

Do you enjoy spending time in the wilderness?
Do you feel responsible for the upkeep of your public lands?
Mountain Stewards want you!



Mountain Stewards help teach others the importance of "Leave No Trace", a program encouraging people to reduce their impact on wilderness areas.

From late July through mid-September, Mountain Stewards hike popular trails in the Mount Baker Ranger District including Heliotrope

Ridge, Park Butte/Railroad Grade trails and trails around the Heather Meadows Area. These trails are popular for climbers attempting the summit of Mt. Baker, as well as day hikers looking for breathtaking vistas.

The sheer number of feet on these trails leaves them vulnerable to damage and deterioration. Mountain Stewards help others understand how to best soften the blow on these well-loved areas.

Now celebrating its seventh season, the Mountain Stewards program has come into its own. Volunteers consistently prove their effectiveness in helping educate fellow hikers and climbers about Leave No Trace ethics and forest regulations. Only by continually gaining new perspectives and appreciating existing ones, can this program continue evolving.

Coordinated by North Cascades Institute in partnership with the Forest Service, the Mountain Stewards program is an exciting way to become an advocate for the Mount Baker area.

Mountain Stewards need to be skilled in hiking and outdoor recreation, including snow travel, but are not required to travel on technical climbing routes. Volunteers donate three trail days in addition to two days of training. Trail days will take place during daytime hours, Friday through Sunday.

If you are interested in becoming a Mountain Steward please contact North Cascades Institute or Mount Baker Ranger District for an application at: (360) 856-5700.

Park Flight Program Welcomes Costa Rican Naturalist

The U.S. National Park System provides critical habitat for many species of migratory birds, from raptors and shorebirds to songbirds. Continental and local declines in these bird populations have led to a concern for their future. Because these species use parks on a seasonal basis, nesting in our national parks in the summer and migrating to Latin America in the winter, their protection cannot be assured without cooperative conservation efforts between the United States and Latin America.

Upon arriving in Washington, Nito studied with The Institute for Bird Populations (IBP), an international organization fostering a global approach to avian conservation. IBP focuses on conducting research and disseminating information related to changes in the abundance, distribution, and ecology of bird populations. Utilizing his knowledge of migratory birds, Nito acted as a guest instructor at the 2008 Bird Fest in Leavenworth. Visitors benefited from his extensive knowledge of migratory bird species.

In July, Nito will move to the North Cascades Visitor Center at Newhalem. He will act as an interpretive naturalist and provide a link to the local Spanish speaking communities. Visitors are encouraged to take advantage of Nito's knowledge of park bird species and their Costa Rican connections.

After August, Nito will return to Costa Rica. Using his new experiences in the North Cascades, he hopes to educate local high school students about the importance of bird conservation through workshops and volunteer programs.

Although he is determined to learn about migratory bird species over this summer, Nito also hopes to observe a few of the native mammals that inhabit the North Cascades including beavers, flying squirrels, big horn sheep and mountain goats.

The National Park Service is working to broaden involvement with other national and international bird conservation initiatives. Park Flight enhances collaboration with other agencies and partners on migratory bird conservation.



Above: Nito banding birds.

This year North Cascades National Park welcomes Dionisio "Nito" Paniagua Castro, a 35-year-old Costa Rican naturalist to Park Flight, through the NPS International Volunteers in Parks program. Nito was born and raised in Costa Rica where he developed an avid interest in the environment, especially the more than 880 bird species that populate his country. With a background in environmental education and ecotourism, Nito eagerly accepted an internship with the National Park Service.

From late May through June, Nito will work with park service and IBP biologists to monitor Northern Spotted Owls and migratory and resident bird species in the Stehekin Valley. Specific migratory species which Nito is familiar with from Costa Rica include the Wilson's Warbler, Western Tanager, Yellow-rumped and Yellow Warblers. He hopes to observe these species in the North Cascades, their summer nesting habitat.



Black-headed Grosbeak



Wilson's Warbler

Helpful Hints from Nito the Naturalist: Bird Watching in the North Cascades

In tropical areas birds are colorful and often easy to spot amongst the trees, but in the conifer forests of the Northwest birds often blend into their surroundings. Nito suggests learning to identify birds by their specific song or call rather than relying on eyesight. Bird watchers should stay quiet and still while trying to locate a specimen. First listen, pinpoint where the bird's call is coming from, and then use your naked eye to locate it. Nito says to avoid using your binoculars too early; trying to use binoculars when you are unsure of a bird's location can cause you to miss your chance.

Get Involved!

