



Kinnikinnick Journal

Volume XIX Number 5

November-December 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, November 28, 2015

Jennifer Costich-Thompson

Botanist

Idaho Panhandle National Forests North Zone

**Progress Towards Treasured Landscapes
Whitebark Pine Restoration**

Saturday, December 12, 2015

Holiday Potluck

11:00 to 1:00

At the home of Sylvia Chatburn

1787 Dufort Road, in Sagle (E side of Hwy 95)

Bring finger foods to share and Holiday Cheer!!

President's Message

As announced at the October meeting, KNPS has now joined the Native Plant Conservation Campaign (a national organization, with members such as the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum and the New England Wildflower Society). They asked about our challenges in conservation, and our top three success stories. Carol Jenkins (with input from Molly O'Reilly, Gail Bolin, and myself) wrote back to NPCC that she is so "passionate about our organization and our wonderful volunteers that I was unable to limit the success stories to the requested 3. But I decided that was a good problem to have!" The five includes our Arboretum, the Landscape book, our high-quality public monthly meetings, and the work of the Conservation and Landscape committees.

The Landscaping with Native Plants in the Idaho Panhandle book deserves special mention. It was written (at least two years in the making) and published four years ago as an educational outreach project. Nearly 100 copies were given to schools/colleges, libraries, plant nurseries, and agencies involved with land management/revegetation issues. To date 1,120 copies have been sold in five counties in Idaho and Washington. And it continues to sell, and to educate...Congratulations, hard-

working committee!

Our consistently informative, colorful, well-edited and much appreciated Newsletter should also be listed. Many thanks to Jill Wilson for her superb work. Please note our Member Profile segment will be back in our next newsletter!

Another success: our new Holiday cards. Gail Bolin had the idea, which the board endorsed, and David Stroud offered to steer the project. Marilyn McIntyre and Marilyn George submitted designs, from which a basic set was chosen and samples prepared, for ordering. Dennis Rieger added it to the website, and sent reminders about ordering, through Google Mail. Marilyn George is printing them. Holiday card sales just passed \$600 (!!!) making them the best fundraising project in recent memory. It is another testament to the wonderful spirit and initiative (not to mention hard work) of KNPS members.

It has been a joy, serving as your President the last two years. I look forward to exciting projects next year, such as planning for our 20 Year Anniversary Celebration in 2017—volunteers for an ad hoc committee welcome!

Rae Charlton

Committee Reports

Arboretum News

The arboretum looked good all summer in spite of the heat. Fourteen gardeners and one paid coordinator worked hard to keep it that way. In September we planted some more flowering plants. They have settled in quite nicely. On October 11, we did our final cleanup, blew out the lines, drained hoses and put them away for the season. We had a wonderful potluck lunch afterwards. The gardeners are taking a rest until after the first of the year, when the Arboretum Committee will decide on a course of action for next season.

We had some vandalism in late September and early October. Drip systems were pulled up and water was turned on and left running. Logs, stumps and other hardscape items were knocked down or moved. We will be discussing security options in the spring.

Marilyn McIntyre is going to do a native plant mural for the backside of the Kiosk. The plan is to have it ready at the Arbor Day Ceremony

Conservation Committee

Earlier this year, the KNPS Board approved the Society joining hundreds of others nationwide in endorsing the Native Plant Conservation Campaign (NPCC). This organization is the first nationwide effort to give voice at the national level to concerns of local and statewide native plant enthusiasts. The Board, at its October meeting, endorsed signing on the NPCC's Equal Protection letter. This is an educational effort aimed at federal policy makers to explain why rare and endangered native plants need the same protections as rare and endangered wildlife.

If you are interested in learning more about the Conservation Committee, please contact Molly O'Reilly; conservation at nativeplantsociety.org or in person at a meeting.

Grant Committee

The Native Plant Grant deadline is November 30, 2015. KNPS provides a \$300 grant annually to honor our founder and to encourage the appreciation of native plants. If you are aware of a group or individual who might be interested, refer them to our website for more information and an application form.

Although most of the recent grant recipients have used the funds to establish a native plant garden, the grant committee encourages requests that promote native plants in other ways.

If you have an interest in joining the committee, please contact Janice DeBaun, Nancy Low, Pat Ramsey or Pat Stevens. Each can answer any questions you may have.

