

# The Potent Teller

Newsletter of the Salal Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society  
serving Northern Snohomish, Skagit and Island Counties

September 2004

Issue 4-04

## News from the Garden

Louise Brissey

The suspense is over and a bright blue paint line marks the outline of the new building that will house the Mount Vernon WSU research facility which is adjacent to our native plant garden. The new facility will bring increased benefits to the agricultural community and to all the participants at the Skagit Display Gardens. We are pleased that we can continue to be a part of this new phase at WSU.

The native plant display garden itself remains untouched by the placement of the new building, but the propagation area will be moved to the south of the garden and will be reduced in size. The University appreciates and values our commitment and contribution to the Display Gardens and is working hard to help us re-establish the propagation area. Due to the disruption of the propagation area, the Fall Plant Sale will be an inventory reduction sale. There will be no plant sales in 2005 because construction will limit parking and access to our sales area.

In October, the plastic hoop house and shade house will be removed. WSU will help us build a new shade house, but we must install a new irrigation system, build soil bins, pot storage and work areas, place propagation bins, etc. etc. This move and the development of a new propagation area will take lots of work, and extra "helping hands" are needed.

**So, the entire membership of the Salal Chapter is invited to a "GARDEN PARTY" to be held on Saturday, October 23, 2004 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be a variety of tasks to fit everybody's skills and abilities. Bring your work gloves and work up an appetite. Lunch will be provided.**

Please join us and help us continue this worthwhile activity of providing native plants for gardeners and developing a demonstration garden where the beauty and usefulness of our native plants can be displayed.



Claspaleaf twisted-stalk (*Streptopus amplexifolius* var. *americanus*). Illustrations in this issue are from Sarah Spear Cooke, *A Field Guide to the Common Wetland Plants of Western Washington and Northwestern Oregon* (Seattle Audubon and WNPS, 1997).

## Salal Chapter Fall Native Plant Sale Saturday, September 25 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

The WNPS Salal Chapter's 6th annual fall sale will be held on Saturday, September 25, 2004 from **10 a.m. to 1 p.m.** (note the time change) at the Native Plant Garden area of the Skagit Display Gardens located at Washington State University's Research Station (16650 State Highway 536) in Mount Vernon.

Expect to find a good selection of native trees, shrubs, perennials, ground covers and ferns. Our chapter plant sales are extremely popular so come early for the best selection but remember that the sale does not open until 10 a.m. There will be no plant sales in 2005 due to the construction planned for the Research Station, so don't miss this opportunity to select new natives for your landscape and get them established now.

Scheduled work parties in September will be spent preparing for the sale. We can use extra volunteers on Saturday, September 11. Thursday, September 23 and Friday, September 24 will be special workdays to set up for the sale.

Proceeds from the sale support the Native Plant Garden. Tour the lovely Garden while you're at the sale for ideas on locating and grouping your new natives. For more information on the sale, contact Pam Pritzl at 360-387-7024 ([ppritzl@whidbey.net](mailto:ppritzl@whidbey.net)).

### Preserving Native Plant Habitat in the Chuckanuts Brenda Cunningham

The Chuckanuts, rocky ramparts that rise suddenly out of the Samish River in northwest Skagit County, host all that remains of a forest once connecting the saltwater of Puget Sound and the glaciers of the Cascade Mountains. This year Skagit Land Trust and Whatcom Land Trust are collaborating on an exciting initiative to save a substantial piece of this landscape, called the Cascades-to-Chuckanuts Corridor Project.

Skagit Land Trust has begun a special outreach and education initiative to meet landowners in the Chuckanut Foothills and introduce them to the work of land trusts. Interested and qualifying landowners may contact Skagit Land Trust for a free inventory of the plant and animal species that are present on their land, plus information on land protection, habitat and forest management options, and restoration possibilities for their property. The landowners learn first hand about conservation easements and other methods for protecting their land from a Trust representative. There are no requirements for pursuing any conservation option, although the Trust would, of course, also work with interested and qualifying landowners on land protection if desired. If you own 10 or more acres in the Chuckanuts or know of someone who does and would be interested in learning more about Skagit Land Trust and how they can protect their property, please have them contact us at 360-428-7878 or email [trustbc@fidalgo.net](mailto:trustbc@fidalgo.net) or write to PO Box 1017, Mount Vernon, WA 98273. We would be happy to set up an appointment to discuss the options available to private landowners.

# Chapter News

## Chairman's Thoughts

Susan Alaynick

I have had a great spring and summer of field trips, both with the plant society and independently. Like a true Northwesterner, I have complained about the weather—too hot. My knowledge of plants seems to vacillate wildly. Wow, I sure am seeing a lot of new plants and finding names for many small plants that I have seen before but not known where to find the matching picture. Or, gee, I didn't know that there were so many plants that look so similar or that there were several more species in a genus I thought I knew. I have also noted the variety of common and scientific names for the same plant in the various reference books I own. I am, in short, continuing to learn and be awed by our flora, especially as seen with a hand lens. I have begun to be able to predict what plants may be growing in a particular habitat, and the influence of altitude, soil, sun exposure, and other factors on plant growth. I hope all of you have had similar experiences this summer.

As we head into another season of program meetings and field trips, please give some thought to what you would like the Salal Chapter to offer you. Are there topics of special interest you would like to see addressed by our Chapter? Do you have a special interest or expertise that you could share? Let me know your thoughts. I can be reached by email at [s\\_alaynick@hotmail.com](mailto:s_alaynick@hotmail.com) or at 13625-11th Ave. NE, Marysville, WA, 98271.

