIL 28

## Wildlife tracking: the art and science of reading the sign

Wild animals are all around, but where are they? Learn how to see and read the hidden stories etched into the landscape. A free evening workshop April 25 followed by a field outing April 28 will awaken your ability to find and interpret tracks and signs. You can register for the free workshop only, the field class only or come to both.

April 25 workshop  
Oregon Zoo Education Center  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Free. Ages 12 and older but geared toward adults. Registration required. Difficulty: easy. 

April 28 field class  
Oxbow Regional Park  
9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
\$6/person, \$11/family; \$5/car, \$7/bus.  
Ages 12 and older but geared toward adults. Registration required. Difficulty: moderate.

SUN. MAY 6

## Turtle walk in the wetlands

Oregon’s turtles are rare, shy and hard to find, but Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area is home to one of the largest populations of western painted turtles in Oregon. Learn about their natural history and examine shells of specimens found there in the past.

Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area  
10 a.m. to noon.  
\$6/person, \$11/family. All ages.  
Registration required. Difficulty: easy.

SAT. MAY 12

## Mother’s Day birds and blooms

Instead of taking flowers to mom this Mother’s Day, why not take her to the wildflowers? Join a Metro naturalist for a leisurely stroll to see and learn about common wildflowers. Enjoy the serenade of nesting songbirds and views of the Tualatin Valley.

Cooper Mountain Nature Park  
1:30 to 4 p.m.  
\$10/person. All ages.  
Registration required: Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, 503-629-6350.  
Difficulty: moderate.

FRI. MAY 18 – SUN. MAY 20

## Sandy River Spey Clave

Get your feet wet at the largest two-hand fly rod event in the Western Hemisphere. Learn the basics of spey casting from Northwest fly fishing legends, guides and national experts. Rods, lines, reels and some sizes of waders are available for use during the classes, or bring your own equipment. Free breakfast and lunch. Details at [flyfishusa.com](https://flyfishusa.com)

Oxbow Regional Park  
9 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily  
\$5/car; \$7/bus; free with annual parks pass. All ages.  
Advanced registration not required. Difficulty: moderate.

SAT. MAY 19

## Pollinator picnic


The annual Pollinator picnic returns to Howell Territorial Park. Metro is excited to partner with the Sauvie Island Center for this fun, family friendly educational event. Through interactive games and a scavenger hunt, guests will learn about the world of pollinators, the challenges they face and the important role pollinators play in the food supply. From there, guests will depart for a self-guided tour visiting a variety of hosted stations around the farm and on the grounds of the park. For details and to pre-register, visit [sauvieislandcenter.org](https://sauvieislandcenter.org)

Howell Territorial Park  
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
\$10/family suggested donation. All ages. Registration not required. Difficulty: easy.

MON. MAY 28

## Memorial Day at Lone Fir Cemetery

Spend the day walking the grounds learning about the service men and women, firefighters and police officers buried on the historic property. Join a guide from Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery to discover the past and present of one of Oregon’s oldest active cemeteries on an historic or veterans tour. Retired firefighter and historian Don Porth will share the stories of Portland’s early firefighters. Self-guided tours available on-site and at [oregonmetro.gov/lonefir](https://oregonmetro.gov/lonefir) will allow visitors to learn about the early police officers of Portland. The crew of Portland Fire & Rescue Engine 9 will be on hand in the morning to raise the flag in the Firefighters’ Section, followed by a short program and the chance to see a fire engine up close. Refreshments provided.

Lone Fir Cemetery  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Free. All ages.  
Registration not required. Difficulty: easy. 



## 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 19; May 17; June 21; July 19; Aug. 16; Sept. 20; Oct. 18; Nov. 11, 15 and 23; and Dec. 20.

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

MON. MAY 28

## Nature through a different lens

Interested in nature photography? Gain an understanding of basic photography composition while learning about the local ecology. Class will start prior to golden hour in order to capture the best light of the day. Cell phones, point-and-shoot cameras and all skill levels are welcome.

Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.  
\$6/person, \$11/family. Ages 8 and older. Registration required. Difficulty: easy.

SAT. JUNE 2

## Stayin’ alive: Survival fires


You are lost, and the storm clouds are gathering. Could you light a fire with just one match? In this family-oriented class, participants will learn how to light a fire in the toughest conditions with only what nature provides. Participants use knives during the class, and the safe conduct of children is the responsibility of their guardians. Fire safety will be emphasized.

