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## Photos from our December naturalist hikes

### Twin Falls hike of the month December 17



The group at Twin Falls (plus Kathy Buck who took the picture), ice upheave was common and adorable (held by ice queen model), icicles, upheave, lichens mosses and fern (sword and wood) all there for the viewing.

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

\*\*\*\*\*

The garden is mostly napping. Rob is not napping. There have been new plantings and landscaping. Every year it is a bit more mature. The year is turning. [Gordie Swartzman](#)

## **January Field Trips for Mountaineers' Naturalists**

There is above average snowpack in the mountains, the temperatures are dropping and the flower season is done. Our hikes will emphasize birds, conifers, mosses and lichens and will be closer to home. We will build on our learning at the moss (November) and lichen (December) workshops. The month begins with a make-up field trip on January 7 for participants in the lichen workshop. This will be at the Tiger Mountain State Park. People in the class have been contacted. Anyone who has taken a previous lichen class and may want a refresher should contact Stewart Hougen about availability.

### **Day Hike - Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge**

Exploring Nature Trip

Nisqually Wildlife Refuge in the Winter is a birders paradise, with large flocks of ducks,

Difficulty: Easy

Sat, Jan 14, 2017

No Prerequisites

Availability:

5 participants available

Registration closes Jan 12

Seattle Branch

Leader: [Stewart Hougen](#)

### **Day Hike - Seahurst Park to Lincoln Park**

Exploring Nature Trip

This trip will include several West Seattle birding locations and hiking in Lincoln Park, which

Sat, Jan 21, 2017

No Prerequisites, Leader's Permission Required

Availability:

7 participants

Registration closes Jan 19

Seattle Branch

Leader: [Gordie Swartzman](#)

## **Day Hike - Cape Lookout State Park**

Exploring Nature, Photography & Day Hiking Trip

Cape trail and beach hikes, winter birding and shorelife, photography, old-growth forests, camping

Difficulty: Easy/Moderate

Sat, Feb 4, 2017 - Sun, Feb 5, 2017

No Prerequisites

Availability:

**6** participants **1** leader

Registration closes Jan 30

Seattle Branch

Leader: [Linda Moore](#)

## **Day Hike - John Day Fossil Beds National Monument**

Exploring Nature, Photography & Day Hiking Trip

Painted Hills - leisurely hikes, photography. nature enjoyment, and geologic wonders at one of "Oregon's

Difficulty: Easy/Moderate

Sat, Feb 25, 2017 - Sun, Feb 26, 2017

No Prerequisites, Leader's Permission Required

Availability:

**6** participants **1** leader

Registration opens Jan 8

Seattle Branch

Leader: [Linda Moore](#)

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

### **Great Earthquakes of the Pacific Northwest**

Mark your calendars: The second of our Naturalists Study Group winter lectures

is **Wednesday, Jan. 11.**

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.

**When:** Wed., Jan. 11, 7-9 p.m.

**Where:** Seattle Program Center, Cascade Room

**Free** for Study Group members. Guests: \$5. **No registration required.**

**Come early to ensure a seat!**

More here:

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

Next lectures are:

**Feb. 9, 2017 — Global warming:** Seems we blame it for every weather change. Nick Bond, state climatologist, has a more informed view.

**March 9, 2017 — Meadowwatch,** a citizen-science program, is monitoring the link between climate and wildflower reproduction at Mount Rainier National Park.

Washington Native Plant Society

## **Holiday Party and Story Sharing**

**January 5, 6:30 PM (Doors Open), 7:00 PM (Potluck Begins)**

**Center for Urban Horticulture**

**Come Together with Native Plant Enthusiasts**

**Honor 2016 Award Recipients**

**Share Inspiration and Ideas for the Year Ahead!**

**It's a Potluck! Beer and wine provided**

Each year, the Central Puget Sound Chapter hosts a Holiday Party for members, friends, partners and others to get to know one another or renew old friendships. Cap off the holiday season with good food, good conversation and good entertainment.

