



Kinnikinnick Journal

Volume XXI Number 5

November-December 2017

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 25, 2017

Eric Grace

Executive Director Kaniksu Land Trust

Preserving Lands and Waters that Sustain Us Today and Tomorrow

Saturday, January 27, 2017

Jack Nisbet

A Taste for Roots

Biscuitroots of the genus *Lomatium* have confused naturalists and ethnobotanists ever since the Corp of Discovery first tasted shapel-lel bread in the fall of 1805. This slide presentation will explore some of the many aspects of the genus, with a particular focus on Plateau tribal use and north Idaho species collected by John Leiberg in the late 1800s.

October Program Summary

Presented by Ken Thacker

Summarized by Cindy Hayes

The KNPS October monthly meeting was held at the Community Hall. At the last minute Ken Thacker stepped in when the scheduled speaker had to cancel. Ken chose to entertain and educate us by presenting 4 YouTube videos from 1000+ *TED Talks available online.

The first of the TED Talks smorgasbord, Natural Pest Control Using Bugs, was narrated by Shimon Steinberg. Israel has state-of-the-art greenhouses that mass produce natural enemies of several agricultural pests; spider mites, aphids, thrips. Using the “good” bugs (predatory spider mites, parasitic wasps and pirate bugs) they were able to reduce pesticide use on sweet peppers by 75%. There are many benefits to using natural biological controls: pests can become resistant to chemical sprays, keep the ecosystems in balance and safer application without wearing protective clothing.

The second in the series was presented by George

Montbiot titled For More Wonder, Rewild the World. He spoke of trophic cascade using both wolf and whale to illustrate what occurs when large predators are absent from the food web. In the case of the removal of the wolf at Yellowstone National Park, the deer population overgrazed the vegetation which impacted plant diversity and river bed erosion, which impacted habitat diversity that supported other animals. When the natural balance in the ocean was upset with the killing of whales, they found whale fecal plumes supported the growth of plankton and krill. Without the whales, the plankton growth was severely curtailed which affected the food source for other aquatic life.

The Hidden Beauty of Pollination by Louie Schwartzberg was a photographic ballet of hummingbirds, bats, insects, butterflies, and bees co-existing with flowers. A third of our fruit and vegetables depend on an array of pollinators.

The last TED talk, Climbing the World’s Biggest Trees by Richard Preston, took us into the aerial labyrinth ecosystem of the giant Redwoods in California. Thirty two stories above the rainforest floor stretches the Redwood canopy where you’ll find flying squirrels, ferns, moss, lichens and maybe a huckleberry bush or two. In one experiment they conducted, they found trees pull additional moisture out of the air to pull down into their roots. There is still much to discover in these 2000 year old trees.

*TED – Technology Entertainment Design

From the President

By Ken Thacker

Here at the end of our 20th anniversary year, we have two more reminders of “from whence we came.” First, we have a display opening December 6th at the Library that is being assembled by a group led by Cindy Hayes. The theme is “Grow Native”, but it will also be spotlighting Lois as the Founder of KNPS and the Arboretum, and observing our 20th year celebration. And then, in case anyone missed it, I have included in its entirety the well written article about the Arboretum that ran in the Reader in July. This is hard to top.

While I know that it is far too soon to be saying this, Happy Holidays everyone!

Help wanted at the Arboretum

By Cate Huisman

Reader Contributor

(Published July 23, 2017)

If you had visited Sandpoint’s public library 20 years ago this spring, you might have seen a notice posted there:

- Interested in the native plants of North Idaho?
- Would you like to learn more about them?

Lois Wythe, an herbalist and teacher well known for the gardens at her home on the Pack River, posted the notice in hopes of finding kindred spirits, and she found them: More than 60 people showed up at her meeting that April. By the following January, they had formed the Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society (KNPS) as well as a committee to look-into creating an arboretum.

A site in Lakeview Park had much to recommend it. Being in town, it was easy for people to get to. It already had mature conifers, and it was next to the history museum, which offered a historic cabin on its site as a space to store tools and materials. For its part, the city of Sandpoint was delighted to divest itself of responsibility for mowing the grass under the big trees, whose roots had been eating up their mower blades. So, on December 16, 1998, the City Council unanimously endorsed the KNPS proposal to use 1.18 acres of the park as an arboretum.

Despite the lateness of the season, enthusiastic committee members met the next day to decide what they could do before winter set in. They spent a busy winter mapping 167 native trees on the site, and developed a detailed landscape plan.

