

**Washington Native Plant Society • South Puget Sound Chapter
Winter 2003**



Upcoming Chapter Meetings

About our monthly presentations...

South Sound Chapter meetings generally gather in Olympia at the Forest Service building at 1835 Black Lake Blvd. SW. Outside of field trips and holiday gatherings, most meetings start at 7:00 pm. These "meetings" consist of a quick preview of activity announcements, but are mostly grounded in presentations that last 45 minutes to over an hour. Our topics are geared to attract and speak to neophytes and amateurs, as well as "dyed-in-the-wool" or otherwise committed botanists. Thanks to Helen Engle, always, and others, for bringing us treats to eat and drink when the presentations are over. Our last season of presentations drew larger crowds than usual. Perhaps we are biased, but presentations by Nalini Nadkarni, Clay Antieau, Robert Michael Pyle, Dr. Art Kruckeberg and our own Kevin Head, were top of the line! We are not only increasing our regional promotions but hoping to bring you topics that satiate your diverse range of botanical interests. Your Executive Committee has been working towards another season that does more of the same, and for their help I am thankful! The series that you see presented below represents core activities occurring in Olympia. Additional activities can also be found occurring in Tacoma on a less frequent basis (please contact me if I can send you an electronic flier for these). We also hope you will contact us if you have particular topic or presenter interests. That is the best way that we can serve you. We hope you will not only join us but become a regular with all of our adventures. Your membership will not only help to make this happen but help us keep the wheels of our programs turning. See you soon!

-- Anna Thurston, South Sound Chapter Chair --

*** Winter/Spring 2003 Presentations ***

February 3rd : *Forgotten Forest - The Dark Divide of Gifford Pinchot National Forest*

Jonathan Guzzo, Washington Trails Association Director of Advocacy will present both scenic and botanical images that reveal the ecology, threats and protection measures sought for this currently unprotected jewel of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. This discussion about the Dark Divide Roadless Area is also a great preview to anyone who might want to attend the annual WNPS study weekend that is scheduled to be lead by Dr. Art Kruckeberg in September (look for details in our Fall newsletter).

March 3rd : *Ethno Botanical History of the Lower Puget Sound - Mack Smith (Naturalist & Instructor)*

Up from California, Mack Smith will be bringing to us a taste for fun and good wild food. He has studied plants for 30+ years between the grounds of Santa Cruz and the Queen Charlotte Islands, and specializes in maritime/seacoast plants. As an instructor for the North Cascades Institute, the Olympic Park Institute, the San Juan Nature Institute, the Preservation Trust, and our own Native Plants Society, he is known for great photos and unusual recipes for delicious seaweed salads. In his presentation, Mack will share images of our early blooming native trees, shrubs and delicate sprouts while discussing how Northwest Coast Native Americans have traditionally used such plants for food, medicine and technology. This presentation precedes a free field trip that Mack will be leading on Saturday, March 8th. For more details check our Field Trips section of the newsletter.

April 7th : *Evolution of Coastal Beach Formations and Associated Plants - Lou Messmer & Dr. Jim Phipps*

Two lifetime instructors explore Washington coastal beach formations along with the interactions of plants that occur in this dynamic dune environment. Lou is our own beloved botanist and Jim is a long term geologist. Together they have conspired to bring us a visual tour of Washington's coastal dunes, highlighting the dynamics that make the dunes linger or languish with the winds and tides. Combined, these gentlemen have taught courses for Grays Harbor College for over 67 years! Although they are both retired, they are still very active with their respective interests and their joy in helping others develop their awareness of Nature.

May 5th : Biogeography of an Island Ecosystem (a listening presentation) - Tim McNulty

Tim McNulty brings to us a unique way of communing with plants and Nature. As president of Olympic Park Associates, Tim's presentation will focus on the environs that he also calls home. Tim is a poet, nature writer and conservation activist who has long been active in Northwest literary and environmental communities. His poems have been published in journals and anthologies in the U.S. and abroad; his essays and articles on forests, wildlife and conservation have appeared in numerous anthologies and magazines, and his natural history writings have been translated into German and Japanese. Tim's books of poetry include Pawtracks, Reflected Light, and In Blue Mountain Dusk. He is the author of ten books of natural history, including Olympic National Park: A Natural History, which won a Governor's Writers Award and Washington's Mount Rainier National Park, which won a National Outdoor Book Award. He has coauthored, with photographer Pat O'Hara, an award-winning series of books on national parks, and he is author of Washington's Wild Rivers: The Unfinished Work, and The Art of Nature.