**It's a Potluck!** Contact Elizabeth at the WNPS office if you are willing to help with the party as a volunteer, [info@wnps.org](mailto:info@wnps.org) or (206) 527-3210. (There are more details on page 7 of the December *Native Plant Press*.)

**Entertainment:** Share stories of amazing native plant or habitat adventures, fascinating lessons learned, success stories in education, conservation and stewardship or that burning question that a room full of botanists might finally be able to answer. Try to stump the crowd! Contact Carter Case ([carterdcase@gmail.com](mailto:carterdcase@gmail.com)) if you want to be part of the line-up!

Also, on the Eastside:

***Special Feature:***

**Andy MacKinnon on**

**"Cool Plants and Their Fungal Friends"**

**January 24, 2017, 7:00 pm**  
**Bellevue Botanical Garden**  
**12001 Main Street, Bellevue**

During the presentation, MacKinnon will explore the fruitful union of two of his favorite kingdoms: plants and fungi. Fungi have been associated with plants since the earliest plants colonized land, and are requisite partners of almost all of the familiar Pacific Northwest plants. His talk will focus on a special group of plants known as mycoheterotrophs which lack chlorophyll and derive their nourishment from fungi attached to the roots of a photosynthetic plant. MacKinnon is a forest ecologist who lives in Metchosin, British Columbia.

**Seattle Audubon Society Field Trips - January**

**Wednesday, January 4, 2017 – Limit 12**

**Vashon Island**

**Leader: Ed Swan**

**Meet aboard the 8:25 AM ferry from Fauntleroy**

We will [start](#) birding from the Fauntleroy ferry! We'll look for Harlequin Ducks and auklets near the Vashon dock. At Fisher Pond, we may find Wood Ducks and other puddle ducks. On Tramp Harbor, we'll scan through large flocks of scoters, scaup, goldeneye and wigeon to look for something unusual. Don't arrange rides in parking lot, meet on ferry. Let Nature Shop know if you can drive when you sign up. You can park for 4 hours in the southernmost parking lot at Lincoln Park (1 block north of the ferry dock) or find parking on nearby neighborhood streets. Do not park on Fauntleroy Way or you risk getting towed. Participants should plan to arrive early enough to park, purchase a ticket, and board the 8:25 AM ferry. Ed will meet up with participants on the ferry. Ed's car will be on the island. Carpool cost: \$6 plus cost of ferry (\$5.25 per passenger plus a share of \$14.30 car and driver ticket).

**Saturday, January 14, 2017 – Limit 10**

**West Seattle Waterfront**

**Leaders: Barbara and Paul Webster**

**8:00 AM, Jack Block Park, 2130 Harbor Ave SW, Seattle**

Explore the West Seattle waterfront and neighboring greenbelts in search of wintering and resident species. We'll carpool to several spots and walk up to two miles on relatively easy terrain. There is a strong possibility of a bakery stop. Dress to stay warm and dry. Scopes helpful. Over around noon. Carpool cost: \$3 shared equally by riders.

**Friday, January 20, 2017**

**Bainbridge Island to Point No Point – Limit 8**

**Leaders: George Gerdts (cell day of trip only 206-817-6979) and Mary Anne Rossing**

**6:00 AM sharp, Green Lake (Ravenna) P&R to form a carpool in 2 cars to take the 7:05 AM Bainbridge Island Ferry and meet George at the Bainbridge ferry terminal.**

Join George Gerdts and Mary Anne Rossing for a day of birding some of the best spots on Bainbridge

Island, then head to Point No Point for the outgoing tide. We will have the group back at the Bainbridge ferry terminal in time to catch the 5:30 PM ferry back to Seattle. We'll be looking for shorebirds and waterfowl (including loons and alcids). Scopes helpful. Bring a lunch and dress in layers in case of inclement weather. Walking from the cars up to a mile on level ground. Carpool costs: \$15 plus \$45 for the ferry shared equally by riders.

