

COOK PARK LOVES THE BIRDS

Restoration and Community Science at Cook Park

Cook Park is a much-loved neighborhood resource for walking, picnicking, sports, and nature appreciation. It's also a great place to watch birds and learn about the value of connected greenspaces in our region! Since 2015, Clean Water Services and the City of Tigard have been working with community organizations to restore and enhance the natural areas at Cook Park, planting over 50,000 native plants in 60 acres of wetland, oak savanna, and riparian forest.

With strong native plant communities and healthy riparian cover and shade, Cook Park helps protect the Tualatin River for fish and people, and provides great habitat for a wide variety of birds and wildlife. The connected beaver pond and wetland meadow are being restored with native wildflowers and oaks, and together these habitats will increase the wildlife value of the entire site.

In 2021, Clean Water Services partnered with Portland Audubon to understand how birds are responding to ongoing ecological restoration at the site. Through a combination of professional surveys and an ambitious community science effort, this project is helping partners understand how these habitats benefit birds, and to monitor for changes as the restoration continues and the site matures. Here are some key preliminary highlights:



Over 50 volunteer community scientists have been trained to conduct bird surveys along the river! **Volunteers include** experienced birders from Washington County and beyond, as well as newer birders, neighbors, and existing park users.

During the first year of data collection, community scientists documented over 77 species using the riparian forest. This includes birds from a wide variety of guilds, including neotropical migratory songbirds, woodpeckers, waterbirds, raptors and owls.



Pileated Woodpecker

Photo by Anne Buckley



Common Goldeneye

Photo by Christina Butler

The most common species documented at the site include Song Sparrow, Common Yellowthroat, Mallard, American Robin, and Cedar Waxwing.

Community scientists also documented nesting **Pileated Woodpecker**, sensitive species including **White-breasted Nuthatch**, and unusual winter visitors including **Common Goldeneye**!



White Breasted Nuthatch

Photo by Alan Krakauer

Professional monitoring by Portland Audubon at the adjacent wetland meadow site will provide an important before-and-after look at how the bird community responds to prairie restoration and more water on the landscape.



If you would like to be a community scientist at Cook Park, please contact Candace Larson: clarson@audubonportland.org or Joe Liebezeit: jliebezeit@audubonportland.org

