

One Step at a Time

Newsletter of the Mountaineers Naturalist Group
May 2016

Photos from our April naturalist hikes to Waclella Falls, Memaloose Hills, Catherine Creek, Cowiche Canyon, southern Oregon and Westberg trail (hike of the month).





Sage violet (Cowiche canyon), Manashtash Ridge top, loupe and brodeaea at Catherine Creek, large-flowered blue eyed mary (Southern Oregon), Gairdner's penstemon and bitterroot (Westberg trail), Columbia kittitas (Waclella falls, Catherine creek by shooting star, Memaloose hills balsamroot.

In the Garden

Flowers are falling over themselves to bloom. Flowers from all different life zones, planted in proximity and begging for your perusal. Here is a list: kinnikinick, pestle parsnip (barestem lomatium), sulfur buckwheat, parsnip-flowered buckwheat, mountain avens, cut leaf anemone, rock penstemon, sea pink, small flowered alumroot, fringe cup, piggyback plant, chokecherry, osier dogwood, tall bluebells, giant camas, coast strawberry, pacific ninebark, twinberry, red flowering current, nootka rose, thimbleberry, bleeding heart, wallflower, stream violet, foamflower, serviceberry, mock orange, hooker's fairybells, racemose solomon seal, star flowered solomon seal, trailing blackberry, orange honeysuckle, oxalis, golden current, yellow penstemon, small flowered penstemon, tweedy's lewisia, tufted saxifrage, oregon sunshine, shrubby cinquefoil, silky phacelia (passing), rosy pussytoes, spotted saxifrage, evergreen huckleberry, labrador tea, media manzanita. Siberian miners lettuce, snowberry and meadow rue. What a change from last month! Come down and browse and see if you can find something (native) blooming that Rob and I missed. The kildeer have successfully nested and now there are a pair of flickers that are using the nest box in the garden.



Camas, fringe cup and youth-on-age, bare stem lomatium, alpine gold daisy and wallflower in the garden

May Field Trips for Mountaineers' Naturalists

We have several field trips for the month of May, including the hike of the month which is May 28 to Easton Ridge near the hamlet of Easton WA. We also have a hike planned on May 8 to Black Canyon, which should be fabulous for birds as well as wildflowers. Another trip to Umptanum Ridge, from another side is on May 14. These are all listed as activities and are reachable by checking Exploring Nature. They all require permission of the leader, which, for study group members is automatic (you do not have to ask the leader to register if you are in the study group). We are no longer linking these hikes to the study group because too many people are not finding the hikes there. The hikes will also be open to people in the Introduction to the Natural World class. The main purpose of requiring leader permission is to avoid having hikers without real interest in or information about the natural world. It can also allow study group members a sort of first priority on these hikes (can you imagine how this is done?). There is another trip led by Linda Moore to Zumwalt Prairie Reserve in Oregon the weekend of May 21-22, which involves four trail walks in the area and promises great birding and flowering (is it a flowering of birds?). If you are interested in these hikes, sign up soon because they are generally open to mountaineers and I'm getting requests for joining us.

Nature Talks and Walks by sister organizations

May 5, 2016 Program Washington Native Plant Society

Robert Van Pelt The Forests of the Olympic Peninsula

Dr Van Pelt has long been fascinated with "Forest Giants" and has extensively studied old-growth forests across North America, particularly in California and the Pacific Northwest. He has a particular interest in tree and forest structure and forest ecology. He has a long connection with the forests of Washington State and was responsible for starting the Washington Big Tree Program in 1987, which keeps records on the largest of each

species of tree in the state. He is currently involved in canopy research in the forests of the Olympic Peninsula, among other sites, and will share recent findings with us.

