

Contents

In Every Issue

About this Journal3	3
Garden chores to do now	9
On the Cover	4
Staying in touch	5
This 'n That	
Notes from Jennifer3	3
Wildlife Corner	3

The Wild Garden: Hansen's Northwest
Native Plant Database
www.nwplants.com
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Feature Articles



Anatomy of a Leaf, Part 3

A primer, conclusion....30



Tough guy
A shrub for all seasons......18



Plants to replace grass lawns
The cost of landscaping



Rethinking the lawn
An old idea ready for a makeover?...9



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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.).



Garden pond with native plants
Photo credit: Mbhufford



On the Cover:

Kinnikinnik, Arctostaphylos uva-ursi

An old (dare I say "ancient?") species that is much the same today as it was hundreds of years ago.

It is truly native in many continents around the world. The map below from the NRS Plants Database shows the native status in and around North America.



Photo credit: Walter Siegmund



Staying in touch

The Wild Garden is on Facebook

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Send me an email anytime: nwplants@gmail.com







Wildlife Corner

Out back with the animals

Every once in a while, the wildlife bodega is completely devoid of visitors. Oh, these times last only a few minutes, but they are sort of disconcerting because the diners are ordinarily so present with their hops and jumps, landings and take-offs, not to montion the songs they sing. Such a moment occurred this morning. It was so still—

and take-offs, not to mention the songs they sing. Such a moment occurred this morning. It was so still--

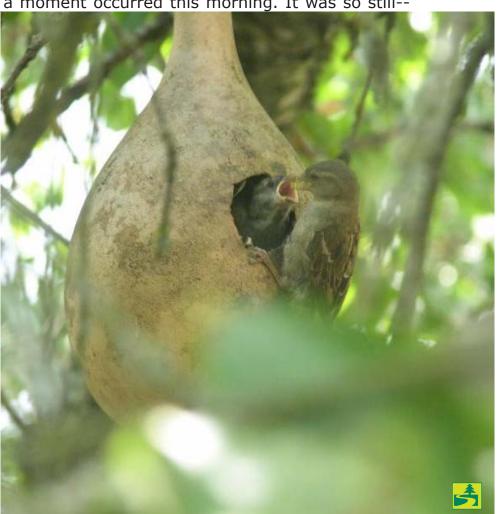
looked like a little ghost town!

The squirrel couple continue the grooming action in between chasing one another around the neighborhood. I've no idea if they are carrying on elsewhere or not. They might be, though nobody has mentioned it.

So far, I've not seen any nesting behaviour in any of the bird houses in the Paper Birch grove (Betula papyrifera). I'm hoping for at least one nest to be filled with chirping babies. I've a friend who has a full nest most every year. What a blessing!

One of the big metal containers of food has been breached twice recently. It's the one with black oil sunflower seeds. We've kept several bricks on top to deter thievery, but those clever squirrels learned just the way to kick them off so the lid springs open and the feast is on. The bricks are now gone, replaced with cinder blocks. So far, they are working.

I must report on the suet cakes. Usually I put seeds and bits of dried fruit in them, and some I buy readymade. They are almost equally admired, but this year I picked up a hot pepper cake to see what would happen. The wild ones will only eat it as a last resort. Not even the jays want it. It seems to be a bad choice. I'm going back to home-made cakes with no peppers!



Garden chores to do now

Pearly bits of wisdom & just plain common sense

Oregon's Willamette Valley has not waited for the 'official' spring season. Instead, the flora and fauna are proceeding with the leafing and flowering as though it were already creeping up on May. Every day this week has had a

sunny respite between moments of showers. The wind has not paid attention to the bucolic beauty, though. Even so, a couple of big windy days have not dampened the fevers of spring present in other aspects of the times.

Flowers are ready for picking, weeds are certainly enjoying the opportunity to repeat themselves, and the soil is giving up spots that are not exactly dry but are certainly not muddy.

So--it's time to get back out there and garden our little hearts out. Weed pulling not your cuppa tea? Do it anyway. If you enlist some help, better make darned sure they know what to pull and what to save.

