

2009 Annual Report





North Mountain Park Nature Center

620 N Mountain Ave

Ashland, OR 97520

541.488.6606

www.northmountainpark.org



**Annual Report 2009 was produced by Ashland Parks & Recreation staff
Linda Chesney, Kari Gies, Sherrill Deckelman & Dorinda Cottle**

Printed 1/2009

CONTENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2009

The Year at a Glance	6
Overview	7-8
History	
Staffing	
Volunteers	
Educational Programs & Events	9-12
Community programs	
School Programs	
Student Projects	
Community Events	
Recreational Opportunities.....	13-15
Nature Center	
Visitor Services	
Exhibits	
Gardens	
Heirloom Garden	
Demonstration Garden	
Natural Area	
Interpretive Trails	
Discovery Kits	

Mission...

Promoting greater community awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the local natural environment, and fostering stewardship through educational programs and activities.

CONTENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2009 CONTINUED...

Stewardship Activities 16-19

- North Mountain Park
 - Restoration
 - Service Learning
 - Outdoor Service
 - Monitoring
 - Weather Station
 - Birds
 - Mammals
 - Animal Forensics Study
- Other Park Sites
 - Ashland Middle School
 - Ashland Pond
 - Clay Street Park
 - Summer Work Parties

Sustainability 20

- Green Business Program
- Green Living Project
- Green Educational Programs

Community Gardens..... 21

Appendices 22-34

- Community Programs
- School programs
- Service Learning
- Outdoor Service
- North Mountain Park Map



NORTH MOUNTAIN PARK NATURE CENTER 2009 AT A GLANCE

Community Programs & Events

Number of programs: 124

Number of events: 3

Number of day camps: 3

School Programs

Number of pre-school programs: 5

Number of K-5th school programs: 53

Number of K-5th home school programs: 6

Number of 6th-8th programs: 4

Number of 9th-12th programs: 2

Number of student projects completed: 8

Total number of students served: 1,900

Service & Service Learning Programs

Number of Outdoor Service programs: 23

Number of Service learning programs: 23

Total number served: 493

Volunteers

Number of North Mountain Park individual volunteer hours logged: 2,791

Number of group volunteer hours logged: 678

Number of event volunteer hours logged: 295

Number of work party hours logged: 95

Number of mandatory service hours logged: 331.5

Total: 4,190.5

Projects Completed

Creation of a new welcome sign for North Mountain Park (see back page)

Production and installation of nine signs in the Heirloom Garden

Updating and installation of four regulatory signs leading to the “no access” area

Installation of a third bioswale sign at the Elk’s parking lot downtown

Construction of a stairway leading into the Natural Area from Mountain Avenue

Development of a ‘Water of the Rogue Valley’ background booklet

Development of a ‘Plants of the Rogue Valley’ background booklet

Updating of the three Demonstration Gardens booklets

Updating of the Ethnobotanical Trail booklet

Installation of a rain barrel in the Demonstration Garden area

Creation of a rain garden at the Ashland Middle School (AMS)

Establishment of a row of plantings and loading wall in the debris area

Accessioning and housing of over 150 pre-historic artifacts

Production of Green Living Guide brochure



OVERVIEW

This report summarizes the 2009 operation of the North Mountain Park Nature Center, a branch of the Ashland Parks & Recreation Department. The Nature Center oversees activities in three main areas: education, recreation and stewardship. Educational programs, which are presented to school groups and the community at large, focus on local natural and cultural history and the demonstration of eco-friendly practices. Recreational opportunities are provided through the Center's indoor exhibits, demonstration gardens and outdoor interpretive trails. Restoration activities engage students and citizens in a variety of activities geared toward enhancing native biodiversity at North Mountain Park and at other park sites in Ashland.

HISTORY

The idea of having a nature center at North Mountain Park arose from citizen input during the early planning phase of the larger sports park in 1995. After more than a year of well-attended public meetings, the Ashland Parks Commission approved the idea of restoring the floodplain portion of the 40-acre park and developing a nature center on the site. Since 1997, the Ashland Parks Department has funded the planning and implementation of the community-led vision for the Nature Center and its associated programs.



This 1905 farmhouse was renovated and opened as the North Mountain Park Nature Center in 2001.

STAFFING

The Nature Center staff consists of three full-time permanent positions: a Stewardship Coordinator, Linda Chesney; an Education Coordinator Kari Gies; and a Receptionist, Sherrill Deckelman. In addition, during 2009, the Nature Center was awarded an AmeriCorps volunteer for the seventh consecutive year. Lucy Whitridge finished her service in August and Libby VanWyhe began her 11-month position with the Nature Center in September. Additional support staff included: the Park's Promotion Coordinator, Dorinda Cottle; Recreation Superintendent, Rachel Dials; and a variety of grounds and facilities personnel.

OVERVIEW CONTINUED...

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers continued to play a very important role in all areas of the Nature Center's projects and programs in 2009, logging a total of 2,791 hours. Volunteers contributed hours inside



Volunteer Howie Wilcox helps teach children about their local watershed.

the Center, accomplishing a variety of administrative tasks, as well as a variety of outside work. Throughout the park, volunteers where they were involved in gardening, trail work, maintenance of the Natural Area, teaching school and service programs, helping out with events, and monitoring. As a result of efforts to reorganize and streamline volunteer coordination over the past

year, the Nature Center now has a strong pool of reliable volunteers. This has resulted in shifting the focus from general volunteer recruitment to more specific areas of need. Such as special projects and seasonal assignments. Volunteers were also utilized at other park sites, including Clay Street, Lithia Park, Ashland Pond, Ashland Middle School and the Hersey Street and Scenic Park Community Gardens.

There were a few updates to the volunteer program during 2009, such as the upgrading of volunteer name tags, the creation of a separate volunteer application for students working on specific projects, and the use of the main bulletin board to acknowledge the work of volunteer groups by season. Volunteers were again recognized at an annual summer dinner which was held at the Nature Center in June. In addition to all of the voluntary helpers, the Nature Center worked in 2009 with an increasing number of mandatory "volunteers" who were doing community service through the local justice system.



