



April 2018

# Naturalists

EXPLORE. LEARN. CONSERVE.

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## In the Native Plant Garden

The garden is hopping. Leading the way are alpine plants including alpine draba, drummond's anemone, shrubby cinquefoil, mitrewort, alpine dryas and yellow fleabane. Woods flowers are well represented including stream violets, false Solomon seals, meadow rue, trillium, and trout lilies. Too, there are large camas and delta balsamroot (first time this has bloomed). Many other plants have healthy vegetation and will flower soon. Now is a good time to visit the garden, see the flower arrangements and dream of mountain hikes. As days lengthen this is a good spot for a picnic and some quiet repose.



Alpine draba (a mustard)



Trout lilies and stream violets at the native plant garden

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## April Hikes

### Deception Pass – April 1

Sun and wind – Despite driving the whole way through fairly heavy rain we arrived at Rosario Beach just in time to say goodbye to the last raindrops and be greeted by a super strong wind. The wind, which made standing around difficult did not seem to bother the oystercatchers and harlequin ducks except maybe made the oystercatchers louder. Rosario beach head had a fair complement of sea ducks and all 3 local cormorant species (Pelagic, Brant and Double Crested). We went on for lunch to Indian Island in the middle of the Deception Pass bridge, which was quite flowery with camas and miner's lettuce leading the show. The sun came out just before lunch and stayed with us the rest of the day, until we drove back to Seattle, where the rain was still going strong.

### Columbia Gorge April 7-8

7 hardy souls stuck with it despite the doom and gloom weather report indicating high winds and bodacious rains. We started to regret going on the way down as heavy rains made visibility on I5 poor. However, as we neared southern Washington we perceived a hole in the clouds, and then, just before Ridgefield the sun came out.

#### RIDGEFIELD NATIONAL WILDLIFE PRESERVE

It stayed out for over an hour as we hiked around the preserve, seeing sandhill cranes, great egrets and many many Canada Geese as well as a lot of woods bird activity. There were camas and death camas and the area is famous for ginormous white oaks. A drive around the other part of the preserve (a wonderful winter destination) showed many ducks, raptors, nutria and deer. We lunched and headed east in Oregon toward ...



Grass Widows Iris



Oregon white oak giant



Wood Star



Round leaved saxifrage

(see more mosses on other pages)

## MEMALOOSE HILLS

Of course, it rained almost the entire way to Hood River (where we were to stay) and on east toward Memaloose there was again a lightening in the sky. We arrived at the rest area on I84 in a light rain, and got out umbrellas for the hike. There was no wind and within 10 minutes the rain had stopped. The flowers, however, did not. There was the first calypso orchid of the year, Solomon seal, licorice fern, giant swaths of supersized miner's lettuce, balsamroot, larkspur, both small and large flowered blue eyed Mary and many more flowers, including chocolate lilies, ballhead waterleaf, cascades of licorice fern and healthy plants everywhere. We filled up our long winter drought of floribunda and headed back down and to Hood River, where it rained all night.



Glacier Lily



Poet's shooting star



Nuttall's larkspur



Large flowered blue eyed mary

## CATHERINE CREEK

We left Hood River in light rain and arrived at Catherine Creek in spitting rain, meeting the rest of our contingent from Yakima. The flowers did not disappoint and as we began ambling up the hills the sun came (and mostly stayed) out. There were verdant patches of camas and shooting stars, buttercups, gold stars, poison oak (lovely!) and enough birds to keep us interested. Catherine Creek has many flowers that never make it farther north so it was a treat to both see fields of flowers (swaths of popcorn flowers) and visit exotic (for us) areas. The winds became high after 1 PM and we were grateful to have it mostly at our backs.

We were extremely grateful that the weather spared us and that we could enjoy the gifts of early spring in the Columbia Gorge region.