This meeting will also close our meeting activities for the season. Join us for this highlight in presentations and to learn more about our list of field trips, volunteer activities and events that will occur throughout the summer season.

Directions to the Forest Service Building

1835 Black Lake Blvd - Olympia 98512-5623

(360)956-2400

To get there:

- take Hwy 101 off of I-5 (just barely north of Olympia) - 101 heads W only;
- travel ~1 mile and take the West Olympia /Black Lake Blvd exit
- turn left and go under Hwy 101 and past the 2nd stop light
- look for the Forest Service Bldg on the right side and enter through the side door.

Winter/Spring 2003 Field Trips

>>>>>>>>> Ethno Botanical Foray <<<<<<<<<<

Saturday, March 8th - 9:30 to 3:30. Mack Smith will lead an Ethno Botanical Foray around the Olympia waterfront home of Patricia Johnson (8716 Libby Road NE - 98506). With all sorts of spring plants poking out of the earth or even blooming, Mack will be ready to indulge in plant ID and discussions about how plants have been used by First Nation peoples for food, medicine and technology. Special treat will be the preparation of a seaweed salad and hot dish! He's also got great stories to tell. You'll want to bring an appetite and clothes to accommodate the weather. To register for this free outing, please contact Anna Thurston (253-566-3342 / a.thurston@worldnet.att.net). Space is limited, so register early.

>>>>>>>>> Scatter creek Wildlife Area – Saturday, April 26, 2003 <<<<<<<<<<

Spring flowers in the prairie and oak woodlands. Meet at 10:00am at the South Unit parking lot located at the end of Guava Road near 180th Ave. If time permits, we also will look at restoration efforts on the North Unit. For sign-up and carpool arrangements, which may include sharing the cost of a vehicle access permit, call Kathy Raettig, .360-956-1269 or Mary Fries 235-272-9192.

>>>>>>>>> Spring Wildflower Field Trips and Classes <<<<<<<<<<

Kevin Head will lead wildflower hikes this spring. The hikes will bring participants into wild areas in peak blooming time. Hike focus will enhance our appreciation of our Washington native habitats. The hikes will last all day long and involve between 1-5 miles of hiking. Discussions will focus on wildflower identification, geologic associations of an area, weather patterns and human considerations. **Thursday pre-hike discussion/slide show presentations will take place at Kevin's home.** The presentation will focus on wildflower families and identification techniques. **The Thursday presentations are required for participation.** Kevin is seeking 10-12 participants who will want to go to all five hikes.
(*schedule of Kevin's wildflower events on following page*)

Schedule of Hikes

March 6th Meeting 7:00- 8:30 pm

March 9th Hike to Catherine Creek/ Paul's Island/
Indian Pits Columbia River Gorge Meet at 7:00 am;
Arrive back in Oly 9:00 pm

April 3rd Meeting 7:00-8:30 pm

April 5th Hike to Major Creek/ Marsh Cutoff/ MP 21
Meet at 6:30; back at 9:00 pm-ish.

May 1st Meeting 7:00-8:30 pm

May 3rd Hike to Glacier Heritage County Park/
Scatter Creek Meet at 10:00; back at 6 pm

May 15th Meeting 7:00-8:30 pm

May 17th Hike to Bald Hills Nature Reserve Meet at
7:00 am; Back at 4:00 pm

May 29th Meeting 7:00- 8:30 pm

May 31st Hike to Umtanum Ridge Meet at 6:00 am;
Back late or spend night and do Sunday hike too.