Volunteers pulled weeds at North Mountain Park for "Pull Together" a valley-wide event.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS & EVENTS

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

In 2009, 124 Community Education programs were presented. All programs were open to the general public and were advertised through local press and Web Site contacts, through the Ashland Parks & Recreation Guide and the Nature Center website and newsletter. Attendance was strong in 2009 with several programs filling up far in advance of program dates, there were few cancellations due to low enrollment. Programs coordinated by the Nature Center were offered at a variety of sites, including Lithia Park, Briscoe School Geology Park, Hald-Strawberry Park, Oredson-Todd Woods, Mt. Ashland, Rogue River National Forest and several Ashland Parks & Recreation facilities. The Nature Center staff also provided two programs for seniors at Hunter Park Senior Center.



Participants learned to gather and use wild plants during this community program.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Pre K: The Nature Center's main outreach to children ages 3 to 5 during 2009 was again through a series of puppet shows. The puppet shows, which were presented throughout the year, introduced young children to their local natural and cultural environment. Five shows, all of which included a theme-related hands-on activity, were presented to local preschools during 2009.



Students came to the Park to study how wetlands help clean our water.

K to 5th grade: 2009 marked the thirteenth year that Ashland elementary students came to North Mountain Park for field trips. Continuing to follow the *Scope & Sequence* that was finalized with the help of teachers in 1999, topics covered during 2009 included 'Water of the Rogue Valley' in the spring and 'Plants of the Rogue Valley' in the fall. Thirty-four classes attended the spring programs and 19 attended in the fall. As of fall of this year, Tax Levy money earmarked for North Mountain Park programs was no longer available. Because of this significant change, teachers were forced to find classroom funds to pay for field trips to the park.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS & EVENTS CONTINUED...

SCHOOL PROGRAMS CONTINUED...

Middle School Programs: Two types of programs are normally presented to sixth graders during the school year; 'Compass and Survival' at EarthTeach Forest Park high in the Cascades, and 'Water of the Middle School.' During the water programs, classes were introduced to their watershed through a PowerPoint presentation and were then taken outside for a tour and a service activity which involved helping to build a rain garden (see page 18 for more information).

High School Programs: In the fall of 2009, at Oredson-Todd Woods, North Mountain Park staff assisted in facilitating a Forest Science field day for two Ashland High School classes taught by Jim Hartman.

Geology Park Programs: This was the second year of presenting programs to school groups at the newly developed Briscoe Geology Park. This program, which is open to any classes in grades 3 through 12, includes both a classroom presentation and a site visit to the Geology Park. Classes were taught by local geologist and park designer Len Eisenberg. Eight classes participated during 2009.



Eight classes learned about the history of the earth at the Briscoe Geology Park.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS & EVENTS CONTINUED...

STUDENT PROJECTS

2009 marked the 14th year that the Nature Center has been collaborating with Ashland High School and Southern Oregon University on senior, capstone, and thesis-level projects. Eight students, including one high school senior, four undergraduate environmental studies students and three graduate-level environmental education students completed projects with the Nature Center during the year. For a complete list of these projects, see the appendix on page 29.



As part of her senior project at Ashland High School, Cyndi designed an outdoor plant display and walk.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

The Nature Center was involved in the production of three major public events in 2009: Rogue Valley Earth Day in April, Migratory Bird Day in May, and the Bear Creek Festival in October.



Despite the cool weather, Rogue Valley Earth Day 2009 was again well attended.

Ashland Parks & Recreation staff served on the planning committee for **Rogue Valley Earth Day**, which took place again at *ScienceWorks* Hands-on Museum. Publicity, logistics and recycled craft activities were some of Ashland Parks & Recreation's responsibilities.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS & EVENTS CONTINUED...

COMMUNITY EVENTS CONTINUED...

Rogue Valley Migratory Bird Day is celebrated each year on the second Saturday of May, coinciding with International Migratory Bird Day. It is a collaborative effort strongly supported by Rogue Valley Audubon Society, the Klamath Bird Observatory and other volunteers. The 2009 event was attended by approximately 200 to 250 participants of all ages. New in 2009 was a bird calling contest that drew several enthusiastic participants of all ages and a large appreciative audience. Also new this year was the participation of the Ashland Art Gallery which provided creative hands-on arts activities at the event.



Staff member from the Klamath Bird Observatory demonstrates bird-banding at the 2009 Rogue Valley Migratory Bird Day event.

The **Bear Creek Festival**, formerly Bear Creek Salmon Festival, expanded its theme to a broader educational scope this year. In cooperation with several local and regional organizations, hands-on experiences were provided, during which participants could discover the natural and cultural significance of Bear Creek and its tributary streams. Coordinated by a committee of contributing partners, this event was designed to enable participants to visit a variety of exhibits located throughout North Mountain Park and to learn about helping to protect and enhance the habitat of salmon and other wildlife that use local streams and riparian areas. Participants also learned about the conservation of water and energy, planting native plants, cleaning up streams and reducing storm water pollution. The food concession was contracted out this year, reducing the work load on staff and volunteers. Also new was the inclusion of Ultimate Frisbee games and clinics coordinated by a local league. Cool, rainy weather again affected attendance. An estimated 600 or so visitors came to the event, slightly more than the previous year. Very positive feedback was received by participants and exhibitors.



The Halau Hula Na Pua O Hawai'i Nei Hula Troupe was one of the many performers at the 2009 Bear Creek Festival event.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

NATURE CENTER

The Nature Center was open Monday through Friday from 8:30am until 4:30pm throughout the year. The Nature Center continued to serve as a hub for visitors of all kinds, from first-time local and regular neighborhood visitors to out-of-town guests.

