

Volume 12, Issue 4-2015; Oct - Dec 2015

NW Native Plant Journal

A Quarterly Web Magazine

Oregon autumn:

A picture book for rainy days, p13

On my bookshelf, p10

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The Wild Garden: Hansen's Northwest
Native Plant Database
www.nwplants.com
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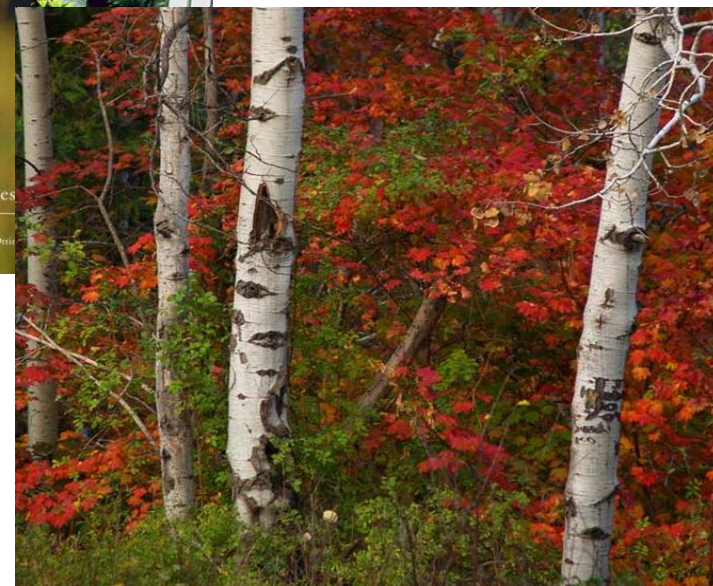
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About this Journal

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.).



Vine Maple, *Acer circinatum*
Photo credit: Corey Lewellen



On the Cover:

Vine Maple *Acer circinatum*

Seems impossible that a plant that's been growing here in the Pacific northwest since as far back as can be known is still far more beautiful than any strain derived from this small native tree. To be sure, the newcomers like Pacific Fire, Sunglow or Sunny Sister do have some charm. But I think the original has them all beat.

There is something uncommonly delicious about the fact that an old fashioned tree growing wild all over the place holds its own over one carefully crafted from horticulturist's dreams.

Vine Maple, *Acer circinatum*: still the best for fall color, for hardiness, for ever-changing kaleidoscopish landscape beauty.

Photo by Nona



Staying in touch

The Wild Garden is on Facebook



Want to know when the next 'Journal' is coming out? Follow The Wild Garden on Facebook! Share comments, ask questions, stay in touch. Get the latest news about our website (www.nwplants.com).

Send me an email anytime: nwplants@gmail.com



So glad you asked!

Readers speak up: Questions, suggestions, pats and pans

Big Leaf Maple, *Acer macrophyllum*

I was told, incorrectly, big leaf maple were red maple. They seem to be similar in all respects, except the "red" has an odd root capability. The tap root will travel down to find the water it needs. Can you inform me as to the depth the "big" will develop roots to locate the water needed. It seems to be abundant, located in hydric soil? -- Ford



Great question! I had a very mature Big Leaf in my backyard which ended at Shelton's Ditch. That old boy's roots were well anchored on both uphill and down. The creek at that point had eroded about 20 feet down from ground level and the maple's roots went clear down and edged the creek. That's my own experience. Here's what I gleaned from the internet:

The federal database says of this tree: "Bigleaf maple is deep-rooted; hence, it is ranked low in susceptibility to windthrow."

Puget Sound Shorlines (<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/pugetsound/species/maple.html>) says: "A large, fast-growing tree, bigleaf maple needs plenty of space to grow. It thrives in poor gravelly soils and makes a massive root system on slopes, which makes it excellent for erosion control."

The Sound Native Plants website says this of the tree: "deciduous large tree to 110 feet; deep, wide spreading roots, excellent pioneer species tolerates poor soil, grows as much as a few feet a year; deep roots stabilize steep slopes, stream ravines, marine shorelines; re-sprouts vigorously from cut stumps."

Oregon State's studies at the Oregon Wood Innovation Center, <http://owic.oregonstate.edu/bigleaf-maple-acer-macrophyllum> has this under size, longevity and form: "Mature bigleaf maple trees range from 50 to 100 ft in height (160 ft maximum) and 12 to 36 in. in DBH (133 in. maximum). Moderately long-lived; some may reach 300 years of age. Height growth becomes negligible after 50 to 70 years. In forest stands, maples often develop clear (50 to 70 percent of total height), well-formed stems with narrow crowns. Open-grown trees have broad, rounded crowns on short, branching boles. The root system of bigleaf maple is shallow and spreading on wet or shallow soils."



Wildlife Corner

Out back with the animals



When cleaning out the kitchen cabinets the other day, I came across a gently used jar of peanut butter. It looked ok, not rancid or spoiled, but it had been sitting on the shelf since spring. I rarely eat the stuff and nobody else wanted it, so rather than throw it out I thought it would be fun to smear it on pine cones, roll them in seeds and hang them out for the wild things in a after they cured for a couple of months.

Next day Chico, Groucho and Zeppo (three of the squirrels who live in the Doug Fir--don't know where Harpo was, she's been hanging out with the squirrels behind Bill and Tina's house, hmmm) were taking turns standing on their heads in the old pot where I stuck the peanut butter. The tail of the guy in the pot was waving while the two on the

rail were tap dancing while they waited their chance.

Jeff, my neighbor, stopped by and suggested we put the treasure out in the cafe with the other food stuffs. Good idea! I left him to it. He has a great imagination and a lively sense of humor, so I was not really surprised at when he placed the peanut butter jar around the dried corn. It worked beautifully, keeping the butter clean and rendering the food more accessible. Right away Zeppo here stuck his paw in and pulled out a fist full of nutty goodness.

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Wildlife Corner, cont'd



Providing food naturally is sometimes a challenge, especially in the winter. My goal is to populate my garden with enough plant life of enough variety that additional food is not required, and put out extra food for treats. I love supplementing the everyday stuff with home-made goodies like this birdhouse that was decorated with seeds of many kinds using natural components gathered from local sources. I want to make a wreath and other things to decorate the back porches. I'll take some photos to post on our Facebook page.

The photo on this page shows a birdhouse that was completely covered with different kinds of seed. One of my daughters sent to her grandmother. We kept it indoors to admire for a month or so, then put it out for the wild things where we could enjoy all the show. Believe me, it was grand.

This squirrel came up to sample!

I'll put some feeders you can make yourself up on Facebook (The Wild garden) and on our home page (www.nwplants.com). Check them out.



Garden chores to do now

Pearly bits of wisdom & just plain common sense

Really, there are just a few things that should be done before inclement weather steals the garden from us. And if you just cannot swing it, let it go. Even a whole winter on its own will not likely kill the garden and you may get a happy surprise come springtime. After all, the birds and squirrels have been busily putting their own peculiar stamp on your little Eden. Flowers may come up where they've never been before. Your favorite bulbs may be newly adorning the old pine in your neighbor's yard.

However, if you can manage a regular old fashioned fall cleanup, gather friends and family, some appropriate implements of construction, and get 'er done! Very helpful items, depending on your circumstances, are:

- gloves
- hats
- scarves
- rakes
- shovels
- clippers
- loppers
- pliers
- gardening scissors
- big ground cloths, wheelbarrows, etc. (to carry stuff to compost pile)
- containers for seeds to save
- baskets for attractive gleanings (for decorations)

Cut back anything that may get wind-whipped, snow crushed or stepped on, or that cannot live though the winters wherever you are. (And, if you don't mind my asking, what were you thinking when you planted tropicals in freezing zones? It's personal preference I suppose, but a decision such as that must be declared with full knowledge.)

Don't be too perfect with your cleanup. Birds especially will thank you for allowing some jetsam and flotsam they can nibble on over the winter.

That's about it. Then curl up with your favorite blankie and dream of springs to come.



Books of a botanical nature

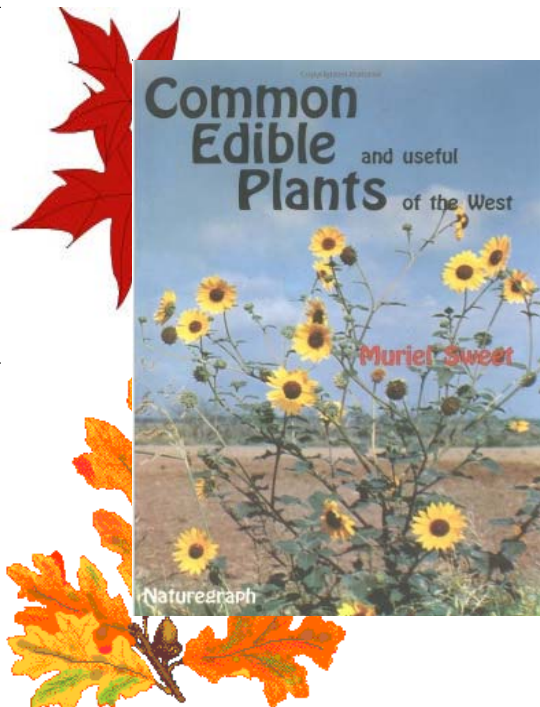


On my bookshelf

When winter comes to call, a gardener can spend hours perusing what others have thought important enough to write a book about it. The import is purely a personal call--you may dote on dogwood, someone else might have a penchant for ferns. Even if you have no interest whatsoever in gardening, you could enjoy wildflowers as photography subjects.

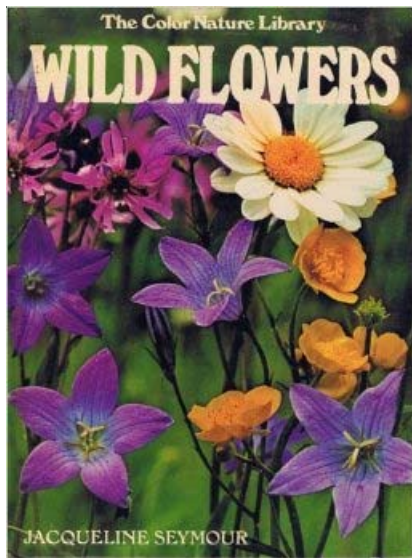
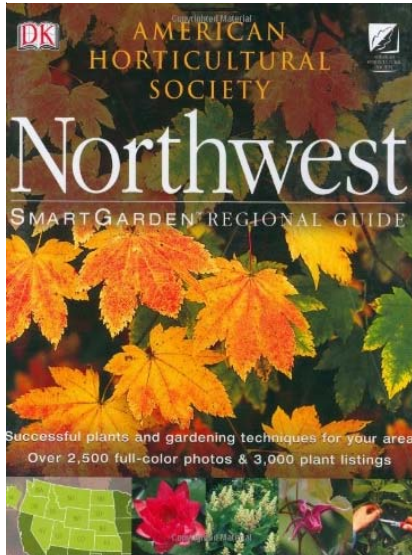
I find inspiration in viewing other folks' gardens, learning new combinations of plants for particular purposes like sunny colorful corners or vines that will pretty up a drab old wire fence. Most every afternoon in the winter, you'll find me curled up in an armchair as I tour gardens around the world.