Contact Kevin Head at 360-943-3752 evenings/weekends or via e-mail: khead@ekit.com

Notes From the Field

In an effort to add more botanical substance to future newsletters, we will be featuring articles on native plants, local habitats, native plant gardening tips, hikes, specific natural areas such as a wetland or forest, etc. that occur in our chapter's geographic area. Please submit any articles you would like to contribute to the Chair or Vice Chair prior to the next newsletter. To start us off, Rod has included an article on water howellia, which he surveys at Fort Lewis.

Water Howellia 101.

As glacial ice retreated from its terminal margin just south of Olympia some 16,000 years ago, large amounts of sand and gravel were carried by melt-water to help form our current day prairies. Additionally, large blocks of ice broke off the glaciers and formed many of the region's kettle wetlands and depressions. For thousands of years indigenous people maintained the open prairie landscape of south Puget Sound with fire, and many species of flora and fauna adapted to this unique habitat, several of which are now very rare. One of the more unique features of the prairies were the ephemeral kettle marshes that were peppered across the frequently burned landscape. These wetland perimeters were thinned by frequent prairie fires, and would have historically had very little perimeter vegetation. They dry up each fall and only recharge with winter rains. One plant that adapted to this ecological niche was water howellia (*Howellia aquatilis*), in the harebell family.

Howellia, is a rare, regionally endemic, annual aquatic forb that is federally listed as Threatened. It is known from only seven disjunct Northwest locations (Montana, Idaho, Washington, and northern California) and has been extirpated from historical locations throughout Oregon. In Washington, it occurs near Spokane, and

sporadically in Thurston, Pierce and Clark counties. In western Washington the largest populations occur on Fort Lewis where it has been found in 18 wetlands, though half the wetlands contain only a few individual plants that continue to persist each year. Today, these wetlands share a similar deciduous perimeter landscape consisting primarily of Oregon ash, with black cottonwood, quaking aspen, and garry oak as co-dominants (*Fraxinus latifolia*, *Populus trichocarpa*, *P. tremuloides*, *Quercus garryana*) There is often a dense aquatic shrub component of hardhack (*Spirea douglasii*), or occasionally whiplash willow (*Salix lasiandra*). Creek dogwood, twinberry, western crabapple and mock orange are also common perimeter shrubs (*Cornus stolonifera*, *Lonicera involucrata*, *Philadelphus lewisii*, *Pyrus fusca*).

Aquatic species found growing with howellia include: water parsnip, water parsley, water-starwort, simple stem bur-reed, common spike rush, western mannagrass, white-water buttercup, lesser spearwort, short awn foxtail, marsh speedwell, cow lily, water horsetail, water plantain and bladderwort (*Sium suave*, *Oenanthe sarmentosa*, *Callitriche heterophylla*, *Sparganium emersum*, *Eleocharis palustris*, *Glyceria occidentalis*,

Ranunculus aquatilis, *R. flammula*, *Alopecurus aequalis*, *Veronica scutellata*, *Nuphar polysepalum*, *Equisetum fluviatile*, *Alisma plantago-aquatica*, and *Utricularia vulgaris*). Wetland size varies from several acres to small 20m x 10m ‘puddles’.

Howellia is a fragile, slender, multi-stemmed species that can reach more than a meter in length. It is dependent on water for structural support, and can form dense floating mats when it reaches the surface. It is self-pollinating, and both submerged apetalous flowers, and emergent petaled flowers, produce small fruits with 1-5 seeds. Stems frequently break and remain viable as floating fragments. It is usually found rooted in water up to 1.2 meters deep, before the water recedes through the summer and dries out by fall. Seeds germinate on the exposed substrate with the arrival of the fall rain, though there is little growth until the spring. Seeds can remain viable for more than one year. It usually grows around wetland perimeters under the canopy of large ash or willow branches, or occasionally in more open water with cow lilies. Perhaps the greatest risk to howellia are changes to the hydrologic regime of the wetlands caused

either by changing global weather patterns that fail to fully recharge the wetlands, or more direct human caused impacts. Howellia soon perishes without water, and as an annual species it is vital to set seed each year on the exposed substrate. Low water levels also enable habitat alteration through the spread of weeds like reed canary-grass and 'invasive' natives such as hardhack, with which howellia is unable to compete. Too much water restricts where seeds are able to germinate and grow. Additionally, most prairie wetlands that were once largely free from conifers are now surrounded by dense Douglas fir forest, which limits the amount of light and warmth able to penetrate the wetland, and which intercepts much needed precipitation.