Meadow death camas



Gold stars abound

## Cowiche Canyon – April 14



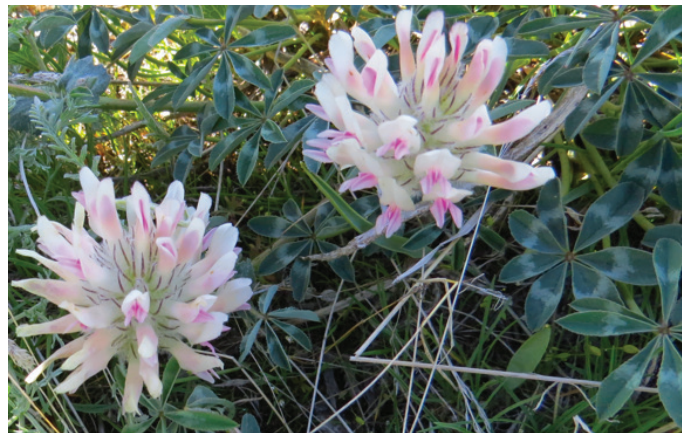
Cowiche canyon group



Kestrel courting



Barn owls



Big head clover Snow Mountain Ranch

## WATERCOLOR WORKSHOP WITH MOLLY HASHIMOTO & FIELD TRIP

A score of enthusiastic nats attended the workshop and many braved the weather for a follow-up field trip led by Monya and Peg. Some of us not artists were amazed at how good our work can look.



Gazebo at arboretum in watercolor

## WHISKEY DICK MOUNTAIN – APRIL 24 PHOTOS BY DONNA HAHN



Gray cheeked rosy finch



Whiskey Dick for lunch?



Lupine and hooker's balsamroot



Anise swallowtail

## Upcoming May and early June hikes

Sign up online under *Explore, Find Activities and check exploring nature* (or click the register buttons below).

The mountain hiking season is nigh upon us, and we nats have many offerings to enjoy.

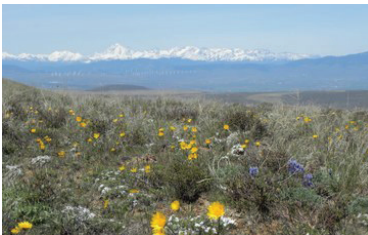


### Stillwater Natural Area

**MAY 4 - TOM BANCROFT**

Stillwater reserve. Join Tom Bancroft for morning birding at the Stillwater reserve near Carnation. Tom has been doing sound recordings in this area and has recorded bitterns (see his article in the April newsletter). The birding is hot and this is a good time to go there.

[Register Here](#)



### Umptanum Ridge

**MAY 10 - DANIELLE GRAHAM**

This steep trail winds up on Umptanum Ridge. Birding and flowering should be good.

[Register Here](#)



### Black Canyon

**MAY 12 - STEWART HOUGAN**

This old jeep road goes through geologically fascinating Black Canyon. Birding is often good (and we bird along the way as well) and flowers are abundant and varied. The quintessential east side canyon hike. We will catch the arrival of Lazuli buntings and many warblers. The hike goes through several life zones for a varied flower experience.

[Register Here](#)



### Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge

**MAY 12, 2018 - ANITA ELDER**

Join Anita for a trip out to the coast to see bird migrations in full swing.

[Register Here](#)



### Icicle Ridge and Chiwaukum Creek

**MAY 17 - GORDIE SWARTZMAN AND STEWART HOUGAN**

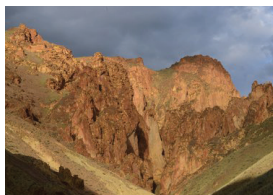
Join Gordie and Stewart on a couple of hikes in the Leavenworth area. Many endemic species of the Wenatchee mountains can be seen as well as birds, since the migration of warblers into this area should be going on.

[Register Here](#)

**MAY 18- GORDIE SWARTZMAN AND STEWART HOUGAN**

Stewart and Gordie continue hiking Sauer's mountain near Leavenworth. This area is great for birding as well as laden with flowers and has fine views. This is best combined with the previous day's hikes and a stay over in the Leavenworth area.

[Register Here](#)



## Leslie Gulch & Juniper Gulch Trail

MAY 18-20 - LINDA MOORE

Linda leads this trip to Leslie Gulch and Juniper Gulch trails in Southeastern Oregon. Linda organizes these trip meticulously and brings us to little visited places famous for views and solitude. Try it, you'll like it.

[Register Here](#)



## Lower Mad River

MAY 23 - GARY BRILL

Join Gary on a mad dash to Mad River, where many rarer flowers can be found. The drive is long but the place is beautiful and Gary is keen.

