

## WILDLIFE: Watch out along shorelines of lakes and streams

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to some local folks that it has been deserted by its mom and has to be picked up and cared for. Wildlife biologists recommend that you just ignore the fawn in your yard. Leave it alone; don't even go near it.

There is no discernible scent to a fawn; even a coyote or cougar can't usually smell one. But if a human goes traipsing around the fawn their scent will be as strong as a skunk to a predator looking for a meal. In addition, the doe will go into stress looking for her baby.

A fawn can spend several days in one spot as mom comes back at night and nurses it, then leaves before dawn to pursue her goals.

There's a similar situation with wild birds.

Native Bird Care, a wild bird rehabilitation

facility near Sisters operated by Elise Wolf, has been caring for orphaned baby birds for years. Wolf says, "Baby and young birds can wind up on the ground, in the hands of humans for all sorts of reasons. Predators (cats, raccoons, jays, crows, ravens, squirrels) can ransack the nest and kill babies or parents. Weather, wind, and human interference like limbing trees in the summer can also result in babies in distress."

Going boating, fishing, or heading to the lake? Waterbirds (ducks, geese, grebes, rails) and shorebirds (sandpipers, killdeer) nest along lakes and river shorelines. These birds' babies all are born with down and can walk. They are supposed to be on the ground.

This nesting season, a baby shorebird was taken to Native Bird Care because several young folks were playing with it. Handling baby birds stress them to the point of death; they are easily injured. Wolf says, "Please,

never play with wild baby animals."

If you go to the high lakes to play in the water, don't turn your dog(s) loose. The ground-nesting birds will be spooked from their nests and the hatchlings will scatter in fright.

Some of these birds build their nests in the reeds actually on the water. Be careful poking around in the marshes and reeds of a lake during spring and summer. A grebe Wolf is rehabbing (named Itsy-Bitsy) was separated from her family by a too-curious human paddling into the reeds. Wolf advises to give these areas a wide berth in this time of year; she doesn't want anyone to accidentally step on babies or eggs.

The obvious thing to do if you stumble on one of these babies or nests is to leave the area as quickly as possible so as not to force the youngster any further from home.

A few nestlings (doves, robins, jays) leave the nest before they can fly



PHOTO COURTESY NATIVE BIRD CARE

One of our local grebes undergoing rehabilitation at Native Bird Care of Sisters, who is the acting foster parent.

(possessing feathered, short tails). Parents care for them as they hop along in the branches of a tree. If the nestling observed is active, warm, not hurt, and parents are agitated, just place it on a tree branch — mom and dad will take it from there.

Except for baby doves, says Wolf, any bird sitting still, not moving, and easy to pick up are often birds in distress. Those who have hit windows at times will sit stunned, usually injured, and

occasionally need help.

Wolf counsels, "We will never see most of birds' nests as they excel at hiding. But eventually the babies must leave the nest. Some birds must learn to find food on the ground — they are ground-feeders. As long as they appear to be active, assume it is natural for them to be where they are and leave them alone."

To learn more about when to rescue a bird, visit [www.nativebirdcare.org](http://www.nativebirdcare.org).

## Commentary...

# Tending your garden after a storm

By Katy Yoder  
Columnist

A hail and windstorm ravaged indiscriminately throughout Central Oregon recently. Gardens and farms tended with love, faith and fortitude were in shambles. Other people and places were untouched — maybe a little rain and whipping winds, but nothing that a hammer or a rake couldn't fix. No trauma, just inconvenience.

Why were some spared and other not? Was a score being kept, leaving swaths of punishment, hardship, and adversity? During these times, challenges and trials continue to mount. Is that by design? Or by virtue of birth, circumstance, or karma? Then there's the challenges we inherit, born of unjust laws, learned biases and cruel traditions that refuse to die.

Walking through my garden, planted to nourish bees and butterflies, I marvel at what remains after so much was lost. Tiny, slender shoots lay against earth like fallen soldiers after a battle. Some have begun to reach towards sunlight in a valiant effort to rise again. Spinach, chard and butter lettuce leaves were shredded, or torn in half. The plants are alive, but leaves had to be removed to ease the burden of depleting energy from the plant. Some could be harvested, cleaned, and eaten. Others were too far gone to save.

Irises transplanted to make room for parsley, cilantro and dill were struggling to acclimate to their new

circumstances. But a few were able to produce buds, and I hoped blooms for the pollinators. The hailstorm delivered golf ball sized hail that bounced off the ground at angles that sliced through stalks, leaving budding flowers in tattered shambles. The force pulverized inch-thick rhubarb stalks, leaving their sheltering leaves in ruins.

Thumb-sized holes remain across our land, a reminder of the indiscriminate force that came and then moved on to others. There are sad stories of farms and the crops destroyed under ocean-colored turquoise clouds that opened above them. People tending plants to feed their families will have to wait for another growing cycle. Growers, depending on their crops for their livelihood face another hardship.

As I step on ground still telling the torrent's story, I know I must keep tending our garden. No matter how overwhelmed I feel by the effort, if I stop now all the hard-won work will be lost. The same can be said for maintaining social distancing and cleanliness as we try to thwart a second and larger wave of COVID-19. But many are going out anyway. Some are seeking social time, work, and a return to normalcy. Others are reacting to a cry for solidarity and the chance to simply breathe. They know the consequences of their actions could be dire, for themselves and others, but they are called to act and bring change and justice for all.

The pandemic hasn't stopped those who bravely walk the streets in large cities and rural roads, protesting the injustice of another unarmed Black man killed while others watched. Our nation has been devastated by natural disasters, a pandemic and social injustices. The onslaught of weather, rising tides and melting ice didn't start with us. But the recent social injustice is on all our shoulders. Some of us have more power than others to clean up the mess. As we see and hear what's happening, we can choose to look at the devastation and figure out how we can help, or we can turn away and let the hard work done by so many turn to dust.

Some may feel removed and wrongly accused of racial injustice, but only the very young are truly innocent. We are products of family lore, traditions, and slippery explanations of why we're not at fault.

As a white woman of privilege, it's time for me to look deeply at the roots I've planted and the garden I tend. There are weeds with rhizomes running stealthily beneath me. Often, I don't know they are there or where they came from. If I stop, listen, and open my heart to hearing what it's like to be born a Black, Brown, Red or Yellow flower, I can begin to understand what I can do to support their right to flourish and grow. There are walls and brutal elements trying to keep them down. With my eyes opened, I realize every person has a part to play in

finally creating a country that mirrors its grand stories of freedom, equality, and self-determination. What's true for me, must be true for all.

We all have gardens to tend and weeds to pull. Choosing ways to get to work and foster change is all our responsibility. A concerted effort will help our country and this world to heal. We all have a role to play and a way to tend the gardens we've started and

inherited. There is no place left to go. We can't escape the world we have created — whether we accept responsibility or not. It's here, it's alive and it's wounded. How we choose to behave now will affect future generations and their harvests. Will we be part of the solution or part of the problem? Roots buried deeply can survive all kinds of trials, it's up to us to nourish, cull and create a place where everyone can bloom.

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