If folks are going to drive on, the best place to meet would be the ACE Hardware Store parking lot on High School Road, just east of the intersection of High School Road and SR 305. Take a right (east) onto High School Road at the second [traffic](#) light after exiting the ferry terminal. It's a mile on SR 305 from the first light, which is at Winslow Way and SR 305. There is a McDonald's on the SE corner of High School Road at the 2nd traffic light. We'll meet the group in the parking lot. If folks are going to walk on, we will meet them at the ferry terminal as they walk off.

**Saturday, January 21, 2017 – Limit 7**

**Birch Bay, Semiahmoo, Blaine**

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

**6:00 AM, Green Lake (Ravenna) Park & Ride**

January is a good time to look for loons, grebes, diving ducks, alcids, and possible wintering owls. We'll start at Birch Bay and make our way to Semiahmoo and Drayton Harbor, as well as the Blaine Marina. Time permitting, we will drive through the Lummi area, then end at the West 90 to look for Rough-legged Hawks and Short-eared Owls. [Drivers](#) will need a Discover Pass. Dress for cold and wet weather; bring lunch, snacks and fluids; scopes will be very helpful but not required. Return by early evening. Carpool costs: \$45 shared equally by riders.

**Sunday, January 29, 2017 - Limit 8**

**Magnuson Park, Seattle**

**Leader: Jen McKeirnan**

**8:30 am, Promontory Point Environmental Learning Center, Magnuson Park**

Magnuson Park offers a variety of habitats, including ponds, forest, fields. This field trip is geared for any experience level. We will walk 2-3 miles on mostly level terrain. Bring binoculars and a scope if you own one. Dress to stay warm and dry. Restrooms will be available. Over around 11am.

## **Odds and ends**

### **Burk Museum Collections**

I would submit this: The Burke Museum provides press release updates for information about their collections and ongoing research. There are many interesting articles. Here is the link to the Herbarium and Collections section of the Burke. <http://www.burkemuseum.org/research-and-collections/botany-and-herbarium> Inside will you find an interesting article on the evolution of plant life in Central and Southern America among others. From this page you can navigate to other centers within the Burke (and outside as well). Sign-up for the Burke newsletter through this website if you so desire. To reach other research centers within the Burke, click the "Explore" icon upper right.

# Poetry

## Poems by Sam Hamill, some at Memory's Vault on the trails in

### *A Lover's Quarrel*

There are some to whom a place means nothing,  
for whom the lazy zeroes  
a goshawk carves across the sky  
are nothing,  
for whom a home is something one can buy.  
I have long wanted to say,  
just once before I die,  
*I am home.*

When I remember the sound of my true country,  
I hear winds  
high up in the evergreens, the soft snore  
of surf, far off, on a wintry day,  
the half-garbled song of finches  
darting off through alder  
on a summer day.

Lust does not  
fatigue the soul, I say. This wind,  
these ever-  
green trees, this little bird of the spirit –  
this is the shape, the place of my desire. I'm free  
as a fish or a stone.