Howellia was only discovered at Fort Lewis in 1994, and continues to be found occasionally in similar wetlands. If you know of a wetland that fits the description, check it out in mid-June! And if you are lucky enough to see its attractive, small, bilabiate white flowers poking above the surface, remember to call the Washington Natural Heritage Program!

Executive Committee Member Introductions (cont.)

Patricia Johnson first became interested in plants after taking "*Identification of Grasses, Sedges, and Rushes*" from Al Wiedemann at the Evergreen State College. As a wetland biologist with the Washington State Department of Ecology, Patricia has gotten a lot of practice identifying the most common grasses, sedges, and rushes as well as other plants that occur in wetlands. Patricia loves to hike and see new plants, and she loves to key plants. "Keying plants is like sitting down for a conversation. By the time I've figured out the genus and species, I feel like I know the plant a little bit better."

Penny Kelley - I became interested in plants after taking a botany class, just for fun, while living in Illinois. It was at this time that I also became involved in doing volunteer restoration work. When I moved to Washington, I took the very same class that Patricia Johnson was in, "Identification of Grasses, Sedges, and Rushes". I took the class because I was intrigued by the grasses (I still am) and my botany teacher would not really talk about them very much. She told me that the study of grasses was very technical. During this time, I also continued to do a lot of volunteer restoration work, finding the South Sound Prairies to be grass heaven as well as containing other wonderful plants. About two years ago, I was very fortunate to become the resident caretaker for the Glacial Heritage Preserve and am there to this day. My husband and I still run the volunteer workdays and we continue to enjoy our time out on this wonderful site.

Lisa Berntsen - This year, I am the Field Trip coordinator for the South Sound Chapter. Previously I served as Vice Chair for the chapter but felt that my talents could be better utilized in this current position. In this role I am excited about providing avenues for our members to experience the world of native plants. I hope to coordinate at least one field trip a month during the spring and summer months. I will need everyone's help to accomplish this goal – both attendees and leaders are needed. I will be soliciting field trip leaders to introduce us to great places in the Pacific Northwest. Leaders do not have to be experts, just know where to go so that we all can learn from one another. This is the key to the growth of the field trip program. When I am not coordinating field trips for WNPS, I fill up the remainder of my time as President of Applied Environmental Services, Inc., a consulting firm in Port Orchard, co-leading the Tacoma Mountaineers Scrambles course, and most importantly, being a mom. If you would like to lead or participate in the development of field trips contact me at 253-857-2569 or via e-mail at lberntsen@appliedenvironmentalservices.com.

Volunteer Opportunities

>>>>>>>>> **Volunteers needed to help in transplanting** <<<<<<<<<<

Mount Rainier National Park Greenhouse needs volunteers to help with transplanting, Mid-April through July. Some 69,000 plant for meadow restoration were propagated and planted in 2002, 31% more than were produced in 2001. Although the seed crop was poor this year, our volunteers spent more time gleaning, and seeds in storage from last year also will be used. If you can help with transplant chores, particularly on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, call the Greenhouse at 360-569-2211 x6170. A Saturday might be arranged if you organize a group to come when work is needed. Bare ground will be grateful.

>>>>>>>>> **Protecting *Lathyrus torreyi*** <<<<<<<<<<

Protecting the low-growing Torrey peavine, *Lathyrus torreyi*, requires persistent pulling of herb Robert and other exotics which could overwhelm this state-threatened plant. Torrey peavine is found on only a few sites in Washington, including Swan Creek Park in Tacoma. Weed pulling parties are scheduled on Thursday, May 22 and Tuesday, June 17 beginning at 9 a.m. at the S. 56th St. entrance to the park. For more information, and to let us know about when you can come for additional times during the summer, contact Mary Fries, 253-272-9192 or Mary Sue Gee, 253-531-5767.

