

Washington Native Plant Society

*South Puget Sound Chapter
Fall of 2003*

CHAIR REPORT

Anna Thurston

Welcome back from a long, hot, and *very* dry summer. I don't know about you, but I'm beyond ready for rain. This weather has, however, provided a fabulous opportunity to compare natives with imported plants. In my own garden, which I feign to water in order to test the conservation that I preach, native plants clearly stood out. No "sore thumbs" among the natives here...

More often they were "OZ green" while magnetizing hummers, bushtits, towhees, sapsuckers and wrens (among many other species) to fragrant flowers, normal insect populations and delicious volumes of fruit. When compared to imported plants, even those that are touted for adapted features, native plants clearly won the weather.

Although I am distressed at my non-native landscape losses (some mature shrubs got crisp overnight) I consider the lessons learned a bonus - now I have new places in which to play! This may verify that I'm a zealous gardener, but the truth is, not everyone would want to try again. Because recurring drought is an experience that gardeners and homeowners will experience again, I am drawn to the silver lining that our new weather presents. What better opportunity to promote native plants for reasons that also benefit us!

It's well known that an established and properly planted and managed landscape increases property values. Why not a native landscape that doesn't require *any* quantity of water, chemicals, nor the time and/or the people to apply these sometimes, (but not always) innocuous items? Why not further increase the ambience with local wildlife for no extra charge? An added bonus is that this approach to landscaping can reduce personal guilt! I *do* sleep better at night knowing that I'm not taking water to keep an unsustainable plot green.

"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."

With an eye on maintaining the quality of life that the northwest has to offer, this mission statement urges me on as the weather changes. Does it catch your eye in a similar way? If so, this is a group of people whose diversity of knowledge and generous pool of friendliness invites us to work together to pull it off. Selling native plants is not always easy. Enjoying them and all of the bounty that tends to come with them, however is fun and makes the package deal worth the price in sweat equity and even hard-earned dollars.

I hope you'll join us for another season of great presentations, and a period that bodes well for our chapter's growth. We have workshops and plant sales on the developing horizon, the possibility of providing a Stewardship program appears more and more realistic, and a Native Plant Salvage program in Pierce County is closer to happening than some of us has ever dreamed. Your membership helps to make the South Sound chapter and our larger mission happen. Your membership dollars help to bring in extraordinary speakers, while giving us the funds that build an on-going foundation of education through our recently renewed website and printed materials. Your first-hand participation is also invited, whether as a member only, or as a part of the fun team that brings out our programs, the reason why we're



CHAPTER MEETINGS

Monday October 6th: Fall Fungi

Dr. Mike Beug will present an introduction to fall mushrooms west of the Cascades. Our region is rich in fall mushrooms. It is one of the finest collecting regions in the world and October is the peak month. In addition to many fascinating and beautiful inedible mushrooms, we have an abundance of choice edible species, an unusual diversity of hallucinogenic mushrooms and a few poisonous ones to keep you on your toes. This program will focus on the best edible mushrooms plus introduce you to the poisonous species to watch out for. Mike is a long time professor at The Evergreen State College, specializing in fungi ecology

Monday November 3rd: Shaped by wind and sea and history: culture and nature in the Scottish Isles.

Florence Caplow is the rare plant botanist for the Washington Natural Heritage Program. Prior to working for WNHP she conducted rare plant and floristic surveys throughout the Pacific Northwest. Florence just returned from a natural history trip to the Western Isles and Orkney, two remote and beautiful island chains in northern Scotland. The flora of Scotland has many affinities with our own. Find out what common NW native plant is a weed in Scotland, see one of the few endemic plants to the British Isles, and learn about the importance of "machair" and other unique environments to the people, birds, and plants of the Isles.

Monday December 1st: Birds, Plants & their Habitats

Chris Chappell will present a slide tour of Washington terrestrial bird habitats. He will talk about representative bird species in each habitat and illustrate bird-plant interactions with noteworthy examples from a variety of habitats. Chris has been working with birds and/or plants of the Pacific Northwest for 25 years. He led his first Audubon field trip at age 14, and teaches advanced birding classes for Federal and State agency scientists. He has a B.S. degree from The Evergreen State College, with an emphasis on field ornithology, and an M.S. in Forest Ecology from the University of Washington. For the last 11 years, he has worked as a plant community ecologist with the Washington Natural Heritage Program, Dept. of Natural Resources. He recently authored the chapter on habitats for the book "Wildlife-Habitat Relationships in Oregon and Washington."