—  
Don't tell me  
about the seasons in the East, don't talk to me

3

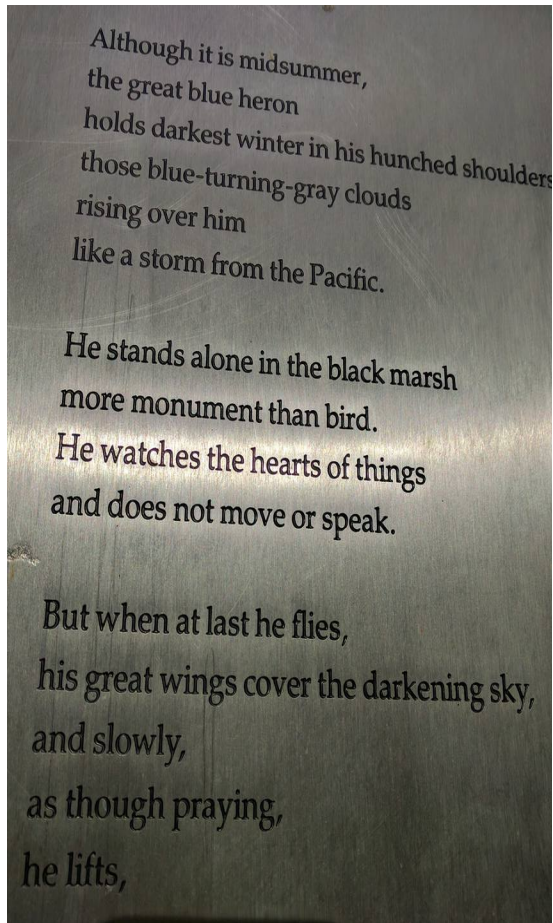
### *Saprophyte*

I have walked often enough  
through these thick wet autumn leaves  
to have memorized the deep steps  
and rich mulch pungent in my nostrils,  
have learned somehow that decay  
at the dead end of the year, in a sump of time,  
is where a life, like a memory,  
begins, first shoots creeping forth,  
tiny gray beneath soaked earth.  
No moon, no stars to rise above  
bare black limbs and cumulus.

Down the valley through dense brush,  
two coyotes in a thicket mourn  
a moonless sky. Nighthawks  
dive for moths. Mountain beaver  
burrow deeper under heaped slash.  
Hoe and ax lie idle in the shed.  
An old coon scuttles along  
down the hill through tangles of salal  
and through a field of saplings.  
Mushrooms, Saprophytes. Years  
grind on, going nowhere.  
In dead, decaying leaves,  
we are finally reborn.



