



Protecting Special Lands in Western Oregon

# CURRENTS

Spring 2011

## A Fish-Eye Lens on Land Conservation

In our news about the McKenzie River Trust and land conservation, we've regularly tried to give you opportunity to consider our work through your mind's eye, looking out over a landscape or across a river. But have you ever considered how these places look to a salmon swimming up or down stream? Just imagine for a moment...

In a river filled with spring runoff, an adult female, heavy with eggs, fights strong currents that wash rough waters across her skin. Over days and miles, she seeks and finds quiet places to rest, backwaters formed by the buildup of logs, and deeply carved pools below ledges and large rocks.

At points she encounters natural barriers and even a full wall, a dam, seemingly impassable. She swims back and forth beneath the obstruction, searching for ways through. Then, finally: a passage, a way up! A ladder! She jumps.. and jumps.. and jumps, making it finally to the quiet swell above the drop.

She swims past things her ancestors had not encountered- past houses, past paths and roads that rim the river's edge. Here, the river is straight, perhaps unnerving. She swims under bridges, past eagles perched on light poles. She evades the waiting lines of fishermen.

Further upstream, she finds more slack waters, what we call side channels, sloughs, and alcoves: the places we seek to protect and enhance. At these project sites we plant native trees and shrubs

that over time can offer shade, nutrients, and even their mass to the river, creating more complexity, more pools and eddies, more places for fish to thrive. These same areas will offer respite and a smorgasbord of aquatic insects to the offspring she spawns, when they ride the high waters back down river, away from the rush of the main channel. Eventually the river narrows, and the salmon finds her way to the headwaters, and the gravels where she will spawn.

*continued on page 2*



MATT STANSBURY



T. GRAUDIER

*For salmon, the places we protect offer depths, velocities, colors and temperatures that are less visible to human eyes.*

## THE LIVING RIVER - TICKETS ON SALE NOW!



DESIGN: APRIL LEWIS

Experience *The Living River*, the McKenzie River Trust's annual event celebrating rivers and people. This year we feature the acoustic Americana band **Misty River** and Grammy-winning guitarist **Doug Smith**.

In Misty River's last Eugene appearance for the foreseeable future, the band will feature songs from the folk, country and bluegrass traditions, *drawing on music inspired by rivers and the natural world*. With voices described as "spine-tingling" by OPB-TV's Oregon Art Beat, Misty River is known for its polished—yet relaxed and humorous—live performances and stunning vocal harmony.

**Tickets: \$18/24/30 - All proceeds benefit the McKenzie River Trust!**

Buy your tickets online at [theshedd.org](http://theshedd.org), by phone at 541-434-7000 or at The Shedd Ticket Office, Mon-Fri 9am - 6pm, 868 High Street in Eugene.



RAPTOR VIEWS BY PHILIP BAYLES

During a high water event this winter, the Willamette River overtopped its banks at the north field of Green Island. This was the first time water from the Willamette flowed into these historic swales since the construction of a levee in the 1960s. The levee was removed last year thanks to the support of Bonneville Power Administration and Trout Unlimited Chapter 678.



TWO PHOTOS ABOVE T. GIRAUDIER

Spring is planting season! Crews and volunteers from Northwest Youth Corps, Trout Unlimited, Mountain Rose Herbs, and more have been busy on Green Island planting hundreds of native trees and shrubs to help re-build the historic floodplain forest.

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# Upcoming Tours

To reserve your spot, visit our website at [mckenzieiver.org](http://mckenzieiver.org) and click on "Events Calendar."



T. GIRAUDIER

## Naturalist Tour of Green Island Sunday June 12th, 9am to 12pm

"Wick-y wick-y wick.....tsweeeet tsweeeet!" Do you hear the calling of early summer in the air? It doesn't get much clearer than at Green Island, where nature surrounds you. Explore just a portion of this thousand-acre property with the naturalist team of Peg Boulay and Bruce Newhouse. Many birds will be heard and seen on this tour – that's a guarantee! Bring your optics along: binoculars and hand lenses (we'll pass ours around to those who don't have any), and cameras – you will need them all for the different kinds of life we'll see: from the flowers and frogs at our feet, to the birds and butterflies above us. Expect to hike a mile or two on fairly flat ground.



BRUCE NEWHOUSE

## Dazzling Dragonflies! Family tour of Green Island Friday, July 29th, 10am to 12pm

What has two pairs of wings, lives near the water, and eats mosquitoes? A dragonfly! Join Steve Gordon and Cary Kerst for a family-oriented dragonfly and damselfly tour of Green Island. You'll leave this adventure knowing way more about these cool bugs and the place they call home!



