



The Acorn

Serving the South Sound Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society Spring 2009

Chapter Elections in Fall 2009 Chair Position Open

After serving as chair of the South Sound Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society since 2002, Anna Thurston has notified the Executive Committee of her resignation effective May 4, 2009. She plans to continue working with our chapter, the Native Plant Salvage Alliance, and as a Pierce County Trustee with the Cascade Land Conservancy, while giving additional focus to her business, Advanced Botanical Resources, Inc. We very much appreciate Anna for her years of service and for what she has accomplished for our chapter, for WNPS and for our community.

Vice Chair Reba Olsen, will serve as Acting Chair pending update of chapter bylaws and elections this fall. A Nominations Committee has been formed to solicit interested candidates for the chapter positions. If you are interested in serving, contact Reba at reba.so@comcast.net. Watch for details in the September 2009 *Acorn*.



Stewards Celebrate Tacoma Habitats with Training and Community Restoration

As of March 27, nineteen more volunteers completed stewardship training originated by the Washington Native Plant Society. The latest offering of this multi-county program, was arranged in Pierce Co. under a contract developed by Anna Thurston, on behalf of the WNPS, in collaboration with the Green Tacoma Partnership, the Cascade Land Conservancy, the City of Tacoma, Metro Parks Tacoma and the Greater Tacoma Community Foundation, with funding acquired from the Pierce Conservation District. This class included a number of Metro Parks Tacoma staff interested in improving their restoration skills and sixteen volunteers ranging in age from their early-20s to late-60s, who have committed to return community services at five student-designed habitat restoration projects in Tacoma open spaces as an element of their training.

This class of stewards joins over 475 people trained as Native Plant Stewards in King, Snohomish and Pierce Counties since 1996. Participating stewards receive ten weeks of intensive training at no monetary cost. In return, each participant agrees to provide 100 hours of service to the community and to the WNPS. The 100 hours of time and energy to fulfill the requirements of the ten-week training and the associated field trips are, in their own right, significant.

Since the program has been implemented,

stewards throughout Washington have provided over 77,000 hours of service to their communities at over 58,600 restoration projects. The training provides grounding in a broad range of topics including native plant ecosystems and identification, restoration planning and techniques, plus outreach and management of volunteers – all essential to the effective implementation of community restoration programs. Projects undertaken include restoration planning, permitting and implementation with numerous community organizations at Oak Tree Park, the Tacoma Nature Center at Snake Lake, First Creek, the Meadow Park Golf Course and the Kia Kaha wetland owned by Tacoma Community College.

Congratulations to our new stewards – Albert Styers, Andy Prince, Cyndy Dillon, Dan Fear, Derek Cabellon, Halli Hemley, Julie Kerrigan, Kelda Miller, Mark Smythe, Mary Henry, Noel Farevaag, Patricia Menzies, Trish Willebrand, and Tyler Stewart. Reba Olsen, a steward from 2006, also attended the class, assisted and has committed to another 100 hours.

As the stewards begin carrying out their projects, we will post the dates of their activities on the WNPS state website, www.wnps.org. We encourage WNPS members and friends to volunteer their assistance in support of the stewards' restoration efforts.

**“Wild Harvest: Grazing for Edible Plants of the Pacific Northwest” with Terry Domico
Wednesday, May 13, 7 p.m., Rausch Auditorium, University of Puget Sound**

As author Terry Domico notes in his book, *Wild Harvest*, food itself means basic animal existence, but wild food is food for our imagination as well as our bodies. Terry recounts the unique experience of “standing in some forgotten field pulling roots or eating tender spring leaves” as his body connects to the dim past while his mind races to the future. He calls this phenomenon, which springs from the satisfaction of hand-to-mouth experience, “grazing.” With colorful slides and amusing commentary Terry will guide potential grazers to some wild, edible plants found around the Pacific Northwest. Terry is well known for his regional ecological assessment work for the conservation and enhancement of critical native plant and wildlife habitats. His articles and photographs have appeared nationally in *Natural History*, *Smithsonian*, *National Wildlife* and other magazines, and in publications by the National Geographic Society. He is also author of a number of books including *Wild Harvest* and *Natural Areas of the San Juan Islands*.

See You at the October Meetings

Because plant lovers like to botanize while the days are long, chapter meetings are not scheduled during summer months. WNPS South Sound Chapter gatherings generally occur from October through May: on the **second Monday of the month (in Olympia)** and the **second Wednesday of the month (in Tacoma)**. The fall meetings will be announced in our next addition of the Acorn newsletter, arriving in September.

Chapter meetings start at 7:00 p.m. and consist of a quick preview of local activity announcements and followed by a presentation that lasts 45 minutes to over an hour. Our topics are geared to attract and speak to neophytes and amateurs, as well as to “dyed-in-the-wool,” committed botanists. Members and the public are invited to attend all free presentations. For more information about our programs or suggestions for topics, contact: John Neorr at (253) 631-4727, or by e-mail at neorrj@yahoo.com.

We hope to see you (and your guests) at future gatherings! Have a good summer botanizing.