Volunteering in the National Park and Forest is an opportunity to meet fun and energetic people who share similar connections to the North Cascades. Participating in group work projects allows for a deeper understanding of the many issues related to management of public lands. No matter your skill level, a day spent combining friends, fun, and stewardship is rewarding for all.

Volunteer with North Cascades National Park Volunteer with the U.S. Forest Service

North Cascades National Park Service Complex partners with a variety of organizations, including those below, for trails, campgrounds and facilities maintenance. For information contact: Michael_Brondi@nps.gov

Westside

- Colonial Creek Campground storm damage restoration June 28, Aug. 9
- Diablo Lake Overlook plant restoration July 12
- Native plant nursery opportunities Dates to be determined; contact: Michael Brondi (360) 854-7275
- Cascade Pass plant restoration Sept. 20

Eastside

- Campground spring cleaning June 13-15
- Native plant restoration June 20-22, July 18-20, Aug. 15-17, Sept. 12-14
- Park building spring cleaning June 20-22
- High Bridge Camp Shelter repair July 4-6
- Bridge Creek Cabin Stove Pipe Replacement July 18-20
- Orchard Tractor Shed Sept. 26-28

The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest partners with groups to help organize volunteers to work on trails and other restoration projects in the forest. In some cases volunteer hours may be good toward a NW Forest Pass.

Volunteers for Outdoor Washington (206) 517-3019

www.trailvolunteers.org

Washington Trails Association (206) 625-1367

www.wta.org

Backcountry Horseman

www.bchw.org

Pacific Northwest Trail Association (360) 854-9415

www.pnt.org

Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association

(360) 715-0283

www.n-sea.org

The Artist-in-Residence program offers artists a unique opportunity to live and work in the North Cascades. Each spring and fall an artist spends a month in either the Skagit or Stehekin Valley gaining perspective from the surrounding wilderness and using their talents to inspire others. Artists are selected from numerous applications by a panel of park stewards and community members. Former artists include photographer David Snyder, painters Alice Dubiel and Karen Lewis, musician David Boye and sculptor Greg Pierce.

Applications are available by contacting Cindy_Bjorklund@nps.gov or for Stehekin Valley contact Kerry_Olson@nps.gov.



Thanks Partners!

The National Forest and Park Service work in a collaborative fashion with a variety of groups and private individuals devoted to the care of our natural resources. By working together and combining efforts, these networks create a community of shared concerns.

National Forest Foundation

Would you like to help maintain your public lands for future generations? Partners are encouraged to work with the Forest Service through the National Forest Foundation, a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to building relationships that result in improvements in our national forests and the communities and landscapes that surround them. Find out more about the foundation at www.natlfoundation.org.

Northwest Interpretive Association

The Northwest Interpretive Association is a nonprofit organization that works cooperatively with public agencies throughout the Northwest to promote historical, scientific and educational activities. Money received through local sales, memberships and donations is used to help both North Cascades National Park and the Mt. Baker Ranger District. The association publishes this newspaper and other guides. Sales items may be purchased at various offices, online and through mail order. Call (360) 856-5700 ext. or visit www.nwpubliclands.org



Student Conservation Association

The Student Conservation Association (SCA) is a nonprofit organization that offers conservation internships and summer trail crew opportunities to more than 3,000 people each year. SCA members complete projects in every conservation discipline - from archeology to zoology. SCA's mission is to build the next generation of conservation leaders and inspire lifelong stewardship of our environment and communities by engaging young people in hands-on service to the land. For more information about opportunities with SCA in the Northwest Region call (206) 324-4998 or visit www.thesca.org.



North Cascades Institute offers a variety of hands-on programs, including Mountain School, a residential program for elementary, junior and high-school students from various school districts in western Washington. Other programs include summer youth adventures, family getaways, adult seminars and retreats, graduate studies and volunteer stewardship opportunities.

The Environmental Learning Center is located across Diablo Dam, near Sourdough Creek on the shores of Diablo Lake. NCI offers a variety of day and overnight field seminars at the ELC.

For more information about classes and programs call (360) 856-5700 ext. 209 or visit www.ncascades.org.

Washington's National Park Fund

Every year millions of people visit Washington state's spectacular national parks: Mount Rainier, North Cascades and Olympic. Since 1993, Washington's National Park Fund has connected people to parks and money. The Fund helps ensure that visitors have high quality, memorable experiences by sponsoring educational, trail and wildlife projects. By securing funding from individuals, corporations, foundations and businesses, the Fund supports park restoration, enhancement and preservation. For information about how you can help Washington's national parks, call (206) 770-0627 or visit www.wnfp.org.