Oxbow Regional Park  
11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
\$6/person, \$11/family; \$5/car, \$7/bus. All ages. Registration required. Difficulty: easy.

WED. JUNE 20

## Eighth Annual Barbara Walker Trails Fair

Want to learn about trails, projects, grants and initiatives across greater Portland? Head to Metro’s Eighth Annual Barbara Walker Trails Fair. Visit booths hosted by dozens of organizations and talk to trail experts from across the region. Refreshments provided.

Metro Regional Center, Apotheker Plaza  
600 NE Grand Ave., Portland  
Noon to 3 p.m.  
Free. All ages.  
Registration not required. Difficulty: easy. 





# Tools for living

PAINT RECYCLING PROGRAM TEACHES SKILLS,  
OFFERS SECOND CHANCES

Story and photography by Guadalupe Triana

Upon entering the warehouse at MetroPaint's production facility, the swift, multi-step operation is all within view.

To the left, trucks drop off bins of used paint. Straight ahead, hundreds of cans of paint are stacked along the wall, ready to be processed. In the sorting station above, workers separate cans by color and pour similar shades into larger containers where they mix together.

And to the right, Karl Burnice is quickly tapping down lids, ensuring each gallon of MetroPaint meets quality standards. After a year of learning the ins and outs of the warehouse, Burnice has found his place leading paint production.

Burnice started working at MetroPaint in the summer of 2016 with the help of the Galt Foundation, a nonprofit temp agency that helps people find job training and a stable path to employment.

MetroPaint, which recycles leftover latex paint into new paint, works with Galt and St. Vincent de Paul to provide such opportunities.

"They give us an opportunity, and they trust us," Burnice said. "And because of that, I feel appreciated."

As a government, Metro is required to hire some employees through what's called a Qualified Rehabilitation Facility. Qualified facilities are defined by the state as organizations that "assist and encourage Oregonians with disabilities to achieve maximum independence through gainful and useful employment."

Galt serves people facing a range of challenges, including those with mental or physical disabilities and those transitioning from the criminal justice system through work release programs. After being matched with compatible jobs, workers start as temporary employees at places like MetroPaint and



acquire skills, such as handling cash and sales, learning lab procedures and operating heavy machinery like forklifts.

## Workers find a chance to be productive and valued

A few years ago, Burnice, who has a criminal record, was working on and off at different jobs. When his grandson was diagnosed with leukemia, Burnice stopped working completely – he didn't know how to react to the situation.

"I kept thinking, 'when am I going to be allowed an opportunity at redemption?'" Burnice said.

He contacted Galt, and they matched him with a job at MetroPaint. Now he leads the paint production department, where he's responsible for – as he puts it – producing as much paint as possible.

"It gives me a reason to be career-oriented again – to say 'hey, this is not over. I can still be productive,'" Burnice said.

While the program is intended to provide training that can lead to other jobs, some employees have stayed. MetroPaint manager Andrew Staab says as long as people are willing to show up and do the work, they have a secure job.

"It's a fantastic program," Staab said. "It gives people the opportunity to get on their feet, off the ground and really make a great, positive contribution."



One of Burnice's colleagues, Alan Hill, arrived in the summer of 2013 after Portland nonprofit Central City Concern referred Hill to St. Vincent de Paul, which then linked him to MetroPaint.

Hill says he's been sober for the past five and a half years, a fact he partially attributes to his job.

"I think this job has a lot to do with that because I have something to do in the morning where I'm needed," Hill said. "It makes me feel good about myself because I actually have a decent job that pays good and everything."

## Help shape the future

Greater Portland generates more than 2 million tons of trash every year. Join family, friends and neighbors to help Metro update the Regional Waste Plan, the 10-year blueprint that guides how garbage and recycling is handled.

Find out when and how you can weigh in at [oregonmetro.gov/letstalktrash](https://oregonmetro.gov/letstalktrash)

## Just \$13 a gallon



Metro

[oregonmetro.gov/metropaint](https://oregonmetro.gov/metropaint)



Learn more

Explore photos and videos about MetroPaint, including behind-the-scenes footage of the mixing room and interviews with MetroPaint staff at [oregonmetro.gov/news](https://oregonmetro.gov/news)





# Regional roundup

6 UNIQUE VOICES ON FINDING A HOME  
IN GREATER PORTLAND

Tyanne Wilmath



Arone Andu

Story by Ambar Espinoza  
Photography by Joshua Manus

Greater Portland is on a road that other regions have already walked. Due to a widening income gap and a shortage of affordable housing, the region faces many of the same challenges that such places as San Francisco and Seattle have already faced. Meet six Oregonians who share what they want decisionmakers to know about people like them as they navigate housing at different life stages.