[Register Here](#)

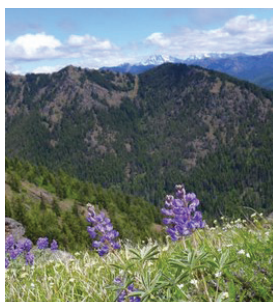


## Stein River Canyon & Stein Valley

MAY 26-28 - LINDA MOORE

Linda is leading this backpacking trip up to Canada near Lytton. It will be wild, wonderful and well organized. Linda vets people before coming on her trips, and this trip appears to already be full, but if you are keen to go, contact Linda anyways and find out more about the area. She will know!

[Register Here](#)



## Easton Ridge

JUNE 2 - STEWART HOUGAN & GORDIE SWARTZMAN

Finally, a destination closer to home, yet having all the feel of a wild place. Join Stewart and Gordie for a leap up the ridge and miles of flower roaming.

[Register Here](#)

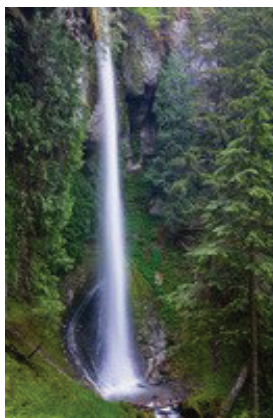


## Kachess Ridge

JUNE 9 - GORDIE SWARTZMAN

The trailhead is right by Easton Ridge, but the feel of the place is different. There are great views of Rainier at the top, a magical lunch spot and quite a steep trail up to it for the last mile. Good, though not for the faint or the feeble. The flowers are, of course, spectacular.

[Register Here](#)



## Goat Creek and Cathedral Falls

JUNE 10 - DEE ANN KLINE

Join Dee Ann for this waterfall trip to the Mt. Saint Helens area. This is with the Olympia Branch.

[Register Here](#)

## WA Native Plant Society Program



### The Tanoak Tree; an Environmental History of a Pacific Coast Hardwood

THURSDAY, MAY 3, 7:00PM, FREDERICA BOWCUTT

Mountaineers Program Center, Seattle,  
Goodman Room

**Doors open at 6:00 PM for the Native Plant Identification Workshop; Program begins at 7:00 PM. Donations greatly appreciated.**

The tanoak, *Notholithocarpus densiflorus*, is a Pacific Coast hardwood native to California and southwest Oregon. It is a tree with a complex environmental history, attracting radically different perceptions -- from treasured food plant of indigenous peoples to cash crop to trash tree. Having studied the patterns of tanoak use and threats for nearly twenty years, botanist, Frederica Bowcutt, uncovers the tangled history of cultural, sociopolitical, and economic factors affecting the tree's fate and discusses hopeful changes; including reintroduction of low-intensity burning to reduce conifer competition for tanoaks, emerging

disease resistance in some trees, and new partnerships among tanoak defenders, including botanists, foresters, Native Americans, and plant pathologists.

Frederica Bowcutt has been teaching botany at The Evergreen State College since 1996. She specializes in floristics, field plant ecology, and plant-centric environmental history. Dr. Bowcutt earned her bachelor of science at the University of California, Berkeley, and her master degree at U.C. Davis, both degrees in botany. She continued at U.C. Davis to earn her Ph.D. in ecology. Between her masters and Ph.D., she worked for five years as an ecologist for California State Parks and Recreation. Her work has been published in a variety of journals. She recently co-edited a second book, *Vascular Plants of the South Sound Prairies*.

Copies of *The Tanoak Tree* will be available for sale at the meeting (\$25.00, cash only). Of the book, John Tappenier, retired Oregon State University Forester, says, "This book will be helpful for someone wanting a general overview of tanoak-conifer forest of southwestern Oregon and northern California. It could serve as a basis for, or as part of, a seminar or class on broadening the scope of forest management to include native American cultural values in contemporary western U.S. forests.

### Upcoming Programs

- 6-12-18 Julie O'Donald "Birds in Our Midst: Creating Gardens Filled with Life"  
Bellevue Botanical Garden, Aaron Education Center
- 9-6-18 Robert Pelant, Pacific Rim Institute, "Restoring abandoned agricultural land to native oak-prairie habitat on Whidbey Island."  
The Mountaineers, Cascade Room
- 11-1-18 Scott and Susan Freeman "Saving Tarboo Creek", The Mountaineers
- 12-6-8 Holiday Party! The Mountaineers



Fading Trillium bloom at the Arboretum by Anita Elder



## Odds & Ends

### Poetry

#### I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

William Wordsworth, 1770 - 1850

I wandered lonely as a Cloud  
That floats on high o'er Vales and Hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host of golden Daffodils;  
Beside the Lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the Milky Way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:—  
A Poet could not but be gay  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the shew to me had brought:

For oft when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude,  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the Daffodils.

