



FRIENDS OF  
Hendricks Park

NEWS FROM THE

# Park Bench

EUGENE'S FIRST PARK

Winter 2003

## Forest Restoration Renews Understory

The Douglas fir understory in Hendricks Park is bustling with activity. **Walama Restoration Project** has a 2-month contract to pull ivy—hence the road closure on upper Fairmount Boulevard. Thanks to a team of eight committed workers, the forest is

being restored to what it should or could be. Mounds of dislodged, tangled ivy rest along the southwest section of the road that winds through the park. What can't be seen is the myriad of bulbs and seeds reawakening after decades of slumber. This spring, the forest floor will look lively with trillium, fawn lilies and other native plants that are finally getting their share of nutrients and sunlight that was previously denied them by ivy.

The park staff used their slim Forest Management Budget to hire Walama Restoration Project. Yotokko

Kilpatrick, founder of that organization, previously established a similar group in the Ashland area that was also dedicated to the enhancement, rehabilitation and restoration of waterways, forest and grasslands. In addition to ecosystem restoration, WRP facilitates experiential education in habitat awareness and rehabilitation. This group understands the problems of invasive species.

Clearing the forest of this invasive plant is a long-term goal for Hendricks Park, and Walama is getting us there with a great leap forward.

As camas, trillium, and spring beauty emerge this time of year, they are tender and fragile. The staff is asking for your help in protecting the habitat restoration areas. Please stay on the trails and keep your dogs on a leash. 



Before—ivy smothers the forest floor.



And after—watch the revival.



Habitat restoration area sign.

## Winter Blooms

Want relief from those winter blues? Take a walk to the park's winter garden and benefit from the color and fragrance you'll discover there. From the entrance of the Rhododendron Garden, proceed directly across from the arrival steps at the parking area, walk half the top circle path, and you will encounter the small, but delightful winter garden. The bush that looks to be a tall bouquet of tiny pink-white flowers is *Viburnum bodnantense*. Between two of those viburnums stands a witchhazel (*Hamamelis*), a tree with little yellow, curly flowers. Bright purple blooms now cover the Korean rhododendron (*R. mucronulatum*). Completing this ensemble with its white clusters coating the stems is the February Daphne (*Daphne mezereum*). Get your nose close and take a whiff of this beauty. You'll also want to check out the hellebores, with their dark evergreen leaves and elegant clusters of white or pink rose-shaped flowers. On your way back, you'll catch the fragrance



Deciduous shrubs flower before the leaves appear.

of sweet box (*Sarcococca*) filling the air. This bush has dark, shiny foliage with little white flowers that later give rise to dark-blue berries.

Our mild winters allow these early bloomers to come alive even as the chilly fog settles around us. OK, so it's not the Caribbean or Mexico, but you don't need a reservation—and it's free. 

## Work Party Update

In early December, fifteen eager volunteers helped plant thirty sword ferns in the Native Plant Garden. On January 4, the clouds parted just long enough for another group to put in a variety of bulbs and small starts. There will be no more planting parties this winter, but there will be opportunities to weed in the upcoming season.

*Gaining Ground* gatherings were held in November, December and January. The last one of this winter is scheduled for Feb. 8, after which the ivy-removal efforts will return to *Free the Trees*. Future dates and times will be in the spring newsletter, or you can check the notice in the park's picnic shelter. 



Eunice Kjaer

## Volunteer Spotlight

Over the past four years, Eunice Kjaer has been one of the best volunteers at Hendricks Park. She is an example of the skilled individuals who come to the park from the Oregon Master Gardener Program. Eunice has worked primarily in the Rhododendron Garden but is willing to help in any way she can. She has assisted with storm cleanup and other special events. Eunice loves being in Hendricks Park and considers working with Ginny and the other staff an excellent learning experience.

She often takes friends and visitors to the park to point out plants that are blooming seasonally.

