

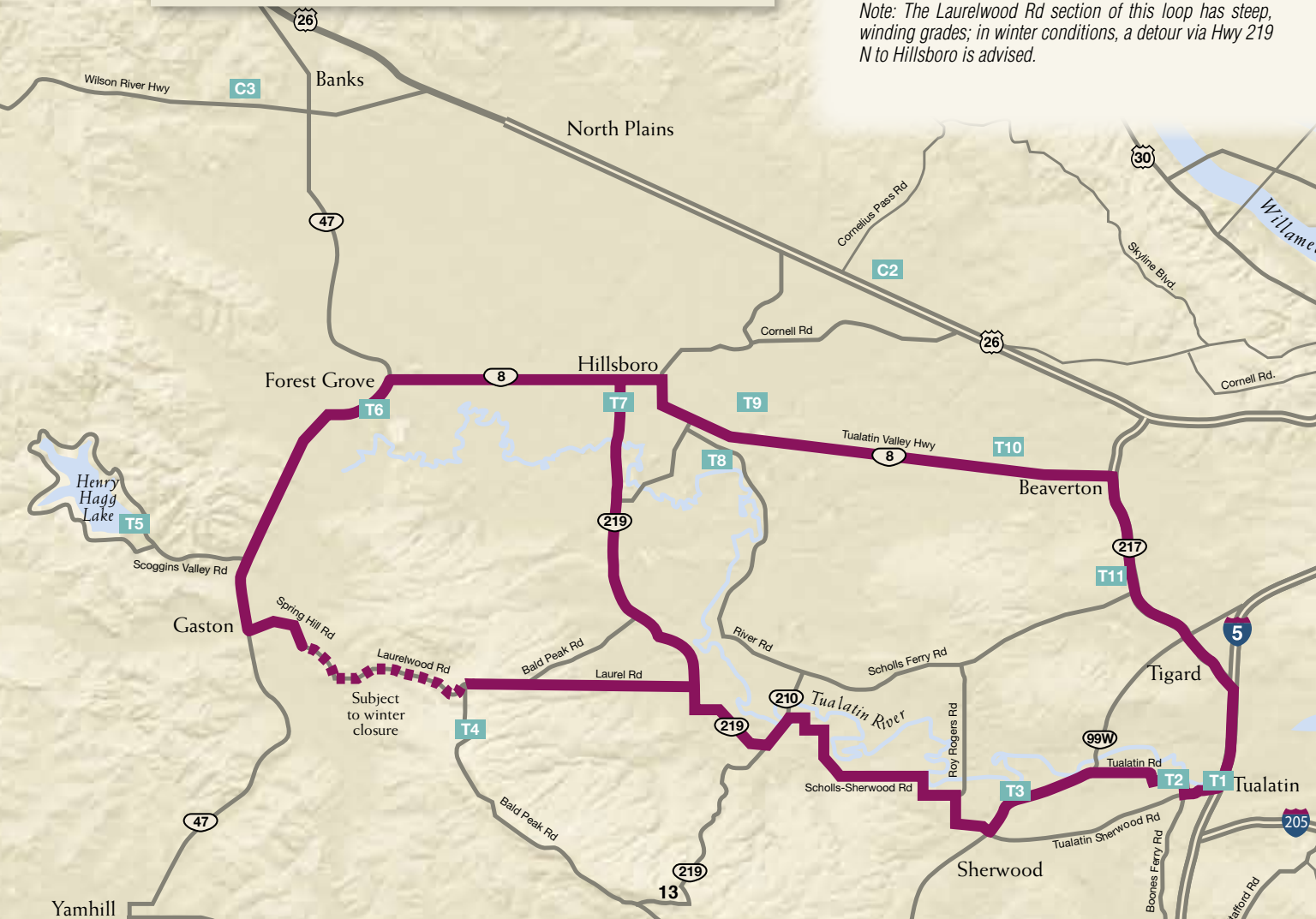
TUALATIN LOOP

The Tualatin River meanders through the heart of this loop, flanked by abundant wetlands in settings that range from the dynamic suburbs that are home to Oregon's high-tech industry, to scenic pastoral landscapes with the forested mountains as a backdrop. You'll find abundant birds, whether you visit suburban parks where well-maintained trails give easy access to a variety of natural habitats, or you range further west to explore the edges of the Coast Range. The loop follows a scenic route that has many turns. Most are evident as the main flow of traffic, but driving directions are included. For a unique and peaceful way to experience the area, try paddling a canoe or kayak along the Tualatin River Canoe Trail from any of 12 access points, including Sites T1, T2, and T8 on this tour loop. See www.tualatinriverkeepers.org for more information, maps, and a schedule of guided canoe trips from March through October.

