



Kinnikinnick Journal

Volume XIX Number 3

May/June 2015

Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society, Inc. / PO Box 1092 Sandpoint, Idaho 83864 www.nativeplantsociety.org

Upcoming Programs

Presentations Sponsored by

Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society
and Sandpoint Parks and Recreation
Community Hall, First Ave, Sandpoint
(Across from County Courthouse)

All meetings begin at 9:45 and are held at the Community Hall
unless otherwise indicated.

Saturday, May 23, 2015

Phil Hough

Executive Director

Friends of the Scotchman's Peaks Wilderness

Proposed Scotchmans Peaks Wilderness Update

Saturday, June 27, 2015

Kathy Cousins

Mitigation Staff Biologist

Idaho Dept of Fish and Game

Update: Clark Fork River Delta Restoration Project

March Program Summary

Camas Populations in the Kootenays (and Beyond)

Valerie Huff, Project Coordinator, and Dr. Brenda Beckwith, Project Advisor, presented information on the Kootenay Camas Project, an effort launched in 2012 by the West Kootenay Native Plant Society (Canada). Common Camas, *Camassia quamash*, grows in the Pacific Northwest. Rare in Canada, it is found in southern British Columbia and in the Columbia River plains. It prefers moist meadows and rocky slopes with seepages. What is so far the largest find of camas in the Columbia River plains was discovered on a 2009 count in Castlegar on the Kootenay.

Camas has a rich history and it is hoped it will have a bright future. The first written record was by Lewis and Clark September 20, 1805. David Douglas in his narrative published in 1916 referred to it several times as "Roots." And thanks to First Nations people, much has

been learned about Camas's contribution to their culture. As more is understood about the connection between First Nations and Camas, what is revealed is a sizeable gap in historical record of the tremendous role of women who managed a staple on a cultural and ecological par with salmon. Emerging from that gap is evidence of a stewardship of symbiotic significance. Indeed, not only did women understand the cycle of Camas from propagation to harvesting and storage, but it is believed that their techniques optimized the sustainability of Camas. For instance, the use of digging sticks facilitates seed sets, aeration of soil, and weeding, and may promote the splitting of the bulb into sister bulbs. Selective harvesting of medium-sized bulbs leaves the more viable large and small bulbs to propagate.

High in water content and rich in carbohydrates, the bulbs have virtually no fat, some protein, and vitamins and minerals. When Camas goes to seed, it is at its most nutritious and palatable state. It is during a time when the ground is ecologically sound and aligned, neither too wet nor rock hard. Culturally, harvest is a time of



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Committee Reports

Arboretum News

We had 14 people turn out for Arboretum cleanup today. We hauled out 2 pickup loads of prunings and other debris. There were several people who came that were not part of the Arboretum Committee. We greatly appreciated their help. As usual the potluck lunch was wonderful. We will start our regular work schedule on May 4 and our coordinator will start on June 2. The Trillium, yellow violets and Kittentails are in full bloom. Jacob's Ladder is getting ready to bloom. There should be something in bloom from now until October. If you are interested in helping, please email me at smchatburn@gmail.com.

Conservation Committee

On April 16, fourteen enthusiastic KNPS members gathered at Molly's home over lunch to discuss current native plant conservation issues. Phil Hough, member and Director of Friends of Scotchman Peaks told us that the wilderness campaign is in an exciting new phase: urging our Congressional delegation to introduce legislation creating the wilderness. Phil encouraged each of us (including you!) to email our senators and Rep. Labrador encouraging a wilderness bill. Let's try to get one this session! John Albi showed fascinating videos he made of the Clark Fork Delta Restoration. An incredible amount of material is being brought in, shoved around and smoothed into place. Now is the time to get the native plants into the new ground. Volunteer for this exciting project! For the final time, KNPS volunteers will help our Forest Service botany team monitor a sensitive population of orchids: clustered lady slippers. The date (probably late May or early June) isn't yet set. Interested in learning more? Contact Molly at "[conservation at nativeplantsociety.org](mailto:conservation@nativeplantsociety.org)."