Robert Van Pelt is currently on the research faculty at the University of Washington and Humboldt State University, where he is part of the Institute for Redwood Ecology. He has been at the University of Washington since 1988, where he received both his MS and PhD. A native of the Midwest, he has lived in Seattle for 30 years, but spends the bulk of his time in Arcata. His fascination with facts and figures, combined with his research on big trees, lead him to write *Forest Giants of the Pacific Coast* (2001), which chronicles in detail the largest trees in western North America. He was a scientific consultant for a congressionally mandated study of state forests in Washington, and wrote two books which are currently being used in Washington state forest management. These books were but one output from a four-year effort in defining what old-growth and pre-Euro-American settlement forests are throughout the state. This has led to a major shift in how state forests are managed, in both eastern and western Washington. Currently, he is involved in canopy research on the structure and physiology of the world's tallest trees - coast redwood, Douglas fir, Sitka spruce, giant sequoia, and mountain ash.

Thursday, May 5th, 7:30pm,

UW Center for Urban Horticulture, 3501 NE 41st St, Seattle

(Doors Open at 6:30 PM for the Native Plant Identification Workshop; Program begins at 7:30 PM.) For details, see wnps.org

Refreshments, Public Invited, Admission is free.

Butterfly Society

Washington Butterfly Assn is looking for young naturalists aged 10-17 who are interested in attending its annual conference in northeast Oregon August 5-7. WBA and the family of its founder, Idie Ulsh, are offering scholarships for interested youth. There is more information and an application form at <http://wabutterflyassoc.org/youth-scholarships-conference-8-5-8-7/>

May 21 National Parks Bio Blitz. Survey butterflies at Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, San Juan Island National Historical Park, Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, Lewis and Clark National Historical Park. More details later, or contact regina_rochefort@nps.gov

AUDUBON SOCIETY FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, May 1, 2016 – Limit 12

Washington Park Arboretum Bird Walk

Leader: Penny Bolton

Meet: 9:00 AM at the Graham Visitor's Center

Let's do a City Birders Field Trip to the Washington Park Arboretum. Join Master Birder Penny Bolton to learn about city birds and the habitat that supports them. Learn what you can do to make your yard bird friendly. Penny will take you through the forested part of the Arboretum to listen to our local birds. Then we'll visit the "Duck Pond" and see who is there. Bring your curiosity and binoculars, if you have them. Walk will be over by 11 AM. \$15 donation to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Friday, May 6, 2016 – Limit 8

Discovery Park Bird Walk

Leaders: Kathy and Arn Slettebek

Meet: 6:30 AM, Discovery Park Visitor Center at Entrance on Government Way

We'll take a leisurely 3 to 4 -mile walk, with some elevation gain and loss, on the Loop Trail and Wolf Tree Nature Trail. We will explore forest, field and wetland habitats looking for resident and migrant birds. Dress for weather; bring binoculars, water & snacks. Over by 11 AM. \$15 donation to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Saturday, May 7, 2016 - Limit 6

Teanaway Basin Hotspots

Leader: Scott Ramos (day of trip only 206-229-2421), Jeanelle Richardson

Meet: 5:00 AM, Green Lake (Ravenna) P&R

We will explore the Teanaway River valley, including the Teanaway Campground, Carlson Canyon and several points in between and around. Targets will be the variety of warblers, vireos and flycatchers which breed in the area, as well as woodpeckers, raptors and grouse. We will walk on flat trails at some spots but other stops will require some elevation gain on more difficult terrain. Bring snacks, lunch, plenty of fluids, sturdy footwear and lots of enthusiasm. Back late afternoon to early evening. Bring Discover Pass if you have one. Carpool cost \$36 shared among passengers, in addition to \$25 donation to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Sunday, May 8, 2016 - Limit 11

Rattlesnake and Christmas Lakes

Leader: Andy McCormick (425-518-0892 day of trip only)

Meet: before 6:45 AM at Green Lake (Ravenna) P&R or at 7:15 AM at uncovered Tibbetts Lot (1675 Newport Way NW) to carpool.