CHAPTER NEWS

The South Sound Chapter is back on-line! Thanks to the volunteer efforts of **Karan Wade James** of *Neanderthal Computing Design*, and the able guidance of chapter member **Bill Kingrey**, we have a renewed website designed to get information to you quickly and efficiently. The address of the chapter's new site <http://www.southsoundchapterwnps.org/>. Please check it and let us know what you think. The web site you see is an early version - a sprout which needs your nurturing in order to grow and thrive.

We invite suggestions to improve the site and help it flourish. Content is our most critical need at this time. (content is all of the information provided at a site). This includes regular features and sections, links to other useful sites. We are also interested in your botanical illustrations, field trip photos, plant lists, technical and non-technical information, book reviews, recipes, and other information that is both fun and useful to present on-line.

>>>>NAME YOUR NEWSLETTER<<<<

It's a contest! The South Sound Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society is accepting name nominations to give a title to the newsletter that you're reading. To enter, please submit one or more name nominations to Anna Thurston by Sunday, October 12th, 2003. From here, nomination names will be posted at our November meeting (good incentive to come and cheer for your name!). The top vote getter gets a worthy prize, and we might devise something to give to entrants too!. In addition, the winner will gain notoriety for having noticed this note and submitting one or more names that captures the essence of our newsletter, possibly along with what we do as a group and where we live.

All south sound chapter members are welcome to play. Please be sure to include your name, telephone number, e-mail (if possible) an/or a mailing address. Submit your newsletter name nomination to: Anna Thurston 253-566-3342, or by e-mail at: a.thurston@worldnet.att.net. Deadline for entries: Sunday, October 12, 2003.

>>>>WORKSHOP ON GROWING NATIVE PLANTS FROM SEEDS<<<<<

The purpose of this workshop for members of the South Sound Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society is to encourage the use and distribution of native plants of western Washington. Each participant will receive a hands-on experience in growing herbaceous native plants from seeds as well as printed materials and sources. During the workshop the participants will be given seeds, pots and seeding mix in which they may plant as many as eighteen different species. The completed pots with seeds are to be taken home for the plants to be grown by the participants.

The workshop will be from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM on Saturday, November 22, 2003. Bring your own lunch; coffee, tea and hot water will be provided. Participation is limited to 14 and a fee of \$10 will be charged to cover expenses and for support of the South Sound WNPS program. Contact Dan & Pat Montague, 360-709-0866 and montague30@comcast.net or Rod Gilbert, 360-456-4013 and roderickgilbert@comcast.net to register.

>>>>BIOTA OF NORTH AMERICA PROJECT CD ROM<<<<<

Our chapter purchased a copy of the *Synthesis of the North American Flora* by John Kartesz (BONAP). It is essentially the same as <http://plants.usda.gov/>, though it is more user friendly and includes a few additional tools, like being able to right click on a plant name and have it automatically type it into a word document. Anyone wishing to check it out please contact Rod Gilbert to borrow it. It is for PC's only, and the PC requirements are very minimal.

>>>>GOING ELECTRONIC<<<<<

Due to the rising costs of production and postage, the South Chapter will be moving toward an electronic distribution of the newsletter. Both the increasing size of the newsletter and the cost of postage have necessitated this move. The Chapter is currently discussing how best to accomplish an electronic distribution. The two options being looked at are e-mailing the letter as an attached document (the document can be saved and sent out in more than one format) or posting the newsletter to the website. A hardcopy will be mailed to those members who do not have e-mail. The goal is to make this move by the next newsletter publishing date which is due to be out in January of 2004.

>>>>NEWSLETTER EDITOR NEEDED FOR THE SOUTH SOUND CHAPTER<<<<<

The Chapter is looking for a volunteer to serve on the board next year as newsletter editor. The newsletter is vital to the success of this chapter as it provides a way for members to share information, participate in local volunteer events and stay informed of great conferences, workshops and other events inside and outside of the local area. Not only that, the board is a great bunch of people to work with. If you are interested in volunteering for this position, please contact any of the board members. A description of the newsletter editor duties can be obtained from the current newsletter editor or the chair.

