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NW NATIVE PLANT JOURNAL

A Monthly Web Magazine

Expanding
horizons:
Adding new
life to the
garden!... p18

What a beauty--*Philadelphia lewisii*..p8

NW Fleur de lis, naturally..p8

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The Wild Garden: Hansen's Northwest
Native Plant Database
www.nwplants.com
Editor: Jennifer Rehm, Webmaster



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Feature Articles

Expanding horizons

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Photo credit: Curtis Clark



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Philadelphia lewisii

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Mockorange, Indian Arrowwood,
Wild Mockorange .pg ..8



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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.).



Iris douglasiana (Douglas Iris)



On the Cover:

Douglas Iris

Iris
douglasiana
— Colony of
the native
iris on
Tomales
Point, Point
Reyes Na-
tional Sea-
shore, Marin
County,
California.
Photograph
taken 3rd
April 2004
by Stephen
Lea This
reduced
image
placed in
the public
domain 9th
April 2004.

Photo credit:
Stephen Lea



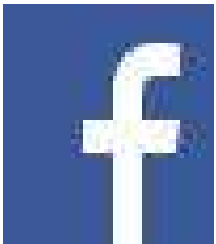
Staying in touch

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Send me an email anytime:

nwplants@gmail.com



Wildlife Corner

Out back with the animals

Went to the feed store for bird seed mix, got the usual and served it to the guests. Those little squirts don't like it. It has no signs of anything different, but they're far smarter I am about their food so I took their word for it. Bring on a different organic, non-corrupted bird seed, same qualities, and served it up. It was a winner. Looking forward to enough plant life that they can pick their own whenever necessary. Let them act like wild birds, be healthy and free.

I was so impressed with the wildlife habitat display at the Philadelphia Flower Show. National Wildlife Federation did a write-up of it. That's my idea of almost perfect. (t'would make it all the way if it were in my backyard.) Go see it for yourself: <http://blog.nwf.org/topics/garden-habitats/>. Sure did shoot down my excuse for not having it done already. I claim there's not enough time. These people put it all up in a matter of hours. Guess it's time to 'put my money where my mouth is' as an old friend used to say.

The current human-served menu in the bodega is not tricky or especially costly. The birdseed usually goes in some of the feeders. There are two suet cakes that is a hit with most everybody. Black oil sunflower seeds are a staple. There's a wooden thing with a spike in it for corn cobs. We refill when all the corn they scattered is eaten. Peanuts in the shell are most usually available, as is the hazelnuts we got from the co-op last fall. Usually they have a piece or two of fruit if I have any to spare.

There are four birdbaths around in the gardens, and a pond stocked with feeder gold fish replenished once a year.

The rock collections is always growing. Big flat ones are nice in both sun and shade. The Paper Birches around the fairy garden are favorites of the hummingbirds. They adore the sprinklers. No way to get a head count, they are too quick and too many of them.

The trees and shrubs offer all manner of shelter and safety.

That's about it for now.



Butterfly garden. Photo credit: NRCS



Garden chores to do now

Pearly bits of wisdom & just plain common sense

Volunteer plants are sometimes happy surprises. They are usually gifts from passing squirrels or birds by having gleaned the seeds during their travels. Sometimes a tree or shrub will appear in the most unlikely place. The same thing happens with perennials. Wildlife feast on the seeds and then drop them through digestion or just spill them from their mouths as they pass by.

Other times a plant will grow from compost or loam or barn cleanings that we've added to our gardens to improve the soil there. I once had a truck load of river bottom loam delivered. I spread it all over my garden and then covered the places I intended to plant later with some free chopped stuff I received from a friend. The following spring I was very pleased to find morel mushrooms growing beside my Hazelnut tree. I don't know where the spores originated but I do know they were among the most tasty of morels I've ever had. They did not repeat, it was a one-time show.

Should you be as fortunate as I was that year and find a rare mushroom or surprise seedling, consider letting it grow where it has begun. It could eventually be your favorite place in your garden.

