

One Step at a Time

Newsletter of the Mountaineers Naturalist Group
July 2017

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Highlights of late May and June field trips

I did two mid-week trips with Naturalists in the past two weeks **White Bluffs and Mad River**. Flowers were, as might be expected, at least ten days later than normal but spectacular thanks to all of the water in Eastern Washington.

The first trip was to the White Bluffs with Jennifer Osborne and Alexa Gatti. We enjoyed warm, but not hot weather with a nice breeze. We spent some time birding and hiked in both the North and South sections of the **White Bluffs** which are along the free-flowing Hanford Reach of the Columbia River. This dry area with sandy soils is home to many birds and flowers that are in general not found elsewhere. There are about a half dozen endemic flowers which can be encountered.



Cedar Waxwings



Cinnamon Teal



Hymenopappus filifolius whose common name is Hymenopappus filifolius



Alexa Gatti at the White Bluffs in late afternoon.

From Gary Brill

Thomas Bancroft and I enjoyed a peaceful walk along the Mad River. We moved up our start time to beat the heat which ameliorated at lunch as a west wind began to develop.



Clematis occidentalis Western blue clematis



Nectarivorous leaf beetle on *Lathyrus pauciflorus* Few-flowered pea

Easton Ridge – Can heaven be higher?



Candy stripe, Danielle, (Mt.) Stuart, fir, twinpod and cushion buckwheat on Easton Ridge.



Orange honeysuckle, Gordie and Yelena and prairie smoke photos by Lisa Ni

Kachess Ridge June 27



The crew, larkspur, rock penstemon and columbia lewisia.

Tronsen Ridge June 28



Tweedy's lewisia with flower 'arranger', Tronsen rocks climbed, wallflower and phlox, gordon's Ivesia. A day in heaven!

The Mountaineers: Seattle Branch Photography Newsletter



Foxglove



Yellow Poppy



Queen's Cup



Big 4 Mountain



Bunchberry



Art, Anita, Paul, Lisa & Pamela



Western Hemlock

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

The garden is alive and well. Many students from the class helped weed in the garden in May and the June Garden looks healthy and blooming. With so many of us out in the mountains a visit to the garden seems like an odd duck. Still it is there and blooming and labelled and you can visit it any time, pull a weed or two, have a picnic and enjoy our summer.

July Field Trips for Mountaineers' Naturalists

Sunday July 2 – Mt. Townsend. This jewel hike in the Olympics features magnificent flowers, including many endemics, lush meadows, forest to alpine habitats and fine views. Led by Carolyn Appleton, we will ferry across and enjoy this long switchbacks in this early-opening mountain. The hike is 9 miles round trip with significant elevation gain. We are going Sunday over July 4 weekend in hopes the ferry wait won't be long since it is a mid-holiday date.

Saturday July 8 – Melakwa Lake in the Alpine Lake Wilderness is arguably the most lovely of the alpine lakes. The way up strolls under the freeway and up to Denny Creek, where mobs of kids line the stream. We will make two short side sorties to Mineral Gulch for geology study and another above the waterfall to look for seep flowers including the uncommon butterwort (insectivorous and lovely). The way is long with many switchbacks and flowers to see. Join Stewart on this adventure.

Thursday July 13 – Ira Spring trail and Mason Lake. This relatively new trail, named after the popular hike guide and author, winds into the Alpine Lakes Wilderness on the side of Bandera Mountain. It has wonderful meadows full of beargrass, many switchbacks, and loads of people, being close to Seattle. Thursday hiking should be less crowded. The lake is lovely and some bogs near the lake have special bog plants. Gordie is leading this hike. Registration opens June 28

Saturday July 22 – Clayton Beach. While the mountains are alive let us not overlook the low tides of early summer. Clayton Beach south of Bellingham, offers not only wonderful tidepooling, but also is quite 'birdy'. Stewart will take us down for a day of adventure and discovery. Registration opens July 6.

Saturday July 29 – Marmot Pass. This strenuous hike has flowers galore as it passes through many life zones on its way to the pass. The abundance of flower meadows make it one of the primo flower hikes in the state. Stewart will lead us.

Registration opens July 14.

Naturalist Youth Program:

The “Nats” are exploring options for youth programming. This summer, we’ll be leading Mountaineers’ summer campers, aged 6-10, around Magnuson Park on 2 dates, June 29th and July 20th. We’ll highlight ecosystems, wetlands, native plants, birds, and edible plants. There will be about 12 campers in each group, and we will be accompanied by camp counselors on a 30-60 minute walk. Interested in helping in the future? Contact Danielle Graham at pedergraham@gmail.com.

