



# DELBERT HUNTER ARBORETUM and Botanic Garden

Volume 27, Number 1

Spring, 2021

PO Box 604  
Dallas OR 97338

Arboretum Center  
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Dallas, OR 97338  
(503-623-4845)

[www.delberthunterarboretum.org](http://www.delberthunterarboretum.org)

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## Volunteers Needed!!

No experience needed.

We will train.

Every Tuesday

From 9:00 AM to Noon

Please give a gift to  
help Hunter Arboretum  
for Earth Day, April 22

The arboretum grounds  
are open during daylight  
hours.

**Delbert Hunter  
Arboretum is entirely  
maintained by  
volunteers and  
supported by your  
contributions.**

## WHAT A WINTER!



*Flume Trail Junction January 13, 2021*

It has already been quite year for the arboretum along with the residents of Dallas. On the night of January 12 into the morning of January 13, flood waters entered the arboretum. The lower part of the arboretum is designed to take in some of the water flow during a flood to help mitigate damage to homes along the creek. The water flowed in under the south bridge as well as in through a low area along the west portion of the creek trail. Much of the area between the flume and creek was inundated, including the pond to just short of the entrance. The flood peaked in the early hours of the morning. By dawn it had already receded substantially leaving behind debris, uprooted trees, and washed out trails.



*Overflowing pond*

Cleanup began soon after on our Tuesday workdays to smooth out trails, clean up benches, pick up debris, and fill in soil by the log that had moved. We also worked on several trees that had been partially or completely uprooted by the flood. Some were removed while others were pruned and propped up. A major task remaining was replacing trail dressing on the trails, but we weren't quite ready for that job.

Toward the end of January there was a snowstorm. The arboretum was a beautiful winter wonderland. Fortunately it did not cause much damage, but the worst was definitely yet to come



*Arboretum center roof pierced*

One month after the flood, the ice storm hit. February 12 brought us freezing rain which accumulated layer upon layer of ice on trees throughout the arboretum and our beautiful little city. Over the next day or two we all listened as the trees began cracking and breaking under the weight of all the ice. We kept our neighbors and friends in our thoughts reaching out to help where we could amongst major storm damage and lengthy power outages. Like many with trees large and small on their property, the arboretum suffered a substantial amount of damage.



*Cypress blocking Dogwood Trail*

Initially we were very cautious in exploring the damage to look for overhead dangers; however, a small group walked all the trails to

evaluate the damage. With approximately 30 trees with small to very large broken limbs hung up in the upper canopy over the trails, we closed the arboretum and scheduled two arborists come in for estimates. Currently we have an arborist scheduled for May 3 and 4 to remove the dangerous widow makers as well as making corrective cuts to damaged trees.

Since our initial evaluation, our group of volunteers has been working tirelessly on our Tuesday workdays to prune, cut up, pick up and remove tree debris since the ice storm. We've cut down numerous dead or severely damaged trees that were within the capabilities of our volunteers and available equipment. There are many trees with damaged branches that we have been able to prune. Several smaller trees and shrubs have been propped up using pieces of wood. Our hope is that their root systems will recover enough over time for those plants to survive and thrive. We look forward to the beginning of May when the arborist will be clearing out the overhead dangers to make it safe for visitors again. In the meantime we continue to work on pickup and cleanup. We are very thankful for our regular group of volunteers with all their various skills along with a couple new helpers this spring. Tina, one of our new volunteers has loaned us her utility trailer which, in addition to our regular equipment and trailers, has helped tremendously with picking up the masses of tree debris.

This year we will be using some of the abundant free woodchips available from the storm damage to top dress the trails, especially in the most damaged trails in the lower areas. Next year we will revert back to our normal trail dressing. Additionally, we will be renting a chipper to recycle some of our tree debris back into trail dressing or mulch around plants. Once the arboretum is safe from overhead dangers we will be looking for volunteer groups to help with spreading trail dressing and other maintenance in the arboretum.

With the arborist work and roof repairs due to storm damage, we also have a hole in our budget. We will appreciate any donation you can make to help us cover our added expenses. Thank you.

## What Keeps Making Holes in My Yard?

In the Willamette Valley, critters leaving mounds or holes in your yard are most likely voles, moles, or gophers. Here's how to tell which burrower might be visiting you.

**Voles:** Voles are rodents, sometimes referred to as field mice. They live underground but forage along the surface, eating tender grasses, root vegetables, and bulbs. Voles do not leave mounds. The entrances to their tunnels are flat round holes about 3 inches wide and open. Voles will make short tunnels, but mostly their burrow consists of channels along the soil surface in intersecting patterns like branches of tree. Vole populations rise and fall in 3 to 5 year cycles. They are territorial and drive off rivals. Voles live about 12 months, but a breeding pair can raise ten litters in a year. A bloom in population is typically followed by a dramatic fall, which restarts the cycle. They are prey items for many species, especially loved by owls.

**Moles:** Moles are not rodents and they do not eat plants. Moles' diet consists of worms, grubs, and insects. If you have a mole, it means you have rich soil, which harbors abundant insect life. Moles are solitary creatures that prefer loamy moist soil and are most active in early morning or evening, in spring and fall. Their tunnels are about 10" below the soil surface. They make volcano shaped entrance mounds with a plugged hole in the center. The soil from a mole hill will feel soft and very fine. Mole populations range from 1 per 6 acres, or as many as 5 in 1 acre. They breed only once per year and usually do not have more than a few babies. Roots of plants may be damaged by tunneling, and mole hills are unsightly to some, but of the three burrowers in this article, moles are typically less problematic.

### **Gophers:**

Gophers are rodents weighing about a pound on average. They have cheek pouches similar to hamsters. They spend little time as possible

at the surface, stuffing their pouches with nuts, seeds, tubers, roots, and other vegetation, before hurrying back to their burrows. They prefer drier sandy soils in woodlands and meadows but can become a nuisance in lawns and gardens because of their prolific burrows, and large appetites. A common misconception is that gophers live in colonies like prairie dogs. They do not. Gophers live alone except in the case of a mother with babies. Tunnels are about 3 inches wide and 6 to 12 inches below ground. A chamber is made for nesting and food storage, and can be as much as 6 feet deep, depending on soil type. Entrance to a tunnel will look like a horseshoe shaped mound with a depression in the center. The mounded soil will feel coarse and have clumps. Gophers are an important prey item, with a 2 or 3 year life span.

*Internet resources: National Geographic, Old Farmer's Almanac, Wikipedia, and NW Wildlife Foundation*

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*In spite of the damage, spring is here!*



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