

VIOLETS

return to Clatsop Plains



KATHERINE LACAZE/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Seaside High School students help the North Coast Land Conservancy and other community volunteers plant more than 10,000 early blue violets on the Clatsop Plains.

Conservancy plants the native flowers to lure threatened Oregon silverspot butterfly back

By Katherine Lacaze
Seaside Signal

CLATSOP PLAINS — About 9,000 early blue violet seedlings, native to the region, found a new home — or rather, returned to home — at sites across Clatsop Plains, assisted by volunteers from local communities who helped the North Coast Land Conservancy during the organization's two-day violet planting event Nov. 20 and 21.

Planting the flower seedlings was the latest chapter in the conservancy's decade-long quest to restore a prairie habitat on the Clatsop Plains and Long Beach (Wash.)



KATHERINE LACAZE/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Seaside High School students Whitney Westerholm (left) and Brittany West share a laugh while volunteering with the North Coast Land Conservancy.

Peninsula that will bring back a robust Oregon silverspot butterfly population, which is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

The diet of the butterfly larvae consists entirely of dried violet stems and leaves.

There to get the violets into the ground were near-

ly 90 volunteers, including about 20 students from Seaside High School's National Honor Society and art of ethnobotany classes. Community members joined in from as far away as Newport and Lincoln City, with only a few repeat volunteers between the two days.

"The fortunate weather certainly favored our high turnout," Stewardship Director Melissa Reich said.

Using native plants

The early blue violet shoots were developed from seeds collected since 2006 at Camp Rilea and elsewhere on Clatsop Plains. From there, seeds were taken to the

Natural Resources Conservation Service's Plant Materials Center in Corvallis to be planted. When the seed pods reached maturity, the center gathered the flowers' scattered seed to make a stock of more than 16,000 seeds.

"We keep the seed from the different regions separate because the habitat and conditions are different," Reich said. "Our violets need to thrive in very sandy soils and coexist with all the other native dune prairie plants in the area."

In 2014, a bag of Corvallis-grown violet seeds was sent to the North Coast Restoration Partnership's temporary native plant nursery in Tillamook. A group of young men from Camp Tillamook, an Oregon Youth Authority facility, filled thousands of plastic plug containers with seeds.

The seedlings spent most of 2014 and the winter of 2015 at the nursery, where they were exposed once again to the coastal environment. In July, the conservancy collected thousands of the burgeoning shoots and brought them back to the organization's Circle Creek property near Seaside to continue maturing in time for fall planting.

On Clatsop Plains, approximately 9,000 violets were placed at two sites owned by the land conservancy — Neacoxie Forest and Reed Ranch — and one site owned by the National Park Service — John B. Yeon Scenic Corridor. The conservancy is planting the violets into plots treated last fall by an excavator that removed topsoil.

"We waited a year after the treatment to give the little violets an extra year to grow and develop their roots," Reich said.

Overall, the group had about 16,000 violets. The remainder were planted at the conservancy's Surf Pines property and are going to be planted later at the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge on

the Long Beach Peninsula, Reich said.

Partnership continues work

The conservancy is in the second year of a five-year North Coast prairie restoration project with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service and Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. The primary goal of the project is to boost the native prairie ecosystem being lost primarily to development, Reich said.

A factor in restoring the habitat is bringing back the Oregon silverspot butterfly population. Clatsop Plains and the Long Beach Peninsula used to teem with butterflies of that species but they haven't been seen since the 1990s, Reich said. They were listed as threatened in 1980. The closest remaining population is at Mount Hebo. The partners said they believe that is because the environment on those prairie lands has changed. Some violets remain, but not enough to support a robust butterfly population.

"If we can restore the habitat, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be able to re-introduce the butterfly to the North Coast," Reich said.

The conservancy is managing the coastal prairie habitat using strategies such as planting native plants and removing invasive species, the most prevalent of which is Scotch broom.

"All of the coastal prairie habitat has been invaded at some level, and we need to keep on top of it because it quickly shades out native prairie species," Reich said. The group seeks volunteer help for its occasional "broombuster" events.

After the violets are planted into the research plots, the Institute of Applied Ecology in Corvallis will monitor them in the spring and make recommendations for adaptive management. Meanwhile, the group is seeking funding for treatments and plantings on a larger scale, Reich said.