# Native Plant Showcase

*Polystichum munitum*

WESTERN SWORD FERN

by Evelyn Hess

A client of our nursery once asked us to make her yard “look like Western Oregon”—but she didn’t want any sword ferns. She thought they looked too much like the palm trees she had left behind in southern California.

Sword ferns do look exotic, with their arching whorls of leathery fronds growing 3-to-5 feet long. But they once formed the dominant ground cover in the park’s woodlands (and will soon do again, thanks to ivy-removing volunteers), and I consider them to be the quintessential Pacific Northwest forest ground cover.

Remaining green and robust throughout our moist gray winter, sword ferns delight in spring by unfurling hairy gold coils of serpentine fronds. In time, one majestic clump can become waist-high, more than 6 feet wide and have up to 100 fronds. Clumps multiply on short rhizomes, but the plants also reproduce with spores if they grow on open organic soil with sufficient moisture.

Easy to transplant, these hardy ferns can quickly give a lush look to that bare area you just deprived of evil ivy. Once established, they need very little water and tolerate deep shade to part sun. They are happiest in soil rich in humus.

To my way of thinking, there would be no better way to make your yard “look like western Oregon” than to plant drifts of *Polystichum munitum* in the shade of your house or under Douglas firs. 



## Aunt Rhodie tells all...

Dear Aunt Rhodie,

While walking in the park the past few months I have seen some very unusual, very small creatures, usually in the Rhododendron Garden. What could they be: elves, sprites, fairies? I was able to capture them on film so am enclosing a picture. **MARTIN**

Dear Martin,

Park staff and visitors have reported many sightings. We are as perplexed as you are. Do any of our readers know what these creatures are? We like to think they are definitely a good omen and maybe are appearing as the ivy is disappearing. Any ideas?

**SINCERELY, AUNT RHODIE**

## FOHP EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY: Newhouse on Native Plants

Botanist Bruce Newhouse will kick off our Spring/Summer Lecture Series with a talk on the native and nonnative plants of Hendricks Park on Monday, March 10th at 7 pm. Newhouse is the cofounder of Salix Associates, an organization that works on environmental planning issues. Join us at the first in a series of four lectures sponsored by Friends of Hendricks Park.

Other lectures in the series include: Invasives from a Gardener’s Perspective with Mariolana Schat (May 12), Birds of Hendricks Park with Dan Gleason (July 14), and Forest Ecology with Alan Dickman (September 15).

All events are free and open to the public. Location of the lectures will be announced via e-mail and snail mail updates, so please stay tuned!

Call FoHP Education Committee Chairperson Evelyn Hess if you have questions, 344-8943. 

**THE SEARCH IS ON** for historic photographs of Hendricks Park. In 2006, the Park will celebrate its centennial and the Friends of Hendricks Park are thinking ahead. Joan Kelley, part of the family of Friends, is taking on the historical research. So far her research in libraries and museums has been unproductive. “The history of Hendricks is in family albums and old-timer’s memories so that’s where I’m going,” she says.

Whether it’s a family picnic, wedding, or Sunday stroll tell us your story and share your photographs. Contact Joan at the Friends’ address or call her at her home at 485-1895.





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**FRIENDS OF  
Hendricks Park**

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Thanks to all  
our new members.  
You are making  
a difference as  
we all rediscover  
Hendricks Park.



## Park Events

### Last Ivy Pull: Gaining Ground

**Saturday Feb. 8, 9:30 a.m.**

Meet at the Wilkins Picnic Shelter in Hendricks Park.

### Lecture Series

The Spring/Summer  
Lecture Series begins

March 10 at 7 p.m., location to be announced.

Bruce Newhouse will speak on Native Plants (see inside article).

### Wildflower Walks and Rhododendron Garden Tours

*Every Sunday*

*April 6–May 18*

**Wildflower Walks** with park employee Ginny

Alfriend start at 11:00 a.m.

**Rhododendron Garden**

**Tours** with head gardener Michael Roberts start at 1:00 p.m.

Meet at the Wilkins Picnic Shelter in Hendricks Park.