

The Columbia Press

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Find out if birds of a feather flock together

The Columbia Press

The Great Backyard Bird Count, the event where people around the world count and report on the birds they see, begins next week.

The Lewis and Clark National Historical Park hopes locals will participate in this annual event. Along with actual bird-counting activities, the park will share other bird-related activities.

- The “Great Pink Heron Scavenger Hunt” is a self-guided hunt on the Netul Trail along the Lewis and Clark River. Participants will search for local birds with the elusive pink heron used as an example.

- A “Birds of Fort Clatsop” display can be viewed in the visitor center most of February. Binoculars will be available for loan within the park.

- A variety of bird field guides and bird-themed items are available for purchase in the Fort Clatsop Bookstore, which is operated by the Lewis & Clark National Park Association, the park’s nonprofit education partner.

The international bird count, which runs Feb. 18 through 21, is in

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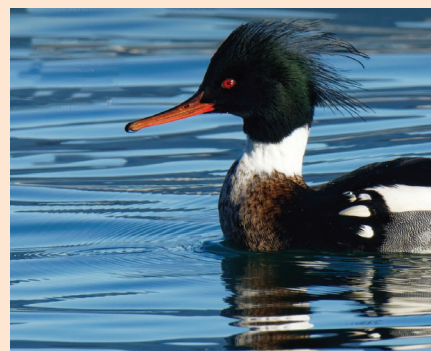


A great blue heron surveys Skipanon Marina from a perch on the embankment.

Photo by Cindy Yingst

Right: The red-breasted merganser is the poster child for this year’s Great Backyard Bird Count.

Courtesy Lewis & Clark NHP



Faulty tide gate may be cause of airport flooding

The Columbia Press

Flooding at Warrenton-Astoria Regional Airport is damaging roads and other structures and could prevent further development at the Port of Astoria’s Airport Industrial Park.

High water levels have made some roads nearly impassable and sent thousands of gallons of stormwater into the city of Warrenton’s already overtaxed water treatment plant.

Last year, the port replaced much of the airport’s sewer system to prevent stormwater from seeping in.

But surface flooding still is an issue, said Matt McGrath, deputy director of the Port of Astoria.

A project completed within the past decade on the Vera Slough tide gate is the primary suspect.

The Vera Slough tide gate is at the north end of the airport near Youngs Bay Bridge.

“The problems didn’t start until after the tide gate was gone over,” McGrath said. “The idea was to create a more fish-friendly habitat ... to raise

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