

One Step at a Time

Newsletter of the Mountaineers Naturalist Group
May 2017

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Photos from our April naturalist hikes

Like the ice out in spring in the Arctic we finally are entering what looks to be spring. Evidence is in the air, in the flowers and in the changing of the guard as ducks leave and swallows arrive.



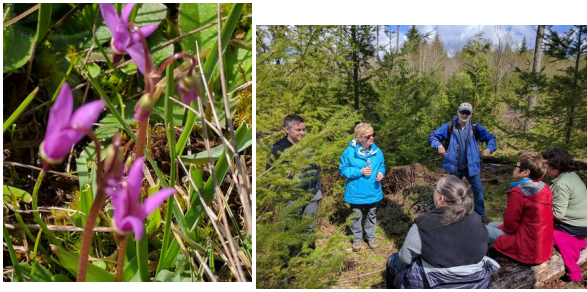
Columbia Gorge – Columbia kittentails, grass widows with Oregon sunshine, and identified identifiers at it, and a wiley toothwort (a mustard) captured by an insect. (Wahclella falls and Memaloose hills)



Parasitic naked broomrape, oval leaved saxifrage, dutchman's breeches, chickweed monkeyflower, prairie star and peekaboo Mt Hood at Catherine Creek (April 2)



Islandwood tour April 9



Poets shooting star and the nats and photographers at Mima mounds (April 15)



Sage violet and daggerpod on Westberg Trail (Manashtash ridge, April 22)



This trip enjoyed everything from sunshine to showers, with plenty of flowers and was also very 'birdy'. We were blessed with several fine birders who were able to suss out many of the jewels of the east, including beautifully vocalizing vesper and brewer's sparrows and house wrens, macgillivray's, orange crowned, yellow rumped and nashville warblers, western bluebirds, kestrels, say's phoebe and more. Flowers are still early, as evidenced by yellowbells, spring beauty, grass widow's, draba, desert buttercup, and many species of early desert parsley's to identify. But other species are coming in. Lupine is almost out, bighead clover and shooting stars, ball head waterleaf, daggerpod, several lovely rockcresses, balsamroot and bluebells.

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

The native plant garden is beginning to run its show, albeit later than we've become used to.

Blooming at this time are ribes sanguineum (red flowering current), mountain avens, snow douglasia, moss campion, tweedy's lewissia, hooker's fairybell, trout lily (yum), jacob's ladder, evergreen huckleberry, stream violet, siberian miner's lettuce, oxalis, trillium, oregon grape, drummond's anemone, racemose and star flowered false solomon seal, strawberry, an early shooting star, hairy manzanita and kinnickinick. Come on down and have a gander. Compared to where you'd have to go to



otherwise see these flowers, this is just a stone's throw away!

May Field Trips for Mountaineers' Naturalists

Our Introduction to the Natural World Class has started (first class was April 10) and many of us are involved leading class field trips around town. Since this is the largest class we've had in my memory (90) we offered 11 field trips for the first round (astounding!). We expect a similar glut of field trips in May (our birding field trips). This has to eat into our other offerings for May, yet we continue to hike and naturalize outside of class, and we've invited class members to sign up on these hikes. My experience so far has been extremely positive because of the high motivation of these nats-in-waiting to climb that steep learning curve. Lots of Questions!

Our offerings for May go fairly far afield, mostly to the East side of the Cascades, in consideration of where the flowers are blooming.

Most of our May trips are oversubscribed and we may add other if we can find leaders.

May 6, Stewart and Gordie lead a trip to Whiskey Dick, between Ellensburg and vantage. This trip features flowering cactus and, given that it is farther east than Manashtash, should be in full bloom as well.

Black Canyon, May 13 (also full and led by Gordie and Stewart) meanders up to Umptanum ridge, through fabulous karstic formations. It should have great birding both along the way and on the trail. Woodpeckers, raptors, warblers, plus flowers galore.

Joyce Fowler will help with the birding.

On May 20 Gary Brill will lead a hike to White Bluffs along the Columbia River. Gary has been scoping out this little visited area for years and expects, with the increased rain this year, to have extraordinary blooms. This can be Washington's own desert in bloom. The Columbia reach here offers birding from above.

Linda Moore will lead a trip to the Zumwalt Prairie in Oregon over the weekend of May 20-21. This apparently is a flower paradise and it should be a banner years. Linda plans her trips carefully and are worth joining.

On May 23 Gary Brill will lead a trip to Lower Mad River on the far east side of the Cascades. Gary will look for rare plants, which you can learn about with and from him.

Study group members request for help.

We really need co-leaders for our second, birding-oriented field trips for the class, in the 3 weeks after the May 8 class. If you are interested contact Shelley Williams s.a.williams100@gmail.com, who is coordinating volunteers.

