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*Fall 2019*



Join ODFW at Duck Pond Cellars in Dundee on November 2 from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. for the annual ODFW art show where [Duck Pond](#) will release its Conservation Cuvee. The free, family-friendly event showcases all entries for the 2020 Habitat Conservation, Upland Game Bird, and Waterfowl Stamp art contests and features live music by Blue Eyed Soul and complimentary Conservation Cuvee tastings.

Artwork features Oregon's native fish, wildlife, invertebrate, and plant species. Winning artwork is used to produce collector stamps and other promotional items with proceeds benefitting our state's fish and wildlife. Visitors can vote for the People's Choice Award.

Duck Pond donates \$5 for each bottle of Conservation Cuvée Pinot noir to ODFW's Conservation Program. There are seven cuvée's in the series, each featuring the winning artwork from [the Habitat Conservation Stamp](#) contest. The wine is available for purchase at the tasting room [or online](#).



## NEW INFORMATION ON LADD MARSH WILDLIFE AREA'S GREATER SANDHILL CRANE POPULATION

Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area biologist Cathy Nowak discovered where some of the area's small group of nesting greater sandhill cranes winter, and released a peer-reviewed Brief Communication on the new data. Because cranes are managed as discrete populations based on several wintering areas in the Western U.S., each population has its own management plan and some include hunting which could impact Oregon's populations.

Nowak began color banding the birds in 2007 but wasn't receiving reports of their wintering location. With grants secured by the Friends of Ladd Marsh and a partnership with Texas Tech University, Nowak began trapping the cranes in 2015, outfitting them with Platform Transmitter Terminals (PTTs), small satellite transmitters on leg bands that record the cranes' GPS locations and upload data. ODFW's Conservation Program provided \$8,000 to buy three PTTs.

To date, 14 adult cranes were outfitted with PTTs and seven of those are currently transmitting data.

Biologists thought the small Ladd Marsh population was very discrete and wintered in the same area. However, satellite data showed seven cranes wintered in California's Central Valley and one in the Lower Colorado River Valley of southwest Arizona and southern California which means the populations are mixing. More research is needed to determine how these cranes fit into the larger picture of crane population delineation and management in the west.



In March 2019, Texas Tech University students and Dr. Blake Grisham, Nowak's coauthor on the paper, traveled to La Grande to attempt crane capture for color-marking and outfitting three cranes with PTTs.

Late 2019 winter storms may have affected the timing of crane migration as arrival was more than a week later than usual, making capture more difficult. The crew was successful in capturing two adult cranes for attachment of PTTs and Ladd Marsh staff captured a pre-fledgling crane colt this summer. The colt did not get a PTT because its male parent is already wearing one. One PTT is remaining and staff hopes to place it on a bird next spring.

[Greater sandhill cranes are an Oregon Conservation Strategy Species](#) in three of Oregon's nine ecoregions. They require large mosaics of wetland and meadow habitats for nesting and foraging.



## A FIRST FOR STREAKED HORNED LARKS AT HERBERT FARM & NATURAL AREA

The first streaked horned lark juveniles resulting from successful nesting on habitat created just for them at Herbert Farm & Natural Area (HFNA) were recently documented.

This [Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program-funded](#) property is owned by the City of Corvallis, and ODFW holds a conservation easement. Part of the site is being restored as mitigation for impacts related to work at Corvallis Airport that has affected streaked horned lark habitat south of HFNA. It is exciting and gratifying to see restoration efforts paying off!



Once imprinted on the site, the odds of these birds continuing to use HFNA are very high. The Institute for Applied Ecology, USFWS Partners Program, and Bob Altman (American Bird Conservancy) are among project partners. Streaked horned larks are an [Oregon Conservation Strategy Species in the Willamette Valley ecoregion](#).

*Photos by Lara Jones.*



## U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE IMPROVES UPTON SLOUGH

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is making water management and fish passage improvements to the Upton Slough Unit of the Nestucca National Wildlife Refuge. A series of tide gates are being replaced and a new screening system installed at a large pump inside the diked area of the slough. The pump provides extra field draining for farming purposes.

The old tide gates were failing, and two of the three new gates were equipped with flow mitigators to let a limited amount of seepage flow on rising tides after the tide gates shut. The USFWS also is enlarging and reconnecting former slough channels to Upton Slough and conducting grading and other measures to improve fish access and marsh aquatic habitat within the Upton Slough Unit. A new fish screen will be installed to prevent native migratory fish injury and harm associated with a large expeller pump that helps drain property associated with the refuge and the Little Nestucca Drainage District.