It will be a good day for Moms and Mother Earth. So, let's go birding! Rattlesnake and Christmas Lakes offer a variety of habitats for spring birding in the Cascade foothills near North Bend. We will have opportunities to see warblers, flycatchers, wrens, woodpeckers, swallows, ducks and raptors. The old red alders, second-growth conifers, black cottonwoods, wetlands and lake provide a variety of habitats and possibly some unexpected species. Bring lunch, water and a snack. Return by early-afternoon. Passenger cost/car is \$40 in addition to \$25 donation to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Sunday, May 8, 2016 – Limit 10

Luther Burbank Park, Mercer Island

Leader: Judy Roan

Meet: 9:00 AM, in north parking lot near tennis courts

Nesting season has begun and birds will be courting and singing on territories. Red-winged Blackbirds, Bald Eagles, grebes, woodpeckers, Anna's Hummingbirds, sparrows--we will just have to see what we find. Walk one mile; ground can be soggy, so proper foot-gear is needed. Back by noon. \$15 donation to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Monday, May 9, 2016 - Limit 11

Vashon Island

Leader: Ed Swan

Meet: on 8:25 AM Fauntleroy ferry, park in southern most Lincoln Park parking lot or nearby neighborhood street parking, meet on ferry itself

We will start birding from the Fauntleroy ferry! We'll look for Brant and alcids on the way over. We'll bird a little at the dock on the Vashon side, catching the last of the water birds in breeding plumage such as the bright white plumes on the Brandt's Cormorant. We'll head to Fisher Pond, which may be covered with Wood Duck and Mallard broods. We'll also visit Mukai Pond to look and listen for flycatchers and warblers. Don't arrange rides in parking lot, meet on ferry. Let Nature Shop know if you can drive when you sign up - we'll need 2 cars (plus Ed's car). 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. Carpool cost \$6 and cost of ferry (\$5.20 per passenger and share of \$13.95 car ticket) shared equally by passengers, in addition to \$25 donation to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Wednesday, May 11, 2016 – Limit 12

Snoqualmie Wildlife Area – Stillwater Unit & Tolt River-MacDonald Park, Carnation

Leaders: Patty North (206-288-3484 day of trip only) and Anne Jacobs

Meet: 7:30 AM, South parking lot of the Stillwater Unit (specifics below) or 6:45 at Green Lake (Ravenna) P&R

Stillwater offers a fine diversity of habitat from open fields and riparian woodlands to marshy wetlands. We'll bird along the Snoqualmie Valley Trail and head out across the fields to the Snoqualmie River. At the end of our 3 mile loop we will return to the cars and move to Tolt – MacDonald Park in Carnation. This is another area of diverse habitat where you can expect almost any Western Washington lowland species. Mostly level walking about 5 miles total for both locations. Field trip over by about noon. Discover Pass required. Carpool cost \$15 shared equally by passengers, plus \$15 donation to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

The Stillwater Unit is located on Highway 203 between Carnation and Duvall, on the west side of the Carnation-Duvall highway. The south parking lot is 300 yards north of the Stillwater gas station on Highway 203. 47°40'59.0"N 121°55'26.1"W

Wednesday May 11, 2016 - Limit 6

Nearly Local Birding “North of the Border” - half day to Edmonds Area Hotspots (repeated trip offered May 11 and May 21)

Leaders: Jon Houghton, Blair Bernson

Meet: 6:30 AM, Lynnwood Park and Ride, 46th Ave W at 200th St. (southern-most corner)

This will be a great trip for north-end beginning and intermediate birders. Learn some cool birding areas you can access for a few minutes, or a few hours, any day of the year! We'll visit some easily accessible areas within minutes of Northgate (OK, they're in south Snohomish Co.). Diverse habitats of mature second growth forest, freshwater marsh and riparian scrub, saltmarsh, and marine shorelines will be included. We should see a diverse mixture of resident and migrant birds including warblers, vireos, sparrows, wrens, herons (Green and Great Blue), scoters, alcids, and maybe an urban owl! Bring Discover Pass if you have one. \$15 donation to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Sunday, May 15, 2015 – Limit 10

Bike and Bird - Snoqualmie Valley Trail from Duvall towards Carnation

Leader: Jean Olson (360-220-5735)

Meet: 7:00 AM at Green Lake (Ravenna) P&R or 8:30 AM at Duvall P&R

Bike and Bird the Snoqualmie Valley Trail. The Snoqualmie Valley Trail is a Rails to Trails that follows the Snoqualmie River from Duvall towards North Bend. It is flat and composed of gravel and rock, so a cross or mountain bike is recommended. Habitats include lowland deciduous forest, riparian shrubs and small ponds. Possibilities include migrating waterfowl and shorebirds, raptors and songbirds. We will ride between 10 and 15 miles total, frequently stopping along the way. Biking is a great way to practice your birding by ear.