## Photos Wanted

If anyone has photos from the spring trip to Washington Park with Art Kruckeberg, please contact Tom Corrigan at 360-466-3215 or [tfcorrigan@hotmail.com](mailto:tfcorrigan@hotmail.com). Thanks!

## Salal Chapter Online

The salal chapter web site is a wonderful resource for news, plant lists, and calendar updates. Thanks to **Michael Warmuth**, who has volunteered to take over maintaining the chapter website. Chapter members wishing to post items to the website may contact Michael at [Michael@thewarmuths.com](mailto:Michael@thewarmuths.com) or mail items to P.O. Box 1823, Anacortes, WA 98221.

The Salal Chapter also maintains an email list of our members so we can send out timely notice of events between issues of the *Potent Teller*. If you'd like to be included, email [marcialhunt@comcast.net](mailto:marcialhunt@comcast.net).

You can now receive the *Potent Teller* via email! If you'd like to receive the newsletter in PDF format instead of paper, email [marcialhunt@comcast.net](mailto:marcialhunt@comcast.net).

## Thank You From Guemes Channel Park

Marcia Hunt

Thank you to Bob Knowles, Marianne Kooiman, Sarah Anderson, Valerie Robinson, Gail Nichols, and David Hall for helping out this summer at native plant work parties at the new Kiwanis Waterfront Park adjacent to the Guemes Ferry landing on 6th Street in Anacortes.

Members of the public have already begun approaching those of us weeding or calling the Parks Department to inquire about the identity of some of the plants that interest them. We expect that this wonderful park will continue to develop its potential as a demonstration site for native plants in public and private landscapes.

Local chapter members will continue to monitor and care for this park during the dormant season. If you are interested in joining in, on either an ongoing or a one-time basis, contact Marcia Hunt at 360-293-0983. Thank you!

## Native Plant Focus Day and Plant Sale

The Native Plant Salvage Project, managed by a group of Snohomish County Native Plant Stewards, is hosting a Native Plant event on Saturday, October 23rd, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at South Whidbey Tilth's property at the northeast corner of Highway 525 and Thompson Road on Whidbey Island. This will be the last Farmers' Market for the season as well so there will be food, vegetables, music, etc. Tour the Forest Restoration Project, Native Plant Salvage holding facility, the beginnings of a Garry Oak meadow and view plans for propagating facilities. Learn more about native plants, how to deal with those noxious weeds (a special focus will be the variety of thistles), and restoration projects on the island. For more information contact Barbara Kolar at [grendl@gte.net](mailto:grendl@gte.net).

## Education Grants Available From WNPS

The Education Committee encourages educators throughout our state to develop projects about native plants and plant habitats for their classes. Teachers who have been granted awards can serve as mentors for other teachers hoping to do similar projects in their school districts.

Grants, funded by WNPS member dues, are available for education projects that further the goals of the Society. Projects may be in the form of a permanent public display including plantings or labeling of native plants; an educational curriculum or museum display; a website or website-based educational program; posters, signs, brochures or presentations about invasive plants; or a teacher resource package that is suitable for reproduction and distribution. Most awards are granted in amounts up to \$500. In accordance with current WNPS strategic plan focus areas, priority consideration will be given to projects relating to shrub-steppe or Garry oak plant communities, or to the effects of invasive exotic species on Washington native plants.

Project application guidelines are available on line at [www.wnps.org](http://www.wnps.org). Project applications and inquiries should be submitted to Payla Schwartz, WNPS Education Committee Chair, Everett Community College, 2000 Tower St, Everett WA 98201, 425-388-9451, [fschwartz@everettcc.edu](mailto:fschwartz@everettcc.edu).

The Washington Native Plant Society (WNPS) is dedicated to the preservation, conservation, and study of the native plants of Washington and to the education of the public on the values of native flora and its habitat.

WNPS is an affiliate of Earth Share of Washington.

## Salal Chapter Officers

Chairman: **Susan Alaynick** (360-659-8792)

Treasurer: **Brian Scheuch** (360-466-2146)

Secretary: **Pat Youngman** [360-299-1495]

Visit our website at [www.wnps.org/salal](http://www.wnps.org/salal).

The *Potent Teller* is issued five times yearly on the first of February, April, June, September and December. Direct submissions to: Marcia Hunt, 1515 14th Street, Anacortes, WA 98221, 360-293-0983, [marcialhunt@comcast.net](mailto:marcialhunt@comcast.net). Next deadline: November 15, 2004.

Back issues are available from the Editor for the cost of photocopying. Thank you to charter chairman **Art Kermoade** for compiling the *Potent Teller* archives.

The *Potent Teller* is printed on tree-free paper (75% post-consumer recycled paper and 25% hemp) that is produced without chlorine bleaching so it is not contributing dioxins to our environment. Thank you to **Printwise** in Anacortes and Mount Vernon for special ordering this paper for us.

Please direct address changes to Washington Native Plant Society, 6310 NE 74th St, Suite 215E, Seattle, WA 98115, 206-527-3210 or call toll free 1-888-288-8022 or email [wnps@wnps.org](mailto:wnps@wnps.org).

