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Northwest Native Plant Journal

A Monthly Web Magazine

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Wild Hollyhocks p15

Birds vs. windows p36

Published by The Wild Garden: Hansen's Northwest Native Plant Database

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About this Journal

This Journal was created under the direction of Wally Hansen – a dedicated Grower, Aficionado and Passionate Lover of Northwest Native Plants.

This Journal is not 'commercial.' Our goals are:

A — To generate interest, even passion, concerning the magnificent Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest.

B — To help you create your own Native Plant Gardens, large or small, for home or work.

C — To help you propagate and “grow on” those species that interest you the most.

D — To inform both Home Gardeners and interested Professionals of many disciplines concerning trends and news items from my little corner of the world.

E — To help the reader enjoy native plants more by understanding the historical and cultural role of native plants (i.e.—use by Native Americans, pioneers, early botanists, etc.).



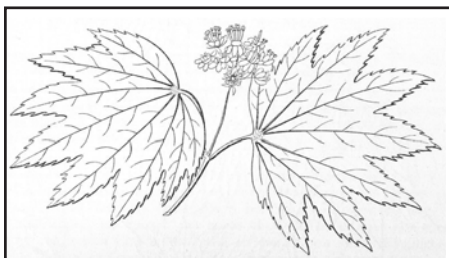
Garry Oak (*Quercus garryana* var. *garryana*)



On the Cover: Visual Fire

Vine Maple (*Acer circinatum*)

Maple trees are known for their fall color. The quest to develop deeper, brighter, more intensely hued leaves will likely go on for centuries. But, for my money, the original Vine Maple (*Acer circinatum*) still holds its own to this day.



Morning sun shining through Vine Maple a la stained glass, an intensity of color so divine! Photo courtesy of Nona.



Late fall in the native garden

Chores that must not be put off until tomorrow

A — Fall planting season encourages a new living hedge, a cutting garden or wildlife habitat.

B — Serious cleanup is the way to spend outdoor time now. Clipping back spent perennials, gathering remnants from bulbs gone dormant, picking up jetsam and flotsam cast off from trees and shrubs. Add these materials to the compost bin for a fine boost in next spring's garden.

C — Continue to water whatever needs it. Here in Oregon's Willamette valley, we've not seen more than a few drops of rain since July. Plants that are drought resistant may need a helping hand.

D — Prepare for sudden evening chills, possibly frost already. Have covers ready for tender plants added to the garden this year. It usually takes a year for these youngsters to fend for themselves. Old sheets, curtains, or appropriately sized cardboard boxes work fine. A personal favorite are cast off gathered skirts or dresses for temporary coverings are excellent.

E — Divide perennials now. Expand the garden by planting new divisions, put some in pots for sharing with friends, create or revamp container gardens for portable beauty. To overwinter containers, corral them in a sheltered area and fill in spaces between and surrounding the group with leaves, straw, or other plentiful material.

F — Plant bulbs now! Natives, of course.



Serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*)



Mystery plant puzzle



There's no mystery about this plant--it's one of our northwest native wild roses and well is worth knowing: *Rosa nutkana*

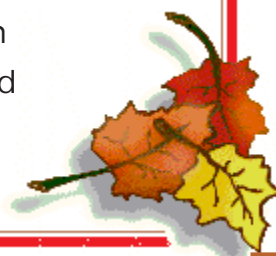
Test your native plant knowledge--identify the wildflower in each Journal. The reward is simple but very satisfying: You will be included in our list of Official Plant Detectives. Send me an email (nwplants@gmail.com) with the correct botanical name of this plant.

Good luck!

P.S. Do you have a plant you'd like to identify? Email it to us and we'll show it here on our Mystery Plant Puzzle page.

Official Plant Detectives

Jerry Murray
Sabrina Kis
Carol Hiler
Mike Burns
Nancy Whitehead
Pat Opdyke
Luke Kishpaugh
Dave Whitehead
Elaine Sawyer
Jacki



Wildlife Corner

Stock up--winter is coming!

The feeders are all sanitized and full, the baths and other water features are prepared and fresh.

The shelters--Rhododendrons and fellow evergreens--are at the ready, a number of choices in each area of the garden for nesting and safety out of the elements.

There are berries, rose hips, junipers and fir cones, but right this minute the birds are overjoyed with the gold-yellow leaves of the birches lightly covering the entire garden. They spend hours hopping around, flipping over leaves to get at the great harvest of bugs crawling to and fro, going about their daily business.

The hummingbirds are not into the find-your-own-bug clan. They are just too fidgety for that. The nectar feeders in my garden are still empty (the hummers check every day!) but the biggest old rhodie is having a second bloom that is well appreciated tho the flowers are in much smaller bouquets than in spring. And there is never a time without flying bugs to be snatched from the air. this will suffice until I get those nectar feeders filled.



Mulch a la Paper Birch (*Betula papyrifera*)



Leaves

Acer circinatum, Vine Maple

New pictures of this favorite tree native to the Pacific northwest by photographer Nona from the Warm Springs Indian Reservation area of central Oregon and nearby small town of Prineville.

Vine Maple red and orange with golden ambers of birches and other deciduous trees. Soon this scene will be ruled by conifers throughout the coming winter.



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Leaves, continued

"First documented botanically by the Corps of Discovery during the Expedition led by Captains John Clark and Meriwether Lewis—October 30, 1805, in Hood River County, Oregon.

"Shrub or small tree with short trunk or several branches turning and twisting from base; often vinelike and leaning or sprawling. Flowers 0.5 in (1.2 cm) wide; spreading purple sepals and whitish petals. Height: 25 ft (7.6 m). Diameter: 8 in (20 cm).

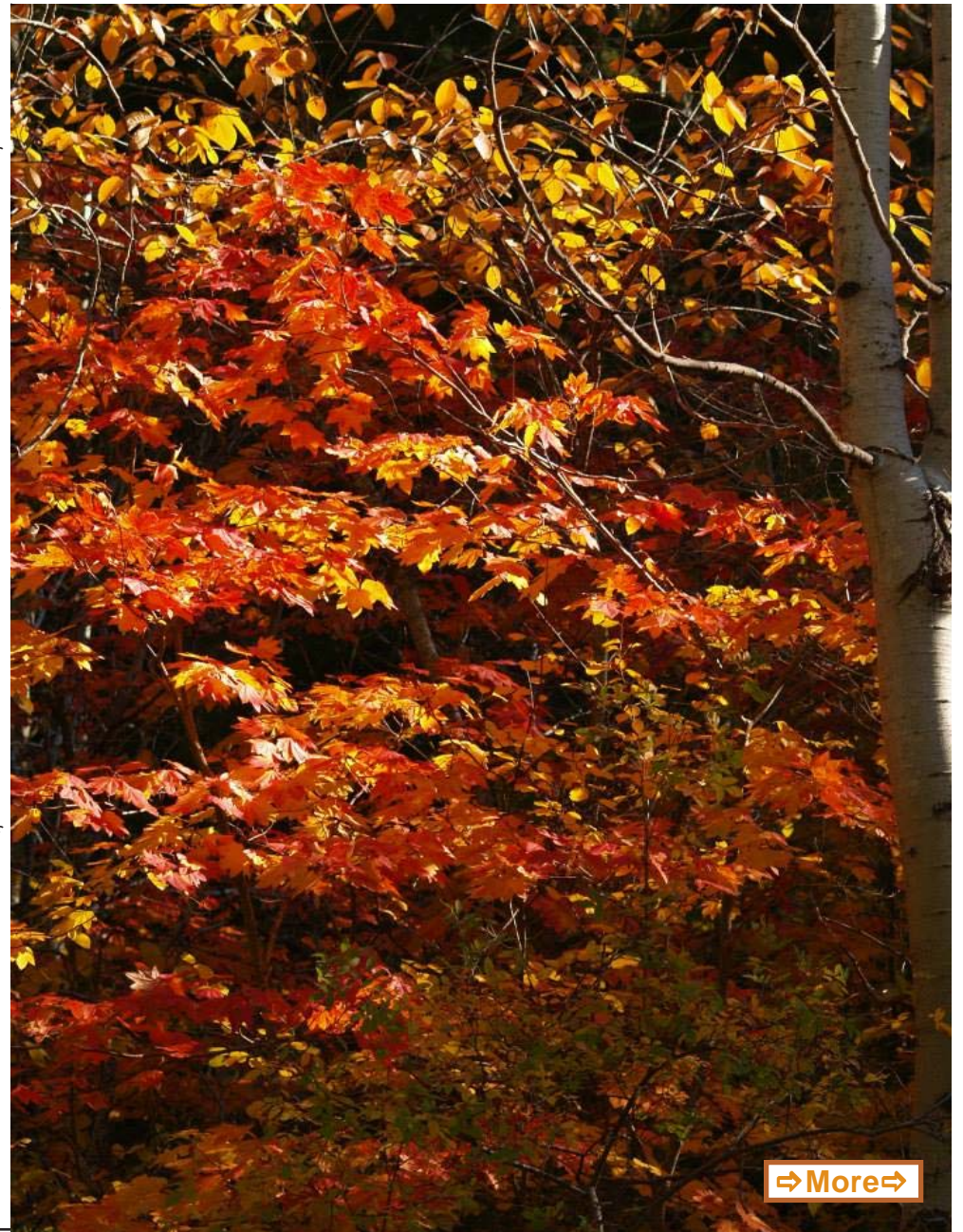
"Moist soils, especially along shaded stream banks; in understory of coniferous forests.

