

Hello Friend of Maddax Woods,

March 20 is the official first day of spring for 2025! There is much to look forward to in 'The Woods'. The return of the Great Blue Herons to Goat Island is among the most impressive shows of spring.

All manner of sprouts are emerging throughout the park and up the Burns and Library trails. The Friends of Maddax Woods Board invites you to make frequent visits to the park to see the weekly changes.

A new City ordinance discourages feeding of wildlife. Human food is not healthy for our wild friends, especially now that their natural food sources are emerging quickly. The residue of human food also attracts unwanted rodents that then wander into neighboring yards. Thank you for respecting this new rule and instead enjoy the animals as they search for their native foods.

The monthly work party is being held Saturday, March 15 from 9am-noon. Work on the grounds and helping to set up for the Heron Watch will be on the list of projects. Your time and labor is always appreciated, even if only for a short time.

The second Heron Watch is on schedule for March 16 and from 1-3:00pm when volunteers will be available with displays and scopes to see the nesting pairs (and lonely bachelors) up close. Marla sends the following update: As of March 10, 2025, the Great Blue Herons (GBH) are in various stages of mating in the Goat Island nesting area. Many gbh's have not mated, some have and I noticed one gbh sitting in the nest that makes me think eggs have been laid at least in this nest. Many single herons are standing on the edges of nests. A few herons are bringing nesting material but more herons are coming into the nesting area with no materials in their bills. I counted over 15 single herons in the nesting area perched on branches but not close to the nests.

These may be immature herons not ready for breeding or a mix of immature and mature singles not having mated just yet. At least 40 nests have at least one gbh standing on or right next to a nest.

With spring just around the corner, the forest will be preparing for the return of its furry and feathered friends. We can learn a lot from observing these changes and perhaps applying them to how we respond to life changes. Some lessons from bird behaviors have been documented by Margaret Roach, author of 'And I Shall Have Some Peace There' and published in Parade Magazine, March 2017.

"1. *Sometimes you need to move on.* Birds, masters of the air and breath, apt readers of the weather, know when to migrate and when to stay put. Few decisions in any life are clear, all pro or all con, and I am reminded of this by so-called partial migrants, like Eastern bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*), who can choose to stay put in winter - ensuring first dibs on a spring nesting site or territory - or can move farther south and have an easier few months. You can't have it both ways.

2. *Stand on your own two feet.* Birds are one of the few animals besides humans that are not four-legged. Watching them perch or hop on their tiny legs always makes me think about maintaining my balance and resolve.

3. *Be ready with a plan B.* It's not only on a stormy night that birds act with resourcefulness. If the seed-bearing trees and shrubs of Canada's boreal forests don't produce a sufficient crop, millions of 'winter finches', who don't normally migrate, rise up and do so, over vast distances.

4. Finally, *believe in magic.* In pure wonder and the simple spectacle: the supersaturated color of a male indigo bunting (*Passerina cyanea*) or a scarlet tanager (*Piranga olivacea*); the tiny iridescent hovercraft that is the spring's first hummingbird, arriving to sip from the bleeding heart out front; and the swelling of so many songs as the season comes on full. And, this from Emily Dickinson: "Hope is the thing with feathers".

We look forward to seeing you 'In The Woods',
Board, Friends of Maddax Woods

**Events: Work party - Saturday, March 15, 2025 - 9:00am-noon.
 Heron Watch #2 - Sunday, March 16, 2025 - 1:00-3:00pm
 Board meeting - Thursday, March 27, 2025 - 3:30-5:30 - West Linn Library,
Trillium room.**