



# Kinnikinnick Journal

Volume XXIII Number 1

January—February 2019

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

[www.nativeplantsociety.org](http://www.nativeplantsociety.org)

## Upcoming Programs & Events

### 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, January 26, 2019**

*Steve Anderson*

### Nevada More than a Sagebrush Ocean

The basin and range province provides for unique habitats for plant and animal species. Isolated mountain ranges stand in stark contrast to the surrounding deserts and contain many plants that are similar to the northwest. The presentation will concentrate on northeast Nevada and discuss plants, animals and some land management issues.

Steve Anderson graduated from the University of Idaho with a BA in wildlife-fisheries resources and worked for the US Forest Service for more than 30 years. He also spent time in Kenya working for the Peace Corps.

**Saturday 23, February, 2019**

*Don Gay*

### Selkirk DNA Grizzly Bear Project

This project has been gathering grizzly bear hair from collection sites in the Selkirk Mountains since 2015. DNA analysis of the hair provides information on grizzly bear reproduction and gene flow with surrounding recovery areas. This information is used by researchers to determine the minimum number of grizzly bears in the U.S. portion of the Selkirk Recovery area and if that number is approaching bear recovery goals.

Don is a retired U.S. Forest Service wildlife biologist. He spent time working on Kootenai, Deschutes, Fremont, and Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forests. He also served in Africa with the Peace Corps and completed international work with the Forest Service in Mali, Madagascar, and Gabon. Don lives in Naples, Idaho.

## November Program Summary

*Summarized by Cindy Hayes*

“Dirty Dancing the Rhythm of the Soil”, was the catchy title Preston Andrews PhD chose for his presentation for the November KNPS program. Dr. Andrews opened his remarks with a quote from Leonardo Da Vinci: “We know more about the movement of celestial bodies than the soil underfoot.”

The distribution of life on earth is 82% plant biomass, with agricultural lands accounting for only 2% of those plants. Globally we are losing forests at an alarming rate due to deforestation, slashing, wildfires and industrialization. Forest communities are critical to the carbon functioning system necessary for sustaining life. Another big equation in plant biomass is maintaining the Amazon Basin, one of the richest depositories of global soil micro biomass. But the Amazon continues to dwindle in size due to man’s encroachment. The next largest distribution of life on earth is bacteria at 13%, and trailing far behind at .05% are humans.

By the early 20th century, soil erosion was considered a national problem. We were losing soil faster than it could be replenished. With the advent of the steel plow in the mid 1800s, poor agricultural practices and the use of pesticides and inorganic fertilizers in the 1950s, the tilled land was not being fully regenerated.

There are complex food webs in the soil. Charles Darwin wrote a book about his observations of the earthworms and how they replenish the soil by burrowing and adding minerals from grinding up small rocks through their digestive processes. Worms make ½ inch to several inches of soil each century. Forest plant communities use the surrounding mulch from the plant’s litter microbiome to protect seedlings and enrich the soil, and use the mycelium networks from mother plants to foster young seed-

lings nearby. In forensic science, because of the soil’s diversity and characteristics it can be used as evidence in criminal investigations.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## President's Message

By Ken Thacker

It has become somewhat of a tradition to start each year with acknowledgment of the volunteers that have kept us going and when you look at the KNPS website you can find a list of those of us who have decided to “sign on the dotted line.” These are the Members of the Board and standing committees who have chosen a higher commitment to KNPS. This year we have four new names in this group. Ann Torpie has joined the Arboretum Leadership Team. Ann brings a long history of community involvement in Spokane to our team. Preston Andrews has joined the Program Committee. He is a retired Professor of Horticulture and adds a lot of pertinent experience to our collected knowledge base. Margaret Petersen has taken on housing and operating our printer (with occasional backup from Shawna Parry). In her previous life, Margaret was a Financial Analyst and stay-at-home mom which makes her qualified for most anything. Nancy Rieger has taken over as the Hospitality Chair from Jackie Earle. This is proof that even long-time KNPS members can take on new challenges.

