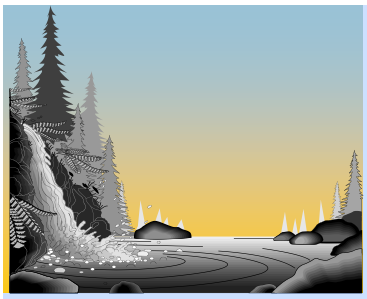


Curry Currents

Summer 2012

Lower Rogue Watershed Council, South Coast Watershed Councils and Curry County Soil and Water Conservation District

The Curry Watersheds partnership has new offices!

THANK YOU to Curry SWCD District Manager Liesl Coleman for making this move happen. Thanks to your hard work, we are warm and dry in a beautiful new space. The team would also like to extend our sincerest thanks to the SWCD Board members and other volunteers who donated their time and labor to help us move boxes and boxes of paperwork, heavy furniture, and *lots* of gear!

Come see us at the north end of Gold Beach's Gold Rush Center at 29692 Ellensburg Avenue, just off 101.

AgriMet continues ...

to provide essential data for agriculture

Curry SWCD would like to thank our generous donors for making another year of AgriMet weather station maintenance possible. The AgriMet program helps regional farmers and ranchers plan efficient irrigation and pest control, and provides essential data for agricultural research and planning.

Pacific Ag Systems, Inc.
Junction City, Oregon
(888)998-1983
www.PacAg.com

Summer 2012

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

Graze the best; buffer the rest in Coos and Curry Counties

Fencing livestock from streams, restoring native riparian vegetation makes sense for a range of local landowners

The popularity of this surprisingly simple Federal-state cooperative program is still strong in Coos and Curry Counties. In the coming year, landowners who have signed up for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) will be building fences or wildlife habitat structures and planting trees and shrubs on 9 sites throughout Coos and Curry counties, and we're in the process of signing up 8 new CREP projects for 2013 and beyond. Fifteen more previously installed projects are due for an annual check-up this summer, and 41 older projects are being maintained by landowners in their "free to grow" stage.

Our newest crop of CREP projects represents the breadth of project types

This beautiful CREP buffer on a large hillside ranch will become a vital wildlife habitat corridor, and the buffer will protect a Floras Creek tributary for generations while providing a logical place to divide hill pastures.

Two new projects are being installed by owners of large ranches who are repeat CREP customers—each of whom have now enrolled over 150 acres in the program. These ranchers have used CREP to cover the cost of restoring riparian corridors along streams through areas of ranch that don't make sense to graze, either because the river bank is steep and the productivity is poor, or because the riparian corridors make logical routes for dividing large holdings into planned grazing units. On a large hillside ranch, it's essential to plan livestock movement to minimize the hours (or days) spent moving cattle through difficult drainages, and well-planned riparian fencing can help.

The larger size of these projects also means that the annual rental payment to each landowner comes to a few thousand dollars. At $114 per acre each year along perennial streams, collecting this annual payment can easily cover the cost of lost feed when areas of low productivity are excluded from grazing. Add in a substantial labor savings due to carefully planning fences that simplify livestock management, and the financial advantage of CREP enrollment to a large landowner is clear.

Buffers and water quality - it's not just about shade

A well-designed riparian forest buffer slows flood waters and improves aquifer recharge, helps stabilize streambanks, traps pasture sediment, provides habitat for terrestrial wildlife, and supplies shade, wood, and leafy debris for the instream ecosystem. Riparian buffers are an essential tool in excellent land stewardship!

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

Continued

The Oregon CREP

You don't have to manage a huge ranch to make a difference

Managers of large holdings like this year's return customers "Graze the Best; Buffer the Rest" to provide a stable ranching future and a diverse landscape that supports fish and wildlife. But you don't have to own hundreds of acres to make a difference using CREP. The owner of the smallest CREP project this year embraces the same philosophy on a modest scale. Just a thousand feet of fence, a little Himalayan blackberry control, and planting a few hundred trees and shrubs will provide a 1.5-acre oasis for wildlife and enhance future instream habitat on a small farm surrounded by managed timber and open pasture. Rental payments on this smaller project are not a business consideration, but cost-shares for fencing as well as technical support and an ODF-reviewed planting plan will make a high-quality project possible for this small family producer.

This small CREP buffer complements the landowner's management, which is geared toward providing a diverse natural landscape on the family farm.

CREP is a great tool for well-informed landowners who manage for the long-term health of our landscape and environment. Regardless of operation size, managing our grazing lands well is essential to the health of our surface waters and wildlife habitat, and every land manager can make a difference.