Landscape Committee

The landscape committee is looking forward to the 2015 season. We already have a full complement of projects but anyone who is interested should contact the committee so their name can be put on the list in case an opening would occur. To contact the committee please send an email to landscape@nativeplantsociety.org. Check out the KNPS website nativeplantsociety.org/landscape for additional information on the landscape committee.

Holiday Day Card Committee

The wonderful note cards shared with members at our monthly programs will have a new addition. For the upcoming winter season, Marilyn and Marilyn will have selected Holiday Cards for members to send to friends and relatives. The KNPS Board has recently reviewed the initial results of the Holiday Card Committee and has given this ad hoc group permission to create card samples. When folks come to the Sandpoint Community Center for the September program, samples will be available for you to choose sets of cards to be placed on advance order for the Christmas season. Look for an article in the fall newsletter for more details.

This fresh project is a new endeavor for the artists in our midst. Another way for us to share the local flora with those we love. David Stroud.

April Program Summary

The Idaho National Laboratory and Its Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem

Roger Blew Ph.D., Ecologist for a Department of Energy contractor at the Idaho National Laboratory, gave an overview and history of the sagebrush steppe of southeastern Idaho. Once thought to be a nuisance, sagebrush suffered the terminal indignities of weed control methods so that agricultural and grazing lands would prevail. It wasn't until the decline of sage grouse population was noticed that sagebrush and its ecosystem began to be valued, thereby driving research into understanding and preserving it.

Today the plant community consists of sagebrush; salt desert shrub; grassland; non-native crested wheatgrass; and juniper woodlands at the toe of the Lemhi Mountains. More than 400 species of vascular plants have been documented, but it's never been surveyed. Data have been collected since 1950 on vegetation plots which are monitored every five years. The soil is composed of fine clay loess deposited by wind. Cresting islands of fertility, or "dunes beneath sage," are created at the base of sagebrush plants enhancing the germination of seeds. The mean age of live sagebrush plants as determined by survey projects is between 7 and 22 years, much younger than previously believed.

The INL has under its control 890 square miles of the sagebrush steppe on the upper Snake River plain, only two percent of which is in facility campus areas. Top secret and safety buffers were implemented in the 1940s when the land was used as a navy gun range and aerial bombing range. In the 50s, the Department of Energy took over control; many name changes, usages, and research projects -- from "Atoms for Peace" to generating electricity from nuclear energy -- ensued. The subjects of today's INL research projects include critical infrastructure integrity, cell phone technology, and biofuels.

Meanwhile, research into the sagebrush steppe ecosystem has revealed that we know very little about its ecology. Roger showed a photo of natural sagebrush steppe and explained that it can be considered essential wilderness. Threats to sagebrush include fire, browsing of seed heads, and traditional management methods. Indeed, it's been determined that the best approach to preserving the sagebrush steppe ecosystem is to simply leave it alone. More information can be downloaded from www.gsseser.com.



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connecting with the earth through coming together in potlatches and other ceremonies.

To bring attention to the importance of Camas ecologically and culturally, the KCP project, started by Eva Johansson and Valerie, has encouraged citizen science through Camas sighting report cards, naturalist and nature's notebooks, email and web presence, and public events and outreach. It conducts field studies, fosters stewardship with the city of Castlegar and propagation in beds, and celebrates annually with a "Camas Discovery Day." The KCP seeks to continue to celebrate this charismatic plant by keeping a public presence electronically and through grassroots projects. Recognizing that long-term survival of Camas needs our help to overcome threats from loss of habitat, climate change, lack of moisture, and loss of knowledge keepers, a three-year integrated project to develop landscaping restoration potential for Camas is under way. The KCP encourages public advocacy and education, sup-

Member Profile: Jan Geren

Article and Photo by Mark Stockwell

Sha-la-la-la-la-la, live for today/(Hey, hey, hey)/Sha-la-la-la-la-la, live for today - The Grass Roots