>>>>>>>>> **Olympia Volunteers in the Park** <<<<<<<<<<

The Olympia Volunteers In Parks (VIP) program is looking for volunteers for native plant restoration projects! Our Restoration Wednesday volunteers remove invasive non-native plants such as English ivy, Himalayan blackberry and Scotch broom and replant with native species. These workparties are every Wednesday, 9:00-Noon. Our Stewardship Saturday work parties frequently involve native plant restoration as well. These workparties are every other Saturday, 9:00-Noon. This is a great way to have fun outdoors, make new friends, and gain valuable experience. To find out more about how you can be a VIP, call 753-8365 or e-mail jturlove@ci.olympia.wa.us. You can use the below contact info for receiving your newsletter.

Jonathon Turlove, Coordinator
Olympia Volunteers In Parks Program
City of Olympia Parks,
Arts and Recreation Department

222 Columbia St NW,
Olympia, WA 98501
(360) 753-8365
(360) 753-8267 / fax
jturlove@ci.olympia.wa.us

>>>>>>>>> **Prairie Restoration Workdays Glacial Heritage Preserve** <<<<<<<<<<

The second Saturday of **every month** we have lots of fun with great people!
Workdays start at 10:00 a.m.

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 and Thurston County Parks and Recreation.

For more information contact:
Penny Kelley or Dan Grosboll
P.O. Box 385, Littlerock, WA 98556
360.273.1820, pennydan@earthlink.net

Upcoming Workshops & Events

>>>>>>>>> WNPS State activities 2003 <<<<<<<<<<

April 5th WNPS Business meeting - Ellensburg
April 25-27 WNPS Strategic Planning Retreat to be held at Camp Delaney, Sun Lakes Park
May 16-18 WNPS Annual Study Weekend to be held in the Columbia Basin

Members of the Washington Native Plant Society are encouraged to learn more about activities happening at the state level. For more information about participation in state-wide activities, please contact the WNPS Administrator, Catherine Hovanic at 206- 527-3210, or via e-mail at wnps@wnps.org.

>>>>>>>>> Pierce County Native Plant Salvage Projects <<<<<<<<<<

People interested in the development of a *Pierce County Native Plant Salvage program* will be meeting again on **Tuesday, January 28th** at 3:30 pm to work on the final touches of a proposal for presentation to area agencies. If you want to be a part of proposal presentations, or to confirm your organization's support for this effort, please be sure to let Anna Thurston know and/or submit a letter describing your group's interests. Anna can be reached at work at 253-502-8723 or via e-mail at athursto@cityoftacoma.org.

Saturday, February 8th, 9:00 - noon - *Plant Salvage at the Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium* (where construction for the new Asia Exhibit will occur). We'll be providing a plant ID walk, tools and refreshments. We need your enthusiasm and muscle power to make it happen. For more details contact Anna Thurston at work at 253-502-8723 or via e-mail at athursto@cityoftacoma.org.

>>>>>>>>> Thurston County Native Plant Salvage Workshops <<<<<<<<<<

Workshops:	"Naturescaping Field Class" -- Saturday, April 5, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
"Winter Twig Identification" -- Sunday, February 2, 2003. Session I: 10 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.; Session II: 1 to 3:15 p.m.	Salvage Events: January 26, February 9, February 23, March 6
"Planning Your Home Revegetation Project" -- Wednesday, February 12, 6 to 9:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 15, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Call Erica Guttman at 360-704-7785 for directions and details for all events.

>>>>>>>>> Upcoming Landscape Seminars <<<<<<<<<<

Tacoma Water and the City of Olympia are both hosting landscape seminars that often involve the incorporation of native plants. Here are some dates to think about:

Tuesday, March 11, 7-9 pm; \$5 - *Waterwise Garden Design for the Urban Garden* featuring *Ciscoe Morris* (For more information, contact the City of Olympia at 360-753-8793 or via e-mail at: tbreuer@ci.olympia.wa.us)

Tuesday, March 18, 7-9 pm; \$5 - *No Work, No Watering: Building Your Landscape Around Garden Accents and Tough Plants* featuring *Marianne Binnetti*. (For more information, contact the City of Olympia at 360-753-8793 or via e-mail at: tbreuer@ci.olympia.wa.us)