Plant and Seed Sales

**Kruckeberg Botanic
Garden Foundation Mother’s Day
Sale and Open House**

May 8, 9, and 10. The MsK Rare and Native Plant Nursery’s annual Mother’s Day Sale has been a tradition for 22 years. Offering a diverse selection of unique exotic and hard-to-find native plants, the nursery’s best selection of the year is available during the sale. There are three days of activities. Friday, May 8, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.: Plant sale all day. Satellite parking at Richmond Beach Congregational Church, 1512 NW195th St, Shoreline. Saturday, May 9, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.: In addition to the plant sale, enjoy kid’s activities all day and free garden tours at 1 p.m. Satellite parking at Syre Elementary, 19545 12th Ave NW, Shoreline. Sunday, May 10, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.: In addition to the plant sale, enjoy kid’s activities all day and free garden tours at 1 p.m. Satellite parking at Syre Elementary, 19545 12th Ave NW, Shoreline. All sale proceeds support the Kruckeberg Botanic Garden. Call the garden at (206) 546-1281 for more information.

**Central Puget Sound Chapter Spring Plant Sale
May 9, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

The Central Puget Sound Chapter of WNPS will hold its annual Spring Plant Sale again this year at the Bellevue Botanical Garden, 12001 Main St, Bellevue. The CPS Chapter Spring Plant Sale always has an outstanding selection of native trees, shrubs and other native plants. The plant list will be posted on the WNPS website. Serious native plant gardeners are advised to come early for the best selection of native plants and plant books. For directions, go to http://www.wnps.org/chapter_info/chapter_sales.html.



A Story Before I Go... Anna Thurston

Every time I shut off the water in the shower I experience a moment of quasi-spiritual prayer. That glub-glubbing drip from the showerhead as the water siphons backwards into the pipeline, while the rest is drawn down and out by gravity - into my awaiting palm. I absolutely love the feel of the drops splashing on the center of my palm!

It's like a potent massage, and for me it consistently carries a message: Aren't we fortunate to live in a place and time where plumbing delivers clean, tempered water to a safe and private location in our homes, where we can enjoy the soothing benefits for relatively extended periods of time?

I may have this reverence out of an awareness of other cultures that also had it good (the Romans and Babylonians come to mind). These ancient cultures enjoyed similar bathing and garden amenities, and yet, they no longer exist. (Talk about extinction... it happens to human culture, too.)

Why discuss water in the WNPS newsletter? Why consider anything other than native plants? Because water is elemental to the larger picture of plants, whether in urban, suburban, rural or natural areas (restored and otherwise). It is the life source that sustains our plants and helps them thrive or shrivel. At the same time, it's easy to overlook aspects of water that have less to do with plant growth and more to do with erosion (or lack thereof) through and around the places we are planting, or ways that water can move into and through different soil textures.

Effective soil preparation is another topic that is elemental to the success of our efforts with native plants. And like water, soil preparation requires an understanding of the plants we hope to cultivate, as well as the soil organisms that we hope will collaborate with our sweat-producing efforts. Without a basic understanding of how these features of the landscape interact and affect our installations, we may not be successful in the planting and management of the natives with which we hope to replace invasive weeds. And I haven't even gotten to the part of the program that focuses on plant ID...

All of this talk of soil and water is the technical stuff that can be taught in schools, or to our stewards. The Washington Native Plant Society is good at providing short bursts of outreach that end in hands-on experiences, which provide the kind of real-world experience that no amount of schooling can provide. However, there is one more ingredient necessary to bring our current story into focus, while imbuing it with potential meaning: community.

In this respect, "it takes a village" to fully realize

the kind of effort required to do more than remove the trash, the transients, the crime and other bad stuff that makes our open spaces the best places for invasives to take root. The WNPS and our various partners are fortunate to have both capable and committed native plant stewards at our disposal, not only to train, but also to orchestrate their newly educated energies toward community-level habitat restoration. If we can churn out more of these dedicated individuals we will really be on our way toward battling the growing masses of invasive plants on all of our horizons.

Some of these individuals come to us with a sense of duty on their minds. Others come to us with voids to fill in their daily routine or résumés to build. Along the way, each of our stewards learns an introductory version of the various techniques involved in habitat restoration (plant ID, ecology of plant communities in Western Washington and plant morphology, to name only a few of the numerous topics covered). It is my hope that we remember to draw attention to the value of the community that they can gain along the way, and how they can successfully move within it to apply more of what they have learned along the way.

Like the water that I appreciate during and after my showers, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work with these impassioned people. The knowledge that I see them soaking up is as important to me as the community that they create during classes, and extend to the larger community beyond. Any skills that we can impart to them along the way that will help them go there are blessings that will help us fulfill our mission as an organization. Aren't we lucky to know native plant stewards and have them in our midst!

As chair for the South Sound Chapter since 2002, I have also been lucky to know and work with a community of very dedicated individuals. Therefore, it is with reluctance that I have decided to open the door to a different path for myself. Management of the chapter has been engaging and fulfilling for me, and I'm glad to see that we are thriving and even growing in the midst of a shrinking economy. I have many people to thank for the support that they have provided along the way, especially people who have made more of the organization. There are others who have done important work to create community within our ranks. Just as plants need to grow in association with each other, so do people.

