

# Behind the Scenes

January 2019



Dear Friend,

I hope the start of the new year has been great for you so far. At the LWC office, we have been busy getting those tax receipts out to all of our 2018 donors, and feeling grateful all over again for the many supporters we have out there! One way we like to thank all of our Friends is to invite you to our annual LWC Social & Celebration, which will take place on March 3 this year, at the Historic Gentle House in Monmouth from 2 to 4pm. Keep an eye on your mailbox for an invitation, and come raise a toast with us to celebrate those who help us achieve our vision of a healthy watershed for all! And if you want to get all the details and RSVP now, you can head to our website at [www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/lwc-social](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/lwc-social) and fill out your RSVP on the bottom of the page. We hope to see you there!

--Suzanne Teller, LWC Outreach Coordinator



## LOVE YOUR WATERSHED

From a Sips 'n' Science talk on mason bees to our annual Watershed Recreation Fair, we have a great line-up of events coming up in the next few months! For more details and RSVP info, make sure to visit [www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/loveyourwatershed](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/loveyourwatershed). If you would like event updates emailed to you, just click on the link above and subscribe to our Events email list!



### Sips 'n' Science: *The Mighty Mason Bee*

February 21, 2019 @ 6:30 - 8:00pm

The Valkyrie Wine Tavern (301 S. Main St., Independence)

Suggested Donation: \$5

*\*\*Please note that this venue is restricted to those 21 and over\*\**



### Stream Temperature Monitoring in the Luckiamute Watershed

March 21, 2019 @ 6:00 - 7:30pm

Monmouth Public Library (168 S. Ecols St., Monmouth)

FREE!



### Watershed Recreation Fair

April 6 or 13, 2019 @ 10:00am - 2:00pm (date and time will be confirmed soon!)

The Grove Coffeehouse (116 S. Main St., Independence)

FREE!



### Spring Bird Walk

May 12, 2019 @ 8:00am - 12:00pm

J2E Tree Farm, Philomath

\$12\* (only \$8\* for Friends of the LWC) \*Cost includes bag lunch from Ovenbird Bakery

RSVP required - Friends get early registration notice, so stay tuned for more details coming soon!

Your Land. Your Rivers. Your Community. Your Watershed.

# Watershed Notes

**With spring just around the corner**, now is an excellent time to get outside and witness the earliest signs of new life emerging from the dark and quiet of winter. Right now, hazelnut orchards are awash in a pale yellow glow due to the hundreds of dangling catkins that decorate every tree. The buds of one of our earliest flowering native shrubs - the Osoberry (*Oemleria cerasiformis*)- are almost ready to burst in bloom, and red-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*) is not far behind. Observing and recording these signs of seasonal changes in the landscape - also called *phenology* - can not only lift your spirits on the dreariest days of late winter, it also has many practical applications. Indigenous peoples have used phenological observations for thousands of years to pinpoint the best timing for migration and harvest. Farmers monitor seasonal changes as a way to maximize crop production. Scientists have been using phenological data to track long term changes in climate, and welcome the contributions of amateur phenologists. If you are interested in learning how to start honing your observation skills, and be a part of the effort to document and understand long-term climate trends, there are several places you can start. **Budburst** (<https://budburst.org/>) welcomes people of all ages and abilities to contribute their seasonal plant observations to an online database. If you are interested in wildlife and plant phenology, check out **Nature's Notebook** ([www.usanpn.org/natures\\_notebook](http://www.usanpn.org/natures_notebook)). You can also join the **Oregon Season Tracker** Program and help scientists track weather patterns and precipitation at <http://oregonseasontracker.forestry.oregonstate.edu/become-ost-observer-its-easy>.

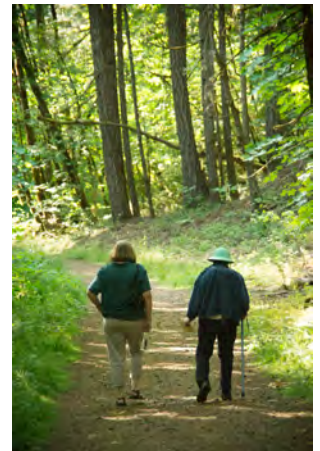


## Outdoor Recreation and Healthy Communities

It's no secret that fresh air and exercise do wonders for keeping you healthy. But now, thanks to a report just released by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD), we can now put a number to the health benefits of outdoor activity.

OPRD's report, titled *Health Benefits for Oregonians from their Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon* — shows Oregon's participation in outdoor recreation activities saves the state \$1.4 billion annually in healthcare costs related to chronic illnesses such as heart disease, stroke, depression, dementia, diabetes and several cancers. In Polk and Benton counties alone, those healthcare cost savings total nearly \$30 million!

Oregon is the first state to ever quantify the healthcare savings of outdoor recreation at a statewide and county level. In addition to being eye-opening, this report gives local governments on up to state agencies some real numbers to support investment in parks, trails, sidewalks and bike lanes. OPRD recreation planner Terry Bergerson says, "The results are consistent across the state: when outdoor recreation is easily accessible, healthcare costs go down. How we design communities and transportation systems contributes to the health of Oregonians."



If you would like to read the full report, you can view it online and download a copy at <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/PLANS/docs/scorp/2019-2023SCORP/2018HealthBenefitsEstimatesforOregonians.pdf>

In addition to the benefits to our physical health, getting outdoors also has positive impacts on our psychological and social well-being. The Luckiamute Watershed Council has long been invested in getting folks outdoors to enjoy the beauty and wonder of their local rivers and landscapes. From seasonal bird walks to ivy pulls, we strive to provide opportunities for community members of all ages and abilities to connect with their watershed on a personal level. Not only do these interactions create stronger bonds among community members themselves, they also remind us of our place in the wider community we belong to -- which includes plants, wildlife, and the entire ecosystem.

OPRD's report gives us yet another reason to value the time and energy we spend outdoors getting connected with the natural world. At our annual Watershed Recreation Fair coming this April, we will be celebrating the incredible array of outdoor activities and recreation opportunities that can be found just minutes from our doorstep. Representatives from federal, state and local recreation agencies, biking and hiking clubs, local nonprofits, and other organizations with programs that promote outdoor recreation in our area. Head to our website at [www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/loveyourwatershed](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/loveyourwatershed) to get details, and keep an eye on your inbox for more information coming soon! In the meantime, you can already start planning a trip to some of our great local outdoor destinations listed at [www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/outdoor-recreation](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/outdoor-recreation). **Happy adventuring!**