It is getting hot again, expected to do that some more. We have created several pieces of hose, each terminating in a water spreader, like a sprinkler or a bubbler. The faucets are each outfitted with appropriate number of splitters combining the functions of a timer so that each of the hoses can be turned off and on as desired. So, now I am programming the timers to water the areas of the garden that need it. Just think--I may never have to worry about watering (except supervising). The whole garden can have the watering it needs and not a drop more, saving on the water bill and making my home happier.



Volunteers that grow from the seeds of specific cultivars are not reliably identical or similar to their parent, and often differ significantly from it. Such open pollinated plants, if they show desirable characteristics, may be selected to become new cultivars.

Note: There is a difference between an accidental volunteer and an invasive thug. A surprise tomato or huckleberry is one thing. A nice patch of Himalayan blackberries or English ivy is another. P.S. The ivys are bursting with seeds right now.



Philadelphia lewisii

Mock Orange, Syringa, Gordon's Mockorange, Indian Arrowwood, Wild Mockorange

July 4th 1806, Captain Meriwether Lewis writes in his journal about this plant discovered that day near "the waters of Clarks River."

He tells us that the Native Americans used the hard wood for making bows, arrows, and many other utilitarian pieces. Additionally, they found value in the plant's healing properties, making teas, poultices, and salves.

Philadelphus lewisii was designated the official state flower of Idaho in 1931.

"What," you may ask, "is all the hullabaloo about this fine shrub?"

Well, it is uncommonly beautiful when in bloom, and the flowers have a distinctly scented perfume which draws bees and hummingbirds to its pollen-laden blossoms by the droves.

Of course, there is something most attractive about Mock Orange in every season. The bright green leaves in spring, gaining their deeper green color after appearing; the snowy white petals and bright yellow sepals of the flowers; the buttery yellow leaves in autumn; and the grey bark of winter are all pleasing to the eye. It's a very nice addition to most any garden.

And it is easy to propagate! Cuttings, air-layering, seed pods are all fairly simple to use to make new plants if so desired. And who wouldn't love to have Philadelphia lewisii in their own yard?



Photo credit: A. Barra

This specimen must be in somebody's garden-- it's so perfect it must be pampered. It could be wild if the weather has been still, the way it does of a summer afternoon.

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Philadelphia lewisii, cont'd

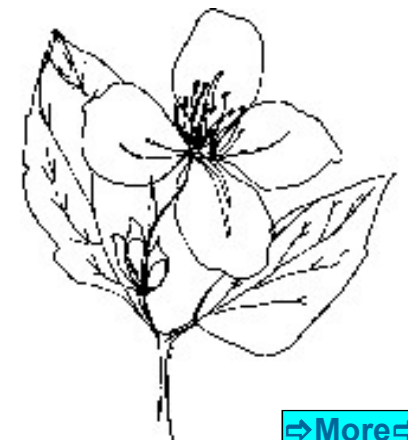
There is a detailed page about this shrub in our catalog (see http://www.nwplants.com/business/catalog/phi_lew.html), which you can check out at your leisure. Here we have a sampling of photographs to whet your botanical appetite.



Below, Mockorange
au naturel, tended
solely by nature.
Photo is in the Pub-
lic Domain