Lois is legendary for the request she made of the committee: There’s some doubt as to whether she asked for three hours or four hours or one morning a week, but all agree on how long she asked them to commit: “for the rest of their lives.” Apparently, no one blanched at this proposal, and they began their lifelong service on Arbor Day, April 30, 1999. When failing health forced Lois to curtail her activities in 2001, Sylvia Chatburn took over in the unofficial position of arboretum manager, and she is only now winding down her long tenure.

While casual visitors to the arboretum might simply think they are walking in a natural woodland, in fact the many smaller trees, shrubs, and other plants are a carefully choreographed collection restricted to native plants. These include “exhibits”—including aspen and larch groves and a bed of wild medicinal plants (not necessarily Idaho natives), as well as representations of eight different north Idaho habitats, ranging from a dry forest to a wetland.

A volunteer is in charge of each habitat, and no plant touches dirt without rigorous vetting. Just because a plant is everywhere does not mean it’s a native. Mullein, for example, must be familiar to anyone who’s walked a road or path in north Idaho in summer. “It’s a weed, but I think of it as a native weed,” says Mary Jo Haag, a current volunteer. It turns out, however, that mullein has been introduced from abroad. It’s a very successful resident, but it’s not a native, and it has no place in an arboretum habitat.

The city provides water, but when the group started, there was no water line to the site. Arlis Harvey, an elfin member of the original volunteers who worked with juvenile offenders, recruited a number of her youthful associates to do their required community service by digging a trench from Ella Street for this purpose. Now water comes both through this line and from the wastewater treatment plant next door.

Arlis also made the bentwood arbors and benches that dot the grounds, while other benches and amenities have also been donated. Members are particularly proud of the mortar less stone wall that provides a welcome separation from the neighboring wastewater facility. “It’s a dry stack stone wall, and that is certainly a vanishing art,” says volunteer Rae Charlton, who remembers the nearly five-year moving meditation of volunteer Jeff Rich as he gradually transformed piles of donated stones into the wall.

The exhibits and habitats have matured nicely over the years, and the arboretum is fulfilling the original vision that members had for it: “Lois had the idea that an arboretum would be the best tool possible to show native plants,” says Rae. Visitors learn about their botanical heritage as they tour the habitats, and perhaps their appreciation for this legacy grows in the cool shade under the big trees. Volunteers lead tours for third-graders each spring, and other visitors include high school horticulture students and touring members of garden clubs.

But as the plantings have matured, so have the planters, and now there is a need for more kindred spirits who can continue the work. Lois herself was 78 years old when she held that first fateful meeting in 1997, and she and most of the rest of the originators have since moved away or gone on to rest among the native plants of the Elysian Fields. Sylvia is the last of the original committee, and she is ready to hand over her hoe.

Perhaps remembering Lois’s frank request for an extraordinarily long-term commitment, Sylvia is frank in describing what kind of volunteers are needed now: “Basically what we need are people that want to learn about native plants and are willing to dig dandelions,” she says.

But Rae elaborates on the advantages: “It’s a lot of fun; we enjoy each other; we enjoy the work,” she says. Beyond the camaraderie and the health benefits of physical work outside, new volunteers will be able to develop their own botanical knowledge in the company of long-time KNPS members who have developed sophisticated knowledge of native plants. It’s a good price for a good education.

KNPS won’t ask you to commit for the rest of your life, but they are looking for volunteers who can put in a few hours a week for at least some lesser period of time. If that might be you, call Rae Charlton (610-1688) or Mary Jo Haag (255-4413).



Annual Holiday Potluck

Our KNPS annual holiday potluck will be held at the Sagle Senior Center on December 9 starting at 11:00 am. Please bring your holiday cheer and a dish to share.

For more information contact Jan Geren 208-263-7279



Arboretum News

By Rae Charlton

Since its inception, Sylvia Chatburn has been the Steward of the Arboretum. After nearly 20 years, she has decided to retire. It is a complex, demanding position, and she had done an outstanding job. In fact, trying to fill her shoes will take four people! The new Arboretum Leadership Team is Mary Jo Haag, Sue Gervais, Mary Fraser, and Rae Charlton. Sylvia is meeting with us, to insure a smooth transition. We are crafting a vision, studying the budget, and putting out the call: we need additional VOLUNTEER GARDENERS! Let one of us know if you'd like to join our happy band, which involves one morning a week at the Arb during the summer, and a few meetings.