Bring binoculars, your bike helmet, snacks, water and clothing layers for changes in weather. For logistics reasons, we do not recommend bringing scopes. You should be comfortable on a bike and children are welcome with parents. We will meet at the Ravenna P&R to carpool to the trail. Bring Discover Pass if you have one for parking area. If you need bike transport, we may be able to accommodate you with prior arrangement otherwise you can transport your own bike. The ride will be over by early to mid-afternoon, depending on the birds. Donation \$15 to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Wednesday, May 18, 2016 - Limit 11

Blewett Pass/Teannaway/Table Mountain area

Leader: Ed Swan

Meet: 7:00 AM, uncovered Tibbetts Lot (1675 Newport Way NW), across the street from the 3-story parking structure at Issaquah Transit Center

My plan would be to look for sapsuckers, woodpeckers and arriving warblers around Blewett Pass and Table Mountain with some looking around the Teannaway area for bluebirds. Bring lunch and fluids. Wear good walking shoes and dress for the weather. Bring Discover Pass if you have one. Car pool cost \$48, split amongst the passengers, plus \$25 Seattle Audubon Birdathon donation.

Saturday, May 21, 2016 - Limit 10 in 3 cars

Umtanum Creek Recreational Area

Leaders: Tiffany and Tor Linbo (206-491-3148, day of trip only)

Meet: 6:00 AM, uncovered Tibbetts Lot (1675 Newport Way NW), across the street from the 3-story parking structure at Issaquah Transit Center

Prepare to hike 6 miles through sage-steppe, riparian, Ponderosa pine, and open meadows up Umtanum Creek. Elevation gain is gradual, but there are a couple of shallow stream crossings. Birds we hope to see include Yellow-breasted Chat, Prairie Falcon, Lazuli Bunting, Bullock's Oriole, and Lewis Woodpecker. Wear appropriate footwear. Bring lunch, water and snacks; back late afternoon. Parking fee payable at the parking lot or National Parks Pass required for each car. Carpool cost: \$60 shared equally by riders, in addition to \$25 donation to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Saturday May 21, 2016 – Limit 6

**Nearly Local Birding “North of the Border” – half day to Edmonds Area Hotspots
(repeated trip offered May 11 and May 21)**

Leaders: Jon Houghton, Blair Bernson

Meet: 6:30 AM, Lynnwood Park and Ride, 46th Ave W at 200th St. (southern-most corner)

This will be a great trip for north-end beginning and intermediate birders. Learn some cool birding areas you can access for a few minutes, or a few hours, any day of the year! We'll visit some easily accessible areas within minutes of Northgate (OK, they're in south Snohomish Co.). Diverse habitats of mature second growth forest, freshwater marsh and riparian scrub, saltmarsh, and marine shorelines will be included. We should see a diverse mixture of resident and migrant birds including warblers, vireos, sparrows, wrens, herons (Green and Great Blue), scoters, alcids, and maybe an urban owl! Bring Discover Pass if you have one. \$15 donation to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Saturday, May 21, 2016 - 8:00AM - 10:00AM - Limit 12

Lincoln Park

Leader: Jen McKeirnan and Renee Koval-Huenuqueo

Meet: 8:00 AM, south parking lot, located at Fauntleroy Way SW & SW Cloverdale St.