Visitor Services

During 2009, the Nature Center staff improved the appearance of the main reception area, where a variety of brochures, maps and booklets help visitors to learn about the features of North Mountain Park and other related local attractions. In addition, the Nature Center's three bulletin boards highlight current and upcoming programs and activities.



Visitors often began their exploration inside the Nature Center's reception area.

Exhibits



The exhibit room was used during the spring school programs to teach about Native American use of wetland plants and animals.

Throughout the year, the main exhibit room continued to be set up to interpret local cultural and natural history. During the spring, the room was set up to interpret the 'Water of the Rogue Valley.' In addition to showing a history of local water use, this installation utilized the sustainability wall to show the current source of Ashland's drinking water and why, though the quality is very good, the quantity is so limited.

Adjacent to the main exhibit room is a lab room which is also used as an interpretive area for visitors. New this year was the development of an updated wildlife-sightings board inside the lab room. This board, along with an expanding series of interpretive cards, is intended to inform visitors of interesting plant and animal sightings in and around the park.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUED...

GARDENS

Surrounding the Nature Center, the Heirloom and Demonstration Gardens serve as a resource for many park visitors, docent tours, educational programs and as habitat for a variety of wildlife. The gardens are primarily and lovingly maintained by a group of highly committed volunteers. The volunteer gardening season begins each year with a spring orientation for new volunteers. Free mini-workshops, offering advice related to native plant propagation, maintenance and water conservation, were again held during 2009.

Heirloom Garden

The Heirloom Garden was designed and is maintained by members of the Ashland Garden Club. This group of very talented gardeners was profiled in the North Mountain Park winter/spring newsletter in recognition of their long-term, outstanding commitment. Based roughly on the American Victorian Garden, this garden is designed in a more informal style, reflecting the Pacific Northwest pioneer era. A series of nine interpretive signs, reflecting each of the unique heirloom garden beds, was installed during the fall of 2009.



The Heirloom Garden continued to be maintained by dedicated members of the Ashland Garden Club.

Demonstration Gardens



Volunteers process seeds from plants in the Native Plant garden; the seeds are available for sale to the general public.

The Native Plant Garden, Butterfly and Reptile Amphibian Gardens, Herb Gardens and Bird Buffet were enjoyed by many park visitors in 2009 and continue to serve as a model for citizens interested in creating wildlife habitat and practicing sustainable gardening techniques at home. The gardens were used in several community education classes and school programs. Seeds which were collected from a variety of the gardens were made available to the public during the annual seed swap in January and for purchase in the Nature Center throughout the year. All three of the garden booklets were updated during 2009, with the incorporation of numerous plant illustrations in the Native Plant Garden booklet.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUED...

NATURAL AREA

Interpretive Trails

The woodchip trails, which provide access to the Natural Area of the park, continued to be maintained during the year by Parks Staff and various volunteers. The trails provide physical recreation, observation of wildlife, and an opportunity to learn more about the local natural history through the Park's signage—the larger, more permanent signs, as well as smaller interpretive ones. Two areas along

the trail are used to interpret the area's culture roots: The "Indian Village," which interprets pre-historic Shasta ways of life, was used throughout the year during various school and community programs, and events. The "pioneer barn" is used to interpret early Ashland history.

The Ethnobotanical Trail, which was constructed in 2005, continues to be used to show how local Native Americans utilized a variety of native plants. An associated Ethnobotanical booklet was updated in 2009 to include illustrations of all of the plants on the trail.



This is just one example of the wildlife that can be seen while walking the trails in the Natural Area at North Mountain Park.



This replica Shasta Umma can be enjoyed by visitors to the Natural Area.

Discovery Kits

As a way of enhancing the experience for children between the ages of 6 and 12, North Mountain Park staff has developed a series of Discovery Kits which can be checked out for use throughout the park. Topics of these hands-on kits include rock-cracking, birding, the dissection of owl pellets, aquatic insects and animal tracks and signs. All of the kits were updated and made more user-friendly and consistent during 2009.

STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES

The Nature Center staff coordinates restoration, monitoring and education activities in order to improve habitat diversity and to cultivate an ethic of stewardship in the local community. According to the EPA, “Environmental stewardship is the responsibility for environmental quality shared by all those whose actions affect the environment.” By engaging in stewardship activities, participants make a connection with, and gain understanding of, their environment while helping to make positive changes in their communities. Stewardship activities occur at North Mountain Park and other park and school sites throughout the city of Ashland.

NORTH MOUNTAIN PARK

Restoration

Approximately 14 acres of the Bear Creek 100-year floodplain are designated as a natural area and are managed for habitat values and for compatible educational and recreational programs. This project area includes several in-stream and riparian restoration treatments. This restoration is designed to emulate a pre-disturbance condition as that which would have existed before intensive grazing, mining, and road building. Ashland Parks staff continue to work increase habitat diversity and restore wetlands and riparian functions at North Mountain Park as well as to coordinate stewardship activities with students, community volunteers and other organizations to that end.

In 2009 restoration efforts emphasized increasing habitat and species diversity through further control of invasive non-native plants and through the propagation and planting of native trees, shrubs and perennials. One seasonal parks employee contributed significantly to restoration efforts in the Natural Area, primarily controlling invasive Himalayan blackberries.

Service Learning

Service learning is a stewardship strategy which integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection in order to teach civic and environmental responsibility. These programs offer discrete service and educational components which provide a reciprocal benefit to the park as well as the student group. During 2009, 23 classes and service groups (400 individuals) in grades 3 to 12 came to North Mountain Park and other park sites to participate in service learning programs. Service learning projects resulted in 400 hours of service conducted at North Mountain Park.



As part of their service learning experience, students often help remove invasive weeds, including Poison Hemlock pictured here.

STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES CONTINUED...

