

One Step at a Time

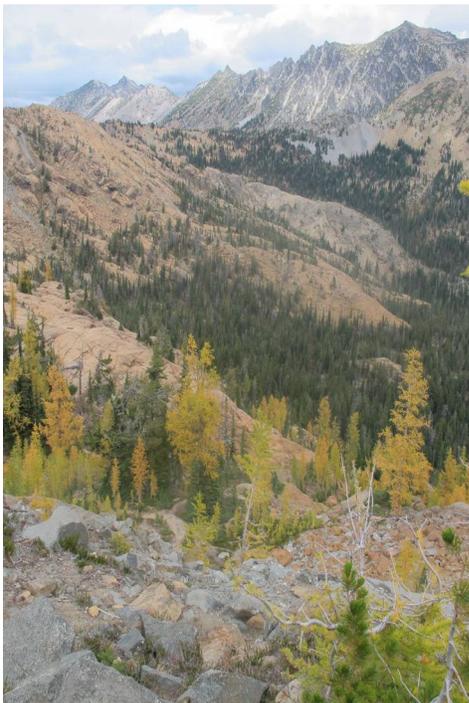
Newsletter of the Mountaineers Naturalist Group
November 2016

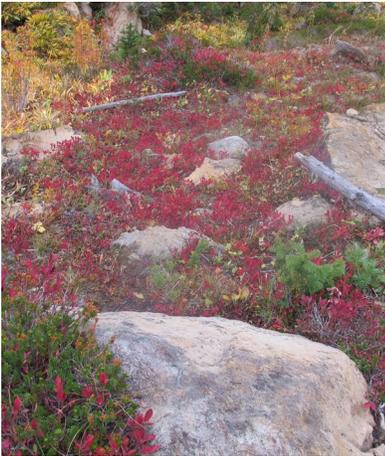
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Photos from our October naturalist hikes

Ingall's Lake fall color trip – October 1





Ingalls Lake did not disappoint for fall color. Larch, huckleberry, gentian, jeffrey shooting star and many others in blaze. There were also the odd flower blooming, like this lonely mountain daisy (*Erigeron alpinus*). We had everything from sun to snow flurries. The rock is where we lunched by Ingall's Lake. There were, of course, mountain goats.

Mushroom, mosses, liverworts and lichens – Barclay Lake

Two hikes, two days, two takes. We had two hikes to Barclay Lake to look for edible mushrooms. The first had rain almost the whole way. The trail was often a stream of water and we were unable to get to the lake because the footing of the bridge crossing Ingall's creek was under water. The car heater felt good at the end of the hike. The second hike, two days later was sunny and the water had receded. We lunched at the lake in full sun gazing up at the wall of Mt. Baring and sprinkle of fresh snow in the mountains around. Both hikes featured enthusiastic moss identification and lichenology. We found mushrooms both days to try including the meaty orange milk *Lactarius deliciosus* and the bears mane *Heracium* growing on logs. From the first hike we were reminded how useful umbrellas can be for hiking when looking at

guides and apps and how difficult it is to use magnifying loupes in the wet since they fog up. Also, we got to use some of the ten essentials we often carry up and back without using them.



Barclay lake on the trail, a liverwort *Pellia neesiana* in hand, green pelt and lung lichen (lighter green) growing on the same tree in lichen city.

On the Barclay Lake hike we 'discovered' a crustose lichen called fairy puke. Here is what Lynn Graf found out about it:

"*Immadophila* is a genus of crustose lichen. The genus has a widespread distribution in the northern hemisphere and contains six species. The only species found in North America, *Immadophila ericetorus*, has a mint green crustose thallus that is dotted with bright pink apothecial disks, and is sometimes affectionately referred to as fairy puke. It aggressively grows over mosses on well-rotted wood and peat. It looks very distinctive, but may be confused with species of *Dibaeis*." From Wikipedia.

