

One Step at a Time

Newsletter of the Mountaineers Naturalist Group
February 2017

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Photos from our January naturalist hikes

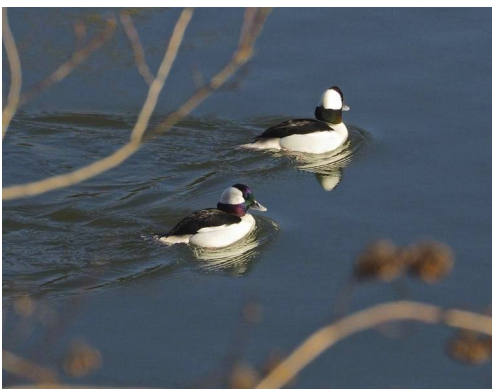
Lichen Workshop field trip – Mercer Slough





cladonia

Nisqually Flats





bufflehead, peregrine falcon

Jack Block and Lincoln Park



red breasted merganser



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



Hairy manzanita

While the garden seems asleep, below ground the sap is moving up, shrub buds are swelling and the hairy manzanita and red flowering current are popping out their first flowers. Look for major changes over the next month.

February Field Trips for Mountaineers' Naturalists

Here are the February and March hikes:

Day Hike - Boulder River

Exploring Nature & Day Hiking Trip

Boulder River Wilderness provides winter rambling with lovely water features, big trees, mosses, lichens and

Difficulty: Easy/Moderate

Sat, Feb 4, 2017

No Prerequisites, Leader's Permission Required

Availability:

6 participants

Registration closes Feb 2

Seattle Branch

Leader: [Stewart Hougen](#)

Day Hike - Bowman Bay

Exploring Nature Trip

This early spring hike combines wildflowers, birding and marine life in a melange of habitats.

Difficulty: Easy

Sat, Mar 25, 2017

No Prerequisites, Leader's Permission Required

Availability:

7 participants 0 leaders

Registration closes Mar 23

Seattle Branch

Leader: [Gordie Swartzman](#)

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Day Hike - Smith Rock State Park

Exploring Nature, Photography & Day Hiking Trip

Difficulty: Moderate

Sat, Mar 25, 2017 - Sun, Mar 26, 2017

No Prerequisites

Availability:

5 participants 1 leader

Registration closes Mar 20

Seattle Branch

Leader: [Linda Moore](#)

Heads up about a special April Trip – from Brian Carpenter current Mountaineers Volunteer of the Year.

“I’ve posted a naturalist outing to IslandWood on April 9th.”

<https://www.mountaineers.org/explore/activities/day-hike-islandwood>

Registration opens March 1st.

I am asking for a \$10 suggested contribution to IslandWood. Folks can just bring cash and deposit it in the donation box in the welcome center.

There will be hiking around campus, but I will also be teaching ways to engage with and think about nature, so the educational component goes beyond identifying things.

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

Next Study Group Lecture Coming Up

Thurs., Feb. 9, 7-9 p.m.
Cascade Room
Seattle Program Center

CLIMATOLOGISTS' VIEW OF GLOBAL WARMING

It's too wet, it's too cold, it's too hot, it's too dry, and we blame it all on **global warming**. But climatologists have a more informed view.

Nick Bond, state climatologist and UW research scientist and associate professor, explains that the last couple of years have brought mostly warmer than normal weather to the Pacific Northwest, with implications for our mountain snowpacks. Nick's presentation will discuss recent conditions in the context of the historical record



and projected future climate.

Link to course listing:

<https://www.mountaineers.org/about/branches-committees/seattle-branch/committees/seattle-naturalists-committee/course-templates/naturalist-lecture-series/naturalist-lecture-series-2017-1>

Washington Native Plant Society Central Puget Sound Chapter

Washington Native Plant Society
February 2, 2017

Recent Floristic Surprises in Northeast Oregon and Regionally (with additional thoughts on how to make sense of the genus *Lomatium*).

Mark Darrach



Photo by Richard Droker

The Blue Mountain Province comprises an area in extreme northeast Oregon and a small section of southeast Washington. Although collectively known as the Blue Mountains, the area is actually made up of several distinct mountain ranges (the Willowa, Elkhorn, Greenhorn, Aldrich and Strawberry Mountains) interspersed by the valleys between them. Variability in the vertical terrain (the tallest peaks reaching almost 10,000 feet) and an interesting geologic history are in turn reflected by a diverse flora. Mark Darrach has spent many a field season exploring the area and will share with us some of the floristic surprises the area has to offer.

Mark Darrach is a rare plant conservation botanist with the U.S. Forest Service on the Umatilla National Forest and is stationed in Pendleton, Oregon. He is also a research associate with the WTU Herbarium at the Burke Museum in Seattle where he works as a plant systematics specialist focusing on the regional flora and the western U.S. in general. His primary interest is in the genus *Lomatium* and allied genera in the Apiaceae, subfamily Apiodeae. He is the author of the *Lomatium* and *Cymopterus* treatments for the upcoming revised edition of Hitchcock and Cronquist and is coauthor of the *Lomatium* treatment for the upcoming *Flora of North America* volume 13.