Outdoor Service

North Mountain Park conducts outdoor service programs and community work parties that offer students and community members outdoor service and stewardship opportunities. Participants are provided with equipment, gloves and snacks. While no formalized educational program is included, participants receive instruction and background information relevant to the specific service projects. In 2009, seven groups totaling 93 individuals participated in 23 service programs facilitated by Nature Center staff and volunteers. In addition, a dedicated contingent of individual volunteers conducted 220 hours of Outdoor Service.

Monitoring

The practice monitoring guides the adaptive management strategies at North Mountain Park and is therefore an important stewardship activity. Natural resource professionals, volunteers, students and Ashland Parks & Recreation staff all participate in monitoring efforts. It is our goal to contribute valuable scientific data to regional and global monitoring programs, teach about monitoring methods and strategies and engage participants in exciting, authentic environmental stewardship.

Weather Station

The weather station, located on the roof of the Nature Center, feeds weather data to a monitor in the center for visitor viewing. Up-to-the-minute weather station data can be viewed on-line and is a popular service for gardeners and weather watchers. In conjunction with the efforts of the City of Ashland's Conservation Division, citizens can use evapotranspiration (ET) rates to regulate their irrigation use and conserve water.

Birds

Volunteers, biologists and staff are enthusiastic about several established bird monitoring programs at the Nature Center. Rogue Valley Audubon is partnering with the Nature Center for the eighth season of **Project FeederWatch**, a nation-wide program which is directed by Cornell Lab of Ornithology and takes place from November to March. Throughout the year, **monthly area search surveys** are conducted by expert level volunteers. These surveys were initiated by volunteer author and retired ornithologist, Barbara Massey, who will be compiling a 10-year report by year end 2009. **Nest box monitoring** utilizes volunteers to maintain and monitor use of numbered nest boxes during the spring and summer breeding season at North Mountain Park. Park visitors are invited to record their wildlife sightings on a dry erase board outside the Nature Center. This information is recorded on a monthly basis and reviewed by staff for updates to the North Mountain Park database. Beginning in 2010, all relevant historic and current sightings-board data will be entered in a database for access by researchers at North Mountain Park and other sites. Klamath Bird Observatory (KBO) contracted with Ashland Parks & Recreation to operate the **mist-netting and banding station** at North Mountain Park during the breeding and fall migration periods this year. KBO provided six community education programs. Half of the cost of KBO's banding effort was provided as their contribution to the mist-netting and banding project this year.

STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES CONTINUED...

Monitoring Continued...

Mammals

Three Southern Oregon University students, mentored by Dr Michael Parker, designed and implemented a mammal-monitoring project, using trip cameras and track plates during the fall term. Their report, *PowerPoint* presentation, monitoring equipment and protocol have been made available for future data collection at the park.

Animal Forensics Study

North Mountain Park staff have continued a forensics monitoring project under the direction of Bonnie Yates at the National Fish & Wildlife Forensics Lab in Ashland. Through continued monitoring of a deer carcass, a body of data can be gathered to assist in Fish & Wildlife poaching investigations. Using a controlled setting that allowed for natural decomposition processes to occur, data on changes in the immediate postmortem period, gross changes to the soft tissues related to the passage of time and climatic variation, and the succession of insects that visit and colonize a carcass are documented and submitted to Bonnie by AmeriCorps volunteers Lucy Whitridge and Libby VanWyhe. The information will be made part of training materials for estimating wildlife time of death.

OTHER PARK SITES

Ashland Middle School



North Mountain Park Stewardship Coordinator, Linda Chesney, leads students in the construction of a rain garden at the Ashland Middle School.

Historically, North Mountain Park staff have offered a lesson titled, “Water of the Rogue Valley” to Ashland Middle School sixth grade classes. This autumn, the lesson plan was augmented with a service project: the construction of a Rain Garden on the school grounds. Four classes learned about their watershed, then helped build a garden which will increase storm water infiltration. After removing invasive English ivy and excavating the lawn, students installed native plants and rocks to finish the seasonal channel, garden, and wetland. The project was coordinated with the help of a professional landscape designer, numerous work party volunteers and donations from local businesses.

STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES CONTINUED...

OTHER PARK SITES Continued...

Ashland Pond

Ashland Pond, below Quiet Village, is within walking distance of Helman Elementary School and is often used for educational exploration. Helman teachers and students have adopted the site as an ongoing restoration project and outdoor classroom. During 2009, North Mountain Park staff assisted with seven class visits to the pond. During these visits, North Mountain Park staff led stewardship activities and taught student, teacher,



Students from Helman Elementary School help create wildlife habitat at the Ashland Pond near Quite Village.

and parent volunteers how to identify both native and invasive plants. Class visits to the pond are coordinated with North Mountain Park staff in collaboration with Lomakatsi Restoration Project whose members help to provide the tools and expertise necessary for conducting large planting projects and invasive species removal. In addition to helping with the student field programs, Ashland Parks staff brought in heavy equipment for the removal of extensive patches of Himalayan blackberry. Following this work, students continued with removal by hand. In November, Lomakatsi Restoration Project provided native plants and assistance with a day-long Plant-A-Thon at Ashland Pond. With the help of North Mountain Park staff, more than 300 students (12 classes) from Helman School, and 40 volunteers, worked throughout the day to install 150 native trees and shrubs. A follow up work party and volunteer efforts have helped maintain the plantings.

Clay Street Park

Clay Street Park, located on Cemetery Creek just off of Ashland Street, was the site of a riparian planting work party in the fall of 2007 after Ashland Parks staff removed a major stand of blackberries. With the help of Siskiyou School, two additional work parties conducted maintenance in 2009. Follow-up efforts included mulching the planting site and removing a dense stand of annual weeds.

Summer Work Parties

North Mountain Park hosted five summer work parties at other locations throughout Ashland. These work parties were advertised in the Ashland Parks & Recreation Guide, bringing community members together to remove a variety of invasive species. Groups worked in North Mountain Park, Lithia Park, Glenwood Park, Wightman Street and the Lithia hillside, removing species such as Scotch broom, puncturevine, and Himalayan blackberry.