"Pacific Coast from southwestern British Columbia south to northern California; to 5,000 ft (1,524 m).

"This handsome ornamental is dramatically colored in most seasons with bright green foliage turning orange and red in autumn, purple and white flowers in spring, and young red fruit in summer. The scientific name, meaning "rounded" or "circular," refers to the leaf shape."

From the National Geographic website
[www.nationalgeographic.com/lewisandclark/
record_species_132_13_18.html](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/lewisandclark/record_species_132_13_18.html)

Note the intense red of the Vine Maple leaves reflected in the trunk of the Paper Birch (*Betula papyrifera*): exquisite photo from Nona.



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Leaves, continued

"Vine maple wood has no commercial value but is used locally for tool handles and firewood.

"During the summer, Vine Maple's abundant foliage is a preferred food of black-tailed deer and elk. Since it grows at low elevations, it is usually abundant on elk winter ranges and ranks high as an elk winter browse.

In western Oregon, seral vine maple/ western swordfern communities which develop after wildfire supply a high quantity of forage for black-tailed deer. Black-tailed deer show a high preference for this community during all seasons.

Photo courtesy of Nona



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Leaves, continued

*Seral brush communities with an abundance of vine maple often contain high populations of mountain beaver. The seeds, buds, and flowers of maples (*Acer* spp.) provide food for numerous birds and small mammals. Squirrels and chipmunks eat the seeds, frequently storing them in caches after removing the hull and wing. Numerous birds use the leaves and seed stalks of maples for nest building.*



Photo courtesy of Nona

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Leaves, continued

Vine maple is eaten by both cattle and sheep. Sheep utilization of available vine maple herbage averaged 79 and 84 percent over two consecutive summers on cut-over Douglas-fir lands in Washington. Sheep allowed to graze during the summer on Douglas-fir plantations in western Oregon also showed a preference for vine maple.



Photo courtesy of Nona

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Leaves, continued

"Vine maple is an ornamental shrub used in landscaping. Native Americans called this maple "basket tree" because they weaved baskets with the long straight stems. Native Americans also carved the wood into numerous household utensils such as spoons, bowls, and platters, and used the branches for scoop nets to take salmon."

From USDA Forest Service website
www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/shrub/acecir/all.html



Photo courtesy of Nona

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Leaves, continued

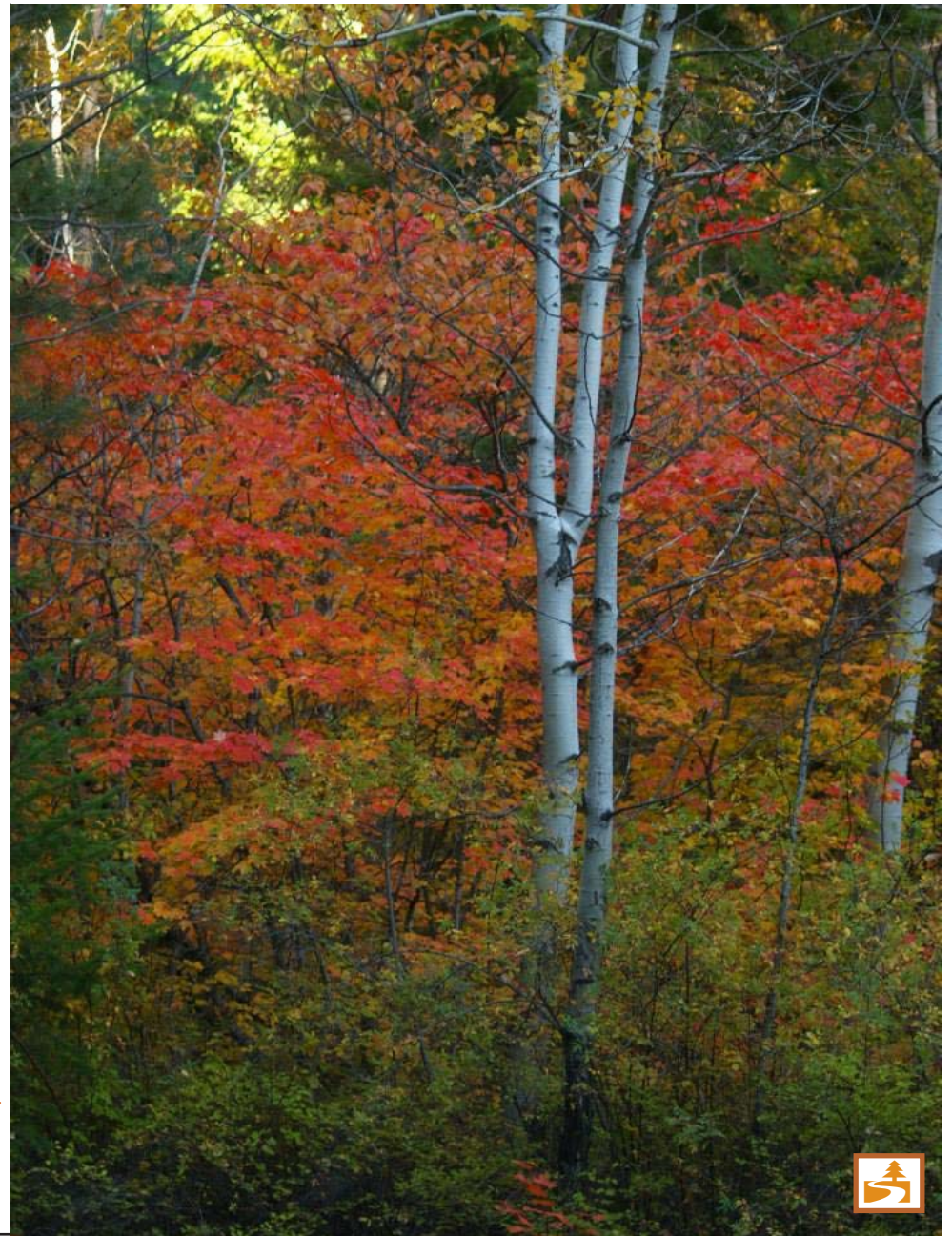
Throughout history, this plant has been used to make bows, frames for fishing nets, snowshoes, and cradle frames. It is an excellent firewood, and can be carved into cooking tool, bowls and platters. When pioneers arrived in the northwest, the Native Americans showed them how to boil the bark to make a tea for colds. Native tribes called this the "basket tree," from which beautiful and long-lasting baskets were made using the long straight stems.

I learned how to use this versatile native in making furniture, garden tipis and even a trellis.

This handsome species is desired for its dramatic colors and tolerance of shade and sun. An excellent ornamental, especially prized for outstanding fall color. Interesting enough to make a good specimen tree, they also do well as the understory to conifers much as they do in nature

For restoration of moist drainages and steep slopes, Vine Maple is respected for its exceptional soil binding qualities. The species is often one of the early colonizers after disturbances such as clear cuts or fire and fares well on poor sites.

