



Tapteal Greenway

Conservation-Education-Recreation on the Lower Yakima River Since 1995

Tapteal Talk

President's Message

by Adam Fyall

Happy spring everyone. It took a while to get here, but that's not so bad if we think about soil moisture and mountain snowpack. The current forecasts are calling for an El Niño winter in our future. That usually means warmer, drier conditions here in the Northwest and while that can be a nice break every few years, it can also mean drought lies ahead.

Back in the now, I hope you are able to get out and enjoy the spring colors and milder temperatures. You will get a chance in this issue to read about some of our spring activities as this is always a busy time of year for the Greenway. Some of these include old traditions, like helping with Salmon Summit and working on Earth Day projects; and some of the endeavors are newer, like this year's third edition of the Tapteal Greenway 50k and the Bird Walks we have partnered on with Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society.

Since I have already looked ahead once, I will do it again. Mark your calendars for October 20, which will be our Annual Celebration this fall. This is another event that the Board puts a lot of effort into and we enjoy seeing many of you there.

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy these last few weeks of spring and are able to get outside and move around. Thank you as always to all of you that help us in our conservation, recreation, and education missions.

~ Board of Directors ~
Adam Fyall – President
Dan Hansen – Vice President
Dirk Peterson – Secretary
Stan Kuick – Treasurer
Members at Large:
Mike Lilga
Diana McPherson
Aaron Pelly
Carole Schuh - Editor

Upcoming Paddle Events on the Tapteal Water Trail



We will be back on the river this spring and summer with our organized paddling events. These are great for kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards. We have three events, and take the lower river in three roughly 10-mile segments. These paddles generally take 2½-3 hours. The Greenway supports these by having guides on the water and providing shuttles so that you can drop your vessel off at the start and leave your vehicle at the finish. Below are the three events. The first date (June 17) is firm, with the other two probable, but subject to adjustment:

- Paddle #1 – JUN 17 – Benton City to Horn Rapids Park
- Paddle #2 – AUG 12 – Tapteal Bend to Bateman Island
- Paddle #3 – SEP 30 – Snively Road to Tapteal Bend

In addition to these three standard events, I would be willing to lead an all-day full Tapteal Water Trail 30-miler. I want at least 4 other people committed before I do so myself. I think late-June/early-July is good while the days are longest and the river is still moving along with some pace, but am open to other options. I am also willing to lead this on a weekday, like a Friday. Last time I did this it took about 11 hours with rest stops and portage around the dam. It makes for a nice day, and a nice day to start early, like 6 am at the latest. If this interests you, send an email to the address below or contact me directly.

Safety is always our priority. Anyone who paddles with us is required to wear a life preserver. Also, while unlikely, weather or river conditions could prompt a postponement or cancellation of an event and we won't hesitate to do that.

More information is available on the website and our Facebook page, or just go ahead and contact us directly at taptealgreenway@gmail.com. Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you on the water!

Seedballs!

By Dirk Peterson

It started last October with a Zoom presentation to the Columbia Basin Native Plant Society by Elise Gornish of the University of Arizona. Dr. Gornish related her experience using seedballs in arid land restoration projects. The concept of using seedballs is that they will remain intact after dispersing until there is enough precipitation to dissolve them. At which point conditions might be right for germination of the seeds. There are several advantages to using seedballs including preventing the seeds from being eaten and providing the seeds with a source of nutrients.

The process we adopted from Dr. Gornish for making seedballs uses a mixture of three parts composted steer manure, two parts fireclay and one part seeds, wetted with water to a dough-like consistency and formed into small balls or patties. After drying for a few days, they can be dispersed.

In February we visited Sagebrush Elementary to make seedballs of a variety of native plants: Munro's globemallow, common yarrow, snow buckwheat, sagebrush and a mix of bunch grasses. A few weeks later they spread the seedballs on a parcel we have been restoring in Amon Basin. The type and location of the seedballs were marked with pin flags for monitoring.

Dr. Gornish mentioned during her presentation that one of the items available on her lab outreach page (www.gornishlab.com) is a design document for using a bike to make large batches of seedballs. After the presentation CBNPS, Benton Conservation District and Tapteal Greenway decided to share the costs for assembling a seedball bike. We assigned construction of the bike and production of the first batch of seedballs to Timothy Chen of Troup 248 for his Eagle Scout project. That first batch yielded about eight gallons of seedballs. The final step in Timothy's project was to disperse about one hundred seedballs near the Rattlesnake Slope trailhead in a marked off area that we can monitor.