This poem appeared in Poem-a-Day on October 1, 2017. This poem is in the public domain.

#### NOTHING GOLD CAN STAY

Robert Frost, 1874 - 1963

Nature's first green is gold,  
Her hardest hue to hold.  
Her early leaf's a flower;  
But only so an hour.  
Then leaf subsides to leaf.  
So Eden sank to grief,  
So dawn goes down to day.  
Nothing gold can stay.

#### A BIRD, CAME DOWN THE WALK - (359)

By Emily Dickinson

A Bird, came down the Walk -  
He did not know I saw -  
He bit an Angle Worm in halves  
And ate the fellow, raw,

And then, he drank a Dew  
From a convenient Grass -  
And then hopped sidewise to the Wall  
To let a Beetle pass -

He glanced with rapid eyes,  
That hurried all abroad -  
They looked like frightened Beads, I thought,  
He stirred his Velvet Head. -

Like one in danger, Cautious,  
I offered him a Crumb,  
And he unrolled his feathers,  
And rowed him softer Home -

Than Oars divide the Ocean,  
Too silver for a seam,  
Or Butterflies, off Banks of Noon,  
Leap, plashless as they swim.

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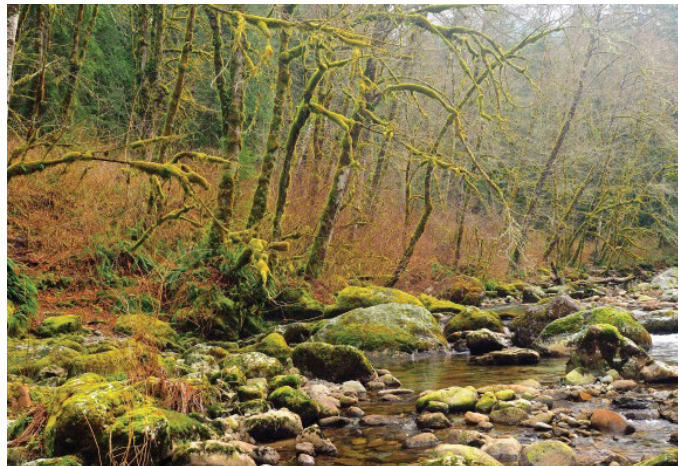
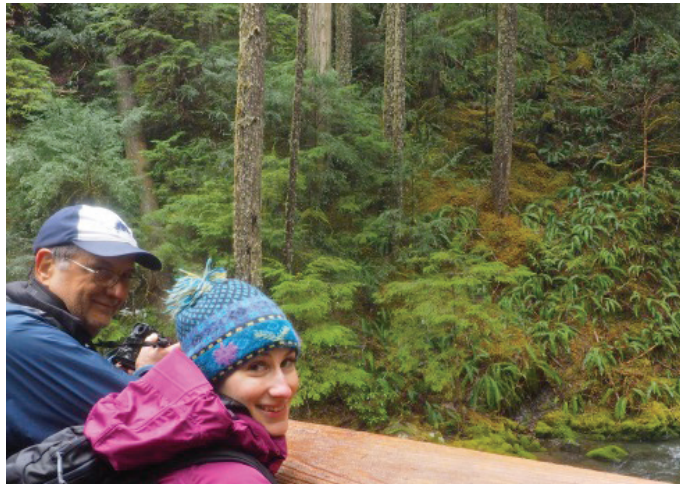
## Gathering Moss Enthusiasts

by Gary Brill

It's been a lot of fun broadening the Naturalists interest into mosses during the winter months. In spring and summer for most of us what we want to do is obvious - enjoy desert and mountain wildflowers. In the winter there are fewer choices for outdoor activities. One can ski, and I do, but waiting for good conditions in the Cascades even with weekdays off can feel like a futile endeavor more often than not. It didn't always used to be that way. Prior to about 1986 the Cascades often had good snow and always had reliable snowpack. So given the weather to try to get aerobic outdoor exercise I and many others would hike up Mt. Si or Tiger Mountain. I would often go at near the fastest pace I could keep up steadily but I've not timed myself for many years. That becomes a fools errand as one gets older, and besides, the way I see things now is not the same way I saw things twenty or thirty years ago.