Loop Sponsor: Washington County Visitors Association

Loop driving directions: From I-5 Exit 289 (Sites T1 and T2), go W on Nyberg Rd 0.1 mi and bear L onto Tualatin-Sherwood Rd. Go 0.5 mi and turn R onto Boones Ferry Rd, which turns W into Tualatin Rd. Follow for 2 mi to Hwy 99W. Turn L onto Hwy 99W and go 3 mi SW to Sherwood (Site T3). Go R on Roy Rogers Rd, then L on Scholls-Sherwood Rd, which zigzags for 6 mi to Hwy 210. Go L 0.5 mi SW on Hwy 210 to Scholls Junction where you turn R on Hwy 219 (SW Hillsboro Hwy). Go NW 2.5 mi on Hwy 219 to Laurel Rd, then W on Laurel Rd for 4.5 mi to Bald Peak Rd (Site T4). Continue W on Laurelwood 3.2 mi. Turn R on Spring Hill Rd and go 1.8 mi. Turn L on Gaston Rd and proceed W 0.8 mi to town of Gaston. Turn R on Hwy 47 and go 7 mi N to Forest Grove (Sites T5 & T6). Turn R on Tualatin Valley Hwy (Hwy 8). Go E for 5 mi to Hillsboro (Site T7). Continue E 9 mi on Hwy 8 to Beaverton (Sites T8-T10) and junction with Hwy 217. Turn R on Hwy 217 and go S 2 mi (Site T11). To return to start of loop, continue 4 mi S to I-5 (Exit 292) to close loop.

Note: The Laurelwood Rd section of this loop has steep, winding grades; in winter conditions, a detour via Hwy 219 N to Hillsboro is advised.



T1. City of Tualatin Wetlands & Art Walk

From I-5 Exit 289 go E or W for the two sites that offer birding access. **For Browns Ferry Park** go 0.5 mi E on Nyberg Lane. For **Tualatin Community Park**, travel W on Tualatin Sherwood Rd to Boones Ferry Rd, N on Boones Ferry Rd to Tualatin Rd; park is on R. Maps are available at Community Services Department office at main park entrance. **Transit:** Both parks are a short walk from the commuter rail stop in Tualatin.

A trail system along the Tualatin River leads to riparian and wetland habitats which attract birds all year round. In winter ducks, wading birds and songbirds frequent the ponds; check tall conifers for Townsend's Warbler. On the river, watch for Bald Eagle, Common Merganser and Belted Kingfisher. A foot bridge across the river connects Tualatin Community Park with Cook Park in Tigard (Site T2) and Durham City Park. The Art Walk follows parts of the Tualatin Trail system and highlights community and private art. The Tualatin Heritage Center is located on the Art Walk adjacent to Sweek Pond. Paddlers' access is at Tualatin Community Park..



Sponsorship available

T2. Cook Park Wetlands

From I-5 Exit 289, go W on Nyberg Rd 0.3 mi. Turn R on SW 72nd Ave. Go 1.4 mi N. Turn L on SW Durham Rd. Go 1.3



American Bittern

PHOTO BY: RIE LUFT

mi and turn L on SW 92nd Ave. Go 0.5 mi to 17005 SW 92nd Ave; Cook Park is at the bottom of the hill. **By foot or bicycle from Site T1:** Use pedestrian/bicycle bridge across the Tualatin River from the N end of Tualatin Community Park. **Transit:** From the commuter rail stop in Tualatin, walk or bicycle via Site T1 over the Tualatin River pedestrian/bike bridge.

These wetlands feature nesting Great Blue Heron and Green Heron, as well as Great Egrets in winter. Northern Harrier and Bald Eagle are often seen, and shorebirds stop by in migration. A spotting scope will help you to see the heron rookery in Durham City Park (across the railroad tracks). Belted Kingfisher and Rough-winged Swallow nest in the bank across from the boat ramp. The Tualatin Riverkeepers (www.tualatinriverkeepers.org) offer public canoe trips from this site each summer. A pedestrian/bike bridge connects to Tualatin Community Park (T1). Other trails give birders access to the Tualatin River and Hedges Creek Marsh in Tualatin.



Sponsorship available

T3. Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge

From junction of Hwy 212 (Tualatin Rd) and Hwy 99W, go SW 0.7 mi to stoplight at Cipole Rd. Continue 0.7 mi and turn R into the refuge, following brown highway guide signs. **Transit:** TriMet bus 12 stops at the main entrance. **Bicycle:** A bike lane on Roy

Rodgers Ln offers access to the refuge boundary, although bicycling is not permitted on the Refuge.