MORE HELP NEEDED As part of the Introduction to the Natural World Class we have stewardship activities at the Native Species Garden right by the clubhouse. This involves some learning activities as well as weeding, planting and other garden maintenance. This will be the weekend of May 20-21. Study group members are needed to help out with the activities of tree and plant identification and the use of keys and guides. There are 4 time slots; 9-12 and 1-4 on Sunday and Monday. Please let Gordie know if you are interested and which one(s) you'd like to help at (g.swartzman@gmail.com).

Washington Native Plant Society

A Yankee Botanist's Search for New Zealand Bush by Linda Ann Vorobik

This botanical travelogue begins on the North Island of New Zealand, and extends to the southernmost tip of the South Island, providing examples of many different habitats and species of the New Zealand flora. Linda's particular interest is the ferns, and New Zealand doesn't disappoint: from delicate filmy ferns through magnificent tree ferns. Linda compares the New Zealand flora to that of our own west coast and discusses the native vegetation versus non-native, as well as other aspects of this delightful country.

Linda Ann Vorobik, PhD botanist, editor, and illustrator of numerous botanical publications has lived on Lopez since 1994, but before that spent summers and weekends at her beloved family home on Lopez. Linda went to school in north Seattle, did her undergraduate work at Western Washington University (then a College), and received her PhD from the University of Oregon. Both of her degrees are in Biology: Linda is enthralled by the great diversity of plants in our wonderful world. She conducts field research throughout the west, and teaches at the Siskiyou Field Institute in SW Oregon, the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, at Hawaii's South Kona Society for Education and the Arts, and at other locations. Linda has over 25 years of botanical experience, and is principal illustrator of, for example, *The Jepson Manual: Vascular Plants of California*, *The Flora of Santa Cruz Island*, and is currently working on drawings for *The Flora of Santa Catalina Island*. For more information, please visit her website, www.VorobikBotanicalArt.com.

Linda will be bringing some of her botanically inspired art work which will be available for purchase. She donates 35% of any proceeds back to the Chapter!

**Thursday, May 4th, 7:30pm,
UW Center for Urban Horticulture, 3501 NE 41st St, Seattle, WA 98105**

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

Refreshments, Public Invited, Admission is free.
Please Post

Upcoming Programs:

June 1st: The Mountaineers Program Center; David Giblin; "Revising 'Flora of the Pacific Northwest' - What Did We Learn and What is Next?"

June 13th: Bellevue Botanic Garden; Nancy Kartes; "Coming of Age: Bellevue Botanic Garden at 25" plus a tour of the Urban Meadow Project

September 7th: The Mountaineers Program Center; Kim Traverse; "Fungi: the Original Network"

October 10th: Bellevue Botanic Garden; Program to Be Announced

November 2nd: The Mountaineers Program Center; Janneke Hille Ris Lambers; "Climate Change Impacts on Pacific Northwest Plant Communities"

Audubon Society Field trips:

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

Note, trips in May will have fees for bird-a-thon month, their fundraiser.

Odds and Ends

Ode on the Spring

By [Thomas Gray](#)

Lo! where the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
Fair Venus' train appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
And wake the purple year!
The Attic warbler pours her throat,
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of spring:
While whisp'ring pleasure as they fly,
Cool zephyrs thro' the clear blue sky
Their gather'd fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader, browner shade;
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think

(At ease reclin'd in rustic state)
How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little are the proud,
How indigent the great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care:
The panting herds repose:
Yet hark, how thro' the peopled air
The busy murmur glows!
The insect youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honied spring,
And float amid the liquid noon:
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gaily-gilded trim
Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
Such is the race of man:
And they that creep, and they that fly,
Shall end where they began.
Alike the busy and the gay
But flutter thro' life's little day,
In fortune's varying colours drest:
Brush'd by the hand of rough Mischance,
Or chill'd by age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear in accents low
The sportive kind reply:
Poor moralist! and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glitt'ring female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display:
On hasty wings thy youth is flown;
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
We frolic, while 'tis May.

Of Interest – from Gary Brill

You might find interesting especially the presentations on cryptogamic soil and on peatlands.

<https://botanicgardens.uw.edu/education/adults/conferences-symposia/wa-botanical-symposium/>

Book Review

Natural History of the Pacific Northwest Mountains by Daniel Mathews

(Timber Press field guide 2017, 583 pp)

Daniel Mathews, in this mid-sized format book, has produced something between a field guide and a wikipedia of North Pacific (mountain) ecosystems. With exceptionally clear photos and some stunning scenes this book has catapulted itself to lead the van and set a new standard for guides, albeit a bit heavy and large to be carried on hikes. It is a good table reference and bears more reading than field browsing. There are well organized and well written sections on climate, landscape (and landscape formation), and then biota in groups (e.g. conifers, deciduous trees, shrubs, herbs by petal form, mosses, lichens, ferns, fungi, rocks, mammals, insects, birds, butterflies). It's pretty complete. I really like the snippet reviews of biologists whose names appear on many plants, and the other factoid snippets, that make field ecology so enticing. Daniel clearly knows this area and wants to share what he knows. It is a labor of love and well worth the price for enthusiasts, students, or even ecotourists.