In the fall of 2015 Bruce scheduled a moss hike on Tiger Mountain and I signed up, not so much because I was interested in mosses but more just because it was something to do during a drab winter. And I brought my camera. I thought I'd photograph a few of the mosses we identified out of Pojar and MacKinnon's Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast so that I could share them with

group members. I enjoyed photography and that was my real interest. Well, as many others in the Naturalists know taking the images opened Pandora's Box. Once you photograph something in nature, be it a plant, an insect, a bird, or mammal, one is obliged to try to identify what one has photographed. Of course, at the time, I didn't know what to photograph on a plant. That takes experience. So, I identified most of my moss images and left a few for further exploration at a later date. And then I did it again. Lynn, later that winter, led a Naturalists hike on Squak Mountain. I took my camera again. I learned from mistakes I'd made on my first moss field trip both technically with the camera in darkish winter-time lighting but also with the detail I sought in my images.



I don't really know how it happened, but those first couple of hikes fairly rapidly evolved into something of a passion for mosses. I guess some of it early on was not being willing to admit defeat in identifying mosses and eventually liverworts as well. Some of this I understand. As some the hikes became more beautiful in Cascade rain forests, I appreciated that mosses are really the best and most beautiful thing going in the winter lowlands of the Cascades and Olympics. The turning point for me in beginning to think that learning mosses was something I might be able to do was a three day trip I took to the Western Olympics, visiting the Hoh, the Bogachiel and the nature hikes near Lake Quinault. I stayed at Lake Quinault Lodge because winter nights are too long and damp for my taste and for reading material I brought along a couple of the books on my resource list. I would hike in the daytime, blown away by the rich hanging mosses and ground cover of the Olympic Rain Forest, photograph mosses that I didn't know or that I thought would be good photographic subjects, and at night I'd try to figure out what it was I had seen. Initially, I learned by trying to match photographs, and perhaps that is one of the best ways to gain a bit of a footing. But my gosh is that dry reading. But by now, I was focused and determined. I think it works much better to acknowledge what you find in the field and especially to photograph particular mosses than it does the other way around. Looking at the book first seems

to me to be of little value. From that point on my interest in mosses and my ability to figure out what it is that I've seen has gotten much better. Initially my knowledge grew in spits and spurts and the vast number of mosses - 750 mosses and 325 liverworts in Washington and the seemingly fine distinctions between them was daunting. But I continued to photograph mosses for artistic and botany reasons. As my photo library grows I can review the names of mosses or review hikes I've done to see what mosses I've found on a particular hike. This is, of course, like a personal plant list. I no longer photograph all I see but choose whether or not to photograph a moss that is new to me. But, of course, when I carry my camera I'm also looking for scenes on both the grand and small scale that I find particularly attractive. Mosses can be amazing.

In each of the past two winters Stewart and I have taught a moss identification class in January that has been well received. Stewart's way of learning things in Nature is different than mine and more organized. He created a chart, which I helped him with, choosing roughly 35 mosses that appear to be common on hikes in winter forests of the Pacific Northwest. These aren't all the mosses, just the most common. And the mosses are so far just those of the forest. There are many micro habitats specific for different sets of mosses and of liverworts. But how easy it is to get started using the chart which





identifies mosses by growth form, where it grows (on the ground, in trees, on rocks, etc.), and a few other parameters. The door is cracked open. At least knowing that you can identify some or most of the mosses one might see gives one the confidence to take on the botanical challenge of identifying Bryophytes (mosses and liverworts primarily). From this point the sky is the limit, although there is no free lunch. To expand, one can learn a moss here and there from others, or one can begin to delve into Pojar, Vitt, Schofield, British Biological Society's Field Guide and into an array of websites. All of this is in the resources listed below.

Well, gosh, now there seems to be a group of people who are enthused about Bryophytes and the group's energy seems to grow by leaps and bounds on each outing. Who'd of think it?

