

Pollinators welcome at planned garden sites

Stops along Row River Trail will cater to Monarchs, bumblebees, etc.

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel



photo by Jon Stinnett

Forest Service biologist Krista Farris talks about the work that will go into constructing a pollinator garden at the Mosby Creek trailhead.

Cottage Grove's popular Row River Trail features a number "rest stops" of sorts, places where travelers can take a break and recharge before continuing their journey. This spring, a biologist with the Cottage Grove Ranger District hopes to add rest stops along the trail for different types of visitors.

Krista Farris, a botanist with the U.S. Forest Service, applied for and received \$9000 in Title II grant funding from federal timber receipts to build five pollinator gardens, 25 by 25-foot plots that she said will cater specifically to several species of birds and insects that are renowned for their work in plant pollination.

Farris said the gardens aim to promote food sources and habitat for species like the Monarch butterfly, which is in serious decline in this area, in addition to western bumblebees, Rufous hummingbirds and others. At each stop, these visitors will encounter plants suited to their needs such as Showy Milkweed, a favorite for the Monarchs, in addition to Oregon Grape, Red Flowering Currant, Western Columbine, Western Cone Flower and Horsemint.

Migrators such as Monarchs often follow bodies of water on their long journeys, and Farris said locating the pollinator gardens along the Row River Trail should double

as a way for human visitors to enjoy seeing the birds and insects in their own travels. She also hopes the gardens act as "weigh stations," where biologists, school groups and others can track the status of pollinators in the area.

"There's a regional concern about the decline of pollinators," she said. "But a lot of people are very interested in what happens to them and supportive of our efforts."

Habitat destruction and pesticides are among the main culprits in the decline of pollinator species, and there are many plant species such as tomatoes that can only be pollinated by certain insects or birds such as the Western Bumblebee, which may be on the verge of listing as an endangered species. Monarch butterflies have declined a startling 80 percent in the last decade as the milkweed upon which they depend has been removed from canals and ditches and herbicides such as glyphosates have taken their toll.

Last week, Farris offered a tour of sever-

al of the sites where pollinator gardens are planned, including the Row River Nature Park, Bake Stewart Park on Dorena Reservoir and the Mosby Creek trailhead. Each offers interaction with human visitors in a conspicuous location.

Students with the Kennedy High School Conservation Corps will be constructing the gardens, which are planned to include plants of very local origin, in the coming weeks.

"We want to include local genetics wherever possible," Farris said.

The project represents a partnership between the Forest Service, Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Row River Trail Partnership, South Lane County Parks and Recreation and the City of Cottage Grove. Farris said the gardens should be planted in April, in time for the Bikes and Blooms event, which should help show them off on May 7.

Felony assault charge filed against Cottage Grove man

A 42-year old Cottage Grove man was reportedly lodged in the Lane County Jail at Sentinel press time Monday after he was arrested on an assault charge stemming from an incident with his four-year old son.

Commander Conrad Gagner of the Cottage Grove Police Department said that the Department of Human Services interviewed the boy after relatives discovered what appeared to be a burn mark on his penis. During the interview, Gagner said, the boy indicated that his father had burned him there with a match, a story that was subsequently corroborated by the boy's other siblings. Gagner said that 42-year old Clent Wayne Wilson was contacted at work in Eugene

and subsequently arrested on a felony Assault III charge on Friday afternoon.

The boy reportedly first told his mother about the burn, and his grandmother subsequently took the child to the doctor, who reported the incident to DHS. Gagner said the boy was very articulate for his age and specific about the allegations, which Wilson has reportedly denied. The case is still under investigation by the Lane County District Attorney's Office.



Clent Wayne Wilson

Local woman charged with harming her child

A nine-month old boy was examined for evidence of a fractured skull and his mother is in custody following her arrest last week, according to the Cottage Grove Police Department.

The boy's mother reportedly took him to PeaceHealth Community Medical Center in Cottage Grove for a well-baby check, at which time police said the doctor discovered a "soft spot on his head where there shouldn't be one," according to Commander Conrad Gagner. Doctors worried that the boy may have a fractured skull, and he was transported to Sacred Heart at Riverbend, where a CT scan confirmed their fears.

The Department of Human Services, concerned that the injury may have occurred due to some kind of abuse, interviewed the mother, who also released the child's medical records to police.

Gagner said that during a subsequent interview with police, 21-year old Kendra Ulmer admitted that she had

been tired and frustrated and, while trying to calm the baby, she admitted to "shaking him harder than she should have." Gagner added that Ulmer admitted that her own chin struck the child in the head more than once and hard enough to make her chin hurt.

Ulmer was lodged in the Lane County Jail on Friday afternoon on a felony Assault III charge, though Gagner said the charge could become more serious once the child's condition is more thoroughly examined.



Kendra Ulmer

Missing Cottage Grove man located

The Cottage Grove Police Department said Monday that the search for a local man who had not had contact with his family since about Christmas came to an end when the department received notice that the man had been located in Sacramento.

Relatives had reportedly not heard from 44-year old William Thomas Stuart, reportedly a mem-

ber of the local transient community, since late last year. Last week, police said they were inclined to believe that Stuart was alive and well despite their inability to positively identify him.

On Saturday morning, Commander Conrad Gagner said the Sacramento, Calif. Police Department notified CGPD that during a routine contact, it had located

Stuart in that city. Gagner said that Stuart was located among the homeless community there, and was not charged with any wrongdoing. Stuart is reportedly working to come back to Oregon and has been put in touch with resources that could help him get back to this area. There was no word regarding his long absence, though police said his parents have been notified.



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