Thanks to my deep love of plants, especially those native to the Pacific northwest, my library of horticulture is ever growing.



Book-Title	Author(s)
Alaska-Yukon Wild Flowers Guide	Helen A. White
Audubon Book of True Nature Stories	John K. Terres
Back in the Garden with Dulcy	Ted Mahar
Bringing Nature Home	Douglas W. Tallamy
Common Edible and Useful Plants of the West	Muriel Sweet
Earth Medicine	Kenneth Meadows
Eat the Weeds	Ben Charles Harris
Field Guide to Wildflowers	Margaret McKenny & Roger Tory Peterson
Flower Gardening Secrets	Cynthia Van Hazinga
Flowers: A Golden Guide to Familiar American Wildflowers	Herbert S. Zim Ph.D.
Garden for All Seasons	Editors of Reader's Digest
Gardening With Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest	Arthur Kruckeberg
Gun Dog: Revolutionary Rapid Training Method	Richard A. Wolters & John W. Randolph
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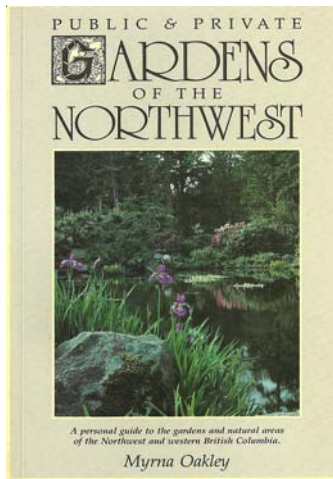
Books of a botanical nature, cont'd



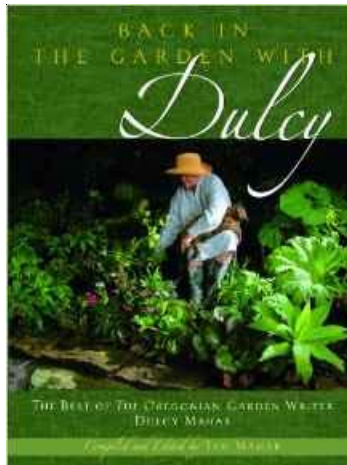
Book-Title	Author(s)
Harvesting the Northern Wild: A Guide to Traditional and Contemporary Uses of Edible Forest Plants of the Northwest Territories	Marilyn Walker
History of Oregon	R.C. Clark & R.H. Down & G.V. Blue
Hortus Second: A Concise Dictionary of Gardening: General Horticulture and Cultivated Plants in North America	L.H. Bailey & Ethel Zoe Bailey
Indian Herbology of North America: The Definitive Guide to Native Medicinal Plants and Their Uses	Alma R. Hutchens
Landscaping With Nature: Using Nature's Designs to Plan Your Yard	Jeff Cox
Native Plants in the Coastal Garden: A Guide for Gardeners in the Pacific Northwest	April Pettinger & Brenda Costanzo
North American Game Fishes	Francesca Raimonde (1895-) La Monte
Northwest Smart Garden Regional Guide	American Horticultural Society
Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast	Pojar & McKinnon
Public & Private Gardens of the Northwest: A Personal Guide to the Gardens and Natural Areas of the Northwest and Western British Columbia Paperback	Myrna Oakley

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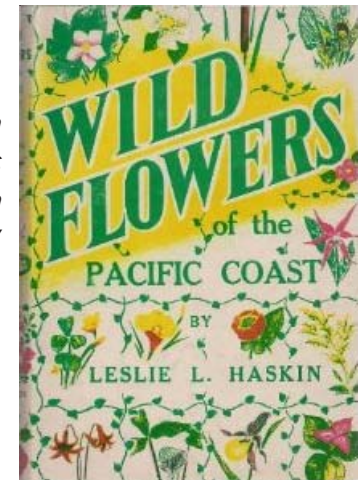
Books of a botanical nature, cont'd



Book-Title	Author(s)
Rare and Endangered Plants of Oregon	Donald C Eastman
Seven Arrows	Hyemeyohsts Storm
Taming Wildflowers	Miriam Goldberger
Taylor's Pocket Guide to Herbs and Edible Flowers	Ann Reilly Consulting Editor
Wild Flowers of the Pacific Coast	Leslie L. Haskin
Wildflowers	Jacqueline Seymore
Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest	Mark Turner & Phyllis Gustafson
Woman's Hardy Garden	Helena Rutherford Ely



Wild Flowers of the Pacific Coast by Leslie L. Haskin remains my most favorite. Published January 1934, it is described: *"A delightful guide to the western wildflower...in which is described 332 flowers and shrubs on Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Central and Northern California and Alaska. 182 full page illustrations."*



Oregon autumn

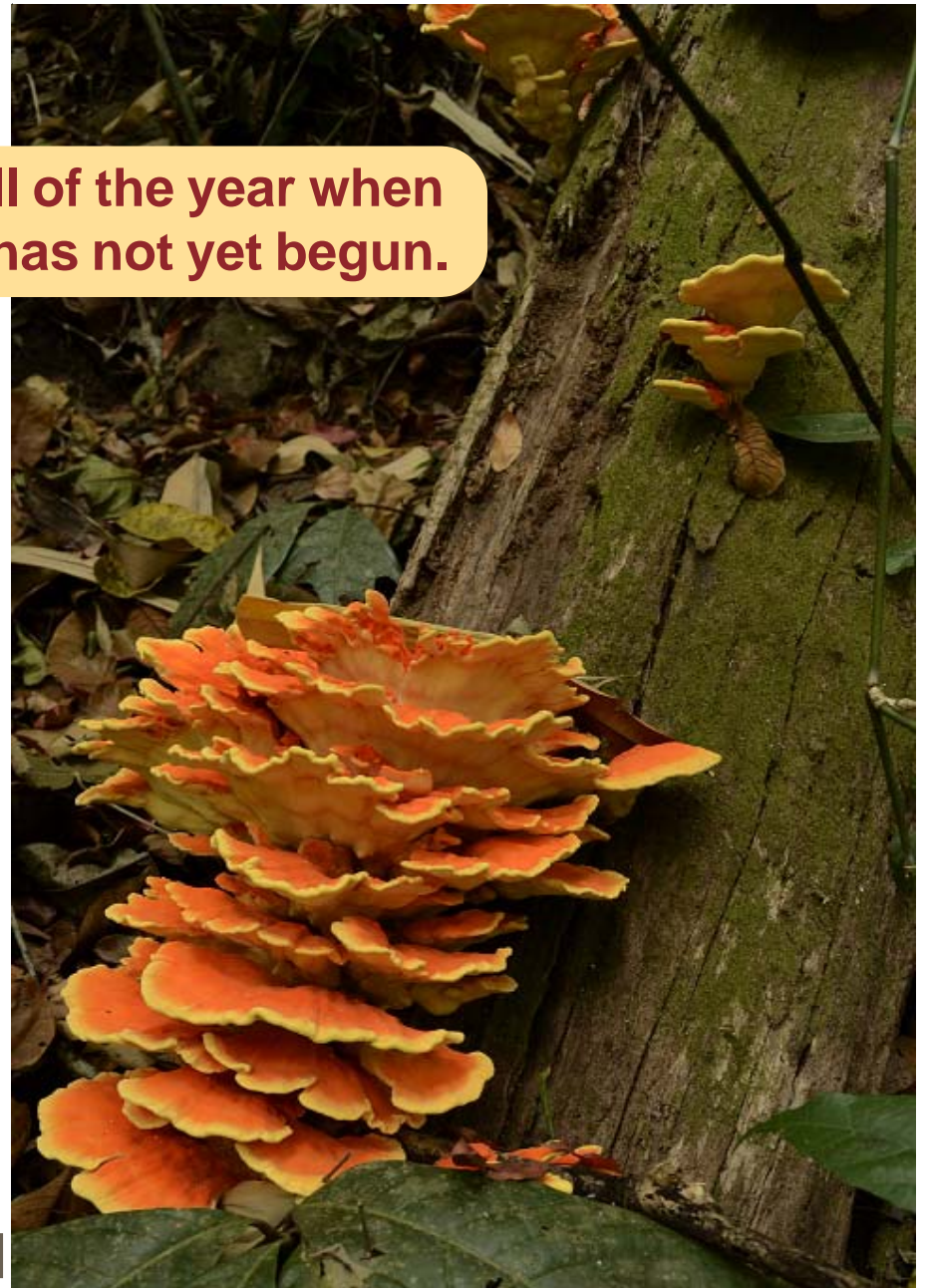
Look with us at what we see in the fall of the year when summer is but a memory and winter has not yet begun.

This section of the Journal is a photograph album entirely populated by pictures taken recently by my dear friend, Nona.

Many an evening she has spend admiring the beauty of this land we so much enjoy, capturing the sights with her digital camera.

All her photographs are untouched, exactly as she recorded them.

The Pacific northwest is an amazing place, a combination of coastal forests, snow-capped mountains, and the high desert of eastern Oregon.



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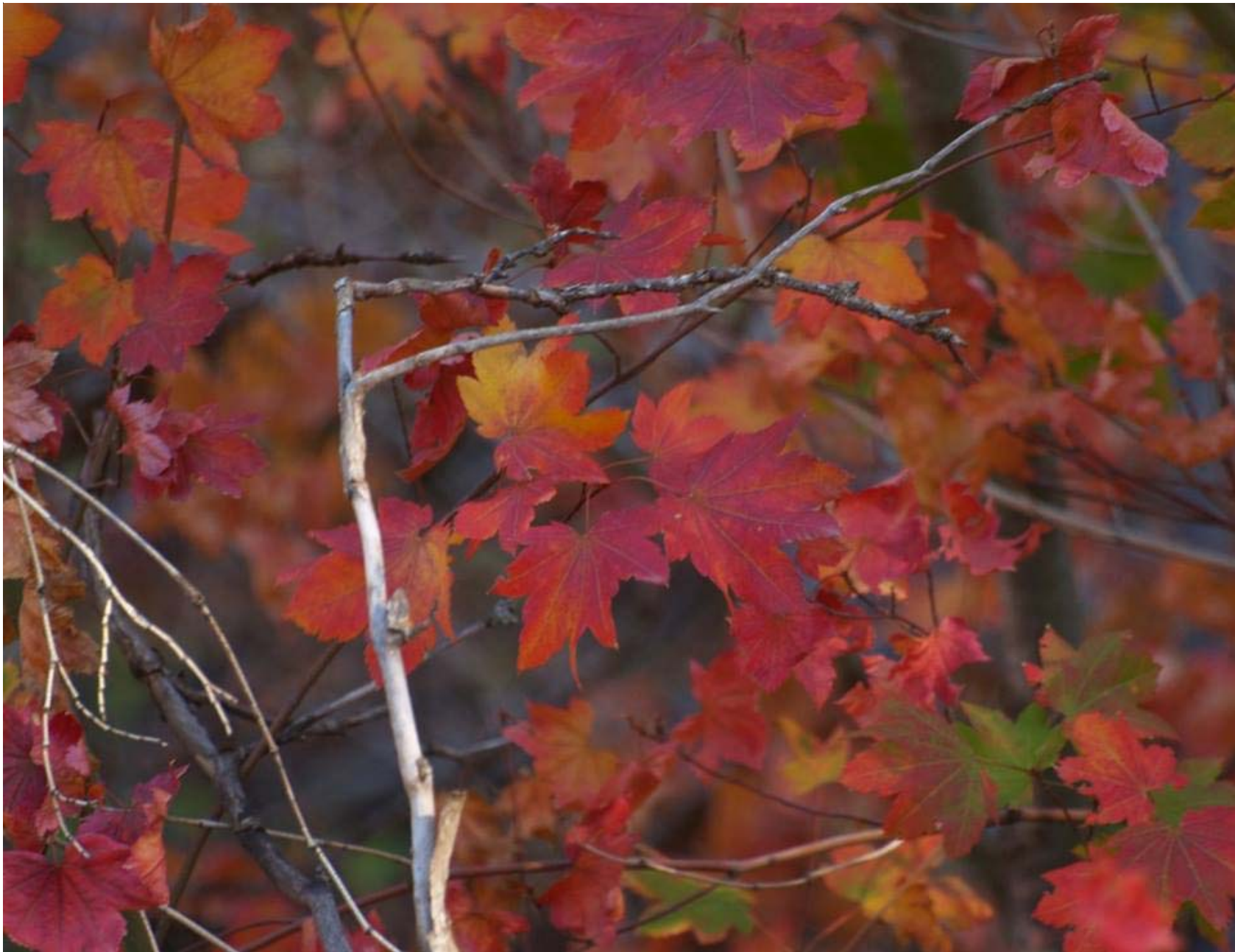


