



The Acorn

*Serving the South Sound Chapter of the
Washington Native Plant Society*

Summer 2017

Special Programs Upcoming

**John Bishop, The Revegetation of Mt. St Helens
Monday, May 8, at the Evergreen State College, 7 pm**



Once again, the South Sound Chapter is working in cooperation with The Evergreen State College and Dr. Frederica Bowcutt to present a special program in the Evergreen College Music Auditorium. This year we will have Dr. John Bishop, Associate Professor at Washington State University Vancouver's School of Biological Sciences. John's work has been on "response of populations, communities, and ecosystems to catastrophic disturbance" focused on the plants, animals, and soils of the primary successional Pumice Plain of Mount St. Helens. Much of this work is focused on herbivore effects on keystone plant colonists, such as a lupin (*Lupinus lepidus var. lobbii*, and its specialist lepidoptera herbivores), and willows (*Salix sitchensis*), and cascading effects on community and ecosystem development. Those who have heard John speak will attest that this is a fascinating talk you will not want to miss. Go to <https://labs.wsu.edu/john-bishop/> to learn more about Dr. Bishop's work, including a PBS news hour video.

Prairies and Wetlands of the Olympic Peninsula, Washington: Their Native American Uses and Stewardship
M. Kat Anderson, May 25, 10 am – noon at the Evergreen College

Dr. Anderson will discuss the crucial importance of prairies and wetlands to the tribes of the Olympic Peninsula as key sites for human habitation, recreation, hunting and plant food procurement. Prior to European contact, the indigenous people managed these open environments mainly with the tool of fire. Based upon extensive ethnographic interviews and review of the historic literature, she will highlight the many uses of these areas, and how Native Americans expertly wielded the powerful tool of fire, which could shape the environment to benefit the plants and animals they harvested for foods, medicines, and fiber. Indian-set fires maintained and in some cases expanded the biologically rich environments of prairies and wetlands. This event is co-sponsored by your WNPS South Sound Chapter.

M. Kat Anderson has a PhD in Wildland Resource Science from UC Berkeley and is an ethnoecologist and research associate in the Department of Plant Sciences, UC Davis. She has conducted field work with tribes in California and Washington for over 25 years, documenting their detailed traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and wildland stewardship practices that has led to the conservation of biodiversity and the maintenance of the ecological integrity of ecosystems. She is author of *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources*, published by the University of California Press.



Dr. Bishop leading field trip (Catherine Hovanic photo)

Other S. Sound Chapter Activities

Grant Report by John Neorr

Thanks to your generous support for our native plant sales, we continued our community grants in 2016-7. In 2016, we awarded five grants: Boze Elementary First-Graders Pollinator Garden in Tacoma; Thurston Conservation District (TCD) Pollinator Garden in Olympia; Coastal Interpretive Center (CIC) Native Plant Garden in Ocean Shores; Pollinator Garden at WSU Extension Campus in Puyallup; and Additional TCD Pollinator Garden Grant. All projects have been completed.

The Pollinator Garden grant at the WSU Puyallup Extension was submitted by the Pierce County Beekeepers Association. It is a part of a large, 3-5 year project – a 6000 sq. ft. educational pollinator garden and



walking path at front driveway entrance and a 3000 sq. ft. educational

pollinator garden at PCBA apiary on campus. Both areas are designed as public educational gardens to offer ideas and examples for developing pollinator gardens and native habitat. The focus is on native, non-invasive plants to provide a rich source of nectar throughout the growing season as well as habitat for pollinators. The overall project will include planting all garden areas, installing walking paths, placing educational signage. Our grant was for \$500 for planting native plant hedgerows that are part of the overall design.

We are considering two new grants for 2017.

Boze Elementary: Our grant money procured nine carts to build mobile pollinator gardens that were designed and planted by first grade students.



Chase Gardens, Orting Closing On February 24

I received word that Chase Gardens in Orting will be put up for sale by the Garden Conservancy. The garden's director, Lori Taylor, and lead horticulturalist Will Clausen will continue to care for the garden and offer programs for visitors through the end of June, 2017. After June, the garden will be closed to the public. The Conservancy believes that sale to a friendly buyer who will appreciate and care for the Chase Garden is the best way to secure its future. The Conservancy holds a conservation easement on the property to protect its future.