Then there were a number of images, and a link to some other rather gorgeous lichens.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/photos/amazing-n-w-t-lichens-include-fairy-puke-space-survivor-1.3067051>

In the Garden – What's happening in our species garden?

The garden is (appropriately) mostly put to bed. While the mountains snow in our garden rains in, nurtured by the leaf and litterfall appropriate to the season. There are a few hangers on including yarrow, and a few anemic blooms of skyrocket, moss campion and shrubby potentilla, and then the new season is beginning for the seaside fleabane. The tree plantings are looking healthy and many of our signature trees are signed and available for viewing (and practicing identification). There are some newly planted alpine plants. If we get a patch of blue, head over to the garden, and have a look at the new plantings (potential personified). It is just north of the climbing wall. Bring your binoculars and stroll into Magnuson park, our expanding urban ecoscape, looking for cedar waxwings, newly arrived widgeons, golden crowned sparrows and the sometimes elusive cooper's hawks. Check for towhees in the garden using the undergrowth for forage and dream of the outdoors, where it is all happening 24/7.



November Field Trips for Mountaineers' Naturalists

There have been intermittent rains in the mountains, the temperatures are dropping and the flower season is close to done. Our hikes will emphasize fall color, birds, mushrooms, mosses and lichens. Look for workshops on mosses (November) and lichens (December), which will combine a lecture session and a field trip. The lichen workshop was also done a couple of years ago and was filled, so make sure you sign up early for that one (early December – look for listings under LEARN and find courses (click on exploring nature). They are there along with the listings for the lecture series, also starting in the winter. The moss workshop, though still far off is filling fast, so sign up soon if you are interested. Both courses have a small fee to contribute to material and room charges.

Moss Workshop - Seattle - 2016

Fri, Nov 11, 2016 - Sun, Nov 13, 2016 – Friday lecture and Saturday or Sunday field trip

No Prerequisites

Availability: 4 participants

Registration closes Nov 9

Seattle Branch

Leader: [Stewart Hougen](#)

Lichen Workshop - Seattle - 2016

Wed, Dec 7, 2016 - Sat, Dec 10, 2016 Wednesday lecture and Saturday field trip

No Prerequisites

Availability: 26 participants

Registration closes Dec 5

Seattle Branch

Leader: [Stewart Hougen](#)

Here are the November and early December hikes:

Note that the Hansville-Greenway (also Point-No-Point) hike (November 19) and the Twin Falls hike (December 15) are both hikes of the month. This means that study group members can assume they have permission to register (i.e. check the *I have permission* box) and that we will take all study group members who register on the hike (even if you are on the wait list). We will, if the hike is in national forest, split the trip officially in two to obey the rules. You will notice both these hikes are officially full (or wait listed). We have added two midweek mushroom and moss hikes Nov 10 and 17 for your delectation.

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Day Hike - Talapus & Olallie Lakes

Exploring Nature Trip

We will be looking at mosses, lichens and mushrooms in this mid fall hike.

Difficulty: Moderate

Thu, Nov 10, 2016

No Prerequisites

Availability:

10 participants

Registration closes Nov 8

Seattle Branch

Leader: [Gordie Swartzman](#)

-

Day Hike - Wallace Falls

Exploring Nature Trip

Wallace falls in the fall is wet, wild and wonderful when the crowds leave, mushrooms

Difficulty: Moderate

Thu, Nov 17, 2016

No Prerequisites

Availability:

10 participants

Registration closes Nov 15

Seattle Branch

Leader: [Stewart Hougen](#)

-

Day Hike - Hansville Greenway

Exploring Nature Trip

This trip will explore a nearby but seemingly far away natural area near Hansville on

Difficulty: Easy

Sat, Nov 19, 2016

No Prerequisites, Leader's Permission Required

Availability:

2 participants on waitlist

Registration closes Nov 17

Seattle Branch

Leader: [Gordie Swartzman](#)

Day Hike - Vashon & Maury Islands Circumnavigation

Exploring Nature Trip

This is a birding trip with a focus on duck identification.

