

Neighbor News

Your Connection to Land Trust Preserves



Spring Hikes to Explore the Metolius Preserve

With towering pines and lush creekside corridors, the Metolius Preserve is a beautiful place to soak in the sights and sounds of spring in Central Oregon. If you are looking for your next spring hike, choose from two trailheads, short and long loops, and a variety of trails. **Here are some ideas to get you started:**

- **Becky Johnson Interpretive Area Wander:** Located at the South Trailhead, the Becky Johnson Interpretive Area has a covered kiosk, wooden benches, interpretive signs, and viewing platforms along Lake Creek. This short, mostly flat, loose gravel trail wanders through the forest with shady stops along the creek where you can learn about sockeye salmon, songbirds, and other wildlife of the Preserve. Great for short wanders for kids, spring picnics, or quiet contemplation. *Trail details:* 0.2 mile (one-way), mostly flat, wide, loose gravel trail.
- **Larch Trail Loop:** This route starts at the North Trailhead and takes visitors through one of the most diverse sections of the Metolius Preserve where wetter plants and trees common to the west side of the Cascades thrive along with drier east Cascade vegetation. Enjoy the bright spring green of larch trees, creekside vine maples, soaring ponderosa pines, and spring wildflowers. *Trail details:* 2.5 mile loop on mostly flat, natural surface trails of variable width.
- **Metolius Preserve Grand Tour:** Feeling ambitious? Take in the beauty of the entire Metolius Preserve by hiking the majority of our trails in a series of lollipops. A georeferenced map (see link below) and strong navigational skills are highly recommended! Start at the North Trailhead, head south to follow the Larch Trails along the peaceful banks of the North Fork of Lake Creek. Cross the creek and continue east and south on the Larch Trail loop until a junction with the Fir Trails. Take the eastern side of this triangle loop and wander through the South Trailhead following the trail south up a small hill into the forest. At the junction stay left/east and follow these figure eight trails until you reach the Pine Trails. The Pine Trails will automatically loop at the very end, and then you can take the lollipop back up to the Fir Trails. This time, follow the opposite leg of the loops back to the North Trailhead. *Trail details:* 8.65 mile loop on natural surface trails of variable width.

Ready to hit the trail? Find more details and maps on our website: deschuteslandtrust.org/neighbor-news



Prescribed Burn Tour

The Land Trust is planning a prescribed burning on ~50 acres of the Metolius Preserve this spring. If we are successful and have the right weather conditions, we will offer a tour of the prescribed burn after it is complete. Watch our website for burn details and our link below to sign up for the Post-Burn Tour!

Learn more:
deschuteslandtrust.org/hikes

Metolius River Preserve Fish News

As we've shared in previous neighbor newsletters, the Land Trust partnered with the Deschutes National Forest in 2022 on a restoration project to increase fish and other wildlife habitat in a section of the Metolius River that runs through the Metolius River Preserve. The project involved carefully positioning whole trees along the riverbank to create log jams that provide habitat for native fish (see photo below).

This spring, Deschutes National Forest employees spotted a redd, or nest where fish lay eggs, in a part of the river where woody debris was added in 2022! Though they weren't able to identify the kind of fish that made the nest, they believe it was a redband trout or steelhead. Prior to the restoration project, this portion of the river was less suitable for redds with fast-moving water and larger gravel sizes. Fish need slower water and the right size gravel to lay eggs in a spot that keeps the eggs the right temperature, provides aerated water, and doesn't smother the eggs.

Trees and wood play an important role in the health of our rivers, especially when it comes to habitat. Woody debris helps slow the flow of water, making it easier for adult fish to move upstream and for young fish to grow and thrive. In addition, the slow water allows gravel-sized sediment to fall to the streambed, instead of being carried swiftly downstream. Woody debris also makes excellent hiding spots for fish to seek refuge from predators.

We look forward to seeing more success stories like this as fish continue to make themselves at home in the slower water near log jams! **Watch our website for more details: deschuteslandtrust.org/neighbor-news**



DARLENE ASHLEY

Got Milkweed?

The Western monarch butterfly is native to Central Oregon and is sadly facing a drastic population decline. You can help by planting native showy or narrowleaf milkweed in your yard or garden!

Even better, we'll send you free native milkweed seed. Simply follow the link below to request your seeds and we will mail them to you!

Free Milkweed: deschuteslandtrust.org/milkweed



LAND TRUST



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