With this retirement announcement I call on all of you for your participation in the magic of the WNPS community, and in the magic of nature in all of its facets. Won't you join us? --A--

More Volunteer Opportunities

Pierce County Biodiversity Alliance BioBlitz 2009, May 15-16

The PCBA is looking for volunteers to assist in this year's BioBlitz. The BioBlitz is a 24-hour intensive survey of the flora and fauna of an area. Volunteers are teamed with experts to survey areas for a variety of taxa including mammals, birds, amphibians, invertebrates and flora. This year's target area is designated as Region 10E of the Nisqually Management Area. It is located near Roy, just east of Fort Lewis, and is dominated by wetlands, flood channels, oak woodlands and remnant prairies. For more information or to volunteer, contact Krystal Kyer at kkyer@tacomaudubon.org or (253) 232-9978.

South Sound Activities

South Sound Chapter Project Updates: For information or to get on the e-mail list for any or all of our projects, contact Bill Brookreson, b.brookreson@comcast.net, 253-564-1137; for more information, look for "volunteer opportunities" at the chapter's website at <http://www.southsoundchapterwnps.org/>

Conservation Committee: A Conservation Committee is still in the formative stages looking for a chair (or co-chairs) and definition of specific issues to track.

Plant Sale: We are very pleased that Bonnie Blessing has volunteered to help coordinate a plant sale, with sufficient help, this fall. If you would like to get involved, contact Bonnie at bonnie.blessing@gmail.com or 360-943-6629. It cannot happen without your help.

Restoration Projects: Restoration Projects are underway in both Olympia and Tacoma. The Olympia project is removal of invasives, mostly blackberry, and planting of native plants this fall along a part of the Woodland Trail. The first workdays were in March and will continue through the summer. May workdays are, Thursday, May 14, and Saturday, May 23, both 9 a.m.-1 p.m. For information, contact bill Brookreson.

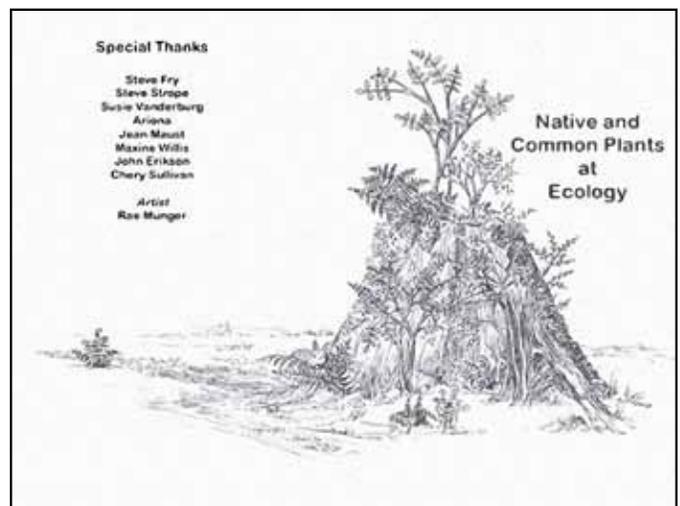
We have two sites in Tacoma – one at Point Defiance Park and one at the Tacoma Nature Center. The May scheduled workday for the Nature Center removing invasives, primarily English ivy, along a part of the hillside loop trail is May 15, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Saturday workdays are scheduled for May 16, June 20, August 15, and September 19 from 9-11 a.m. The project is in support of our Washington Native Plant Society's Natural Area Stewards. For information, contact Cyndy Dillon at cpdillon@earthlink.net or at (253) 847-4003.

Join in and have fun!

Chapter Purchases a "Weed Wrench." Anyone dealing with invasive removal of holly, cherry laurel, Scot's broom or similar woody invasives will appreciate the use of a weed wrench which allows you to pull them by the roots with relative ease. The chapter has purchased a medium-sized weed wrench that is available for use on restoration projects. To check out the tool for the day, contact Bill Brookreson at (253) 564-1137 or b.brookreson@comcast.net.

New Trail Signs, Pamphlet identify Native Plants at the State Department of Ecology Lacey Campus

On January 13, the Department of Ecology's Native Plant Interpretive Trail Committee held a grand opening for its interpretive plant trail on the Lacey campus of DOE. The opening of the trail was the culmination of eight months of work in their spare time by a committee of Ecology employees. The committee created signage as well as a publication to educate employees and the public on the identification and use of native plants on the campus. Pamphlets are available at kiosks at both ends of the trail. Tours will be offered to celebrate Native Plant Appreciation week.