When tidying up the garden, it's probably time to pick up remaining dead parts of perennials, wayward pieces of firs and other evergreens, anything that's bothering something else's 'wa.' I like to leave the jetsam and flotsam where it is if possible or at least in close proximity. I think the best thing to do with my whole area is let it be. What comes from the existing plant will nourish the others, both new and old. My garden can be as healthy as the woods and the meadows that are pure. It is unfortunate that we've changed so much of the earth where we live, that it doesn't remember how to take care of itself.



Hummingbird nest with two chicks in Santa Monica, CA Photo credit: Miksmith



Garden chores to do now, cont'd

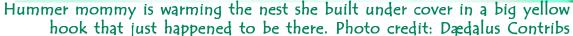
If there is something in your garden that you want to change, that can be wonderful if it is done respectfully.

If you are planning on a 'paved area,' I found out it's not ok to make one of Joni Mitchell's parking lots. The percentage of paved to not is critical, as is the type of paving selected.

Use permeable material, or If you allow spaces between the paver pieces, rain can go there and little plants can grow there. And to my mind, whatever you use for paving will be soften and enhanced by the living plants among them.

Chore of the month: **PLANT SOMETHING!**







Rethinking the lawn

An old idea ready for a make-over?

Definition of 'lawn'

1 archaic: an open space between woods: glade

2 : ground (as around a house or in a garden or park) that is covered with grass and is kept mowed

3 : a relatively even layer of bacteria covering the surface of a culture medium

lawn or lawny \'lo-ne, 'lä-\ adjective

`Lawn'

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

A lawn is an area of soil-covered land planted with grasses or other durable plants which are maintained at a short height and used for aesthetic and recreational purposes.

Common characteristics of a lawn are that it is composed only of grass species, it is subject to weed and pest control, it is subject to practices aimed at maintaining its green color (e.g., watering), and it is regularly mowed to ensure an acceptable length, although these characteristics are not binding as a definition. Loosely translated, 'lawn' means 'a managed grass space.'

In today's world, lawns are used around houses, apartments, commercial buildings and offices. City parks and municipal areas are most always subscribed to the big green space



A helicopter preparing to land on the south lawn at the nation's White House. Not a common occurence for most folks. Photo credit: PHC C. M. Fitzpatrick



theory. In many suburban areas, there are bylaws in place requiring houses to have lawns and requiring the proper maintenance of these lawns.

Some sports require specific varieties of the green designated as turf, pitch, field, or green, depending on the sport and the continent.

More recently, water shortages and other environmental concerns have given weight to alternatives to lawns, a practice encouraged by local government authorities and "green" groups.

The English landscape, quite unfairly, has gained a bad rap as the instigator of the 'grass' definition of 'lawn.'

In truth, prior to the 17th century, lawns were walkways and social areas covered with meadow plants, chamomile being the most favored.

In the Jacobean influenced early 17th century, lawns as we know them today were born. A closely cut "English" lawn designated the landscape as fit for the aristocracy and gentry;



People playing croquet at a croquet club, Edinburgh Scotland.

Photo credit: pschemp

it showed that the owner could afford to keep land that was not being used for a building, or for food production.

As the moist, mild climate of those days in Europe just happened to be ideal for this landscape genre, it was only a prideful attitude that suffered such foolishness.



However, North America, as a whole, cannot be said to have a moist, mild climate. Oh, to be sure, there are areas of this continent that fit that mold, but our country runs from coastal regions to jungle, to deserts both high and low. Snow-capped mountains often form barriers between such disparate environments.

The stressful weather changes we now are just beginning to notice are dictating an adjustment in our gardening schemes, including the lawn, should we deem it to be an attractive and required element of our gardens.

Water levels are fluctuating greatly. This winter, the frosty, freezing cold to which we are accustomed lasted only a few days. It seemed like one week we had a touch of frost and the next one saw plants stretching out and leafing much sooner than I remembered. Summers, at least here in Oregon's Willamette Valley, are becoming hot and long. And we are now aware of the quality of our air, the surprising discoveries of unheard-of 'poison' levels in the very earth upon which we walk.

