



Wenatchee Naturalist's mission is to cultivate awareness, understanding, and stewardship of the Wenatchee River region by developing an active corps of well-informed community volunteers.



January & February 2017

A NOTE FROM SUSAN:

Happy New Year! I've compiled a year-long list of naturalist and conservation options to help you map out your 2017. Regular enews will resume in March.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

■ Citizen Science Projects

Jan.-March, 2017: Winter snow tracking pygmy rabbit survey. All day walking, dressed in layers are you would for skiing (5-8 miles/day). Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife project leader, Jon Gallie, will send an email out each Friday with the next week's schedule and meeting time/place/transportation logistics. Sign up by emailing Jon at Jon.Gallie@dfw.wa.gov. Volunteers need to register with the WDFW new online registration system at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/volunteer/>.

Feb.17-20, 2017 Great Backyard Bird Count. Join this free, fun easy event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings online at birdcount.org.

March 4, 2017 (all day), Rare Plant Monitoring Training, Tri-Cities. Deadline for applications is Feb. 15. If you have questions, feel free to call the Rare Care office at (206) 616-0780 or email them rarecare@uw.edu. Citizen scientists sign up to monitor a WA rare plant species, using a protocol and reporting system. Applications are available at:

<http://depts.washington.edu/uwbg/support/volunteer.php>, Select Rare Care Rare Plant Monitor

March 22-23, 2017 for eBird trainings with the Chelan Douglas Land Trust and WDFW:

- March 22, 6-8 pm Wenatchee, CDLT Conference Room, 18 N. Wenatchee Ave. RSVP to Susan Ballinger at susan@cdlandtrust.org
- March 23, 9-11:30, Leavenworth, Wenatchee River Institute, 347 Division Street. RSVP to Brook Hinton at bhinton@wenatcheeriverinstitute.org

April 1-2, 2017: Sagebrush Songbird Survey field training. Three extraordinary instructors: WDFW's Matt Vander Haegen and Dr. Micheal Schroeder plus David St George. Training site: Nature Conservancy's Moses Coulee Field Station and WDFW Sagebrush Flats Wildlife Area/ Mileage and hotel reimbursement. RSVP to Christi Norman at cnorman@audubon.org

[Xerces Society](#) has compiled list of Citizen Science projects for volunteers to easily join, all in support of the science of invertebrate conservation. [Purchase](#) books or a pollinator habitat sign for your yard.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

■ Stewardship

Climate Conversations NCW Join this local group of citizens to learn more about climate issues and their local impact, and to learn how to take effective steps to voice your opinion to elected officials. A

once/month Monday evening planning team invites new volunteers to join. To learn more, contact Carolyn Griffin-Bugert at climateconversationsncw@gmail.com

North Central WA Audubon Society Conservation Committee. A team of NCWAS volunteers are currently involved in several local processes with potentially significant impacts on the welfare of birds in our region. Questions or comments regarding any of these issues, or our conservation work in general – Please contact Mark Johnston at S697striata@frontier.com

Late March Native Plant Sale (plant prepping) and Sale- April 1, 2017 (10-1pm). Volunteer with Cascadia to prepare and distribute pre-ordered native plants. Held at Stemilt Growers Warehouse in North Wenatchee. [Orders](#) must be received by March 1, 2017. Volunteer with Ava Izdepski at (509) 436-1601 or americorps@cascadiacd.org

April-November, land stewardship projects with Chelan-Douglas Land Trust. To help with trail building and maintenance, contact Hanne Benner at hanne@cdlandtrust.org. To assist the Stewardship Director with a wide variety of on-the-ground work, contact Neal Hedges at neal@cdlandtrust.org

April-November, stewardship projects on the grounds of [Wenatchee River Institute](#). On-going restoration projects, care of the native plant garden, and the grounds rely on volunteers. To learn more, contact Brook Hinton at bhinton@wenatcheeriverinstitute.org.

Spring workshop Shrub-steppe Stewardship & Restoration, offered by the Washington Native Plant Society Stewardship Program. Dates are being set for this free training series, held in Wenatchee that included 4 evening sessions and 2 Saturday field trips. Contact organizer Jim Evans at jimevans@centurytel.net to learn more (dates will be firmed up very soon!). Participants must join WNPS as a member, and pledge to do stewardship volunteering upon completion of the training.