Native Plant Resources

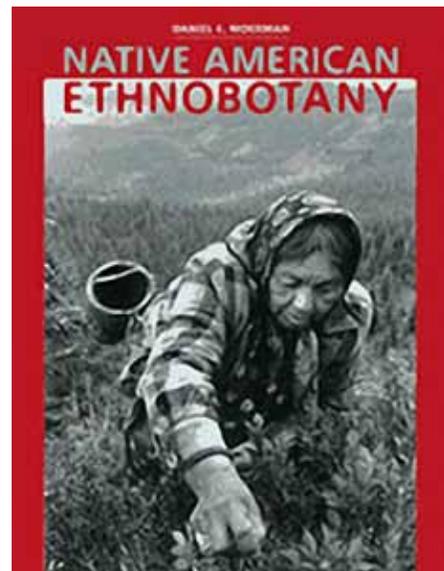
***Native American Ethnobotany* by Daniel E. Moerman**

Timber Press, 1998, \$79.95. *Native American Ethnobotany* represents the culmination of 25 years of work by Anthropologist Daniel E. Moerman. Moerman has collected information on over 44,000 uses of more than 4,000 plants by Native Americans for medicine, food, fiber, dyes and other uses in perhaps the most comprehensive study available of native American ethnobotany. This massive study, 987 pages, is an important study for anyone interested in ethnobotany.

To quote from the book, "Native American peoples had a remarkable amount of knowledge of the world in which they lived. In particular, they knew a great deal about plants. There are in North America 31,566 kinds (species, subspecies, varieties, and so on) of vascular plants: seed plants, including the flowering plants (angiosperms) and conifers (gymnosperms), and spore-bearing plants, including the ferns, club mosses, spike mosses, and horsetails (pteridophytes). North America is defined here as North America north of Mexico, and Hawaii and Greenland. American Indians used 2874 of these species as medicines, 1886 as foods, 230 as dyes, and 492 as fibers (for weaving, baskets, building materials, and so on). They used 1190 species for a broad range of other purposes as well, classified in this book as Other. All told, they found useful purpose for 3923 kinds of vascular plants. Native American Ethnobotany also contains information on 106 kinds of nonvascular plants (algae, fungi, lichens, liverworts, and mosses). The data for nonvascular plants are much less complete than those for vascular plants, however."

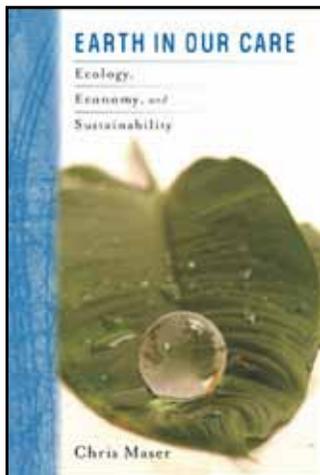
The book has great potential for those interested in individual tribes as well. Under each plant name, usages are categorized first by the five main categories—Drug, Food, Fiber, Dye, Other—in that order. Each of the five main categories is next divided alphabetically by tribe.

Moerman is the William E. Sturton Professor of Anthropology at the University of Michigan and widely recognized for his teaching, scholarship and professional accomplishments. *Native American Ethnobotany* is a winner of the Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries literature award. The book is available on the Timber press website or, at a significant discount, from Amazon.com or from the Central Puget Sound chapter book sale or at Amazon.com for \$42.17.



***Earth In Our Care: Ecology, Economy, and Sustainability* by Chris Maser**

Rutgers University Press, 276 pp. Scheduled for release July 15, 2009; \$49.95. Those of you already acquainted with Chris Maser will certainly be interested in his new book scheduled for release in July. Maser is a prolific writer having authored or co-authored 31 books and over 250 papers. Maser has over 40 years experience in ecological research. The challenges facing society in this study range from global warming to general environmental degradation caused by unsustainable use of the planet's resources. Maser is one of the global thinkers trying to get his hands around how to address these problems.



To quote from the book description, "As Chris Maser puts it, fulfilling our obligation as environmental trustees—of Earth as a biological living trust—requires fundamental changes in our social consciousness and cultural norms. To meet these challenges, we need to fundamentally reframe our way of thinking. Instead of arbitrarily delineating our seamless world into discrete parts, we need a more holistic approach—one that acknowledges the interconnectedness of causes and effects, actions and consequences. Knowledge of *systems* is essential if we are to pass a habitable, healthy planet to future generations. Proper trusteeship is critical to maintaining the Earth's ability to produce, nourish, and maintain life. Without it, we risk becoming the authors of our own demise."

Though one may agree or disagree, Maser's book will provide food for thought. A review of the Table of Contents will whet your appetite including: Our Ever-changing Landscape Patterns; the Never-ending Stories of Cause, Effect, and Change; and Repairing Ecosystems. For more information, visit Maser's website at www.chrismaser.com or pre-order a copy of the book at Amazon.com.

Field Trips

With no currently scheduled field trips by the chapter for the summer months, we wanted to present you some ideas for botanizing on your own or in a group.

Taking the High Road – Visiting Hart’s Pass

If you are looking for a spectacular wildflower hike in July or August, Hart’s Pass may be for you. Hart’s Pass is the highest point you can drive in the state of Washington. It is accessible by car, although the road, built in 1893, is not for the faint of heart. The narrow gravel road goes along a cliff wall (sans guard rails) and provides some breath taking views of the canyons. Although the road is maintained for sedans, passing on coming vehicles can be challenging. The road ends near the timberline and opens into the center of the North Cascades, where you may access the Pacific Crest Trail and a number of side-trails into the Pasayten Wilderness and Canada twenty miles north.