Call Hardworking Professional...



DEBRA BOWE Broker
Cell: 503-440-7474
Office: 503-325-5111
Toll Free: 877-949-5111

Windermere REAL ESTATE
PACIFIC LAND CO.



ASTORIA 503.338.5200
GEARHART 503.738.9552
www.riverandsea.net



Founded 1904
Oregon's Oldest Lumberyard
2142 COMMERCIAL ASTORIA
325-4511 • 1-800-248-4511
www.citylumber.com
Open Mon-Fri 7:30-5:30 pm
Saturday 8am-5pm; Sunday 9am-4pm



VOTE for your favorite Shopping and Restaurants at the Seaside Outlets

1111 N. Roosevelt Dr. Seaside • 503.717.1603
www.seasideoutlets.com



Available for all of your routine healthcare needs, not just emergencies
Keith Klatt, MD

7 days a week 9AM - 7PM
2120 Exchange Street, Suite 111

Visit our site to compare our low cost pricing to ER costs!

503-325-0333
www.urgentcarenwastoria.com



Tell us your favorite choices for the categories below. Nominees can come from anywhere in Clatsop, Pacific and north Tillamook counties. Clip and mail or bring this form to Coast Weekend, 949 Exchange St. Astoria, OR 97103 or enter online at www.coastweekend.com/readerschoice. One randomly drawn entry will win a \$50 gift card.

DINING

- Best Asian Food _____
- Best Bakery _____
- Best Bar _____
- Best Barista _____
- Best Bartender _____
- Best Breakfast Spot _____
- Best Brewpub _____
- Best Burger _____
- Best Catering _____
- Best Chef _____
- Best Clam Chowder _____
- Best Coffee _____
- Best Dessert _____
- Best Fine Dining _____
- Best Fish & Chips _____
- Best Happy Hour _____
- Best Latin Food _____
- Best Lunch Spot _____
- Best Pizza _____
- Best Restaurant for Kids _____
- Best Server _____
- Best Wine Shop _____

ACTIVITIES

- Best Birdwatching Site _____
- Best Cheap Date _____
- Best Farmers Market _____
- Best Golf Course _____
- Best Hiking Trail _____
- Best Local Festival _____
- Best Local Sports Team _____

- Best Museum _____
- Best Music Venue _____
- Best Neighborhood Park _____
- Best Place for a Picnic _____
- Best Place for a Walk _____
- Best Place to Watch Fireworks _____
- Best Tourist Attraction _____

BUSINESSES

- Best Art Gallery _____
- Best Automotive Shop _____
- Best Antique Shop _____
- Best Barber Shop _____
- Best Bookstore _____
- Best Car Dealership _____
- Best Customer Service _____
- Best Dance Studio _____
- Best Day Spa _____
- Best Florist _____
- Best Garden Center _____
- Best Gift Shop _____
- Best Grocery Store _____
- Best Gym _____
- Best Hair Salon _____
- Best Home Improvement Store _____
- Best Hotel _____
- Best Radio Station _____
- Best Real Estate Business _____
- Best Seafood Market _____
- Best Theater _____
- Best Thrift Shop _____
- Best Yoga _____

NAME: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Information will only be used for contacting entrants and will not be kept or shared. No photocopied entries, please. One entry per person.

Vote online
The 2015 Readers' Choice Ballot can also be found at:
coastweekend.com/readerschoice

Online Ballot Open: Wednesday, November 18 to 11:59 p.m. Saturday, December 19

See the winners in the Special Readers' Choice Coast Weekend January 28, 2016

OPEN DAILY 11AM-11PM
620 OLNEY AVE.
ASTORIA
503-325-2855

Thank You For Your Support
Peninsula's Only Display Kitchen
www.depotrestaurantdining.com
1208 38th Place
(on the Seaview Beach approach)
360-642-7880

Discovery Coast Real Estate
"We're Looking Out for You"

www.discoverycoastrealestate.com
360-642-3325 • 877-637-1412

Proud of Being Locally Owned & Operated
3 Blocks East of Light in the Heart of Ocean Park
360-666-5222

Shelburne Inn, Restaurant & Pub
4415 Pacific Way, Seaview, Wa
360-642-4150
www.shelburnerestaurant.com