



# Meadowbrook Farm Park

Summer Newsletter -- June 2025



*Kris Kirby admires young hop vines starting up the twine at Interpretive Center posts. Battey photo*

**It's the beginning of summer** in the Snoqualmie Valley, and where better to enjoy its subtle pleasures and appreciate where we live than Meadowbrook Farm Park? Each visit to Meadowbrook is different, with new birdsongs to hear, new tracks and animal signs to see, and new plants in bloom.

Consider starting the family's summer off with a visit to the Outdoor Adventure Jamboree at the Meadowbrook Interpretive Center June 25, with fun outdoor-related activities especially designed for children 3—12! More information and sign ups at [www.siviewpark.org](http://www.siviewpark.org). Join us for a summer guided walk or class, or visit Meadowbrook on your own.

Whenever you visit, think about the amazing history of this very special place, part of the Snoqualmie Tribe's ancestral homeland for thousands of years. What a gift it is to have this beautiful and important part preserved as open space! We are all now stewards of this land; visit thoughtfully, with respect and care!

## Why is the Grass So Tall?



*An elk cow may "babysit" several calves while other cows graze.*

*Berger photo*

Elk calves are born in late spring, and for their first days, will lie motionless in the grass where their mother has left them. As they get older, they learn from their mother to jump up and run when danger, such as a predator, approaches. But during the time when the calves lie quietly in the tall grass, they also may not move when a tractor and mower come near. To prevent accidental injury or death to young baby calves, and ground-nesting birds, most of Meadowbrook's meadows are not mowed in June. Watch for "Hello, Baby!" time, coming soon!

## Washington State Youth Heritage Project Summer Camp to Visit Meadowbrook

Look for approximately 40 high school age historians visiting the Snoqualmie Valley this July, as part of a free, week-long history-related summer camp put on annually by the Washington State Trust for Historic Preservation. At a new location each year, this summer's camp is in conjunction with the Mountains to Sound Greenway, and features upper valley sites to explore human interactions with the landscape. Students will stay at Rainbow Lodge, and will explore many valley sites, including several areas of Meadowbrook, as well as use the Interpretive Center to work on individual project displays. Washington students interested in history can apply for this free week-long overnight camp. Watch for their vans and wave with a smile!



*Members of the JA Brennan design team walk the Prairie Loop Trail route with Mike McCarty.*

*M Davis photo*

## **Prairie Loop Trail Progress**

The Prairie Loop Trail is again moving forward. Revised construction estimates indicated that the available funding—a combination of a large King County Parks grant, individual King County Park Levy contributions from each city, plus funds from the Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association—was not enough to plan, permit and construct the trail. King County Parks was willing to change their grant scope to a design-only grant, enabling the project to proceed with the design and permitting of the trail. However, funds will need to be sought for further grants to actually construct the trail.

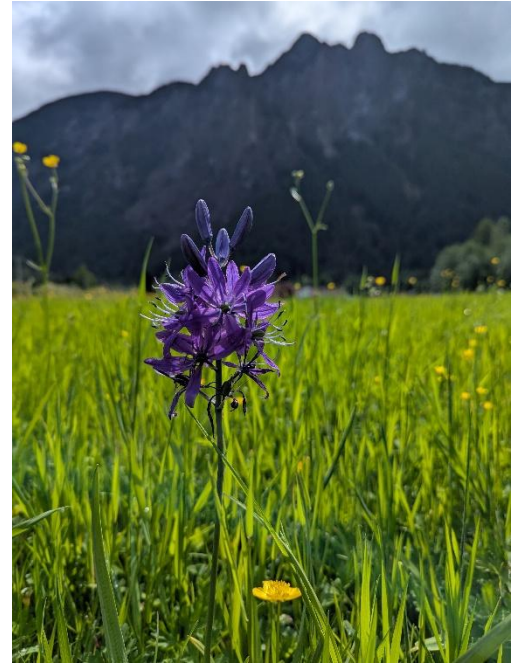
North Bend has contracted with the landscape design firm of J.A.Brennan to design the trail segment, which will travel the edges of the Camas and Scout Meadows, and connect to Snoqualmie Middle School and Centennial Fields Park. The design firm is beginning work, and will convene meetings of interested parties soon. The trail will enable a 2.5 mile loop route, of mostly gravel path with some boardwalks, and connecting to the paved trail along Park Street/Boalch Avenue. Because of the presence of wildlife in Meadowbrook’s interior, the trail will be designed for slower paced, contemplative and respectful walking.