SUSTAINABILITY

In keeping with its mission, the Nature Center promotes sustainability through educational and stewardship programs, interpretive displays, and resource materials, and by modeling sustainability practices.

GREEN BUSINESS PROGRAM

In 2009 North Mountain Park Nature Center was presented with a Certificate of Participation as recognition of its accomplishments in the Ashland Green Business Program. In 2008, North Mountain Park Nature Center and Ashland Parks & Recreation Department participated in an assessment process with the City of Ashland's Green Business program, a voluntary program that encourages environmental stewardship while practicing economical and ecologically sound business practices that promote resource conservation, reduce waste, minimize pollution and provide education for employees and the public. Benefits to participating businesses include: lower resource and waste disposal costs, the satisfaction of minimizing impacts on the natural environment and recognition for working to build a stronger and healthier community.

As a Green Business, Ashland Parks & Recreation staff agreed to try to follow recommendations made in the 2008 "Low Hanging Fruit" report. In December 2009, at the request of North Mountain Park staff, Ashland Conservation Division staff conducted a blower door test and had duct leakage tested. When their report is received, Ashland Parks & Recreation staff will make efforts to implement any air-sealing measures indicated.

In keeping with the program goals and the Nature Center mission, Ashland Parks & Recreation staff will continue to strive toward operating and educating with sustainability as a priority.

GREEN LIVING PROJECT

As 2009 drew to a close the Green Living Project at North Mountain Park was nearing completion. The goal of this project is to promote the sustainable living practices demonstrated on-site at North Mountain Park Nature Center and its surrounding grounds. Elements of the project that were completed during 2009 include the installation of a rain catchment barrel and the completion of a Green Living Brochure. Educational information about these practices is also available on the North Mountain Park Web Site (click on "Sustainability" and then "Green Living Guide"). The finalized interpretive signs will be installed in early 2010. The intended result of the project is for community members and park and website visitors to be encouraged to incorporate these sustainable living ideas into their own lifestyles, thus benefiting the health of the environment.

GREEN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Nature Center expanded its offerings of educational programs with a sustainability theme. Resource conservation programs were very popular this year, and a wide variety of community programs provided information that could be incorporated into home or work environments. Some of the programs that were offered during 2009 included: Introduction to Permaculture, Natural Cleaning Products, and Harvest the Rain. This is a topic that was increasingly incorporated into the school programs during 2009, as seen in the construction of the "Rain Garden" at the middle school and through the teaching of water conservation, the use of the native plant gardens and the modeling of the green lunch buckets as part of the K-5 school field programs.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

The Ashland Community Gardens provide recreational garden space for non-commercial organic gardening. Located on the Ashland Creek Park property on Hersey Street, the first community garden site operated through Ashland Parks has 43 plots of various sizes that are leased by annual subscriptions at the start of each calendar year. A volunteer garden manager and a Nature Center staff coordinator collaborate to manage garden registration, volunteer involvement and other activities. Several public classes and tours took place at the Community Garden in 2009, and a new garden opened at Scenic Park consisting of 10 plots. All garden members volunteer a required minimum of four hours to help maintain common areas and contribute to planning and coordination of other garden endeavors. A third community garden is under construction at Clay Street Park and will also be coordinated by Nature Center staff when it opens in the winter of 2010.



A second community garden became available to citizens at the new Scenic Park during 2009.



Community Programs 2009

SEASON	2009 PROGRAM	DATE/S	INSTRUCTOR/S	LOCATION
WINTER / SPRING	Project FeederWatch	January 3, 17, 31 February 14, 28 March 14	Rogue Valley Audubon Society	N MT Park
	Preschool Puppet Theatre	January 9 February 13 March 13 April 10, May 8	Staff	N MT Park
	Hawks, Masters of the Sky	January 7	Dick Ashford	N MT Park
	Winter Bird Walk`	January 10	Vince Zauskey	N MT Park
	Nature & Landscape Drawing for Beginners	January 10, 11	Irene Brady	The Grove
	Beginning Wet Felting	January 10	Lucy Whitridge	Pioneer Hall
	Making Herbal Medicine I & II	January 20, 27	Melanie Dupuis	Community Center
	Nature Sketching Details, Shading & Texture	January 24, 25	Irene Brady	The Grove
	Seed Swap	January 27	Staff	N MT Park
	Sustainable Building Classes	January 31 February 7	Shelley Lotz	Ashland Senior Center
	Sustainable Landscape Practices	February 3, 10, 17, 24	Bonnie Bayard	The Grove
	Flood!	February 4	Robert Coffan	N MT Park
	Nature Sketching with Color	February 7, 8	Irene Brady	The Grove
	Nature Center Open House/Orientation	February 10	Staff	N MT Park
	Hawk ID for Beginners	February 18	Dick Ashford	N MT Park
	Sketch in Your Journal	February 21	Irene Brady	Ashland Senior Center
	Journal in Your Sketchbook	February 22	Irene Brady	The Grove
	Introduction to Permaculture	February 25 March 4	Cynthia Care	N MT Park
	A Natural Basket Class	February 28	Louisa Lenz-Porter	N MT Park
	Nature and Landscape Drawing for Beginners	March 7, 8	Irene Brady	The Grove

Community Programs 2009 Continued...

