

One Step at a Time

Newsletter of the Mountaineers Naturalist Group
April 2016

Photos from our March hikes to Wallace Falls, and Deception Pass
(hike of the month).



Fan moss (Wallace falls), common lomatium and camas, black oystercatcher (by Karen Johnson) and small-flowered blue eyed Mary.

In the Garden

Flowers are popping and spring is beginning its spate.

Oregon grape, henbit and red flowering current continue blooming and are joined by trillium, manzanita, kinnickinick, woods violet, trout lily, evergreen huckleberry, siberian miner's lettuce, meadow rue, wood sorrel, and (just coming in) silky phacelia.



Kinnickinick, trout lily and silky phacelia

April Field Trips for Mountaineers' Naturalists

We have several field trips for the month of April, including the hike of the month, which is on Saturday, April 23 to the Westberg Trail along Manashtash Ridge, where we will focus on early spring eastside flower identification, hopefully not noticing the steepness of the trail on the way up. Notice this is not the last weekend of April (I changed it because I can't make the last weekend and I want to go – leader's prerogative). Sign up for this by going to LEARN, check the exploring Nature box and Click on Naturalists Study Group and you should see the listing for Westberg trail. Now click on Manage Registration, and

the next page should allow you to check the hike you want and add yourself as a participant. If we oversubscribe, do not worry. We will figure out a way to accommodate everyone.

Other hikes this month are directly accessible by clicking on Find activities (under the heading EXPLORE) and check Exploring Nature. There is a weekend trip to the Columbia Gorge April 2-3 (short notice). The word is that the flowers are in full spate down there and we have a variety of hikes on both sides of the Columbia. Look for others on the website. These hikes are open to the general mountaineers so sign up early. You access them by clicking on EXPLORE and the Activities, click on the Exploring Nature box and the hikes will turn up.

There are a series of hikes in Oregon in April, led by the indomitable Linda Moore. Linda is famous for organizing hikes to cool places not often visited or requiring prior organization. She does all the legwork beforehand and she often provides a lot of ancillary information. The hikes listed run day to day, so, if you can get free for several days you can do a series of them. They are listed for mid-April. They are filling up. I suggest you e-mail Linda <abenteuerbc@yahoo.com> to find out what she has planned.

The weekend at Columbia Gorge is almost completely full. The weather this coming weekend is supposed to be lovely, so you might consider the hikes. Flowers should be glorious. There are 3 hikes (2 listed Wahclella Falls and Catherine Creek) and you must sign up for both of them to come along. We will also be going to the Memaloose Hills in Oregon on Saturday and plan on leaving Seattle early Saturday morning to make a 9AM trailhead. If you are in the study group you will get permission (it is sign up by permission only).

There are other hikes listed (or soon to be listed) for April, including Gingko State Park (great flowers and good possibility of seeing bighorn sheep) on April 9 (Gary Brill leading). Keep your eyes peeled for other listings in the activities section under Exploring Nature.

View one of the best examples of a recessional-cataract canyon. Potholes Coulee caught the attention of J Harlen Bretz in the early 20th century, which led to his "outrageous hypothesis" of Ice Age flooding. This hike near Quincy WA, will be led May 7 by Kay English and Lola Kemp.

Nature Talks and Walks by sister organizations

April 2016 Program Washington Native Plant Society

Judy Harpel, The Moss Flora of Washington

Although Dr. Elva Lawton published the Mosses of the Pacific Northwest, she never produced a formal species list for Washington State. Over the last 32 years, I have been working on gathering the historical information on past collectors, as well as trying to revisit some of the historical collection sites. This, combined with my own collecting activities throughout the state will hopefully result in a published checklist of the mosses for Washington. In my talk, I will introduce people to the bryophytes and discuss the ecology and distribution of several rare species. In conclusion, I will share techniques on how to voucher, what areas of the state are missing records and finally, what we can do to strengthen our knowledge of the moss flora.

Dr. Judith Harpel is currently the Curator of Bryophytes at the University of British Columbia, Beaty Biodiversity Museum, Museum Research Associate with the University of Washington, Burke Museum, and a Research Associate with the California Academy of Sciences. She has been working on bryophytes for the last 38 years and studied the ecology and phytogeography of the mosses within the San Juan Islands, Washington for her Ph.D. For eight and half years she was the U.S. Forest Service Regional Interagency Bryologist and provided bryophyte training and guidance for U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management botanists in Washington, Oregon and California. Current research projects include: a bryophyte flora of Yellowstone National Park, a moss checklist for Washington State, and identifying bryophytes from several Arctic National Wildlife Refuges.