Above, Photo credit:
Ian Poellet, Umatilla
National Forest, Oregon



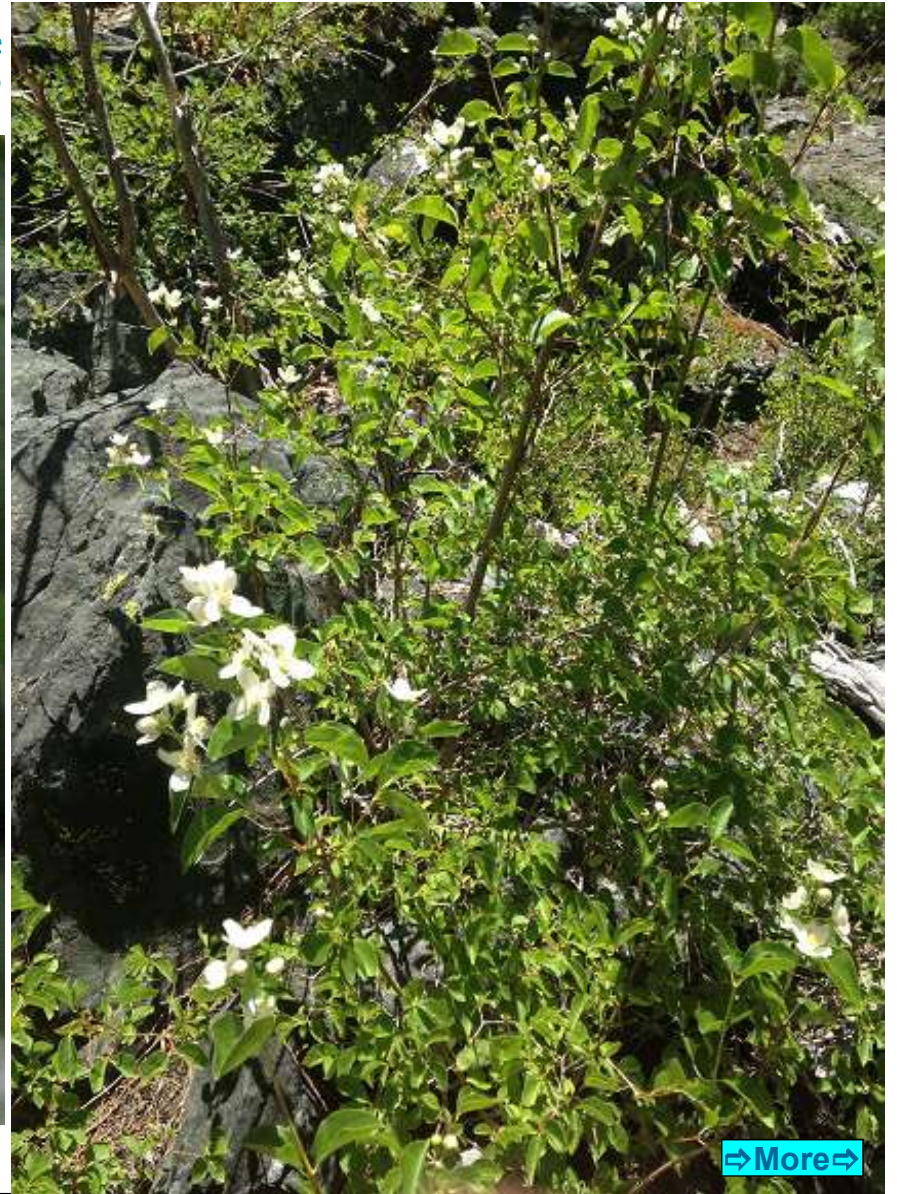
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Philadelphia lewisii, cont'd

At right, Photo credit: • Damon Tighe
Mature specimen



Above, Photo credit: A. Barra, gorgeous blossom



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Philadelphia lewisii, cont'd



At right, Photo credit: Dave Powell, USDA
Forest Service (retired), www.Bugwood.org