For more information about surface water protection on agricultural lands and about the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, call Coos-Curry CREP Technician Barbara Grant at 541-396-2841 Ext. 106 or come by the USDA Service Center in Coquille at 382 North Central Blvd to talk with Bret Harris, Farm Service Agency County Executive Director.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, Large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's Target Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call 800-795-3272 (voice) or 202-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Welcome to the Lower Rogue Watershed Council, Kelly Sparks!

Hello, my name is Kelly Sparks and I am your new Lower Rogue Watershed Co-ordinator. I took this position in May 2012, and am looking forward to diving into all the amazing ongoing projects with my local watershed!

A little background: I am originally from Missouri, where I attended college at Southeast Missouri State University and earned a B.S. in Wildlife Biology in 2002. I worked for the Missouri Department of Conservation before moving to the west coast to work for the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife. Most of my job experience has been on the ground work and research within the field of fisheries. Sturgeon and salmonids have been the focus for much of my career, but I always enjoy learning something new to keep things exciting.

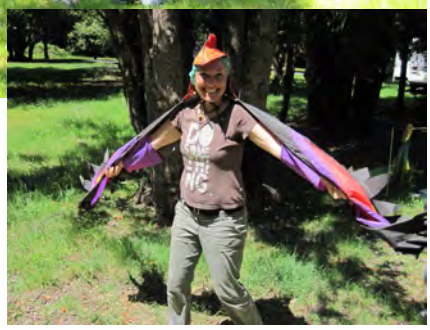
Gold Beach has been my home since 2005 and I continually grow to love it more all the time. I took a temporary hiatus in 2009 to get my Master's Degree, and attended the University of New Brunswick (Canada) to achieve that goal. After completing a M.Sc. in Fisheries in 2011 (sturgeon ecology focus) I returned to this area. Most of my extra-curricular activities involve outside play of any kind; surfing, hiking, rafting, swimming, the occasional run, and playing guitar around a campfire.

As I learn all the tasks of my new position I would urge everyone to feel free to drop by the office and introduce yourself. I am thrilled to meet everyone involved and get some great new ideas concerning improvements on our watershed. Feel free to call me at the office at 541-247-2755 (ext 4#) OR email me at kelly.sparks@currywatersheds.org.

Here we go!

2012 Rogue River Cleanup

Kelly Sparks, Lower Rogue Council Coordinator



We had a beautiful, sunny day up river even though it started a little rainy at the Port. There were 40 students and 45 adults participating in the Cleanup this year. Students and adult chaperones were taken on the river in 13 jet boats piloted by volunteer drivers. The gravel bars along the lower Rogue and Illinois Rivers and beaches near the river mouth now have 20 cubic yards less trash, and 2 acres less Scotch Broom. The BBQ at Quosatana Campground was followed by a lovely talk from the Forest Service on stewardship of our natural resources, and a surprise visit from Smokey Bear! This year we were also fortunate to have the Salmon Tent; an interactive "tent" shaped like a salmon that kids can climb around and play in! In addition to this fine treat, there were forest animal costumes for the children to dress up in as well.

The annual Cleanup could not happen without generous financial and personal support from local businesses and amazing volunteers! Thank you to all our wonderful cooperators: Rotary Club of Gold Beach, Coos Curry Electric Co-op, Freeman Marine, Thrivent Fraternal Organization, Trash Dogs, Fred Meyer, Ray's Food Place, McKay's Market, Jerry's Rogue Jets, Curry County Sheriff's Department, Central Curry School District, Oregon State Police (Gold Beach), Gold Beach Ranger District, CTR, Gold Beach Visitors Center, Ophir Fire Department, Port of Gold Beach, Agness RV Park, Surfrider, Stellar Design, Curry Soil & Water Conservation District, SOLV, and Oregon Lottery. You have all helped complete another successful year for the Rogue River Cleanup!

