



February 2013

Heron Habitat Helpers' HERALD

P.O. Box 99815, Seattle, WA 98139-0815

HHH Annual Meeting and Celebration

SATURDAY MARCH 9

12:30 – 2:30 PM • DISCOVERY PARK VISITOR CENTER

Mark your calendars and come to our Annual Meeting! Our accomplishments, goals and great blue herons will be discussed. There will be crafts for kids and afterwards, we will lead a short tour along the edge of the ravine in hopes of seeing the herons. Bring your friends to this fun for all ages event! Light refreshments will be served. See you there!

Everyone is WELCOME to our free event!



Would you Like to Tour the Kiwanis Heronry?

Whether you are a first time member of the HHH family or renewing your long time support, all members are eligible to experience an unparalleled view of the heron nests from a private backyard.

Standing at the edge the ravine, gaze upon the herons and listen to their squawks as they build their nests and select their mate. Learn about herons and the history of the ravine and HHH.

Tours will be held during the first three weeks in April. Schedule your tour by contacting our fabulous and knowledgeable tour guide, Heidi Carpine at (206) 284-6489.



Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity!

Our Annual Membership Drive is on now!
Join or renew today by mailing the form on page 6
or go paperless at: www.heronhelpers.org

heronnews

By Pam Cahn

HERON REPORT WINTER 2013

After this January's winter nest count, I estimate 94 nests in Kiwanis Ravine and 7 nests in Commodore Park for the 2012 heron season.

Watch for returning herons sometime between the end of January and mid-March.

They typically lay eggs sometime between mid-March and the first week in April.

Second Saturday Work Parties 10:00 am - noon

Do you love to grub out invasives and listen to the birds at the same time? Participate in a work party to help restore the heron habitat. No experience necessary. Just a love of herons, nature and meeting new people. Bring your work gloves and dress for the weather. See you there!

Check www.heronhelpers.org for the work location.
Join us and you'll be doing your part to help the herons!



A Fun and Successful Martin Luther King Work Party

By Mike Marsh

We had a great work party January 16, honoring Martin Luther King and responding to his question, "What are you doing for others?"

It may not seem that planting salal or evergreen huckleberry is doing something for others, but I believe that we are doing something for our children and grandchildren when we protect and restore the natural environment in which we live.

We had thirty-one energetic volunteers, led by Carol Burton, Scott Luchessa, Hooper Havekotte, Mark Ewbanks and myself (Mike Marsh). Heidi Carpine introduced HHH to the group before we climbed up to the work site in the south end of the Wildlife Corridor.

In the first half hour we had planted the few plants available in pots, and were looking for something else to do. The 4 cubic yard pile of mulch up at the street was transported down and spread around the new plants and on the planting area before noon.

Then someone approached me quietly and asked if we might attack the blackberries. He noted that he had some feelings of aggression that he would



like to dispel! Pretty soon the dense patches of salmonberry were suffused (yes, suffused! mixed, interspersed) with people identifying, digging, pulling and hauling blackberry plants to a growing pile.

We ended the day a little early, at 1:30 pm, by going into the bushes and towing some of the eager workers out. I only hope that we have as good a group the next time."

So THANK YOU to our volunteers! Keep on giving, and doing things for others! Come back and visit Kiwanis Ravine, too.



Coal Trains Pose Serious Threat to Herons

By Sue Gillespie

In January the HHH board sent a letter to public officials at the Washington Department of Ecology, Army Corps of Engineers and Whatcom County expressing our concerns about plans for trains carrying coal to begin regular routes on the Burlington Northern tracks running adjacent to Kiwanis Memorial Preserve Park and the heron colony.

Toxic coal dust from the trains (cars are left uncovered) will almost certainly affect the nesting birds. The noxious stuff will also dissipate along more than 62 miles of shoreline from Pierce County to the Cherry Point refinery up by Blaine; these waters are home to many prime feeding grounds for the herons. In addition, the increased volume of train traffic – from up to 18 trains per day – will subject nesting birds to highly disruptive noise pollution.

The HHH board has asked that our concerns be addressed in a comprehensive environmental impact study. To learn how you can protect the great blue heron, read more about proposed coal trains here: www.coaltrainfacts.org

We're on Facebook!

Like us and keep up to date on news and special events. Feel free to post your own stories and photos related to our herons. Pass this info to friends and help keep our community growing.

www.facebook.com/HeronHabitatHelpers



GET INVOLVED WITH HHH

How can you help?

Participating in restoration, outreach, grant-writing, taking on a board position or financial support – all takes passion, dedication and commitment. Our community is small, and we're always looking for assistance and input.