## “Affording rent should not be that hard.”

Arone Andu moved to Portland from Seattle about three years ago, when he took a job working as an AmeriCorps teacher. He considered renting his own apartment, but he couldn’t find anything that fit his budget. So he shares a four-bedroom apartment near the school where he teaches in North Portland.

**Andu:** One thing I would like to see is definitely more affordable housing, more support [and] some regulation when it comes to landlords. I think that development can be done in a more respectful, equitable way... I went to school, and I work at least six days out of the week. For somebody who’s trying to make an honest living, finding a place to stay should not be this hard and affording rent should not be that hard either. I think everybody deserves a home, a roof over their head.

## People with disabilities “need housing near transit hubs, MAX stops.”

More than four years ago, Allan and Tyanne Wilmath were renters in Southwest Portland. They decided to start house-hunting when their rent went up. The couple had recently welcomed their first child, so the timing felt right to start looking for their own home. Because they’re legally blind and do not drive, they picked a home in Southeast Portland that’s close to bus lines, schools and shopping. But it’s still challenging to get around sometimes.



Wilmath family

**Tyanne Wilmath:** We do not have straight sidewalks, which Adrian [my guide dog] is mostly trained to walk on the sidewalks. So it’s really hard for me to stay on the side of the street because he’s not fond of walking without a sidewalk.

**Allan Wilmath:** You know, disabled people don’t have the option to drive. They probably really need housing next to the transit hubs, MAX stops and stuff. But ironically the MAX stops increase property values, which prices out the people who need it the most.

## “I don’t see any way I’ll get out of apartment living.”

Heather Thurber has lived in Aloha for about 20 years. Aloha’s small-town character with access to the amenities of a big city are a big draw. It’s why Thurber bought her first home in Aloha more than 10 years ago. Unfortunately, she lost it during the mortgage crisis. She foresees renting over the long-term.

**Thurber:** It would really help renters if we didn’t get nickel and dimed, if the rent was the rent... It’s not the rent, plus the utilities, plus the fees, plus this and that... We need to get rid of those no-cause evictions. I wish that the legislators would look at ways to roll back the laws that prevent rent control.

## “Our house is not set up to really age.”

John Schuberg bought his house in 1984 when he was a young chef managing a restaurant. He’s grateful he bought his home in Southeast Portland when he did because he couldn’t afford to buy it today, he says. He and his wife, Maggie Skenderian, love their home and neighborhood and the close proximity to transit and shopping. But their house is not set up to age in.

**Schuberg:** If we needed to be in a wheelchair or walker in our later years we wouldn’t be able to do that in the house. One of the reasons that we felt converting our garage into an



Heather Thurber and daughter



John Schuberg and Maggie Skenderian

accessory dwelling unit was [necessary was] to actually have an opportunity to stay in the neighborhood, so we could actually live in that unit or have a caretaker live in that unit and take care of us in the house. We felt this gives us an option to age a little more gracefully.

**Skenderian:** It’s very expensive to live in Portland these days, and I suspect many people as they age may not be able to afford to continue to live here... As the region grows and more people move here, I think that it’s important to have the option to do this sort of thing [build accessory dwelling units]... to try to accommodate the needs for aging or the needs of parents or grandparents or children.



Read more stories in Metro’s latest Regional Snapshot, which explores the region’s need for public investments in affordable housing:  
[oregonmetro.gov/snapshot](https://oregonmetro.gov/snapshot)





# Share your nature and win!



**Kevin Wells, West Linn**

Walking through Camassia Natural Area in West Linn, I saw some beautiful butterflies flying between the flowers. I knelt in a fairly squishy spot to get down low enough to snap this shot of a cedar hairstreak butterfly (*Callophrys gryneus*) on a daisy.

## Submit your photo

Win an annual parks pass, an overnight camping trip at Oxbow Regional Park, a tennis court session, or a round of golf for four people including cart at Glendoveer Golf and Tennis Center.

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

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