# Wider News

## Fall 2004 Watershed Masters Volunteer Training Program (Class XIII) Begins September 22

Are you interested in meeting new friends, learning from local experts about water quality-related issues in the Skagit Valley Community, and participating in meaningful community projects? The Skagit Conservation District is now taking applications from interested community residents, age 17 and up, for participation in the Fall 2004 Watershed Masters Volunteer Training Program. The purpose of the program is to increase public awareness on a variety of water quality problems and solutions and to inspire community stewardship in regards to water quality.

### What Do Watershed Master Volunteers Do?

- Receive 40 hours of FREE training which covers geology, history, the biology and habitat needs of local salmon, stream ecology, soils and wetlands, the values and functions of estuaries, nonpoint sources of pollution, household hazardous waste, forest stewardship, agriculture, and water quality monitoring.
- Hear from MANY LOCAL EXPERTS on a variety of topics and issues.
- Become familiar with the complexity and dilemmas involved in managing our natural resources.
- Participate in field trips to explore local watersheds.
- Receive a free comprehensive reference notebook.
- Meet new friends.
- Participate in meaningful community projects.

Volunteers who complete the training return forty hours of volunteer service over the next year (or two) by undertaking projects designed to protect and/or restore water quality, or educating the public on these same issues. The Project Coordinator will work with each Watershed Master Volunteer who has completed the training to design a plan of action for returning the forty hours of training. Volunteer projects are geared toward the interests of the participant.

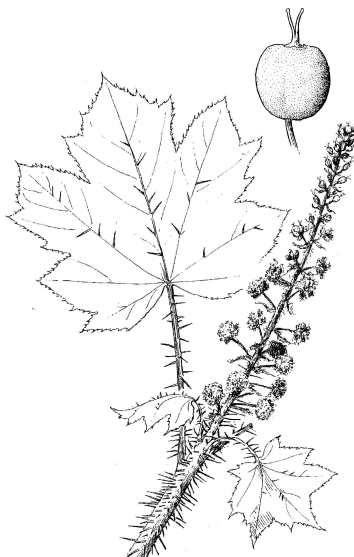
### Scheduled Training Dates

The Fall 2004 Training will begin on **Wednesday, September 22, 2004 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.** and will continue **every Wednesday evening through November 10th (8 weeks)**. The program also includes three Saturday field excursions, which have tentatively been scheduled for September 25th, October 9th, and October 23rd. The training will be held at the Port of Skagit County, located at 15400 Higgins Airport Way, in Burlington. Field trips will require carpooling and we will meet at various sites (to be arranged).

Class limit: 25 first come basis  
(class fills up fast)

Application Deadline:  
Wednesday, September 15,  
2004

For an application packet or questions, contact Kristi Carpenter at the Skagit Conservation District, 360-428-4313 or email: [kristi@skagitcd.org](mailto:kristi@skagitcd.org).



## Devil's Club Makes the News

*Salal Chapter member Barbara Irgens advises that a northwest native, devil's club, was featured on NPR's Morning Edition on August 11 this year. An excerpt from the story is reprinted below from the NPR website. To listen to the entire broadcast, visit the NPR site at [www.npr.org/features/feature.php?wfid=3607496](http://www.npr.org/features/feature.php?wfid=3607496). I particularly enjoyed learning that leaves of skunk cabbage can be used as gloves to protect the hands of harvesters from devil's club's thorny spines!*

Devil's Club: A Medicine Cabinet for Alaska Tribe  
Thorny Plant's Popularity May Endanger Its Sacred Role

Aug. 11, 2004 -- In Sitka, Alaska, one of the most revered members of the community is the thorny devil's club. But the plant's popularity as a medicinal may endanger its sacred role in Tlingit culture. NPR's Ketzell Levine reports.

The Tlingit have turned to devil's club for a list of ailments you wouldn't wish on an enemy: from coughs and colds to stomach ulcers, tuberculosis and hypoglycemia. Tribe members steep it into teas, mash it into salves, chew, sip and steam it. It's also used to ward off evil. The plant, dubbed the "Tlingit aspirin" has not been approved for medicinal use by the Food and Drug Administration.

In a report for [npr.org](http://npr.org), Levine describes the devil's club characteristics and native habitats:

Devil's club, or *Oplopanax horridus*, is a plant with an unmistakable presence. It has leaves like palm fronds, spines like daggers and red fruit that's candy for bears. It sticks its long neck out as far south as Oregon, and to the east, has even surprised a few Michigan hikers with its cloak of vicious thorns. But the plant is perhaps most common to the bear, deer and salmon habitats of Alaska's Tongass National Forest.

Growing undisturbed among 500-year-old trees, devil's club runs with abandon. It scampers up and across these spacious, wild woodlands, where the conifers are so widely spaced that the sun pours right in, and right through the plant's open-palmed leaves.

From a distance, devil's club looks enticing; its foliage, balanced on top of long, leggy canes, seem to offer an almost tropical respite. But a close encounter with the plant is one you're not likely to forget: spines cover every inch of its stem, and punctuate the undersides of its leaves.

If you're not inclined to harvest the plant for its medicinal properties – as First Peoples have done for centuries -- devil's club can seem short on charm. In areas where it goes unchecked, it's even considered a nasty weed. But horticultural fans of *Oplopanax horridus* praise its use as a bold foliage plant, among them garden writer William Cullina. In his book, *Native Trees, Shrubs, & Vines*, Cullina finds inspiration in the details of devil's club leaves:

"Artery-size veins create deep channels in the blade, like a landscape scoured by rivers. The tissue in between the veins is itself puckered and textured, and the leaves, arrayed as they are on very long petioles, create the impression of a rich green quilt that is just singing with design possibilities."