Striking contrast of maple leaves
and tree trunk. Photo courtesy of
Nona



Checkerblooms of the Pacific Northwest

Native Hollyhocks

Sidalcea is a genus of the botanical family Malvaceae. It contains several species of flower known generally as checkerblooms or checkermallows, or prairie mallows in the United Kingdom. They can be annuals or perennials, some rhizomatous. They are native to West and Central North America.

In mid- to late summer the clumps of toothed basal leaves produce erect flowering stems, with 5-petalled mallow-type flowers in terminal racemes, in shades of pink, white and purple.

Delightful in the garden, divine in cut flower arrangements, and exquisite as pressed botanical creations, this native beauty is a must have for the cutting garden. The species range from 1 - 1 1/2 ft to taller plants, some reaching 4 - 6 ft tall.

This list includes the *sidalcea* species that are native to the Pacific northwest. There is a description page including photos for each of these plants.

Sidalcea asprella

aka *S. malviflora* ssp. *asprella* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea asprella ssp. *asprella* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea asprella ssp. *nana*

aka *S. malviflora* ssp. *nana*

or *S. reptans* ssp. *nana* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea campestris (Meadow Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea cusickii

aka *S. cusickii* ssp. *purpurea*

or *S. oregana* var. *cusickii* (Cusick's Checkerbloom)



[⇒ More ⇒](#)

PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea elegans

aka *S. malviflora* ssp. *elegans* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea hendersonii (Henderson's Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea hirtipes (Bristlystem Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea malachroides (Mapleleaf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea malviflora (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea malviflora ssp. *malviflora* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea malviflora ssp. *patula* (Siskiyou Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea malviflora ssp. *virgata*

aka *S. malviflora* var. *virgata*

or *S. virgata* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea multifida (Cutleaf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea nelsoniana (Nelson's Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea neomexicana (Salt Spring Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea neomexicana ssp. *crenulata*

aka *S. neomexicana* var. *crenulata* (Salt Spring Checkerbloom)

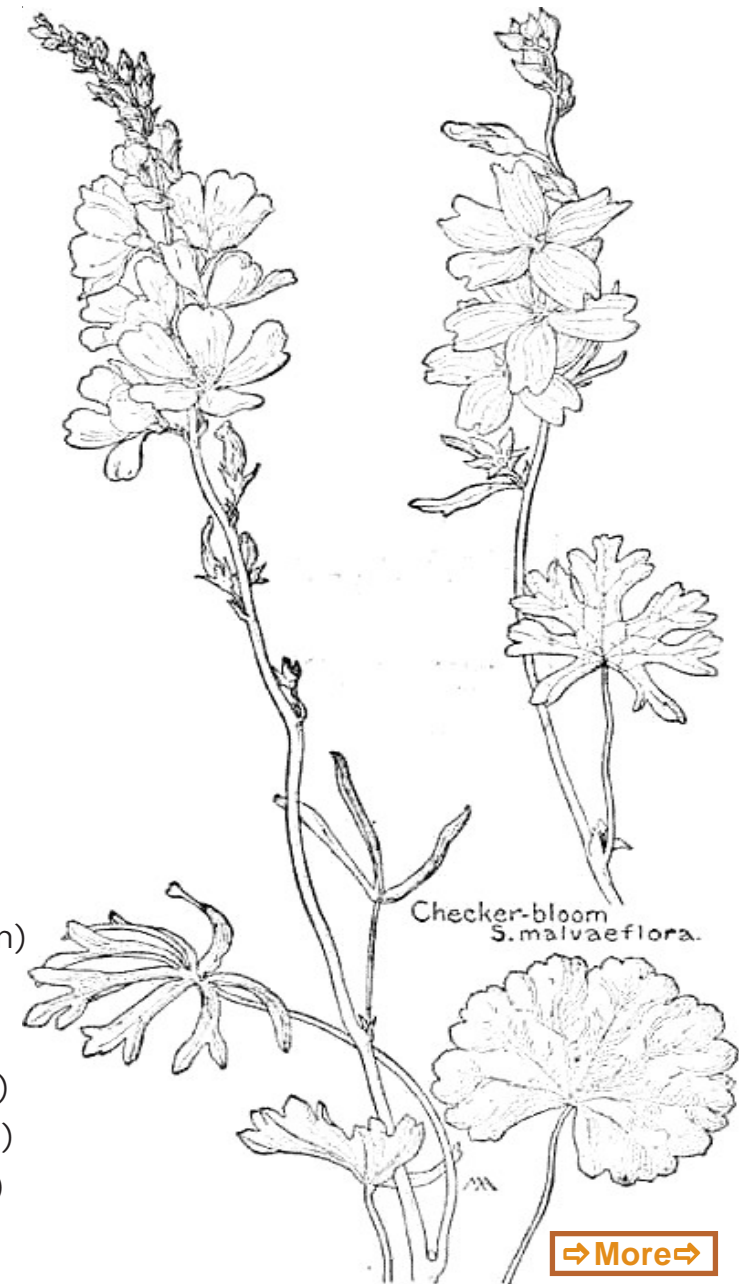
Sidalcea oregana (Oregon Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea oregana ssp. *oregana* (Oregon Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea oregana ssp. *oregana* var. *maxima* (Oregon Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea oregana ssp. *oregana* var. *oregana* (Oregon Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea oregana ssp. *oregana* var. *procera* (Oregon Checkerbloom)



PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea oregana ssp. *spicata*

aka *S. oregana* var. *spicata*

or *S. setosa*

or *S. setosa* ssp. *querceta*

or *S. spicata*

or *S. spicata* var. *tonsa* (Oregon Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea oregana ssp. *valida*

aka *S. spicata* var. *valida*

or *S. valida*

Sidalcea pedata (Birdfoot Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea ranunculacea (Marsh Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea reptans (Sierra Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea robusta (Butte County Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea sparsifolia

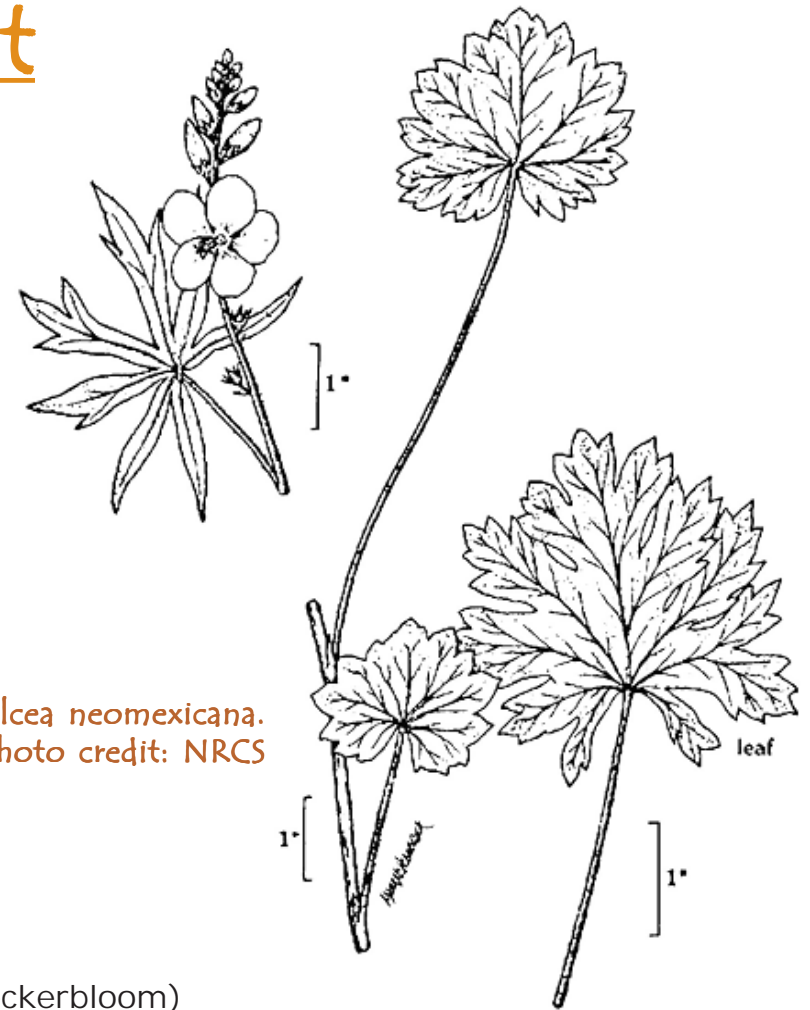
aka *S. malviflora* ssp. *sparsifolia*

or *S. malviflora* ssp. *sparsifolia* var. *sparsifolia*

or *S. malviflora* ssp. *sparsifolia* var. *stellata*

or *S. malviflora* ssp. *sparsifolia* var. *uliginosa* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea neomexicana.
Photo credit: NRCS