Did I mention we made about eight gallons of seedballs? On Earth Day we spent the morning at the Rattlesnake Slope trailhead handing out bags of seedballs to everyone that was headed up the trail. Cub Scout Pack 248 came out and weeded a patch of ground before spreading their seedballs. Many thanks to all who made this activity possible.



Tapteal board member Stan Kuick and helpers at the seedball table



Members of Scout Troup 248 weeding prior to spreading seedballs

Salmon Summit 2023

by Stan Kuick

Salmon Summit 2023

As we have done for many years, Tapteal Greenway hosted a station on the life cycle of the salmon at the annual Salmon Summit organized by the Benton Conservation District. Participating in the two day event on April 17 and 18 were board members Carole Schuh, Dan Hansen, and myself.

As you may remember our spring earlier this year was on the cold side, and the first day dawned cold and windy, with heavy clothing required to stay warm! The second day it was merely cold, but not as windy. Whew! There was some extra fumbling of life cycle bracelet components by the cold fingers of the Tapteal crew, so a number of colored beads were donated to the Columbia Park turf. Each bead in the bracelet is a different color and represents a stage in the life cycle of the salmon. The kids also release classroom raised salmon “fry” into the river. In addition to the salmon life cycle station the kids, mostly fourth and fifth graders, rotate through seven other conservation related stations at this event.

This awesome event is part of the “Salmon in the Classroom” program sponsored by the Benton Conservation District and is funded by your property tax bill. Participating schools are from the Tri-Cities, Prosser, and even Patterson. Thanks go out to Rachel Little and her staff for a great job organizing this event. Pictured is the bracelet assembly line. ~ Stan



Students listen intently as Stan teaches the life cycle of a salmon



Bracelet fodder



Assembly line – Dan and Carole tie the knot and cut off the ends



Finished product. Students were challenged to go home and explain their bracelet to family

Birding the Tapteal Greenway

By Mike Lilga

Join us for our last “Birding the Tapteal Greenway” walk on Saturday, June 10 at 8:00 am at Horn Rapids Park. Kathy Criddle and Mike Lilga will help us find and identify the birds. Take SR240 past the Wanawish Dam to SR225 (Horne Drive) and turn toward Benton City. Enter the park about a mile down on the left and turn left at the T. Meet at the interpretive kiosk. Great for all birding levels or anyone that wants to explore an important natural area along the Greenway. Contact Mike at mike.lilga@gmail.com with questions.

The LCBAS/TG second-Saturday bird walks along the Tapteal Greenway have been very successful this spring with good numbers of both birds and birders in attendance. Thank you to our excellent LCBAS leaders Lori Nelson, Lisa Hill and Kathy Criddle and those of you who have attended.



A great turnout and a fruitful walk



Look for the Western Kingbird in Horn Rapids Park

Other Important Dates Along the Tapteal Greenway

Friday, June 2

Chamna Prune – 9:00 am

Friday, October 20

Annual Celebration

TGT: A Trail Through the Solar System

By Mike Lilga

Have you seen the model of the sun at the Hanford Reach Museum? Do you know about the effort by SILAS Education (see <http://silaseducation.org/HRSS/>) to place markers for each of the planets at the appropriate scaled distance from the Reach Museum, mostly along riverfront parks and trails? (see <https://visitthereach.us/hanford-reach-solar-system-model/>)

All of the planets out to Uranus have an intersection with the Tapteal Greenway Trail all the way out to Horn Rapids Park. The Tapteal Greenway board has decided to facilitate the placement of markers along the TGT by making a \$4,000 donation to SILAS Education. By leveraging our donation in addition to other contributions, SILAS was successful in receiving a Park Partnership grant from the City of Richland to place four markers (Mercury, Venus, Mars, and Ceres). These markers will be placed along the TGT/Sacagawea trail between Bateman Island and the Chamna Preserve.

The markers, like the one pictured that you can find in Benton City, are educational and artistically crafted using corten and stainless steels, which are, coincidentally, the same materials we used to construct the entrance signs to Chamna and Horn Rapids Park. They offer points of interest along the TGT and give you something to look for as you hike the trail.

We would like to ask you to help Tapteal Greenway further support this effort by making a donation. Your donation will help place markers between Chamna and Horn Rapids Park. Our target is \$5,000 to bring the solar system to the Tapteal Greenway.