Then there is the collection of ongoing tasks that are critical to the function of KNPS and are done by people who often don't get recognition for doing them. These include the other Rieger (Dennis) who along with his other duties, serves as our all-round information technology guy. He is our Website Administrator on a website that he created. He is also our listserv manager and fixes the equipment glitches that inconveniently show up during the run-ups to our program presentations. And in his spare time, Dennis researches and advises us on most of our IT equipment purchases. Also, along with other duties, Jan Geren functions as our Event Planner. She has organized fundraising events at local restaurants and the Arbor Day baked goods table for the last several years. She has also stepped up to see that our Christmas Potluck parties keep going since our move to the Monarch Road Community Center. Preston Andrews has recently taken the lead on evaluating and improving our community outreach efforts. In doing this he has begun a process that is long overdue. He is also working to add to the science based natural history information on our Website, Facebook page and potentially this newsletter. Gail Bolin is a past KNPS President and has continued her involvement by putting together and administering our Facebook page. She also organizes the annual Summer potlucks and is always available to help with community outreach such as the Library display, and presentations to schools and civic groups. Bob Wilson has quietly worked behind the scenes to pull together our Arbor Day plant sale for many years. Bob and Jill also own Cedar Mountain Perennials, a native plant nursery. And last but not least, there are all the Arboretum gardeners who just show up and get their hands dirty all summer each year.

Of course, when making lists like this, there are always some who get missed who just do it whether called upon or not and we owe our thanks to all of these folks as well. The volunteerism of our membership is unsurpassed! Thank you, all!!

*(Continued from page 1) October Program Summary*

Living soil was defined in the Organic Agriculture: A Global Perspective as the “... biologically regulated interconnections in the soils ecosystems that play key roles in maintaining desirable soil physical and chemical conditions.” We are just beginning to research and understand the complexity of microbial biomass, microbes and genes that feed the soil and plants. One teaspoon of healthy fertile soil may contain millions of individual bacteria and thousands of microbial species.

The passage of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 established the National Organic Program, reintroducing organic practices to agriculture. To improve soil quality, organic farming emphasized: more organic material, more total and mineralized carbon, more total nitrogen, more microbial biomass and respiration, more microbial gene activity (more than 100 unique genes), enhanced gene functioning (nitrogen fixation, and pollutant and pesticide degradation), reduction of tillage and compaction, crop rotations, and irrigation and drainage. Through education these practices are gaining momentum. In time we may reestablish the “rhythm in the living soil.”



## Committee Reports

### Conservation Committee

As we slip into 2019, the Conservation Committee looks back on an eventful year representing the wellbeing of native plants in the Idaho Panhandle. We support the creation of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness and encouraged our members to vote in the May advisory election on this topic. The opposition's scare tactics were successful in convincing a majority of voters to have doubts, and congressional action on a wilderness proposal is off the table for now. We continue to see the value in a formal wilderness designation.

We encouraged the Bonner County Commission not to adopt the proposed Natural Resource Policy (which is generally an extractive/privatizing one) and were disappointed when they approved it.

The proposed silicon metal smelter in the Newport WA area was not well documented but appeared to have a high potential for pollution levels that would be detrimental to our native plant habitats. Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society submitted a letter that expressed our concerns and requested a thorough review. A copy is on the website.

We commented on a BLM project at Gamlin Lake and had a participant in planning the Hughes Meadow restoration project. Wildfires are one way that we're locally experiencing the warming climate. This will undoubtedly be a focus for us going forward.

### Grant Committee

The Lois Wythe Native Plant Grant for 2019 has been awarded to the fifth grade classes at Washington Elementary School. The funds will be used to purchase 27 pocket microscopes which will be shared by the two classes as students study both native plants and their habitat.

As part of this study, students will maintain field journals and develop a brochure featuring the native plants of our area. They will also create a terraqua column in which they will grow seeds without soil to support an argument that plants can acquire the materials they need for growth primarily from air and water.

Kaleb Darrin and Jewel Shea, fifth grade teachers, will direct the students in this project.

## 2018 CHRISTMAS POTLUCK



## **Member Profile: Susan Bates-Harbuck**

*Submitted by Cindy Hayes*

I've lived, in alphabetical order, in California, Michigan, Montana and Texas, but have traveled to every state in the union, and have been on the highest point in 31 of them. I moved to Sandpoint with my husband John in 1979. We wanted to get back to the Rocky Mountain area and had heard that Sandpoint, as a town, had turned down a pulp mill wanting to locate here. That sounded to me like their priorities were on the side of the natural world, like ours have always been. Our daughter, Kristin, was born here in 1982, so she's our native spud. We passed on our interest in native plants to her and as a 10-year-old she impressed a park ranger by telling him what the plants in the area were, including a few scientific names. Then she went on to get her masters in botany.