When Jan Geren disclosed, almost apologetically, that she grew up as a Long Beach teenager in the 1960s, I feared she might ruin my “surf city” vision of the California beach lifestyle by describing some ordinary suburban childhood. As a pre-teen kid raised in a Midwestern resort town in the 1960s I spent most of my summer days at the beach, and my concept of southern California was shaped by surfer music and films starring Annette Funicello or Elvis playing beach blanket whatever. I was certain all the guys had names like Moondog and cruised in old surfboard-capped woody wagons before “hanging 10” each afternoon. Those Coppertone-scented California Girls were named Gidget and Sunshine and wore flowers in their sun-bleached hair as they grooved out to the Beach Boys and whispered “far out” in every sentence. Thank-



fully, after seeing the genuine envy on my face, Jan reminisced enthusiastically of her teen years, and I retained that idyllic image I’d created as a kid. Really, how many of us haven’t listened to the Mamas and the Papas and done a little California Dreamin’ of our own! Jan’s teen years were – barefoot on a beach, dancing to the Animals, the Byrds, Dylan and the Beatles. Her family lived a short drive from both Disney Land and the beach – how groovy is that!

When Jan’s Midwestern dad and Southern belle mom moved there in the 1930s & 40s, Southern California exuded possibilities – a place to reinvent yourself and bring out your best, ideals they passed on to Jan and her older sister. Her mom was an educator, so it wasn’t unexpected that after high school Jan followed that noble path and got a teaching degree from UC Long Beach. Saying goodbye to her southern California roots was difficult, but she moved to the Pacific Northwest to walk a new shoreline. She began teaching in the Tacoma area, specialized in both traditional and gifted education for grades K through 4. Tacoma was a perfect place to work, offering a great career environment and a creative teaching outlet. She also taught in Alaska for 4 years, employed in a school district rich with “oil money” during the height of the pipeline construction. She recalls the joy of working where a school’s budget wasn’t under constant pressure and staff development was always encouraged. During her 36 year career Jan surely touched hundreds of kids with her positive values of peace, love, and the prospect of making a better world.

While in Washington Jan met her husband John, a soulmate who shared many interests over the years including travel, classic rock music, a love for Arts & Crafts artistry, and raising Jan’s son, Justin. John and Jan’s museum-caliber art collection includes furniture, lamps, Native American pottery & basketry, photos and art prints. One summer during their many travel adventures the couple passed through Sandpoint on a loop up through Lake Louise and Edmonton. They both fell in love with our area, so John spent several months researching the prospects of moving here for their retirement. They both envisioned reinventing themselves, simplifying to a small town lifestyle, and building their retirement dream home. They soon purchased riverfront property bestowed with wildlife, calm shores and even... a beach! After most of their goals had been attained and the prospects of a blissful future awaited them, tragedy soon struck when John lost his life to an unexpected stroke. Devastated, yet filled with remarkable memories and unbreakable spirit, Jan continued living for today, staying as active as ever and diving into the Sandpoint scene. She is currently involved with CAL, the Monday hikers, KNPS (as a current board member), and the master gardeners. She also enjoys her new power boat and frequent visits from friends and her son, daughter-in-law and 2 grandkids - who love nothing more than getting dirty and hanging out at their groovy grandma’s beachside playground.

A Voice From the Moist Montane

Story and Picture by Marilyn McIntyre

The Winter That Thought It Was Spring

I have been unable to shake the feeling that we are now afflicted with what I have been calling the “Coastal Forest Syndrome” ever since hearing Jerry Rehfeldt speak on the “Plant-Climate Relationship: Bio-geographic, Ecological and Genetic Impacts of Global Warming” at the May, 2008 KNPS meeting. The warm temperatures and lack of snowfall here in the Moist Montane made the entire winter seem like many springs in the past. We have never before driven into our cabin before the first week in May. Even in 2009/2010 when the snow was low (4’ total) it fell later in the spring and didn’t melt early, as the temperatures were colder. This year we drove in on March 30th, with the temperatures never having dropped into single digits the entire winter. While I know that the problem has been the unusually hot water block in the Pacific Ocean that is a phenomenon second only to El Nino/La Nina in terms of our climate, I have to agree with Molly O’Reilly when she says:” This early spring is amazing; easy on living but disquieting to the spirit.”