Thursday, April 7th, 7:30pm, UW Center for Urban Horticulture, 3501 NE 41st St, Seattle
(Doors Open at 6:30 PM for the Native Plant Identification Workshop; Program begins at 7:30 PM.) For details, see wnps.org

Refreshments, Public Invited, Admission is free.□
Please Post

2016 Program Calendar

April 20th - Eastside Branch Program: MeadoWatch: Exploring the Link between Climate Change and Wildflower Phenology by Dr. Hille Ris Lambers. Bellevue Botanic Garden, 7:00 PM

Butterfly Society

Washington Butterfly Assn is looking for young naturalists aged 10-17 who are interested in attending its annual conference in northeast Oregon August 5-7. WBA and the family of its founder, Idie Ulsh, are offering scholarships for interested youth. There is more information and an application form at <http://wabutterflyassoc.org/youth-scholarships-conference-8-5-8-7/>

May 21 National Parks Bio Blitz. Survey butterflies at Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, San Juan Island National Historical Park, Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, Lewis and Clark National Historical Park. More details later, or contact regina_rochefort@nps.gov

Audubon Society

Saturday, April 9, 2016 – Limit 12

Montlake Fill (Union Bay Natural Area)

Leaders: Sharon Ellard (day of trip only: 206-963-4781), Jean Olson

7:30 AM, Center for Urban Horticulture east parking lot by the greenhouses

All levels of birding skill welcome on this very early spring 3 mile walk. We expect wrens, some early migrants, raptors and waterfowl. The Fill often provides a look at (or sound of) the unexpected bird. We should find around 40 species. Bring binoculars, a scope if you own one. Wear layers, be prepared for rain and have boots for the mud. Expect mostly flat terrain. You may want to bring snacks and water. Since restrooms are scarce, you will want to stop at the U Village QFC before you arrive. Over by about 11:30 a.m.

Sunday, April 17, 2016 – Limit 10

Juanita Bay Park, Kirkland

Leader: Jean Trent

8:00 AM, 2201 Market Street in Kirkland, Juanita Bay Park parking lot

Explore a good mix of habitats, finding waterfowl, raptors, woodpeckers, swallows and perhaps a shorebird. The early migrants will be arriving, some of the wintering passerines will still be around, the resident birds will be singing and establishing territories, and there's always the possibility of a surprise. Scopes helpful. Dress for the weather. Over by 11:00am.

Tuesday, April 19, 2016 – Limit 10

Pierce County Lowland Hotspots

Leader: Michael Hobbs

6:00 AM, Green Lake (Ravenna) P&R

This trip will explore some well-known and lesser-known hotspots in Pierce County. We will explore forest, field and wetland habitats looking for migrant passerines, shorebirds, marsh denizens, and anything else we can turn up. Dress for weather; bring binoculars, scopes if you have them, lunch, water & snacks. Return by 5PM. Carpool cost: \$40 each car shared equally among passengers. Drivers should bring a current Discover Pass.

Saturday, April 23, 2016 – Limit 6

Snoqualmie Point Bird & Hike

Leaders: Scott Ramos and Jeanelle Richardson

6:00 AM, Green Lake (Ravenna) P&R

Snoqualmie Point is the northern access point to the Rattlesnake Ridge trail. It climbs through alder woods, a recent clearcut and older second growth conifer forest, thus offering a varied set of habitats. Expect to see and hear a variety of passerines, including warblers and vireos. With luck, we may encounter Red Crossbills, Varied Thrush and Sooty Grouse. And raptors are always a possibility. We will hike about 5 miles, with an elevation gain of 1500 feet, both on trail and on old logging roads. Bring snacks and fluids, protection from the weather, and sturdy hiking boots. Return mid- to late-afternoon. Carpool cost: \$12, shared equally by riders.

Sunday, April 24, 2016 – Limit 8

Potholes and Vicinity

Leaders: Dasha Gudalewicz, Jen Kunitsugu and Allisa Carlson (425-785-0812 day of trip only)

6:00 AM at Green Lake (Ravenna) P&R, or 6:30 AM at Issaquah P&R (uncovered Tibbetts lot) - Please indicate where you will be meeting when you register.

This will be a long day of birding in the Potholes area of the Columbia Basin, with forays as time allows to check out other areas such as Lower Crab Creek Road and Birder's Corner. We hope to see a nice variety of species - Golden Eagle, Swainson's Hawk, Loggerhead Shrike, Sandhill Crane, Great Egret, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Tricolored Blackbird, and Yellow-headed Blackbird are possibilities. Depending on our route, we may also pick up some sagebrush species like Sagebrush Sparrow, Sage Thrasher, and Brewer's Sparrow, and birds of rocky slopes and canyons, such as Rock Wren, Canyon Wren, and Chukar. Bring binoculars, a scope if you have one, plenty of food and fluids, and dress in layers. Returning late evening (7-ish) so pack dinner or bring money to get something en route. Drivers will need a Discover Pass. Carpool cost: \$100 per car shared equally by riders.