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When The Frost Is On The Punkin

When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock
And you hear the kyouck and gobble of the struttin' turkey cock
And the clackin' of the guineys, and the cluckin' of the hens
And the rooster's hallylooyer as he tiptoes on the fence
O, it's then's the times a feller is a-feelin' at his best
With the risin' sun to greet him from a night of peaceful rest
As he leaves the house, bareheaded, and goes out to feed the stock
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock

They's something kindo' harty-like about the atmusfere
When the heat of summer's over and the coolin' fall is here
Of course we miss the flowers, and the blossums on the trees
And the mumble of the hummin' -birds and buzzin' of the bees
But the air's so appetizin'; and the landscape through the haze
Of a crisp and sunny morning of the airly autumn days
Is a pictur' that no painter has the colorin' to mock
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

The husky, rusty russel of the tossels of the corn,
And the raspin' of the tangled leaves, as golden as the morn;
The stubble in the furries kindo' lonesome-like, but still
A-preachin' sermons to us of the barns they growed to fill;
The strawstack in the medder, and the reaper in the shed;
The hosses in theyr stalls below the clover over-head!
O, it sets my hart a-clickin' like the tickin' of a clock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock!

Photo by Nona

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Then your apples all is gethered, and the ones a feller keeps
Is poured around the celler-floor in red and yeller heaps;
And your cider-makin' 's over, and your wimmern-folks is through
With their mince and apple butter, and theyr souse and sausage,
too!

I don't know how to tell it but ef sich a thing could be
As the Angels wantin' boardin', and they'd call around on me
I'd want to 'commodate 'em all the whole-indurin' flock
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock!

-- James Whitcomb Riley



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Thanksgiving

Let us be thankful--not only because
Since last our universal thanks were told
We have grown greater in the world's applause,
And fortune's newer smiles surpass the old--

But thankful for all things that come as alms
From out the open hand of Providence: --
The winter clouds and storms---the summer calms--
The sleepless dread--the drowse of indolence.

Let us be thankful--thankful for the prayers
Whose gracious answers were long, long delayed,
That they might fall upon us unawares,
And bless us, as in greater need, we prayed.

Let us be thankful for the loyal hand
That love held out in welcome to our own,
When love and only love could understand
The need of touches we had never known.

Let us be thankful for the longing eyes
That gave their secret to us as they wept,
Yet in return found, with a sweet surprise,
Love's touch upon their lids, and, smiling, slept.

And let us, too, be thankful that the tears
Of sorrow have not all been drained away,
That through them still, for all the coming years,
We may look on the dead face of To-day.

-- James Whitcomb Riley

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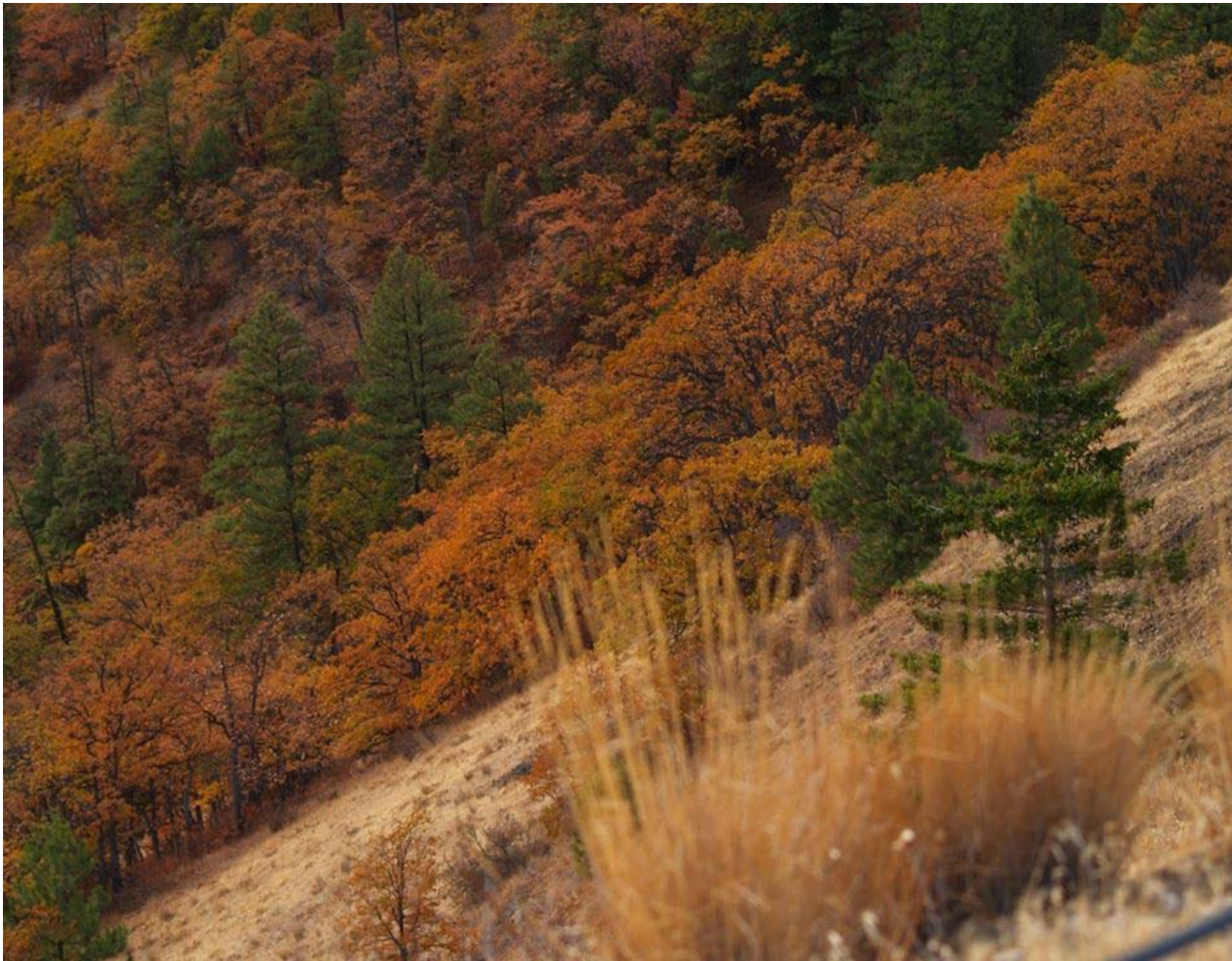


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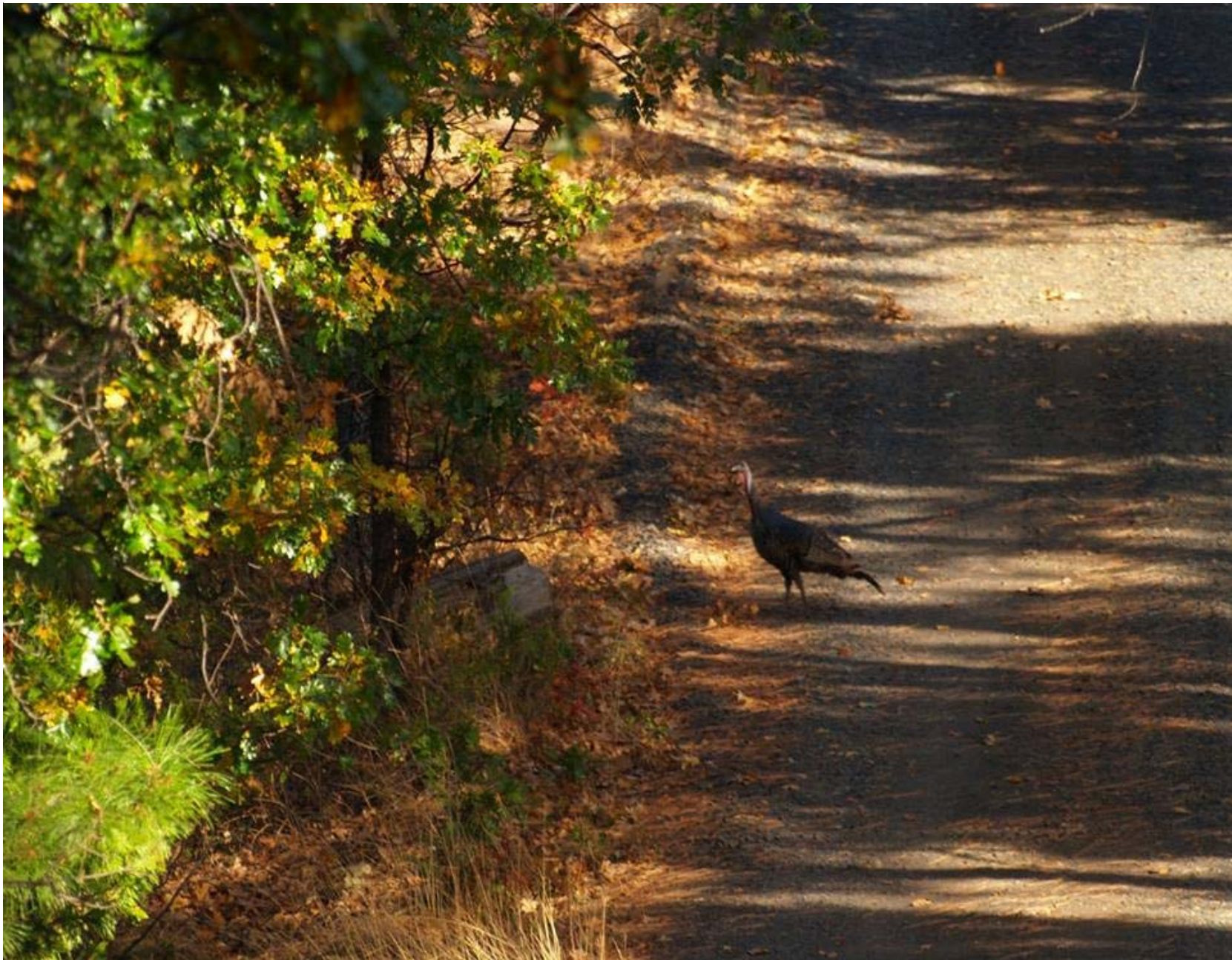


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Wet Weather Talk

It ain't no use to grumble and complain;
It's jest as cheap and easy to rejoice:
When God sorts out the weather and sends rain,
W'y, rain's my choice.