## Fort Worden State Park near Port Townsend

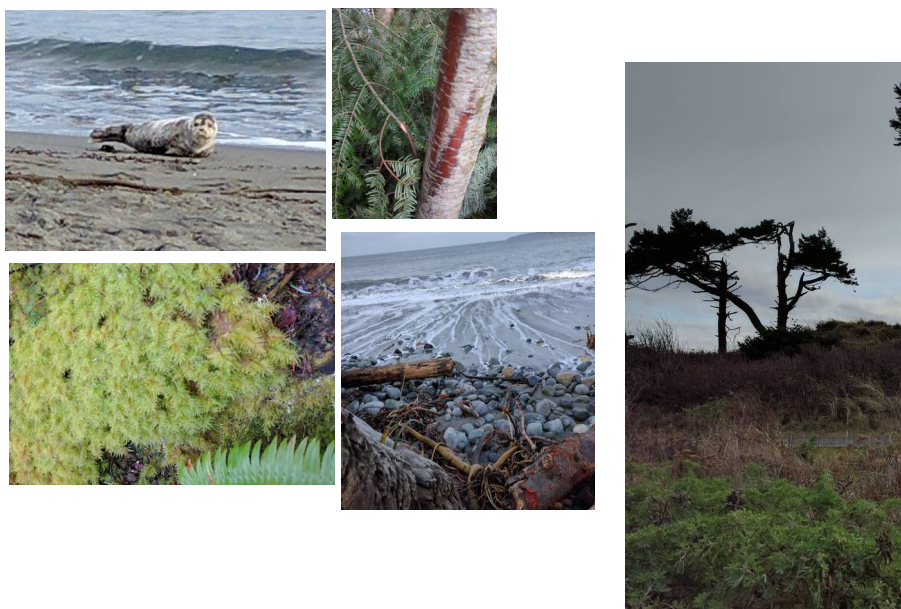


### A winter walk at Fort Worden by Gordie Swartzman

On a day in late December, a day weather soothsayers deemed rainy, a cold day warmed with a low sun, and, being in the neighborhood I set out primed for adventure. Winter walking on a day like this is in a cemetery of the past summer. pruning and dead heading are the works of man and natural systems look frowzy with dead nettles, ferns and leaves blanketing the trails. Mosses, mostly slender beaked moss, line the trails, with a few masses of lanky and stair step fern. Branchfall with lichens is very much in evidence and these little museums produce displays of usnea, bone, shield and reindeer lichens in profusion, running rampant over all available space like a high rise in a desirable district. Dominant conifers are douglas fir and western red cedar, but I also see grand fir, bitter cherry, red alder, madrone and shore pine, showing the wear of coastal winds. The robins abound in the fields of Fort Worden, but as I enter the woods, two shy varied thrushes land nearby. My binocs are at the ready and though shy, they seem curious. In the woods it is sounds of chickadee, flicker, robins and golden crowned kinglets, with occasional song sparrows and pacific wrens. Attaining the bluff I can bird on the sea below, but the sea is rough and the birds are diving a lot. There are many surf scoters, cormorants (double crested and a few Brandt's), a pair of goldeneyes (too far to identify to species). As I come closer to the water and down to North Beach I begin to see clearly and am pleasantly surprised by many horned grebes and red necked grebes and a white winged scoter, not common and looked like he is made up with white eye makeup, and the telltale white wing near the back. The surf is up and there must be storms offshore because the sea is rough and the waves are really pounding the shore. I sit close and try to photograph waves coming in. Their energy is palpable and I feel it flow through me. Around the bend I photograph



plants in the low light, the lighthouse and the few flowers. There are signs of new siberian miner's lettuce, probably fit for a salad they are so small and fresh. There is a mix of last season's plants without flower and this seasons plants just coming up. The mildness near the sea seems to foster rapid new growth despite the cold (but not too cold) days. On the beach back to surf is much tamer. There is a cooper's hawk winging along the beach and no birds offshore. Why? The kelp beds are on the north shore. Are they better seabird habitat? Buffleheads also were in the wildest surf, almost looking like surfers. Buffleheads are also common in lakes. How can they handle such disparate conditions? At the end of the beach there is a harbor seal pup and by the pier of the environmental center I look over and a bird explodes away. Is it a kingfisher or a turnstone? I was too surprised to take in the good but short look I was getting. I noticed red-brown and black. I checked against my mental image and memory and in retrospect think it was a kingfisher. Then on back to the car where I am greeted by a (probably yellow bellied) sapsucker which I thought was a hairy woodpecker when I first looked. Funny how my eyes are fooled by the expectation of what I will see. Then home to friends and lunch, after a couple of hours well spent with bunkers, poems (Memory's Vault) and, of course, the Natural World. What would we do without it?



Harbor seal pup on beach, bitter cherry (red bark) and grand fir, stairstep moss, big tide and riprap, windswept shore pines at Ft. Worden State Park near Pt. Townsend WA.

## **Introduction to the Natural World class**

Registration has opened for this year's class. Enclosed is a brochure for advertising the class. We are printing the brochures now. To make the class as engaged as possible many of we study group members can attend and some help with the field trips. Contact gordie ([g.swartzman@gmail.com](mailto:g.swartzman@gmail.com)) if you are interested in helping out in some capacity. Enclosed are pdf files for advertising the class. They are 2 sides and are intended for a foldout (2-sided printing). Feel free to copy the folder, send it to friends who might be interested, or even print out some copies at home for distribution to friends, libraries you go to, food coops \_\_ any place you think people might be interested. The course is well run, inclusive and helps to fill a desperate need for connection to the natural world we all have.



# An Introduction to the Natural World



## Cost:

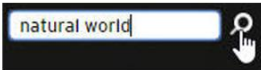
\$105 - Members  
\$160 - Non-Members

*Registration is limited.  
Recommended 18 and older.*

## Register Online:

go to [www.Mountaineers.org](http://www.Mountaineers.org)