Tuesday, March 25, 7-9 pm; \$5 - *Natural Lawn Care* featuring *Ciscoe Morris*. (For more information, contact the City of Olympia at 360-753-8793 or via e-mail at: tbreuer@ci.olympia.wa.us)

Friday & Saturday, April 11 & 12, all day/both days – *Building Sustainability into Landscapes - A 30th Anniversary Celebration of Learning with the WSU Pierce County Master Gardeners*. For more information contact Tacoma Water at 253-502-8723, or via e-mail at conserve_h2o@cityoftacoma.org.

News and Other Items of Interest

>>>>>>>>> Favorite Native Plant Recipes <<<<<<<<<<<

Submitted by Joyce Ogden

NETTLES-- Pick tender shoots (with gloves!) in early spring. Boil gently to dissolve the stingers. Flavor is milder than spinach.

WILD WATERCRESS ("POPWEEDS")-- These are coming up from now until spring in gardens and flowerbeds. Pull up, cut off roots, wash and use like Alfalfa sprouts in any salad.

>>>>>>>>> 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; at fschwartz@evcc.ctc.edu or by phone at 425-388-9451.

>>>>>>>>> Native Plant Conservation Campaign News <<<<<<<<<<<

Rep. James Hansen (R-UT) has filed a bill which would exempt private property, military lands and ALL PLANTS from federal Endangered Species Act protection. The Botanical Society of America (BSA) has posted information about the bill on their web site with an e-mail link to Congress so that members of the public can express their views on this issue to their elected representatives. The BSA is not a lobbying agency, so if you have an opinion, they urge you to respond individually to this and make your views known to your legislators. The information is posted on the front page of the BSA's site at <http://www.botany.org/>

South Puget Sound Chapter Contacts

Chair

Anna Thurston
253-566-3342
a.thurston@worldnet.att.net

Vice-Chair

Rod Gilbert 360-456-4013
roderickgilbert@home.com

Secretaries

Julie Alesio & Brandi Eide
Alessio@cco.net blmaster@aol.com

Publicity

Joyce Ogden
jtogden@alumni.albany.edu

Treasurer

Patricia Johnson
smilacinastellata@msn.com

Newsletter

Penny Kelley
360-273-1820
pennypoa@earthlink.net

Liaison with Native Plant Salvage Project

Erica Guttman
360-704-7785
ericag@coopext.cahe.wsu.edu

Field Trip Coordinator

Lisa Berntsen
360-769-8400
lberntsen@appliedenvironmentalservices.com

Conservation

Mary Fries
620 N C St.
Tacoma, WA 98403-2800
253-272-9192

Volunteer Coordinator

Lila Muller
nwnatives@attbi.com

For membership information, contact the state chapter at 1-888-288-8022 or wnps@wnps.org

In Memory of Mareen....

Members of WNPS were shocked and saddened to learn of the passing of Mareen S. Kruckeberg (January 1925 - January 2003), one of our Founding Mothers, Internationally recognized expert Horticulturist, Our Generous Friend, Mentor and Inspiration. Our condolences to her family and especially to Professor Arthur Kruckeberg, the WNPS founding President, Mareen's partner in all things botanical and horticultural. There will be tributes to Mareen and her MsK Rare Plant Nursery in coming issues of WNPS state publications.



Summary of South Puget Sound Chapter Activities “Dates for Your Fridge”

Winter/Spring 2003 Presentations

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- **April 7th**: Evolution of Coastal Beach Formations and Associated Plants - Lou Messmer & Dr. Jim Phipps
- **May 5th**: Biogeography of an Island Ecosystem (a listening presentation) - Tim McNulty

Field Trips

- Ethno Botanical Foray - Saturday, **March 8th** - 9:30 to 3:30 with Mack Smith
- Scatter creek Wildlife Area – Saturday, **April 26th**, 2003 with Mary Fries & Kathy Raettig
- Spring Wildflower Field Trips and Classes with Kevin Head - Schedule of Hikes:

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