Devil's club is reliably hardy to minus 20 degrees, though it's not all that tolerant of heat and sun. Gardeners who want to try it might keep in mind its natural habitat: damp forest floors with moist, acidic soil.

# Native Plants Afloat

## Native Plants for Artificial Ponds in Coastal

### Washington

Al Hanners

This is a generic appraisal of native plants for display in artificial ponds in the northwest coastal areas of Washington State. It is based largely on investigations by the writer using watercraft on some twenty "natural" lakes and ponds between sea level and an elevation of 2000 feet in coastal Whatcom and Skagit Counties, and on contributions by colleagues in the Koma Kulshan and Salal Chapters of the Washington Native Plant Society that are much appreciated.

### Selection of species

Selection of species would depend on the size, depth, and slopes of the shorelines, steady maintenance or variation of water level in accordance with seasonal changes in nature, and the amount of dissolved oxygen. Final selection would depend on availability of plants. A number of nurseries specialize in native plants but probably not all species could be purchased. Species selected are listed by common habitat in the wild. Criteria for recommended and rejected species are given below.

- Native plants that are truly native to the northwest coastal area.
- Colorful, or with distinctive morphology that would attract attention.
- Attractive species seldom seen and/or seldom identified by amateur botanists.
- Not aggressive. It is extremely difficult to control aggressive wetland plants.

### Free floating plants

- *Ricciacarpus natans*, purple-fringed riccia, is an attractive liverwort with green fan-shaped lobes and purple rhizoids projecting at the edges.
- *Spirodela polyrrhiza*, greater duckweed. Often with *Lemna minor*, lesser duckweed, and overlooked. It usually is reddish on one or both sides of the thalus.

### Rooted species for main body of the pond

- *Brasenia schreberi*, watershield, should be considered. Floating leaves are on long, pink petioles with elliptic blades commonly more than 5 cms long, and are variegated reddish and yellowish much of the summer. Lovely purple flowers bloom only a short time. It is likely to spread where water depths are less than about one meter unless manually controlled.
- *Potamogeton natans*, floating-leaved pondweed. This species is especially attractive because floating leaves usually are reddish starting about the middle of August or earlier. However, here is a note of caution. During a single summer it totally dominated shallow water on the sunny side of Bug Lake (a pond) in Bellingham.
- *Potamogeton epihydrous*, ribbon-leaved pondweed. It often grows in water about 1 ½ to 2 meters deep. Rhizomatous, it commonly is seen in patches, but it is not aggressive. The blades for upper leaves are elliptic, or even almost diamond-shaped, and are on long petioles. Most of them float, but some may ascend well above water level, and hence, attract attention from shore.

### Rooted plants for shallow water near pond margins including those that could be stranded by mid-summer if the water level drops.

There are numerous attractive native species adapted to shallow water near shorelines. Hence, designing a pond with gently sloping near shore areas should be considered. Some of those species, in natural conditions, often are totally emergent by mid-summer. If kept partly submerged, some will die; others

will become abnormally large. Moreover, if not partly submerged at least some of the year, they will die.

- *Ranunculus aquatilis* var. *capillaceus*, water-buttercup. This species is attractive because all leaves, submerged or floating, are filiformly dissected. It grows near a muddy shoreline and prostrate stems root at the nodes. It could be expected to survive if stranded by a seasonal drop in water level.
- *Ranunculus flammula*, creeping buttercup. The lower part of the stems are prostrate to decumbent and root at the nodes. The long leaf blades are more or less linear and on long petioles, thus attracting attention. Like *R. aquatilis*, *R. flammula* grows near a muddy shoreline. It could be expected to survive if stranded by a seasonal drop in water level.
- *Polygonum amphibium*, water smartweed. It has attractive reddish flowering heads. In vegetative state it is distinguished by floating leaves with midribs and lateral veins in contrast to floating leaves of *Potamogetons* with more or less parallel veins. Grows in shallow water not far from shore.
- *Menyanthes trifoliata*, buckbean. It has strikingly beautiful, mostly white flowers, and it grows in water to a depth of about 2/3 meters. However, while the flowers have a bad odor that attracts insects, I have never heard anyone complain.
- *Potentilla palustris*, marsh cinquefoil, grows in shallow water near shore.
- *Sparganium emersum*, narrow leaf burweed, grows near shore. It has attractive greenish white flowers in globular clusters.
- *Alisma plantago-aquatica*, water plantain. In natural settings, it is mostly on shore after water level drops by mid-summer.
- *Hippuris vulgaris*, mare's-tail, is an attractive, erect plant that could be totally emergent by mid-summer after the water level drops.

### Life in motion. Plants to attract dragonflies and blue damselflies.

Life in motion makes a pond much more attractive and adult dragonflies and damselflies spend a good deal of time about the pond where they have metamorphosed. The size of the stem and location of the plant, shallow water near shore or deeper water farther from shore, are said to be important factors in choice by larva as places to climb out of the water and metamorphose into adults.