Remember, Meadowbrook Farm Park is sacred land to the Snoqualmie Tribe, and important wildlife habitat. **No motorized vehicles** are permitted on the fields or trails—including electric bikes, electric scooters and electric mountain bikes!

# Prairie Restoration Progress!



*Ryan Lewis leads a tour to prairie restoration sites on Meadowbrook.  
Norton photo*



*Camas blooms at second-year site at Three Forks.  
Norton photo*



*Taper-tip onions were planted as bulbs. Norton photo*



*Seablush is an annual which will reseed. Norton photo*



*First year prairie restoration test plots at Meadowbrook planted in 2024, are beginning to bloom.*

**Ryan Lewis**, prairie restoration project leader for the Snoqualmie Tribe, recently led a tour of the prairie restoration test plots on Meadowbrook. An interested group examined each plot, which were planted in the fall of 2024. Additional test plots, planted in 2023, are growing at King County and City of Snoqualmie Three Forks Park sites.

Meadowbrook's test plots began with about 1% native plants, after years of farming practices, and the presence of invasive non-natives. (Most recently, the meadows were planted in the early 1990's with a grass/clover mixture for dairy cow fodder.) After clearing the test sites, and planting with a mix of native seeds and bulbs, the test plots happily show 25—30% native plants. The test plots vary in the planting mixtures, and what is presently blooming. On the May 14 tour, the Meadowbrook sites showed conspicuous numbers of the pink annual seablush, two kinds of camas—the elk have grazed some of the camas leaves—, taper-tip onions, and nodding onions. Several kinds of native grasses, including meadow barley and wild rye, will be showing seed-heads soon.

Competition from invasive non-natives is an ongoing issue. Buttercup, thistle and blackberries plus non-native grasses showed in many plots. What are the next steps? Traditionally, the prairie was burned in small areas in the fall, to keep the meadows free from invasive plants and intruding tree growth. While fire is intriguing, the logistics are problematic, and would need to be done in cooperation with the fire department. Continuing to plant bulbs and overseeding could increase the native plant numbers, while hand spraying individual invasives could reduce the invasives. Ryan would like to create additional test plots and potentially expand the present ones, but full restoration is a process of many decades.

The initial Forest Service funding that began the project will end soon, but funds are being sought to continue the restoration efforts. As efforts continue, watch these plots for an increasing percentage of native plants. Someday soon, we may see a spring landscape of blue camas as the foreground to Mount Si!!

# Swallow Time!

Do you watch the calendar in the spring, anticipating the return of your favorite summer birds? The upper valley hosts 6 swallow species, according to local birdwatcher Harold Erland, most of whom winter in southern Mexico, or even farther south. Some species, such as barn swallows and tree swallows, migrate in large flocks. Occasionally one may be fortunate enough to see the return of a flock—hundreds of swallows in the air, circling briefly over their previous homes. But before the swallows disperse to nest sites, they may spend several weeks together at a hospitable location in late March or early April. In the upper valley, this site is often Meadowbrook, where the elevation is low, and insects are plentiful.

Tree swallows are usually the first to arrive, followed by Violet Green swallows, then Barn swallows, Cliff swallows, then the brownish Northern Rough-winged swallow, and finally, Purple Martins. The Tree swallows eventually disperse to nest boxes or holes in dead trees, preferably near water. Violet Green swallows may nest near others, forming loose colonies in



*Tree swallows have distinct white breasts.*



*Barn swallows build mud and grass nests often inside buildings.*



*Violet Green swallow.*



*Northern Rough-winged swallows*



*Cliff swallow with mud nest.*

trees. Forked tailed, rust-breasted Barn Swallows often prefer buildings, eaves and porches. In the Snoqualmie valley, Cliff swallows are usually found near the faces of Mount Si, or near Snoqualmie Falls. Dark, iridescent Purple Martins can be confused with starlings, but have longer wings, tails, flight characteristics and eating habits. Enjoy the sight of our insect-eating summer resident swallow friends! Next spring, look for them in March, on Meadowbrook!