Men giner'ly, to all intents--
Although they're ap' to grumble some--
Puts most their trust in Providence,
And takes things as they come; --
That is, the commonality
Of men that's lived as long as me,
Has watched the world enough to learn
They're not the boss of the concern.

With some, of course, it's different--
I've seed young men that knowed it all,
And didn't like the way things went
On this terrestrial ball!
But, all the same, the rain some way
Rained jest as hard on picnic-day;
Er when they raily wanted it,
It maybe wouldn't rain a bit!

In this existence, dry and wet
Will overtake the best of men--
Some little skift o' clouds'll shet
The sun off now and then;
But maybe, while you're wondern' who
You've fool-like lent your umbrell' to,
And want it--out'll pop the sun,
And you'll be glad you ain't got none!

Photo by Nona

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It aggrivates the farmers, too--
They's too much wet, er too much sun,
Er work, er waiting round to do
Before the plowin''s done;
And maybe, like as not, the wheat,
Jest as it's lookin' hard to beat,
Will ketch the storm--and jest about
The time the corn 's a-jintin' out!

These here cy-clones a-foolin' round--
And back'ard crops--and wind and rain,
And yit the corn that's wallered down
May elbow up again!
They ain't no sense, as I kin see,
In mortals, sich as you and me,
A-faultin' Nature's wise intents,
And lockin' horns with Providence!

It ain't no use to grumble and complain;
It's jest as cheap and easy to rejoice:
When God sorts out the weather and sends rain,
W'y, rain's my choice.

-- James Whitcomb Riley

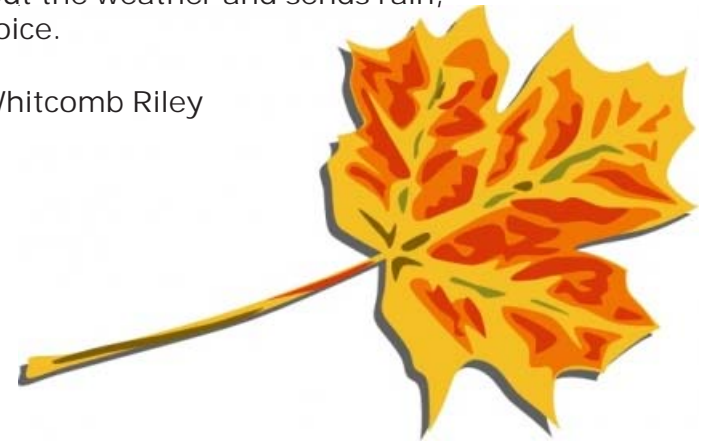


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A Home-Made Fairy Tale

Bud, come here to your uncle a spell,
And I'll tell you something you mustn't tell—
For it's a secret and shore-'nuf true,
And maybe I oughtn't to tell it to you—!
But out in the garden, under the shade
Of the apple-trees, where we romped and played
Till the moon was up, and you thought I'd gone
Fast asleep—, That was all put on!
For I was a-watchin' something queer
Goin' on there in the grass, my dear—!
'Way down deep in it, there I see
A little dude-Fairy who winked at me,
And snapped his fingers, and laughed as low
And fine as the whine of a mus-kee-to!
I kept still— watchin' him closer— and
I noticed a little guitar in his hand,
Which he leant 'ginst a little dead bee— and laid
His cigarette down on a clean grass-blade,
And then climbed up on the shell of a snail—
Carefully dusting his swallowtail—
And pulling up, by a waxed web-thread,
This little guitar, you remember. I said!
And there he trinkled and trilled a tune—,
'My Love, so Fair, Tans in the Moon!'
Till presently, out of the clover-top
He seemed to be singing to, came k'pop!
The purtiest, daintiest Fairy face
In all this world, or any place!
Then the little ser'nader waved his hand,
As much as to say, 'We'll excuse you!' and
I heard, as I squinted my eyelids to,
A kiss like the drip of a drop of dew!

-- James Whitcomb Riley

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Granny

Granny's come to our house,
And ho! my lawzy-daisy!
All the childern round the place
Is ist a-runnin' crazy!
Fetchd a cake fer little Jake,
And fetchd a pie fer Nanny,
And fetchd a pear fer all the pack
That runs to kiss their Granny!



Lucy Ellen's in her lap,
And Wade and Silas Walker
Both's a-ridin' on her foot,
And 'Pollos on the rocker;
And Marthy's twins, from Aunt Marinn's,
And little Orphant Annie,
All's a-eatin' gingerbread
And giggle-un at Granny!

Tells us all the fairy tales
Ever thought er wundered —
And 'bundance o' other stories —
Bet she knows a hunderd! —
Bob's the one fer "Whittington,"
And "Golden Locks" fer Fanny!
Hear 'em laugh and clap their hands,
Listenin' at Granny!

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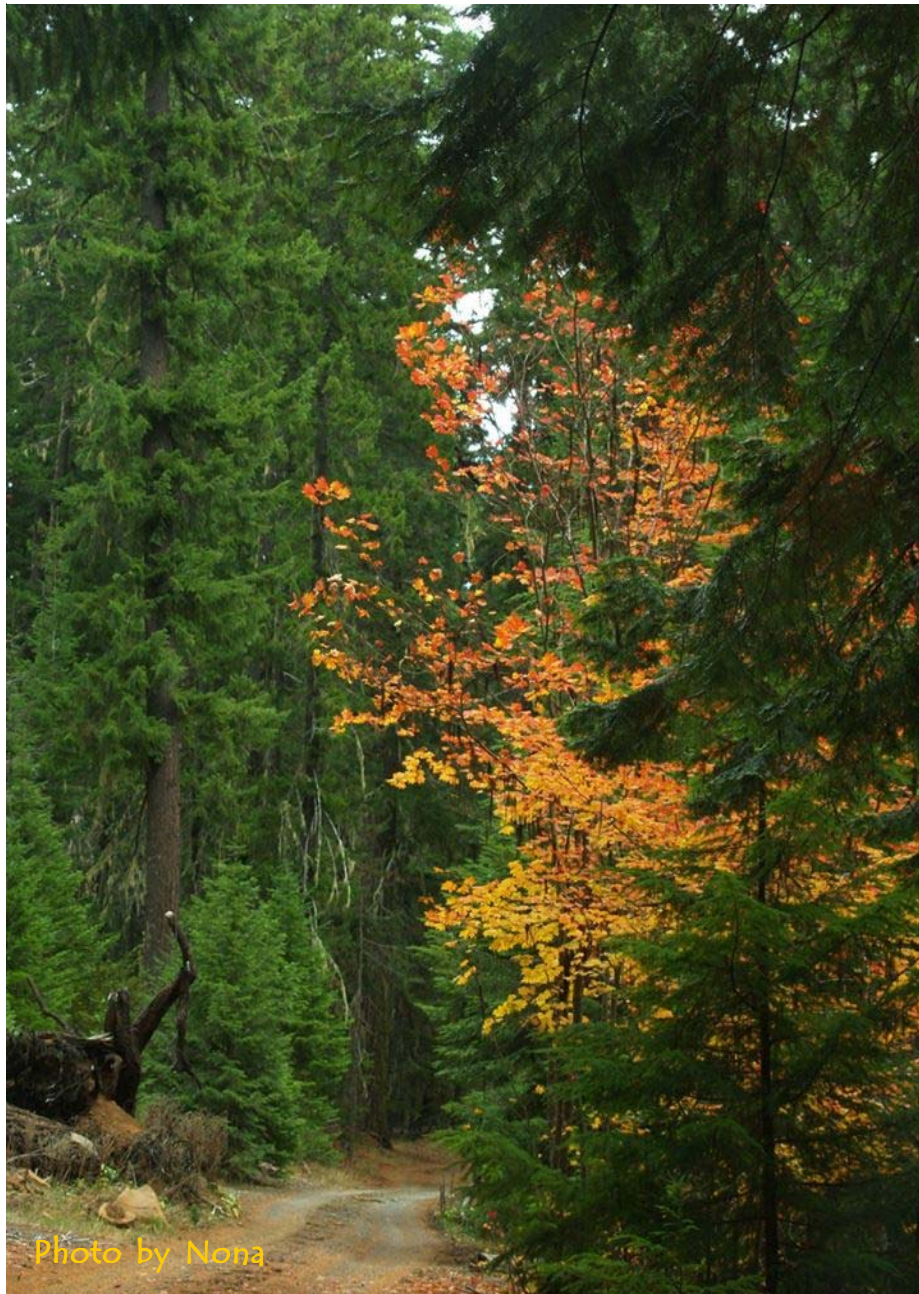


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"Jack the Giant-Killer" 's good;
And "Bean-Stalk" 's another! —
So's the one of "Cinderell'"
And her old godmother; —
That-un's best of all the rest —
Bestest one of any, —
Where the mices scampers home
Like we runs to Granny!

Granny's come to our house,
Ho! my lawzy-daisy!
All the childern round the place
Is ist a-runnin' crazy!
Fetched a cake fer little Jake,
And fetched a pie fer Nanny,
And fetched a pear fer all the pack
That runs to kiss their Granny!