- *Dulichium arundinaceum*, Dulichium, is a member of the Sedge Family characterized by three ranks of upper stem leaves, and it is commonly found in shallow water on edges of ponds. It is a favorite species used by the larva of dragonflies to climb out of water and metamorphose into adults. After metamorphosing, adults leave the pond and later return, but not to the plant species where they metamorphosed.
- *Eleocharis palustris*, spikerush, also is a member of the Sedge Family. It is characterized by a single leafless erect stem with a single terminal spikelet. It is common in shallow water at edges of lakes and ponds, and in standing water in marshes.

The presence of both Dulichium and spikerushes on the edge of a pond would benefit dragonflies and promote life in motion at the pond.

- *Scirpus americanus*, three-square bulrush, is part of the Sedge Family. It is a favorite plant used by larva of blue damselflies to climb out of water and metamorphose into adults. Unlike dragonflies, blue damselflies' favorite perch as adults are the species where they metamorphosed. Scirpus grows farther from shore and in water ½ to 1 ½ meters deep, in deeper water than Dulichium. Usually there are several stems and/or clumps of vegetative leaves originating from a single short rhizome. The fruiting heads consist of 1 to 3 spikes. Heads are seldom seen in freshwater lakes, possibly because muskrats eat them. The species is not aggressive.

## “Waterscaping”. Plants on floating logs.

Nature abhors straight lines, and plant people love nature. “Waterscaping” a monotonous shoreline can require no more than using a stranded log to break an unchanging pond edge. Moreover, plant life can be grown on floating logs in sunny locations and would greatly enhance human interest.

Trees on banks of pond and lake margins tend to lean toward the water to secure more sunlight, and when they fall, the lower trunk often remains high and dry. The lower trunk does not support plant life unless it is already rotten because, unlike a raised bog, rain runs off instead of in. In natural conditions, water splashed by waves on a floating log, and saturation of most or all of a log by the water in which it is floating, are very important.

Complete saturation of a large log would require decades or even a century. Nature speeds up the process by moving floating logs downwind and jamming two or more logs together at the windward shore. Floating leaves from shore and/or uprooted aquatic plants move in the same direction and become lodged on the logs where they decay. In storms, waves stir up the bottom and silt and clay become trapped in the decaying organic matter. Hence, people could speed up the process by joining two logs side by side and adding organic matter with a little silt and clay.

Another method for speeding up the process of a log becoming suitable for growing plants is to use a router to cut a shallow trough in the top of a log and fill it with compost and organic soil.

In nature, mosses and lichens are likely to be pioneer species on a bare log. Pioneer species on logs at elevations of 2000 feet usually are the moss *Calliergon gigantum* and *Carex leptalea*. Pioneer species are followed by successional changes in plant species as more dead organic matter accumulates. Less commonly, *Drosera rotundifolia*, round-leaved sundew, is pioneer species. *Drosera rotundifolia*, while commonly occurring early in the order of succession, does better in somewhat mature conditions. It often grows on sphagnum along with *Oxycoccus oxycoccus* (*Vaccinium oxycoccus*), bog cranberry. Both species are very attractive and can be considered a “must”. Round-leaved sundew is distinctive with sticky red leaves that catch insects and provide needed nutrients. The red color and lifestyle of sundews provide much human interest. Bog cranberries brighten the setting with reddish berries and stems.

In mature conditions, *Carex lenticularis* is the most common sedge, and *Mimulus guttatus*, yellow monkey flower, and grasses also appear. *Angelica genuflexa*, kneeling Angelica, is occasional. It usually turns red by late summer and adds color and interest.

## Species not recommended

Algal “blooms” have deleterious effects on fresh water bodies, and cyanobacteria, blue-green algae, produce a foul odor. Care should be taken to avoid an influx of water containing phosphorus and introduction of algae with plants grown in contaminated waters. Decaying barley straw has been used for decades in Europe to control algal “blooms”, and containers called barley balls can be purchased in the USA.

However, use of barley straw is controversial. Some published reports are favorable, some are not possibly because the cyanobacteria and other conditions are not identical. Dr. Robin Matthews says there are some 20 or 30 species of blue-green algae affecting water quality. The most common genera are *Anabaena*, *Aphanizomenon*, and *Microcystis* that are disaffectionately called Annie, Fannie, and Mike.

Alien and native species not recommended are listed below.

## Alien species

- *Lemna minor*, lesser duckweed, is free floating, common, and attracts little attention. It forms extensive patches in stagnant water near shorelines. Moreover, if in the same pond with

*Ricciacarpus natans*, the two species are likely to form unattractive tangled masses.

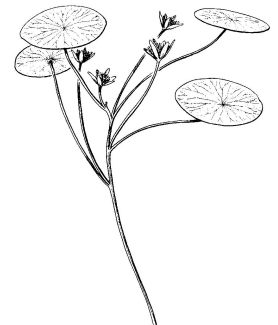
- *Iris pseudacorus*, yellow flag, spreads from floating seeds and spreading roots. It is extremely aggressive. Efforts to control it by pulling and digging leaves fragments of roots which re-sprout and create more plants. Tennant Lake Boardwalk and the Whatcom County Chuckanut Bay Wetlands are rapidly becoming monocultures of *Iris pseudacorus*.
- *Lysimachia thysiflora*, tufted loosestrife, probably is Eurasian. It grows in shallow water near shore and usually in partial shade. It has colorful blooms. There are plenty of attractive native plants, so there is no need to plant a species that is at best questionably native.
- *Nymphaea odorata*, white water-lily and also the variety with pink flowers, is an eastern USA species. It forms a large patch in Squalicum Lake in Whatcom County, and the Jepson Manual of California calls it a noxious weed.
- *Vallisneria spiralis*, wild celery, is native to eastern USA and may not be native to western USA. However, helically coiled peduncles of female flowers attract attention.

