

Hello Friend of Maddax Woods,


February is shaping up to be a mixed weather month as if to keep us 'on our toes' before we crave the benefits of spring. However, the wet weather and intermittent snow flurries are not deterring the flora and fauna from their annual routines. Clusters of bulbs are pushing up their first sprouts and the tips of shrubs are beginning to bud. The small birds that have wintered over can be heard chattering and seen fluttering amid the branches of evergreens as they begin to regain their neighborhoods. Listen for the various sounds - some solitary and some in noisy flocks. How many birds can you identify by their voices even if you cannot see them? The 'Merlin Bird ID' app is easy to use and remarkably accurate.

And, speaking of birds - it is time to watch for the return of the Great Blue Herons to the nests on Goat Island. The males arrive first to scope out the real estate and check out their mating competition. Strangely enough, their return nearly coincides with Valentine's Day. The females will begin arriving after the 'boys' have had their squabbles.....later in February, early March.

The FOMW board will host the first Heron Watch on February 22, 1:00-3:00pm. This is a great opportunity to clearly see the nests before the trees leaf out and obscure the view. Volunteers will be at the viewing area with scopes to help get a close-up view of individual birds. Bring your binoculars to enjoy capturing all the action.

OPB highlighted the Great Blue Heron, including glimpses of Goat Island in their Oregon Field Guide program. Photographer Mike Houck discovered Maddax Woods last spring and visited the park frequently through the summer to film the heronry on Goat Island. The program can be viewed with this link:

<https://www.opb.org/article/2025/02/06/urban-naturalist-mike-houck-tracks-great-blue-herons-on-the-willamette-river/>

Happy Valentines Day from the board of the Friends of Maddax Woods 

Work Party - focus on winter cleanup of raised beds and pathways. - Saturday, February 15 - 9:00-noon.

*Heron Watch - Saturday, February 22 - 1:00-3:00pm

Board Meeting - Thursday, February 27 - 3:30-5:30, location TBD

*Heron Watch sessions for 2025:

February 22 - 1:00-3:00

March 16 - 1:00-3:00

April 19 - 1:00-3:00

May 11 - 1:00-3:00

June 7 - 1:00-3:00