To make a donation send a check to Tapteal Greenway at PO Box 2002, Richland, WA 99352 or donate to us via PayPal. Please designate it to Planetary Markers. Thank you.



Tapteal Greenway 50K 2023

By Dan Hansen

The 2023 version of the Tapteal Greenway 50K race was held on May 13. The weather was HOT. The race maxed out with 100 entrants! The race director, Jason Reatherford of the Nomad Trailrunners of Eastern WA, capped entries at 100 due to limited parking at the start and finish areas. This year there were seventy paddlers and thirty runners registered. Did I mention it was HOT? The aid stations did a brisk business in water and ice.

Seventy paddlers signed up and sixty-eight started the race. Sixty-eight paddlers finished the race as well!! First overall was Aaron Lish in a time of 3:34, which handily beat the first runner. Last year the Runners finished first. First Lady to finish was Krista Patterson in a time of 5:01. Finish times ranged from 3:34 to 8:04.

Thirty runners registered and twenty-nine started the race. All twenty-nine finished as well! First overall was Jeffrey Czajka with a time of 4:16. The first Lady to finish was Amanda Questel with a time of 4:36. Finish times ranged from 4:16 to 7:25.

Board members Dirk Peterson, Stan Kuick and Adam Fyall helped staff the Wanawish portage for the paddlers. Many thanks to them and ALL of the volunteers and the Nomads for making the race possible AND safe. Due to their efforts this year there was **100% completion** rate! That is unheard of in ultra races!! Virtually everyone started (only a couple of non-starters) and those that started finished! In spite of the heat! I think that is a testament to the organization and efforts of the volunteers.



Pre-race directions at the Benton City Boat Launch



Race Director explaining there are RULES before race start



70 paddlers were registered!



Temporary marker to keep people from getting lost



Pretty primroses along the trail



Part of the long, dusty trail

Tapteal Greenway 50K 2023 (continued)

By Dan Hansen



Pretty Munro's Globemallow along the trail



Always helps to have a running buddy.
Thanks, Kristi!



What do you do after a long, hot race?
Cool off in the river!

Columbia Park Trail Roadkill

By Mike Lilga

We continue to collect roadkill data along Columbia Park Trail with the hope of building a wildlife crossing at Amon Creek.

Below is the summary for 2023 so far. **Nine** beavers have already been killed in 2023. This is much higher than in the last two years in which a total of **six** were killed each year. In previous years by the month of April there were **three** beaver killed in 2021 and **four** in 2022. There have also been **four** deer and **two** otter killed already this year.

Please report roadkill sightings to cptroadkilltg@gmail.com

	2021	2022	2023 (to 5/7/23)
Beaver	6	6	9
Deer		3	4
Raccoon	8	5	2
Skunk	5	5	1
Porcupine	1	1	1
Rabbit	1	1	
Opossum			1
Muskrat		1	
Squirrel		1	2
Otter			2
Un-ID'd Small		1	



Educational Birding

By Diana McPherson

As we quickly transition from spring to summer, more people are getting out for bird watching. The change in weather has us seeing birds building nests, some caring for their first set of hatchlings, and others with fledglings learning from their parents. Since the popular bird-watching area, Bateman Island, is currently closed (until further notice) due to a lightning strike-caused fire, where else can you go birding? There are several trails along the Greenway for great bird watching.

In South Richland, in Amon Creek Nature Preserve, you'll see red-winged and yellow-headed blackbirds singing to their mates and building nests in the reeds. You may even see one or two blackbirds chasing a red-tailed hawk away from their nesting area. The Chamna Natural Preserve in Central Richland hosts several trails. Look for songbirds and egrets along the River Trail and hawks and ravens flying over the Sage and Jackrabbit Trails. WE Johnson Park in North Richland is a great place to see Anna's Hummingbirds, cedar waxwing, and a yellow-bellied chat. You may hear a variety of calls of the Chat before you see it. One of its calls sounds like a bullfrog! In West Richland, be sure to check out Horn Rapids Park for songbirds. You might also get lucky and see Great Horned Owls in the hemlock stand.

There are many birding opportunities along the Greenway. We look forward to seeing you on the trails. For trail maps, please check out our website www.tapteal.org. And please share your sightings with us on Facebook and/or Instagram @taptealgreeway.



Red-winged Blackbird



Yellow-bellied Chat