## Aggressive native plants

- *Azolla mexicana*, Mexican water-fern, is free floating, very aggressive, and tends to form a mat on top of a pond.
- *Equisetum fluviatile*, water horsetail, grows in shallow water near shores and often extensively dominates shorelines to the exclusion of other plants.
- *Nuphar luteum* ssp. *polysepalum*, yellow pond-lily, often dominates shorelines to a water depth of about 3 meters. In Tennant Lake, a shallow water body in Whatcom County, yellow pond-lily chokes much of the lake so much that boating there is very impractical.
- *Typha latifolia*, common cattail, is very aggressive in water less than 1 meter deep.

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# Calendar

## Calendar Key

- 📅 Salal Chapter Meeting and Program (Contact: Tom Corrigan, 360-466-3215, [tfcorrigan@hotmail.com](mailto:tfcorrigan@hotmail.com)). Regular chapter meetings are held at Skagit Valley College in Mt. Vernon, Room A 11, Angst Hall, from 10:00 a.m. to noon on the first Saturday of the month, October through June. Most meetings continue with a field trip in the afternoon. All activities are open to the public and visitors are welcome. Individuals participate in hikes and field trips at their own risk.
  - ✚ Salal Chapter Field Trip (Contact: Harold Mitchell, 360-293-0405). **Please call ahead to sign up.**
  - Salal Chapter Garden Project (Contact: Thad Davis, 360-856-6261 or Marianne Kooiman, 360-293-5815)
  - ⌘ Koma Kulshan Chapter Meeting or Field Trip (Contact: Barry Wendling, 360-671-8403).
  - ♥ Friends of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands Event (Contact: Denise Crowe, 360-293-3725, [acfl@fidalgo.net](mailto:acfl@fidalgo.net))
- 
- ♥ Sep 9 (Thu), **Senior/Adult Hike: Mitten Pond Loop**, 10 a.m. to noon. Meet at the kiosk at 37th and A Avenue.
  - ⌘ Sep 11 (Sat), Koma Kulshan Chapter Field Trip: **Canyon Ridge**. Subalpine meadows late in the season. Look for the last straggling blooms as the show transitions from the flowers to the leaves. This area is seldom traveled. Six to eight miles of moderately strenuous to strenuous hiking. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the SE corner of the Sunset Mall parking lot in Bellingham.
  - Sep 11 (Sat), **Garden Work Party**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
  - Sep 18 (Sat), **Master Gardeners Backyard Habitat Event**, 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Discovery Garden.
  - ✚ Sep 13 (Mon), Salal Chapter Field Trip: **Anderson Butte**. Meet at Sedro-Woolley Food Pavilion parking lot, 8:30 a.m. with lunch and bird glasses. Short, with some steep, good trail, 360 degree view, possibly berries.
  - Sep 23 (Thu), **Special Plant Sale Garden Work Party**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
  - Sep 24 (Fri), **Special Plant Sale Garden Work Party**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
  - Sep 25 (Sat), **6<sup>th</sup> Annual Salal Chapter Fall Native Plant Sale**, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. See page 1 for details.
  - ⌘ Sep 25 (Sat), Koma Kulshan Chapter Field Trip: **Yellow Aster Butte**. A wonderful fall experience—magnificent views and colors (depending on the stage of development of blueberries and other plants). The trailhead is located about 4.5 miles along the Twin Lakes Road, which is about 13 miles beyond Glacier. The trail itself is four miles one way, gaining some 2,200 feet to several tarns nestled at the base of Tomyhoi Peak. Moderately strenuous. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Sunset Square Mall parking lot in Bellingham.
  - Sep 25 (Sat), **Skagit Land Trust Field Trip**, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Join Skagit Land Trust for a Bus Tour of Trust properties. Your day will begin with a beautiful drive up the South Skagit Highway with visits and short walks to several Trust properties. At Concrete the bus will cross the Skagit River and head west to Hurn Field and into Lyman to explore newly purchased properties. Lunch will be served along the way. \$15 for members. Donation of \$25 for non-members. For reservations call Diane at 360-428-7878 or [trustmvtv@fidalgo.net](mailto:trustmvtv@fidalgo.net).