# Which Woodpecker Is That?!

You are walking through a wooded area, (maybe Meadowbrook!) and suddenly, you hear the drumming of a woodpecker. You look, but can't see the bird. The drumming comes again. You know we are fortunate to have five different woodpecker family species in our area, the Hairy Woodpecker, the smaller Downy Woodpecker, the Red-Breasted Sapsucker, the Red-shafted Northern Flicker, and the Piliated Woodpecker. But who is doing the drumming?



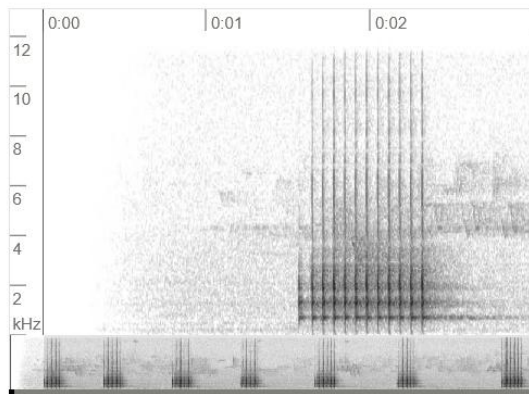
*Piliated Woodpecker*

A recent article by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology ([cornellbirds@birds.cornell.edu](mailto:cornellbirds@birds.cornell.edu)) may help narrow the choices!

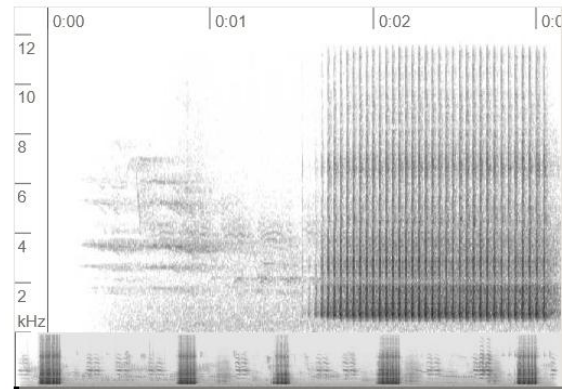
According to the article, both male and female woodpeckers can drum all year around, with more drumming likely in the spring and early summer mating season. The drumming is a territorial signal, and can help attract mates. Unlike quietly pecking for food, the goal of drumming is to make as much sound as possible. Listening to the speed and duration of the sounds can help distinguish between some woodpeckers.

Downy Woodpeckers have relatively short bursts of drumming, and the sounds are slow enough one can almost count the strikes. In contrast, Hairy Woodpecker drums are slightly longer, but much faster—you can't count the individual pecks. The Flicker's drum is slightly longer, with a speed between the Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers—but they may pause and call between drums. Our local Sapsucker's drumming may be recognizable by an initial drum roll, followed by irregularly placed double taps. The Piliated Woodpecker has a deep, relatively slow drum that is faster at the beginning and end, so that the sound seems to fade away. (The fading away is easier to hear than the crescendo at the beginning.)

Listen closely next time you hear drumming, and you may have a better idea which woodpecker is nearby!



*Sonograph of Downy Woodpecker drumming*



*Sonograph of Hairy Woodpecker drumming.*

Thank you, Cornell Lab of Ornithology Newsletter!

# The Story of Indian Plum by Dave Battey

Indian Plum, *Oemleria cerasiformis*, is considered a harbinger of spring in the Pacific Northwest, but it is quite easy for us to miss. It is one of the first native fruits to flower and ripens in late spring and early summer, so was not missed by local Salish Indians nor by today's birds and animals. Other common names include: Osoberry, Oregon Plum, Indian Peach and Bird Cherry. It is closely related to the much larger plum fruit from Eurasia that we enjoy from our supermarkets and gardens.

