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# **Washington Native Plant Society South Sound Chapter Fall 2001**

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## **Upcoming Meeting Schedule**

WELCOME BACK! I hope everyone had a great summer. We are getting geared up for another fall season with great speakers and our member free for all presentation and potluck. Hope to see folks at the meetings!

### **October**

Mark Muller will take us on a virtual trip to the Siskiyou Mountains, focusing on the southern most section of PNW flora. He has some great slides to share and delights in exchanging with others their experiences and knowledge of this exciting botanical storehouse.

### **November**

Carol Trasatto, an herbalist at Radiance, will share her knowledge on medicinals and other native uses of herbs.

### **December**

Potluck and member free for all presentations. Get your slides ready, bring some poetry, displays any fun summer projects and don't forget to pick a favorite dish for the potluck.

All meetings occur on the first Wednesday of the month at the Forest Service Building located on Black Lake Blvd. The meetings start at 7:00 p.m. If you know of someone you would like to see as a guest speaker, please feel free to send in suggestions. If you have any questions about the meetings, please feel free to give one of your board members a call.

## **Conservation**

**Seed Picking at Mount Rainier**

## Mary Fries

It was a different year. Instead of a shoreline so saturated by last year's large snowpack that few plants bloomed, the Reflection Lake area provided a good harvest for eight volunteers. This group also drove up to the Paradise Visitor Center and picked seeds nearby to continue restoration plantings around the new dorm.

Five picked in the meadows around Tipsoo Lake to provide plants to fill in around drainage work done last summer between here and Chinook Pass. Those who hiked the Naches Loop trail in August 2000 saw this construction work. Many asters had lepidopteran larvae, as did the mountain daisy. A medium-sized, bright yellow butterfly with dark markings may be a suspect? A few were flying around. Customarily, we have hunted for plump pods of Veronica. At Tipsoo they had popped open, but one could look straight down and see a few bright orange-red seeds in the bottom of the capsules on about a third of the stems.

Two trips were made to Sunrise, where the lower loop of the old campground is almost finished, and we have begun to collect seeds for replanting an upper loop road. Last year we waited forever for seeds at Sunrise to ripen, especially green fescue. Because of the light snowpack and low summer precipitation, seed production in the area was again low. Undisturbed meadows were not as lush as usual. We caught the alpine aster seeds just as they fluffed out. This loop is a more challenging, drier area, apparently more exposed to the wind. Seven went the first time, and fewer went on the second trip.

Many thanks to all who helped and to Lila Muller who coordinated volunteers from the Olympia area.

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Mt. Rainier Greenhouse

Now that seed collection is completed at the Mt. Rainier greenhouse, the staff need some help with cleaning the seed. If you are interested in helping out, please call 360-569-2211 ext. 6170. Leave your name, phone number, the day you are available to come out and the best times for staff to return your call. Any help you can give is greatly appreciated!

### Glacial Heritage Workdays

On the second Saturday of every month, volunteers gather at the Glacial Heritage Preserve to help in the on going restoration efforts at this site. Activities ranges from pulling scotch broom to planting native species and seed collection. All workdays start at 10:00 a.m. If you are interested in helping out please contact Penny Kelley in the contacts section. Additional volunteer opportunities on prairies are available every Tuesday. Contact Dan Grosboll at [dgrosboll@tnc.org](mailto:dgrosboll@tnc.org) for details.

**October 13<sup>th</sup>** – Bird Box Cleaning! Glacial Heritage has several nest boxes on site that need cleaning every year. These boxes are spread over the site and this provides an opportunity to see some of prairie not normally seen on other workdays. There will also be opportunities to pull Scotch broom.

**November 10<sup>th</sup>** – Scotch Broom Pull! Yes, volunteers are still at it, pulling up that broom. While it does seem there is an endless supply of broom, volunteers are making a difference. For the last four years, one corner (about 60 acres) has been kept broom free and this area has been expanded. Any help in the battle against broom is always appreciated. There may be an opportunity to participate in planting native prairie plants as well.

**December 8<sup>th</sup>** – Scotch Broom Pull and Conifer Removal. Every year volunteers come out and pull broom in the morning and spend the afternoon removing small Douglas fir & lodgepole pine. These efforts help to keep

the open prairie intact and folks can take home a tree for Christmas. This can be a fun and safe activity for the family so come on out!

## **Upcoming Workshops & Events**

### **Field Trips**

As many of you may have noted, there were very few scheduled field trips for the summer. As a member of the Native Plant Society, I would like to offer this suggestion on field trips. If anyone has a place they like to go for a hike or know of a place they have not visited but would like to, please feel free to suggest a group hike be held at that site. While it is nice to have a planned event, in which we have a leader that might be prepared to give a talk, present some history etc., chapter members could certainly engage in some good old fashion, lets get together and hike, kind of field trips. I would love to find people to go for a hike with, visit and share some native plant knowledge. These trips could be as close as Swan Creek Canyon, located in Tacoma or farther away, on the coast or in the mountains. The planning can be as simple as picking a date, site and time and for folks that are interested in hiking. If you know of place, would like to just get together and hike, please feel free to submit your suggestion to David Brastow, our field trip coordinator. His contact information is found at the end of this newsletter. Now is the time to plan, in anticipation of the summer months for next year.

## **News and Other Items of Interest**

### **Good Books to Share**

#### Grasslands

Richard Manning, Viking Penguin, 1995

Grasslands is a book that takes a long, hard look at the history, biology and politics of the American Prairie. In the author's wanderings of this compelling landscape, the reader is taken through time, as Manning looks at the past, present and hopeful future. He starts twelve thousand years ago and continues on through extinction of species, European settlement, the expansion of America and current agricultural practices. Along the way Manning introduces us to the native flora and fauna of this landscape and the causes for the diminishment of this grassland system. He interviews the current inhabitants, ranging from Ted Turner, the progressive and controversial Montana Rancher to the biologists who are trying to restore this native grassland. From the folks who view native plants as weeds to the restoration of those same "native weeds", from the past to his thoughts on future, Manning successfully weaves together the diverse elements that make up the history of the American West and how it was settled.

If you have a favorite book you have read recently and would like to share, please send in a short summary to the newsletter editor. Contact information can be found below.

## **Contacts**

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