

SALMON COMING BACK

Some salmon travel hundreds of miles to return to their native spawning grounds. Some salmon in a hatchery on the Rakaia River in New Zealand will travel almost 7,000 miles to get back to their native home on the McCloud River near Mount Shasta if the Winnemem Wintu are able to pull off their plan.

In the early 1900s, McCloud River salmon were taken to New Zealand and have lived in Rakaia River ever since. In 1945 the Shasta Dam was completed and blocked the Chinook salmon run from its spawning grounds. The McCloud salmon are said to have either interbred with Sacramento River salmon or have died out. But they live on in New Zealand. Misa Joo, a member of the Winnemem Support Group of Oregon, says the Maori people of New Zealand have agreed to return the some of the fish to the Winnemem and restore the run that used to exist. Joo says she has been following the Winnemem ways for 30 years and became involved in the effort to bring the salmon back when a Winnemem chief spoke in Eugene about 10 years ago.

The Winnemem say their plan would be less expensive than a government effort to restore the runs and that New Zealand Fish and Game has given its support to the project.

The tribe says it has had preliminary meetings with government agencies such as the National Marine Fisheries Service, which has already looked at the McCloud for salmon habitat restoration.

The word tribe brings up another battle the Winnemem people are facing — the Winnemem were dropped from the list of recognized tribes in the mid-1980s without an explanation.

Joo says the Winnemem Support Group of Oregon is planning events and fundraising for the effort to bring the salmon home. On Saturday April 16, at Amigos Cultural Center from 1 to 5:30 pm Joo says there will be an event featuring music, frybread, and a Winnemem arts and crafts marketplace. The Wild Salmon Party will begin with a run by the youth of Juventud Faceta, who Joo says are adopting the Winnemem “water warriors” program, and they will be joined by Winnemem youth. The run will begin and run with a ceremony, she says. The event will also feature the film *Bringing Salmon Home* about the Winnemem’s effort to restore the salmon.

The event is at the old Whiteaker School, 21 North Grand, and is attached to LCC’s annual Peace Symposium.

On May 5, Oregon Arts Alliance will host a contemporary Native American art exhibit and silent auction benefit called “Salmon Dance: Bringing the Salmon Home.” For more information contact mjoo@gmail.com

— Camilla Mortensen

CORRECTIONS / CLARIFICATIONS

• We were unable by press time to identify the girl featured on our March 24 cover holding the sign, “Kids Need Schools, Schools Need Money!” We have since heard from Samantha Brainer that the girl is her daughter Raisa. The photo by Jack Liu was taken at a kick-off event for the Strong Schools, Strong Eugene campaign March 8 at Kelly Middle School.

• In the Chow story April 7 on Agate Alley, the quote, “If you look at our entrees at Agate Alley, it’s going to be really comparable to what we will do here but just a little more ‘out there,’” was mistakenly attributed to chef Jeff Strom, due to an editing error. Owner Dug Beard is the person who said that.

IT'S ABOUT TIME

BY DAVID WAGNER



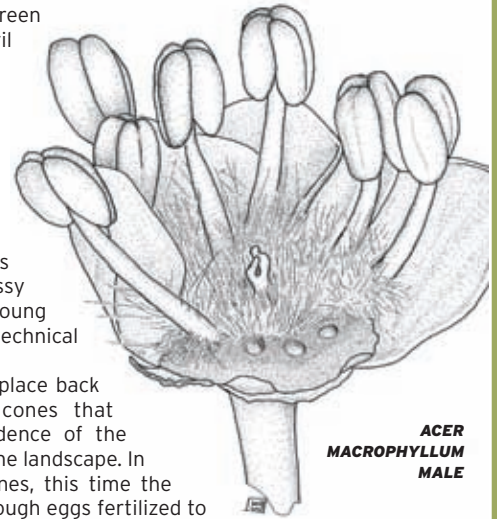
“The force that through the green fuse drives the flower ...” April could well be Dylan Thomas month. Looking up at trees, I am overwhelmed by the urgency of the leaves unfurling and flowers bursting from every bud. Walking under cottonwoods along the riverbank paths makes me giddy with the fragrance released by their fallen resinous buds. All six local native willows have their buds popping open. Pussy willows are called this because the young catkins are softly furry like a kitten. The technical term comes from Dutch for little cat!

Incense cedar pollen dispersal took place back in January. Heaps of spent pollen cones that accumulated in rain gutters gave evidence of the millions of pollen grains that blew over the landscape. In April there may be another rain of cones, this time the aborted female cones that didn't get enough eggs fertilized to make it worth investing in full development of seed cones. It demonstrates that wind pollination, despite seeming to exhibit overproduction of pollen, is not always effective. Darn that winter rain!

The larger animals had their breeding season last fall and are now in late gestation, getting ready to bring forth young when nature's bounty is most abundant. Birds and small mammals are entering their main breeding season.

The sex life of flowering plants is not nearly as obvious. The bigleaf maple has one of the most complex. It has four different forms of unisexual flowers, two pairs that emerge at different times on two mating types.

David Wagner is botanist who lives and works in Eugene. He teaches moss classes and leads nature walks. He may be reached at fernzenmosses@me.com



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