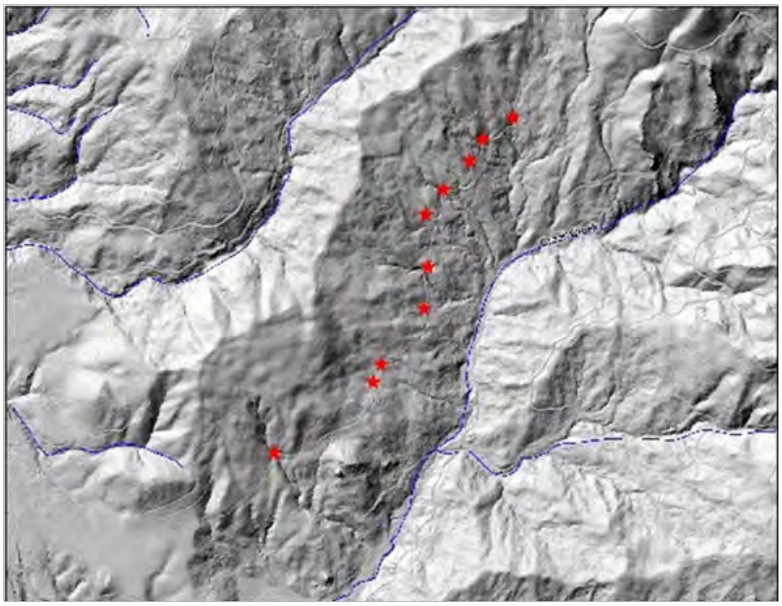
A very special thank you to the boat pilots – those that carried students, and those that provided safety: Nic and Scott McNair, Denny Graves, Tim Harding, Marine Deputies Ted Heath and Walter Sherbarth, Scott Adams, Merle Lang, Darrell Allen, Reed Ringer, Tad Bell, Randy McDonald, Wayne Adams, and Tom Hawkins. Thanks to Margaret Hobson for safely delivering the students once again to Agness. Thank you to the great folks that helped with the event organization and the BBQ: Morrie & Laurie Hickerson, Clare Bowen, Sheila Macaulay, Norma Allred, Rose Street, Diane Delong, Maggie McHugh, John Hawkins, Alan Storns, Mike Meszaros, Shawn O'Connor, Mike Wallace, Mike Bradbury, Candy Cronberger, Carolyn Cronberger, Alan Hall, Dennis and Linda Graves, Dustin Williams, Erin Minster, and all the parents and others that helped supervise the students. Forest Service employees Nancy Schweiger, Linda Mullins, Alan Vandiver, Matthew Timchak, Cameron Adams, and James Simino were a super addition to the day, and great help on the river and at the BBQ. And for anyone we missed, thank you!

The annual Rogue River Cleanup shows results by changing the way that our youth and community think about our river, invasive plants, and responsible trash disposal. We are all making a difference together…see you on the river next year!

Email the author: kelly.sparks@currywatersheds.org

Monitoring the Effectiveness of Ranch Road Sediment Abatement and Livestock Exclusion

Within the Pistol River Watershed, a ranch access road parallels Crook Creek, and was the location of a project to reduce sediment and restrict livestock access along multiple road-stream crossings and seeps (located in red on the shaded relief map). Clay-rich soils, exposed subgrade, and livestock use caused increased turbidity at these road-stream crossings. This road location provided an opportunity to sample water upstream and downstream of the road at each crossing. Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board funded the monitoring before and after the project.



Pre-Project: After 2.5 inches of rainfall in 24 hours, the average turbidity of samples downstream of the road crossings was more than 200 NTU higher than the average turbidity of samples upstream of the road crossings.

Post-Project, second year: After 2.4 inches of rainfall in 24 hours, the average turbidity of samples downstream of the road crossings was 2 NTU higher than the average turbidity of samples upstream of the road crossings

—continued next page

Ranch Road Sediment Abatement, cont.

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The overall effectiveness of the restoration project is also evident from comparing the average turbidity in these tributary streams below the road, with the turbidity in Crook Creek (table below). Before the restoration, tributary streams sampled below the road averaged higher turbidity than Crook Creek, and after the restoration, averaged much less turbidity (cleaner) than Crook Creek. Runoff from the ranch access road is now cleaner than Crook Creek, which provides refuge for overwintering salmon.

	Average Tributary Turbidity	Crook Creek Turbidity
Pre-project	257 NTU	195 NTU
Post -project, 2nd year	53 NTU	435 NTU

About Turbidity

Turbidity is the optical property of a sample that causes light to be scattered and absorbed. Sediment is one type of particle in the water column that can scatter light.

Turbidity is measured using a “nephelometer” and reported in nephelometric turbidity units (NTUs). Samples containing more sediment scatter more light and have higher turbidity.

Salmon experience stress when turbidity is high, in the form of reduced feeding, increased respiration and coughing, and abandonment of cover in an attempt to avoid turbidity.

Ranch Runoff Source Detection and Targeted Technical Assistance

By Cindy Myers

Annually, Curry SWCD develops a work plan for technical assistance to agricultural land owners for water quality improvements. Each year we have the opportunity to ask ourselves, where can we make the most of our investments in restoration? In addition, granting agencies increasingly ask how we can record and display specific improvements in land condition and water quality resulting from restoration projects statewide. During the 2010-2011 fiscal year, Oregon Department of Agriculture funded water quality sampling in Edson and Ranch Creeks, tributaries to the Rogue River Estuary. We selected these streams for monitoring based on:

