



landscapes

CONSERVING LAND FOR WILDLIFE, SCENIC VIEWS, AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

DESCHUTES LAND TRUST NEIGHBOR NEWS {SPRING 2015}

FOCUS: METOLIUS PRESERVE

HIKING TRAILS INVITE EXPLORATION

The Deschutes Land Trust has been caring for the Metolius Preserve since 2003.

Located north of Highway 20 and west of Camp Sherman, the 1,240-acre Preserve is home to pine and larch forest, three forks of Lake Creek, and a host of wildlife species. The Preserve is also open to the public year-round with limited access in the winter months.

As with all Land Trust properties, the priority for the Metolius Preserve is to conserve and restore fish and wildlife habitat. That's why we've worked so hard to restore the Preserve's forests. We've also dedicated time making the Preserve more accessible: the Metolius Preserve offers more than 10 miles of hiking and biking trails that link to longer regional trails like the Lake Creek Trail and the Metolius Windigo Trail. The Metolius Preserve is broken into three checkerboard-type sections: the south, middle and north:

South Fork Kiosk: The southern entrance to the Preserve is named for the south fork of Lake Creek that runs nearby. It is accessed from Highway 20 via forest road 2064 and offers a large, covered interpretive kiosk, creekside viewing platforms, and the 0.6 mile Becky Johnson Nature Trail. The South Fork provides a great introduction to the Preserve with easy hiking, quick access to Lake Creek, and interpretive signs that tell the story of native fish. Springtime brings lovely native wildflowers like mariposa lily, summertime offers cool, creekside refuge from hot sun, and fall blazes with brightly colored vine maples.

North Fork Kiosk: Located off of Camp Sherman's Road 14, this entrance now has upgraded visitor facilities including a new kiosk, new trails, and two new bridges. Hiking opportunities abound! Visitors can now cross Lake Creek on beautiful log bridges and hike through larch and pine forest to the South Fork entrance. Fall is spectacular in this section of the Preserve when red and orange vine maple and brilliant yellow larch shine. The North Fork entrance also offers great access to the Lake Creek Trail. This trail follows the north fork of Lake Creek 2.7 miles to its headwaters in Suttle Lake.

Stay tuned for more trail work! In the coming year, the Land Trust hopes to convert several roads to trails and install permanent navigation signs around the Preserve. As you explore this great trail system, please remember dogs must be on leash at the Metolius Preserve. **Thanks for helping keep the Metolius Preserve a sanctuary for wildlife!** ➤



NEVER VISITED THE METOLIUS PRESERVE? START HERE:

Visit the North Fork entrance to the Preserve. Follow the Lake Creek Trail west from the parking area and then south to the new bridge over Lake Creek. This short, flat ¼ mile trail will give you a taste of the Preserve's forests and creek.

Or, join the Land Trust for a guided hike at the Preserve! Come April, we'll offer more than 100 free nature hikes to help you explore your Land Trust Preserves. Details: deschuteslandtrust.org





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WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS CONFIRM INHABITANTS

The Metolius Preserve is rich with habitat for native wildlife. From pine forests, to lush creekside corridors, there are many places for deer, elk, bear and bobcat to roam and live. While we've always known that the Preserve was home to these animals, the recent installation of a wildlife camera has confirmed our beliefs. Here are a few of the critters caught on camera in 2014:

- **Bobcat:** These elusive felines have been caught several times on our wildlife camera. Mottled brown in color these cats are slightly larger than a house cat with tufts on their ear tips. Bobcats eat rabbits and other small mammals and are active any time of the day. Ours was caught on a snowy day shortly after some wild turkeys went by the camera.
- **Elk:** A herd of elk was caught moving by the camera last fall. Elk are the largest mammals found at the Metolius Preserve and are elusive at best. The Land Trust frequently finds signs—scat and tracks—of their passing but rarely sees the mammals themselves. Two main subspecies of elk exist in Oregon. Roosevelt elk are usually found west of the Cascade crest and Rocky Mountain elk inhabit areas east of the Cascades. Interestingly, the Metolius Preserve's elk are likely Cascade elk, a hybrid of the Roosevelt and Rocky Mountain elk. While the only way to truly determine the species is through genetic testing, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife categorize all elk found between the I-5 corridor and the Ochoco Mountains as these Cascade elk.
- **Cougar:** Hot on the heels of the elk was a cougar! Our largest feline predator who specializes in hunting hoofed mammals (see elk above!). Cougars can be active at any time of the day, but are most active at dawn and dusk. They live in a variety of habitats, but usually can be found where deer and elk roam. Our cougar was a curious one—find the photos of it checking out the game camera up close at deschuteslandtrust.org! ➤

LEARN MORE ABOUT METOLIUS PRESERVE WILDLIFE:

Join the Land Trust on a guided wildlife walk! Camp Sherman's own Gus Gustafson will lead Metolius Preserve wildlife walks in May and June. Land Trust Walks + Hikes will be online April 1. Details: deschuteslandtrust.org

DID YOU KNOW?

The Deschutes Land Trust is charting the future of Central Oregon with the **Campaign for Whychus Creek**: a three-year campaign to conserve and care for high priority lands along Whychus Creek. Make your mark on the future, get involved today: deschuteslandtrust.org/campaign



JAY MATHER



THE DESCHUTES LAND TRUST IS PROUD OF OUR GENEROUS FAMILY OF SUPPORTERS. JOIN US TODAY: DESCHUTESLANDTRUST.ORG/JOIN

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