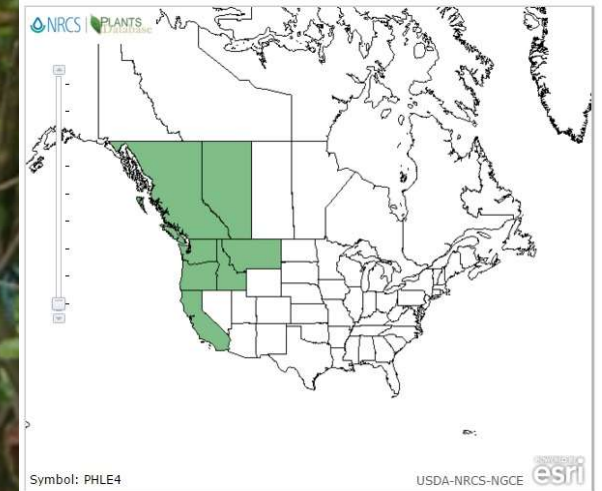


Philadelphia lewisii, cont'd



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Philadelphia lewisii, cont'd



Range map from PLAN TS
Green shows where
Mockorange lives.

Photo credit: Wally Hansen

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Philadelphia lewisii, cont'd



Photo credit: Walter Siegmund
Pods at the end of branches are
full of seeds

[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Philadelphia lewisii, cont'd



Photo credit: Valérie75

What a lovely wild thing! In about a week, all those buds will pop open--
breathtaking!

Reaffirmed

The leaves on the silver birch flutter
in the gentle breeze first silver then green
all around the fruit trees slowly growing
heavy as fruits swell and start to ripen

The flower buds break open in glorious
colour
white scented flowers of mock orange rife
honey blossom cascading down walls
while sweet peas climb ever higher

Summer hot and sultry shows her face
to the earth's stunning painted canvas
and life once more renewed and vital
as all around us everything flourishes
Copyright © Shadow Hamilton |
Year Posted 2014

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Philadelphia lewisii, cont'd



Mature plant growing in a small clearing of dappled sunlight among the surrounding big trees.

[⇒More⇒](#)

Philadelphia lewisii, cont'd

A little bit more of the expedition around the time this plant was discovered:

On July 3, 1806, the Corps of Discovery left Travelers' Rest, near the Lolo trail in Montana, an undisturbed area of meadows along a branch of the Bitterroot River.

"I took leave of my worthy friend and companion Capt Clark and the party that accompanied him. I could not avoid feeling much concern on this occasion although I hoped this seperation was only momentary. I proceeded down Clark's river with my party of nine men and five indians." Lewis [See note below]

July 4, 1806, Lewis says,

"these affectionate people our guides betrayed every emotion of unfeigned at seperating from us."

All through their journeys, members of many different indian tribes accompanied the expedition, showing the best routes and both plants and animals they made use of in their daily lives. This generosity was simply the way they knew the earth was to be shared.

"All of this information was to be recorded in their journals. President Jefferson also instructed Captain Meriwether Lewis to note when plants were in bloom and to investigate their potential value in commerce."

"What remains of the collection taken by Lewis are now housed in the Lewis and Clark Herbarium at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia. Members of the Expedition employed a number of plants, using them for food and medicine, as well as firewood, shelter, ax handles and dugout canoes. At the conclusion of the journey, Lewis had mentioned 260 plants in his journals, and over half of them were new to science."

From Lewis and Clark Trail, <http://lewisandclarktrail.com/nativeplants.htm>

[Note] This phrase, "nine men and five indians," shows clearly the mind-set of a good deal of the non-indian population at that time. It is unfortunate that, though the travelers were quite willing to take the assistance from the native peoples, their opinions held those same "affectionate" peoples in disregard. Some folks still share their views.--Jennifer



Expanding horizons

Unexplored species

It is always a delight to discover a plant that is native to the Pacific Northwest that I've never seen or heard of, and there are hundreds of possibilities that fit this description.

After all, my garden is a finite size, and will hold only so many plants before it reaches the 'jungle' stage.

And, being a self-professed adventurer, the plants I select for my yard are those unusual species that have to be hunted down. To be sure, there are some tried-and-true standards: Oregon Grape (*Mahonia*), Paper Birch (*Betula papyrifera*), Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), Sword Ferns (*Polystichum munitum*), Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra formosa*), Salal (*Gaultheria shalon*), Kinnikinnik (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), wild iris (more about these later). But it's the here-to-for unknowns that offer the thrill of the hunt.