CONSERVATION REPORT

Four mornings in May, June and July were spent pulling herb Robert and wall lettuce, and clipping or pulling non-native bird-disseminated shrubs and trees from trail sides on the forested bluff above the canyon in Swan Creek Park in Tacoma. While several thick patches of herb Robert remain, these are smaller than last year's leftovers. They are not close enough to pose an immediate threat to the state sensitive Torrey peavine. They are far enough from the trails that they may not be readily spread this season by trail users, animal, human and mechanical. About ten of our Tacoma area members were involved on various days.

Support for conservation and restoration of South Puget prairies and oak woodlands follows the lead of larger organization to some extent. Our annual weed survey of the horse trail on the Scatter Creek Wildlife Recreation Area, for which we volunteered some years ago, was done on July 13. On request, we also looked for mouse-ear hawkweed on the North Unit where an infestation has been actively controlled for several years. We did not find any, but the extremely dry conditions of this summer made us hesitant to believe it has been eliminated for good; June appears to be it month for rooting stolons. On the horse trail in the South Unit, closed during growing and nesting seasons, a few common weeds had a few blooms, but our conclusion was that they were not dominant. Some prairie plants grow in the trail also. The only late season prairie flower that appeared to be happy with the weather was the showy daisy. Balsamroot and *Lomatiums* had formed seeds, but lupine did not.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

SEED PICKING AT MOUNT RAINIER

For the twentieth year, we are picking seeds at Mount Rainier National Park to help with subalpine meadow restoration. It now includes Paradise meadows and two former auto campgrounds at Sunrise. After eight years of seed collecting at Sunrise, the Lower Campground re-vegetation is almost completed. However the Upper Campground is barely begun; this is a more challenging habitat. We are soliciting help from the Central Puget Sound chapter, as well as our own. More help will be needed next year for these and other activities.

PRAIRIE RESTORATION GLACIAL HERITAGE PRESERVE

Second Saturday of every month Workdays start at 10:00 a.m.

For more information contact Penny Kelley or Dan Grosboll

360-273-1820 or pennydan@earthlink.net

Please come and join us at the Thurston County Black River Mima Mounds Glacial Heritage Preserve as we work to restore the wonderful and rare South Puget Sound Prairie ecosystem. Efforts at this site have been on-going for the last eight years and have changed the site from a Scot's broom forest to a prairie worth fighting for. There is still lots of work to be done and we could really use the help. Workdays are quite varied and include planting native species, pulling Scot's broom, cleaning bird boxes, seed collection, fence mending, and many other activities. Make sure to call for information. The workdays are jointly sponsored by The Nature Conservancy of Washington & Thurston County Parks and Recreation

>>>>RESTORATION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED<<<<<

Help Olympia Volunteers In Parks do environmental restoration in Olympia's Parks! Projects are 9-noon Wednesdays and Saturdays and include invasive plant removal and native plantings and maintenance projects. Visit www.ci.olympia.wa.us/par/volunteer/parks.asp or call 753-8365 for a project schedule.

>>>>WSU COOPERATIVE EXT & NATIVE PLANT SALVAGE PROJECT<<<<<

Native Plant Salvage Project will be pursuing several revegetation projects and demonstration garden installations this fall -- new volunteers are always welcome! Call 360-704-7785 for specifics\

>>>>PUGET CREEK RESTORATION SOCIETY<<<<<

Puget Creek Restoration Society is dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the Puget Creek Watershed located at the north end of Old Town Tacoma. The Society hosts a monthly second Saturday event from 9:00 to 12:00 that involves maintenance work on planting sites including weeding and mulch distribution among newly installed native vegetation, and eradication of invasive plants. The Society also obtained a grant from R.E.I. which will allow them to place gravel on the trail to provide an easy access for all individuals and to help curtail sediment-laden runoff from entering the stream that flows year-round. In addition, trash removal occurs twice a year. For more information please contact Scott Hansen, President of the Puget Creek Restoration Society at: pugetcreek@yahoo.com.