On the following pages, each of the checkermallows native to the Pacific northwest (i.e. California, Oregon, Washington and into Canada's British Columbia) is briefly described and illustrated in photos from several camera artists who graciously share their work through the Creative Commons licensing strategy. Read more about this innovative way more and more people are using with great benefits for us all: <http://creativecommons.org/>

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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

***Sidalcea asprella* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)**

aka *S. malviflora* ssp. *asprella*

***Sidalcea asprella* ssp. *asprella* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)**

***Sidalcea asprella* ssp. *nana* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)**

aka *S. malviflora* ssp. *nana*

or *S. reptans* ssp. *nana*

This perennial sports a more cup-like bloom than do several other wild hollyhocks. However, the flowers are sparsely borne on 2 - 5 stalks as is common to the *sidalceas*. Bloom period is usually May - June.

The global status of this plant is :Apparently Secure" because it has been reported to occur in California in the central to northern Sierra Nevada (at least from 200-5400 feet), as well as the Klamath Ranges and western Oregon. It occurs in open woodlands and forest, and can be common.

Collect seedheads or pods when flowers fade; allow to dry on plant pf possible; break open to collect seeds. Properly cleaned, seed can be successfully stored.

Direct sow the seeds outdoors in fall. In springtime, direct sow after last frost.



Photo credit:
Keir Morse



© Keir Morse

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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea campestris (Meadow Checkerbloom) *

Tall Wild Hollyhock is also referred to as Meadow Checkerbloom and Meadow Sidalcea. It can be found along roadsides, in meadows and throughout the slopes, hills and fields of the Willamette Valley. In the Northwest this flower should be fall planted, outside, for the best results and highest chance of success. Many native flowers need a burst of cold weather to help them out of the ground. Some can take longer to grow, and many can take up to three years before they reach full establishment.



Details:

- Common Name: Tall Wild Hollyhock
- Latin Name: *Sidalcea campestris*
- Type: Native Flower
- Color: pink, white
- Cycle: Perennial
- Origin: Native
- Height: 36-48"
- Bloom Season: Spring-Summer
- Seeds Per Pound: 78,020
- Seeding Rate: 10

*Description from Oregon Flower Seed, a company located in Silverton, Oregon. They do not sell seed directly, they provide information only. They offer seed via retail website, Silver Falls Seed Co. at www.silverfallsseed.com/ and Oregon Wholesale Seed Co. at www.oregonwholesaleseed.com/ for large projects.

Sidalcea campestris
Photo credit: Amy Bartow NRCS

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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea cusickii (Cusick's Checkerbloom)

aka *S. cusickii* ssp. *purpurea*

or *S. oregana* var. *cusickii*

A delightful, hollyhock-like perennial rarely found outside its native Oregon, and not in every county. Stands of this perennial have been reported in Washington, Multnomah, Yamhill, Benton, Linn, Lane, Douglas, Coos and Jackson counties, but not all are documented.

Reaching a full 5,' this plant develops stout stems to support one to five densely flowered racemes.

Rose-pink petals age to a deep purple and are indeed regal.

This checkermallow thrives in full sun to partial shade and is a riparian species, so it needs consistently moist soil in the garden.

It is considered to be rare or threatened in its natural habitat.

Butterflies find it irresistible.

Photo credit: USBLM



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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea elegans (Del Norte Checkerbloom)

aka *S. malviflora* ssp. *elegans*

"The young specimens, recently sheltered, need more cures compared to the adult specimens: as the years go by the development of a good radical apparatus allows the plant to be satisfied with the rain, without needing other waterings. We suggest watering these plants only from time to time, but we must remember to wet the soil deeply using 1-2 buckets of water every 4-5 weeks.

"The dwarf checkerbloom develops growing in height, and develops a bare stem, creating a thick crown. dwarf checkerbloom isn't an evergreen; during the summer it assumes a red colouring; the adult species are large in size and reach 17 m in height. The dwarf checkerbloom develops like a tree.

"For a balanced development, it is best to position the The dwarf checkerbloom in a place where it is exposed to at least a few hours of direct sunlight. During the winter young plants could need a light protection from the wind or cold; when putting the very young specimens, with a thin stem, in shelter, we should provide them with a high stake to keep them erect. The dwarf checkerbloom plant can be grown in the garden throughout the whole year. It doesn't fear cold weather and it bears very harsh minimum temperatures.

From www.gardening.eu/



This is the only illustration I could find of this particular plant. If anyone has a photo of the living plant, please share if you will. Photo credit: Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History, Dept of Botany

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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea hendersonii (Henderson's Checkerbloom)

This checkerbloom likes to grow along the coast in tidal marshes and meadows. Mature height is 1 - 5 ft, blooms all summer.

Uncommon in Washington state, extremely rare in Oregon state and rare in the province of British Columbia, listed as a Species of Concern by the USFWS. It is a List 1 species in Oregon state with a rank of G3S1. The List 1 ranking means that it is a "taxa threatened with extinction or presumed to be extinct throughout their entire range". The G3 status indicates that globally, this plant is "rare, uncommon or threatened, but not immediately imperiled" and the S1 indicates that in Oregon state, this is a plant that is "critically imperiled because of extreme rarity or because it is somehow especially vulnerable to extinction or extirpation."

Naturally occurs among *Potentilla pacifica*, *Juncus balticus*, *Angelica lucida*, *Achillea millefolium*, *Galium aparine*, *Deschampsia caespitosa*, *Hordeum brachyantherum*, *Agrostis exarata*, *Erechtites minima*, *Festuca rubra* var. *littoralis*, *Grindelia integrifolia*, *Heracleum lanatum*, *Solidago canadensis*, and *Vicia gigantea*.

Photo credit: W.D. and Dolphia Bransford



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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea hirtipes (Bristlystem Checkerbloom)

Produces stems up to 5 - 6 ft tall that arise from creeping rhizomes. Large pinkish-lavender flowers are congested



toward the tip of the stem from early June to mid-July, .

Range: Clark, Lewis, and Wahkiakum counties, WA and Clatsop, Lincoln, and Tillamook counties, OR. Occurs in Olympic Peninsula and SW Washington, Puget Trough, and Western Cascades in fencerows, openings in drainages, remnants in some prairies.

Habitat: Remnant prairie fragments along fencerows and openings along drainages, sometimes beside creeks and streams.

Photos are by Walter Siegmund



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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea malachroides (Mapleleaf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea malachroides (Mapleleaf Checkerbloom) is a perennial herb that is native to coastal Oregon and California, blooming March - August in broadleaved upland forest, coastal prairie, coastal scrub, and North Coast coniferous forest., riparian woodland, often in disturbed areas.



Threatened by timber harvest and development pressures. Although this plant appeared rare a few years ago, today it is apparent that it is relatively common in its center of distribution along the north coast of California. Over 200 occurrences are known with well over 11,000 plants. The plant responds positively to some disturbance, but its reaction to heavy logging and the followup treatments is unknown.

Photos credit: Stan Shebs

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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea malviflora (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea malviflora ssp. *malviflora* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea malviflora ssp. *patula* (Siskiyou Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea malviflora ssp. *virgata* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

aka *S. malviflora* var. *virgata*
or *S. virgata*

Sidalcea malviflora's appearance varies from clump to clump and there are over ten subspecies, some of which are endemic and rare.