Use the search tool  
to find the course



## Register By Phone:

(206) 521-6001

## Register In Person: (9a-5p M-F)

The Mountaineers Program Center  
7700 Sand Point Way NE  
Seattle, WA 98115



# Naturalist Study Group

*Take the next step.  
Connect with other aspiring naturalists.*

**Naturalist Study Group**  
members attend winter lecture series,  
workshops, field trips, hikes and more.



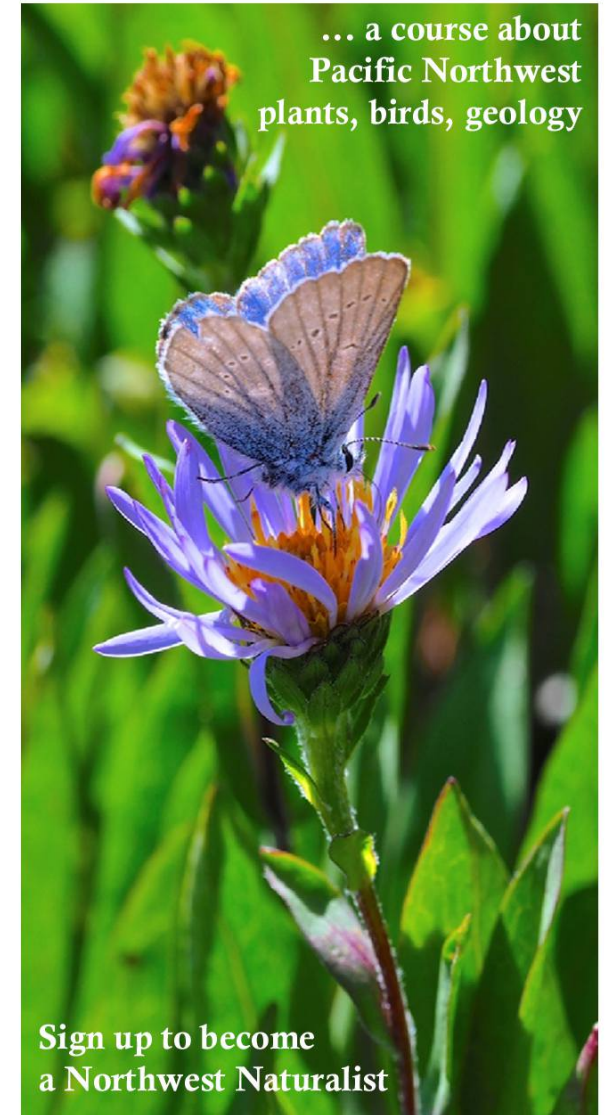
To find out more go to [mountaineers.org](http://mountaineers.org),  
use the search function on the home page  
and search for *Naturalist Study Group*;

Or contact: Stewart Hougen  
[sehougen@comcast.net](mailto:sehougen@comcast.net)



**Photos By Study Group Members**  
Cover: Gary Brill

# An Introduction to the Natural World



The Mountaineers  
[www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org)



# An Introduction to the Natural World

Learn how to increase your appreciation of the incredible variety and beauty of the Pacific Northwest's Natural World!

An Introduction to the Natural World course is designed for hikers, climbers, photographers, scramblers, and conservationists who want to learn more about the mountains they enjoy.



Look  
Deep  
Into  
Nature

With the best information resources, together with four lectures and five field trips, you will learn the basics of how to identify plants, birds, geology, mammals, butterflies and other forms of life.



## Course Schedule

**LECTURES:** (Mondays 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm)  
**The Mountaineers Program Center**  
7700 Sand Point Way NE  
Seattle, WA 98115

**April 10:** Conifers, Life Zones, Geology and Ferns

**May 8:** Flower Identification and Local Birds

**June 5:** Insects & Butterflies and Eastside Ecosystems

**July 13:** Mt. Rainier, Tidepools, and Mosses, Lichen & Liverworts

### FIELD TRIPS\*:

**April 14-19:** Coastal forest plants, trees, shrubs, birds and life zones. *Evening or half-day weekend - local park.*

**May 12-17:** Birds and plants. *Evening or half-day weekend - local park.*

**May 20 or 21:** Stewardship. *Half day - Mountaineer's Native Plant Garden*

**June 24 or 25:** Interior fir zone, wildflowers and birds - *East Slope Cascades\*\**

**July 29 or 30:** Silver fir subalpine zone, birds, wildflowers and mammals - *Mt. Rainier National Park\*\**

*\* Field trips will be organized with faster and slower paced groups to accommodate all fitness levels.*

*\*\* Dates may change depending on snow levels.*

### GRADUATION POTLUCK:

**September 18:** (Monday evening, 7-9 pm)

Get:



Handy Trail Charts of Washington's most common plants, butterflies, mosses, lichen and more.

Qualified Instructors and field trip leaders

An introduction to the best information resources