Notes from the field & garden

>>>>SUMMER TRAVELS<<<<<

KEVIN HEAD

This summer I was very fortunate to travel to many wildflower meadows in our intermountain west. My wife (Julia Brayshaw) and I traveled through Oregon, California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona and Wyoming, reaching most meadow areas at the peak of their wildflower bloom. Our adventures allowed us to meet some wonderful stewards of the land and to hear their laments about our changing landscapes.

The Ochoco National Forest in Central Oregon has its tallest forest guard station above the Black Canyon Wilderness. The lookout has six steep sets of stairs that one needs to back down slowly to reach the ground. Julia and I were surprised to find an 80 year old guard who was assisted by an oxygen tank! She had been watching this place since 1980 and could point out every mountain and valley in sight. Her eyes narrowed as I questioned her about the ever-present haze. "Every

year it gets worse". She explained "It's not fire", but she didn't know what it was from. "You use to be able to see Mt. Shasta (200 miles away) in California, but now I have a hard time seeing the Strawberries (40 miles distant)". She described how the haze grimed her windows. She washed daily now and expressed dismay at policy makers who say air quality is better now than in the 80's when the National Forest Service regularly slash burned as a practice!

Air quality, desertification and drought met us in all our travels. The White mountains are in California, east of the Sierra Nevada range. The Whites host the Bristlecone Pine Natural Reserve outside of Bishop at 10,000'. The reserve is the largest and oldest Bristlecone Pine (*Pinus aristata*) forest in the world. In early July the forest understory was alive with *Penstemon scapoides* which blooms only in good moisture years. The Bristlecones are magical and mysterious. The oldest trees are 20' tall with an assortment of knarled, dead branches and a strip of bark with a few green branches. The oldest trees thrive in the most stressful of conditions: windswept, barren, dolomite ridgelines. On the other hand, the younger, robust trees are fully barked, live in drainages and areas with more nutrients and moisture. They grow 30-40', but live only 300-400 years. The amazing signature of the Bristlecone species is that the trees that have to contend with the most severe conditions achieve the greatest longevity. The oldest Bristlecones are over 4600 years old and are the oldest living trees in the world. The rangers said this was the best flower year in the last three drought years. Even so, the Whites received eight feet of snow this year compared to historical averages of 20'. Most perennials came out this year and we had a great show, but by our second day there the flowers began to fade, pushing our travels into the deserts of Nevada and Arizona and rising to Cedar Breaks National Monument in Utah.

Of all Utah's National Lands and sights this one small park boasts wildflower blooms like no other. At 10,000' Cedar Breaks meadows reach their peak in early July. Meadows were waist high in Angelica (*Angelica grayi*), Sunflowers (*Helianthella quinquenervis*) and Columbine (*Aquilegia coerulea*). The meadows rim the Amphitheater whose rock formations capture the imagination of even the most casual visitor. Julia and I also visited Bryce Canyon and Capital Reef National Parks. They were hot, lower than Cedar Breaks and past blooming time, but beautiful. After Capital Reef we headed east along the Fremont River. Hwy 24 travels through BLM land of exquisite erosional beauty. The gray sedimentary South and North Caneville Mesas are spectacular, and we were disturbed to notice that all along our drive off-road four wheelers' tracks were despoiling the countryside. We were moving along awed and bewildered when a sign advertising organic smoothies caught our attention in the 100 degree morning. A couple here had the only organic farm in hundreds of square miles and was offering yummy smoothies, breads and salads. They told me of their joint fight to limit the four wheelers use to a specific part of the mesas and make the majority of the area off limits to recreational vehicles. Their efforts inspired us to write to Aden Sidelitz, BLM Coordinator-Richfield, 150 E 900 N Richfield, Ut. 84701, and now you can too. Please mention the rare beauty of the landscape. The vehicles are breaking up the soil's structure, causing toxics to erode into the Fremont watershed.