Thursday, February 2, 2017

Cascade Room, The Mountaineers, 7700 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115

Doors open at 6:00 PM for the Native Plant Identification Workshop; Program begins at 7:30 PM.

Refreshments, Public Invited, Admission is Free

Upcoming Programs:

March 2, 2017: The Mountaineers Program Center, Cascade Room; Peter Stekel; Best Wildflower Hikes in Western Washington

April 25, 2017: Bellevue Botanical Garden; Richard Ramsden; Seeking Washington Wildflowers

May 4, 2017: Center for Urban Horticulture, NHS Hall; Linda Vorobik; Flora of New Zealand

June 1, 2017: The Mountaineers Program Center, Cascade Room; David Giblin; updates on the revision of Hitchcock and Cronquist

June 13, 2017: Bellevue Botanical Garden
Nancy Kartes "Bellevue Botanical Garden Present and Future" plus tour of the Urban Meadow Project

Seattle Audubon Society field trips

Saturday, February 4, 2017 – Limit 10

Lower Duwamish - Jack Block Park to Hamm Creek

Leader: Denis DeSilvis (cell day of trip only 425-830-9895)

7:30 AM, Green Lake (Ravenna) P&R

Discover a string of parks and restored habitats along the Duwamish River in Seattle. We'll visit parks at the mouth of the Duwamish River (Jack Block Park), several south of the West Seattle Bridge (Terminal 105 and 107 Parks, Herrings House) and bird up to the farthest navigable point near Hamm Creek. Expect to see a variety of birds, from sea ducks to passerines. Join master birder Denis DeSilvis in exploring these often-overlooked, in-city parks. Carpool cost \$6 per car to be shared equally by riders. End about 1:00 PM.

Sunday, February 5, 2017

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 Super 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 a 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.

Friday, February 10, 2017 – Limit 12

Luther Burbank Park, Mercer Island

Leader: Judith Roan (cell day of trip only 206-265-2661)

9:00 AM, North Parking Lot of the park

February is a good time to see wintering ducks and grebes. Luther Burbank Park has an impressive shoreline from which to watch ducks, grebes, cormorants, gulls and Belted Kingfisher. Fox Sparrows, Cedar Waxwings, Pacific Wren, Towhees, Anna's Hummingbirds, Kinglets, and a resident pair of Bald Eagle are likely to be seen. Meet in the North parking lot at 9 AM. The loop trip may be rainy and muddy so dress accordingly. Over by noon.

Sunday, February 12, 2017 – Limit 12

Magnuson Park

Leader: Jan Bragg (cell day of trip only 206-234-7196)

9:00 AM, Education Pavilion (west side of boat launch parking lot E-1. At the end of drive, on your right, after entering Magnuson Park from NE 65th St entrance). Bus #75.

This is a great time to look at sparrows and migratory waterfowl which spend the winter in Seattle. By mid Feb, some of our songbirds may be starting to sing and Anna's hummingbirds may be starting to nest. We will be climbing uphill and down at Promontory Point, then walking through the wetlands, and ending along the lake shoreline. Be prepared to walk over uneven, wet, muddy ground. This is open to all levels of birders, especially those who want to listen to bird calls and songs. Children accompanied by adult welcome. Over by early afternoon.

Saturday, February 18 and Sunday, February 19, 2017 (Friday, February 17 to travel to Omak) - Limit 10

Okanogan Highlands and Waterville Plateau

Leaders: Gary Kelsberg, Sarah Safranek, and Allisa Carlson

6:00 AM, lobby of Omak Inn, Omak, Washington, both Saturday and Sunday

The Okanogan Highlands in winter provide wonderful opportunities to see arctic visitors, altitudinal migrants, and hard-to-see residents. We will start birding from Omak on Saturday at first light, hoping to see Sharp-tailed Grouse feeding in water birches in the Scotch Creek area. From there, we'll head up to the town of Conconully to look for forest birds (nuthatches, Pine Grosbeaks, Clark's Nutcrackers, and maybe a Northern Goshawk). We'll then cross the Okanogan River eastwards and explore the highland wooded areas and clearings seeking Snow Buntings, Gray-crowned Rosy-finches, Northern Pygmy Owls. If we are lucky, we may see White-winged Crossbills, and even luckier, Great Gray Owl at dusk at the end of our first day.

On Sunday we'll bird the orchards and islands near Brewster seeking Bohemian Waxwings, American Tree Sparrows, and winter ducks. Then we'll explore the open fields of the Waterville Plateau looking for Snowy Owls, Rough-legged Hawks, Gray Partridge, and possibly Long-eared Owl or even a Gyrfalcon. We'll finish birding by afternoon so participants can drive home by Sunday night.