None of these conditions are optimum to growing a big green grass lawn. And nowhere in the good neighbor manual does it say "thou must have lawn." Well, except where those HOA's mentioned earlier rule.

"Bathtub madonna" in a front yard in Sherrill, Iowa, Photo credit: Joe Schallan Re-purpose kudos for turning this bathroom relic into yard art.



Time for a re-think: maybe all that grass could be replaced with personally designed areas of use to fit your exact requirements.

(Keep an open mind here, it's important. And don't let what's actually there keep you from seeing what could be.)

The big question:

What do you want from your yard? What would you like to do there? Answers to these questions will help you determine your yard needs.

Looking at the entire garden where your house is sitting, how much yard do you want? This question overlaps with how you want to use your space, of course, because croquet and volleyball, for example, require a fair amount of space. If you just want vistas of the distant mountains and a path to reach the garage, you may not need much yard at all though you may want to purpose the area for flowers that bees and birds can enjoy.



Tennis at Newport - 1919 Painting by George Bellows



Appearance--What do you want your yard and garden to look like? How perfect? Do you care if there are different plants? Do you require broad or fine-bladed grass? How do you feel about weeds? If you can't see them and they're not going to take over, spreading hither and yon, do weeds bother you?



Time--How much time do you want to spend on your yard? Is it one of your pet projects, or is it the step-sister to the garden, which you love?

Cost--What percentage of your budget will you want to devote to this valuable space?

Uses--What kind of use does your yard get? If kids are playing soccer on it, you'll need a tough, resilient surface. If it's where you set your chair to read, yet another type of surface is needed. With today's decks, do you ever venture out into the dirt or are all your activities centered around an outdoor room?

An outdoor cooking and eating area might be wanted, fire resistant and ready to handle plenty of foot traffic.

A variety of plants make this pastoral space beautiful, easy to care for, and in tune with the earth, as well as comfortably fragrant. An enchanting place to spread a blanket for picnicking or sun-bathing. San Francisco Botanical Garden Great Lawn. Photo credit: Stan Shebs



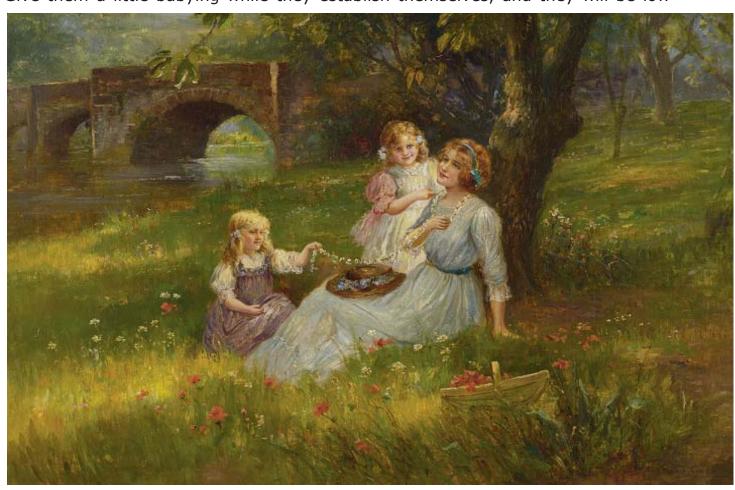
Lawn Alternatives

The Pacific Northwest is home to a great many spectacular native plants adapted over hundreds of years to local climate and soil conditions. Give them a little babying while they establish themselves, and they will be low

maintenance, will not want or require pesticides or fertilizers, and will thrive on the available water—mostly. Here in my garden, I do water plants that are floundering.

Depending of how you want to to utilize your landscape you may want to consider one of the following alternatives to lawn:

Groundcovers: Native groundcovers come in a wide variety of textures and colors, and some have interesting features like flowers and berries. After the initial establishment/ adjustment period, if you've picked the right plants their needs are far less than those of an ordinary grass yard.