T. GIRAUDIER

## Field Course on Dragonflies and Damselflies Friday, July 29th, 1pm to 3pm

Join dragonfly experts Steven Gordon and Cary Kerst for an afternoon field course on dragonflies and damselflies. Green Island is your classroom. Learn about the life cycle, preferred habitat, and behavior of these fascinating creatures. Bring your binoculars. This tour is meant for adults and mature kids only – for a family-oriented outing please see the morning tour.

## A Fish-Eye Lens on Land Conservation *continued from page 1*

We trace these journeys aerially, by maps, from ocean to those headwaters and back. From above we look at our conservation properties as a string of pearls along the necklace of the river. To the fish eye, these protected places on the McKenzie – Green Island, Springfield Oxbow, Big Island, Berggren, McKenzie Oxbow, Roberts Island, Drury Meadow – have depths and velocities, colors and temperatures, forage and hideouts that make them distinct. Try to imagine what instincts and memories must be triggered by this journey home.

After she spawns, the female will die and the nutrients held in her body will feed the river that sustained her. Soon

after, her offspring begin the cycle again. They emerge from gravels with large eyes of their own and slowly begin their own journeys to the ocean, resting and feeding in those same backwater sloughs she visited on her way up river.

With the support that you lend to the McKenzie River Trust, that journey, both downstream and in return, will be richer, more varied, and more assured for generations to come.

Enjoy this perspective? Consider reading [Return to the River](#) by Roderick Haig-Brown. The novel explores the high drama of the entire salmon lifecycle through the eyes of a scientist, a Senator, and a Spring Chinook.

# Above and Beyond!

Here we highlight a few volunteers who have gone above and beyond – making MRT’s land conservation work possible!



PHILIP BAYLES

## Philip Bayles

Philip of Raptor Views Digital Aerial Imagery uses a lightweight radio controlled plane with a high definition video camera onboard to capture unique regional bird’s-eye-view perspectives of our properties. So far, he has conducted over a dozen flights on MRT lands including Green Island, Berggren Watershed Conservation Area, Bangs Farm, and Waite Ranch. Our

protection and stewardship staff have used Philip’s photos to see the extent of high water events, and we hope to track changes over time on our properties through these records. His photos are invaluable in helping us visualize the impact of our work.

When he’s not volunteering his time to photography, Philip is a dedicated musician. He currently devotes his musical talent to a baroque performance group, conducting the Riverside Chamber Symphony, and acting as Music Director for the United Lutheran Church. Thank you for all your service to the community, Philip!



FIRST AMERICAN TITLE CO.

## Ron Denton

Great conservation projects that stand the test of time require detailed research. Ron Denton, Title Officer at First American Title Company, has been providing the Trust with outstanding title research services for the past five years. Whenever we have a question about ownership, property lines, title exceptions and other seemingly mundane details of land transactions, we turn to Ron.

An avid bowhunter who hails from the great state of Michigan, Ron’s professionalism and attention to detail his work inspires Trust staff to maintain that same level of excellence all the way through closing on our acquisitions. Thank you Ron!



©CHARLES QUINN/TNC

## Jean Jancaitis

Jean has served on our Lands Committee for the past four years, advising Trust staff on the intricacies of land stewardship and long-term land management. She should know – Jean manages the Coburg Ridge Preserve for The Nature Conservancy and has been implementing an ambitious restoration plan for that property for the last several years.

The Trust would like to thank Jean for her many years of service as she steps down from the Lands Committee. Thank you Jean!

## LEAVE A LEGACY



T. GRAUDIER

“ Sharing the planet with other forms of life implores us to care for their wellbeing as well as our own. A strong organization like MRT is one of the best ways to fulfill that responsibility. I feel privileged to be able to be a part of MRT’s worthwhile endeavors by including a bequest in my will. ”

- Gerald Morsello, MRT Supporter

For information about how to name MRT in your estate plans please contact Brandi Ferguson, Development Manager at 541-345-2799 or visit our website at [www.mckenzieriver.org/support-us](http://www.mckenzieriver.org/support-us)

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T. GRAUDIER



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Ruby crowned kinglet on big leaf maple



Waite Ranch Property

## OUR MISSION

*The McKenzie River Trust protects and cares for special lands and the rivers that flow through them in western Oregon.*



Trout Unlimited's Karl Mueller volunteering on Green Island



Vine maple

ALL PHOTOS THIS PAGE: GIRARDIER



## Thanks EWEB and Ninkasi!

Did you know... Our namesake, The McKenzie River, is the source of drinking water for more than 200,000 people in the greater Eugene area? It's also one of the cleanest rivers in the world!

### Great ingredients make great beer!

McKenzie River water is also the main ingredient in Ninkasi's award-winning brews.

Conservation Ale commemorates EWEB's 100th Anniversary. All profits directly benefit the McKenzie River Trust.

*Enjoy The River!*