Odds and Ends

(Request: I am willing to post your pictures, or articles about your activities, thoughts, anything connected with nature. Just send me the article or photos and I'll include them. There is always ROOM.)

"Nature" Is What We See - Poem by Emily
Dickinson

"Nature" is what we see—
The Hill—the Afternoon—
Squirrel—Eclipse— the Bumble bee—
Nay—Nature is Heaven—
Nature is what we hear—
The Bobolink—the Sea—
Thunder—the Cricket—
Nay—Nature is Harmony—
Nature is what we know—
Yet have no art to say—
So impotent Our Wisdom is
To her Simplicity.

Wallace Falls Naturalists hike on 3/17 - target mosses and liverworts

Four of us hiked the beautiful Wallace Falls trail on a clear and cool day with the primary educational goal of studying/identifying mosses and related liverworts. We left the trailhead and very quickly came to an area where we had a number of mosses of interest. In fact, our progress along the trail was rather slow with fits and starts on the first one-half mile of the trail where it closely follows the Wallace River in a cool, damp, brilliant green, moss-rich environment. Although I had hiked the trail a couple of times previously there were still additional mosses that caught my attention and that of other group members. We successfully identified a number of mosses but were still in doubt about a number of others. Four of the members of the Naturalists Study Group had just attended a weekend moss workshop March 5th and 6th led by Lee Ellis, who curates the Burke Museum's WTU Herbarium moss collection, so we came with some new found knowledge and enthusiasm about mosses.

Mosses and liverworts, which are Bryophytes and lack the ability to obtain water and mineral nourishment from their substrates, are an extremely challenging subject for aspiring Naturalists. In the state of Washington there are some 800 different mosses. They can be identified by a variety of methods: Morphologically by shape and color (habit), and environmentally by habitat; by studying field keys with the use of a hand lens; and for scientists, by studying mosses on the cellular level. In the workshop we worked on a limited number of mosses by studying them with 15 power loupes and 40 power lighted microscopes. In practice (and obviously) many of the key features of mosses are difficult to see in the field because of their small size and the fact that differences in leaf shapes for many moss near look-alikes are often quite subtle. The teeth, for instance, on the leaves of most mosses are at most a few hundredths of a mm in size and steady hands and good lighting is necessary to see such small features in the field. Nonetheless, it is possible with practice to differentiate a good number of species. The best part, as it is with mountain and desert flowers, is that in the process of evaluating the mosses they can be appreciated for their beauty. My personal methodology, which has worked well for me with flowering plants, is to take photos of the mosses on a larger scale with the recording of habitat and, on occasion, at the macro level. The camera can sometimes see what the eye can't on tiny, but beautiful mosses. As with wildflowers, it takes some experience to know what it is that you should photograph for identification. With the photos at home on a computer screen I have a record of what I've seen and take the additional time to edit and label the images, providing me with a better set of data for memorization.

There is little question for me that studying mosses has enhanced my out of door experiences on winter hikes in the Cascades and Olympics. And sharing the experience (with occasional deeper investigation) with my Naturalist friends in the mountains enriches the experience of what might otherwise be a rather mundane winter hike. Our group at Wallace Falls still managed to complete the hike and enjoyed a glorious lunch in the sun at the top of the trail.

Gary Brill



Photos by Karen Johnson at Deception Pass



Classes in the woods

My grandson Kaveh participates once a week in Wilderness Awareness School.

“Wilderness Awareness School was founded by Jon Young, a celebrated naturalist who trained with and was mentored by renowned tracker Tom Brown, Jr., and Ingwe, an elder of British descent who had grown up roaming the wilds of Kenya.

Jon met Tom Brown, Jr., as a young boy, and Tom became his mentor. Influenced heavily by his work with Tom over almost 10 years, and by Tom's training by Apache elder Stalking Wolf, Jon became



Wilderness awareness school near Duvall, WA. What was that bird?

fascinated with the ways people effectively integrate ancient traditions into modern existence. He pursued his interest through his five years at Rutgers, where he graduated with a [degree in](#) Environmental Awareness. It was this passion for integrating ancient skills and his deep connection with nature that led him to found Wilderness Awareness School as a high school nature club in New Jersey in 1983.