It is in full bloom right now (April) in western Washington, with a small, yellow and white bloom. Curiously, the female flower are said to have a pleasant odor and the males unpleasant :) Yes, it is dioecious, meaning that you need both male and female plants and some type of pollinator including hummingbirds, bees, butterflies and other insects, to have fruit.



**Indian Plum – Blossoms**



**Early Fruit**



**Indian Plum—Maturing Fruit**

The plant is also not likely to attract much attention. It is a bush, often multi-stemmed, not a tree, averaging ten feet in height.

This is strictly a West Coast of North America native, from southern British Columbia to Santa Barbara California, east through the Cascade and Sierra-Nevada foothills.

Immature fruit are yellow to peach color and mature fruit are deep purple to blue-black. They are quite bitter until fully ripe. I should point out that the pit is a much larger percent of the fruit than the plums we are used to :)

Snoqualmie Indians and other coastal tribes ate them fresh, cooked and dried. Ethnobotanists have had fun cataloguing the value as a fruit and its Indian medicinal uses. Tribes that I recognized, in alphabetical order included: Chehalis, Cowlitz, Lummi, Makah, Quinault, Saanich, Samish, Skagit, Snohomish and Snoqualmie. One commented on fruit storage: “To store the fruits in winter, they were placed in tall cedar boxes, covered with hot oil, sealed and placed in a cool place.”

Check it out and do taste tests, as the fruit matures in your gardens, yards, parks and forests, and be thankful of our Eurasian ancestors who slowly selected the biggest and best tasting fruit over many thousands of years, to give us today’s supermarket fruit. Experts suggest that humans have only lived in the Americas for 20,000 years, maximum, so did not have time to enhance Indian Plum for our enjoyment.



**David S. Battey** is a founding Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association board member, historian, gardener and fruit grower.

## Website Under Construction!

The MFPA website, [www.meadowbrookfarmpreserve.org](http://www.meadowbrookfarmpreserve.org) has not been substantially updated since Covid! It does not reflect the new operations and maintenance partnership with Si View Parks, nor the MFPA’s new focus on education, interpretation and stewardship. Meadowbrook volunteer Larry Colagiovanni is beginning the process of a complete website revision, aimed at a more user-friendly place that will aid those interested in cultural history, walking, wildlife, botany, upcoming events, classes and more. Watch for changes soon!



*Building personal first aid kits at the 2024 Outdoor Adventure Jamboree Meadowbrook booth. Norton photo*

## **Outdoor Adventure Jamboree – Wednesday, June 25: 11:30AM-2:30PM at Meadowbrook Farm Interpretive Center**

Come join this FREE community event to get your kids excited about recreation and play! Si View Metro Parks is hosting the Outdoor Adventure Jamboree at Meadowbrook Farm (1711 Boalch Ave N, North Bend). Come play outside, explore our many activity stations and meet local recreation service providers. Crafts, games, and fun things to do especially for ages 3—12. Free, registration requested at [www.siviewpark.org](http://www.siviewpark.org) or come drop in!

## **Native Plant Identification Trail Coming Soon!**

You don't want a long hike, but you'd like to learn more about northwest plants than what is an evergreen and what is something else?! Soon, we will have the trail for you! Meadowbrook volunteer Susan Doyle is leading the formation of a self-guided walk along the edges of the Interpretive Center landscape to highlight 15—20 common native Northwest coast trees, bushes, ferns and other plants. QRS codes at the plants will lead to additional information, ethnobotanical notes, and Lushootseed names and pronunciation.

Longer term plans will create similar walks on Meadowbrook accessible from Snoqualmie Middle School, and along the trail to the Big Cedars, to highlight additional native plants.