Depending on the weather, the peak wildflower viewing is in the first three weeks of July but may be later. The Pacific Crest Trail at Hart’s Pass has an amazing variety of wildflowers and wildflower habitats from rocky talus and scree slopes to lush alpine meadows. Every turn in the trail is a new delight! The Washington Native Plant Society and the Methow Valley Ranger District cooperatively produced a booklet called “Watchable Wildflowers of Hart’s Pass,” available at the ranger station or online at <http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/regions/pacificnorthwest/HartsPass/index.shtml>. The 220 species makes Hart’s Pass one of the most popular destinations for naturalists and botanists in Washington. Hart’s Pass is the place for a digital camera and a big memory card!

Directions: From Western Washington, travel east on the North Cascades Scenic Highway (State Route 20) from Interstate 5. Turn off SR 20 at the Mazama and proceed toward Mazama. Continue northwest past Mazama and go up Forest Service Road 5400 to Hart’s Pass. The 35 miles from just past Mazama to the pass will take nearly an hour on the slow-going gravel road from just past Mazama to the pass. Note: trailers are not allowed on FS road 5400 to Hart’s Pass, and wider vehicles such as motor homes are highly discouraged.

Take a Walk on the “Native Side” at The Chase Garden Dr. Brent Chapman, South Puget Sound Community College

In 1908, a ridge to the west of the Puyallup River Valley was clear-cut, leaving smaller native Douglas firs and cedars to mature. When Emmott and Lone Chase moved to their home there in 1959, they removed the debris in their woods, leaving nurse logs and stumps, and encouraged the abundant growth of native wildflowers and ground covers. Today, visitors to The Chase Garden can follow the paths into the woods to enjoy the wildflowers under a tall canopy of trees and savor a diverse collection of trilliums, fawn lilies, violets, twin-flowers, vanilla leaf and other native treasures of the Pacific Northwest forest.

Lone Chase, who passed away on April 2, 2006, at the age of 97 is quoted as saying, “The forest is my favorite part and the other natives around the edges of course. The natives – we must preserve the natives. The native dogwood by the badminton lawn is our most precious tree. I think the Oregon grape is just beautiful out there to the Southeast. Visitors would enjoy the use of natives here. It isn’t that we used them. It’s just that they were here and we’ve tried to preserve them. The trillium in the woods; they are lovely. I always appreciate those and they are increasing because we encouraged them. We weeded out around them and spread the seed and that’s the reason.”



Vanilla leaf, photo by Catherine Hovanic

Field Trips, continued...

Perhaps the most impressive native wildflower display in The Chase Garden woods is the sweeping masses of vanilla leaf, *Achlys triphylla*, also known as sweet-after-death and deer foot. Vanilla leaf is widespread in both the eastern and western Cascades. In the wild it grows from low to middle elevations, and its range extends from British Columbia to Northern California. When hiking in our Northwestern woods, one may find vanilla leaf growing in shady forest glades or near the forest edge. The smooth, slender rhizomes of vanilla leaf furtively creep along, sending up intervals of single stems in early spring. The foliage sits atop a six- ten -inch stalk and is made up of three fan-shaped, blunt-toothed leaves. Some liken the appearance of the foliage to that of a deer's foot. Peeking above the foliage is the crème colored bottlebrush-like bloom.

Emmott Chase said, "My father used to bring it home to my mother. She would press the leaves to use in making. The leaves smell like vanilla...and even more so after dried."

Treat yourself and your friends to a walk through the native woodland groundcovers at The Chase Garden this spring, summer or fall. Take a moment to bend over, rub a leaf and inhale the beautiful fragrance of the woodland vanilla leaf. Self-guided tours are available on Fridays and Saturdays from April 3 through October 31. There is a tour fee of \$5.00 per visitor. Visit The Chase Garden's website at www.chasegarden.org for more information and driving directions, as well as a calendar of garden events for 2009.

The Chase Garden is a preservation project of The Garden Conservancy.

More Local Attractions: Or Cheap Dates for a Botanist

West Hylebos Wetlands Park, Federal Way. If you have never visited the West Hylebos Wetlands, or haven't done so since the new boardwalk opened on February 11, 2008, you are missing an adventure to delight all your senses and an extraordinary cheap date for a botanist.

A visit to the West Hylebos Wetlands Park is a chance to experience a western Washington forested wetland that is very much like what existed before the Europeans arrived—a unique opportunity. The almost mile long boardwalk takes you deep into the wetland where you can view this marvelous habitat up close and personal. The walkway also provides a great walk for families with young children or those who have mobility issues.

Hidden among the park's 120 acres is a staggering diversity, as the website notes, "from the tiny — 27 species of moss, 37 species of lichen, 30 fungi, and 6 liverwort species — to the gigantic — cathedral-like Douglas firs, western hemlock, red cedars, and rare ancient Sitka spruce that began life around the time the Mayflower reached Plymouth Rock. . . More than one hundred bird species frequent the park, including gangly great blue herons, snazzy red pile-ated woodpeckers, orange-brown warblers, and violet green swallows."



