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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Celebrate Mother Earth and Mother's Day All in One Weekend
10th Annual Backyard Wildlife Festival theme: "Love Your Mother"

Friday, April 16, 2010 [Tukwila, Wash.] – This year marks the 10th anniversary of Tukwila's Backyard Wildlife Festival on Saturday, May 8 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., with the annual Certified Backyard Habitat Garden Tour following from 3-5 p.m.

From a few dozen attendees in early years to hundreds today, the Backyard Wildlife Festival is always the second Saturday in May, coinciding with International Migratory Bird Day. This year's festival theme "Love your Mother" is intended to renew people's commitment to the natural environment and to foster growth and support of native wildlife found in our own backyards. Nearly always falling on the same weekend as Mother's Day as well, the festival makes a perfect place for a Mother's Day weekend outing or to pick-up Mother's Day gifts.

Highlights at this year's festival start with the Ribbon Cutting for Tukwila's newest park – Codiga Park – at 9 a.m.

"The park site is just a few minutes away from the festival grounds, making it easy to attend each of the events." explains Tracy Gallaway, Tukwila's Volunteer and Events Superintendent. "Attendees at the ribbon cutting will also receive a special button that will give them access to a free gift at the Backyard Wildlife Festival."

Beginning at 10 a.m., the popular guided bird tour along the Duwamish River will be led by Carol Schulz of the Rainier Audubon Society. Attendees can learn about vegetable gardening from long-time Northwest gardener Ed Hume at 11:30 a.m., followed by the presentation "Do Garden Remedies Really Work?" by Linda Chalker-Scott at 1 p.m. Seattle Tilth will demonstrate composting at home at 2 p.m. as well.

The Certified Backyard Habitat Garden Tour begins at 3 p.m., just as the festival wraps up. Organizers are looking to expand the garden tour that usually includes four to five gardens certified by the National Wildlife Foundation (NWF) within Tukwila. A self-guided map will be available at the festival and on the festival's Web site. However, a garden tour shuttle will be available to reduce the number of vehicles driving around town and prevent parking problems at each stop.

A unique method to the festival's set-up has always been to incorporate activities for kids to learn about sustainability, recycling, wildlife and more, right alongside their parents. This year's kid features include: Junk Chime, a recycled materials music-making station; stilt-walker Janet Raynor; the festival Passport Program to engage kids with educational exhibitors; birdhouse-making area; and arts and crafts. Attendees will enjoy these other activities throughout the day:

live music, arts and crafts vendors, educational exhibitors, a kid's zone, native plant sales, food, and more.

The Backyard Wildlife Festival is located at the Tukwila Community Center, 12424 42nd Ave S in Tukwila – just south of Seattle's Boeing Field. The Codiga Park Ribbon Cutting is located at 12535 - 50th Place S in Tukwila. There is no on-site parking for the ribbon cutting, so free shuttles will run from the Tukwila Community Center to Codiga Park.

It may come of surprise to some, but the City of Tukwila became the first city in the State of Washington to become a Certified Community Wildlife Habitat by the NWF in May 2002 and just the fourth in the country to achieve such certification.

To become a certified community, a city must adhere to NWF guidelines including providing habitat for wildlife throughout the community, incorporating efforts to educate the community about sustainable gardening practices, and organize workshops and events about gardening for wildlife and more. After receiving certification, the Tukwila model spawned similar projects in nearby communities around the region. The next certification in the state didn't come until three years later in April 2005.

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