SEASON	2009 PROGRAM	DATE/S	INSTRUCTOR/S	LOCATION
WINTER / SPRING	Pine Needle Basketry, an Introduction	March 7	Sue Yamins	N MT Park
	Winegrape Production in Southern Oregon	March 11	Greg Jones	N MT Park
	Seed Starting for Spring	March 14	Jennifer Ewing	N MT Park
	Starting a Kitchen Garden Using Raised Beds	March 14	Jennifer Ewing	N MT Park
	Spring Garden Work Party	March 18	Staff	N MT Park
	Natural Cleaning Products	March 14	Staff	Pioneer Hall
	Spring Wildflower Walk in Oredson-Todd Woods	April 11	Jim Duncan Marcia Wineteer	Oredson-Todd Woods
	Trees of Southern Oregon University Campus	April 1	Ashland Tree Commissioners	SOU
	Who Invited You? An Introduction to Noxious Weeds	April 18	Bob Budesas`	N MT Park
	Rogue Valley Earth Day	April 25	Staff	<i>ScienceWorks</i> Hands-on Museum
	Introduction to Local Edible Plants	April 26	Jon Carlson	N MT Park
	Wildflower Walk in Strawberry Hald Park	May 1	Staff	Hald Straw- berry Park



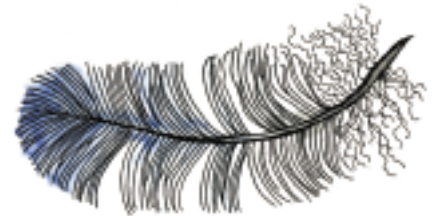
Bird feeders remained filled at the Park during the winter and were used as part of the Project Feeder Watch program.

Community Programs 2009 Continued...

SEASON	2009 PROGRAM	DATE/S	INSTRUCTOR/S	LOCATION
SUMMER	Rogue Valley Migratory Bird Day	May 16	Staff	N MT Park
	Intro to Local Medicinal Plants	May 17	Jon Carlson	N MT Park
	What is an Old Growth Forest?	May 23	Dr. Thomas Atzet	The Grove
	Intermediate Nature Sketching Shading & Texture	May 23, 24	Irene Brady	The Grove
	Guided Bird Walk in Oredson-Todd Woods	May 24	Jim Janousek	Oredson- Todd Woods
	Harvest the Rain	May 26	Angie Boudro	N MT Park
	Sustainable Building	May 30	Shelley Lotz	N MT Park
	Bio-Intensive Composting	May 30	Louisa Lenz-Porter	Ashland Community Garden
	Fire Starting with Friction	June 6	Myron Cretney	N MT Park
	Demonstration Garden Tours	June 10, 27 July 8, 25 August 12, 29	Susan Lander Gary Foll	N MT Park
	Preschool Puppet Theatre	June 12, 26 July 11, 25 August 8, 22	Staff	N MT Park
	Summer Saturday Morning Bird Walks	June 13 July 11 August 8	Volunteers from Audubon Society, KBO and others	N MT Park
	Crafting Bark Containers	June 13	Myron Cretney	N MT Park
	Birds in the Hand	June 14	Ashley Dayer	N MT Park
	Earth Kamp for Kids	June 15, 16, 17, 18	Staff	N MT Park
	Introduction to Permaculture	June 16	Cynthia Care	N MT Park
	Rogue Valley Geology in the Earth's History	June 17	Len Eisenberg	Briscoe Geology Park
	Rising from the Flames	June 20	Ashland Forest Lands Commission & City Staff	Lithia Park
	Permaculture Tactics & Techniques	June 23	Cynthia Care	N MT Park

Community Programs 2009 Continued...

SEASON	2009 PROGRAM	DATE/S	INSTRUCTOR/S	LOCATION
SUMMER	Geology of the Rogue Valley Field Trip	June 27	Jim Janousek	Mt. Ashland
	Summer Floral Arrangements	July 8	Ashland Garden Club Members Gena Goddard & Darlene Fenwick	N MT Park
	Beginning Nature & Landscape Drawing	July 11, 12	Irene Brady	The Grove
	Herbs are Food - Food is Medicine	July 11	Karin Tassinari	N MT Park
	Cattail Weaving	July 12	Myron Cretney	N MT Park
	Sustainable Water Management	July 15	Zack Williams	N MT Park
	Bats of Oregon	July 17	Tony Kerwin	N MT Park
	Evening Nature Walk	July 21	Staff	N MT Park
	Nature Sketch Journaling	July 25, 26	Irene Brady	The Grove
	Proper Veggie-Harvesting Techniques & Preparing for a Winter Garden	July 29	Jennifer Ewing	Ashland Community Gardens
	Nature Sketching with Watercolor Pencils	August 1, 2	Irene Brady	The Grove
	Blackberry Wine-Making	August 13	Carla David	N MT Park
	Collecting Native Seed for your Garden	August 15	Jim Duncan	Dead Indian Memorial Hwy
Making Medicinal Body Creams & Salves	August 16	Karen Tassinari	Pioneer Hall	



North Mountain Park AmeriCorps Volunteer, Lucy Whitridge, leads students in an art activity during a week of summer Earth Kamp.

Community Programs 2009 Continued...

SEASON	2009 PROGRAM	DATE/S	INSTRUCTOR/S	LOCATION
FALL	Demonstration Garden Tours	September 9, 26	Susan Lander Gary Foll	N MT Park
	Siskiyou Life Zones	September 12	Dr. Thomas Atzet	Mt. Ashland
	Just for Kids-Geology of the Rogue Valley Field Trip	September 12	Jim Janousek	Mt. Ashland
	Exploring the Night Sky Star Party & Lecture	September 12	Colin White & David Bloomsness	N MT Park
	Butterflies I Have Known	September 13	Tom Romana	N MT Park
	Geology of the Rogue Valley Field Trip	September 19	Jim Janousek	Mt. Ashland
	Medicinal Plant Walk	September 26	Jon Carlson	N MT Park
	Biointensive Gardening	September 26	Louisa Lenz-Porter	N MT Park
	Basic Herbal Tincture Making Workshop	September 27	Jon Carlson	Vitalist School of Applied Herbology
	Introduction to Permaculture	October 6	Cynthia Care	N MT Park
	Care & Pruning of Wisteria	October 7	Patrick Marcus	N MT Park
	Preschool Puppet Theatre	October 9, November 13, December 11	Staff	N MT Park
	Beginning Nature & Landscape Drawing	October 10, 11	Irene Brady	Ashland Senior Center
	Making Herbal Medicine	October 10	Karen Tassinari	N MT Park
	State of the Birds	October 15	KBO	N MT Park
	Permaculture Tactics & Techniques	October 15	Cynthia Care	N MT Park
	Composting with Worms	October 21	Paige Prewett	N MT Park
	Sustainable Building	October 21	Shelley Lotz	N MT Park

Community Programs 2009 Continued...