This newest National Wildlife Refuge in the Willamette Valley includes more than 400 ac including rivers, mudflats, seasonal wetlands, grasslands, riparian forest, and forested uplands. Nearly 200 species of birds can be found, including Tundra Swan (winter), Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, waders, shorebirds, and songbirds. The Refuge is open year-round but some trails are closed Oct 1 – April 30. A wildlife photography blind is available by appointment only, and can be reserved by emailing the Refuge (see www.fws.gov/tualatinriver). A new Wildlife Center opened March 2008.



Sponsor: Washington County Visitor Association



Wood Duck

PHOTO BY: STEVE DOWLAN

T4. Bald Peak Scenic Viewpoint

From Scholls Junction (Hwy 210 and Hwy 219) go W, then NW on Hwy 219 (SW Hillsboro Hwy) 2.5 mi to Laurel Rd; then W on Laurel Rd for 4.5 mi to Bald Peak Rd (T4). At 3-way intersection with Laurelwood Rd turn S and go 1.9 mi to park entrance on R. **From Hwy 47 in Gaston** turn E at flashing light onto Main St, which becomes Gaston Rd. Go 0.8 mi and turn R on Spring Hill Rd. Go 1.8 mi then L on Laurelwood. Go E 3.2 mi to intersection with Bald Peak Rd. Turn R and go 1.9 mi up hill to park entrance. GPS 44° 23.742' N, 123° 03.351' W.

The highest point in the Chehalem Mountains offers scenic views of the Coast range and Cascade peaks.



Yellow Warbler

PHOTO BY: STEVE DOWLAN

Steller's Jay and Red-breasted Nuthatch are resident in the mature Douglas-firs, and Varied Thrush and Townsend's Warbler can be found in winter and early spring. The brushy edges of the park lawns can be a magnet for migrant songbirds in spring. In mid- to late April, walk Bald Peak Rd along the ridgeline (being careful of cars) to check the budding big-leaf maples for warblers, vireos, and other migrant songbirds. Clearcut areas below the park are home to nesting White-crowned Sparrows



Sponsorship available

T5. Scoggins Valley Park & Henry Hagg Lake

From MP 23.8 off Hwy 47 between Gaston and Forest Grove (1.7 mi N of Gaston or 4.5 mi S of Forest Grove), turn W on Scoggins Valley Rd, following signs for Hagg Lake, 3 mi further. Be prepared to pay \$5 per car at the entrance booth, March–November.

The 11-mi paved road encircling the lake is a popular bicycle and driving tour route, with overlooks of the lake, trailheads, boat ramps, and picnic areas (some facilities including restrooms are closed in winter). Look for American Dipper in creeks that empty into the lake, Hutton's Vireo, Hermit Thrush, and warblers in the shrubby trees along the shore. Scan the water for waterfowl, gulls, grebes, and the occasional migrant loon. In fall when water levels are drawn down, exposed mudflats can be good for shorebirds, particularly along the west end. The surrounding forested hillsides have limited public access, but a short drive up any of the dirt



Orange-crowned Warbler

PHOTO BY:
PAUL RENTZ

and Cackling Goose flocks for rarer species. Bald Eagle and Red-tail Hawk frequent the snags, and keep your eyes open for Merlin and Peregrine Falcon. Check the wetland across Fern Hill Rd (Taylor Marsh) for Black-crowned Night-Heron in particular.



Sponsor: Oregon Field Ornithologists

T7. Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve

From Hwy 8 in Hillsboro, go S 0.8 mi on First St (which becomes Hwy 219) to the Wetlands Education Center.

Transit: Take Westside light rail to Hatfield Station, which is within 1 mi of the Preserve.

This 725-ac wildlife preserve, located in the 3000-ac Jackson Bottom floodplain of the Tualatin River, is valuable habitat for both migratory and nesting birds. The Preserve is a complex of wet meadows, open marshes, scrub-shrub, mudflat, riparian corridor, upland ash, and Douglas-fir woods. Fall migration brings thousands of wintering waterfowl, including Tundra Swan, Northern Shoveler, and Northern Pintail. The Preserve is home to nesting Bald Eagle, and a Great Blue Heron rookery with over 20 nests. 15 species of shorebirds have been found in migration. The 4.5 miles of trail with five viewing shelters give access to the south end of the Preserve, while protecting sensitive habitat. The Preserve offers 'Lunch with the Birds' every Wednesday at 12pm; binoculars and scopes are available.



Sponsorship available

T8. Rood Bridge Park

From Hwy 8 (SE Tualatin Valley Hwy) at SE 10th Ave in downtown Hillsboro, go SE 1 mi to 24th Ave and turn R. Go 0.2 mi SW and turn L on SE River Rd. Go 0.4 mi and turn R on Rood Bridge Rd. Follow for 0.6 mi to park entrance on L. **Transit:** The park is a 1.2 mi walk from TriMet Bus 57 stop at SE Tualatin Valley Hwy and 24th Ave.