"The daisy chain," Painting by Maude Goodmann (1844-1936)



The groundcover market has broadened hugely, partially due to the work of Frances White, who started Stepables 14 years ago, offering 10 ground covers. Today, she sells 220 different plants all over the country. Her orginal goal was to provide plants that can be walked on or used as foot paths due to their cushion-like feel and durability. I didn't find any natives in her inventory but I can say without reservation that her plants are well-grown, healthy specimens. I did not notice any invasive or endangered plants in the list.

I've heard of groundcovers that can actually be planted in a way that will mimic the appearance of a traditional turf lawn without requiring water, fertilizer and maintenance in general. I suspect these groundcovers are made of



plastics, although I wouldn't disregard one made from old tires and/or used milk jugs, especially if it were not impervious to water so that the rain would still nourish the earth.

However, if you are devotedly native, you're in luck—there are a whole bunch of the old-timey species that will also work to cover the ground beautifully.

Should your dream garden want some living dividers between the dedicated spaces, nature provides shrubs and trees and vines and perennials.

Hardscapes materials are plentiful in myriad configurations and naturally made.

Death Valley: Real native groundcovers. Photo credit: Brocken Inaglory

→ More→

Beware! Some places on the world-wide web offer suggestions that are not so helpful— due, I am sure, to misinformation from their sources. One of these encourages planting a particular mixture of seeds that includes English Daisies (Bellis perennis) and some clovers that are not native here. These species have both been introduced to the Pacific northwest. In fact, the daisies are often considered invasive, crowding out natives. So take care with whom you do business. Almost anybody could be mistaken. Check your facts before you jump.

Resources:

Lawn from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawn

Definition of lawn, Miriam-Webster, http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lawn

Lowdown on Lawn History, Planet Natural, http://www.planetnatural.com/organic-lawn-care-101/history/

"Lawnternatives" of the Pacific Northwest,

by Ross Lukeman, Alternative Homes Today, http://www.alternativehomestoday.com/blog/lawnternatives-of-the-pacific-northwest/.

Lawn Alternatives, Conserveh2o.org, http://www.conserveh2o.org/lawn-alternatives

Ground covers provide popular lawn substitute, whether solid surfaces or plants like Stepables, by Kym Pokorny, The Oregonian/OregonLive, http://www.oregonlive.com/hg/index.ssf/2013/05/ ground covers provide popular.html

Lawn Substitutes, Sustainable Gardening, http://www.sustainable-gardening.com/ plants/lawn-substitutes.



"A beautiful Day, "painting by Maude Goodmann. Furnishing a relaxing spot beside the pond to make it as comfortable as possible is an affordable luxury



Eco-friendly yards | Replacing a grass lawn with a flowery meadow, by Phil Wood, The Seattle Times, Lifestyle, http://www.seattletimes.com/life/lifestyle/eco-friendly-yards-replacing-a-grass-lawn-with-a-flowery-meadow/.

Alternatives to Lawns by Deva Luna, Sustainable Landscape Contractor with EarthCare Landscaping, Cupertino, CA, California Native Plant Society http://www.cnps.org/cnps/grownative/tips/lawn alternatives.php.

Very good article on evaluating your garden needs.

Imagining a no-mow yard: 7 lawn alternatives in pictures by Evelyn J. Hadden, TIMBER PRESS on JANUARY 17, 2013, Timber Press Talks, the blog of Timber Press, http://www.timberpress.com/blog/2013/01/imagining-a-now-mow-yard/.

Meadows: You Can Grow That!, by Timber Press on May 7, 2012, Timber Press Talks, the blog of Timber Press, http://www.timberpress.com/blog/2012/05/you-can-grow-that-meadows/

ASK MR. SMARTY PLANTS, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, http://www.wildflower.org/expert/show.php?id=8540 Ask Mr. Smarty Plants is a free service provided by the staff and volunteers at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, http://www.wildflower.org/expert/show.php?id=8043&frontpage=true

More ideas: the library, internet, landscapers, bookstores, nurseries, neighbors, local organizations have knowledge to share (sometimes at no cost to you!).



