

One Step at a Time

Newsletter of the Mountaineers Naturalist Group
September 2015

The 2015 hiking season in review

Checking with the naturalist hike list for this past hiking season (March through August) there were 45 hikes completed, including hikes for the Intro class and the naturalist leadership training course. Many of these hikes had waiting lists. There were 19 leaders in all. Of these 9 were led by trainees in the leadership training class (there were 15 signed up for this class). Several others in the class also co-led. As you all experienced this summer it was extremely hot and dry. Mid-July looked like September in the mountains. We had to move up our Rainier hikes for the Intro class to mid-July and ended up canceling the Teanaway hikes due to extreme heat. Thus, most of the hikes were earlier in the season. Still, flowering happened and the good part was that many trails were accessible much earlier than usual.



Cliff penstemon – Easton Ridge May 28 (find the sedum)



Mount Townsend – June 6 – phlox anyone?



Yellow Aster Butte – July 25



Green Mountain – July 18



Berkeley Park – July 11 – cold, but oh the flowers!



Black Canyon Umptanum Ridge – May 10



Gingko State Park – April 4



California false hellebore – Tronsen Ridge June 19
Photo highlights from this hiking season

CHANGES IN THE NATURALIST GROUP

New chair – Gordie Swartzman

Introduction to Natural World Coordinator – Jeff Nystuen

Study Group Leadership – Bruce Barcklow and Kay English

Seminar Series Coordinator - Rose O'Donnell

Advocacy – Gary Brill

Native Plant Garden – Rob Stevens

Hiking and Leadership mentoring Coordination – Stewart Hougen, Carolyn Appleton, Ming Rutan,
Lola Kemp and Gary Brill

Financial (Treasurer) – Monya Noelke

Facilities coordination – Marc Provence and Nancy Provence

New Coordinating committee consists of the above

UPCOMING HIKES AND EVENTS

Potluck for the Introduction to the Natural World course Wednesday September 23 7 PM all study group members are welcome. Please bring a potluck item to share. If you have photos to share bring them on a thumb drive or e-mail them to gordie (g.swartzman@gmail.com).

Organization meeting for naturalists – We have to make some decisions, have some new leadership and have ideas to discuss. September 29 7-9 PM at Cascade Room in the Mountaineers Clubhouse.

Hike of the Month – Barclay Lake Saturday September 26. Sign up through the study group accessible through My Courses on your profile on the Mountaineers web page.

2015-2016 Naturalists Lecture Series, Seattle Program Center

Nov. 11, 2015 (Wed) – Thor Hanson, conservation biologist, will read from his well-received new book "The Triumph of Seeds," describing how seeds not only became dominant in the plant world, but shaped human history as well.

Jan. 13, 2016 (Wed) – Paul Hessburg, USFS forest ecologist, will focus on how our forests have evolved without fire, and what they *should* look like.

Feb. 11, 2016 (Thurs) The geology of Mount Rainier, by Mike Harrell, scientific instructional designer at the UW's Earth and Space Sciences department.

Mar 10, 2016 (Thurs) – Carolyn Shores of the UW's Predator Ecology Lab focuses her research on predator/prey relationships, particularly the impact of returning wolf packs on coyotes and their prey.

Washington Native Plant Society Central Puget Sound Chapter. October 1, 7 PM Urban Horticulture. Andy MacKinnon "Life Above the Treeline: Plant Adaptations to the Alpine"

Useful Links

Link of the month: One of the most useful web links for plant identification is the wildflower search website <http://www.wildflowersearch.com/>. This is useful for anyone from rank beginner to experienced amateur. It keys the species with pictures to the location where you are hiking (or where you are) and when you are hiking. It gives the probability of different sightings and also relates species to altitude. It is for locations nationwide and has some pre-loaded locations for most states (not too useful for us, but maybe better in the future). There are links to pictures and more information about the species. It also includes ferns and many non-natives (a.k.a weeds). It is great after a hike to browse the area and find the knotty plant you saw a lot of but don't recognize.

Odds and Ends

Opportunity for Indonesia: If you are interested I can send you a registration form

I was given your name as head of the Naturalists Committee of the Mountaineers. I live on Vashon Island and for about 9 years now have been a board member of a small organization called the Alliance for Tompotika Conservation (AITo for short), working on the island of Sulawesi in Indonesia. We began, at villagers request, to assist in the conservation of the endangered maleo bird, and now do some work on sea turtles and bats as well. We have taken interested participants on trips in previous years, but not in the last couple of years.

Now we have an exciting opportunity coming up in early 2016 and are looking for folks who might like to go with a small group and participate in a tarsier survey. I have attached relevant information.

I am hoping you might agree to spread the word, either formally and/or informally, about this opportunity for involvement by citizen scientists in the identification of new species of small mammals, and also getting to see other aspects of the natural world in this place of immense biodiversity. If you have any questions I might answer, I would be happy to do so. I would also be most appreciative if you had suggestions for other individuals or institutions I might contact.

Thank you so much,

Ellen Kritzman

Ellen's e-mail is Ellen Kritzman <ekritzman@centurytel.net>. I have no idea how much this would cost you. It is in Jan and Feb 2016. It costs \$500 to reserve a space.

Woes of a naturalist – Dead fish by Jeff Nystuen

As I was packing for a business trip to England, I found myself at the grocery store buying supplies. I noticed a special on fresh filet of sole, and thought that some fresh fish would make a good quick dinner. I bought some and returned home. When I unpacked the groceries, I couldn't find the fish. How strange? Almost never do grocery store clerks fail to put all items in the bag. I searched the car for the fish, and found nothing. I searched the bag again. I searched the car. Again, nothing. Dinner time came, and I searched the car again. Nothing. In the morning, I again searched the car for the missing package of fish. Nothing. And so I went to England for two weeks...

When I returned from England, I opened the car door, and instantly remembered the missing fish issue. The stench was overwhelming. I renewed my search for the missing fish, and finally found a now aromatic package UNDER the passenger's front seat. The smell persisted in my car for months. I thought that I would have to buy a new car. Certainly it affected my ability to offer dates a ride in my car. I didn't want to promote the association "Jeff = dead fish smell". How can smells persist so long?? I now have a new car.