This perennial starts life as a woody caudex and rhizome with stems about 1 - 2 ft tall. The leaves are often divided deeply into several lobes.

Blooms are dense or loose arrays of several flowers, each having five petals in bright to dark pink, often with white veining, and measuring one to over three centimeters in length.

Sidalcea malviflora is native to the west coast of the United States from Washington to California as well as Baja California, where it is a common plant of the chaparral and other habitat types.

Sidalcea malviflora (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

Photo credit: Stan Shebs

Sidalcea malviflora spp. *patula*
(Siskiyou Checkerbloom)
Species collection for Jepson



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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea multifida (Cutleaf Checkerbloom)

Perennial herb grows from woody caudex, gray-glaucous; rhizomes. Many stems, generally erect. Leaves are mostly basal, fleshy, deeply lobed. Flowers are rose-pink, generally 3–9 on each stalk.

In the wild, this *Sidalcea* finds dry places, sagebrush scrub, and sunny spots amid pine forests in Nevada's High Sierras but mainly along the northwest coastal regions. It intergrades with *Sidalcea glaucescens*. Bloom period from May to July.

The Cutleaf Checkerbloom is a perennial. During the summer it assumes a red colouring; the adult species are large in size and reach 17 m in height. The cutleaf checkerbloom develops growing in height, and develops a bare stem, creating a thick crown.

The young specimens, recently sheltered, need more cures compared to the adult specimens: as the years go by the development of a good radical apparatus allows the plant to be satisfied with the rain, without needing other waterings. We suggest watering these plants only from time to time, but we must remember to wet the soil deeply using 1-2 buckets of water every 4-5 weeks .

Photo credit:BarryBreckling under
Creative Commons Attribution-
NonCommercial_ShareAlike 3.0
Unported (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0)



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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea nelsoniana (Nelson's Checkermallow or Checkerbloom)

A rare species of flowering plant in the mallow family native to the Willamette Valley and Coast Range of Oregon and the southwestern corner of Washington in the United States.

This perennial herb has several erect stems up to a meter tall from a thick taproot. The blades of the leaves are variable in shape. In general, the basal leaves are palmate in shape and the upper leaves are more deeply divided. Each stem can bear up to 100 pink flowers in a spikelike raceme. Each flower has a purple-tinged calyx of sepals and five petals up to 1.5 centimeters in length. Blooming occurs in late May through mid-July.

This plant does well in wetland habitats such as sedge and grass meadows and the transition zone from prairie to woodland. Also may enjoy sunny forest edges and riparian habitat, and is tolerant of disturbance, occurring even near campgrounds.



This plant is listed by the U.S. federal government and by Oregon as threatened, and by Washington as endangered. I could not believe it when I spotted a patch of this beauty growing alongside the road near Corvallis.



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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea neomexicana (Salt Spring Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea neomexicana ssp. *crenulata* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

aka *S. neomexicana* var. *crenulata*

A species of flowering plant in the mallow family known by the common name salt spring checkerbloom.

It is native to the western United States and Mexico, where it can be found in a number of habitat types, including alkali flats and other salty substrates.



It is a perennial herb growing from a cluster of fleshy roots, the mostly hairless stem growing 20 to 90 centimeters tall. The fleshy leaves are sometimes divided shallowly to deeply into lobes. The inflorescence is a loose cluster of flowers with pink petals up to 2 centimeters long.

Description from Wikipedia.

Right, photo credit: Walter Keck, NPS.

Left, photo credit: Wm. Dean Taylor



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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea oregana (Oregon Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea oregana ssp. *oregana* (Oregon Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea oregana ssp. *oregana* var. *maxima* (Oregon Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea oregana ssp. *oregana* var. *oregana* (Oregon Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea oregana ssp. *oregana* var. *procera* (Oregon Checkerbloom)

Sidalcea oregana ssp. *spicata* (Oregon Checkerbloom)

aka *S. oregana* var. *spicata*

or *S. setosa*

or *S. setosa* ssp. *querceta*

or *S. spicata*

or *S. spicata* var. *tonsa*

Sidalcea oregana* ssp. *valida

aka *S. spicata* var. *valida*

or *S. valida*

At home in moist habitats such as marshes and meadows.

Mature height ranges from 1 1/2 - 4 feet. Blooms are many pink flowers.

Somewhat variable in appearance, and the species is divided into a few subspecies; some authors also recognize varieties within subspecies.

The Wenatchee Mountains Checkermallow (*Sidalcea oregana* var. *calva*), is found mainly in the Wenatchee Mountains of Washington. *Sidalcea oregana* ssp. *eximia* (Coast Checkerbloom), is known from ten occurrences in northern California, and ssp. *valida* (Kenwood Marsh Checkerbloom), known only from two marshes in Sonoma County, California. These species are classed as endangered.



Photo credit: USFW

[➡ More ➡](#)

PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea pedata (Birdfoot Checkerbloom)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

"Sidalcea pedata, also called Bird-footed Checkerbloom or Big Bear Checkerbloom, is a rare and endangered perennial herb of California.

"However, it is an endemic species of California and only occurs in few places in the San Bernardino Mountains, primarily at Bear Valley, Bluff Lake. It grows at 1500–2100 m elevation in moist meadows to open woodlands and the unique pebble plain habitat of the area.



"Since Big Bear Valley is a resort destination, the birdfoot checkerbloom is threatened by development, vehicles and grazing.

Sidalcea pedata grows from a fleshy taproot and can be as tall as 40 cm. It has few stems, which are erect and somewhat stellate at the base. The leaves are basal and are ternately divided into 5–7 parts. The flowers are about 1.3 cm long and are a deep rose-pink with darker veins. They are arranged in a spike-like raceme, with the upper flowers closely crowded together.

"It blooms between May and July."

Photo credit: Scott Eliason,
US Forest Service

[⇒ More ⇒](#)

PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea ranunculacea (Marsh Checkerbloom)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"Sidalcea ranunculacea is a species of flowering plant in the mallow family known by the common name marsh checkerbloom. It is endemic to California, where it is known only from the southernmost Sierra Nevada foothills, especially the Greenhorn Mountains.

"It grows in moist areas, such as wet meadows and streambanks. It is a rhizomatous perennial herb reaching up to half a meter tall. It is coated in hairs, the lower ones becoming bristly. The fleshy lobed leaf blades also have hairs and bristles.

"The inflorescence is a dense, spikelike cluster or series of clusters of flowers. Each flower has five pink to purple petals up to 1.5 centimeters long."



PhotoS credit: Jerry Oldenettel

[⇒ More ⇒](#)

PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea reptans (Sierra Checkerbloom)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"Sidalcea reptans is a species of flowering plant in the mallow family known by the common name Sierra checkerbloom. It is endemic to California, where it can be found throughout the Sierra Nevada, especially the central peaks of the range.

"It grows in moist and dry habitat types in the mountains, including meadows and forests.

It is a rhizomatous perennial herb reaching up to half a meter tall, lower portions of the stem sometimes rooting when in contact with moist substrate. It is coated in long, bristly hairs. The leaf blades are also bristly. They vary in shape, the lower ones barely lobed and borne on long petioles, and the higher ones often deeply cut into lobes.

"The inflorescence is a long, open series of flowers with pink to lavender petals up to 2 centimeters in length."