Difficulty: Easy

Sat, Dec 3, 2016

No Prerequisites

Availability:

11 participants
Registration closes Dec 1
Seattle Branch
Leader: [Stewart Hougen](#)

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Day Hike - Twin Falls (Olallie State Park)

Exploring Nature Trip
Twin falls has water, mosses, lichens and solitude in winter as well as proximity to
Difficulty: Easy
Sat, Dec 17, 2016
No Prerequisites, Leader's Permission Required
Availability:
0 participants
Registration closes Dec 15
Seattle Branch
Leader: [Gordie Swartzman](#)

2016-2017 Naturalists Lecture Series Seattle Program Center, 7pm

The Study Group's winter lecture series starts Nov. 9. Hope to see you there!

2016-2017 Naturalists Lecture Series
Seattle Program Center, 7pm

Wed., Nov. 9, 2016
Elizabeth Petras, Natural Resources Specialist from NOAA Fisheries, will share the latest information on **Puget Sound's endangered orcas**: new insights into where they go, what they eat, how they're doing, and how we can help.

More here:

<https://www.mountaineers.org/about/branches-committees/seattle-branch/committees/seattle-naturalists-committee/course-templates/naturalist-lecture-series/naturalist-lecture-series-2016>

Next lecture:

Wed., Jan. 11, 2017
Remember hearing how the Big One will leave everything west of I-5 toast? Maybe not. Nick Zentner, senior lecturer in geology at Central Washington University, reviews the tracks of previous **great earthquakes in the Pacific Northwest**. Careful study of field

evidence at the coast of Washington and Oregon helps us separate fact from fiction regarding tsunami and ground-shaking potential.

Washington Native Plant Society

Nov 3, 2016 Program

Sword Fern Die-off in Seward Park: A Research Update

Tim Billo

The sleuthing goes on! For several years now, sword ferns in an area of Seward Park have been dying, and the problem is getting worse. Dr. Billo will share the work to date to unravel this mystery. He'll review the multiple etiologies that have been explored and share the hypotheses the research team has developed. He will also share the team's plans for experimental work to test their hypotheses and to identify restoration solutions. The need for extensive monitoring in Seward and other parks will be discussed. Finally, Dr. Billo will place this challenge in the context of anthropogenic climate change and other human pressures.

Tim Billo is a Lecturer in the UW Environmental Studies Program. He received his PhD from the UW Biology department in 2011. His undergraduate degree also, in biology, was earned at Williams College in Massachusetts. Over his career as a biologist he has worked on the ecology and evolution of birds and plants, in both tropical and temperate ecosystems. His current focus is on undergraduate education, including the facilitation of research experiences for undergraduates. His many course offerings include a philosophical summer course in the Olympic Mountains in which they ponder the role of wilderness in the Anthropocene, and among other things, spend time informally monitoring populations of Olympic Mountain endemic plants. Interested folks can learn more at his website: <https://timbillo.wordpress.com/>

Thursday, Nov 3, 7:30pm,

UW Center for Urban Horticulture, 3501 NE 41st St, Seattle

(Doors Open at 6:00 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

Upcoming programs

Dec 3 Rob Efirid "The Intersection of Botany and Culture: The Development of the Ethnobotany Garden at Seattle University" Watch for a spring time field trip to the garden!

Seattle Audubon Society Field Trips - November

Friday, November 4, 2016 – Limit 8

Discovery Park

Leaders: Kathy and Arn Slettebak

8:00 AM, South Parking Lot (turn north onto Carolina and into the parking lot off of W. Emerson St.)

We will take a leisurely 2-3 mile walk, with some elevation gain and loss, on and off the loop trail exploring forest, field and wetland habitats. Over by 11:30 AM. The meadows and the bluffs can be very windy. Dress for weather. Bring binoculars, water and snacks.

Sunday, November 13th, 2016 – Limit 14

Seattle's Peregrine Falcons

Leaders: Martin Muller (206-525-5575) and Ed Deal (206-713-1546). Calls on day of trip only please.