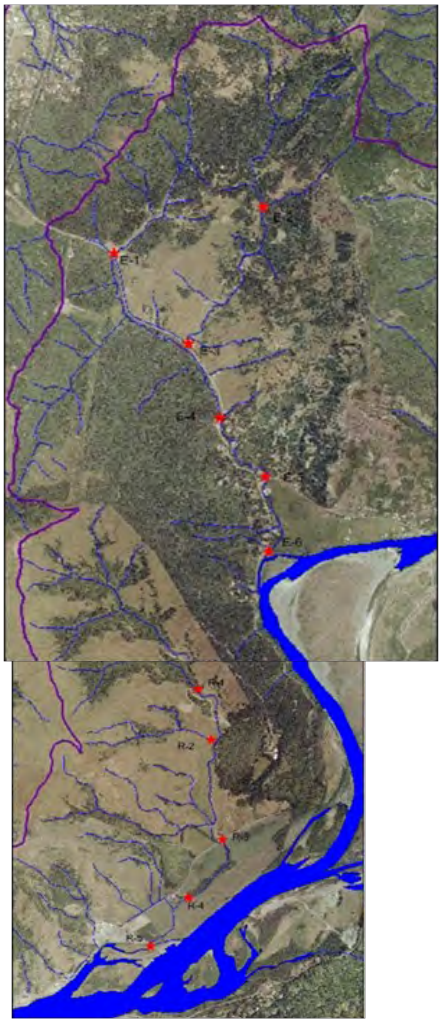
- importance of small lowland stream habitat for coho over-wintering
- tributaries to the Rogue River Estuary
- Rogue Basin streams are 303(d) listed for *E.coli* bacteria
- among the four highest *E.coli* bacteria levels of 15 streams in storm samples

Ten sample sites were located along stream reaches of Ranch and Edson Creeks (shown in red on the aerial photo to the right) and were sampled during a relatively intense spring storm, and a second more typical spring storm.

Results of the sampling indicate that *E.coli* sources are present in the uplands of both Edson and Ranch Creeks. In both watersheds, *E.coli* concentrations were elevated above state standards at sites draining upland areas grazed by livestock (and possibly elk herds). In Edson Creek, a site located upstream of grazing had lower concentrations than the other sites. Limited sampling also supports an observation from a previous ranch runoff study, which found that *E.coli* runoff contributed by bottomland pastures is less than from upland pastures.

Livestock exclusion among major streams adjacent to bottomland pastures has been a priority for restoration programs; the results of this study suggest that upland pastures need more attention in the future to address ranch runoff. Technical assistance may be targeted towards areas contributing the highest levels of *E.coli*, particularly North Fork Edson, upper Ranch Creek, West Fork of Ranch Creek, and other upland tributaries draining into the reach between the West Fork of Ranch and North Bank Rogue River Road.

Riparian vegetation plantings and livestock exclusion fencing had been completed in some areas of both of these streams, so we hoped to isolate and characterize the relative water quality effects of livestock grazing, livestock grazing with riparian exclusion fence, and elk herd grazing.



Email the author: cricks@currywatersheds.org

Rogue River Urban Waters

The Lower Rogue Watershed Council recently received a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to be used towards increasing Rogue River Estuary health. The *Urban Waters p*roject includes four goals:

- scientific assessment of the Rogue River Estuary
- education and engagement of local community in a continuing education course
- monitoring water and environmental quality
- developing a community-driven restoration plan for the Rogue River Estuary

A national competition selected the Rogue Estuary project from hundreds of other applications. Only Oregon and one other state received as many as three of the highly competitive grants. Oregon grants were also received by the City of Corvallis and the City of Florence.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for us - a vote of confidence for our community-based approach to restoration," said Kelly Sparks, Lower Rogue Watershed Coordinator. "The Rogue River Estuary is recognized nationally for its fishing and recreational opportunities. It's a critical part of salmon and sturgeon habitat in our river."

For more information contact Kelly: 541-247-2755 (ext 4#)

How can you be involved?

- volunteer to be a "Stormchaser" and help to collect water quality samples
- enroll for the SWOCC Rogue Estuary/Wetlands class in Spring of 2013

We need at least 10 Stormchasers to sample tributaries in the lower Rogue River during two storms in fall-winter 2012-2013, and one storm in fall 2013. Don't miss this exciting opportunity!

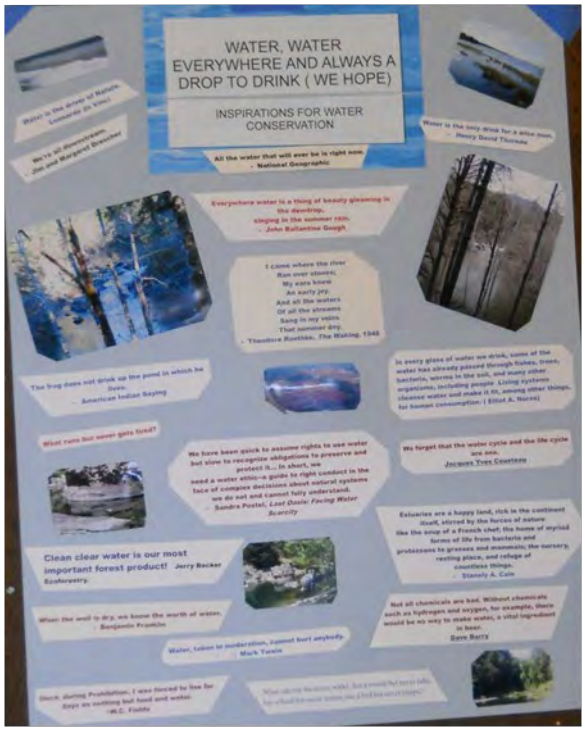
For more information contact Cindy: 541-247-2755 (ext 7#)