SEASON	2009 PROGRAM	DATE/S	INSTRUCTOR/S	LOCATION
FALL	Sustainable Building	October 21	Shelley Lotz	N MT Park
	Nature Sketch-Journaling	November 7 & 8	Irene Brady	The Grove
	Restoration Work Party	November 7	Staff	Ashland Pond
	Natural Cleaning Products	November 7	Staff	Pioneer Hall
	Rain Barrel Workshop	November 12	Vicki Simpson	N MT Park
	Soap Making Workshop	November 18	Staff	N MT Park
	Project FeederWatch	November 21, December 5, 19	Rogue Valley Audubon society	N MT Park
	Natural Holiday Wreaths	December 4, 5	Staff	N MT Park
	Nature Art with Watercolor Pencils	December 5, 6	Irene Brady	The Grove



Participants of the fall Rain Barrel Workshop learned how to attach and utilize a rain barrel such as this one attached to the green house at North Mountain Park.

School Programs 2009

2009 School Program Participants — North Mountain Park Nature Center

SCHOOL	TEACHER	GRADE LEVEL	PROGRAM/S
BELLVIEW	Craig Martin	1	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Candace Palmesano	3	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Pamela Eddington	2	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Lindsay Gates	K	Plants (fall)
	Joyce Schlecht	K	Water (spring)
	Max Schmeling	5	Water (spring)
	Renee Gardener	1	Water (spring)
	Ingrid Hansen	4	Water (spring)
	Laura Rogers	2	Water (spring)

SCHOOL	TEACHER	GRADE LEVEL	PROGRAM/S
HELMAN	Kari Smith	1-2	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Gail Buettner	1-2	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Mia Driscoll	K	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Valerie McCoy	1-2	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Tia McLean	1-2	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Mark Sherbow	4	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Laura Rogers	4	Plants (fall)
	Berit Larson	3	Water (spring)
	Michelle Cuddeback	5	Water (spring)
	Joe Dunbrasky	5	Water (spring)
	Matthew Fujikawa	K	Water (spring);

SCHOOL	TEACHER	GRADE LEVEL	PROGRAM/S
HOME SCHOOL	Home School	K-3	Water (two in spring); Plants (two in fall)
	Home School	3-5	Water (spring); Plants (fall)

SCHOOL	TEACHER	GRADE LEVEL	PROGRAM/S
WILLOW WIND	Judith Ann McBride	3-5	Plants (fall)

School Programs 2009 Continued...

2009 School Program Participants — North Mountain Park Nature Center

SCHOOL	TEACHER	GRADE LEVEL	PROGRAM/S
WALKER	Debi Blair	3	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Shannon Wolff	1-2	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Lynn Fain	3	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Chris Abbott Stokes	K	Water (spring); Plants (fall)
	Nancy Keim	4	Water (spring)
	Susan Hunt	K	Water (spring)
	Courtney Carver	1	Water (spring)
	Kathleen Mateas	2	Water (spring)
	Stephanie Henner	K	Water (spring)
	Inge Kendrick	3	Water (spring)
	Nancy Sirski	1	Water (spring)
	Kathleen O'Shea	1	Water (spring)
Amy Kneeland	4	Water (spring)	

SCHOOL	TEACHER	GRADE LEVEL	TOPIC	DATE
ASHLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL	Bonnie McCracken	6	Water of the Middle School	November 3
	Andy Burt	6	Water of the Middle School	November 5
	Terry Karlin	6	Water of the Middle School	November 9
	Grace Gonzales	6	Water of the Middle School	November 12

STUDENT PROJECTS

STUDENT	SCHOOL	PROJECT
Cyndi Trujillo	Ashland High School Senior Project	Plant walk and display
Elizabeth Heffron	Southern Oregon University Environmental Studies	Plant propagation with willow water
Laura McFaden Emily Jablonski David English	Southern Oregon University Environmental Studies	Mammal monitoring protocol
Sara Poggi	Southern Oregon University Environmental Education Masters Program	Instructor 'Plants of the Rogue Valley'
Elizabeth Pusch	Southern Oregon University Environmental Education Masters Program	Instructor 'Water of the Rogue Valley'
Sarah Shipley	Southern Oregon University Environmental Education Masters Program	Curriculum development and instructor for 'Water of the Rogue Valley'

Service Learning 2009

GROUP	LEADER/ TEACHER	DATE	NO. OF PEOPLE	HOURS	SERVICE HOURS	WORK COMPLETED/ LOCATION
Medford Opportunity High School	Kate Giles/ Molly Mclaughlin	1/5/09	6	1.5	4.5	Birding Program, transplanted rushes near Bear Creek
Medford Opportunity High School	Kate Giles/ Molly Mclaughlin	1/6/09	6	1.5	4.5	Birding Program, transplanted rushes near Bear Creek
SOU Environmental Education graduate class	Linda Hilligoss	2/11/09	8	1	4	Ethnobotany program, dug out blackberries along trail
Americorps	Americorps regional team	2/20/09	9	2	9	Weed'em and Eat'em program, dug out blackberries along Bear Creek
Lithia Girls	Megan Mitchell	4/4/09	11	1.5	8.25	Birding program and planted seeds
Medford Opportunity high School	Molly Mclaughlin	4/10/09	10	1	5	Ethnobotany program, planted strawberries on trail
Homeschoolers from Medford and Ashland	Andrea Bizzanelli	4/17/09	15	2	15	Weed'em and Eat'em Program, dug out Poison Hemlock
The Siskiyou School	Jeanne Renaux	4/22/09	22	2	22	Birding Program and weeding around black-capped raspberries
Phoenix High School	Kim Budd	4/23/09	13	2	13	Water Quality Program, weeded in native plant garden
Medford Opportunity High School	Molly Mclaughlin	5/8/09	12	2	12	What's living in the Creek Program, weeded and mulched black capped raspberries
Roosevelt Elementary	Sandra Anderson	5/12/09	25	2	25	Birding Program, dug out teasel and hemlock in riparian area
Howard Elementary	Mrs. Silva	5/18/09	28	2	28	Birding Program, dug out teasel and hemlock in riparian area

Service Learning 2009 Continued...