22nd Annual Prairie Appreciation Day Saturday May 13, 10-3

For those that enjoy or want to experience the wonderful South Sound prairies, the Prairie Appreciation Day is a particular treat. It is a chance to experience the Glacial Heritage and Mima Mounds natural areas. The day will feature a variety of programs including – prairie wildflower walks; gardening with native plants; native American uses of native plants; birds of the prairies; butterflies, bugs and native pollinators; geology of the prairies; and more. You may bring a lunch and picnic. No food is available Please no pets! For more information, visit <http://prairieappreciationday.org/>.

Chapter Meetings

Because plant lovers like to botanize while the days are long, chapter meetings are not scheduled during summer months (June-August). The fall meetings will be announced in our next addition of the *Acorn* newsletter, arriving in September. Meetings are normally scheduled from October through May on the second Monday of each month in Olympia and on the second Wednesday in Tacoma. Starting at 7 pm, each meeting consists of a quick review of local items and announcements, and a presentation lasting approximately an hour. Programs are geared for all levels of botanical knowledge.

Unless otherwise noted, all Tacoma meetings are at Tacoma Nature Center, 1919 South Tyler Street, Tacoma. All Olympia meetings are at Capitol Museum Coach House, 211 21 Ave. SW, Olympia although the future here is tied to state budget. Meetings are free and open to the public. Please contact Sue Butkus (presentations@southsoundchapterwnps.org) if you have a suggestions. We hope to see you (and your guests) at future gatherings! Have a good summer botanizing. We have a special kickoff meeting planned for September. Watch monthly updates and the newsletter for details.

Workshops

Know Your Grasses Workshop

“The Identification and Appreciation of Grasses” June 28, 29, and 30

Knowing Your Grasses” is critical to many fields of science and practice, including wetland identification and delineation, ecosystem restoration, erosion control, and interpretation of natural history. Beautiful and diverse, grasses are globally important in many ways—fundamental to the past and future survival of humans. WNPS and the University of Washington Herbarium at the Burke Museum are proudly partnering to offer this grass identification workshop. Join Instructor Clay Antieau, M.S., Ph.C, on the UW Campus. Full information and registration is at <http://tinyurl.com/lyrhzrv>



American Dunegrass,
Elymus mollis

Chair's Report

The Times They Are A-changing'

By Bill Brookreson



Some of us are old enough to remember 1964 when Bob Dylan wrote and sang “The Times They Are A-changing’.” In 1964, we saw that as a hopeful sign. Though the song is still fitting, the reasons are very different and certainly not so hopeful.

For the past several decades, it hasn't really mattered who was in the majority in government. Republicans and Democrats, though there were differences in speed of changes and specific policy emphasis, both parties acted as stewards of the long term health our environment. Members of both parties remembered when the Cuyahoga River was so polluted it actually caught fire. They remembered when the air in major cities such as Los Angeles and Pittsburg was barely breathable. In Tacoma, Asarco spewed heavy metals on Ruston and Vashon Islands. Salmon runs were facing extinction. Nuclear wastes were leaking at Hanford towards the Columbia River. Certainly, not everything was addressed without controversy and not with the urgency many of us wanted. I did not always agree, but I never doubted their intent. Today it is climate change, or global warming, you pick the terminology, that threatens our children and grandchildren with a very different and dangerous world.

For the first time in my 70 years of life, we are seeing a total change in direction. We are no longer to be directed by the best available science to make good decisions. We are being driven by the best available politics. The Environmental Protection Agency, created to address the real important problems of the time, faces being gutted. Other environmental programs are under siege. What we do not know is whether the damage that may be done is reversible – can we unscramble the egg?

What can we do as an organization, WNPS, and as individuals? As an organization, we can speak out on issues that directly impact native plants and their environment. We have a Conservation Committee headed by Becky Chaney that can speak out on issues of importance and continue to emphasize the need to have our policies driven by science and not politics. We cannot endorse or support individual candidates but we can stand strongly with other like-minded groups and make our concerns known.

As individuals, I can only encourage you, in the strongest possible terms, to track the issues that are important to you and speak out to the decision makers. Silence, in these times, can be construed as agreement or acquiescence. The world we leave to the next generations is our heritage.

What You Plant Matters!