With the typically fluctuating temperatures of the spring, the natives are still taking their time to blossom, but the earliest of all, the illustrated Utah honeysuckle, is open as I write this on April 14. And it also happens to be snowing. The pussy willows are open too, and vast numbers of small, native bees are clustered on both. Water will be the most important consideration as the summer develops and we with native plants will be happy that they can handle dry conditions if we don’t get our needed heavy spring rains. Our glacial soil is quick to lose its moisture so we really hope for the rains. My greatest plant of concern is always the huckleberry, so I request no frosts while the blossoms are open and no hailstorms when the berries are ripe. Is that really too much to ask? We’ll know more later.

We all need to be especially conscious of how we use and waste water, and find good ways to conserve what we have. Those of us who live in the wild land-urban interface (we know who we are) must be prepared for fire as outlined in the KNPS book: *Landscaping with Native Plants in the Idaho Panhandle*. The USFS and the Idaho Dept. of Lands both have information available. Ultimately we are all responsible for ourselves.

2015 Arbor Day Plant Sale - June 6

Preparations are underway for another exciting celebration of our city trees and native plants. Local elementary schools have been invited to visit the Arboretum on May 26 & 28 for a six-stop tour of native trees. They will learn how to identify the different trees, how they grow, and how they make the world a better place. Sylvia Chatburn and Mary Toland are heading up our youth education program.

Sandpoint will be observing Arbor Day on June 6 this year with a brief ceremony at 9:00 am presented by the Sandpoint Tree Committee. This will be immediately followed by the KNPS Native Plant Sale where there will be a great variety of trees, shrubs and perennials available for purchase. We also will be selling our notecards and bird-houses made by the Idaho Master Naturalists. Coffee and baked goodies will be available as well. We are looking for more volunteers to bake some things. If you can help out, please contact Bob Wilson (contact information below). The bake sale is a big income producer for KNPS. Also that day, the Bonner County Historical Museum is waiving the admission fee and having a free day courtesy of local sponsors Dr. & Mrs. Kenneth Conger.

KFRY radio is helping us promote the event and has invited Gail Bolin and Bob Wilson for an interview on Thursday, May 28 at 8 am. Be sure to tune in.

As always with a big event like this, it wouldn't happen without volunteers. If you can help with the set-up, which starts at 7:30 am, help customers carry plants, tallying up sales, or doing some baking for the bake sale, contact Bob Wilson (683-2387, email: botanybob@frontier.com).

Native Plant Landscape Book

Carol Jenkins

In January we surpassed 1,000 copies in circulation of **Landscaping with Native Plants in the Idaho Panhandle!** The book has been an important part of outreach and education for KNPS. It remains a popular gift and a wonderful reference for gardeners. Remember to thumb through your copy as your gardening season gets underway. Our best and most convenient source of quality native plants remains Cedar Mountain Perennials. So, happy spring and *“Grow Native!”*

Replant Your Refund Day

Our Fundraising event on April 15 at Baxters was a huge success. We made about \$460 from the raffle and our percentage of the gross, which Baxters increased to 10%.

The restaurant owner, Rich Curtis, said “Replant Your Refund Day was very good for us. We have been looking for ways to give back to the community, we met a lot of new customers and our bottom line was 22% higher than Wednesdays have been lately.” Also, we all owe Molly and Steve a big “THANK YOU” for donating the raffle prize!! The winner was Peter Kriz of Sandpoint. *Ken Thacker*



Save the Date!

Plant Tour and Pot Luck Picnic at the Moist Montane

Sunday, June 14

Marilyn McIntyre invites us for a "Walk in the Moist Montane" for a plant walk and discussions of geomorphology and more. The walk will be followed by a pot luck picnic. More details to come!!

Annual Summer Barbeque/Potluck

Sunday, August 23, 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Waterlife Discovery Center, Lakeshore Drive, Sagle, Idaho

Contact for more details: Gail Bolin, 208-627-3292, wgbolin@hotmail.com

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