Twinberry, photo by Bill Brookreson

A typical walk takes about ninety minutes but, unless you have no sense of wonder, give yourself more time to simply enjoy the beauty. The plant life alone will gladden your heart. Among the varied plants there are marvelous, huge lady ferns (*Athyrium felix-femina*) and the black twinberry (*Lonicera involucrata*). You'll have your own so don't forget your camera.

If you really want to challenge yourself, download the plant list for the Hylebos wetlands (<http://www.hylebos.org/west-hylebos-wetlands-park/plants-of-the-west-hylebos-wetlands>), compiled by WNPS members Fred Weinmann and Sarah Cooke, and see how many of the 94 native and 31 introduced species that Sarah and Fred identified that you can find. Tours will be offered also during of Native Plant Appreciation Week (see the article on NPAW).

Directions: From I-5, Take exit 142B into Federal Way. Head west on S. 348th Street (the address of the park is 411 S. 348th St.); turn left at 4th Ave S. (a one-lane road between the Pioneer Cabin and the Puget Sound Energy substation). The parking lot is immediately east of the road. Follow the trail west of the two cabins to the West Hylebos Wetlands trailhead. Park hours are dawn to dusk daily and admission is free.

A Spring Visit to the South Sound Prairies, by Dan and Pat Montague. One of the rarest ecosystems in the country, these open savannas were created by retreating glaciers 15,000 years ago, which left behind gravelly soils that dried out quickly during summer droughts. Native Americans sustained these grassy plans for thousands of years using fire to keep the encroaching forests at bay so that tribes could harvest the prairie's bounty of wildflowers and bulbs. Today conservationists maintain our prairies through active management and restoration.

Field Trips, continued...

Spring, when many native wildflowers are in bloom, is a special time to visit the South Puget Sound Prairies. Scatter Creek Wildlife Area and Mima Mounds are two prairies that are open daily to the public. Wildflowers you might see during Native Plant Appreciation Week, May 3 – May 9 include *Camassia quamash*, *Dodecatheon hendersonii*, *Viola adunca*, *Viola nuttallii* var. *praemorsa*, *Aquilegia formosa*, *Lomatium utriculatum*, *Fritillaria affinis*, *Trillium parviflorum*, and *Eriophyllum lanatum*. Go to http://www.wnps.org/plant_lists/counties/thurston/thurston_county.html for a plant list. Note that in this web page, "North Unit Swale" refers to Scatter Creek, North Unit.

Scatter Creek Wildlife Area. Scatter Creek Wildlife Area has two different sections to visit. They include open prairie, oak and conifer woodlands, and riparian areas. A Vehicle Access Permit from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is required for parking (<https://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov/wdfw/vup.html>). Scatter Creek is used for other activities such as horseback riding, dog training and bird watching. For more information, go to http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/scatter_creek/.

For a nice loop walk at Scatter Creek South Unit, walk west from the Main Parking Lot along the faint footpath, the red barn will be on your right. Continue northwest around the central oak cluster, then on north and back along the road toward the barn. Near the barn, a side trail leads to Scatter Creek. At the Middle Parking Lot, walk about 300 meters west to the central swale for the best plant diversity in the North Unit.

Directions: Exit I-5 at Littlerock. Drive west one block, then turn south on Case Road. For the North Unit, go 4 miles to the North Parking Lot on the right. Go another 0.4 miles down Case Road to the Middle Parking Lot. For the South Unit, go another 0.8 miles down Case Road and then take a right onto 180th Avenue. The Main Parking Lot of the South Unit is 0.4 miles down 180th Avenue.

Field trips concluded on Page 10



West Hylebos wetlands, featured on pages 7, 8 and 9

State Activities

Native Plant Appreciation Week May 3-9, 2009

At the request of the Washington Native Plant Society, Governor Chris Gregoire has again declared May 3-9, 2009, as Native Plant Appreciation Week in Washington. This is the sixth annual celebration. There are a number of activities scheduled statewide where you can participate. These are listed on the WNPS website at <http://www.wnps.org/npaw/events.html>. Some of those events include. Check the website for late additions.

May 3: A Walk on the "Trail of the Giants," Pack Forest. Join Bill Brookreson for a walk on the "Trail of the Giants". The Trail of the Giants is part of a 166-acre section of "Old Growth" located near the center of the University of Washington's 4,300-acre Charles L. Pack Experimental Forest near Eatonville. Many of the trees in this area date from the 1800's with some significantly larger and older specimens – several over five hundred years old. The stand contains a variety of Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*), western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*), and some Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*). Highlights of the trail are two 800+ year old trees, one nearly 230 feet tall.

For a delightful visual introduction to the trail, you may want to visit the Pack Forest website at <http://www.packforest.org/tour/giants.html>. We have arranged with Pack Forest to get a gate key that will allow us to drive right to the trailhead and spend our time enjoying the trail.