Special Districts Collaborate on Drinking Water

The Langlois Water District hosted an Open House at the Langlois Public Library in November, 2011. This event was to celebrate the completion and approval of a Drinking Water Protection Plan for Langlois. The Plan was funded by a grant from Oregon Department of Human Services, and was developed by a team of community members with assistance from Curry Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) staff. Stan Chinowsky managed the grant for the Langlois Water District.

The event featured many attractive displays (prepared by Deanna McDermott), maps, and digital copies of the Plan for those in attendance.

During the open house, the group celebrated years of service volunteered by Milt Smith for the Langlois Water District, with cake and a commemorative plaque to mark the occasion.



Dave Terrusa (left) presents Milt Smith (right) with a bottle of historic water from the olden days when the quality of the drinking water was not so good.

Cathy Boden demonstrates the Curry Watersheds Education Program "Stream Trailer" to show how activities in the watershed can affect drinking water.

Rip N' Weeds

Lisa Ward, Curry SWCD Riparian & Vegetation Management Coordinator

Here are the latest accomplishments of the Riparian and Vegetation Management Programs at Curry Soil and Water Conservation District.

During the 2012 Winter Planting Season, Dustin, Herbie & Aaron M. planted just over 10,000 trees. This year, Curry SWCD planted trees along Willow, Butte, Myrtle, Edson, Morton and Donaldson Creek, as well as Elk River. Currently, Dustin, Aaron F., Patrick & Erin are working hard to scalp around the trees and keep them watered and protected.

Many thanks to our hard working crew for the hundreds of hours logged in the wind, rain and occasional sun.

Curry SWCD is working on a large Gorse treatment project taking place in both Harris Beach State Park near Brookings and near Dry Creek off of Grassy Knob Road just north of the Elk River. Curry SWCD has partnered with Oregon State Parks and Bureau of Land Management on this project. The initial mowing and mulching of several acres in Harris Beach State Park was dramatic. However, small sprouts of Gorse were seen poking through the mulch in early June; so Dustin will revisit the site and apply herbicide. Currently, Curry SWCD is looking for funding for additional herbicide treatment and restoration of the area with grasses and trees.

The Port Orford Water Festival was a great event where Cathy Boden organized children to pull noxious weeds from the Wetlands just behind the Driftwood School. The kids were all impressed by Dustin and the weed eater! He really attacked the Blackberries. Thanks to all who participated and improved the health of the wetlands.

The weekend of May 19th and 20th, the Vegetation Management Program set up an informational table at the Wine, Art and Music Festival in Gold Beach. Over 200 people visited the table where they could learn about noxious weeds in Curry County. Several brochures regarding noxious weeds in Curry County, gardening with native plants and fire prevention & noxious weeds were made available.

There was a small but mighty group of Scotch Broom pullers at the Rogue River Clean up on June 2nd. Dustin and Dan were very efficient using the RTV to pull out the larger plants. During the 2 hours of work, it is estimated we removed over 50 Scotch Broom plants in the Old Mill Gravel Bar. Well Done Weed Warriors!

This summer there are several noxious weed projects that we are working on throughout Curry County. These projects primarily target Japanese knotweed, Gorse, Jubata grass and Scotch broom. Dustin and Patrick will be extremely busy. I appreciate their hard work and dedication to the Riparian & Vegetation Management Programs.

Email the author: Lisa.Ward@currywatersheds.org

The Curry Weed Advisory Board sponsored a Noxious Weed Informational Booth at the Wine, Art & Music Festival in Gold Beach Over 200 people attended the event on May 19th and 20th.

Scotch broom

This article was originally published as the Seattle Tilth newsletter Weed of the Month in February 1991, along with an illustration from a book.

**Reprinted with author's permission.*

***by Arthur Lee Jacobson**

Scotch Broom is a very common big bushy weed. Some people will object to calling it a weed. Some people think the moon is made of cheese. Scotch Broom is weedy even though ordinary vegetable-gardeners may not think so.