Lincoln Park is in west Seattle

Lincoln Park was recently described as one of Seattle's premier urban birding sites! Due to its varied habitats, it hosts a diverse group of bird species, with sections of old growth forest, meadow, rocky and sandy shorelines. Bring binoculars, and a scope if you own one. Restrooms will be available. Donation \$15 to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Sunday, May 22, 2016 – Limit 12

Carkeek Park

Leaders: Jen McKeirnan and Joe Sweeney

Meet: 8:00 AM at the far west parking area overlooking the water

Carkeek Park is in northwest Seattle, enter from 3rd Avenue NW at 110th Street. Expect to walk up to 3 leisurely paced miles with some hills and stairs. Bring binoculars, and scopes if you own one. Restrooms will be available. Over by 10 AM. Donation \$15 to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Sunday May 22, 2016 - Limit 12

Magnuson Park, Seattle

Leader: Emily Bishton

Meet: 9:00 AM, Promontory Point Environmental Learning Center

Magnuson Park is in NE Seattle. Take bus #30 or #75 to the park entrance at NE 65th St and Sand Point Way NE. Meet at the Promontory Point Environmental Learning Center, which is the red-metal-roofed shelter next to little drive-in road at the west edge of parking lot #E-1, marked with a pink square on the park map. [Link to park map](#)

This field trip is geared for beginner birders and families. We will spend approximately 3 hrs spotting birds from the trails of Promontory Point, the Flyway, and the entire Wetlands Complex. We'll keep a lookout for the multiple sparrow and swallow species that are annual summer visitors, as well as year-round residents such as Downy Woodpecker, Pied-billed Grebe, Osprey, other raptors and waterfowl. Be prepared for approximately 2 miles of walking, up hill and down. If you wish to borrow binoculars, make sure to request them from the Seattle Audubon office when you register. Donation \$15 to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Monday, May 23, 2016 – Limit 12

East of the Cascades: Snoqualmie to Liberty, Colockum

Leader: Dave Swayne

Meet: 6:00 AM, uncovered Tibbetts Lot (1675 Newport Way NW), across the street from the 3-story parking structure at Issaquah Transit Center

The east side of the Cascades offers a variety of birds we rarely see in the Puget Trough, and by late May most migrants should be back on their breeding grounds. We'll drive over Snoqualmie Pass and bird the east side foothills, exploring river valleys and open hillsides, trying to make it all the way across the Kittitas valley and into the sage. We may do a little walking, but we'll likely stay close to the cars so we can cover more ground. Bring lunch and drinks, and wear appropriate clothing for the weather. Discover Pass could come in handy. Carpool cost \$60, split amongst riders in car excluding driver, in addition to \$25 donation to Seattle Audubon for Birdathon.

Odds and Ends

Species Garden and Volunteering

As you know we have a species garden, chock full of native flowers, trees, shrubs and ferns from our bioregion. This garden was brainstormed by Mickey and Jean Eisenberg, who did much of the planting and maintenance at the start. It is now under the able purview of Rob Stevens and Sandy Bowman. They work hard and have a long-term vision. As seen above in the newsletter a lot is blooming in the garden. We have attempted to create mini-habitats within the garden and it is also a bird friendly place as any visit there will show. The garden is, of course open to the public. However, it is maintained by us and was visualized also as a learning opportunity Many of the plants are labelled. We are using the

garden as part of the Introduction to the Natural World class to provide an opportunity for students to see many of the plants in one place that they would have to roam far and wide to see otherwise. The first two weekends in May we will host class members at the garden, play some identification and finding games, give some information on how to use keys, field guides and apps, and also have them help maintain the garden, through weeding, mulching, chipping and berming. These activities are enhanced if there are more experienced naturalists available to go around with the groups and help in the treasure hunt. It is also a good opportunity to 'recruit' students to the study and nature ethic we have in the study group. The more the merrier. There are 3 sessions; May 7 from 1-4 PM, May 15 9-12 and May 15 1-4. Rob, Sandy and I would like to have your help. If you are interested or at least willing to help, let me know (g.swartzman@gmail.com) and I'll hook you up with Rob. Bring work gloves and your favorite keys, flower guides and apps. We also need wheelbarrows for the work party. And I encourage you all to take a walk around the garden any time soon, especially now when so much is blooming. Check out the noble fir, the grand fir, the many fern species. See how amazingly big the barestem desert parsley is (without fertilizer). See if you can find all the ferns. Use it as an opportunity to walk around Magnuson Park and find the secret spots where the teal hang out. I am sure many of you are on the trails by now. Remember our parks have a lot of flowering as well and are easy to get to.