Bill Brookreson

Having worked actively in restoration projects now for well over ten years dealing with invasive plant species, I have become acutely aware of the impact if what homeowners plant in their yards and gardens on the natural environment. Walk through many of our parks and you will find that the groundcover is predominately English ivy, *Hedera helix*.

English Ivy, still sold in many nurseries as an ornamental, out competes most of our natives. Unlike many of our deciduous native groundcovers like fringe cup, English ivy is evergreen. Control is difficult. It has a waxy leaf that responds poorly to chemical control. It spreads in two different ways. When ivy is on the ground, the vines spread by rooting as they grow, When English ivy grows vertically up trees, for example, it flowers and produces fruits that are eaten and spread by birds. Private property is often the seed source.

It becomes a particular problem in areas that were logged in the 19th and 20 centuries and where the trees are predominately red alder, *Alnus rubra*, or big leafed maple, *Acer macrophyllum*. Unlike our native evergreen trees, these trees are short lived and many are nearing their life expectancy. When English ivy dominates the understory, the young trees, evergreen or deciduous, cannot compete successfully. English ivy is not parasitic and yet, because of its weight and other physical impact, can bring down trees.

Every year, thousands of volunteer hours are spent removing English ivy from our parks and natural areas while it is being planted on adjacent private property. Certainly, it is not the only culprit, just perhaps the worst. Others, like yellow archangel, *Lamium galeobdolon*, and *Arum italicum*, are becoming major problems. There are good sources for information such as *Garden Wise; Non-Invasive Plants for Your Garden* that give you information on plants that do not present a problem for the environment. You may get the pamphlet from your local weed board or at <http://tinyurl.com/mwrfo2l>. What you plant does matter!



Wards Lake, University Place

Spring Native Plant Sale!

Join us April 22 at the Capital Museum Coach House for our Spring Native Plant Sale. We have a wide selection of plants for garden and restoration projects. Make your plant lists. Volunteers are have potted bulbs and other plants to be ready. We need volunteers on Friday, April 21, for set up and Saturday, April 22, for the sale. If you want to volunteer for either or both dates in April in preparing plants and set up, have native plants to donate, want to work the sale, or have specific plants you would like us to look for as we acquire plants for the sale – we are still buying plants – contact Bill Brookreson at b.brookreson@comcast.net, 253-292-8570; or Bonnie Blessing-Earle at bonnie.blessing@gmail.com. To volunteer you may contact Cyndy Dillon at cpdillongh@comcast.net.

WNPS Central Puget Sound Chapter, Spring 2017 Native Plant Sale is set for April 29, 2017 at the Mercerdale Park on Mercer Island. Check the WNPS website for more details as they become available.

Pierce County Master Gardener's Plant Sale is scheduled for April 29 (9 am-4 pm) & April 30 (9-3), 2016 at the WSU Almendinger Conference Center, 2606 W. Pioneer Way, Puyallup. The sale will feature vendors and plants grown by Master Gardeners, as well as books for sale.

Tacoma Nature Center Spring Plant Sale– May 6, 9 am – 2 pm. Landscape your yard with plants that are native to our area. Planting natives ensures the conservation of our precious water resources and provides habitat for local birds, mammals and insects. A list of available plants will be posted on the website by 1:00pm on Friday, May 5. www.tacomanaturecenter.org. Come early for the best selection.



Hikes and Field Trips

Chapter members continue to work on arranging hikes and other native plant walks. These will be announced on the website and in the monthly updates. If you have a favorite hike you would like to share and lead, please contact Cyndy Dillon at cpdillongh@comcast.net.

A Favorite Hike – West Rocky Prairie, Submitted by Chris Earle

When you get there, just wander as you like. The whole prairie covers only about half a square mile and is wide open, so it's hard to get lost. The prairie itself has some dirt roads that are sometimes used by researchers and maintenance staff, but I've never actually seen anyone out there. The area has seen extensive restoration actions by DNR and WDFW and is one of the best examples of prairie vegetation remaining in the Puget Lowland. It is extensively covered with Mima mounds. Some areas have been planted with the endangered golden paintbrush, and when it's in bloom, there are thousands of plants carpeting parts of the prairie. Parts of site also turn into a sea of camas in early May. A variety of other rare plants and butterflies use the area, and it is home to endangered species of the Mazama pocket gopher and the Oregon spotted frog. The area has seen its share of controversy as well. A major gravel mine is being developed north of the railroad, and if you hike west from the prairie, you enter a degraded prairie area that was formerly an explosives factory; now it's mostly covered in Scots broom, but some of it is still pretty good prairie. There are wetland areas to the south, along Beaver Creek, and a nice Oregon white oak woodland can be found in the southwest part of the prairie. For further information just Google "West Rocky Prairie."