The Leadership Team has a year-end request of members: when you join, or renew your membership, please consider including a donation. It is easy to do, by check or charge, and of course can be done anytime. If you would like it to be directed to support the Arboretum, note that. For instance, we are hoping to buy a sturdy hose caddy, to simplify watering chores next summer.

Exciting plans for Arbor Day, 2018, will be announced in a future newsletter.



Committee Reports

Conservation Committee

In Sandpoint, the University of Idaho is preparing to sell its 77 acres on North Boyer. In recent years, it has been used recreationally, as the extension service moved to the fairgrounds and stopped local research. A spring foray confirmed the presence of three sensitive plants. KNPS submitted a letter asking that the riparian area east of the railroad tracks be protected. (That letter is posted on our website under Conservation Committee.)

At a public workshop, citizens voted to have that habitat be designated as "park" rather than the previous industrial designation.

The city currently has no "protected natural area" category, so more work needs doing, as the time is right in the process. Again, the Conservation Committee helps KNPS be a positive and effective voice for our local native plants. To learn more about the Conservation Committee contact Molly at conservation-at-nativeplantsociety.org.

Lois Wythe Native Plant Grant

Application deadline for the 10th annual Lois Wythe Native Plant Grant is fast approaching. All applications must be received by November 30. Forms are available on our website.

Lois Wythe was the driving force behind the establishment of the arboretum in Lakeview Park and our local native plant group. It is in her honor that KNPS awards a \$300 grant to a Bonner County person, group or class who proposes the best way to spread the appreciation of native plants in our community.

Although many prior winners have developed a native plant landscaping project, the grant committee welcomes the possibility of other proposals perhaps using art, photography, directed hikes for children or educational speakers.

Spread the word to anyone you know or any group you know who may have an interest in the creative promotion of native plants. Anyone who has questions or needs more information may contact Janice DeBaun at grant@nativeplantsociety.org.

September Program Summary

Summarized by Cindy Hayes

Juanita Lichthardt was the presenter for the September KNPS program. She taught General Botany at University of Idaho for several years. She worked as a plant ecologist for Idaho Natural Heritage Program for 25 years. Every state has a database cataloguing rare species. The agency heading up Idaho's database is Department of Fish and Wildlife. Funding for her conservation program comes mainly from Federal grants. During her presentation, she concentrated on two of Idaho's rarest plants; Idaho Phlox and Water Howellia.

Part of her job description was to map the plant populations of rare plants and monitor them yearly. A small population of Idaho Phlox is found on private land owned by Potlatch Forest Products in Clearwater, Idaho. Idaho Phlox occupies very common montane-meadow habitat. The alder-leaf buckbrush is often found adjacent or mingled among the tall Idaho phlox. One of the distinguishing characteristics of this species is a large percentage of stems are produced but very few flowers bloom. Stretching above tall vegetation is thought to be a trigger to aid in blooming. The perennial Idaho phlox is genetically related to long leaf phlox. It reproduces by seeds and rhizomes.



Water Howellia depends on a very specific habitat and is sparsely scattered over a large range spanning four states. The flowers emerge above the water but it also has closed flowers below the surface. It is an annual and emerges in mud from dried out ponds from mid June to July. It reproduces by seed only and has very specific germination requirements. Water fowl help spread seed. It is the only member of its genus. Hawthorne, Water parsnip, Water foxtail (an aquatic grass) and/or Burr reed may also be found in the habitat community of Water Howellia.

Photos from the Arboretum Cleanup!



Member Profile: Julie Kallemyn

By Cindy Hayes

While backpacking in the Sawtooth Mountains, a friend suggested Julie and Daniel visit Coeur d'Alene in Northern Idaho, which led to a side trip to Schweitzer for skiing. When Julie Kallemyn and her husband Daniel Shalferman moved to Sagle in 2015, they were enjoying a hiatus from their 25 year career as sales associates in real estate. They wanted to carve out time in their lives to pursue many of their personal passions including fly fishing, hiking and skiing.

Love for the outdoors was instilled early in Julie's life by her parents. Her family outings to their lake cabin in northern Minnesota provided opportunities to pick wild fruit and berries, fish and hunt. Her mother was especially instrumental in teaching Julie and her 4 siblings to appreciate the intricate qualities of native plants, and plant and animal communities. Julie shared that their mother taught her to look closely to find nature's "surprises" "... the pink jester's cap hidden under wild ginger, the Blood Root's bright orange stem juice, the lovely and fascinating blooms of yellow and showy lady slipper and jack-in-the-pulpits ... I was much closer to the ground then..."