From Western Europe originally, it is the best known of various kinds of Brooms, named because useful sweeping brooms are easily made from the twiggy brush. Why it is called *Scotch* or *Scot's* Broom is a mystery, though it is also called Common Broom or Broom, period. The scientific name *Cytisus* is adapted from an ancient Greek name; the Latin specific name *scoparius* means broom-like.

Introduced to the Pacific Northwest by Captain Colquhoun Grant of Sooke, Vancouver Island, around 1850, Scotch Broom quickly invaded coastlines, meadows, roadsides, clearcuts and other open sunny areas. Because of its wanton reproduction, forming sometimes choking colonies, it has long been considered *too much* of a good thing.

It has wiry, grooved evergreen twigs, but also tiny clover-like leaves in summer, especially prominent on the young plants only a foot or two tall. The slender twiggy branches are tough to break, flexible and strike me as quite the thing for broom-making. Probably they should be gathered for this purpose during fall or winter.

Though sporadic flowers can be seen *every* month (even December and January) the main explosion of yellow is from late April into May and June, when it erupts into scented bright yellow or red-spotted blossoms, of piercing drama. Everybody knows it then. Allergy-sufferers curse its pollen. Bees joyfully court it. In August the flat seedpods, an inch or two long, hairy on the edge, and very dark, have dried enough to explode with popping noises, thereby making meadows lively with sound.

The flowers are so unstinting and pretty that garden versions and hybrids such as 'Moonlight' are planted in masses along freeways and in other barren, ugly sites. For most Brooms tolerate with easy nonchalance baking sunny sites and poor soil. Severe wintry blasts alone sometimes kill them back. But nobody pities the Broom. We know darn well how it returns with strength unabated in spring. Cast-iron weeds they are, or admirable, tough garden plants, according to how many we have.

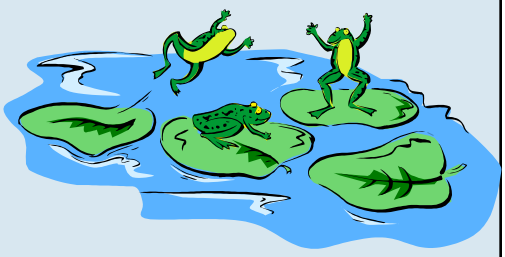
A great plus is Broom's ability to fix nitrogen through root-nodule symbiosis. Meaning, unlike most plants, which grow poorly in soils low in nitrogen, Broom thrives by simply *making its own* nitrogen even as porcupines make their own armor of needles. Uproot a Broom and you can see plainly little roundish swellings: these do the trick. Most members of the pea family (leguminosæ), besides a few other plants such as alders, can do this. The result is a richer soil every year.

It is a short-lived plant, quickly reaching about 6 to 12 feet tall, then dying and presenting a scrawny, scratchy mass of tinder: dangerous fuel for brush fires. Though the fresh green plant is easily sliced or cut, the dry dead wood is hard, brittle and incendiary. A *spiny* broom called Gorse, Furze or Whin is *Ulex europæus,* neither as common or well known, but also a weedy yellow-blossomed introduced shrub. Dyer's Broom, *Genista tinctoria,* is still another yellow-flowered wild bushy weed, of even less consequence.

In bygone times the flowerbuds were pickled as caper substitutes by some folks. A tea of the plant was used to combat gallstones, and other therapeutic uses prescribed. Some people brewed a coffee from the roasted seeds. California Quail are said to eat the seeds. However, since the plant contains toxic alkaloids it should be considered poisonous. In the Language of Flowers, Broom signifies variously: mirth, neatness or humility. The *neatness* is obvious for a broom-plant. The *mirth* is a joke beyond my understanding; the *humility* may initially seem at odds with such a conquering globetrotter, but must have reference to its being used to sweep dust.

So Scotch Broom cannot be condemned as altogether vile: it improves soil, is a good erosion-control plant, is pretty, is tough, supplies broom-material, and pleases bees. Florists can use it somewhat, too. On the other hand, it is a *too*-abundant plant, fire hazard, and toxic to livestock.

News from our Education Team



Adopt-a-Stream Highlights!

By Statia Ryder

Winter/Spring 2012 Adopt-a-Stream activities involved 570+ Curry County youth in field activities ranging from the Rogue River clean-up, water quality monitoring, riparian restoration, and a student-planned educational event to involve and educate others on their adopted wetland! Over the 2012 winter/spring planting months, 300 students planted 400 native trees and shrubs; 436 students used hand tools to remove invasive weed species in riparian zones in 5 Curry county watersheds. Enjoy highlights of a few student projects in this edition of Curry Currents!