The best time for this hike is April or May. The usual length can vary from 1 ½ to 4 miles. The trailhead is north of Tenino, 2 options. I usually take Option 2 because it's shorter and quicker. This east-west railroad is almost never used and then only by very slow-moving trains.

1. Exit I-5 at Maytown Road exit, south of Olympia. Go 2.5 miles east on SR121, turn right and follow S. Tilley Rd. for 1.4 mi, then turn left on 143rd Ave. SE for 1.9 miles to the WDFW parking area on the left. You'll need a Discover pass to park here. Hike down the winding old road to the north for about 1/2 mile, leading you to the southeast corner of the prairie.

2. Exit I-5 at the 93rd Ave. SW exit, south of Olympia. Go 3.3 miles east on 93rd Ave., turn right and follow Old Highway 99 south 3.7 miles; park on the right at the Whistle Stop Grocery (12745 Old Hwy 99 SE, Tenino, WA 98589) and hike west along the railroad tracks about 1/4 mile, then walk south into the north end of the prairie.

Volunteer Opportunities

BioBlitz Volunteers Sought

The Chehalis River Basin Land Trust is putting on two BioBlitz events, one in Grays Harbor (July 29) and one in Centralia (June 3) and is looking for volunteers. A BioBlitz is a community rally to find as many species (of anything, plant, animal, fungi...) in a set area within a set time. That data is then uploaded to the popular citizen science app iNaturalist. If you'd like to see more, a simple Google search yields a lot of good results. They are looking for folks willing to volunteer a few hours to lead small groups of community members and aid in identifying plants. We have help from local colleges, local environmental professionals, and the master gardeners. The contact for the Land Trust is Kylea Johnson, Director of Program Services, chehalislandtrust.org, (360) 807-0764 or contact Bill Brookreson and I will pass on the information.



On Going Activities

One of the goals of the South Sound Chapter of WNPS is to provide a variety of opportunities for people to volunteer in that they enjoy, and which serve the community as well as the society. Most of those opportunities will be found in the Monthly Updates and on the website. Ongoing activities include:

- 1) Tacoma Nature Center where Cyndy Dillon leads work parties on the first and third Fridays of the month. For details contact Cyndy at cpdillongh@comcast.net.
- 2) Capital Museum Native Plant Garden where Bill Brookreson leads work parties on third Thursdays.
- 3) Ryan's Park Work Party (Tacoma). Luis Yanez, Habitat Steward for Friends of Ryan's Park leads work parties the first Saturday of the month. For more information, contact Luis at luis_cia@yahoo.com.
- 4) China Lake Natural Area. Gail Sklar leads a work party in the China Lake Natural Area, 1811 South Shirley Street, Tacoma the first Saturday of the month. For more information, contact Gail at gjsklar@gmail.com
- 5) Wapato Lake Park. On the 4th Saturday of the month, Park Steward Chris Beale has a work party in the Wapato Lake natural area. To. For more information, contact Chris at 253-320-5623 or restorewapato@gmail.com.
- 6) South Sound Prairie Restoration. Center for Natural Lands Management at Glacial Heritage Preserve continue to help enhance the South Puget Sound Prairies. Work parties are every Tuesday from 9 am to 3 pm and the second Saturday. Contact ssvolunteers@cnlm.org for more information, or call (360) 570-0762.

Native Plant Appreciation Week April 23-29, 2017

This will be the 14th annual Native Plant Appreciation Week (NPAW) in Washington. Governor Gary Locke proclaimed the first NPAW in 2004 at Washington Native Plant Society's request. Governor Gregoire and Governor Inslee have continued the proclamations. This week is a celebration of the amazing diversity of Washington's over 3000 native plant species that inhabit deserts, rain forests, high alpine environments, river valleys and even backyard landscapes, and all the good work being done to protect and preserve it. We hope you take the opportunity that NPAW provides to spend a few hours enjoying our wonderful flora in whatever way is meaningful to you, whether it be attending a formal program or just taking a quiet walk in a natural area or park. We will kick off NPAW a day early with our spring native plant sale.