ODFW's Fish Screening and Passage Program staff reviewed and approved the USFWS' project proposal, finding the project would significantly improve and restore fish passage connectivity between Upton Creek, Upton Slough and the Nestucca River Estuary. North Coast Watershed District fish staff provided technical assistance with fish passage, fish use, and other biological aspects of the project. The ODFW Dalles Screen Shop fabricated and will install the new screen system.

Fish that benefit from this project include coho and Chinook salmon, cutthroat trout,

steelhead, and Pacific lamprey. [Coho salmon are the main Oregon Conservation Strategy Species](#) to benefit from this project, and chum salmon in the lower Nestucca may also benefit. The project is in the Estuaries Strategy Habitat within the Coast Range ecoregion and the Nestucca Bay Conservation Opportunity Area identified in the Oregon Conservation Strategy.



ODFW's Springfield district fish staff received a grant from the Bonneville Power Administration through the NW Power and Conservation Council to determine efficiency of monitoring equipment for counting Pacific lamprey at Leaburg Dam. The dam is the only lamprey counting facility in the upper Willamette Basin.

These funds are used to capture, PIT tag and radio-tag Pacific lamprey for release into the McKenzie River below Leaburg Dam and monitor fish movement, determining detection rates for lamprey as they pass the dam. Staff also hope to determine possible passage routes of lamprey that can't be monitored with the current system.

ODFW's State Lamprey Coordinator Ben Clemens and district fish staff surgically implanted radio tags into 29 lamprey and released them below Leaburg Dam. Three additional lamprey were PIT tagged and released. Four of these tagged lamprey were

captured in the Leaburg Dam tailrace and the rest were collected by hand from Willamette Falls.

Two stationary Pacific lamprey radio tag detection sites were set up on the river located upstream and downstream of Leaburg Dam. Eleven lamprey apparently successfully passed Leaburg Dam and were detected at the head of Leaburg Lake. Osprey, a known predator of lamprey, were ruled out as picking up and moving lamprey past the stations as detections were recorded mainly during night hours when osprey are not actively hunting.

Where most of the lamprey traveled subsequent to detection is still a mystery as only two were located upstream with the mobile tracking units. McKenzie Hatchery staff is also checking camera footage from Leaburg Dam ladders for lamprey observations and noting the direction of travel and timing.

[Pacific lamprey are an Oregon Conservation Strategy Species](#) in the Willamette Valley ecoregion and accurate counts are an important barometer to how well the species is doing in the upper Willamette Basin.



SAUVIE ISLAND/MULTNOMAH CHANNEL  
CONSERVATION RESOURCE GUIDE

The [Sauvie Island/Multnomah Channel Conservation Resource Guide](#) has information on plants, animals, habitats, soil, hydrology, and more with ideas for improving habitats and conditions for wildlife on the island and in the Multnomah Channel Bottomlands. The guide covers the Sauvie Island-Scappoose Conservation Opportunity Area in the [Oregon Conservation Strategy](#). The guide was a joint project of the Sauvie Island Habitat Partnership, the West Multnomah Conservation District, the Scappoose Bay Watershed Council and The Wetlands Conservancy.



This year, Oregon's 80th Legislative Assembly passed HB 2829 which created the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund and an Oregon Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee to advise the Fish and Wildlife Commission on spending money in the fund. The legislature also tasked ODFW with raising \$1 million from the private sector to be matched with \$1 million from the general fund. The Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund is an opportunity for all Oregonians to invest in a 21st century approach to conserving our living natural resources for present and future generations.

At their October meeting, the Commission unanimously approved rules establishing the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee and rules guiding expenditures from the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund. The Advisory

Committee will consist of nine members appointed by the Governor. The fundraising campaign went live at the same time. Please reach out to Davia Palmeri, [davia.m.palmeri@state.or.us](mailto:davia.m.palmeri@state.or.us) to get involved!



USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service is launching the updated Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) under the new 2018 Farm Bill. Proposals to improve water quality, combat drought, enhance soil health, support wildlife habitat and protect agricultural viability are [being accepted through December 3, 2019](#).

RCPP eligible partners include private industry, non-government organization, Indian tribes, state and local governments, water districts, and universities. Funding requests can range from \$250,000 to \$10 million with partners expected to make value-added contributions to amplify the impact of RCPP funding.

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