GROUP	LEADER/ TEACHER	DATE	NO. OF PEOPLE	HOURS	SERVICE HOURS	WORK COMPLETED/ LOCATION
Howard Elementary	Sherrill Lashley	5/19/09	28	2	28	Birding Program, dug out teasel and hemlock in riparian area
Howard Elementary	Mrs. Horton	5/21/09	28	2	28	Birding Program, dug out teasel and hemlock in riparian area
Eagle Point High School	Dina Wittler	5/27/09	15	2	15	What's in the Creek Program, weeded in native plant garden
Roosevelt Elementary	Karey Dixon	5/28/09	25	2	25	What's in the Creek Program, weeded riparian area, mulched
Orchard Hill Elementary	Bonnie Swanberg	6/2/09	25	2	25	What's Living in the Creek Program, weeded in riparian area
Roosevelt Elementary	Becky Plankenhorn	6/4/09	28	2	28	Birding Program, weeded native plant garden, riparian area
Helman Elementary	Mark Sherbow	9/17/09	25	2	25	Ashland Pond, teacher's own lesson, watering and weeding
Rogue River Elementary School	Jon Buckley	10/19/09	24	2	24	Ethnobotany program. Dug camas bulbs, mulched trees
Medford Job Council	Christie Lawson	11/17/09	6	4	15	Water quality program. Additional service removing blackberries from pond
Golden Eagle Charter School	Jennifer Knapp	12/14/09	8	1	4	Ethnobotany program, half hour coppicing dogbane
Medford Job Council	Natona Davey	12/17/09	23	4	57.5	Ethnobotany program. Additional service with blackberry control



Outdoor Service 2009

CLASS	INDIVIDUAL/ TEACHER	DATE	NO. OF PEOPLE	SERVICE HOURS	TOTAL HOURS	WORK COMPLETED/ LOCATION
Lithia Girls	Megan Mitchell	1/17/09	13	2.5	32.5	Seed processing
Lithia Girls	Megan Mitchell	1/24/09	13	2.5	32.5	Seed processing
Siskiyou School	Catherine Razi	2/6/09	15	1.5	22.5	Mulching and weeding riparian area at Clay Street Park
Lithia Girls	Megan Mitchell	3/7/09	14	2.5	35	Cut back grasses and dug out strawberry bed
Lithia Girls	Megan Mitchell	3/28/09	14	2.5	35	Dug out Scotch Broom and blackberries
Fifth grade soccer team	Adam Eggertsen	4/19/09	15	1	15	Dug out weeds around the compost area and mulched
Various community members	N MT Park Work Party	6/20/09	20	2	40	Work party pulling out invasives at North Mountain park
Lithia Girls	Megan Mitchell	7/11/09	12	2	12	Weeded teasel and burdock in riparian area, made flower bouquets
Lava Beds YCC	Jo Ann Schaffer	7/22/09	12	3	36	Weeded blackberries around ponds at Riverwalk
Various community members	North Mountain Park Work Party	8/5/09	10	1.5	15	Removing puncture vine from Wightman Street and Railroad
Helman School	Mia Driscoll, Michele Cuddeback	9/25/09	50	.5	25	Ashland Pond watering and flagging plantings, cutting blackberries
Helman School	Mark Sherbow	9/29/09	26	1.5	39	Ashland Pond removing blackberry, and yellow star thistle
Siskiyou School	Michael Mcglane	9/29/09	25	1	25	Clay Street Park, stream side restoration, pulling invasives

Outdoor Service 2009

CLASS	INDIVIDUAL/ TEACHER	DATE	NO. OF PEOPLE	SERVICE HOURS	TOTAL HOURS	WORK COMPLETED/ LOCATION
Helman School	Tia Mclean, Mary Snowden	10/16/09	24	1.5	36	Ashland Pond, removing blackberry and monitor- ing plantings
Helman School	Joe Dubransky	10/16/09	60	.5	30	Removing blackberry and inventory or plant- ings and photopoints
Medford Opportunity High School	Molly Mclaughlin	10/29/09	23	1.5	34.5	Digging up blackberry at Ashland Pond, cleaning up between plantings
Rivergate Church	Jill Maschella	10/31/09	5	2	10	Garfield park, raking leaves picking up trash
Helman School	Mia Driscoll	11/6/09	360	.5	180	Plant-A-Thon, Planting 150 trees and shrubs at Ashland Pond
Lithia Girls, and various	North Moun- tain Park work party	11/7/09	20	1.5	30	Work Party at Ashland Pond. Follow up plant- ing and mulching
Ashland Middle School 6th Grad- ers	Bonnie McCracken	11/3/09	26	.75	19.5	Building the AMS rain garden, removing ivy and sod
Ashland Middle School 6th Grad- ers	Bonnie McCracken	11/5/09	26	.75	19.5	Building the AMS rain garden, removing ivy and sod
AMS 6th Graders	Terry Karin	11/9/09	26	.75	19.5	Building the AMS rain garden, removing ivy and digging channel
AMS 6th Graders	Terry Karin	11/12/09	26	.75	19.5	Building the AMS rain garden, digging channel and placing rocks



Students from Helman Elementary School help create wildlife habitat at the Ashland Pond near Quite Village.