Wildflower Meadow can be groomed with one or two mowings and waterings per year.

Photo credit: Jack Daniels 68



Tough guy A shrub for all seasons

For hundreds of years, important meetings in the lives of American Indians were celebrated with a long pipe filled with a mixture of bark and leaves of native plants such as Bearberry (Arcostaphylos uva-ursi), Red Osier Dogwood (Cornus sericea), Silky Cornel (Cornus amomum), Canadian Bunchberry (Cornus canadensis), Evergreen Sumac (Rhus virens) and the Littleleaf Sumac (Rhus microphylla), depending on location, time of year, and the tribal customs.

Today, the ceremonies proceed as ever. And today this durable little plant continues to thrive here in my garden, (though I have not as yet tried it for smokability). Right now it is waking up, growing the pink bell flowers that will draw bees and nectar loving birds in no time.

I chose this plant to border the grouping that welcomes visitors to my home. The Kinnikinnik will spread to form a continuous band stabilizing the slight incline of the space, keeping the good compost neatly off the narrow sidewalk.



Photo credit: Yvonne Zimmermann





The plant's oval leathery leaves of dark green remain all year. The small bell-like blooms in springtime last several weeks. They are followed in the fall by bright red fruits that stay on the plant well into winter, and they are edible for wildlife and humans.

Needless to say, wildlife are quite fond of them, so it's a case of first come, first served.

Kinnikinnik will grow in rocky or sandy soil in light conditions spanning full, bright sun all the way to full shade. Extremely drought tolerant once established, this native shrub is not fazed by hot or cold weather. It's soil must not be tamped down or compacted, and **never ever fertilize** this tough cookie.

Photo credit: Jesse Taylor





Arcostaphylos uva-ursi is known by many names in different locations. Bearberry is the main common name where I live, but some of its other names are: Uva-ursi; Chipmunk's Apples; Mealberry; Tinnick, Arbutus; Red Bear's Grape; Black Bear's Grapes; Alpine Bear Grapes.





It is interesting to see the botanical renderings of artists from different millenia. The plant in each painting carries similar features as do all the others.

These artists are considered tops in their fields, and I believe their works are carefully rendered from perfect live specimens. Arctostaphylos uva-ursi seems to have not appreciably evolved since the earth was born.



This planting is along the front of a native plant lover's home landscape. At the rear are some Sword Ferns, rhodo-dendron and various shrubbery, and filling in the foreground is a wide swath of Bearberry. These plants do not ask for water or fertilizer or any other pampering. The grassy clump has been left as is for wildlife nourishment.



The Wild Garden: Hansen's Northwest Native Plant Database

Edible Parts: Its ripe, red berries are edible raw or cooked. You can make a refreshing tea from its young leaves. The wild things will be glad to pick any that are left.







Medicinal Uses from history: Antiseptic; Astringent; Birthing aid; Diuretic; Hypnotic; Kidney; Lithontripic; Poultice; Skin; Tonic; Women's complaints.

The European Medicines Agency's indepth report has details. See:

http://
www.ema.europa.eu/
docs/en_GB/
document_library/
Herbal__HMPC_assessment_report/
2011/07/
WC500108750.pdf

Warning: we do not recommend self-medicating with this or any other plant.



Kinnikinnik covers this hill in Catalonia, Spain.
Photo credit: Isidre blanc



Side effects: According to the Botanical Safety Handbook (CRC, 1997), uva-ursi should not be used during pregnancy.



When fully ripe, these berries will be ready to pick. They will keep well, and were picked all at once by Native Americans. Photo credit: Walter Siegmund