James Whitcomb Riley



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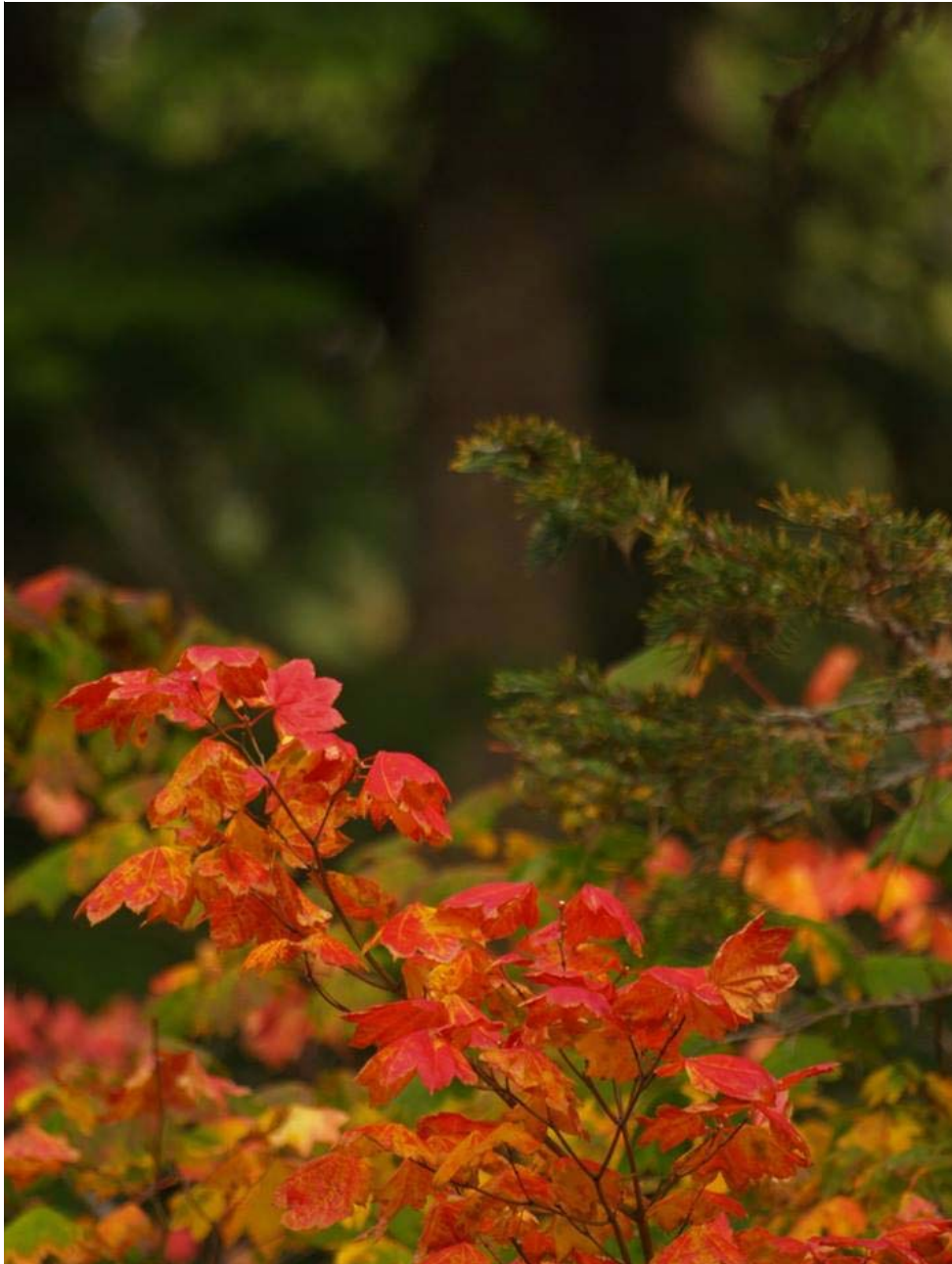
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Thoughts Fer The Discouraged Farmer

The summer winds is sniffin' round the bloomin' locus' trees;
And the clover in the pastur is a big day fer the bees,
And they been a-swiggin' honey, above board and on the sly,
Tel they stutter in theyr buzzin' and stagger as they fly.
The flicker on the fence-rail 'pears to jest spit on his wings
And roll up his feathers, by the sassy way he sings;
And the hoss-fly is a-whettin'-up his forelegs fer biz,
And the off-mare is a-switchin' all of her tale they is.

You can hear the blackbirds jawin' as they foller up the plow—
Oh, theyr bound to git theyr brekfast, and theyr not a-carin'
how;
So they quarrel in the furries, and they quarrel on the wing—
But theyr peaceabler in pot-pies than any other thing:
And it's when I git my shotgun drewed up in stiddy rest,
She's as full of tribbellation as a yellor-jacket's nest;
And a few shots before dinner, when the sun's a-shinin' right,
Seems to kindo'-sorto' sharpen up a feller's appetite!

They's been a heap o' rain, but the sun's out to-day,
And the clouds of the wet spell is all cleared away,
And the woods is all the greener, and the grass is greener still;
It may rain again to-morry, but I don't think it will.
Some says the crops is ruined, and the corn's drownded out,
And prophasy the wheat will be a failure, without doubt;
But the kind Providence that has never failed us yet,
Will be on hands onc't more at the 'leventh hour, I bet!

Photo by Nona

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Does the medder-lark complane, as he swims high and dry
Through the waves of the wind and the blue of the sky?
Does the quail set up and whissel in a disappointed way,
Er hang his head in silunce, and sorrow all the day?
Is the chipmuck's health a-failin'?—Does he walk, er does he run?
Don't the buzzards ooze around up thare just like they've allus
done?
Is they anything the matter with the rooster's lungs er voice?
Ort a mortul be complainin' when dumb animals rejoice?

Then let us, one and all, be contentud with our lot;
The June is here this morning, and the sun is shining hot.
Oh! let us fill our harts up with the glory of the day,
And banish ev'ry doubt and care and sorrow fur away!
Whatever be our station, with Providence fer guide,
Sich fine circumstances ort to make us satisfied;
Fer the world is full of roses, and the roses full of dew,
And the dew is full of heavenly love that drips fer me and you.

-- James Whitcomb Riley



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Photo by Nona

To Santa Claus

Most tangible of all the gods that be,
O Santa Claus— our own since Infancy!
As first we scampered to thee— now, as then,
Take us as children to thy heart again.

Be wholly good to us, just as of old:
As a pleased father, let thine arms infold
Us, homed within the haven of thy love,
And all the cheer and wholesomeness thereof.

Thou lone reality, when O so long
Life's unrealities have wrought us wrong:
Ambition hath allured us—, fame likewise,
And all that promised honor in men's eyes.

Throughout the world's evasions, wiles, and shifts,
Thou only bidest stable as thy gifts—:
A grateful king re-ruleth from thy lap,
Crowned with a little tinselled soldier-cap:

A mighty general— a nation's pride—
Thou givest again a rocking-horse to ride,
And wildly glad he groweth as the grim
Old jurist with the drum thou givest him:



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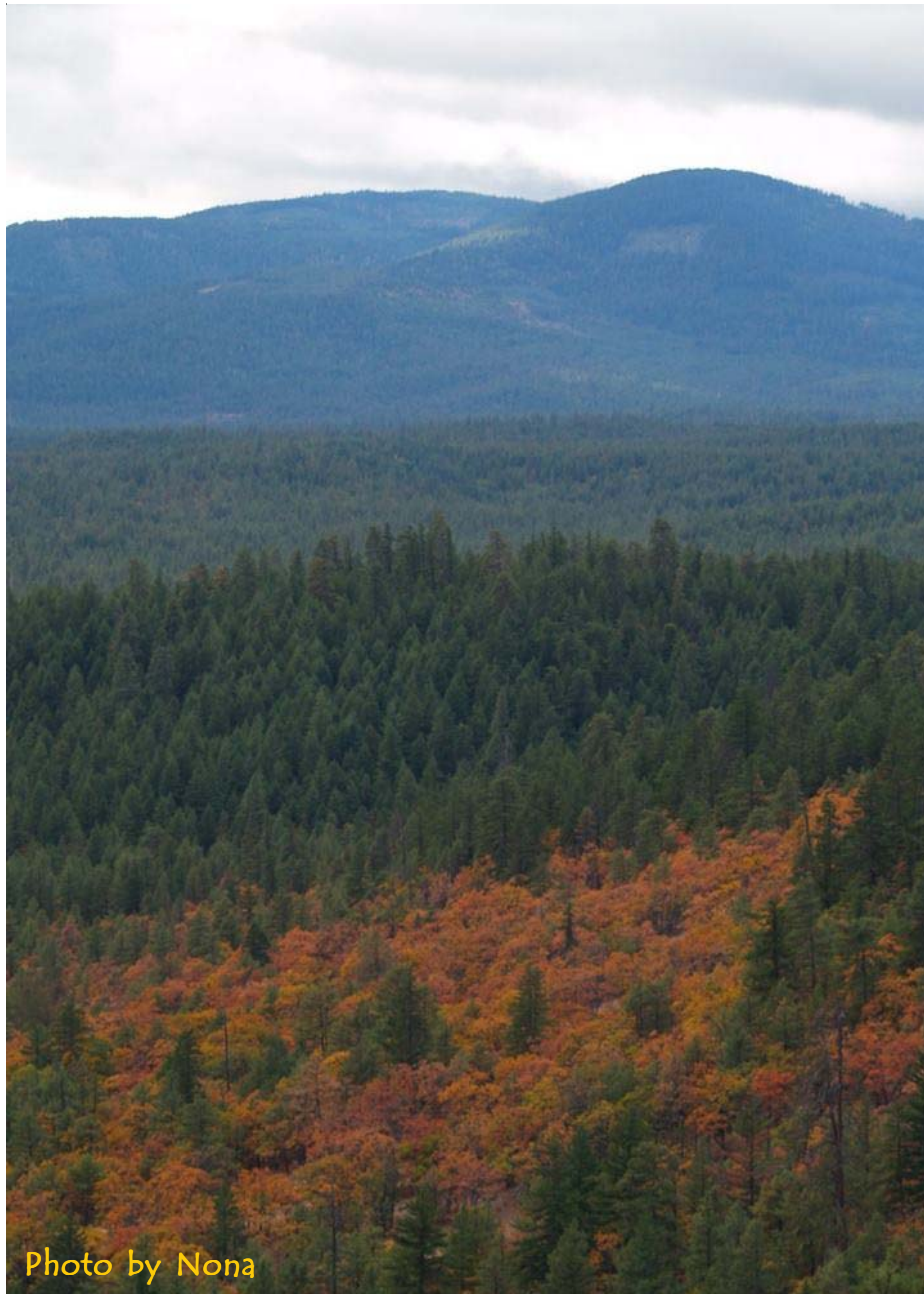


Photo by Nona

The sculptor's chisel, at thy mirth's command,
Is as a whistle in his boyish hand;
The painters model fadeth utterly,
And there thou standest—, and he painteth thee—:

Most like a winter pippin, sound and fine
And tingling-red that ripe old face of thine,
Set in thy frosty beard of cheek and chin
As midst the snows the thaws of spring set in.

Ho! Santa Claus— our own since Infancy—
Most tangible of all the gods that be—!
As first we scampered to thee— now, as then,
Take us as children to thy heart again.