8:00 AM sharp, Ivar's Salmon House, 401 NE Northlake Way, Seattle (Under the I-5 Ship Canal Bridge)

Join us for a Sunday morning half-day search for the city's Peregrine Falcons. This exploration will likely turn up urban Bald Eagles, Merlins and Red-tailed Hawks as well as various ducks, loons and grebes. Please dress warmly for standing in one spot, with lots of layers available; bring latte money and a spotting scope too, if possible. Limit of 14, carpooling in the minimum number of vehicles (4 or less). Due to the difficulty of car caravans in city traffic, we ask that you not add an extra vehicle so you can leave early. Over promptly at 12:30 PM.

Sunday, November 13, 2016 - Limit 12

Montlake Fill (Union Bay Natural Area)

Leaders: Sharon Ellard and Jen McKeirnan

8:30 AM, parking lot east of Center for Urban Horticulture (near greenhouse area), 3501 NE 41st Street, Seattle, WA 98195

We hope to find around 40 avian species in this morning outing. Our list at this time of year should include a variety of water birds, native sparrows, winter migrants, and an unexpected highlight or two. Since restroom facilities are very limited, stop by the QFC at the University Village on the way to field trip site. Expect to spend about three hours exploring the nooks and crannies of the wetlands and small woodlands the Fill provides. Bring binoculars and dress to stay warm while exposed to the elements. Boots are recommended. Scopes are welcome. Should be over by noon.

Sunday, November 13, 2016 – Limit 12

Lake Sammamish State Park, Issaquah

Leaders: Patty North (206-288-3484, day of trip only) and Todd Sahl

Indicate your meeting place when you [register](#):

7:00 AM at Greenlake (Ravenna) P&R Lot, N side of 65th, OR

7:30 AM at Lake Sammamish State Park

Lake Sammamish State Park's varied ecosystems provide habitat for a diverse collection of species in one of the Eastside's 'birdiest' parks. Dress in layers and bring a snack. Level walk of about 3-4 miles. Some trails can be muddy after recent rain. Drivers need a Discover Pass. Over by about 12:30. Carpool cost is \$10 shared equally by riders.

From Seattle: Take I-90 Eastbound to Exit 15. Go left from the exit ramp, over the freeway. Turn left at the second light onto NW Sammamish Rd. In about 0.4 mile, the main park entrance is on the right. After passing the toll hut (usually closed), take the first left into a large parking lot. Meet at the NE corner.

Saturday, November 19, 2016 – Limit 7

Whidbey Island

Leader: Scott Ramos (206-229-2421, day of trip only)

6:00 AM, Greenlake (Ravenna) P&R

Whidbey Island offers a variety of intriguing habitats to birds and birders, from open salt water to quiet bays, small lakes and marshes, to dense northwest forest and shrubby meadows. A traverse of the island (we will go north to south) should provide opportunities for many winter species of both water and land birds. Bring lunch, snacks and fluids for a long, intense day of birding. Dress for cool and wet NW weather (layers!), including footwear suited for walking on hillsides, wet grass and beaches. Scopes will be useful if you have one; we'll be on the lookout for loons, grebes, scoters and Long-tailed Duck on the open water, raptors and other waterfowl inland. Return via Clinton ferry in late afternoon/evening – please be flexible, as we cannot guarantee we will make a specific ferry. Discover Pass needed by drivers. Carpool cost: \$40.00 per car, plus cost of ferry, shared equally by riders.

Sunday, November 20, 2016 – Limit 10

South King County and Puget Sound

Leaders: Matt Bartels and Dasha Gudalewicz (425-785-0812, day of trip only)

7:00 AM, Greenlake (Ravenna) P&R

We'll look for loons, grebes, alcids and ducks, keeping an eye out for such hard-to-find birds as Ancient Murrelet. We'll work our way south along the Puget Sound coast checking several good viewing points. Bring lunch & snacks, and dress for weather. Scopes & 2-way radios a plus. Over by late afternoon. Carpool cost \$22.50 per car, shared equally by riders.

