

Benton County Prairie Species HCP



January 2007

Survey Planning for Spring & Summer 2007

Land Surveys Planned

Benton County is interested in surveying property of willing private landowners that has the potential to support the species covered by the HCP (see below for a list)- this includes lands that currently are or were historically upland prairie, wet prairie, or oak savanna.



Fender's blue butterfly—Photo by Cheryl Schultz

These habitats, once common in the Willamette Valley, are now extremely rare, as are many of the native species that require these habitats to survive. Citizens interested in checking out high quality examples of these habitats can find examples of upland prairie and oak savanna at Benton

County's Fitton Green Natural Area and wet prairie at Benton County's Jackson Frazier Wetland. For more information about these Benton County properties and their locations, visit the Benton County Natural Areas and Parks website at: <http://www.co.benton.or.us/parks/benton.htm>

The County is conducting surveys because it needs to learn where these species are located, the habitat the species depend on, and how many individuals of these rare species there are in the County. Even if these species are not present on a piece of property, the County is still interested in examining examples of high quality native habitat, to provide critical information for habitat restoration.



Nelson's Checkermallow—Photo by Tom Kaye

Species Targeted for Survey

Biologists will conduct surveys for a total of eight species- five plant species: Kincaid's lupine, Nelson's

checkermallow, Bradshaw's lomatium, Willamette daisy, and peacock larkspur; two butterflies: Fender's blue and Taylor's checkerspot ; and one bird species, the Streaked Horned Lark. Photos of these species are included throughout the newsletter, and can also be viewed with additional information on the Benton County Prairie Species HCP website: <http://www.co.benton.or.us/parks/hcp/species.php>




Photo by Dana Ross

Taylor's checkerspot—Photo by Dana Ross.

Free Property Surveys for HCP Covered Species

You can request a survey of your property by visiting the Benton County Prairie Species HCP website. On the website you can fill in and submit a field survey request form online, or download the form to mail to Benton County. The form will ask you for contact information, the property location, and a series of questions about the habitat and land-use history of your property. This information will help the County determine which properties are most likely to have prairie or savanna habitat. The survey request form is located on the Benton County HCP webpage <http://www.co.benton.or.us/parks/hcp/surveyrequest.php>

The number of parcels biologists can visit is limited by the season in which surveys can be conducted, usually late



Prairie Species HCP Public Meeting

January 22, 2007
6-8 pm

Benton Plaza, Plaza Meeting Room
408 SW Monroe Ave., Corvallis, Oregon

Please join us to find out more about the HCP and how it could affect you. To learn more visit:

<http://www.co.benton.or.us/parks/hcp/index.php>

For more information check out our webpage at: <http://www.co.benton.or.us/parks/hcp/index.php> or email us at: hcpinfo@co.benton.or.us

April through mid- July. Re-requesting a species survey does not guarantee that we will be able to visit your property in 2007 or 2008. Properties will be selected for survey based on the likelihood that the species and habitats that the HCP is focused on are present on your land. You will be contacted in April of 2007 if your property is selected for survey this year.



Peacock larkspur-Photo by Tom Kaye.

Property Survey Protocols

If you volunteer to have your property surveyed for the HCP, and your property is selected for surveys this year (2007) field biologists will contact you in April to schedule a visit to your property. All sites will be visited by a botanist (biologist specializing in plants), and depending on the type and quality of the habitat at your property, your property may also be surveyed by lepidopterists (biologists specializing in butterflies) or ornithologists (bird specialists). Property owners are welcome and encouraged to join the biologists as conduct assessments.



Kincaid's lupine-Photo by Tom Kaye.

The biologists will use an aerial photo to identify the areas of your property that are most likely to contain prairie habitat and or prairie species. When these species are found, the biologists will estimate the number of individuals present, and location of the population using a GPS (Global Positioning System) unit. This data will go into a database at Benton County, and be used to create species occurrence maps in a GIS (Geographic Information System). When a rare species is found, a botanist will conduct vegetation sampling consisting of placing a large vegetation plot on the ground and measuring the abundance of all plant species, moss, rock, and bare soil within the plot. This data provides important information about the habitats supporting the species covered by the HCP. Even if the property lacks the rare species covered by

the HCP, the biologist will compile a list of plant species in prairies on the property, write a brief habitat description, and note any problematic aggressive weedy species that are present, such as false brome or Scotch broom.



Streaked Horned Lark, photo by: WA Dept. Fish & Wildlife

Data Sharing Policy

The habitat data and any rare species data collected at your property will be provided to you once it has been compiled, usually in late summer. The data also will be entered into a database maintained by Benton County. The data will be available for limited use by organizations, agencies, and researchers doing work to benefit these species and habitats. Such agencies include the Oregon Natural Heritage Information Center and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.



Bradshaw's lomatium-Photo by Tom Kaye.

Take Advantage of this Survey Opportunity

Benton County is offering these surveys at no cost to the private landowner. Surveys are a chance to learn about the plants and animals that occupy your property, including any rare and protected species. If you do have rare, protected species, it is desirable to be aware of them for several reasons.

First, knowing that you have these special species on your property will avoid the accidental destruction of the species or its habitat. Second, obtaining a free survey now may eliminate the need for future surveys of these species. Finally, based on the habitats and or species present on your land, you may be eligible to participate in county, state, or federal programs providing incentives to landowners interested in conservation and management of their property.

Project Name Change

Notice the change? We changed the Benton County HCP name from the Multi-Species HCP to the Prairie Species HCP, which is easier to refer to, remember, and more specific.



Willamette daisy- Photo by Tom Kaye.

For more information check out our webpage at: <http://www.co.benton.or.us/parks/hcp/index.php>
or email us at: hcpinfo@co.benton.or.us