Bearberry (Arctostaphylos uva-ursi)Jelly

Ingredients

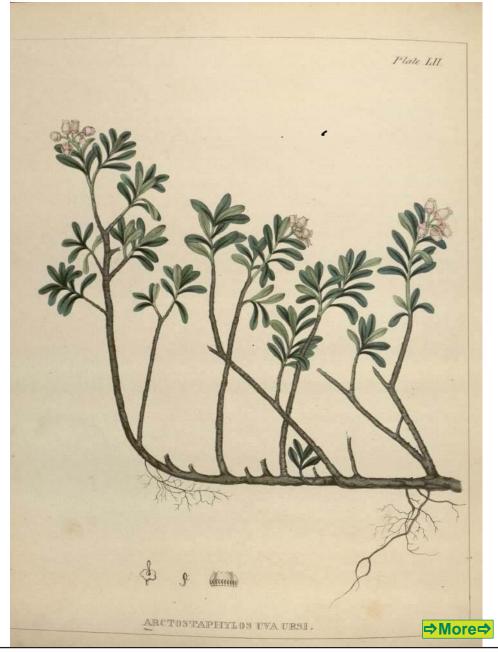
- 2 quarts berries
- 1 cup sugar per cup of juice
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 3 oz liquid pectin

Berries should be fully ripe. Wash and stem berries. Place in saucepan and cook till the fruit pops and the juice flows freely. Remove from heat and squeeze through jelly bag. Measure juice and place into a deep saucepan. Add 1 cup of sugar per cup of juice measured. Add 1 tbsp of lemon juice and mix thoroughly. Place mixture over high heat and boil till sugar dissolves while stirring constantly. Add 3 oz of liquid pectin and keep mixture at a hard boil for 1 full minute. Skim off foam and pour into hot, sterile ielly jars and seal.

My mom used to put the skimmings in an old sugar bowl and we spread it on toast.

I like jam better than clear jelly for this fruit. The texture is lovely.









"If you pick a green fruit and suck on it, you'll discover an interesting trail nibble. Chances are you'll spit out your first taste. It's sour. But there's also sugar in there, and if you try it again, and again, the flavor will grow on you. Some pretty good jam and jelly is made from the green fruit."



http://www.motherearthnews.com/real-food/guide-wild-manzanita-ze0z1404zjhar.aspx?PageId=2



Once considered an important food additive in making aspic, a thickener, or a sweetener to other foods. It also makes a pleasant beverage.

Collect the ripe fruit, and pick out any foreign matter, such as leaves or stems, bugs, and so forth. Wash it all, and let it dry in a colander. I typically put all the berries in a cookie pan and let them then dry in the sun or in the oven at pilotlight temperature.



Photo credit: Sten Porse

http://www.motherearthnews.com/real-food/guide-wild-manzanita-ze0z1404zjhar.aspx?PageId=2

⇒More**⇒**

This specimen is bursting into spring with bright green tender new shoots.





Anatomy of a Leaf, Part 3

VENATION



Arcuate secondary veins bending toward apex



Longitudinal veins aligned mostly along long axis of leaf



Pinnate secondary veins paired oppositely



Cross-Venulate small veins connecting secondary veins



Palmate several primary veins diverging from a point



Reticulate smaller veins forming a network



Dichotomous veins branching symmetrically in pairs



Parallel veins arranged axially, not intersecting



Rotate in peltate leaves, veins radiating

A primer, conclusion

Venation is the last of our concepts that, together, can describe any plant on our planet, I think maybe.

Part 3: Venation

There are two subtypes of venation, namely, craspedodromous, where the major veins stretch up to the margin of the leaf, and camptodromous, when major veins extend close to the margin, but bend before they intersect with the margin.

Feather-veined, reticulate (also called pinnatenetted, penniribbed, penninerved, or penniveined) – the veins arise pinnately from a single mid-vein and subdivide into veinlets. These, in turn, form a complicated network. This type of venation is typical for (but by no means limited to) dicotyledons.

Taro leaf underside backlit by sun shows the venation Photo credit: Avenue



Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons derivativework McSush

Anatomy, cont'd

Three main veins branch at the base of the lamina and run essentially parallel subsequently, as in Ceanothus. A similar pattern (with 3-7 veins) is especially conspicuous in Melastomataceae.