We arrived in Crested Butte on July 10th, and proceeded to prepare for two four day backpacks into the wonderful wildflower capital of Colorado. The flowers around town were exquisite. Colorado meadows are known world wide, and Crested Butte hosts a yearly wildflower festival. This festival hosts wildflower hikes for all interests including: Crested Butte garden tours, wilderness hikes, butterfly adventures and 14,000' peak climbs. We came to hike in the wilderness, and this year we were thrilled by the very abundant and showy bloom. But as the days progressed the meadows dried up in front of our eyes. What had been a riot of color three days before was now going to seed. We couldn't believe the quickness of this transition. Crested Butte had record high temperatures for the fifth time this summer by July 18th. The temperatures were going up in both daily highs and daily high lows averages. Ground moisture, according to data collected over the last 25 years, was lower. June brought adequate moisture to the Rockies, but July's drought and heat devastated the wildflower bloom. This dynamic is slightly different from what happens in Washington's mountains, but we have had similar results. Our beautiful summer subalpine/alpine flower displays are not holding up to longer summers, higher temperatures, earlier snowmelts and evaporation of nourishing summer showers. These climatic changes present us with personal and cultural challenges. I encourage us native plant enthusiasts to act on behalf of our natural world. We need passionate observers who can articulate the changes that are happening. I encourage you to explore this fall with new eyes and experience our color changes as a pathway to a closer connection with nature. With this in mind I suggest two hikes to see fall color. September moisture will affect the color scheme this year and vary peak dates. In late September/early October, Ingalls Lake in the Teanaway portion of Alpine Lakes Wilderness is a joyous hike to alpine larches (*Larix lyallii*). Alpine larch is a northwest endemic and is found in the Wenatchee mountains and other parts of the eastern Cascades into BC and the near Rockies. It is different than western larch (*L. occidentalis*) the common tamarack of the west. The hike has a three mile, 2000' gain to Ingalls Pass and views of stunning Mt Stuart. In late October and early November a local favorite is Priest Point Park. In the north section of the park, trails lead through big leaf maples (*Acer marcophyllum*) that shimmer in late fall light. Wait for the big leaf maples on Boston Harbor Drive to pass their

peak of color before you take this hike. Summer is fading and the fall is approaching. I hope you all enjoy the colors.

>>>>PLANTS FROM HELEN'S GARDEN<<<<<
HELEN ENGLE

It's fun to create your own quiz -- and in so doing learn the little differences (for instance: between *Paxistima myrsinites* and *Vaccinium ovatum*). David Biek said the dainty-tasseled *Thalictrum* I had was from the male plant -- now I need to go out and find the female to compare. . . .

Below are the plants from my garden that were in the bouquet of greens at the South Sound Chapter of WNPS on May 5, 2003. It was pretty, with soft greens and chartreuse, and yellow green.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Blechnum spicant</i> Deer Fern | 11. <i>Prunus emarginata</i> Bitter Cherry |
| 2. <i>Corylus cornuta</i> Hazelnut | 12. <i>Spiraea douglasii</i> Douglas Spirea; Hardhack;
Steeple Bush |
| 3. <i>Gymnocarpium dryopteris</i> Oak Fern | 13. <i>Symphoricarpos albus</i> Snowberry |
| 4. <i>Heuchera micrantha</i> Small-flowered Alumroot | 14. <i>Tellima grandiflorum</i> Fringecup |
| 5. <i>Lonicera involucrata</i> Black Twinberry | 15. <i>Thalictrum occidentale</i> Western Meadow Rue |
| 6. <i>Luzula parvifolia</i> Wood-Rush | 16. <i>Trientalis latifolia</i> Starflower |
| 7. <i>Myrica californica</i> Pacific Wax-myrtle | 17. <i>Vancouveria hexandra</i> Inside-out Flower |
| 8. <i>Oxalis oregana</i> Sorrel, Oxalis | 18. <i>Vaccinium parvifolium</i> Red Huckleberry |
| 9. <i>Paxistima myrsinites</i> Oregon Boxwood | 19. <i>Vaccinium ovatum</i> Evergreen Huckleberry |
| 10. <i>Philadelphus lewisii</i> Mock-orange | |

Questions arose about the distribution of Pacific Wax Myrtle. The claim that it is native in Washington is confirmed in Pojar/Mackinnon. The book says: *Myrica californica* (Pacific Wax-myrtle) is found near the coast from the Grays Harbor area to southern California; and an isolated population between Toifno & Ucluelet, on the west coast of Vancouver Island.)