-- James Whitcomb Riley



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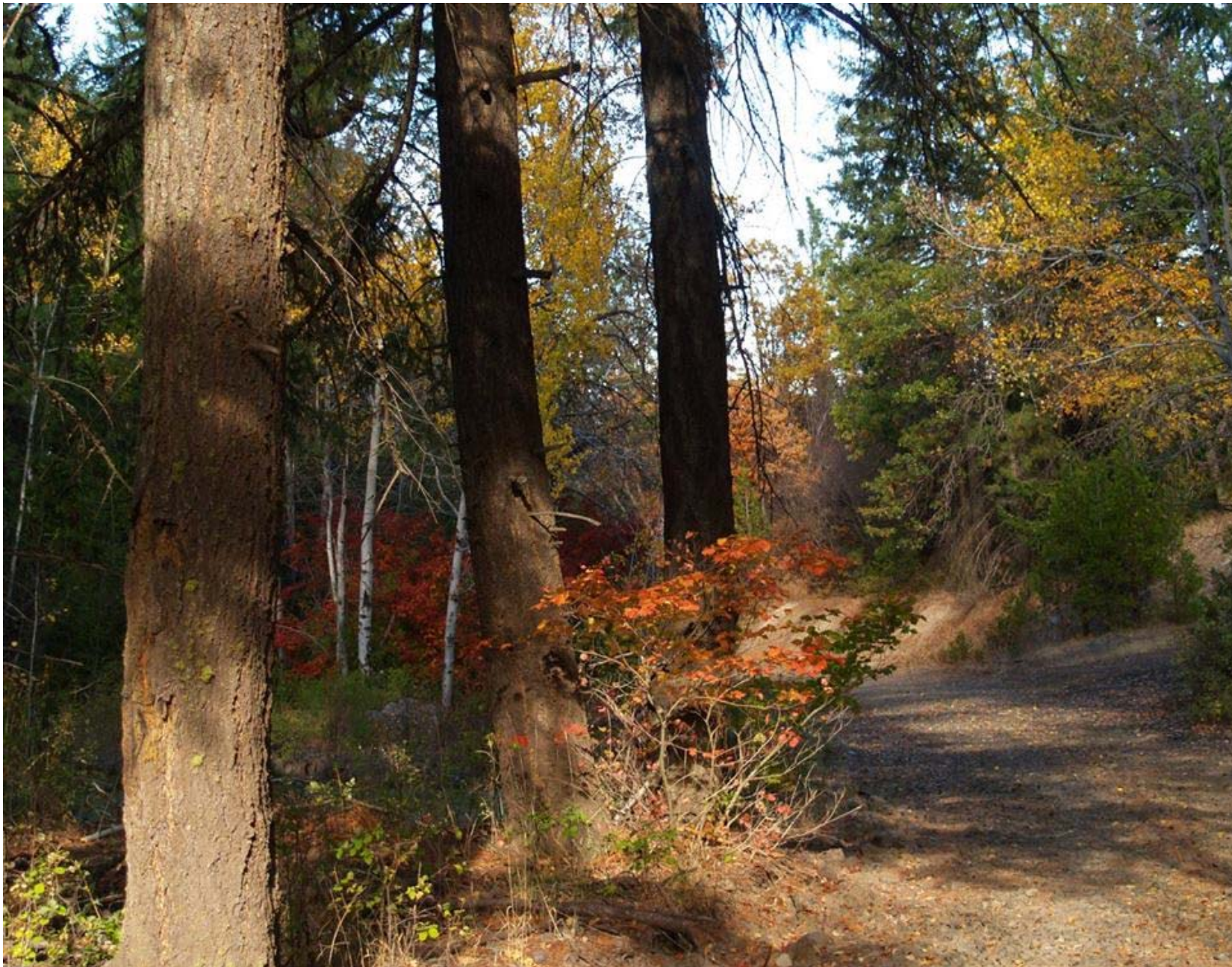


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The Jaybird

The Jaybird he's my _favorite_
 Of all the birds they is!
 I think he's quite a stylish sight
 In that blue suit of his:
 An' when he' lights an' shuts his wings,
 His coat's a 'cutaway'—
 I guess it's only when he sings
 You'd know he wuz a jay.

I like to watch him when he's lit
 In top of any tree,
 'Cause all birds git wite out of it
 When _he_ 'lights, an' they see
 How proud he act', an' swell an' spread
 His chest out more an' more,
 An' raise the feathers on his head
 Like it's cut pompadore!

James Whitcomb Riley



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The Little Fat Doctor

He seemed so strange to me, every way—
In manner, and form, and size,
From the boy I knew but yesterday,—
I could hardly believe my eyes!

To hear his name called over there,
My memory thrilled with glee
And leaped to picture him young and fair
In youth, as he used to be.

But looking, only as glad eyes can,
For the boy I knew of yore,
I smiled on a portly little man
I had never seen before!—

Grave as a judge in courtliness—
Professor-like and bland—
A little fat doctor and nothing less,
With his hat in his kimboed hand.

But how we talked old times, and 'chaffed'
Each other with 'Minnie' and 'Jim'—
And how the little fat doctor laughed,
And how I laughed with him!

'And it's pleasant,' I thought, 'though I yearn to see
The face of the youth that was,
To know no boy could smile on me
As the little fat doctor does!'

-- James Whitcomb Riley

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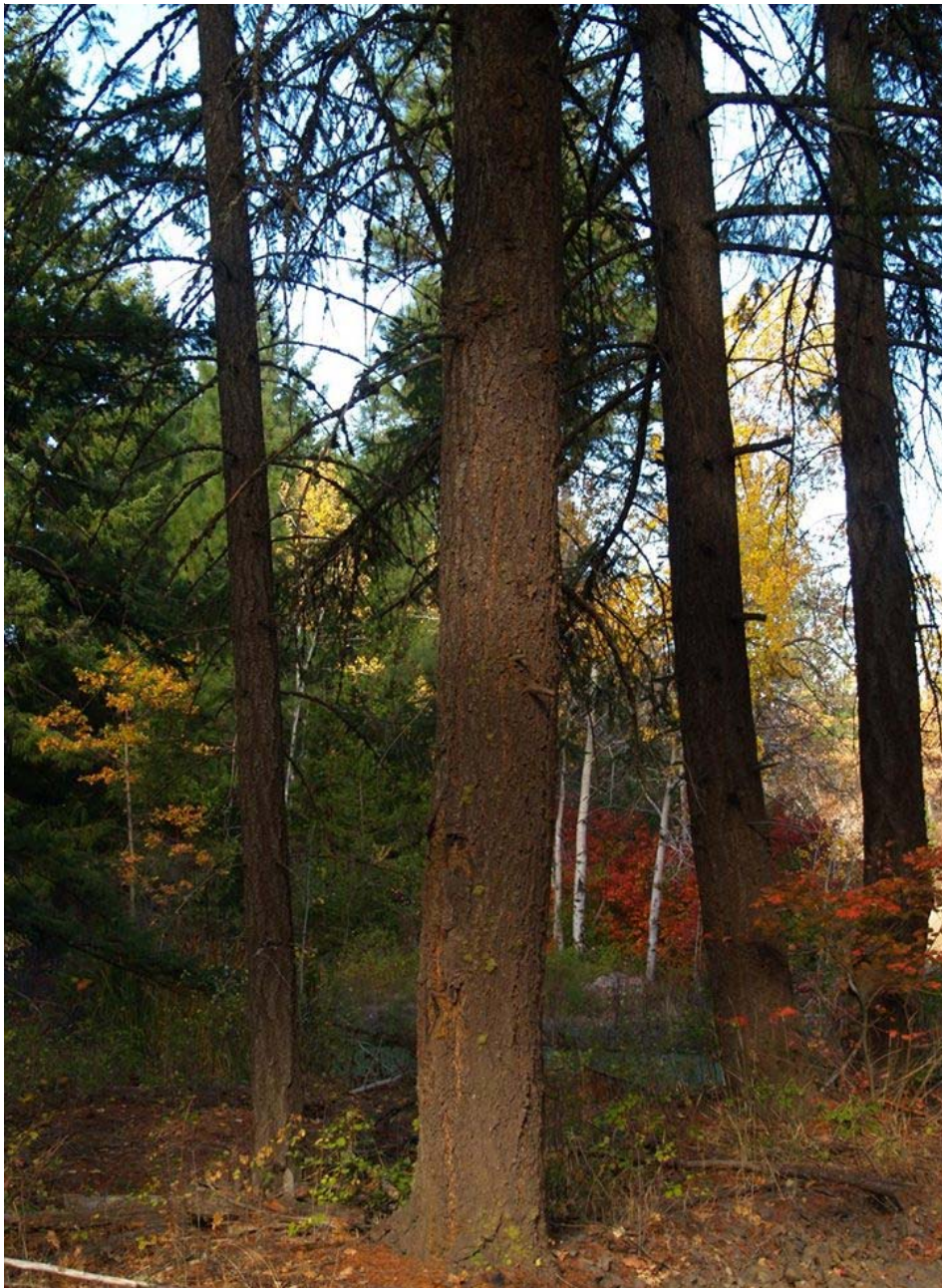
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The Squirtgun Uncle Maked Me

Uncle Sidney, when he wuz here,
Maked me a squirtgun out o' some
Elder-bushes 'at grewed out near
Where wuz the brickyard—'way out clear
To where the toll-gate come!

So when we walked back home again,
He maked it, out in our woodhouse where
Wuz the old workbench, an' the old jack-plane,
An' the old 'pokeshave, an' the tools all lay'n'
Ist like he wants 'em there.

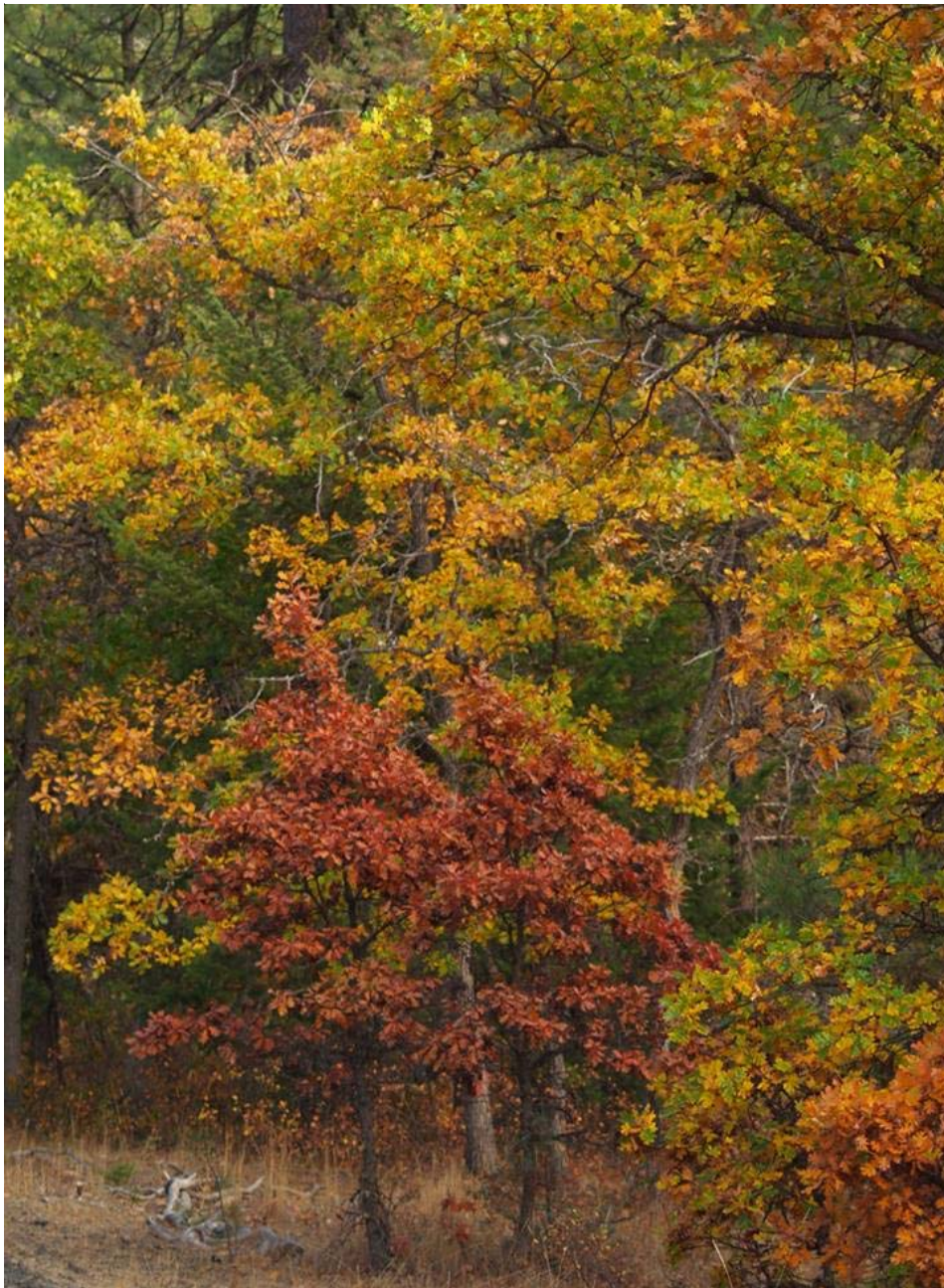
He sawed it first with the old hand-saw;
An' nen he peeled off the bark, an' got
Some glass an' scraped it; an' told 'bout Pa,
When _he_ wuz a boy an' fooled his Ma,
An' the whippin' 'at he caught.