Departure from Tacoma will be at 10 a.m. to car pool. You may also arrange to meet us at the gate of Pack Forest. For driving directions, visit the Pack forest website. To reserve a slot, contact Bill at 253-564-1137 or at b.brookreson@comcast.net. We expect to return at or soon after 3 p.m.. Sturdy shoes and weather appropriate clothing are advisable for the hike with some caution on rainy days for slippery planks on the trail.

May 6: A West Hylebos Wetlands Evening. Early evening is one of the most delightful times to enjoy the West Hylebos Wetlands. Join Hillary Kleeb, the Restorations Coordinator for the Friends of the Hylebos, for a stroll along the boardwalk; learn about the restoration work of the Friends of the Hylebos, and enjoy the native plants, the birds, and the treasure that is the West Hylebos Wetlands. We will depart at 5 p.m. from the parking lot at 411 S. 348th St. in Federal Way. For more information, contact Hillary Kleeb at streamteam@hylebos.org

State Activities, continued...

May 8: A Walk in the Woods, Point Defiance

Park. Getting to know the native plants of our Puget Sound lowlands can be as easy as a trip to Point Defiance Park. Join Anna Thurston, native-plant expert and local landscape designer for an evening journey that starts at the rhododendron gardens and ends with a picnic at the Native Plant Garden gazebo beyond the zoo. Friday, May 8th; 6:30-9:00 p.m.; kids and dates are welcome. For more information contact Anna at a.thurston@worldnet.att.net or (253) 566-3342.

May 9, Prairie Appreciation Day. Join us in celebrating Western Washington's prairies on Saturday, May 9, from 10 AM to 3 PM at Thurston County's Glacial Heritage Nature Preserve.

This free annual event showcases the wonders of this rare ecosystem. An interpretive trail of about five miles provides panoramic views. An activity trail loop provides information booths covering aspects of prairie restoration, management, wildlife and wild flowers. Many of the booths include activities geared towards children--so please, bring the kids. Bring a lunch and

snacks, and water; and dress for the weather and for walking.

For those who require handicapped accessible trails, additional activities will be available at the fully accessible Mima Mounds Natural Area Preserve four miles north of Glacial Heritage. Dogs are not allowed on the preserve. For maps, driving instructions, and more information, please visit <http://www.prairieappreciationday.org>.

May 10, Hylebos Wetlands Native Plant Walks. Come and join Catherine Hovanic and Bill Brookreson for a native plant walk in the West Hylebos Wetlands as a part of Hylebos Days and the City of Federal Way's Buds and Blooms Festival, May 9-10. The festival celebrates the coming of spring and native plants in Federal Way. In addition to the native plant walks, there will be a number of other nature tours during Hylebos Days. For a complete schedule, including times for the native plant walks, consult the Friends of the Hylebos website at www.hylebos.org.

Workshops and Conferences

Workshops:

Native Plant Salvage Foundation and WSU Extension Thurston County, Winter/Spring 2009 Events. Advance registration is required for most events. Call or email to sign up and receive directions and details: www.nativeplantsalvage.org, nativeplantsalvage@gmail.com or call (360) 754-3588, ext. 109.

1. "Naturescaping for Water & Wildlife" Field Course. May 30, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free!

Join Native Plant Salvage Project's Erica Guttman and landscape designer Linda Andrews for a full day of learning about sustainable landscape design and creation; then, travel by bus to local private water-wise landscapes! Sponsored by Thurston County Stream Team.

2. "Meet the Trees of Washington" Field Course. June 13, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Free!

Learn about the wonders of our lowland native forests as well as other South Sound ecosystems. Travel by bus to a local nature trail to learn hands-on plant identification of native trees, shrubs, ferns and flowers. Sponsored by Thurston County Stream Team.

3. Garden Rhapsodies Tour. Saturday, July 25, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Conferences:

*"Creating Thriving Rural and Urban Communities through Ecological Restoration," Society for Ecological Restoration Northwest, **Regional Conference 2009. Lynnwood Convention Center, Lynnwood, May 19-22, 2009. Registration is open for the SERNW*** Regional Conference. Conference tracks will include technical sessions, workshops, field trips, and special presentations focused on promoting the preservation, conservation, enhancement, and restoration of urban and rural ecosystems of the Pacific Northwest. For more information and registration, visit the SERNW website at <http://www.ser.org/sernw/Conference2009.asp>.

*"Living on the Edge: Why Natural Areas Matter," **36th Natural Areas Conference, September 15-18, 2009, Vancouver, WA.*** The 36th Annual Natural Areas Conference, hosted by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, will be held in Vancouver, WA. The conference will examine the many *edges* in conservation land management, including edges for species, habitats, human society and the earth. Discover the latest research results for species and habitat management, and learn about the challenges, successes and pitfalls in conservation site management. Attend thought-provoking plenary sessions, symposia, workshops and hands-on field trips to Washington and Oregon natural areas and features. Share your story of conservation stewardship and learn from more than 500 of our nation's conservation leaders. For more information, visit the website at <http://www.naturalarea.org/09Conference/index.htm>

Making Choices By Bill Brookreson

By the time you are reading this article, many of the budget decisions at the state and the local level should already be made. These will profoundly impact our future. As I write, the decisions are still in limbo.