A bigger bowl of greens could have been created by adding the plants below, but the leftover April Showers struck hard and I retreated: Sitka Alder, Service Berry, Vine Maple, Yellow Violet, Beach Strawberry, Lady Fern, Gland Willow, Scouler's Willow, Orange Honeysuckle, Oceanspray, Labrador Tea, Indian Plum, Goodyera, Baldhip Rose, Tiarella, 2 sp, Trailing Blackberry, and more. . . .

>>>>WTU ELECTRONIC DATABASE<<<<<

The University of Washington Herbarium (WTU) is pleased to announce the creation of a Web site for accessing its electronic database. To visit the site, go to the WTU home page <http://depts.washington.edu/wtu/home.htm> and then follow the link to the database. Users will also find a mapping program which displays the county level distribution in Washington State for each taxon in the database. Distribution maps are based on specimens held at WTU. Label data from over 23,000 specimens have been entered to date, with additional data entry ongoing. Data entry for the vascular plant types collection, and the fungal and lichen collections has recently begun.

The WTU database was created through a collaborative project between the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Washington Natural Heritage Program, and the University of Washington Herbarium. The database program was developed at the University of California-Riverstide Herbarium using FileMaker Pro software. Questions or comments can be sent to wtu@u.washington.edu.

>>>>NATIVE PLANT EDUCATION PROJECTS<<<<<

WNPS has some funds set aside for small projects taken on by WNPS members that educate the public about native plants. In the past we have funded a number of public school native plant gardens and accompanying education programs, brochures and exhibits about native plants, and signs about native plants for natural areas. The grant application can be found on the WNPS website (www.wnps.org) or you can get a copy from the committee chair. Grants are given out twice a year. Proposal deadlines are May 15 and November 15 each year. For more information, contact Fayla Schwartz, Education Committee Chair; fschwartz@evcc.ctc.edu or 425-388-9451.

>>>>SPEAKERS WANTED<<<<<

The Olympia Beekeeper's Association is looking for interesting speakers. That would include presenters who have a fair amount of knowledge about native plants! They meet on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm. If you, or someone you know, would be interested in assisting this group, please contact Lilla or Marion Juhl by telephone at: 360-866-9257, or by e-mail at: lillajuhl@netzero.net.

>>>>FREE WORKSHOP<<<<<

Wednesday, November 19, 6:30 to 9 p.m. The Thurston Conservation District will offer its popular free workshop, "Naturescaping for Water & Wildlife." Call 360-704-7785 for more details or to register.

CHAPTER & state CONTACTS

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Membership form for the Washington Native Plant Society

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES (please check one)

Individual \$25

Budget (Sr/Stdnt) \$15

Family \$35

Club/Institution \$50

Special Friend \$50-\$99

Best Friend \$100-\$499

Lifetime Supporter \$500+

CHAPTER AFFILIATION

Each membership entitles you to affiliation with one chapter; add \$5 for each additional chapter selected:

Central Puget Sound (Seattle)

Central Washington (Yakima)

Columbia Basin (Tri-Cities)

Koma Kulshan (Bellingham)

NE Washington (Spokane)Okanogan

Olympic Peninsula

Palouse (Pullman)

Sallal (Mt Vernon/Skagit Vllly)

San Juan Islands

South Sound (Olympia/Tacoma)

Suksdorfia (Vancouver/inactive)

Wenatchee Valley

At Large

WNPS POSTER & LAPEL PIN

"Wildflowers Across Washington"

A beautiful 24" x 36" full-color poster featuring 36 native species,

\$8 (members \$6) + \$2.50/poster for shipping & handling

"WNPS Enamel Lapel Pin"

\$4.25 + \$1.00/pin shipping & handling

ENCLOSED ARE:

My Dues (Please sign me up!) \$ _____

Additional Chapters (\$5/each) \$ _____

\$5.25 per lapel pin (S&H incld) \$ _____

\$10.50 per poster (non-member) \$ _____

\$8.50 per poster (members) \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Please make checks payable to WNPS and mail to:

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Native Plant Society South Sound Chapter