Holiday Card Committee

Last Chance to get your Holiday Greeting Cards

This year the board elected to try something new. In place of the annual calendar they elected to have native plants photographed by Marilyn George and original artwork by Marilyn McIntyre made into Holiday Greeting cards as featured in the Sept-Oct newsletter and website. There is no writing on the cards so you can write your own message or give them as a gift. Order forms and pricing information is available on the website (www.nativeplantsociety.org). Orders will be taken thru Nov 20th and will be ready for pick-up at the Nov 28th general meeting. Other delivery arrangements or questions can be directed to Marilyn George at 263-9470 or iluv2photo@gmail.com.

September Program Summary

When Money Grew on Trees: How Industrial Capitalism Transformed the Ecology of Western Forests

Dr. Greg Gordon, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies at Gonzaga University, gave an insightful view of the history of logging and the resulting transformation of Pacific Northwest ecology. Greg's 2014 book, *When Money Grew on Trees*, features A. B. Hammond as a timber empire builder. Bonner County is linked to the early history through Hammond's employment with E. L. Bonner, who mentored Hammond in Bonner's mercantile business in Missoula, Montana. Hammond received a contract to build the Northern Pacific Railroad from Miles City to Sandpoint, thereby launching his logging career.

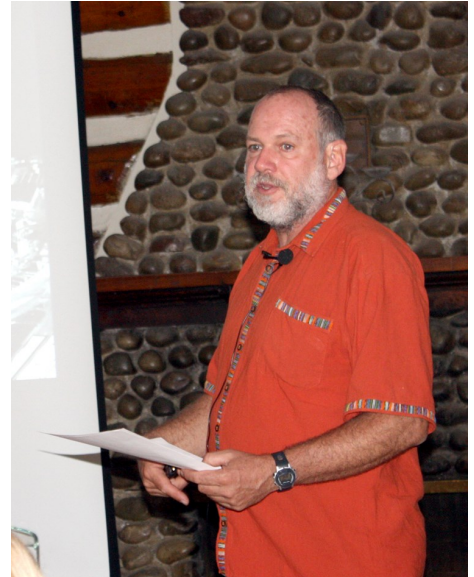
The magnificent, unprotected forests of the Pacific Northwest in the late 1800s were ripe for timber barons such as Hammond. Conifer species defining their own ecosystems were western white pine, Douglas fir, ponderosa pine, coastal redwood, western red cedar, and western hemlock. Throughout the next few decades, logging nearly eliminated the desirable western white pine and redwood.

Under the early "bull-team" logging, two men took three hours to cut down a Doug fir and up to two days to cut down a redwood tree. Despite generating huge waste, the inefficiencies and seasonal limitations of human/animal logging perhaps saved the ability of the forest to regenerate by 90 percent. Efficiencies were gained with the use of steam donkeys, machines that could be hoisted up a hill, but at a greater cost to the land and ability of the forest to regenerate. That ability decreased further with high-lead logging, which employed "enormous battering rams," uprooting everything in their paths and contributing to a high human death rate. Factory logging caused removal of all trees; even spruce and hemlock were marketed.

With logging at a feverish pitch, lumber companies took on bond debt to increase production, which created more inventory and dropped prices, which caused more borrowing in order to pay interest. Whereas at one time production was limited by the ability of an animal/human team, now Wall Street drove the vicious cycle plaguing the logging industry.

By the 1920s it was clear that no natural forest regeneration would occur. Oddly, that led to an increase of clear cutting and then replanting with Doug fir. Under the "scientific management stage," increased erosion, landslides, stream sedimentation, and catastrophic fires resulted. In Oregon, the state stopped clear cutting, but it was continued on private lands even despite drought conditions. Massive slash remained on these logging deserts; piles burned up to 1800 degrees, destroying soil and changing PH from acidic to alkaline. In the drought year of 1933, on a 650,000-acre tract in Tillamook considered to be the most industrialized forest on the Oregon coast, 300,000 acres burned after a spark flew off a skidded log onto a slash pile. Catastrophic fires in the same tract ensued each subsequent six years three more times. This trend interrupted a prior burn cycle of 500 years.

As Greg points out, the benefit of hindsight reveals only that our knowledge does not comprehend the ecosystem and how to sustain it. Now we are further challenged by climate change and wildfires.



October Program Summary

Native Plant Propagation - Unlocking Nature's Secrets

On October 24, 2015, Bob Wilson, a plant propagator since 1998, shared his knowledge of native plant propagation. At Cedar Mountain Perennials nursery, Bob uses both seed germination and cuttings to reproduce plants.