I grew up in California, back when it was a nice place to live, going to the beach, hiking in the Sierra, visiting San Francisco. I graduated from UC Berkeley at the end of the 60's, which was definitely an interesting time to be there. Never got tear gassed; did get to observe the Blue Meanies; got a BA in Spanish and math, then a teaching credential at San Francisco State.

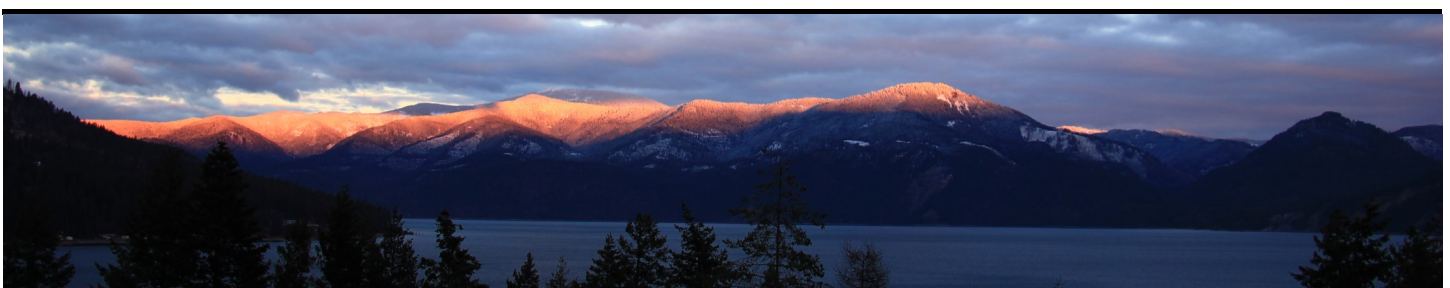
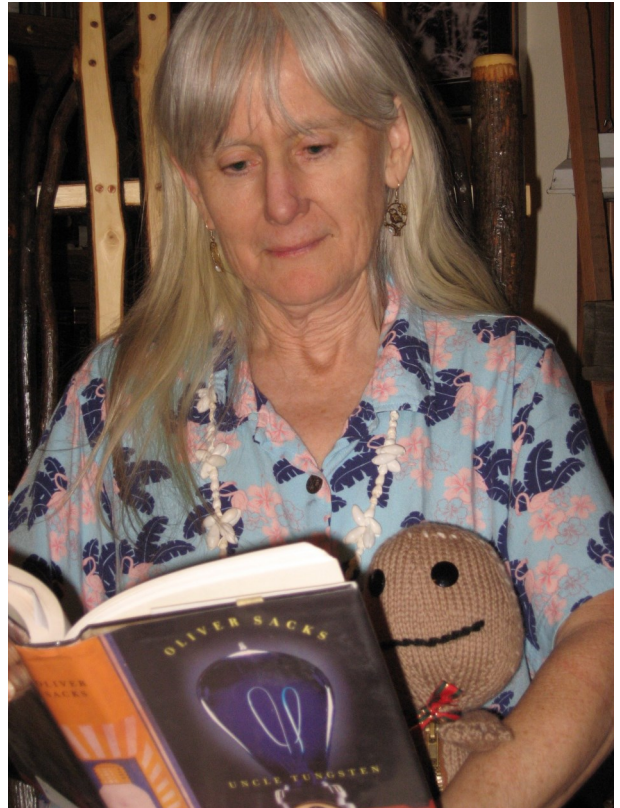
In 1975 I was a VISTA volunteer in Georgetown, Texas, living in the barrio and running a free breakfast program, after-school tutoring, driver's license classes in Spanish and ESL and generally empowering the people in the Chicano and black neighborhoods to get the city services they needed.

I've traveled to Brazil, Zimbabwe and Cuba as part of a regional Methodist choir, singing in their churches and meeting the people. What great experiences those were. I would go again in a heartbeat.

Obviously I enjoy travel. We checked off one item on my bucket list in October with a trip to Bhutan, to see how their happiness quotient is. I would still like to see Japan and Australia and would happily go back to Hawaii, especially after spending 3 hours snow blowing the driveway. The only other item on my bucket list is to experience weightlessness, but I think I'm a bit beyond the age range for astronaut.