- ✚ Sep 27 (Mon), Salal Chapter Field Trip: **Chain Lakes**. Meet at Sedro-Woolley Food Pavilion parking lot, 8:30 a.m. with lunch and bird glasses. Possibly berries. Good but rocky trail.
- 📅 Oct 2 (Sat), **Salal Chapter Meeting**, 10 a.m. After a brief business meeting, our speaker will be Mira Lutz, a new Interpretive Ranger at Deception Pass State Park, who will discuss aspects of Ethnobotany, the traditional uses of native plants. A field trip will follow.
- ♥ Oct 2 (Sat), **Ethnobotany Field Seminar**, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Registration required (please call or email Denise Crowe). Spend a day in the woods with friends on a slow botany adventure. We will immerse ourselves in the hidden history of the native plants around us, and their ongoing relation with the humans of this place. Learn of the material, food, and medicinal abundance held in the forest. There is no better way to start seeing the details in the green! Location and instructions will be provided upon registration.
- Oct 9 (Sat), **Garden Work Party**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- ✚ Oct 11 (Mon), Salal Chapter Field Trip: **Bagley Lakes-Herman Saddle**. Meet at Sedro-Woolley Food Pavilion parking lot, 8:30 a.m. with lunch and bird glasses. Long but not difficult.
- ♥ Oct 14 (Thu), **Senior/Adult Hike: Ace of Hearts Creek**, 10 a.m. to noon. Meet at the Heart Lake parking lot.
- Oct 23 (Sat), **Special Garden Work Party**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Come help move the propagation facilities before the construction project begins! Lunch will be provided for all volunteers.
- Oct 23 (Sat), **Whidbey Island Native Plant Focus Day and Plant Sale**, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. See page 2 for details.
- ♥ Oct 23 (Sat), **All Ages Hike: Sugarloaf Mountain**, 10 a.m. to noon. Meet at the base of Sugarloaf on Ray Auld Drive for this all the way to the top hike. The views from the wild summit can't be beat. Bring water and a snack if you wish.
- ✚ Oct 25 (Mon), Salal Chapter Field Trip: **Oyster Dome**. Meet at Cook Road Park and Ride, 9 a.m. with lunch and bird glasses. Moderately strenuous in one 1/4 mile section only.
- 📅 Nov 6 (Sat), **Salal Chapter Meeting**, 10 a.m. After a brief business meeting, we'll enjoy our annual seasonal mushroom program, with a speaker TBA. A field trip will likely follow.
- ♥ Nov 11 (Thu), **Senior/Adult Hike: Ray Auld Trail**, 10 a.m. to noon. Meet at the base of Mount Erie on Ray Auld Drive.
- Nov 13 (Sat), **Garden Work Party**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- ♥ Nov 13 (Sat), **All Ages Hike: Early Beavers**. 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. The beaver at Little Cranberry Lake are busy preparing for the long and cold dark time. We may see them before they seek the shelter of their lodges for the day. Meet at the parking lot on the north end of the lake and gather quietly before the hike. Turn South on Georgia off of Oakes Ave. and follow to the Little Cranberry Lake Road. Turn right and follow up the hill to the parking lot.
- ♥ Nov 20 (Sat), **All Ages Hike: Whistle Around**, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The joys of Whistle Lake do not end with summer at the cliffs. Late fall is the perfect time to explore another challenge, hiking all the way around. Meet at the Whistle Lake parking lot.
- 📅 Dec 4 (Sat), **Salal Chapter Meeting**, 10 a.m. After a brief business meeting, we'll enjoy a program on plant families, with a speaker TBA.

# Take a Walk (or Two) on the Wild Side

These walks are reprinted from the Summer and September 2004 issues, respectively, of the Central Puget Sound Chapter Newsletter. Thank you to Holly Zox for her informative and inspiring descriptions.

## Walk of the Summer: Troublesome Creek

Holly Zox

Miners first beat a trail up Troublesome Creek in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, but we know the real treasure here is the old-growth forest. Beginning on the 0.6 mile nature trail loop at Troublesome Creek Campground, it is possible to explore the old miners' trail some 2.5 miles to the boundary of the Henry M. Jackson Wilderness.

From the parking area, walk upstream on the nature trail with the creek on your right. The western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) forest is still young enough to be dominated by some massive Douglas firs (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*). Western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*) and the occasional Pacific silver fir (*Abies amabilis*) round out the rest of the canopy.

If you possess the curiosity of a prospector, and good route finding and bushwhacking skills, find the old miners' trail on the west side of Troublesome Creek, just before the second, narrow bridge leads the nature trail to the east side of the creek. Continue up the old miners' trail, with the creek on your right, sometimes climbing over big logs, through devils' club (*Oplopanax horridus*), down to the creek, up through debris that hides the trail, over old puncheon, always within sound of the roaring creek. A small pond bubbling out of the forest, ringed by western yew (*Taxus brevifolia*) and oak fern (*Gymnocarpium dryopteris*), about a mile in, makes a good turn around point. Be sure to check out the water moss (*Fontinalis antipyretica*).

On your way back to the nature trail, note big uprooted trees altering the flow of the creek and gravel bar islands covered in deciduous forest. The nature trail continues by crossing the creek on the upstream narrow bridge, framed by yew. Hold on to the rails as you look downstream mid-bridge. The water is sculpting solid granite into forms Henry Moore would have admired.

Look for hairy woodpeckers exploring snags. Horizontal trees on the forest floor begin their second "life" as nurse logs, host to a whole forest of tree seedlings, shrubs--especially oval-leaved blueberry (*Vaccinium ovalifolium*)--and a whole array of mosses and flowering herbs.

Once on the east side of the creek, head upstream with much access to the creek on your left. Be careful at the creek, as fatal accidents have occurred. The nature trail soon curves uphill, away from the creek and heads back down under the road to the newer, wider bridge that completes the loop. Expect to see such woodland favorites as star-flowered false Solomon's-seal (*Maianthemum stellatum*), false lily-of-the-valley (*M. dilatatum*), wild ginger (*asarum caudatum*), and twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*), as well as treats like foamflower (*Tiarella trifoliata* var. *unifoliata*), toes-in-the-moss (*Rubus pedatus*), bunchberry (*Cornus canadensis*), pink wintergreen (*Pyrola asarifolia*), sidebells wintergreen (*Orthilia secunda*), both big and little pipissewa (*Chimaphila umbellata* and *C. menziesii*), queen's cup (*Clintonia uniflora*), and much more.

