



*To save the orcas, we must save the salmon.  
To save the salmon, we must save our creeks.  
To do that, we must change how we live along  
the Chambers-Clover Creeks*

## Chambers-Clover Watershed Council

*Protect Restore Enhance*  
[www.piercecountywa.org/ccwc](http://www.piercecountywa.org/ccwc)



### Backyard Habitat Workshop

**October 6, Saturday**

9:30 – 11:30 am

Lakewood Community Center, Room 103  
9112 Lakeview Drive, Lakewood, WA

*RSVP Requested: E-mail* Elise at  
[TASrestoration@gmail.com](mailto:TASrestoration@gmail.com)

### Creek Restoration

**Learn how plantings in our neighborhoods, backyards and public spaces can help with salmon recovery and bring bees and bird songs back into our community.**

**Experts at the morning work shop will discuss:**

- Plants that are attractors to bring your backyard, schoolyard & private spaces alive with birds.
- How to make a rain garden that improves the nearby creek's ground water.

# Restoring Backyards Along Chambers & Clover Creeks

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audubon  
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*People meet to clean Clover Creek to prepare for an increase in salmon runs. Learn how you can help improve water quality without leaving your backyard.*

## **Water quality program to increase wildlife in neighborhoods along Clover Creek.**

"With dam removal still a few years away, it's time to kick off the next phase in creek restoration," said Al Schmauder. "Time for neighbors to pitch in and improve their creek habitat for fish, birds and wildlife."

Schmauder is chair of the Watershed Stewardship Committee and long-time advocate to restore this urban creek and remove Chambers Dam. "We're fortunate to add Tahoma Audubon to our team. They bring years of experience in environmental education."

Audubon is reaching out to people in neighborhoods along Chambers Creek, Lake Steilacoom and Clover Creek to help people make their backyards friendly to birds, bees, and other wildlife. "With just a few changes, people can attract birds and bring a little splash and sparkle to the creek."

Public funds have been spent on opening fish passages. Now it is time for neighbors to take a second look at their own yards, to see how they could become better habitat for fish and birds.

Chinook salmon cannot get over the Chambers Bay Dam. However, Coho and Chum still spawn in Chambers and Leach creeks near Bridgeport Way. Unfortunately, when spawning adults return, seals and sea lions gather at the dam to feed on them.

A study to remove the dam is underway. As a natural creek it would increase the survival rate of salmon

and increase the productiveness of the estuary. In the mean time, Audubon Society and other groups have set goals to improve the salmon habitat for when the dam is gone and fish runs can return to the watershed.

Over the years the county has made substantial changes to street drains and fish passages to allow fish to return to spawn. Community groups have planted shrubs in parks and cleaned up garbage and debris. Now it's time for neighbors to finish the job by improving their yards.

The goal is to improve the water quality in our lakes and streams. The bonus is an increase in backyard birds and improved wildlife corridors along the creeks. Read on to find out how to improve water quality and bring a little birdsong to your neighborhood.



**Become a creek steward!** *Join these and other stewards as they remove invasive ivy from the banks of Clover Creek. They are preparing for restoration work later in the spring, when they will plant native trees and shrubs.*

**Join  
Lakewood City Parks &  
Chambers-Clover Watershed Council  
Make a Difference Day**

**October 27, 2018 at Springbrook Park.  
Call: Cameron Fairfield 253 983 7827**



*In partnership with the National Wildlife Federation, Tahoma Audubon is sponsoring a training class for people interested in making their yards into healthy habitats.*

"I moved recently from Chicago, and a few changes in yard plantings drew new migrating birds," said Elise Harnois. "Feeders and water sources help, and native shrubs attract some birds I've never seen before."

Native flowering plants are healthier than the sweet water in hummingbird feeders. Tubular flowers hold the most nectar, and are particularly attractive. These also add color to the yard: columbine, daylilies, and lupine, also foxglove and many annuals like petunias.



*Learn more about colorful fuchsia and other shrubs and plants that attract birds to your backyard at the October 6 workshop at Lakewood Community Center. A native plant specialist will answer your gardening questions. You can also sign up for a series of habitat classes from the National Wildlife Federation, to be held at the Audubon Center in University Place later in November.*

**Experts to lead workshop group sessions.**

Tahoma Audubon Society is the host of the October 6 workshop and has invited experts from several organizations. Restoring the creek requires varied skills. Volunteers will be the key to success, and there are many opportunities that will fit each person's talents and interests.