I retired from the East Bonner County Library after 14 years and only wish I had found that job earlier. I mean, surrounded by books and making people happy by answering their questions? It doesn't get any better. I still volunteer there a little each week, and am part of Dewey and the Page Turners, the trivia team at McDuff's made up of librarians and library lovers. Did I mention we have won several times? I also have volunteered at the Panida since 1985, and have been on their Board. In August you can find me at the Rabbit Barn at the County Fair and have been able to for the past two and a half decades or so. Then, let's see, I've been a 4-H leader, a Girl Scout leader, Friends of Scotchman Goat Cop, on the Community Hall Committee, and classroom helper at Northside. I've helped a little at the Arboretum.

In my free time, I like to read, play penny whistle and guitar with the Monday Slow Jam, knit, read, sew, read, you get the idea.



## A Voice From the Moist Montane Forest



### Miracle on Grouse Creek

The parade is led by Raven mapping the route in soaring circles. Seeds, suet, buds and bugs are abundant. Noone goes hungry. The trees gather snow and dip their branches low, offering shelter to all. Temperatures are warm and the snow pack is a solid 25 inches.

"the lifespan of a particular plant or animal appears, not as drama complete in itself, but only as a brief interlude in a panorama of endless change."

Rachel Carson

HAPPY NEW YEAR

from the Moist Montane, Marilyn



## **Board of Directors 2019**

Ken Thacker, President, Programs  
 Jan Geren, Vice President  
 Carol Robinson, Secretary  
 Shawna Parry, Treasurer  
 Julie Kallemeyn, Publicity  
 Cindy Hayes, Board Member  
 Judy Lyding, Board Member  
 Carol Jenkins, Board Member

### **Additional Committee Chairs and Positions**

Mary Jo Haag, Sue Gervais, Mary Fraser,  
 Rae Charlton, Ann Torpie, Arboretum  
 Dennis Rieger, Landscape  
 Molly O'Reilly, Conservation  
 Janice DeBaun, Lois Wythe Grant  
 Mary Jo Haag, Historian  
 Nancy Rieger, Hospitality  
 Jill Wilson, Marilyn George, Newsletter Committee  
 Jill Wilson, Newsletter Editor  
 Margaret Petersen, Shawna Parry, Printer  
 Ken Thacker, Preston Andrews, Program  
 Dennis Rieger, Website Administrator, List serve

## **Happy New Year!!!**

**Join KNPS for 2019!**

### **Membership Rates**

January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>

___ Individual	\$25.00
___ Household**	\$30.00
___ Student/Senior (65+)	\$20.00
___ 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**

(make check payable to Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society or KNPS)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### *Newsletter Options:*

Electronic Copy \_\_\_ Paper copy \_\_\_

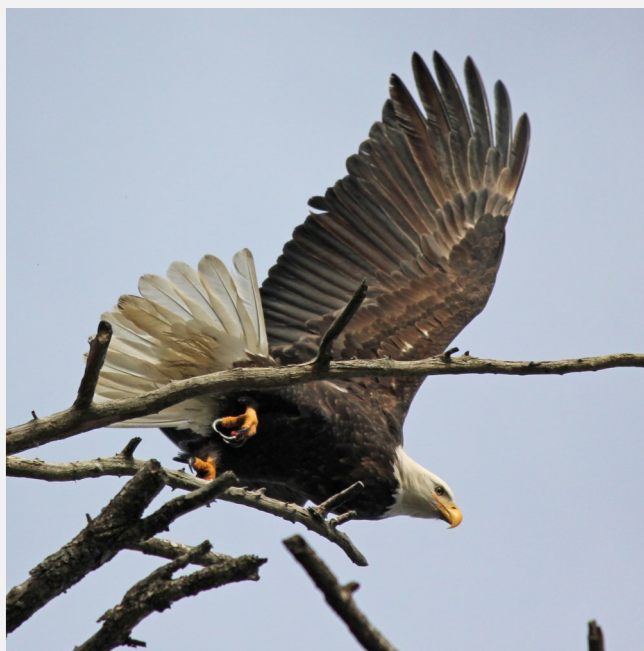


*Mail to:*

Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society  
 PO Box 1092  
 Sandpoint, Idaho 83864

**OR**

Payment by credit card is available on our website,  
[nativeplantsociety.org](http://nativeplantsociety.org).



*Eagle in flight.....photo by Jill Wilson.*