## **E-Bikes and Hang Gliders!**

There are multiple categories of e-bikes, e-scooters and e-mountain bikes, and many types of personal manned aircraft. All are **motorized vehicles, and are not permitted** on Meadowbrook's fields and trails. Meadowbrook is protected wildlife habitat, and a sacred place for the Snoqualmie Tribe. Appreciate Meadowbrook by visiting respectfully.

## Upcoming Events:

### **Meadowbrook Bird Walk: Saturday, June 7, 9 am Meadowbrook**

**Interpretive Center.** Join wildlife biologist and birder Harold Erland to explore the seasonal bird life at Meadowbrook. Walk through forest edges, meadows, and near wetlands to learn new birdsongs and perhaps new birds. Bring binoculars and dress for the weather, with boots for wet areas. Families welcome.

### **Outdoor Adventure Jamboree! Wednesday, June 25, 11:30—3 pm**

**Meadowbrook Interpretive Center.** Bring the family to explore outdoor activities available in and around the Snoqualmie Valley. Play games, do crafts and more, from local outdoor-oriented groups and businesses. Especially fun for children 3—12. Free. Pre-registration requested at [www.siviewpark.org](http://www.siviewpark.org) or drop in.

**Make Your Own Salish-style Moccasins: Saturdays August 16 and 23, 9am—11:30 Meadowbrook Interpretive Center. \$50 materials fee per student.** Join historian Greg Watson and learn to create handmade, custom leather moccasins, for yourself or as a gift for someone special. We will make an individual pattern, create the custom leather parts, and sew the moccasins. Make something you will enjoy for years! Adults and high school students welcome. For more information, and to register, text Greg at 253 334 3227.

### **Hike to the Big Cedars Saturday August 23, 9 am, Meadowbrook**

**Interpretive Center** Walk through Meadowbrook's forested riparian woodlands to see an old growth cedar tree over 500 years old! Learn about what an important tree cedar was for Northwest tribes and early pioneers, and appreciate other native plants as we walk. Dress for the weather, with boots for wet areas. Children welcome, not suitable for strollers. 2.5 miles. Heavy wind or rain will cancel.

### **Prairie Loop Walk: Saturday September 13, 9 am Meadowbrook**

**Interpretive Center** Enjoy early fall colors with a walk on Meadowbrook! We will peek quietly into the hidden meadows to look for elk, enjoy tracks in damp areas near wetlands, and listen for birds. 2.5 miles. Dress for the weather with boots for wet areas. Children welcome, can be difficult for strollers. Heavy wind or rain will cancel.

### **Mark Your Calendar: Oaktobefest returns to Meadowbrook. Saturday October 25 9 am—1pm Meadowbrook Interpretive Center.**

Come to the Snoqualmie Valley's own Native Plant and Arbor Day Festival, with native plants, games and activities for all. Find out about the best plants for your garden, plus the best plants for birds and insects. Make your home a natural haven for native pollinators. Plants from local nurseries will be available. Families welcome! Watch for more information soon! Berger photo



## Facility Rentals at Meadowbrook Farm:

The Meadowbrook Farm Interpretive Center and Recreation Fields are available for you to reserve for your special event, party or business meeting. Imagine your own celebration at such a special place! Will the elk come for a visit?

Have questions or are interested in reserving space at Meadowbrook? Please contact Travis James with Si View Parks at [TJames@siviewpark.org](mailto:TJames@siviewpark.org)



*The Interpretive Center building will accommodate 125 people seated. .*



## Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association

PO Box 1462, Snoqualmie, WA 98065 [www.meadowbrookfarmpreserve.org](http://www.meadowbrookfarmpreserve.org)

Caroline Villanova (MTS Greenway) Secretary

John House (Treasurer)

Mary Norton (SVHS) President

Mona Davis ( City of Snoqualmie liaison)

Mike McCarty (City of North Bend liaison)

Dave Battey (citizen)

Katie Woolsey (King County)

Ron Crouch (North Bend citizen)

Travis James (Si View Parks)

Bill Whitaker (Snoqualmie citizen)

Greg Watson (citizen at large )

Harold Erland (USVEMG)

Adam Osbekoff (Snoqualmie Tribe)

Michelle Chaney (SVSD)