

GROUSE HOLLOW NOTES

Spring 2024

OUT IN THE FOREST



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The Hopkins Demonstration Forest is in full 'spring' as the educational programming fills, more public visitors come to explore, and the forest management team and facilities crew (which works every Monday) is keeping things going, growing, and getting everything into tip top shape. With the longer days that spring brings, the sun shines through the budding trees' needles and unfurling leaves allowing the forest floor to capture the golden light which offers a variety of wildflowers for visitors and educational program participants to enjoy.

Perhaps the most iconic spring flower of the Pacific Northwest, the trillium is celebrated for its delicate white petals and distinctive three-lobed leaves. These elegant blooms can carpet the forest floor or be found in solitude behind a rock or popping out from behind Oregon's official state flower (Oregon grape). With its clusters of bright yellow flowers and glossy, holly-like leaves, the Oregon grape adds a cheerful pop of color to the forest understory. Pollinators flock to these nectar-rich blossoms before they give way to their clusters of purple berries. Wood sorrel with shamrock-shaped leaves and a white or pink flower blanket the forest among the distinctive, bleeding hearts, Siberian miners' lettuce, piggyback plant, and more. As the spring moves on, the salal and mix of ferns emerge and the other shrubs (elderberry, huckle berry, ocean spray, Indian plum, and more) fill in the understory and provide habitat to the small mammal as they become more active in search of food and building their shelters underneath the canopy of Douglas-fir, western red cedar, bigleaf maple, and red alder.



While Hopkins is an amazing place year-round, spring is my favorite time. With youth and adults coming to participate in the education programs (supported by OSU Clackamas County Extension service in partnership with Forests Forever Inc.) their curiosity and engagement always seems a little more upbeat amongst the lush foliage, tapestry of colors, and cool sweet smell of wildflowers in the air. Even though plants are flowering and new growth abound there is one flower that that is out of place and a bit shocking to the nose.

Stinky Bob, scientifically known as *Geranium robertianum*, is a small flowering plant native to Europe but is an invasive ground cover found in many parts of the Pacific Northwest. It belongs to the geranium family and is also commonly referred to as herb Robert, Robert geranium, or cranesbill. The plant gets its name "Stinky Bob" from the pungent odor emitted by its crushed leaves, which some people describe as unpleasant or just stinky. With its less-than-appealing scent, Stinky Bob does have delicate pink flowers, which bloom in clusters from spring to early summer. These flowers have five petals and distinctive deeply notched leaves, making them easily recognizable in the wild. So, to control the spread of seeds, you can brush off boots, clothes, tools, and pets after visiting infested areas. You can also pull the plant by hand as the roots are shallow (but this plant can blanket the forest floor). Additionally, it's important to pull early as the plant spreads by seed, which are inside long pointed capsules that fly off the plant when it's touched. The seeds can stay viable for up to five years. While we have a Robert 'Bob' on the FFI Board for more than five years, the other 'Stinky Bob' is not welcome at Hopkins.



Peter Matzka
 OSU Extension Forestry Educator/Hopkins Demonstration Forest



BELTON OUTREACH CENTER

Upcoming Events (Spring 2024):

Mondays Forest Management & Facilities Maintenance Crew Weekly (on Mondays)

~9:00am-3:00pm
Forest Management Focused
~9:00am-12:00pm (noon)
Facilities Maintenance Crew Great Exercise, @ Camaraderie
All are welcome for all or part of the day!

Every Saturday Starting in May, Lookout Tower Open*
9:00am-1:00pm
*Depending on volunteer availability

May 11th Community Engagement & Education Day (CEED)
8:30am-12:30pm
Build a bird house—family friendly

May 18th Bigleaf Maple Field Day
8:00am-2:30pm
Registration Required
<https://www.oregonmapleproject.org/event-details/bigleaf-maple-field-day>

June 8th Community Engagement & Education Day (CEED)
8:00am-12:30pm
Tour of trees @ tree cookie painting—family friendly

For More information:
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OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

Those that have been involved in the development and growth at Hopkins (approaching its 35th year soon), are a frequent returning visitor, or have partnered with OSU's Forestry and Natural Resources Extension Program in Clackamas County... understand the many benefits offered by FFI's formation and management of its now 140-acres at Hopkins. However, for the first-time visitors and those groups or folks that only come occasionally, I thought I would highlight some of the amazing benefits that are provided to the surrounding community.

The Hopkins Demonstration Forest holds a special place for many that visit, and here are a few things that stand out:

Educational Resource: The forest serves as a living laboratory for students, woodland owners, researchers, and community members. It provides hands-on learning opportunities in sustainable forestry practices, wildlife habitat management, and ecosystem services. Educational programs are designed and delivered by professionally trained foresters in a partnership between Clackamas County Extension Service and Forests Forever Inc. Clackamas County's Extension Service District funds most of the educational program development and delivery with FFI providing a 25% match along with the use of all its facilities and resources free of charge to the youth and adult forestry-based programing.

Diverse Ecosystems: The forest boasts a rich tapestry of ecosystems, from towering Douglas-firs and western red cedars to young forests and a babbling stream. Its diverse habitats support a wide array of plants and animal species, making it an ideal destination for outdoor enthusiasts.

Scenic Beauty: With winding trails and rarely traveled forest roads, Hopkins offers great scenery where visitors can immerse themselves in the natural splendor while enjoying a leisurely hike or picnic amidst the tranquil surroundings.

Community Engagement: Hopkins actively engages with the local community and provides free access, works to expanded accessibility, public events, educational brochures, and a series of ten interpretive kiosks/sites. It serves as a gathering place for nature and outdoor enthusiasts to come together and celebrate the wonder of Oregon's forests.

So, for those new to Hopkins, dive a little deeper and learn more about the great partnerships that created what is here today. It is a place to get connected with the outdoors and your community, it is celebrated for its role as an educational resource, its diverse ecosystems, scenic beauty, wildlife habitat, and community engagement efforts. It stands as a testament to the importance of sound forestry stewardship in a sustainably managed forest that is preserving our natural heritage for future generations to enjoy and an amazing place for all ages to learn by doing. (photo: Master Gardeners next their new Native Plant Garden information kiosk)



PROJECT UPDATES & HAPPENINGS

The bigleaf maple sugaring season seemed to end as quickly as it started. Two sap flow events were captured this year that yielded 240 gallons of sap that was reduced to three gallons of syrup. With the support of Clackamas Extension, OSU College of Forestry, Oregon Maple Project, and a team of volunteers the success of this year's yield was attributed to a deep freeze in January (thirty-two trees were producing twelve gallons per hour at peak flow). For those that want more information take a look at some of the past newsletters (<https://demonstrationforest.org/who-we-are/newsletters/>) or the Oregon Maple Project (<https://www.oregonmapleproject.org/location>).

Bigleaf Maple Field Day May 18, 2024. Organized by the Oregon Maple Project (web address above) and FFI with educational programing supported by OSU Extension (Registration Required).



LEARN BY DOING—IT'S THE HOPKINS WAY WE MANAGE OUR FOREST!

www.demonstrationforest.org