Logistics: Participants will need to arrange their own overnight accommodations for two nights in Omak, and will need to get to Omak by Friday night. We will need two more snow-capable vehicles in addition to leader's Subaru, (AWD is ideal) for carpooling on the birding trips from Omak (there is not enough parking at every stop to accommodate more than 3 cars). Each carpool car will need a Discover Pass and a radio. Bring warm clothes appropriate for freezing temperatures and wind, appropriate footwear for slippery snow and ice, and enough food/drink to carry in the car all day. Scopes helpful for spotting grouse, owls. Most of the birding will involve short walks from the cars, with some walks up to a mile. Carpool costs shared equally by riders in each car, at Seattle Audubon rates of \$0.25 per mile (estimate \$130 per car). When signing up make certain that phone and e-mail contact information is accurate since leaders will need to coordinate logistics. Attendees will need to get to and from Omak on their own, although it may be possible to share rides with other participants.

Sunday, February 19, 2017 – Limit 6

The Three S's (Stilly, Skagit, Samish) in Late Winter

Leaders: Jon Houghton and Sarah Peden (cell day of trip only 206-601-0773)

7:15 AM, 145th Ave NW Park & Ride

This trip will visit several winter hot spots for raptors, waterfowl, and shorebirds and seabirds in the Stillaguamish, Skagit, and Samish flats. We'll start at the Nature Conservancy's tidal restoration site in the Stilly Delta, go on to Thomle Road (if reports there are positive), and Eide Road to transition into the Skagit Flats. Depending on recent sightings and time, on Fir Island we may visit Wiley Slough and Dry Slough WDFW game access points. We'll then continue on to Padilla Bay, the West 90 on the Samish Flats, finishing up with a good dose of marine birds from the County Park on Samish Island. Some short walking for better viewing is possible, but not mandatory at each area. Bring: rain gear and warmth, rubber boots, lunch and drink, and an interest in discovery! Scopes will be a plus for shorebirds and marine birds. Carpool costs: Maximum of \$50 each car shared equally by riders. Drivers should bring a current Discover Pass. Anticipate return to Park and Ride around 5:30 PM (earlier if the weather is really awful!).

Odds and Ends

*******CALL TO ACTION*******

It's beginning – threats to the environment

<http://www.outdooralliance.org/blog/2017/1/4/giving-away-our-public-lands-for-free>

Gary Brill – Nature Advocate (our nose for news)

Also from Gary Brill:

This is a very interesting piece that details the multiple strategies of dispersal and maintenance of populations for bryophytes (mosses, liverworts, and hornworts) and compares those strategies to those of flowering plants and algae. It is long, fascinating, and thankfully doesn't use that much scientific language. The reader will learn a great deal.

http://www.bryoecol.mtu.edu/chapters_VOL1/4-7%20Adaptive%20Strategies%20Vegetative%20vs%20sexual%20diaspores.pdf

Poetry

Nature is what we see— 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.

Amends To Nature -Poem by Arthur Symons

I have loved colours, and not flowers;
Their motion, not the swallows wings;
And wasted more than half my hours
Without the comradeship of things.

How is it, now, that I can see,
With love and wonder and delight,
The children of the hedge and tree,
The little lords of day and night?

How is it that I see the roads,
No longer with usurping eyes,
A twilight meeting-place for toads,
A mid-day mart for butterflies?

I feel, in every midge that hums,
Life, fugitive and infinite,
And suddenly the world becomes
A part of me and I of it.

Arctic Wildlife Refuge

Information about Bowhead whale and other wildlife migrations in the north arctic. Makes us want to go there. Graphics and text by the World Wildlife Fund:

<http://wwf-site.webflow.io>

Meditation for hard times

This meditation glimpse is from Loch Kelly. If winter or the national scene are getting you down try the following. Close your eyes and visualize a hike that you've been on that was special (hopefully a naturalist hike). See yourself moving up a mountain trail or along a stream heading up and feeling your heart beat and your mind slow to the rhythm of your step. See the views opening as you climb through flower lined paths. Feel your ease and comfort, your connection with companions and the place you are. See yourself reaching a lunch spot with a wide view or a lake or by a stream and feel your energy and relaxation fully. Now open your eyes and keep that feeling of spaciousness and comfort, of ease and connection. Congratulations! You have found a way to get there at any moment. Feel free to use it after watching the news, dealing with beaurocracy, in a (boring) meeting or on the way to or from work. In wildness is your preservation (in more ways than one).

Mystery Location: Since we don't have many flowers blooming here is a mystery location. Hint: this is NOT Discovery Park.



Pictures

Amanita muscaria by Danielle Graham with size 7.5 shoe.



Trumpeter swans at Union Bay (by Gordie through scope)

The great eye of Betsy Bertiaux



Honeysuckle, elfin saddle mushroom and swallowtail butterfly