Chetco River watershed activities

Riparian Restoration at Salmon Run Golf Course:

50 5th grade students removed Himalayan blackberry from Jack Creek and Hamilton Creek confluence riparian areas on the Salmon Run golf course, then planted 150 native trees and shrubs in their place. Prior to field work, students received classroom visits to learn about the importance of riparian forests, and the impacts of invasive species. Our interactive Stream Trailer, a watershed model, was used to teach about watersheds, riparian zones, non-point source pollution and the benefits of having a healthy riparian area for wildlife and water quality. A few months later, all of the students made a return visit to give their planted trees and shrubs some "Tender Loving Care", by applying organic fertilizer and mulch around the base of the plants. They also spent their time digging up blackberry crowns from sprouting blackberry bushes that were trying to make a comeback. Volunteer support for these field days came from Oregon South Coast Fishermen.

-continued page 14

Snapshots-






-from our riparian restoration project at Salmon Run Golf Course!

-continued next page

Education: Adopt-a-stream highlights, continued

Water Quality monitoring at Jack Creek:

110 4th grade students made visits to Jack Creek, less than a mile downstream of the Hamilton Creek confluence, described above, to continue monitoring macro-invertebrates. Presence/ absence data has been collected by students at this site since 2005. This year was the highest recorded 'bio-diversity' of organisms since the projects inception! Also during their field trips, students identified, sketched and labeled riparian and in-stream habitat features (such as root wads, log jams, pools, riffles, etc). They also explored a riparian forest and applied new knowledge of how to identify trees by using identifying features. Prior to their field visits to collect data, students received a series of classroom lessons, in which our education program uses as the foundation of knowledge as they become more involved with hands-on Adopt-a-Stream projects in years to follow. Classes: The Wonderful World of Water, Introduction to Watersheds (using the Stream Trailer), Riparian Ecology, Riparian Dwellers, Salmon Life Cycle, Riffles and Pools (Salmon freshwater habitat), Macro-invertebrates, and Natural Resource Conservation. Classes reach academic standards, are inter-active, science based and teach using kinesthetic games, worksheets, stories, props, and demonstration techniques.

Pre/post test class averages- Pretest: 37% Post-test score average: 85%

Continued next page-

Adopt-a-Stream

Highlights, concluded

Myrtle Creek watershed activities:

All 200 of Curry County 3rd grade students participated in a partnered event called "Reel Fish Day", which spanned a total of 4 days. During the "Adopt-a-Stream" portion of the event, students were introduced to the concept of trees and plants providing a multitude of benefits to water quality and wildlife using an activity called "Wetland Metaphors". Next, students were armed with leather gloves and tools to test their strength and skills to help protect riparian habitat. Overall, students planted 140 native trees and shrubs along Myrtle Creek riparian zone, and the wetland area surrounding the 'youth fishing pond'; they also applied organic fertilizer and mulch around newly planted species, and previously planted trees and shrubs. This is the 4th year of students performing riparian/wetland restoration work at this State Park site; plants are growing beautifully and invasive species are being kept under control due to student Adopt-a-Stream work each year.

Connecting the Drops at the Water Festival

By Cathy Boden

Kids organize students & community to help the Wetlands

Driftwood Students helped "Connect the Drops" towards Land & Sea Sustainability at this years 2012 Water Festival in Port Orford. Mrs. Weinblatt's 4/5 grade class, as well as Mr. Betz's 6th & 7th grade classes organized a service learning project in their adopted Wetlands behind the school. The wetland is situated on city land, but the students have permission to use the land as a living classroom. They study native and non native plants, learn about invasive species, and investigate the Wetland habitat. They have learned this wetland is important in filtering out pollution, and helps slow down rain runoff during storms.

Students sign up volunteers to help in the wetlands, while a tour is returning in the background.

For the Water Festival the three classes organized a hands-on Wetland education program for the youth and adults of Curry County. Students promoted their program with newspaper articles, presentations at civic groups, spoke to students in different grades, and made posters to hang around town. The kids also set goals for work to be done in the wetlands.

At the Water Festival's front door, Watershed Education Coordinator Statia Ryder worked closely with students who used the Stream Trailer model to share what they know about Wetland Function and how that affects our watersheds.

At the Wetland site students led educational tours sharing what they learned and accomplished to improve the area. For those willing to roll up their sleeves and help out, the kids had three main goals, clean out the weeds at the opening to the wetlands so water can more easily enter; clear weeds out of the channel so the water can flow through the wetlands; and to keep the paths clear so everyone can enjoy this special place.

Student and adult volunteers work to open up the water entrance into the wetlands.

"I like working in the Wetlands, cause it just feels different when I am in there" commented one of the students. "I like making Port Orford a better place". Other students like the opportunities to try public speaking, article writing, and everyone likes making posters, and working outside.

"This opportunity helps students realize they can make a difference in their community. They learn the process of organizing an event, and how to reach out to other groups to get help on a project" shared Cathy Boden Watershed Specialist who has worked closely with the students since 2008. "When the students first started, the Wetlands were impenetrable. The ivy and black berry were so thick and over your head you couldn't even get in there". The students have worked hard, and now they have a place where they can study and learn more about this habitat. "We hope everyone in our community learns why it's important to protect our wetlands, and enjoys spending time there."