April 25 & 27 (6-8pm) Weed “Alert” Training, offered by Chelan-Douglas Land Trust and Chelan County Weed Board. Learn to identify 13 problematic weeds that could become invasive in the Wenatchee Foothills. Volunteers will learn how to report sightings to CDLT as way to allow quick deterrent actions to prevent these invasive weeds from spreading. To register, contact Susan Ballinger at susan@cdlandtrust.org

Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary- Environmental Stewardship begins in our own backyards. Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife offers suggestions for making your property a better place for songbirds and other wildlife. Once you are ready, apply for certification. The website includes [Woodworking and other projects](#) to make for backyard wildlife and helpful tips for winter bird feeding.

Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center CBFIC informs people of all ages about the historical and ecological role of wildland fire. On-going projects at the site welcome new volunteers. To learn more, contact Board President, Dave Spies daves60@aol.com

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

■ Education

Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center. To volunteer, contact Education Coordinator Selina Danko at sdanko@wvmcc.org. Programs that depend upon volunteers include: [Youth on the Columbia](#) (6 weeks each spring and 4 weeks each fall), [Super Summer Adventures](#) (10 weeks in summer)

The [Era of Megafires Project](#) contact volunteer coordinator Sara Rolfs sararolfs@nwi.net. Sara needs volunteers to help with all-day forest classroom field experiences based at Mission Ridge Ski Lodge, serving regional middle and high school students. Year-round programming.

Wenatchee River Institute Youth Education Field Days. Year-round outdoor education programming. Learn more about volunteer opportunities by contacting Youth Programs Manager, Will Crawley, at wcrowley@wenatcheeriverinstitute.org

Kids in the Creek, coordinated by Cascadia Conservation District. Annual May outdoor riparian education program serving area high school students. To learn more, contact coordinator Amanda LeVesque Newell at AmandaL@cascadiacd.org

Wenatchee School District Science Field Experiences (Kindergarten-5th grades) Annual outdoor science education programs offered spring and fall. To learn more, contact K-8 Science Coordinator Jill Fineis 663-9106 x251 or fineis.j@wenatcheeschools.org

[North Central Washington Audubon Society](#)

[What's That Bird](#) (Kindergarten-adults) Join a fun team helping people learn to use binoculars and to identify common local species at a wide variety of outdoor venues. To learn more, contact NCWAS Education coordinators Penny Tobiska ptobiska@nwi.net or Mark Oswood moswood@nwi.net.

[Wenatchee River Salmon Festival](#) Annual mid-September festival serving school groups and the public. To learn more about volunteering, contact education@salmonfest.org.

WORKSHOPS/TRAININGS:

Feb. 11, 2017. Native Planting 101 Workshop, offered by Cascadia. Free workshop (noon-4:30pm) at Chelan PUD Auditorium in Wenatchee. Topics include yard-scaping, pollinator gardening, weed law, weed identification, and integrated weed management, specifically tailored to our lands in Chelan County. Register with Ava Izdepski at (509) 436-1601 or americorps@cascadiacd.org

March 15, 2017. The [1st Washington Botanical Symposium](#) at the Center for Urban Horticulture on the University of Washington campus in Seattle. This day-long conference will feature presentations by botanists throughout Washington on topics ranging from aquatic plants and climate change to invasive species, rare plants, and a revised regional flora. In addition to learning about ongoing projects, the conference will be a great opportunity to connect with colleagues within and across disciplines. \$75.

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spreading. Free. Register with Susan Ballinger at susan@cdlandtrust.org.

May 19-21, 2017 Washington Native Plant Society Annual Study Weekend, based at the Eastern WA University campus in Cheney. Hosted by the [Northeast Chapter](#), the theme is "From Sagebrush to Subalpine: Exploring the Diversity of Eastern Washington Landforms and Flora" Evening speakers and 2 all-day field trips offered to registrants. Fee to be announced. Registration required.