Seeds have three parts: embryo (little “plantlet”); endosperm (food in the form of starch or oils and minerals); and a coat. Germination occurs at the appropriate temperature and when the seed is able to take in water. Then enzymes are activated, cells divide, and roots and shoots emerge.

Bob creates a good germination environment through the use of heat mats and a suitable germination mix of sand, peat, and perlite. Good records are essential to evaluating the quality of seed as well as the environmental conditions in place. Not all seeds germinate when desired as nature provides a mechanism by which the seed waits for optimum conditions. Dormancy and a hard seed coat can delay germination. Seeds also may fail to germinate due to poor pollination, age, and plant stress. Variabilities in nature and in geography are other challenges. To enhance success, Bob suggested several written sources and the on-line “Native Plant Propagation Protocols.”



Moisture and cold temperatures help break down the natural chemical inhibitors, but patience is required. Cold treatment, either in a refrigerator or outdoors for one or two seasons, helps to encourage germination as long as the seed is able to absorb water. Plants with hard seed coats include legumes, mallow, and iris, and scarification techniques – mechanical, hot or boiling water, and acid – help break down the coats. Seeds requiring direct light are very small, such as campanula, pussytoes, pearly everlasting, monkey flower, and fireweed, and it’s important that they not dry out from exposure on top of the surface.

Native plant seeds can be purchased or collected in the garden. If collecting in the wild, be aware of public land policies. Seeds should be identifiable and ripeness determined. Collection in one area should be from no more than 10 percent of the area’s population, and that site should be rested for three years. To clean the seed, crush the capsules, pull out the stems, and screen. Most seeds will keep for several years in ideal conditions: seed must be dry and environment must be cool with low humidity.

To produce larger plants or retain desired characteristics, propagation by cuttings is indicated. Some species such as coyote mint or shrubby penstemon are easier to reproduce that way. Cuttings can be from any part of the plant and grown in a moist, humid environment with good substrate. For woody plants, expect softwood in summer, semi-hardwood in early fall, and hardwood in winter and spring. Cuttings can be placed in a handmade tent with a heat mat to regulate the temperature. If stem cuttings are used, apply root hormone before placing the cutting into a pre-made hole in perlite. Cuttings can go into potting mix after rooting. Some plants root from stem cuttings: spirea, syringa, orange honeysuckle, penstemon (Shrubby and Barrett’s) monarda and monardella, and monkey flower.

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A Voice From the Moist Montane

Story and Picture by Marilyn McIntyre

Notes from Our Watershed

John Wesley Powell once wrote that a watershed is "that area of land, a bounded hydrologic system, within which all living things are inextricably linked by their common water course and where, as humans settled, simple logic demanded that they become part of a community."

Our watershed is in complete homage to fall, which is the perfect and only time to track the growth and location of the young Western Larch trees. By this last week in October many of the deciduous trees have lost their lingering yellowed leaves to the Northeasterly winds that blow. The Larch, while beginning to shed their golden needles, are still very evident as they spill down the side of the mountain, as bright as Chinese lanterns. Across the creek on the hillside, groves of Aspen are interspersed with red-orange maples and green conifers to create a visual mosaic.

I can report that the forest looks good following a very low snow pack last winter and an unusually dry and hot summer. The huckleberries, serviceberries, mountain ash and red osier dogwoods are all showing their essential structure of stems and twigs. The firs, cedar, hemlock and pines provide the solid dark green background to the reds and yellows. Grass heads are the motion sensors, their creamy colored seed heads rarely still when the cold fronts move in. The ground covers that blanket the forest floor with soft green cushions of moss, club moss, lichen and perennial natives like twin flower, kinnikinnick and pipsissewa are all concealed in a growing layer of red and golden needles and leaves. Even the sunless depauperate areas under the thickest canopies, are beginning to grow colorful.

In the midst of this, the chickadees returned within an hour of my hanging the black oiled sunflower seed feeder for the winter season.

A chunk of suet brought in the Stellar and Canada Gray Jays first, but the Black capped and Chestnut Backed Chickadee families weren't far behind. The Pygmy Owl "serenaded" me from a small Red Cedar top while the Flickers banged on a bug infested tree nearby.

Now a welcome rain is gently falling and the air is very still. The main creek is as low as anybody has seen it in years, but it is still carrying its shed of water from the upper draws and ridges. This water will join the lower Pack River and then go on into the Lake.

It is good to be involved in a group that is working so hard to educate the public about the importance of this "simple logic" to the watershed community in which we all live.



Watershed Mandala