Sunday, November 20 – Limit 10

Samish Flats and Fir Island

Leaders: Penny Bolton and Sarah Peden

6:30 AM, Greenlake (Ravenna) P&R

The Samish Flats and Fir Island offer some of the best winter raptor and waterfowl viewing in the state. Join Penny and Sarah for some great birding fun. All skill levels welcome. Expect to see Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks, Northern Harriers and Bald Eagles. With luck we'll find a Peregrine Falcon and perhaps American Kestrel, Merlin and Short-eared Owls. On Padilla Bay we will see the various loons, scoters, mergansers, grebes and ducks aplenty. Bring a scope if you have one. You can borrow binoculars from the Audubon office if you need them. Dress for cold, wet and windy conditions. Bring lunch, snacks, liquids, and a Discover Pass if you have one (all cars need a Discover Pass). Return to town at 6pm at the latest. Carpool cost \$50 shared equally by riders.

Odds and ends

If you liked the Wildflower Search website and you have a smart phone or pad (with space available) you will love the Washington WildflowerSearch app (for Android or Ipad/phone). Besides being FREE it is also only one of a large group of state specific wildflower (plus other plants) location and identification apps. These were developed by a single individual (Steve Sullivan) who was clearly inspired by the website. The face page is below and gives a feel for the look of the app.



Washington Wildflower Search

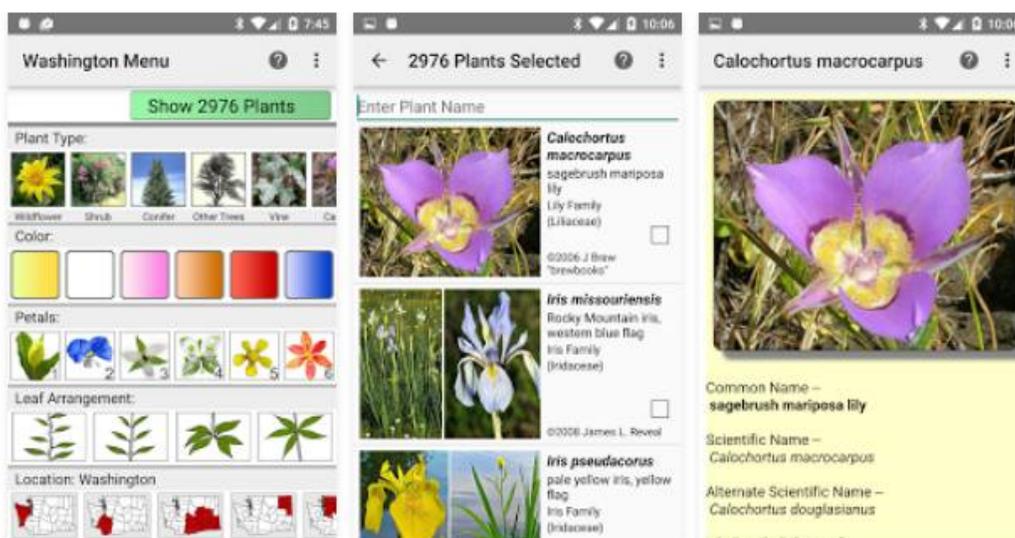
Wildflower Search Education

★★★★★ 3

Everyone

This app is compatible with some of your devices.

Installed



The App includes over 2,900 species of plants found in Washington. Overall, roughly 2,000 are "Wildflowers", 250 are shrubs, 140 are trees, 20 are vines, 4 are cactus, 125 are aquatic plants, 220 are grasses and sedges. 80 are ferns. 175 are lichen and 65 are moss.

Here is what I (gordie) think about this app. First, if you have the space, I suggest you at least try it. It takes about 96 MB space. For this you get a species list of 2900 species. This includes, flowering plants, conifers, shrubs, grasses, other trees, mosses and lichens, vines, and aquatic plants and ferns and cacti.