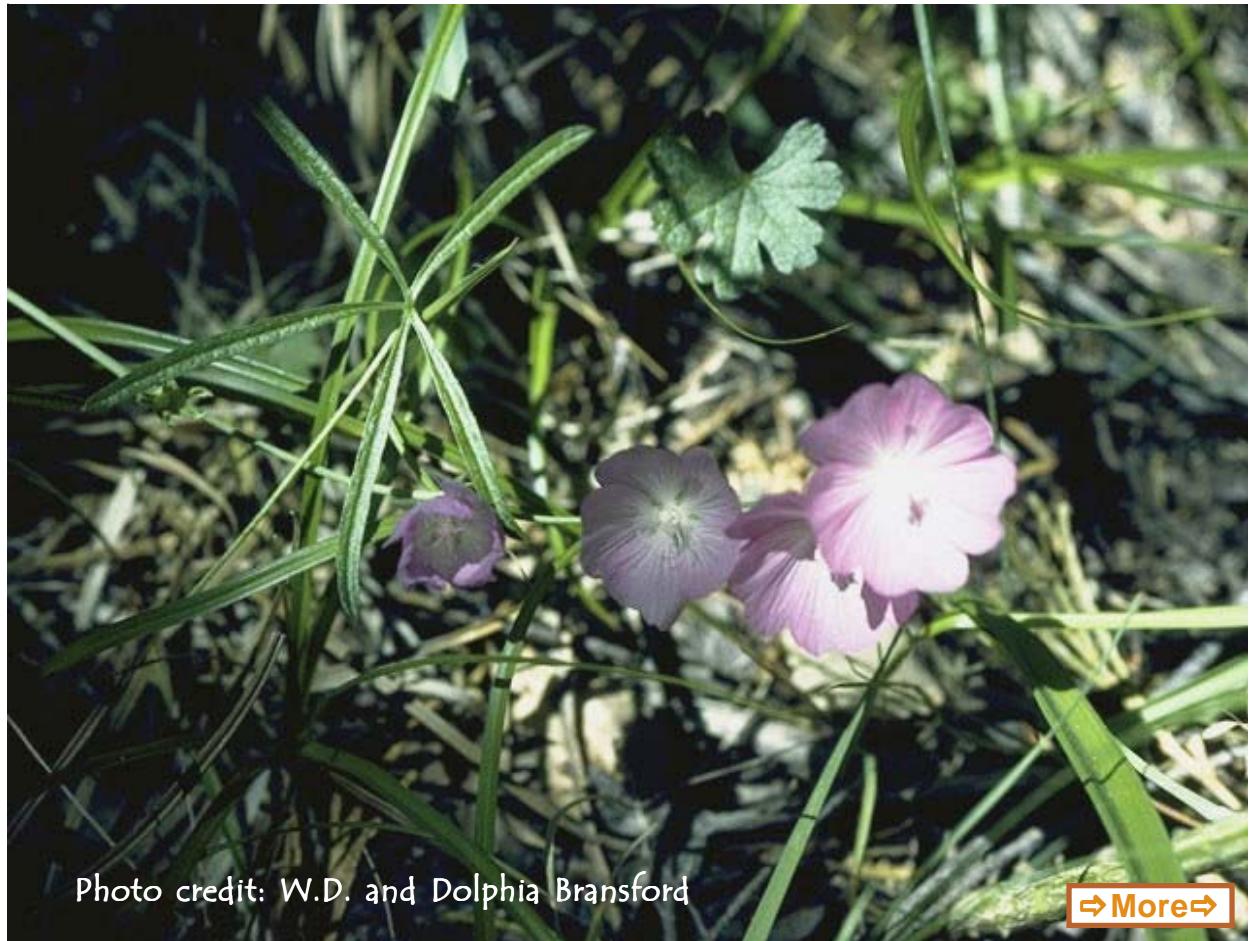
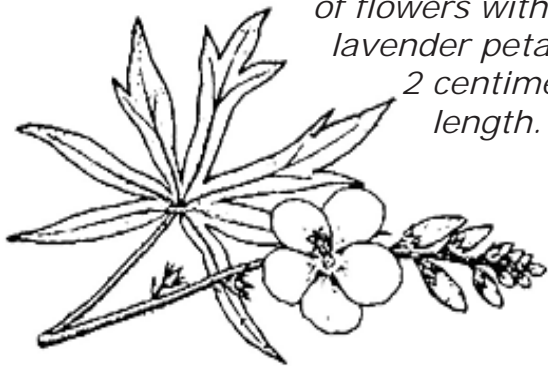


Photo credit: W.D. and Dolphia Bransford

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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea robusta (Butte County Checkerbloom)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"Sidalcea robusta is an uncommon species of flowering plant in the mallow family known by the common name Butte County checkerbloom."

"This rhizomatous perennial herb produces a sturdy stem which can exceed a meter in height. Sidalcea robusta is mostly hairless above with sparse hairs near the base. The leaves are divided into pointed lobes and have bristly hairs on their upper surfaces. The inflorescence is a long, open series of flowers which can be 30 to 40 centimeters in length."

"The flowers each have five pale pink petals up to 3.5 centimeters long that turn yellowish as they dry."

"Sidalcea robusta is endemic to Butte County, California, where it is known from about 20 occurrences, including some near Chico. It is a resident of chaparral and woodland habitat in mountain foothills."



Photo credit: Friends Of Bidwell Park



PNWCheckerblooms, con't

Sidalcea sparsifolia

aka *S. malviflora* ssp. *sparsifolia*

or *S. malviflora* ssp. *sparsifolia* var. *sparsifolia*

or *S. malviflora* ssp. *sparsifolia* var. *stellata*

or *S. malviflora* ssp. *sparsifolia* var. *uliginosa* (Dwarf Checkerbloom)

This species follow the common description of most checkerblooms with an erect development, a bare stem in the lower part, and broadens toward the crown. One of the larger sidalceas, approximately 17 m in height; in the summer



it assumes a red colouring. True perennials, these plants lose their leaves during the autumn of the year. The dwarf checkerbloom develops in an erect manner.

Grow in a bright place, with direct sunlight. If the climate is particularly windy, stakes may be used until the plant develops its mature form. Some younger specimens might have difficulty in intense cold and wind. The dwarf checkerbloom should be grown outdoors; it can bear very harsh temperatures without any problems, even many degrees below zero at full growth.

A mulch of humus or composted plant material can be done at the beginning of the spring or of autumn.

Photo credit: Sedges Have Edges

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PNWCheckerblooms, con't

***Sidalcea virgata* (Rose Checker Mallow, Wild Hollyhock, Dwarf Checkerbloom, Cusick's Checkermallow)**

Rose Checker Mallow is native to Washington and Oregon's Willamette Valley along roadsides, moist meadows, and hillsides, USDA zone 8. This Wild Hollyhock has loose racemes of rose pink to magenta flowers in Springtime.

It will spread by rhizomes, which develop into clumps over time.



The plant will reach 1-2' tall with palmate lower leaves and deeply cut foliage along the stem.

This is a wonderful wildflower for mild moist areas and will create an inviting habitat for butterflies.

The *sidalcea* below left shows the colorful partnership that checkermallows often forms with native perennial *Delphinium menziesii* (Western Larkspur).



Birds vs. windows

Maintaining peace in the wildlife garden

Experts believe that over 100 million birds die each year in collisions with buildings and skyscrapers in the United States and Canada alone. Birds of many types have been killed by flying into glass windows and doors. According to the Audubon Society, collisions with glass may be a major source of avian mortality that's widely overlooked.



Doves enjoying a sunny central Oregon afternoon.
Photo courtesy of Nona

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "One of the greatest hazards to birds is plate glass, with windows in homes and offices killing as many as one billion birds each year. Glass is invisible to birds, and if it reflects the images of trees, bushes, the sky or other natural habitat, a bird may fly directly into it."

Bird strikes often follow a pattern – the same windows on a house or building may be repeatedly struck, while others are never struck. Observation from a bird's point of view and attention to bird attractions such as water, food and cover, will help identify the small percentage of glass area in your home which causes the most problem. Especially important to note are the season, time of day and atmospheric conditions. Strikes may occur only at night or early morning or in other situations of commonality.



[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Birds vs. windows, continued

Aggressive behavior may be seen in the breeding season. If a bird sees its own reflection as another bird, it may try to drive it away. Many birds are competitive during breeding times and will repeatedly 'attack' their reflection in a window.

When a territorial robin notices its reflection in a window or mirror within its territory, it gets agitated, raises the feathers on its head, and assumes a dominant posture. Sometimes this will make any other robins leave the territory immediately. But instead of flying away, the reflected robin seems to get equally agitated, raises its head feathers, and gets in an equally dominant posture. The first time this happens, the real robin often just leaves. If it's a male, he often goes to his favorite song perch and starts singing. When he doesn't hear a responding song, he's more certain that this is really his own territory. If it's a female, she goes back to her daily activities and stays on the lookout for other females.