Snowbrush, Ceanothus velutinus. Note leaf venation

University of California UC Master Gardener Program of Sonoma County's article on Ceanothus:

Ceanothus species are easily identified by their unique leaf-vein structure shared by all plants within this genus. The ovate leaves, mostly with serrated edges, have three prominent parallel veins extending from the leaf base to the outer margins of the leaf tips. The leaves normally have a glossy upper surface, and vary in size from 1/2 inch to 3 inches. Many of the very drought-tolerant species have spiny, holly-like leaves.

http://ucanr.edu/sites/scmg/Plant_of_the_Month/Ceanothus_796/

Palmate-netted, palmate-veined, fanveined; several main veins diverge from near the leaf base where the petiole attaches, and radiate toward the edge of the leaf.

Palmate-veined leaf

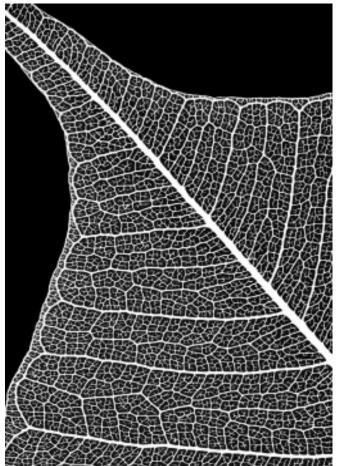
Parallel-veined, parallel-ribbed, parallel-nerved, penniparallel – veins run parallel for the length of the leaf, from the base to the apex. Commissural veins (small veins) connect the major parallel veins. Typical for most monocotyledons, such as grasses.

Palmate venation on this Maple leaf
Photo credit: Dennis Mojado



Anatomy, cont'd

Dichotomous – There are no dominant bundles, with the veins forking regularly by pairs; found in Ginkgo and some pteridophytes.



Leaf Skeleton negative Photo credit: Robert D Anderson

Note that, although it is the more complex pattern, branching veins appear to be plesiomorphic and in some form were present in ancient seed plants as long as 250 million years ago. A pseudoreticulate venation that is actually a highly modified penniparallel one is an autapomorphy of some Melanthiaceae, which are monocots, e.g. Paris quadrifolia (True-lover's Knot).rf

> Paris quadrifolia venation Photo credit: George Chernilevsky



Eocene fossil leaf of Ginkgo biloba from the Tranquille Shale of MacAbee, British Columbia, Canada



This & That



Notes from Jennifer

Now that I am the oldest person in my family, I realized I've got a huge responsibility as well as a huge opportunity.

Some of the responsibilities:

- --To serve as the teller of family tales and happenings. To be the one holding all the facts, and keep documentation and artifacts and mementos.
- --To pass along the beliefs, the truths we hold dear; what I learned at my parent's knees.
- --To be the modulator should disagreements require help for resolution.

Some of the opportunities:

- --To share what I think is important and why.
- --To give exposure to artists and works that have lifted my heart.
- --To promote love and respect between us all, our earth, and everything within it.

These chickens were running all around in the populated areas of Mauie when I was there some years ago. Fascinating. They were remarkable, just trotting around, completely at ease. A nice attitude.



This & That, cont'd

But it's not all on me. When I realized the pickle I was in, I asked my sister, Linda, to stand together with me as co-matriarchs. After considerable thinking and discussing, she agreed.

As far as for me, in between matriarchal duties, I'll continue living to the best of my lights with two life rules. They're deceptively simple, but I've yet to come face to face with a quandry one or the other doesn't answer.

It if does't hurt you or somebody else, there's nothing wrong with it.

And

"One big pile is better than two little piles..."

This second one may be remembered from awhile back--the rest of that sentence is "...and rather than bring that one up we decided to throw ours down." Arlo Guthrie's story about Alice's Restaurant. I didn't make these up, I just heard them and adapted them for myself and those two girlies I love so much.

Until next time,

Jennifer

Two sections of the welcoming scene at the front of my house.

Salal (Gaultheria shallon) behind the Kinnikinnik (Arctostaphylos uva_ursi). The Camas bulbs, both Indian Hyacinth (Camassia quamash) and Great Camas (Camassia leichtlinii ssp. suksdorfii), are gathering strength for their coming show. The native grasses in the back give some heighth.