Native Plant Resources

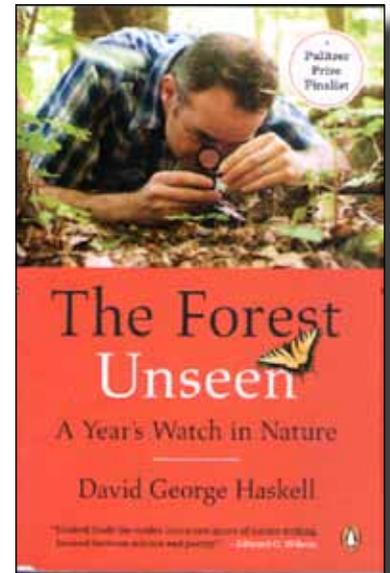
The Forest Unseen: A Year's Watch in Nature

by David George Haskell, Penguin Books, 2012, \$17.00

I have a rule, strictly my own, that I do not review a book that I don't find interesting enough to acquire. *The Forest Unseen* certainly meets that criteria. The book is set in old-growth Tennessee forest where a biologist, David Haskell, sets out to watch a one square meter patch throughout a year. He writes an observation approximately every two weeks tracing the events in and around what he refers to as the mandala. His observations range from the snails and nematodes, to the ferns and ephemerals, to the trees around the mandala and the birds that surround it. The science is detailed and clearly written.

The writing ability of Haskell makes the book extremely readable. As a nature writer, he often borders on poetry. Finding a short piece to illustrate the point was difficult because there are so many.

With that risk, I will share short passage from "March 25 – Spring Ephemerals", page 54. "At the mandala I find a starburst of white flowers, a hundred blossoms shining out at the world. Spring beauty flowers with pink-streaked white petals grow low to the ground, intermixed with purple Hepatica. A few rue anemones emerge from the mandala's edge, their nodding white flowers held finger-length above the leaf litter. Toothwort reaches tallest, just above ankle height, holding flowers with long white petals in clusters at the tips of sturdy stalks. Each flower trails a comet's tail of lush green growth, erupting life from the mat of dead leaves. . ."



Lee Fellenberg, our Chapter Web Manager, has retired and moved to Idaho but is graciously continuing his work for the chapter. That is why you will see the address P.O. Box 611, Ponderay, Idaho 83852 on *Acorns* and Updates.

Native Plant Study Weekend, May 19-21, 2017

This year's Native Plant Study Weekend, "From Sagebrush to Subalpine: Exploring the Diversity of Eastern Washington Landforms and Flora" will be led by the Northeast Chapter. Base of operations will be at Eastern Washington University in Cheney. More information is at WNPS.org. Registration closes April 30.

Botany Washington, June 9-11, 2017

Botany Washington (BotWa) 2017, "Spring in the East Cascades," will be centered at the Tierra Learning Center in Leavenworth and will focus on the flora of the Wenatchee Mountains. Once again, BotWa will be co-sponsored by the Native Plant Society and the University of Washington Herbarium at the Burke Museum. Botany Washington will provide botanists, plant ecologists, restoration ecologists, conservation biologists and other professionals with access to experts and an opportunity for in-depth study of selected taxonomic groups. It is also an opportunity for individuals new to the Flora of the Pacific Northwest to gain additional practice in technical keying with the support of expert guidance. Hikes will focus on Wildflowers of the East Cascades. Registration material is on the website at WNPS.org.

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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.



Native Plant Sale

Saturday, April 22, 2017
9am-3pm

Capital Museum Corch House
 211 21st Ave SW, Olympia
 Washington Native Plant Society
 South Sound Chapter



Celebrate
Native Plant Appreciation Week
 April 23 - 29, 2017

Learn more about native plants!

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

Clayton Kreswick and Christine Spenneth at Olney Heritage County Park in Thurston County. Here Golden Fireweed is making a comeback with the help of the Center for Natural Land Management and many volunteers. In late April/early May hundreds of acres are filled with Common Camas.

Gulick, Philiberta, and Common Camas. Photographed by Lynell Reed.