Statia Ryder works with students to give Stream Trailer demonstrations about wetland function.

Special thanks goes out to State Parks for hauling away our weeds, and to Dustin Williams of Curry Soil & Water for helping us "weed eat" the blackberries!

Riley Creek Class to Garden Support

Riley Creek students worked hard this spring to plant a garden they could harvest all winter long. And they were successful! Lettuce, kale, spinach, and celery were enjoyed all winter by several classes, as well as beds filled with cover crops adding nutrients to the soil for their spring plantings.

Then the winter winds hit, and took the Riley Creek Garden shed over the fence and landed upside down in the church parking lot next door. No worries! Local friends, neighbors, parents, city workers, Gold Beach Lumber, etc all came to the rescue! But a week later it happened again! This time it leveled the shed!

Did that deter the kids from planting their spring garden? Of course not! And thanks to Master Gardeners Glen Kral, Carol Hobbs, & Mary Jacobs, the kids got great support pulling up their winter garden and getting ready for their spring planting. Here are some great pictures from this spring's school garden time.

Community comes to the aid of Riley Creek School and gets their shed back in the garden.

Many grades enjoy dissecting a fava bean.

Older students with special needs come out to help with the big tasks in the garden.

Several classes all working to clean out the beds of their winter garden for spring planting

Mr. Smith & students clean out their bed

Foodshed Classes Travel County Wide

South Coast Watershed's Foodshed Classes have now traveled down to Brookings reaching 5 new classes of 5th graders. This school year 175 students countywide received over 10 classroom hours of education about their local Foodshed; where and how their local food is grown and transported, and how this all affects our watersheds.

Students at Kalmiopsis School examine different types of soil.

These 5th graders have learned more about the food they eat. Investigating the history of Oregon's Agriculture story, comparing Oregon's growing regions learning what grows where, determining how Portland plays a big part in how Oregon's food moves around the state, country, and the world. The students examined different types of soil & irrigation, learned watershed friendly techniques to get rid of pests, and began to understand how local food can be better for you, and your community. After three weeks of lessons they realized how all these factors ultimately affect the health of their bodies and our watersheds, including all the parts that go into growing our food!

Riley students try new foods during their Foodshed Celebration.

Riley Creek students enjoy an Oregon cake, but first they cut it into growing regions.

Foodshed Field Trips

Riley Creek students evaluate their choices on a Ray's Scavenger Hunt.

Everyone loves a scavenger hunt! Here students visit their local grocery store to search for food that is nutritious, local, imported, USDA inspected, or organic while learning how to read labels and having fun.

Students at K-School examine ingredients on a Ray's Scavenger Hunt.

Riley Creek students visit Terry Wahl's sheep ranch in North Curry and watch twin lambs being born.

But that's not all!

These students went to visit local farms. They wanted to see first hand what it is like to grow our food. They met local farmers and asked them questions from the lessons they learned.

Continued next page

Foodshed Farm Tours

Kalmiopsis students listen to Kathleen Dixon of Otterbees Farm & Fungi talk about irrigation.

Riley students help Aaron Fitch of Sweeter Valley Farms plant this year's crops.

Students found Ted's cows grazing in the top of the Watershed.

Kalmiopsis students travel to the top of the Watershed to visit Ted Fitzgerald's tree farm.

Want to know more about the food you eat? Ask a Curry County 5th grader!

Don't lose the connection to the food you eat. Where does it come from? How was it grown or raised? Is it in season? What ingredients are in the food? Your health depends on it, and so does your watershed!

Funding for the Foodshed Program and School Garden Support provided this year by the Meyer Memorial Trust

Curry Currents

Summer 2012

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South Coast Coordinating Watershed Council	George Fleming, Chair
Lower Rogue Watershed Council	Dave Lacey & John Wilson, Co-Chairs
Chetco Watershed Council	Tim Guzik, Chair
Port Orford Watershed Council	Steve Taylor, Chair
Elk/Sixes Watershed Council	Joe Marsh, Chair
Floras Creek Watershed Council	Steve Kalina, Chair
Hunter Creek/Pistol River Watershed Council	-
Winchuck Watershed Council	-
Euchre Creek Watershed Council	-

Curry Soil & Water Conservation District Board	
Chair	Michael Knapp
Vice Chair	Steve Kalina
Treasurer	Scott McKenzie
Director	Neil Walker
Director	Keith Smith

To receive our newsletter please contact us and provide your name and email address.

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Statia Ryder, Liesl Coleman, Cindy Myers, and Cathy Boden enjoy a moment on the river.