Rood Bridge Park is a 61-ac complex of riparian woods with creek and Tualatin River access. Watch and listen for Pileated Woodpecker, and Black-throated Gray and Orange-crowned Warblers in spring. Green Heron,

Hooded Merganser, and Wood Duck may be seen around and on the ponds. In winter watch and listen for Golden- and Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Winter Wren, and Brown Creeper.



Sponsorship available

T9. Noble Woods Park

From Hwy 8 (Tualatin Valley Hwy) at SE 10th Ave in Hillsboro, go E 0.2 mi on SE Oak St. Turn L on SE 12th Ave. Go N 0.2 mi and turn R on E Main St (first street after crossing railroad).

Go E 2.5 mi (E Main St turns into W Baseline Rd) to park entrance on R.

Transit: TriMet Bus 47 stops at W Baseline & NE 63rd, with direct access to the park.

Noble Woods is a 39-ac urban park with natural, mature forest and meadows, with access to Rock Creek. Look for Pileated Woodpecker, Great Horned and Western Screech-Owl, Brown Creeper and Spotted Towhee along trails, and Varied Thrush in the winter. Trails throughout the park are well marked, and may eventually connect to Rock Creek Greenway (Columbia Loop Site C2).



Sponsorship available

T10. Tualatin Hills Nature Park

From Hwy 8 (Tualatin Valley Hwy) 1.2 mi E of Aloha, turn N on SW Millikan Way. Go 0.4 mi to the Interpretive Center. **Transit:** From TriMet's Westside Light Rail, get off at the Merlo Rd/158th Station. Cross the tracks and turn L onto the asphalt path on Oak Trail, which leads into the



Black-crowned Night Heron



Cinnamon Teal

PHOTO BY: STEVE DOWLAN

park and eventually to the Interpretive Center (about 0.75 mi).

This 222-ac wildlife preserve is in the heart of Beaverton. About 5 mi of trails (1.5 mi paved) lead through mixed forests, creeks, wetlands, ponds, and meadows. The park is home to Winter Wren, Steller's Jay and Brown Creeper, and Varied Thrush in winter. Spring migration brings warblers and flycatchers. Hooded Merganser and Bufflehead are just a few of the waterfowl that can be spotted at Big Pond in the winter, along with Great Blue Heron (year-round) and Green Heron which may winter, but is more often seen in spring and summer.



Sponsorship available

T11. Koll Center Wetlands Park

From Beaverton take Hwy 217 S to Exit 4A. At bottom of ramp turn R on Hall Blvd. Go 0.3 mi W and turn L on Nimbus Ave. Go 0.7 mi S. Turn R on Gemini Dr and follow to the fifth drive on the L. Access to the wetlands is along this drive, which skirts Fanno Creek behind businesses in the Creekside 7 complex. **Transit:** TriMet Bus 76 stops at Hall Blvd and SW Nimbus Dr.

A family of river otters hunt in this wetland regularly in the early morning hours, catching carp. Waterfowl can be seen in abundance year round. In winter look for Green-winged Teal, Common Merganser, Northern Shoveler, Great Blue Heron and Great Egret. Belted Kingfisher are frequent. In spring and summer watch for Green Heron, and watch Cliff, Barn, Violet-green and Tree Swallows feeding over the wetlands.



Sponsorship available

roads may yield forest birds such as Northern Pygmy Owl, Band-tailed Pigeon, and Pileated Woodpecker. A spring evening listening for owls may be rewarded with Western Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Northern Pygmy-owl, and occasionally even Long-eared Owl.



Sponsorship available

T6. Fernhill Wetlands

From the intersection of Hwy 8 and Hwy 47 just E of Forest Grove, go S 0.7 mi on Hwy 47 and turn L onto Fern Hill Rd. Proceed 0.3 mi to gravel parking area on L. **Transit:** TriMet Bus #57 serves central Forest Grove, about 1 mi N of the site along Maple St.

This popular birding site includes three man-made effluent treatment ponds and a series of wetlands. A flat gravel trail leads 1.25 mi around the main pond (Fernhill Lake), with two covered viewing platforms and an information kiosk along the way. Numerous swallows forage and nest here in season, Marsh Wren chatter from the wetlands year-round, and shorebirds turn up in spring and especially fall migration. The wetlands east of the main lake host Tundra Swan and other waterfowl in winter. Scan large Canada



Greater Yellowlegs

PHOTO BY: STEVE DOWLAN

PHOTO BY: KEVIN SMITH