As far as I know it is the only app around having mosses, lichens and ferns as well as the others. It is not the most comprehensive flower app around and there is only a single picture for each plant. Yet, the whole deal is available with no web connection. If you've used the web page you may remember that you can enter latitude and longitude of your hike. With this app you can only locate by region of the

state (and the regions are broad). Still it has color, leaf arrangement, petal type and habitat to specify as well as altitude and month of the observation. Furthermore you can type in a name (common or genus) and if it has it you will see that group or species. Its main strength is the simplicity of use and that the search engine seems pretty efficient. There are, for each species a map where it is found and specific locations where it has been found. Also there is a graph of the time of the observations for different months and elevations. It seems to include introduced as well as native species and it is strange to see things like watermelon on a species list. I think it is best for beginners who want to have a look at what they might see before a trip or what they are looking at during a trip. As with Wildflower Search web page it has links to various other plant description web pages, which, if you have a web connection can be used to enhance (or overdo) the experience. There actually is a lot of text information about most plants as well. I have found it most useful for mosses and lichens. I prefer Pojar and MacKinnon for these because that book gives ethnobotany information and also is put together by field ecologists, rather than an avid amateur technically trained person. That being said, most of us fall into that latter category (without the technical training) and so we can truly say this app was developed for us. That is saying a lot.

You can download and try the app from the Apple Store (for iPhones) or Play Store (for Android) and it is (yay and power to the people) FREE!

Poetry

Did you hear the evening song

By Bill McGuire

Rain! Rain! Rain! That incessant chorus filled the evening air, those tiny tree frogs with the huge voices befitting an accomplished Irish tenor, or an old rusty prairie windmill in need of lubrication, loudly predicting this morn's pattering sound of rain on the tin roof and gurgling in the downspout, invoking instant visions of huge fresh boletes and golden chanterelles just as has been promised.

And now, the long wait, the long dormant mycelium busily drinking up the new life giving moisture, must soon yield to the call of renewal, swelling, and then thrusting it's reproductive bodies up through the sodden duff to repeat once again it's age old ritual.

The Mushroom is the Elf of Plants - (1350)

By [Emily Dickinson](#)

The Mushroom is the Elf of Plants -

At Evening, it is not

At Morning, in a Truffled Hut

It stop opon a Spot

As if it tarried always

And yet it's whole Career

Is shorter than a Snake's Delay -

And fleeter than a Tare -

'Tis Vegetation's Juggler -

The Germ of Alibi -

Doth like a Bubble antedate

And like a Bubble, hie -

I feel as if the Grass was pleased
To have it intermit -
This surreptitious Scion
Of Summer's circumspect.

Had Nature any supple Face
Or could she one contemn -
Had Nature an Apostate -
That Mushroom - it is Him!

Moss

by Anna Wrigley

I had never seen the colour green
until the Long Mynd moss
lay at my feet in a cold [rain](#),
burning;

as if some temperamental [goddess](#)
had turned out her jewel-box
here, on this stubbled heath

then set fire to the lot.

And this was what was left:

the just-cooling [embers](#) and coals
still on their necklace-strings,
curling like miniature constellations
in a fern-and-heather [heaven](#).

Environmental Issues:

Report on Cowiche Canyon Conservancy – By Gary Brill

Cowiche Canyon Conservancy

Cowiche Canyon Conservancy is an independent nature conservancy just west of downtown Yakima. I visited the conservancy on October 25th this past week. The conservancy manages it's properties which consist of the separate areas of Snow Mountain Ranch and Cowiche Canyon for their natural values and for recreational use. Snow Mountain Ranch has many miles of trails in it's shrub steppe habitat and Cowiche Canyon has one major trail with three access points leading into the riparian habitat at the base of the canyon. Once into the Canyon, the trail follows a decommissioned former railroad route along the length of the canyon. The major trails are detailed on WTA.org but there is much additional information on the Cowiche Canyon Conservancy and the multitude of trails are detailed on webpage <http://www.cowichecanyon.org>

Located west of Yakima, the weather is much better than nearer the Cascades and so it was on October 25th. The sun was out much of the day and temperatures were pleasant in the 60's. On Monday the 25th I visited Cowiche Canyon, entering via the Uplands trail which provides a wonderful vantage into and through a good portion of the canyon as it descends from sage covered shrub steppe some 350' into the center of the canyon.

