

Register for habitat steward training

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Although Camano Island is already certified as a Community Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation, the Friends of Camano Island Parks (FOCIP) and Snohomish Conservation District continue to strive to keep Camano a wildlife friendly island.

To that end, the organizations are offering another training sessions to expand its team of volunteer habitat stewards who help create, preserve, enhance and restore wildlife habitat.

A habitat steward is someone who is interested in wildlife, ecology, gardening and habitat conservation and who enjoys hands-on learning.

Habitat stewards are resource people who help the community create an environment beneficial for wildlife as well as humans. Specifically, habitat stewards help others create and restore wildlife habitat in backyards, neighborhoods, schoolyards, demonstration gardens, parks and other areas in the community.

FOCIP, SCD and NWF work together to provide learning opportunities for others as well.

As the 10th community wildlife habitat in the nation, Camano Island has 819 certified backyard wildlife habitats, including a schoolyard habitat at Elger Bay Elementary School and demonstration gardens at Four Springs Lake Preserve, Camano Center and Vista/Madrona Fire Station.

Native plant interpretive trails at Camano Island State Park and Elger Bay Preserve are also a product of their efforts.

For a habitat site to become officially certified by the National Wildlife Federation, it must provide four essential habitat elements: a source of food, water, cover, and places for critters to raise their young.

Through the certified wildlife habitat and schoolyard habitat programs of the NWF, more than 176,000 backyards, schoolyards, workplaces, and other community spaces across the nation have been certified since the program began in 1973.

Trainees learn to identify native plants and create their own personal wildlife sanctuaries.

The training begins Feb. 12 at the Camano Multipurpose Center, 141 N East Camano Drive, and continues through March 12.

Evening classes run from 6:30 to 8:45 p.m. and two Saturday field trips are planned on Feb. 21 and March 7, with optional work parties on Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m., at demonstration gardens of Four Springs Lake Preserve and Camano Center. The fee is \$40 for course expenses plus a 30-hour volunteer commitment to assist FOCIP's Camano Wildlife



Wildlife habitat

Habitat stewards help others create and restore wildlife habitat in backyards, neighborhoods, schoolyards, demonstration gardens, parks and other areas in the community.

Habitat Project.

Register at camanowildlifehabitat.org, email camanowildlifehabitat@gmail.com, or call 387-2236.