Nen Uncle Sidney, he took an' filed
A' old arn ramrod; an' one o' the ends
He screwed fast into the vise; an' smiled,
Thinkin', he said, o' when he wuz a child,
'Fore him an' Pa wuz mens.

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He punched out the peth, an' nen he put
A plug in the end with a hole notched through;
Nen took the old drawey-knife an' cut
An' maked a handle 'at shoved clean shut
But ist where yer hand held to.

An' he wropt th'uther end with some string an' white
Piece o' the sleeve of a' old tored shirt;
An' nen he showed me to hold it tight,
An' suck in the water an' work it right
An' it 'ud ist squirt an' squirt!

-- James Whitcomb Riley



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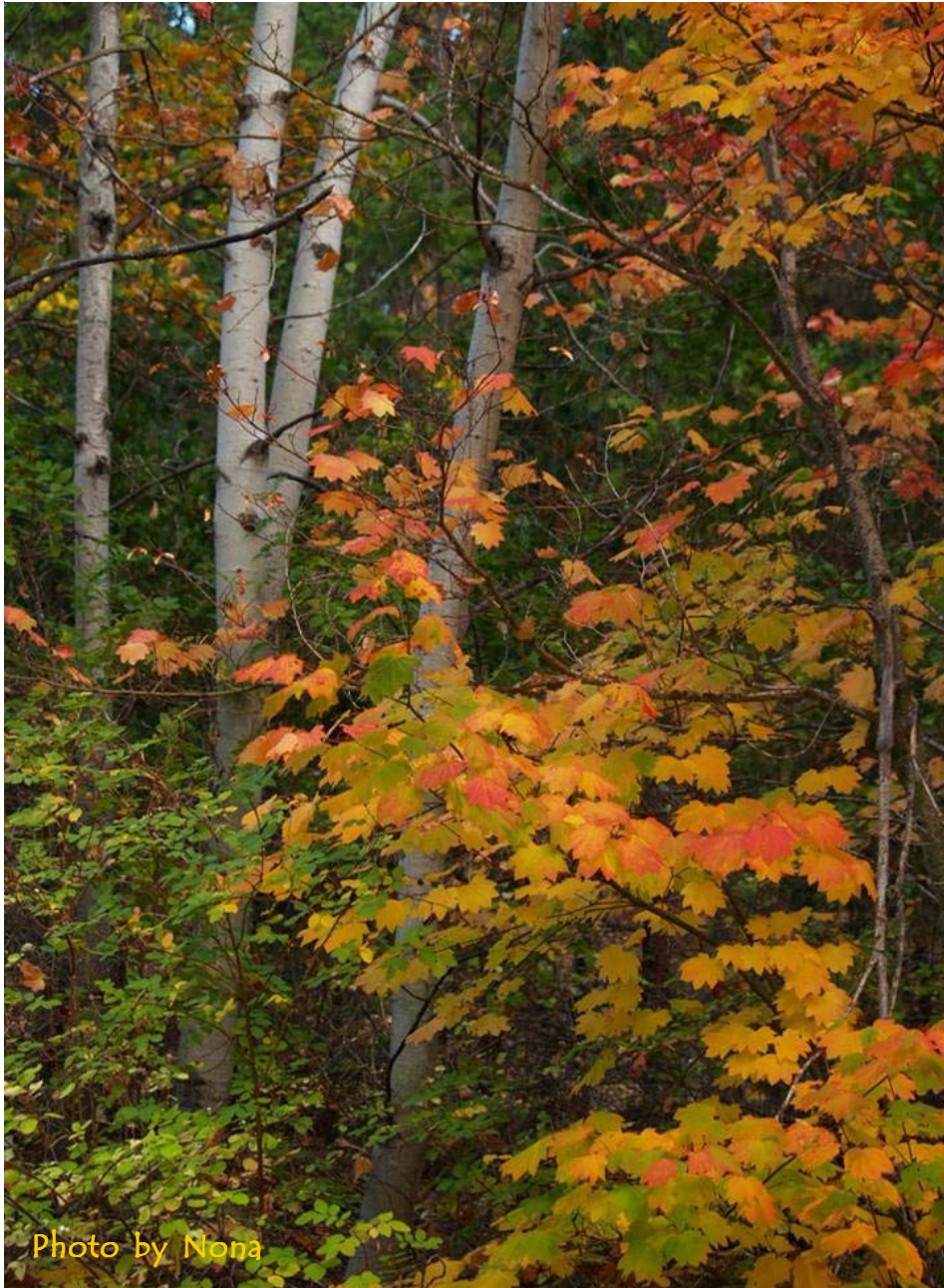


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The Quiet Lodger

The man that rooms next door to me:
Two weeks ago, this very night,
He took possession quietly,
As any other lodger might—
But why the room next mine should so
Attract him I was vexed to know,—
Because his quietude, in fine,
Was far superior to mine.

'Now, I like quiet, truth to tell,
A tranquil life is sweet to me—
But _this_, ' I sneered, 'suits me too well.—
He shuts his door so noiselessly,
And glides about so very mute,
In each mysterious pursuit,
His silence is oppressive, and
Too deep for me to understand.'

Sometimes, forgetting book or pen,
I've found my head in breathless poise
Lifted, and dropped in shame again,
Hearing some alien ghost of noise—
Some smothered sound that seemed to be
A trunk-lid dropped unguardedly,
Or the crisp writhings of some quire
Of manuscript thrust in the fire.



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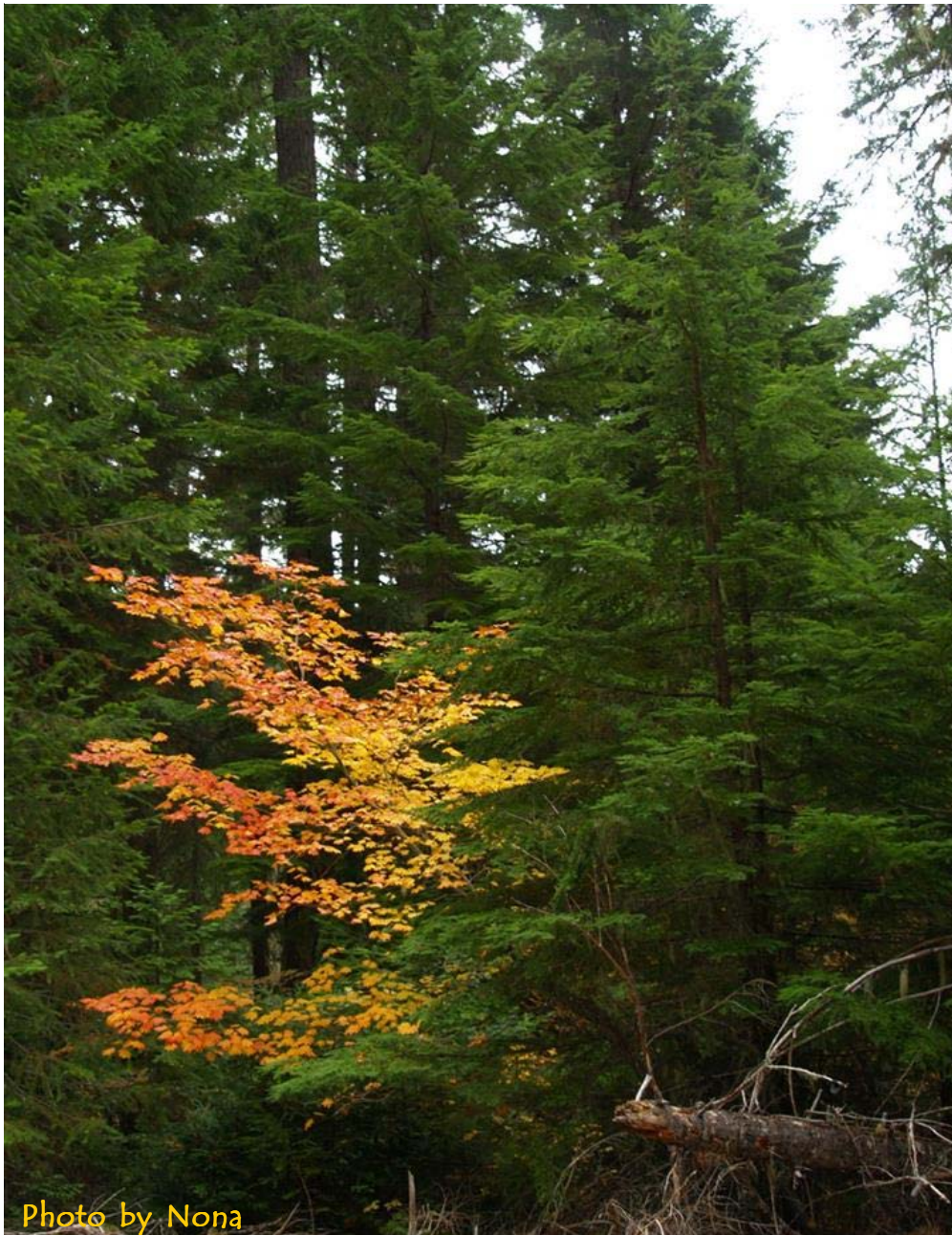


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Then I have climbed, and closed in vain
My transom, opening in the hall;
Or close against the window-pane
Have pressed my fevered face,—but all
The day or night without held not
A sight or sound or counter-thought
To set my mind one instant free
Of this man's silent mastery.

And often I have paced the floor
With muttering anger, far at night,
Hearing, and cursing, o'er and o'er,
The muffled noises, and the light
And tireless movements of this guest
Whose silence raged above my rest
Hoarser than howling storms at sea—
The man that rooms next door to me.