June 9-11, 2017. Botany WA at Tierra Retreat Center; Wenatchee Mountains. Planning for the annual event, held by WNPS and the UW Herbarium, is underway. Registration information will release in early January 2017. Tierra Retreat Center is over 400 acres of forested retreat center located within 15 minutes of Leavenworth. Registration will be online at <http://www.wnps.org/>

PROGRAMS & FILMS:

Wenatchee Chapter Washington Native Plant Society speaker series on Thursday evenings, once/month, Jan-March and Sept.-November. Wildflower walks offered spring-fall. Free and open to the public. Learn more at: <http://www.wnps.org/wenatchee/home.html>

Wenatchee Valley Environmental Film Series, hosted at Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center on Tuesday evenings once/month, Sept.-April. Suggested donation- \$5. Learn more at: <http://www.wenatcheevalleymuseum.org/our-events/>

Wenatchee River Institute Red Barn Series, offering enlightening speakers and engaging discussions. Meet other community members and enjoy a no-host bar, as we explore a wide variety of topics related to the people, places, and natural world of the Pacific Northwest. By suggested donation. See the calendar and learn more at: <http://www.wenatcheeriverinstitute.org/adult-education/red-barn-events>

Wenatchee Valley Erratics Chapter of the Ice Age Floods Institute, hosts guest speakers on the "even" numbered months on the 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 P.M at the Wenatchee Valley Museum, 127 South Mission, Wenatchee. Free and open to the public. Learn more by contact Chapter Publicity Chair, Susan Freiberg, at susanf@televar.com.

Chelan-Douglas Land Trust. Year-round, the trust offering a wide variety of outings, open to all. To learn more, contact Membership & Education Coordinator, Hillary Schwirtlich Hillary@cdlandtrust.org.

Methow Conservancy Year-round, the conservancy offers a wide array of natural history speakers, field courses, workshops, and walks based in the Methow Valley. To learn more, contact Mary Kiesau, Educational Programs Director at 509-996-5871 or mary@methowconservancy.org.

North Central Washington Audubon Society. Year round, check the calendar for free field trips led by experienced birders and open to all.

Wenatchee Valley College Continuing Education offers [Nature Appreciation](#) short courses on conifers, waterbirds, and bird-watching (Feb-Apr, 2017) the 50-hour Sept.-Dec.2017 [Wenatchee Naturalist](#) course.

April 23, 2017 Leavenworth Earth Day Community Fair. Join a team of local volunteers who organize and produce this fun education afternoon of activities, music, and food, celebrating environmental awareness and sustainability. To learn more, contact Lisi Ott lisisott@gmail.com

May 18-21, 2017. Leavenworth Spring BirdFest Celebrate the return of migratory birds in the midst of peak wildflower season while enjoying field trips, events and free family activities for all ages and abilities in Leavenworth, Washington and throughout the Wenatchee River valley! To learn more, contact Brook Hinton at bhinton@wenatcheeriverinstitute.org

April-May, 2017 Puget Sound Energy's Wild Horse Wind Farm Wildflower Festival , Vantage, WA. Each spring, the center offers special tours and programs during peak spring bloom. Check for dates and times [here](#).

REGIONAL BIRD FESTIVALS:

Mar. 24-26, 2017. Othello Sandhill Crane Festival, Othello, WA.

For nearly two decades we have celebrated the annual return of nearly 35,000 sand hill cranes to Othello, Washington every March as they migrate north to their breeding grounds in Alaska. The Festival offers an incredible opportunity to view the cranes up-close, with tours led by local experts. The Festival also boasts other specialty tours of the flora, fauna and

geology of the area, and many lectures, as well as children's activities.

Apr 6, 2017 to Apr 9, 2017 Harney County Migratory Bird Festival Burns, Oregon

Spend an amazing weekend witnessing the spectacular spring migration in the Harney Basin of Southeast Oregon. View thousands of migratory birds as they rest and feed in the wide open spaces of Oregon's high desert. From waterfowl to shorebirds, cranes to raptors, wading birds to songbirds, you'll see it all! The festival offers non-stop birding activities as well as historical and cultural information sure to entertain you and your family. So whether you're a beginner or a life-long wildlife enthusiast, the festival has something for everyone! Our featured speaker for 2017 is author and photographer Noah Strycker, who completed a "Big Year of Birding" in 2015 and set a new world record of 6,042 species observed around the world! Contact: Harney County Chamber of Commerce, 541-573-2636, info@migratorybirdfestival.com.