If the robin sees that reflection *again*, it gets more and more agitated — but so does the reflection! Finally, the robin flies in to chase the other robin away. But the reflection flies in exactly the same way, and the robin hits the glass. And the reflected robin **STILL** doesn't leave! No matter how aggressive the real robin gets, and no matter how hard it fights, the reflection matches it. The real robin becomes more and more determined to drive that upstart away!

Robins are not stupid. But during the nesting season their territorial urge is even more powerful than their urge to eat or sleep. Defending their territory is the way they ensure there will be enough food for their babies. No wonder they work so hard!

But the whole time the robin is fighting its reflection, it is **NOT** doing the things that will really ensure its babies' survival. It needs to eat, sing (if it's a male), build a nest, incubate eggs (if it's a female), and chase **REAL** robins away. How can we help it stop this behavior?



Western Tanager. Photo credit: Jim Conrad

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Birds vs. windows, continued

The only way to do this is to break the reflection. Fortunately, we don't have to break the window to do this! The simplest way, if it's a small window or mirror, is to simply tape some paper or cardboard over it, on the outside.



Red Shafted Flicker. Photo courtesy of Nona

several variables which account for bird strikes, one of the primary causes is reflection. Birds become confused or startled and rush to cover or open sky; unfortunately they often mistake a reflection for the real thing. Birds may strike windows because they see a reflection of clouds, sky or trees which give the mistaken impression that they are flying into open air.

Usually the paper needs to be up for three or four days until the robin gets busy enough with other things to forget about the "intruder." If it's a big patio window, it's harder to cover the whole thing. One technique that sometimes works is to paper over the area where the robin has been actually hitting, and then hang shiny helium balloons nearby. Most birds are frightened of helium balloons, probably because they act so different from things birds encounter in nature: they seem to fall up!

A large number of strikes typically occur at night during spring and fall migrations, when indoor lights appear to lure birds into deadly collisions. Unlike the reflection syndrome, in this scenario the bird is unaware there is a barrier (the window) between himself and inside the home. He thinks he can swoop into the room where he sees the lights only to come smack up against the invisible window.

Reflectivity--what you can do to fix

Although there are



⇒ More ⇒

Birds vs. windows, continued

Try some of these ideas to make your windows safer:

Preventative actions

Move houseplants away from the glass, especially those in hangers, and close curtains over windows and sliding glass doors whenever possible.

If you're a bird watcher and feed birds, consider moving your feeders further away from windows. Relocate feeders and other attractants. Without changing your window, you might be able to reduce mortality, at least by resident birds, by moving your feeders and birdbaths to new locations. Bird strikes are significantly more likely to be fatal when they take off far enough away from the window to be flying at top speed when they hit. When feeders are placed within 3 feet of window glass, or affixed to the window or frame, birds may still fly into it, but seldom with enough force to injure themselves. Feeders and water should be either within 2 or 3 feet of a window so that birds come in at a slower speed and are less likely to get hurt; or placed further out (10 feet or more) so birds have more room to maneuver.



A vase of bright flowers or flowering plants indoors near a window may attract hummingbirds which tend to approach quickly and hover before dipping into the flower. If the flower is right against the window, hummers will usually stop before hitting the window. But if the flower is set back a bit (6" – 12" from the window) it may appear to be reachable.

Avoid visual paths to sky and greenery. Bright windows on the opposite wall from your picture window may give the illusion of an open path to the other side. Closing a window shade or a door between rooms can sometimes solve this situation.

On new construction or when putting in new windows, consider double-hung windows, which have the screen on the outside of the glass. Alternatively, you might be able to ask your contractor to construct the window so the glass angles downward and doesn't reflect sky and trees. Unfortunately, in some cases this may void the warranty on the window.

House Finch

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Birds vs. windows, continued

Items to hang indoors or out

Indoor window blinds, either horizontal or vertical—maybe adjust more open or closed.

Sheer curtains (I call them 'glass curtains') can reduce reflection outside but allow indoor viewing.

Awnings or blinds on the outside of the window may also work.

Old cd's—hanging some from fishing lines outside windows or incorporate into a wind chime turn in the breeze and send reflections about.

Mardi Gras" beads—hang down the window, at least two strands, with a decorative ornament on the bottom.

Twisty ribbon from Christmas gifts hung on the windows in spring.

Bird Tape—American Bird Conservancy now sells this to the public. Tests show it can significantly reduce collisions with glass windows and doors.



Spiders sometimes build large webs outside windows creating natural deterrent.

Netting (sometimes called "Bird Block") is sold to protect fruit from birds and deer. Stretched taught over the window, it cushions the hit and can be see a little by the birds.

Deer net hung over the windows a few inches away is effective. A 1/4" wooden dowel threaded through the top and bottom of the net and hung from eye hooks screwed into the top of the window frame or siding holds the net neatly in place.

Hang sections of 1/2-inch square bird netting from hooks placed in the soffit overhang. Plastic curtain hooks are attached along the bottom for just enough weight to keep the net in place. Leave space between the net and the windows.

Pine Grosbeak. Photo credit: Wikipedia users
72426950scott and Papa Lima Whiskey

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Birds vs. windows, continued

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology installed crop netting—the kind used to keep birds away from fruit trees—in front of a large picture window next to our bird-feeding garden. The result? No more dead and injured birds. Small-mesh netting is best—ours is 5/8" (1.6 cm) in diameter—so if birds do fly into it they won't get their heads or bodies entangled but will bounce off unharmed. You can mount the netting on a frame, such as a storm-window frame, for easy installation and removal.

Place a wooden grille or vertical tape strips on the outside of the glass, set not more than 10 cm apart, or mark the glass with soap or permanent paint in the same way. (The inks in most markers usually degrade in sunlight very quickly.)

Install external shutters and keep them closed when you're not in the room or taking advantage of the light or view. (These can be huge energy savers, too!)

Install external sun shades or awnings on windows, to block the reflection of sunlight.

Smaller birds will avoid hawks which fly low into cover, often near feeders, and prey on small birds. A "fake" hawk can be placed on your window or glass door. Hang this on the outside of the window, using a suction cup with a bit of clear fishing line to hang the silhouette so it swings in the wind, emulating a real hawk.

Plastic owls are not usually effective over time, as the figure never moves and birds quickly learn to ignore it.

Sun ornament, crystal or other objects help birds know they can't fly through.

Robin's nest by Howard Jones

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Birds vs. windows, continued

Things to stick on the window

Adhesive-backed cut-out silhouettes of hawks or falcons in flight to attach to the outer surfaces of reflective glass are sold in virtually all stores catering to naturalists and birders. In fact, any shape will work. The non-reflective cutout helps the birds focus on the glass and, knowing it's there, avoid it.



American Robin. Photo credit: Kristofvt

These are only effective when spaced very closely—no more than the span of a large hand between them. The design of a decal or sticker is immaterial. Hawk silhouette stickers are probably no more or less useful than any others. Some stickers sold in bird-feeding stores are colored in the ultraviolet spectrum—these appear transparent to our eyes but are visible to birds. Remember: placing just one or two window stickers on a large window is not going to prevent collisions—they must cover most of the glass with the spaces between too narrow for birds to fly through.

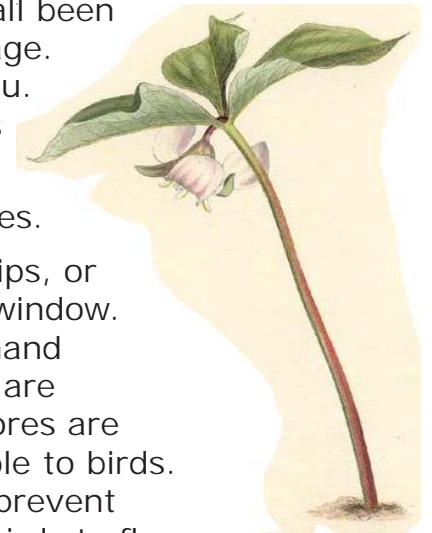
Brightly colored sticky notes randomly stuck on the inside of the window are inexpensive, and easily removed once the bird stops the behavior—generally in less than an hour.

Consider soaping your windows for a couple of weeks during the nesting season.