We had our first youth session on June 29, with 3 mountaineer camp groups ages 6-10 going around the Magnuson Park ponds area with Danielle, Peg, Stewart, Lisa and Gordie. Highlights were eating edible berries (salmonberry, thimbleberry, oregon grape, rose hips and gooseberries) and learning the poisonous ones, looking at tadpoles and examining a small frog (petting the frog?), looking at aphids close up, and seeing birds, butterflies and dragonflies, and seeing beaver tracks in the mud. This is a test case to see how we can adapt to and learn about kids needs in an environment where structure is provided by counselors and we can concentrate on the cues nature provides.

Naturalist Winter Lecture Series

Winter seems a long ways away, but we already have this coming year's lecture series set up. Here is the schedule.

Nov. 8: Joe Sweeney on Seabirds of Puget Sound — what birds you will see, when and where to see them. This is a lighter version of a lecture he gave this year for Audubon.

Jan. 10: Jon Riedel, Geologist at North Cascades National Park, on the Status of Glaciers in Washington’s National Parks, a report on his glacier studies over the past 20 years.

Feb. 14: Dave Nunnallee on Butterflies and Buckwheats — which butterflies use these plants and why.

March 14: Clay Antieau on What’s the Matter with Worms — turns out our favorite soil engineers have a dark side.

Request for leaders for class trip to Mount Rainier

We've planned our final class field trips for August 5-6 to Mt. Rainier. Volunteers from the study group are needed to co-lead some of these trips. There may be multiple destinations This is a chance to both see a lovely area,

hone your identification skills and share what you are learning in the study group. Contact Bruce Barcklow if interested/willing to help.

Audubon Society Field trips:

<http://www.seattleaudubon.org/sas/GetInvolved/GoBirding/FieldTrips/LatestFieldTrips.aspx>

Odds and Ends

Poetry on the wing

Cuckoo Song

[Brit. Lib. MS Harley 978, f. 11v]

Sumer is icumen in,
Loude sing cuckou!
Groweth seed and bloweth meed, *meadow blossoms*
And springth the wode now. *wood*
Sing cuckou!

5

Ewe bleteth after lamb,
Loweth after calve cow,
Bulloc sterteth, bucke verteth, *leaps/farts*
Merye sing cuckou!

10

Cuckou, cuckou,
Wel singest thou cuckou:
Ne swik thou never now! *cease*

Summer Shower - Poem by Emily Dickinson

A drop fell on the apple tree,
Another on the roof;
A half a dozen kissed the eaves,
And made the gables laugh.

A few went out to help the brook,
That went to help the sea.
Myself conjectured, Were they pearls,
What necklaces could be!

The dust replaced in hoisted roads,
The birds jocosely sung;
The sunshine threw his hat away,
The orchards spangles hung.

The breezes brought dejected lutes,
And bathed them in the glee;

The East put out a single flag,
And signed the fete away.

natural therapy

the clouds formed faces
and began to scatter
shapelessly

it was one
of those funky days
where
I'd felt like a ghost
and I pondered my
purpose
on this
earth

I walked way out
into the woods
wandering about
as the trees understood
and so did
the birds
it was a place
which defined peace

when the easy wind
blew against my cheeks
I decided I was right
where I needed to be
in that very moment
in time

I floated to
the part of the creek
that called out my name
where I'd meticulously meet
the water I splashed
with my loving hands
refreshed
rejuvenated
at last

I was elated
to feel that
alive

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Introduction to the Natural World

This short note is a reminder that Naturalist Study Group members can attend lectures (for free). The final lecture for this year will be on Monday July 10 from 7-9 PM. There will be talks by Stewart on the Mt. Rainier Ecosystem and on Mosses and Lichens and a talk by Gordie on the use of and recommendations for apps and web pages for aiding an abeting Naturalist activities.

The Teanaway field trips for this year's class are now history. For the first time in awhile we enjoyed excellent weather and a great flower show for all hikes, which included Iron Bear, DeRoux Creek and Bean Creek. Some highlights were a spectacular display of shooting star and elephant head pedicularis on DeRoux Creek, miles of ceanothus on Iron Bear. The rain and wetness this year, while delaying the

wildflower blooms have produced extraordinary vegetative growth (supersizing many plants), and fresh looking flowers. The species variety in the Teanaway area is spectacular and I urge you all to grab a day in the near future to take advantage of this fine region.

Yellow columbine

Photos by Lisa Ni





Ladyslipper orchid

Prairie smoke