The most recent of these 'new' plants is the Hummingbird Sage or Pitcher Sage (*Salvia spathacea*).

According to Lady Bird Johnson's Wildflower Center (<https://www.wildflower.org/>):

This perennial spreads by rhizomes and bears upright stems with several pairs of broad, quilted, light-green, aromatic leaves. The flower spikes rise above the leaves to 2-3 ft. in height and bear large, tubular, magenta-colored flowers.

Photo credit: Antandrus, Gaviota State Park, Santa Barbara County, California



[⇒More⇒](#)

Expanding horizons, cont'd

Sound interesting? It's pretty and attracts hummers, and undoubtedly bees.

This perennial has flower stalks from 1 to 3 feet tall. It blooms from March through May. Its native range is along California coastal areas on open or shaded slopes below 2000 feet.

It wants part shade, rich humus that is well drained. Hardy to USDA zones 8 - 11.



First introduced from the wild into cultivation by British horticulture adventurer, Thomas Payne. According to notes I've found, he was determined to preserve the native flora of California. His description of this plant:

"A robust growing plant with large handsome leaves and spikes of red flowers."

Flowers by the Sea, <http://www.fbts.com/a-gardeners-guide-to-hummingbird-sage.html>

Common to coastal California gardens, it is well used there and makes a fine ground cover, particularly under deciduous trees where it gets good sun in spring and is later shaded a bit when temperatures heat up.

"In the home garden, Salvia spathacea spreads slowly to form a colony of gently mounded foliage. Under favorable conditions, it can grow to about 4 feet wide topped by flower spikes of similar height."

[Photo credit: peganum from Henfield, England](#)



[Photo credit: peganum from Henfield, England](#)

[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Expanding horizons, cont'd

As are most of the wild sages, this one is easily propagated by divisions, rooted sections, or seed sown outdoors in fall.

Although its native range does not reach quite up to Oregon, it seems to me that this beauty might be a candidate for stretching its range. The changing climates can be opportunities to enhance the footprint of this, and other, native plants. In my particular location in Salem, Oregon, there is not really much difference nowadays between western California and the Willamette Valley.

Of course, I've always been a dreamer.

If you are interested in learning what else Theodore Payne did for native wildflowers, visit the Theodore Payne Foundation for Wildflowers and Native Plants, <http://theodorepayne.org>.



Closely related to Hummingbird Sage, this Purple Sage is such a beauty I may have to incorporate some of this plant as well. Photo credit: Dcrjsr



Fleur de lis

Wild Iris of the Pacific Northwest

We are now in the middle of bloom cycle for the wild iris that call this area home. You can see them growing along roadsides, amid grasses, sometimes there's a whole field of them.

Such a delicate appearing plant. The center looks as delicate as a porcelain cup; the fall curves downward, finely etched veins fade into mere shadows of themselves as they end in the slightly rippling edges like a ruffle on a gossamer petticoat.

There are photos of all the wild iris native to California, Oregon, Washington, western Canada, and some as far north as Alaska. My hope is you'll find it easier to identify them--even take a few photos to better remember where they were blooming.

Many have a fine, airy perfume if you can catch a whiff.

Wally firmly believed the wild iris was the inspiration for the fleur de lis. Could that be true?



Iris bracteata, Siskiyou Iris, CA/OR;

Photo credit: John McRae USFS



Photo credit: Ian Poellet, Wildflower with pollinating flies, China Ditch, Oregon
Iris chrysophylla, Yellowleaf Iris, CA/OR



Iris douglasiana,
Douglas Iris, CA/OR

[⇒More⇒](#)