One of our website visitors, James from Ontario, said that he uses a full size 8.5 x 11 photo of a persons face. "I've tried changing the face. I tried a male and female face. I tried putting the picture on the back of a chair in the room rather than on the window. All have worked. So far the faces I have tried have all been in colour and they have filled the 8.5x11 page. James said. Give it a try, it may work for you. Let us know if you try this and how it works out for you.

Window decals may prevent some bird strikes.

Put decals, stickers, sun catchers, mylar strips, or other objects on the outside surface of the window.



[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Birds vs. windows, continued

Window tints may be another solution. You can see out, the birds can't see in very well. An added benefit: these may also block cancer-causing UVA rays, which come right through an untinted window.

Not always very nice, but if it is a real problem you could simply not clean the window that they strike for a while.

Objects inside the window

Barbie dolls—someone suggested putting these on the inside window sill. Use your own opinion about this, if you have some Barbies laying around.



Crystals hung from long fishing line in the windows so the light sparkles and reflects, and will also cast rainbows in our interior.

Put something inside against the window like a box or a piece of paper to remove the reflection.

Some say a cat in the window also works.

Flicker. Photo credit: Nona



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Birds vs. windows, continued

Predatory danger

The National Audubon Society says 100 million birds a year fall prey to the domesticated cat (and feral ones, too! Cats are usually attracted to the presence of birds around feeders, and the bird must have space to escape in any direction. If feeders are placed 3' – 10' from the window, birds sometimes fly into windows thinking there is safety.

Water bath—place away from low bushes where cats can hide.

Keeping squirrels out of bird feeders can be tricky. One idea I heard recently was to grease a baffle. It was said that squirrels leaping on the greased baffle skidded off at high speeds. However, the squirrels found the grease to be delectable so they chewed up the baffle.

In an online dialog on enature's blog (<http://wild.enature.com/blog/what-should-you-do-when-birds-collide-with-a-window>), one gardener reported that last year a Cooper's hawk learned how to spook her feeder birds into the kitchen window. She gave this opinion of predator/prey:

"Although it is heartbreaking to watch, we all must keep things in perspective. In nature, survival means outwitting your predator or your prey. The hawks need to eat just as much as the cardinals do. Why do we think that it is OK to provide an easy meal for one but not the other? Instead of fretting about it, admire the beauty and intelligence of the hawk!"

Cat stalking a butterfly



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Birds vs. windows, continued

Rescue

Often when a bird collides with a window, it is just stunned and will be flying again within an hour, after regaining its senses. You may help by carefully picking up the bird and placing in a safe area away from predatory danger. If weather is cold, a make-shift sanctuary can be fashioned using a well-ventilated box in a warm area while the bird recovers. Old warnings of never touching wild birds with bare hands are not true. In a call to a local Audubon source, I learned that transferring human scent to a wounded bird is not an issue.

Bird in the house? This can happen if doors or windows without screens are left open. A recommended action is to close all doors and windows and draw the blinds or drapes so the bird sees they are not a way out. Then stand quietly until the bird lands. Gently toss a towel or other cloth over the bird, pick up bird, towel and all and take them outside. Put the towel down, uncover the bird and wait until it flies away.

If a squirrel gets in your house, the towel trick will probably work for that as well.

How to Help a Window Collision Victim

If you find a bird dazed from a window collision, examine it for external injuries. If the wings are both held properly, neither dangling, and the eyes seem normal, see if it can perch in a branch unassisted. If so, leave it to recover on its own.

Cooper's Hawk



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Birds vs. windows, continued

If the bird has a noticeable injury, get it to a rehabber as quickly as possible. Broken bones usually need proper attention within minutes or hours to heal properly without surgery. Use this online directory to find a rehabber near you.

Meanwhile, place it in a dark container such as a shoebox, and leave it somewhere quiet, out of reach of pets and other predators, for 15-minutes. If the weather is extremely cold, you may need to take it inside, but don't keep the



bird too warm. Do not try to give it food and water, and resist handling it. The darkness will calm the bird while it revives, which should occur within a few minutes unless it is seriously injured. But do not open the box indoors to check on it! Take it outside every 15-minutes or so and open the box—if it flies off, that's that! If it doesn't recover in a couple of hours, take it to a wildlife rehabilitator. Remember that, technically, it is illegal to handle a migratory bird without a permit. Few state or federal officials are concerned with keeping a bird for a few minutes or hours in the process of bringing it to a licensed facility, but in the United States it is absolutely illegal, as well as cruel and unethical, to keep in captivity any bird protected by the Migratory Bird Act.

Cedar Waxwing fledgling. Photo credit: Fat Finch (<http://fatfinch.wordpress.com/tag/baby-bird-rescue/>)

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Birds vs. windows, continued

Shared experiences

An owl who, each evening, came to perch outside a large window and occasionally striking it. The attraction? An aquarium kept on a counter near the window. The fish tank lights created a most attractive scene to the owl.

A cardinal had his sights set on a patio door, continuously hammering it for hours. It seems Cardinals are territorial and this one viewed his reflection as another cardinal. It was reported that the *cats* were fascinated by the show.

In another neighborhood, a young robin perched on a windowsill. Its parent kept bringing a worm for the baby but on approaching the window, it would fly away. This occurred 20 or more times. The parent thought its reflection was another bird approaching the baby. Finally the youngster flew to a tree nearby and the parent then fed it successfully.

I had a sparrow who fell in love with its reflection in the side-view mirror of a small pickup truck I parked in the driveway. Day after day, this little bird perched by the mirror preening and dancing and pooping on the side of my truck. Should you find yourself in a similar situation, you might consider keeping the mirrors covered when parked.



Cardinal male. Photo from US Fish and Wildlife Service

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Birds vs. windows, continued

Our neighbor had a bird house on a fence in his back yard, the blue birds always made it their home every spring. Last Spring two blue birds dove at his window's intentionally for a few days. He said it was the strangest thing to see. He inspected the bird house to find a rat in it. After he removed the rat and cleaned the bird house the blue birds made their nest once again!

I have another story regarding birds hitting windows. For four years we had a pair of bluebirds I named Bart and Blossom. Blossom knew I was a protector of sorts and every morning she would "knock" on our living room window until I got up. She hit the window with the side of her head and it left an oily smudge as if I'd rubbed it with a cotton ball soaked in baby oil. As soon as she saw me she'd fly off. Sometimes she had a special request, like when there was snow on her house—she hated that—and I'd go brush it off. Blossom was a very special bluebird and I miss her terribly.

You haven't seen anything till you've seen a full grown turkey fly into your window. We thought it was going to join us in our living room, but luckily for us and the turkey he didn't break the glass or hurt himself.

On a spring afternoon, I was sitting on a bench right beside the beautiful glass doors of the Justice Building in Salem, Oregon. It's next door to the park surrounding the state capitol building. A squirrel decided to join me. He scampered up the steps, stopped a moment to say "hello," then ran headlong into the door. I don't know what he had in mind, but he shook himself and then took off toward the park. He seemed to be ok but I bet he had a headache.

For more information:

Feather Friendly Technologies. www.featherfriendly.org

American Bird Conservancy, www.abcbirds.org

Fatal Light Awareness Program, www.flap.org/



Look closely at this mom and pups. That's a baby western grey squirrel rescued and successfully adopted by this generous mom. See the whole story at <http://passionateaboutpets.wordpress.com/2012/02/26/finnegan-the-squirrel/>



This & That

Notes from Jennifer

I so enjoy Rob Sandelin's musings on his walks in the woods. His words paint such pictures in my mind, it takes but a moment and the blink of an eye to transport me there. I envision myself a wee elf riding on his shoulder, a magical experience!

In the latest chapter, he sites a most interesting medical theory:

"A recent study showed that spending 1 hour a day outdoors cured more than two thirds of people who suffered from the depression of seasonal affective disorder."

Sounds like a very reasonable concept. From my own experience, I know it to be true. I fully agree with Mr. Sandelin's advice:

"So suit up and get out there, dance with the chickadees, admire the mist as it winds through the cedar branches and breathe in some of the fine moist fall air. Nature will do you good."

Until next time,

Jennifer

My friend, Nona, took this snapshot of reflections on her pond. Such a peaceful scene.