These early experiences cemented the path Julie would take later in adulthood. Julie attended the University of Minnesota and completed a Bachelor in Landscape Architecture. She worked in Landscape Design for several years and although she didn't continue working in that field, her interest in design, regional planning, native plants, plant communities, permaculture principles and organic food production remained strong.

In 2011 Julie spent a 6 month internship in Booneville, Ca. at a permaculture, biodynamic gardening community. It was situated on 160 acres with 15 permanent residents. Julie lived in a Cobb constructed house built of straw and clay and learned that building technique and a myriad of skills using natural materials. She also worked at a large scale, alternative energy wind farm in south Minnesota for awhile. During her real estate career Julie donated her time and services for The Nature Conservancy at Camp Ripley in MN. She helped with real estate easement land transactions to help save the Blanding turtles.

She has brought that zest to be involved to Idaho. She works as a volunteer with Phil Hough at KRFY Radio co-hosting the Tuesday morning show on outdoor topics. She has stepped in to help with the Southside Elementary School garden program as a Bonner County Gardeners Association (BCGA) volunteer and will be joining the KNPS Board starting in January 2018. She also puts energy into Friends of Scotchman Peak Wilderness and Idaho Trail Association. In addition to all of the above...Julie has taken up the banjo, tying flies for the next fishing trip (perhaps Alaska) and dog sitting their dog Dexter while Daniel is off hiking in Nepal. When he comes back, perhaps they'll plan a trip to South America for their 30th wedding anniversary so she can check it off her Bucket List.

A Voice From the Moist Montane Forest

As the Forest Changes Story and Art by Marilyn McIntyre

Yesterday's late October walk into the forest was a bit shocking. I was particularly interested in looking at forest health following such a long dry spell. Though we did recently receive some rain and even snow, which brought the woods into some semblance of more typical fall like conditions, it apparently wasn't soon enough to save approximately 50% of the understory seedlings between one foot and six feet in height. Especially hard hit are the western hemlocks, grand firs, sub-alpine firs and lodge pole pines. These are small trees whose roots didn't find any moisture for too long, and whose crowns were no longer shaded by the dead and dying over story. The crown species is western larch with a few Douglas fir and white pine visible silhouetted against the cobalt sky. Drought. Simple, right? Well, probably not so simple when I take into consideration the facts of forest succession. As you can see from the attached aerial photo taken in 1933, this entire forest was burned in 1932.

Now, 85 years later, we are seeing the succession of trees that came in following that fire. First the sun loving species: western larch, lodge pole, and western white pine grew in fast and thick, providing for more shade in which tolerant tree species like western hemlock, grand fir and western red cedar could thrive. As Nature would have it, the potential climax species of Douglas fir and western white pine were afflicted with root rot and blister rust, leaving only the grand fir, western hemlock, western red cedar and western larch to become the over story. Now the western hemlocks, and grand firs are dying and the western larch are showing less resistance to mistletoe and pitch producing bugs. Drought and forest succession are having a large impact on forest health.



One thought that intrigues me in all of this forest transition energy is that over 90% of the biomass is woody tissue, a very durable material. Whether the wood is dead or alive, vertical or on the ground, intact or falling apart, a myriad of creatures make their livings tunneling, chewing and otherwise reducing it to the original constituents.

We were so very lucky not to receive any lightning when the forest was as dry as it was, or we would potentially look like that photo taken in 1933!

Have a wonderful winter wherever you are, Marilyn.



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Photo by Jill Wilson.

Membership Rates

January 1st through December 31st

___ Individual	\$25.00
___ Household**	\$30.00
___ Student/Senior (65+)	\$15.00
___ Sustaining**	\$50.00
___ Patron**	\$100.00
___ Sponsor	\$50/00

****These memberships are entitled to two votes**

*Membership dues and additional
Donations may be tax deductible*

Membership Information

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Mail to:

Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society
 PO Box1092
 Sandpoint, Idaho 83864

OR

Payment by credit card is available on our website,
nativeplantsociety.org.

Please note: A small increase [\$5] in KNPS membership dues was deemed a practical [and hopefully affordable] move for the 2018 year by the Board. Membership dues in other non-profit organizations in the area are in alignment with this increase. Let us know if this is difficult for you. **The KNPS Board**