HHH Board of Directors Seeks New Members

Heron Habitat Helpers is taking applications for 2013 openings on the group's board of directors. If you are a smart, energetic, "can do" kind of person who's interested in our region's great blue heron, we'd like to talk with you!

We need HHH members and volunteers to reach out and recruit more members and volunteers.

Often someone you know is searching for ways to get involved in their community, but just doesn't realize that Heron Habitat Helpers exists or what we do. Get involved by asking someone you know or don't know (a complete stranger) to become an HHH member or volunteer.

Would you like to join in weeding and watering activities at one of the restored sites located at the Kiwanis Ravine?

Throughout the growing season there are monthly Second Saturday work parties scheduled and coordinated by one of the Restoration leaders. What's better than working alongside of others while having a great conversation about herons? Next one is March 8!

Renew your membership or become a member.

HHH is a 100% all-volunteer group. We need your financial support to continue conservation initiatives, educational programs and outreach efforts.

For further information contact

Barbara Selemon at 206-300-4179 or baselemon@gmail.com

President's Corner

There has been a good deal of action for HHH over the last few months. I'll try to hit the highlights.

Through the efforts of Mike Marsh, we purchased just over \$200 of plants from the Go Natives nursery in Shoreline. Then, on Martin Luther King Sunday, with the help of 31 volunteers from United Way, those plants were planted, mulched and watered into the ground at the Kiwanis Wildlife Corridor, near the north end of 34th Avenue West. The volunteers were so energetic that they even started pulling out Himalayan Blackberry. That was a fun day. See the full article on page 3.



The annual Reconnaissance Tour of Kiwanis Ravine was rained out this year. Had younger hearts prevailed, things might have been different, but after days of near constant rain, Mike Marsh and I decided that it would be too dangerous to venture into the ravine. What a shame to miss the tall, majestic trees towering over the floor of the ravine and those 80 nests 100 feet overhead. Maybe next year's reconnaissance could be scheduled for October or November instead of the last weekend in January?

After months of inexplicable delays, we are finally seeing some progress towards fulfilling our Department of Neighborhoods (DON) grant. The grant is to explore public viewing options with live video terminals at Discovery Park Visitor Center and/or at the Commodore Locks. We have met with two audio/video display contractors and two interpretive signage contractors to meet our requirements with the City. Now we need to select our contractors and award stipends. It's been a long time coming to this!

On Wednesday, February 6th 2013, I gave a presentation about Heron Habitat Helpers to the Ladies of Fatima. Marla Master joined me, bringing photo albums, heron eggs and bones to show the audience. I spoke for twenty minutes or so, outlining the history of Kiwanis Ravine and explained what we do through HHH. We were given a warm reception and a donation for our cause.

The annual public meeting for HHH is coming up on March 9th. Each year we elect new members to the HHH Board of Directors at this meeting. Some Board members will be staying on for another year or so. Some will be leaving the Board, and I'm happy to say that there will be some new members this year. We expect to have a Heron Report from Pam Cahn, an Accomplishments Report that I will give, and I will award some lucky member our Volunteer of the Year award. Don't miss our public meeting to welcome home our herons. It should be interesting.

JOHN "HOOPER" HAVEKOTTE,
President

Heron Update by Mike Marsh: The Great Blue Herons have returned for their 2013 nesting season in Kiwanis Ravine. On February 12, twenty herons were seen on both sides of the Ship Canal just below the Chittenden Locks. On February 16, eight herons were perched on or near the seven old nests in an alder grove in Commodore Park. No herons were seen yet in the main nesting colony in Kiwanis Memorial Preserve Park. Herons usually rebuild old nests, or build new ones if existing housing is taken. Go to www.heronhelpers.org and click on "Heron Watching" to see the birds return to their nests.

Prabhu Kannan



Annual Membership Drive

WE RESTORE HABITAT.

WE EDUCATE.

WE COLLABORATE.

WE ADVOCATE.

Join, renew or donate today!

HHH is an all-volunteer group. By joining and supporting Heron Habitat Helpers, you enable us to directly support conservation initiatives, educational programs and outreach efforts. Every membership and donation – regardless of size – truly makes a difference!

Donate online (under membership) at www.heronhelpers.org or by mail:
Heron Habitat Helpers, PO Box 99815, Seattle, WA 98139-0815

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP \$15

Mail your check to: Heron Habitat Helpers • PO Box 99815, Seattle, WA 98139-0815

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

\$15 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP PER FAMILY _____

Donation \$10 \$25 \$50 \$75 _____

TOTAL _____

E-MAIL _____

WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER? YES check field of interest(s) NO

conservation programs fundraising strategic planning public relations habitat restoration

HHH is an IRS 501(c)(3) organization under the umbrella of the Associated Recreational Council (ARC). Membership and donations are 100% tax deductible.