Introduction to the Natural World Class

The class is now ongoing! Several of you study group members have attended and enjoyed the fine lectures in the first class. You in the study group are all welcome to attend *free of charge*, though we ask you to sit in the back (its close enough to see). Several have asked how to access the class web page (to get the dates), since it is not available under find courses. We've added a hot link (underlined and in blue) on the study group webpage. Go to My Courses under your name after you login. Click on Study Group and the webpage should come up. The link is in the paragraph about the course (you may have to scroll down or click Read More) to get to it. We've generally not had study group members on the field trips, since we try to keep the numbers down on each trip and we do have 60 people in the class this year. If you want to go on the field trips you can do it as a co-leader in some cases. This means you need to help out. Contact Bruce Barcklow if you are interested. Another option is to ask Bruce if there are any reconns on the field trips (where we go out to check things out before a trip). It may be possible to get into these trips. Again Bruce is the contact person.

A Hike to Whiskey Dick Mountain

Eastern Washington's Short flowering season is now. The distance is large but its worth it. We move west and higher with the flowering season. A couple of Mondays ago Bruce, Stewart and I met to hike up Whiskey Dick Mountain, a high sagebrush region near Vantage WA, off old US 10. The mountain is right next to the Wild Horse Wind Farm, a high wild region, reflecting the weird development of our power grid in high wind areas – often lonesome, long view regions throughout our country. We had heard that Simpson's barrel cactus was in bloom and cactus, with their diaphonous colorful blooms, glowing barely above menacing cactus pins, drew us across the mountains. We were not disappointed. The place is wild with flowers, sage violet and brodeaea and hooker's balsamroot in the lower areas, and penstemon, cactus and arrowleaf balsamroot on the hillsides. I was amazed at how changeable to flowers were in little mini-habitats throughout the area and also how easy it was to get lost on the way down when the way seemed so clear from the top. Part of the challenge in the east side is the relative unfamiliarity of the flowers to we dark siders. There are so many desert parsleys and buckwheats. The lupines seem (and probably are) different. This year has been relatively wet on the east side and so it seems almost lush in places (there was even some standing water).



Horned lizard and Simpson's hedgehog cactus on Whiskey Dick. Elk herd off Hayward Road (off old US 10 between Cle Elum and Ellensburg).

Gary Snyder – “Riprap” (1959)

August 2, 2008 at 6:56 pm ([Gary Snyder, Poetry & Literature, The Beats](#))

Lay down these words
Before your mind like rocks.
 placed solid, by hands
In choice of place, set
Before the body of the mind
 in space and time:
Solidity of bark, leaf, or wall
 riprap of things:
Cobble of milky way.
 straying planets,
These poems, people,
 lost ponies with
Dragging saddles –
 and rocky sure-foot trails.
The worlds like an endless
 four-dimensional
Game of Go.
 ants and pebbles
In the thin loam, each rock a word
 a creek-washed stone
Granite: ingrained
 with torment of fire and weight

Crystal and sediment linked hot
all change, in thoughts,
As well as things.

Song: "Where the bee sucks, there suck I"

By [William Shakespeare](#)

(from *The Tempest*)

Where the bee sucks, there suck I:
In a cowslip's bell I lie;
There I couch when owls do cry.
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily shall I live now
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

Photos by Study Group Members



Bruce Barcklow collomia and phacelia



Shelley Williams – chocolate lily and camas



Lisa Ni monkeyflower, pitcher plant (Darlingtonia) and balsamroot + Southern Oregon flower-scape