But twice or thrice, upon the stair,
I've seen his face—most strangely wan,—
Each time upon me unaware
He came—smooth'd past me, and was gone.
So like a whisper he went by,
I listened after, ear and eye,
Nor could my chafing fancy tell
The meaning of one syllable.

Last night I caught him, face to face,—
He entering his room, and I
Glaring from mine: He paused a space
And met my scowl all shrinkingly,
But with full gentleness: The key
Turned in his door—and I could see
It tremblingly withdrawn and put
Inside, and then—the door was shut.

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Then silence. _Silence_!—why, last night
The silence was tumultuous,
And thundered on till broad daylight;—
O never has it stunned me thus!—
It rolls, and moans, and mumbles yet.—
Ah, God! how loud may silence get
When man mocks at a brother man
Who answers but as silence can!

The silence grew, and grew, and grew,
Till at high noon to-day 'twas heard
Throughout the house; and men flocked through
The echoing halls, with faces blurred
With pallor, gloom, and fear, and awe,
And shuddering at what they saw—
The quiet lodger, as he lay
Stark of the life he cast away.

* * * * *

So strange to-night—those voices there,
Where all so quiet was before;
They say the face has not a care
Nor sorrow in it any more—
His latest scrawl:—'Forgive me—You
Who prayed, 'they know not what they do!'
My tears will never let me see
This man that rooms next door to me!

-- James Whitcomb Riley

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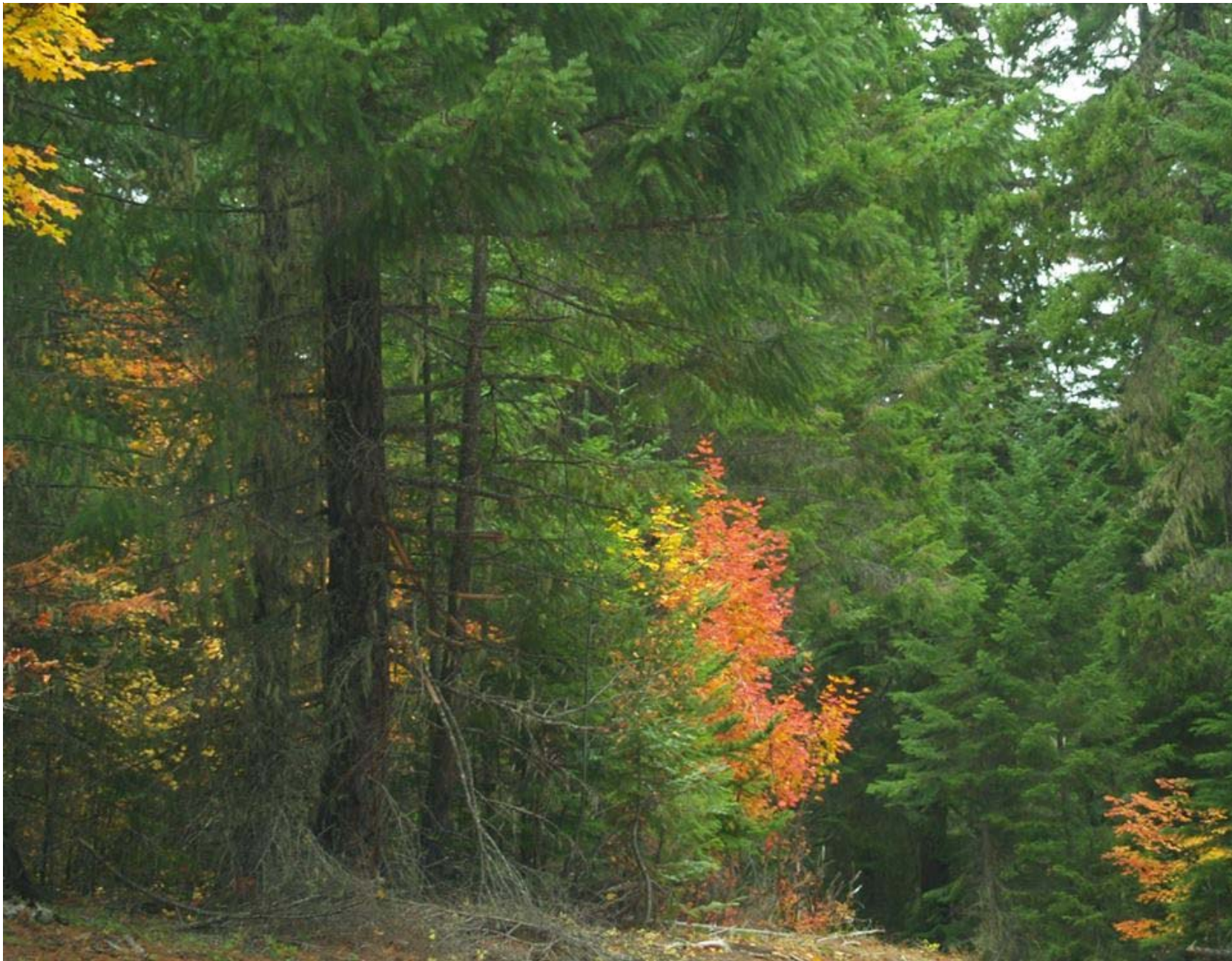


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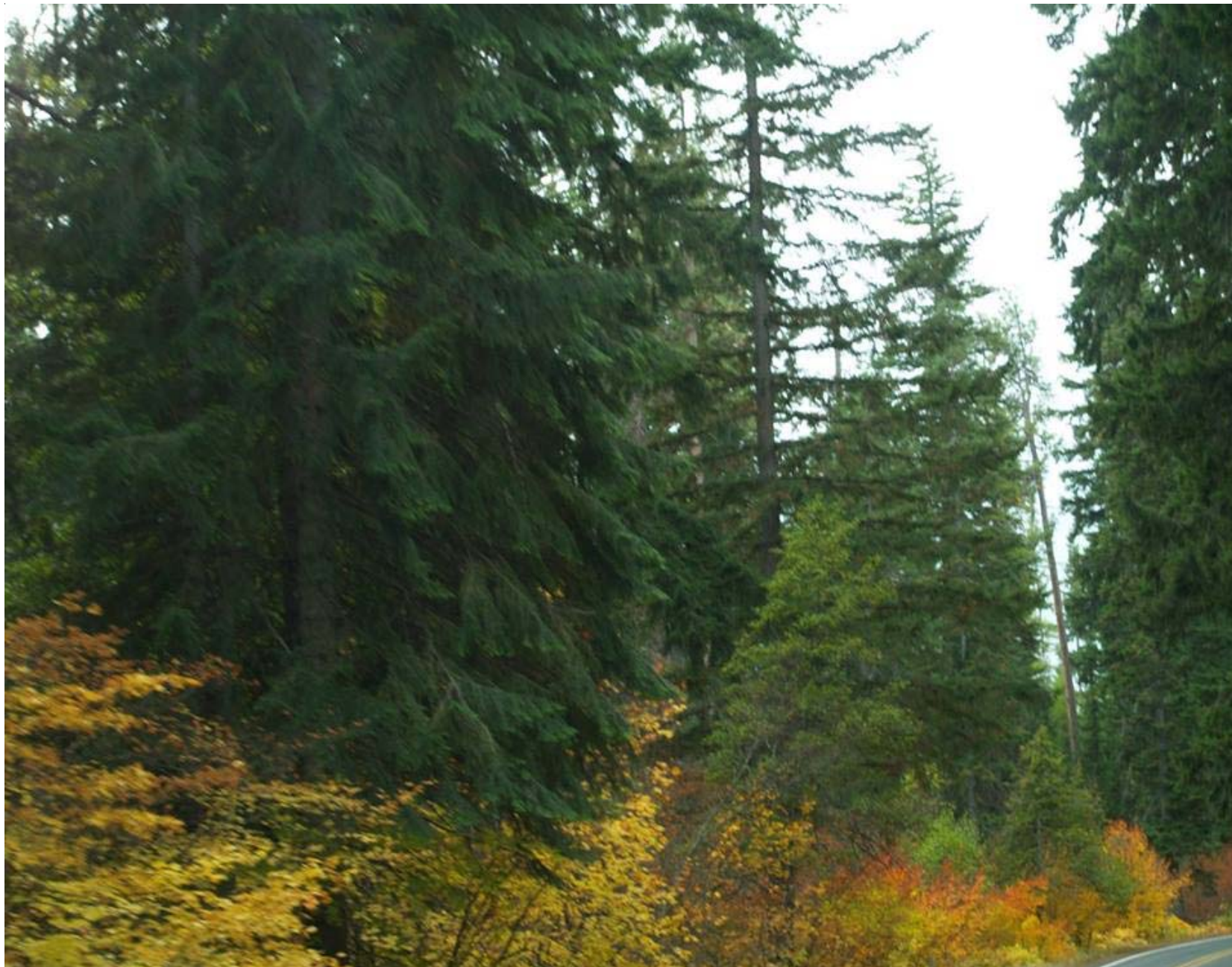


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This & That

Notes from Jennifer

"The rain is coming," they said on tv. "HOORAY" I say. The hot, dry summer took a serious toll on my garden. Three of my huge, old rhodies are looking pretty sad. One of them has only a few branches with green leaves remaining. The trees have all the earmarks of survivors: they are full grown and their roots reach down to enough moisture to keep them growing. No, it's just the shrubs in trouble. A few perennials look kind of peaked--it'll be spring before a true diagnosis is possible.

Oh, I'm not complaining. Most of my garden was planted over the past 30-some years and the plant life was chosen well. The woman who did the planting knew her stuff. It's the caretaking where she wasn't looking at the long future. She did make it all picture perfect, though.

My way of gardening is not just for looks. I don't hesitate to chop a dead branch, thin out places so thick the sun or rain cannot penetrate, and I've never flinched about cutting some fresh beauty for the house. I will coddle a plant that needs it, but only to a degree. More plants have died from over-caring than from neglect.

When I lived in Arizona, I saw for myself how truly hardy the native plants there were. A friend gave me a baby Saguaro he'd found beside the road. It was a 10 inch ball of stickers with a single root about 9 inches long and thick as my thumb (he used that part for a handle). He came up swinging that thing and pitched it under the porch, telling me to let it lay there for at least a week before I planted it. I did as he suggested, finally stuck it in the ground where it was probably safe from harm. I poured a couple cups of water on it about once a month. I almost drowned it. I cut back to watering the same amount but bi-monthly. That worked. When I left for Oregon, it was a beauty. I trust it still is.

Tonight I will open a window so if the rain starts before I wake I'll hear it. Rain--such a wonderful thing.

Photo credit:
Leonard G.



This & That, cont'd

This will be the last Journal for 2015. I'll be back January 2016, to resume writing.

I cannot thank my 'sister' Nona enough for sharing her photographic genius with us.

Our world has taught us much about gardening this year. I would love to hear what y'all found out in adjusting ordinary chores to a new environment. Mostly, I'm looking ahead--cannot wait to find out what the next year will bring.

I wish you all good luck and good gardening!

Until next time,

Jennifer



Photo by Nona