**Habitat Classes** The National Wildlife Federation contribution to creek restoration is to provide homeowners and others with planting and other information to attract wildlife to your healthy yard. In a four session weekly class you can learn all you need to know.

**Rain Gardens:** The Pierce Conservation District has a specialist who will custom design a rain garden for your home. Rainfall that flows into rain gutters is distributed through the garden plants and eventually filters into the ground water. Even if you are miles from the nearest creek, this contributes to the health of the stream.



**Creek Stewards:** Al Schmauder with the Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed Council leads a group of Creek stewards that keep the creek clear of invasive plants and trash, keep fish passages open, and plant trees to shade the creek. This fall they will replant creek shoreline near Springwood Park in Lakewood. Volunteers are needed.

**Butterflies and Native Plants:** Audubon Society has two resident experts to meet with you. Nell Batker will supply a list of native plants which require less water during our dry summer months and survive the wet winter with little care.

**Bird Surveys:** Learn how to participate in a survey of birds in your backyard. Online survey method will track changes in yards and neighborhoods to reflect improvements along the creek.

## Salmon return to Chambers & Clover Creeks.



*Fish breathe the water and scent a hint of their birthplace waters. Each of our homes in the watershed makes a water contribution to our local creeks in many small ways. Learn what you can do to improve water quality at our October 6 workshop.*

Each winter several salmon runs pass through Chamber's Bay Dam to spawn. **Around Thanksgiving the first Chum salmon start up creek** as the winter rains fill it with water. They stop around Bridgeport Way to spawn in gravels around Leach Creek near Kobayashi Park. Chum only stay 120 days and leave while the creek is still high. They're fussy about water quality. Any improvements up stream will make a difference. Many streets in University Place and Fircrest drain toward the creek. Many new homes crowd up to the creek buffers for many miles.

**Coho salmon appear in December** with winter rains. They're great jumpers and leap over Steilacoom Lake's fish ladder. One great place to view them is at Springbrook Park in Lakewood.

Coho spawn near Springwood, but many travel across JBLM through a 165 foot long pipe under the runway. They navigate by tasting the water for that hint of their home waters.

Near Spanaway Loop Road, most Coho stop in the wetlands. Fry appear after 120 days, and stick around for a year before spring rains flush them out to the sea. Each winter the fish show their desire to live in our suburbs. Improving water quality is not overwhelming," said Kirk Kirkland. "It just requires the community to pay attention to the water that runs off their yards and roofs and understand how it travels to the nearest stream."

### What you can do to improve water quality

1. Limit the use of pesticides on the yard and garden.
2. Wash your car on the grass. Watering the grass, not the street, keeps pollutants out of our streams
3. Pick up pet waste which becomes toxic when it mixes with ground water.
4. Capture water off your roof for use in gardens that are free of chemicals that may affect ground water.

## Bees & butterflies bring a flutter of life to your garden.



*Pollinators play a big role in preparing your breakfast. One out of every three mouthfuls of food is a product of honeybee pollination -- from fruit on your cereal to the coffee beans in your cup.*

**Bees are dying at a rapid rate.** In 2015, 42% of the bee colonies collapsed in the United States. Our food supply is at serious risk, according to scientists from Natural Resources Defense Council. Serious declines have been reported in both managed honeybee colonies and wild populations.

Recovery of urban creeks, adjacent habitat, and bee populations begins at the neighborhood level.

**Pesticides:** These chemicals are designed to kill insects, but do not discriminate between beneficial insects and pests. Neonicotinoids are worse for bees than others.

**Loss of habitat:** As rural areas become urban, the patches of green space that remain are often stripped of all weeds and their flowers, which bees rely on for food.

### What you can do for bees and pollinators

- 1) Anything from a container garden to a large lawn can create a pesticide-free space for pollinators, native bees and other beneficial insects, and also invite birds to your yard.
- 2) Purchase native plants that aren't pretreated with pesticides when you shop for seeds and flowers.
- 3) Bees need flowers that bloom at different times of the year, providing a year-round supply of food. At the workshop you can learn which ones will grow in your yard.
- 4) Bees also need water. Water features and bird baths add function and beauty to your garden design. Water is a great attractor for bird, bees and butterflies!

**It's time to help out the struggling pollinators that do so much for us at mealtime.**