A year later, he met Ingwe, an elder of British descent who grew up with the ancient traditions with which Jon was so fascinated. Born M. Norman Powell in South Africa in 1914, Ingwe's family moved to a farm in Kenya when he was young. He spent his childhood running barefoot through the plains of Kenya with the young warriors of the neighboring Akamba tribe. Adopted into their tribe and given the name Ingwe, he learned how to live close to the Earth.

Discovering their shared passion for mentoring and nature connection, Jon refounded Wilderness Awareness School in 1984 with the broader mission of combining ancient and modern ecological wisdom to connect people with the natural environment and empower people of all ages to become stewards, mentors and leaders. In 1995, they moved the organization to its current home in Duvall, Washington.

Over the next three decades, Wilderness Awareness School grew from a small group of visionary individuals to a leading international organization, impacting the course of nature [education](#) and inspiring many schools and individuals across the country and the world to share our teachings and curriculum. At the same time, Wilderness Awareness School has evolved under the influence of several other naturalist and native elders.

Because of the involvement of Tekaronieneken Jake Swamp, a sub-chief of the Wolf Clan of the Iroquois Confederacy, and his wife Judy, Wilderness Awareness School's curriculum was greatly influenced by the Peacemaker Principles and Thanksgiving Address. Over the years, these teachings have also grown to form the backbone of our community at Wilderness Awareness School, and have helped us learn to reconnect people with each other as they reconnect with the natural world.”

I joined Kaveh and Peg for grandparents day on Thursday, March 24. The idea of the school is to make people more aware of the natural world as a place to survive in, connect with, and understand. The school uses games, projects, singing, stories, imagination and a great deal of outdoor experience to bring across their message; and they have programs for adults as well as kids. On the day I was there the early choices were games or fire starting (most chose games). The main purpose of the games seemed to be running around and getting energy out, and connecting as a group. After a fireside time with snacks, stories and songs we split in 5 groups, by choice of the kids. One group looked for native plants that were edible (they made nettle pesto), another reviewed the language of birds and focussed on bird identification by sound, sight and size (I went with this group). They talked about the big 5 – 5 bird species, all ground birds, that signal what is going on in the woods with their behavior (e.g. predator presence). These were the towhee, junco, song sparrow, pacific wren and robin. There was a bird identification quiz and some challenges around bird sounds (the various sounds of birds including territorial songs, alarms, connection calls, male aggression calls and baby feed-me calls). There were lots of games. The 'reward' for success was a dunk in the pond of the counselors (what a treat! It was cold!). At the pond (an ecotone and good place for birds) we ate lunch and some of the kids fell in (they were OK with it; perhaps even loved it ___ and could warm by the fire later). Of the other groups, one emphasized the feel of being an animal and looked for animal tracks. They then made slingshots and went hunting (with grapes, shooting them at the counselors). Another group told stories around the fire, while a final group made capes (sort of medieval style) from blankets. A wide variety of activities. The nettle pesto was delicious and I guess they used a mortar and pestle and did the whole thing, plus prepare nettle chips. I was thinking about the program and plan on doing an online program with my son to learn more. I'm interested in the connection with nature, survival with edibles, tracks and tracking and the connection with native peoples and their wisdom and lore. As usual in organizations like this the leaders must be visionaries, not into it for the money, but for intangibles (the real deal).

What can we learn from programs like this if we want to begin youth outreach. I personally think this should be part of our group activity (our outreach or stewardship). I'd like to define a pilot program for this coming year, with help of others (I cannot do it myself) and will ask for some support from the Mountaineers to begin. This could be anything from a family hike of the month, to a camp, to learning sessions at Magnuson park, beginning in our species garden. I'm looking for ideas and interest from you, the study group.

Partnerships?

I have recently learned that the Mountaineers do partnerships with businesses. I was asked if the Naturalists would give a talk at the Three Beers brewery tasting room, proceeds for the day from sales going to our group. Does anyone know about this place? Does anyone want to come help give a one hour talk about flowers in the northwest. Presumably it will be a picture show (flower emphasis) with some kind of a story line. Presumably we can get free beer or cider. If any one of you has pictures to share for such a show let me know. The date set is July 20 (a Wednesday night). Hopefully someone younger than me (or someones) will want to help out so I can have support and have the questions translated into old people's English. I have no idea whether this will be remunerative, but I'm aiming to make it fun; like an adventure in la la land. I do need support to rein me in or I may go over the top and

give them either a religious talk or a diatribe about greed and despoliation in our society (I've thought of these themes). Prevent embarrassing the mountaineers by volunteering to join me. We can even give a tag-team presentation, or all talk at once (a series of toasts perhaps?). There is a limit of 20 participants for this talk, so volunteer early.