Apr 21, 2017 to Apr 23, 2017 13th Annual Pacific City Birding and Blues Festival Pacific City, Oregon

Visit Pacific City on the Oregon Coast for a weekend of birding and blues music. This nonprofit community festival aims to educate as well as entertain its participants. The three days include presentations from photographers, conservationists, and bird enthusiasts, live bird exhibitions, birding field trips led by regional experts and biologists, and one night of excellent blues music. This year's keynote speaker is Paul Bannick, author of OWL: A YEAR IN THE LIVES OF NORTH AMERICAN OWLS and bestseller THE OWL AND THE WOODPECKER. Experience spring migration like never before from dawn until well after dark at the Pacific City Birding and Blues Festival on the Oregon Coast! For more information call us at 503-965-6247 or visit our website at birdingandblues.org

Early May, 2017 Grays Harbor Shorebird and Nature Festival, Hoquiam, WA.

EACH SPRING, hundreds of thousands of shorebirds stop to rest and feed in Grays Harbor estuary on their migration northward. Coming from as far south as Argentina, these Arctic-bound shorebirds are among the world's greatest migrants. Some birds travel over 15,000 miles round trip! Tens of thousands of shorebirds feed on the open mudflats in the estuary. This concentration of birds offers people a great chance to view a number of shorebird species. Friday and Saturday night evening programs, field trips,

lectures and more. For more information, call (360) 289-504

May 12, 2017 to May 14, 2017 Yakima River Canyon Bird Fest

Yakima River Canyon Scenic Byway, Ellensburg, Washington

Come bird with KEEN for 3 days during the second weekend of May and discover the natural beauty of Central Washington State! Kittitas County features diverse and spectacular habitats ranging from snow-capped mountains, thousands of acres of public forest, lush riparian corridors, and endangered shrub-steppe open space. The Yakima River Canyon is an Audubon Important Bird Area (IBA) with some of the highest densities of passerines and birds of prey in the State, some of them obligates to the shrub-steppe habitat. The Yakima River Canyon Bird Fest will offer expert-led field trips, keynote speakers including Paul Bannick, vendors, extended field trips, social events and music, and a plethora of early spring bird watching! Contact: KEEN kittitasee@gmail.com or 509-551-8807.

May 18, 2017 to May 21, 2017 Leavenworth Spring BirdFest

Wenatchee River Institute, Barn Beach Reserve, 347 Division Street, Leavenworth, Washington

Come bird with us the third weekend in May and celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Leavenworth Spring BirdFest! Enjoy the unforgettable experience of witnessing the vast array of returning migratory birds in the midst of the peak wildflower season in the incomparable natural beauty of North Central Washington's Wenatchee Valley. The Leavenworth area features spectacular habitats ranging from snow-capped mountains to sunny ponderosa pine forests, lush riparian zones to shrub-steppe. Educational and recreational opportunities abound with field trips led by area birding and wildlife experts and professionals. While birding is the heart of the weekend, activities also include wildflower walks, art events, and family activities to ensure fun and learning for birders and outdoor enthusiasts of all ages and skill levels. Contact: Wenatchee River Institute Programs programs@wenatcheeriverinstitute.org 509-548-0181, x4.

Sept. 15-17, 2017. **Puget Sound Bird Fest in Edmonds, Washington**

Puget Sound Bird Fest in Edmonds, Washington is an annual fall celebration of birds and nature found on the beautiful shores of Puget Sound. The r three-day event includes speakers, guided walks, land and water-based field trips, exhibits, and educational

activities for children and adults. Plan to spend the weekend in Edmonds, birding and meeting other birders, naturalists, photographers, and people engaged in fascinating bird research projects.

Oct 7, 2017 to Oct 8, 2017 Ridgefield NWR Birdfest & Bluegrass Ridgefield, Washington

BirdFest and Bluegrass is a city-wide event put on by the Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, catered to the idea of bringing more awareness of the Refuge, and educating people about what the Ridgefield NWR and the City of Ridgefield have to offer. Events take place at the Carty Unit, the River 'S' Unit, the Cathlapotle Plankhouse, and Downtown Ridgefield throughout the weekend. Events include a Birders Marketplace in Downtown Ridgefield where local artists and artisans can sell their wares, Audubon Birds from Portland and Clark County, Sandhill Crane hikes, birding tours, educational tours, guest speakers and more. A full schedule will be available in August. Keep your eye out for more special tours, hikes, and presentations. Contact 360-887-9495 or 360-887-4106, BirdFestReservations@gmail.com, or contact@ridgefieldfriends.org.



Scenes from our Fall 2016 Wenatchee Naturalist class. The [Wenatchee Naturalist](http://WenatcheeNaturalist) website features everyone's photo, with their journal!