Over the past few months, I have set back almost in disbelief as the economy seems to continue it seemingly inexorable unraveling. Within our state, the projected budget shortfall for the next biennium now exceeds eight billion dollars – a sum that will require almost unimaginable cuts in programs to meet our constitutional requirement for a balanced budget. There are choices that we have to make as a state and as a society; these roll down into local decisions as well. We will have to make incredibly hard choices with no good alternatives.

In such times, the present seems so pressing that the future is often forgotten or put aside for another time. We have choices that we have to make as a state and a society. People are hurting today! They need help! But we also know that if we sacrifice our environmental programs, parks and natural areas today, there may be no habitat or environment to save tomorrow. Although it may look very different at the end of the process, our economy is very likely to recover, although it will be a transforming and painful process. If our ecosystems are lost or terribly degraded during this process, there is little or no chance they will recover. Our choices today will make the difference.

The future always seems an abstract until it has a face – for me it is my grandchildren. What kind of state and world am I leaving for them? I have enjoyed great beauty of our state and our wonderful plant life. I want them to have that and know that I played a small part in preserving it. So much of the rest is transitory.

As the budgets roll out and as agencies and local jurisdictions struggle to grapple with the results, choices become critical. Where do we allocate resources when they are beyond scarce? There are a number of programs in the state budget that may not seem to be essential in these tight budget times. The Natural Heritage Program and the Natural Areas Programs in DNR are examples, but they are certainly not the only examples, but, in the long-term what could be more essential? They exist to protect our natural heritage that, once lost, can never be recovered. What greater responsibility for stewardship than that do we have as a society? Parks are scheduled to close and programs to be cut at the county and city levels.

We need to carefully and thoughtfully consider what these cuts mean to the quality of life in Washington. We all are responsible for the choices we make individually and collectively and the impact those choices have. For whatever we decide, we will be held ultimately accountable by those that have to live with our decisions. I hope that we decide well.

Where Conservation and Restoration Make a Difference

Have you wondered if all the efforts at conservation and restoration – especially of wetlands – make a difference? Information forwarded by Sarah Gage of the Washington Biodiversity Council gives us an indication. Although the Department of Interior released the first ever comprehensive report on bird populations in the United States, showing that nearly a third of the nation's 800 bird species are endangered, threatened or in significant decline due to habitat loss, invasive species, and other threats, Sarah shared some good news.

The report highlights examples, including many species of waterfowl, where habitat restoration and conservation have reversed previous declines. The report, "The U.S. State of the Birds," at www.stateofthebirds.org, synthesizes data from three long-running bird censuses conducted by thousands of citizen scientists and professional biologists. Birds can respond quickly and positively to conservation action. The data show increases in many wetland birds such as pelicans, herons, egrets, osprey and ducks, which DOI officials say are the result of cooperative conservation partnerships aimed at protecting and enhancing more than thirty million wetland acres. Our challenge is to continue these investments and extend them to other neglected habitats where birds are in decline.

For more information on the Washington Biodiversity Council and its work, visit their website at <http://www.biodiversity.wa.gov/council/index.html>. As a chapter, we can make a difference too by being involved in conservation issues, speaking out, and engaging in restoration projects. It's the cumulative impact that can change the world

Note: We are now using a minimum of 35% post consumer paper for the Acorn.

One More Field Trip (concluded from page 8)

Mima Mounds. Mima Mounds Natural Area Preserve contains the best remaining examples of the unique Mima Mounds. Many theories have been proposed, but there is no widely accepted explanation for the origin of the mysterious, regularly spaced six- to eight-foot tall mounds. A paved interpretive trail, which is suitable for the disabled, meanders through the mounds. Longer walks are available. Mima Mounds is administered by the Washington Department of Natural Resources.

Directions: Exit I-5 at Littlerock. Drive west through Littlerock and continue on 128th Avenue SW until it ends at an intersection with Waddell Creek Road. Turn right on Waddell Creek Road. The Mima Mounds entrance is on the left in 0.8 mile; the sign is on the right.

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Washington Native Plant Society South Sound Chapter

www.southsoundchapterwnps.org

Washington Native Plant Society State Chapter

www.wnps.org 206-527-3210



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Make checks payable to WNPS and mail to:
 Washington Native Plant Society, 6310 NE 74th St., Ste 215E
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South Sound Chapter WNPS

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The mission of the Washington Native Plant Society is to promote the appreciation and conservation of Washington's native plants and their habitats through study, education, and advocacy.

Celebrate
Native Plant
Appreciation
Week
May 3rd - May 9th, 2009

Learn more about native plants!

- Visit a natural area
- Take a native plant walk
- Go on a garden tour
- Learn about and volunteer on habitat restoration projects
- Shop at a native plant sale
- Attend interesting programs

For more information about events and activities in your area see: www.wnps.org

Schubert's Museum, Rhinelandic Day Pavilion