The fall colors explode along Cowiche Creek, which is delineated by both columnar basalt cliffs and andesite flows, with Sumac, various willows, Red Osier Dogwood and Black Cottonwood offering an array of yellows, oranges, and reds. Once in the canyon one follows the gentle grade of the old railroad on a graveled pathway. On this occasion I just walked down the Uplands trail into the canyon and walked perhaps 2-1/2 miles to the western end of



Cowiche Canyon before returning the way I came. Cowiche Canyon offers these colors each October.

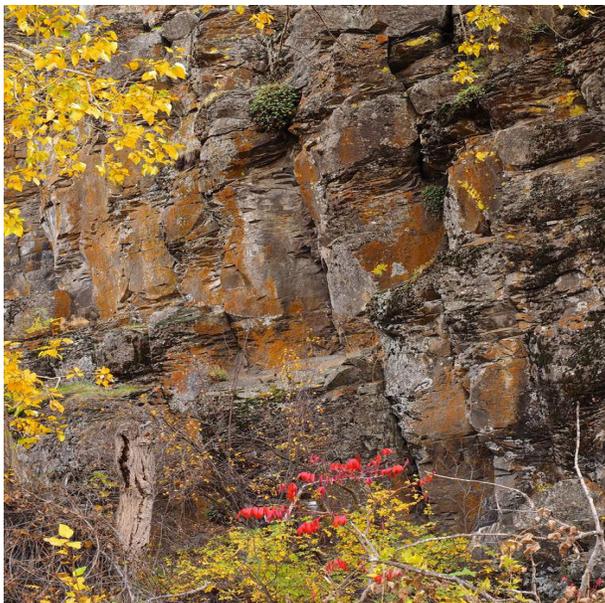
There are two seasons to visit the Cowiche Canyon Conservancy, very early spring and mid-

fall. I also visited The Conservancy's Snow Mountain property the end of March each of the past two springs. The floral display on Snow Mountain Ranch, which is covered by Big Sage, Stiff Sage, and Three Tip Sage is early (as early as the Columbia River Gorge), widely varied, and can be extensive following wet winters. The Snow Mountain Ranch trails can be taken



one way or looped in various combinations to offer up to a full day's outing on the 1500 foot mountain.

After visiting I try to remember to make a small contribution to the Conservancy to show my appreciation for the recreational opportunities and for their conservation efforts. Both Cowiche Canyon and Snow Mountain Ranch are also renowned birding locations.



Plant identification Challenges

Last month's challenge biota from Gary Brill

Last month's challenges from Gary Brill – the answers (if there are answers)

top is some aster (*Aster peregrinus* is my guess), cascade mountain ash, golden mantled ground squirrel and oregon or dark eyed junco.





These were on the Little Si trail. I think there are 2 different plants
My guess on this mystery plant (which I really am not sure about) is
probably some aquatic or disturbed area weed like water primrose
and the bigger leaves are something else like maybe marsh marigold.



On little Si near the bottom anything goes.

This month's identification challenges

on Tiger mountain (identify all biota in first photo for more fun)



How to manage your Mountaineers Profile

Anita Elder put a tutorial together for the photography group and suggested it might be useful for us as well. I'm sending you the pdf along with the newsletter. I think many of us don't realize the options available to us around our own profile.

Pictures

Thanks to Anita Elder taken at Nisqually Flats

Garter snakes, Northern shrike, shoveler