Bring a picnic for the easy nature trail, the 10 essentials for the moderate miner's trail, and enough imagination to picture most of the lowlands west of the Cascades clothed much like this.

**Directions:** Drive US 2 east to the Index turnoff at MP 35.7 and take the North Fork Skykomish River Road (Forest Road 63) eleven miles north to the first entrance of the Troublesome Creek Campground.

## Walk for September: Tonga Ridge and Mount Sawyer

Holly Zox

Hone your *Vaccinium* identification skills by taste on this easy hike into the Alpine Lakes Wilderness west of Stevens Pass. Huckleberries *Vaccinium deliciosum*, *V. membranaceum*, *V. ovalifolium*, *V. alaskaense*, and *V. scoparium* are all here, along with huckleberry/heather meadows, tree islands, talus and views.

The hike begins by climbing gently through Pacific silver fir (*Abies amabilis*) forest to break out into subalpine parkland at about 4800' elevation. Tree islands here are comprised primarily of subalpine fir (*A. lasiocarpa*), though mountain hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*) and Alaska cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*) can also be seen, especially in areas of deeper snow pack. Occasional openings as the forest shifts from montane silver fir to subalpine caused by fire, snow, or landslides add spatial diversity to the landscape and result in herbaceous slopes of colonizers bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), broadleaf lupine (*Lupinus latifolius*) and edible thistle (*Cirsium edule*).

White pine (*Pinus monticola*) and east-siders Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) and grouseberry (*V. scoparium*) indicate meso-topographic influences on climate on this west-side ridge, perhaps wind blowing snow off the ridge-top leading to drier soil and a shorter growing season, or a rain-shadow effect as storm fronts hit big peaks Daniel and Hinman to the west and drop much of their moisture before reaching Tonga Ridge.

Continue wandering the ridge about 3 miles to Sawyer Pass. See here classic huckleberry/heather meadows with Cascade huckleberry (*V. deliciosum*) and pink (*Phyllodoce empetriformis*) and white (*Cassiope mertensiana*) mountain heathers, and two indicators that this area has been heavily impacted by hikers: tame camp robbers (*Perisoreus canadensis*) watching from tree island perches, and a myriad of bare social paths and denuded campsites where Vibram soles have trampled the not very resistant or resilient subalpine shrubs. Wood is a luxury in the subalpine and represents a tension between not enough snow (conditions too dry for the formation of wood) and too much snow (too short a snow-free growing season to produce wood). Keep this struggle in mind and stick to established trails as you botanize in the huckleberry/heather meadows. A special treat is an abundance of another woody member of the Ericaceae, white rhododendron (*Rhododendron albiflorum*).

Meander back the way you came and look for a cairn at the steep start of the way-trail up Mount Sawyer, about 1.5 miles from the trailhead. Switchbacks soon moderate the grade as the trail climbs merrily 700' through flowers and huckleberries for an easy walk to the summit of Mount Sawyer, elevation about 5500'. As you near the summit, look for foliage and fruits of Davidson's penstemon (*Penstemon davidsonii*) and spreading phlox (*Phlox diffusa*). Views from the summit include volcanoes Mt. Baker, Mt. Rainier, and Glacier Peak, and numerous Cascade Mountain peaks.

Look for patterns on the landscape of the mountains all around you, and ponder the environmental factors responsible as you eat your way back to the trailhead. Allow five or more hours to enjoy this 6-8 mile round trip hike, and come prepared with the 10 essentials.

**Directions:** Drive US 2 east from Skykomish 1.8 miles and turn right on Foss River Road (No. 68). As 1.2 miles keep right to stay on the main road, and at 2.5 miles go straight at an intersection after passing under a railroad bridge. At 3.6 miles, turn left onto Tonga Ridge Road and drive 7 miles, then turn right onto Road 6830 (may be numbered 310) and drive 1.5 miles to the road end and trailhead.

## WNPS Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Category:

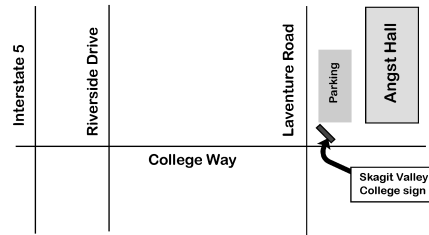
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 \_\_\_\_ Central Washington (Yakima) \_\_\_\_ Salal (Skagit Valley)  
 \_\_\_\_ Columbia Basin (Tri-Cities) \_\_\_\_ San Juan Islands  
 \_\_\_\_ Koma Kulshan (Bellingham) \_\_\_\_ South Sound (Olympia)  
 \_\_\_\_ NE Washington (Spokane) \_\_\_\_ Suksdorfia (Vancouver)  
 \_\_\_\_ Okanogan \_\_\_\_ Wenatchee Valley  
 \_\_\_\_ Olympic Peninsula \_\_\_\_ At Large

Dues year begins on March 21. Please make checks payable **WNPS**  
 and mail to Washington Native Plant Society, 6310 NE 74<sup>th</sup> St, Suite 215E, Seattle, WA 98115.

Location of Salal Chapter's Monthly Meeting- Room A-11,  
 Angst Hall, Skagit Valley College, Mount Vernon



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### WNPS-SALAL Chapter

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