### Reference Material



## Leadership anyone?

by Gordie Swartzman

This time of year the Nats have a lot going on. Besides the beginning of the spring-summer hiking season we are also running our Introduction to the Natural World Class. Because the class is fully subscribed (81) we are strapped with a need for leadership in class field trips, since we attempt to keep these small and intimate. At the same time, we try to maintain a good number of naturalist hikes open to our membership. This kind of effort takes leaders. A quick perusal of the offerings demonstrate the relatively few number of leaders actually leading hikes. Also, we want to continue to offer learning opportunities to our members through workshops and to foster collaborations with other like-minded organizations. This all takes brainpower and people willing to do the leg work, so to speak. On top of this we have maintenance of our native plant garden and use of it for education and stewardship activities, with a special focus on youth stewardship.

I think a program such as ours, to succeed and offer a viable alternative to the many meet-up informal hike get togethers, must provide some value in terms of safety, education and experience, choosing destinations with a variety of hiking challenge, and taking advantage of the mountaineers leadership in conservation and outdoor ethics. I believe our work is a mission to help protect the environment through hands-on environmental education and mutual learning – sharing what we know and how we came to know it. This is part of a larger vision for environmental protection through allowing people to reconnect with the natural world they originally evolved in. Such connection, besides being shown to help people's mental, physical and emotional health, also provides meaning in a spiritually deficient society. Those that 'get' this message are more willing to carry the torch into the future and reverse the biblical concept of nature as being the dominion of man.

So, gents and ladies, step up and take your tickets for the future ride to leadership in our program. This is more than just pay back for past services, but a chance to enhance your own life compassion and join the mutual admiration society we have created with our experience diversity. If you already hike a lot, you can, with a little effort, start to lead naturalist's hikes. The commitment here is to participate in a 2 hour hiking leadership 'course', and to lead (maybe starting with a co-lead) of a mentored hike. You then get to go where you want to go, when you want to go there. There are many acceptable styles of leadership of our hikes. You don't have to be a marathon hiker. If you feel more comfortable leading city hikes, that's great! The city hiking season is extremely long and we have many fine parks and trails nearby. If

(continued n last page)

# Photographs



Sandy Bowman trout lilies and stream violets



Bruce Barcklow bighorn sheep along the Columbia near Vantage

Donna Hahn:



*Usnea longissima*, somewhere along the Sauk River



# Photographs



Camas



Natural world class field trip – Wolf Creek Nature trail.  
Fawn lily and bleeding heart.

Gary Brill photos:



Sage violet and buckwheat buds



# Photographs

Betsy Bertiaux – owls, yellow bellied marmot, balsam root and mystery seed pods. Can anyone identify the owls or the pods?



# Photographs

Brodiaea, camas and bitterbrush blooming in the Columbia Gorge by Grace Winer



Anita Elder:



Invasive teasel (*Dipsacus*) near Sedro-Woolley



Common horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)





(continued from page 11)

you like backpacking and scrambling, we are dying for leaders who can offer more of these. Leaders do not have to be experts in plant identification or birding. The main qualification is passion. If you feel inadequate, why not consider asking some of our more eco-experienced leaders to come along as co-leaders. We all started somewhere. Some of our members have expertise or interest in areas not in the mainstream, like scientists who specialize in specific plants, or marine biologists. What a great resource you are for us. Why not consider helping us put together a workshop or field trip around your interest area; like a geological workshop, with a field trip, or edible plant workshop. These could involve hiring someone you know about who has experience teaching or doing it yourself or as part of a team (we do have a budget for that). Being small, we are flexible, and our vision of what the group can be can change with members. I'm particularly interested in getting younger people involved (and we have some already) because many groups age in place and the environment will need future protection after we are gone. If you believe, as I do, that hiking our area trails is the best antidote to ecological malaise (let alone malpractice) you will want to play a role.

Not everyone is a leader. Some see organizing as a hassle or don't like hiking with strangers, or shy away from the responsibility of logistics and possible snafus. Those of you who still want to be an active part of our group can still help with technical areas like video-taping our lectures, helping with AV, writing articles in germane areas, helping with the newsletter, helping or taking leadership in our native plant garden or greeting and setting up for classes. Do consider helping our soon, and let either me or Danielle Graham know if you have an idea or an inclination to lead or help.

## Seattle Naturalists Committee Officers and Subcommittee Chairs

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