Fleur de lis, cont'd



Photo credit: Stan Shebs

Iris fernaldii, Fernald's Iris, CA



Photo credit: Tom Hilton
Iris hartwegii, Rainbow Iris, CA



Iris innominata,
Del Norte County Iris;
Photo credit: Walter Siegmund



Photo credit: Eric in SF

Iris macrosiphon, Bowltube Iris, CA



Photo credit : Matt Lavin

Iris missouriensis, Western Blue Flag



Iris missouriensis
range map

[⇒More⇒](#)

Fleur de lis, cont'd



Iris munzii, Munz's Iris, CA
Photo credit: Stan Shebs



Iris purdyi, Purdy's Iris, CA/OR
Photo credit: Tom Hilton



Iris setosa, Beachhead Iris, AL/CAN+
Photo credit: Qwert1234



Iris setosa var. *setosa*, Beachhead
Iris, range map



Iris setosa, Beachhead Iris,
range map

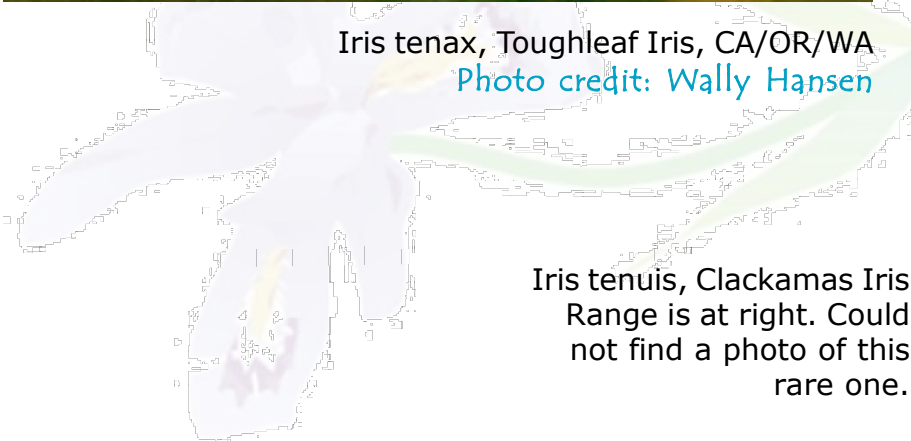
This native iris looks a lot like those found in catalogs and some retail stores, usually named Japanese Iris or some variation thereof. It's best to rely on the Latin names, which are accepted over the world I think.

[More](#)

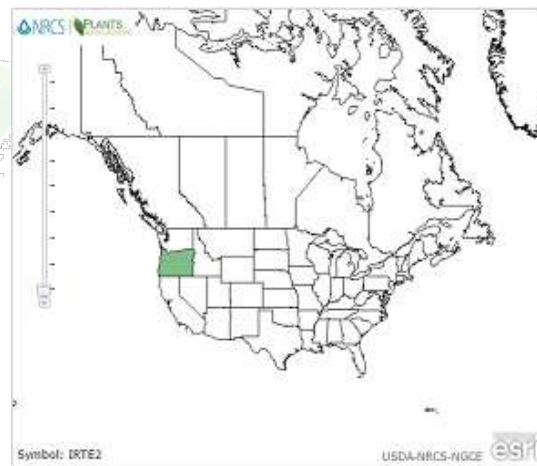
Fleur de lis, cont'd



Iris tenuissima, Longtube Iris, CA
Photo credit: Susan Erwin



Iris tenax, Toughleaf Iris, CA/OR/WA
Photo credit: Wally Hansen



Iris tenuis, Clackamas Iris
Range is at right. Could not find a photo of this rare one.



This & That

Notes from Jennifer



All my life I've loved picking flowers and plopping them into a vase to enjoy inside. As a child I'd bring in a fistful of posies to my mother, sure she would be overwhelmed by such a display of beauty. Back then my offering was a typical child's bouquet: mauled dandelions and squished roses from her prized plants, each with a 1 inch stem. Now I bring her a collection of wild flowers, the most choice blooms, cut with care but presented with just as much glee as when I was 3.

Now the neighbor boy brings me bouquets of his mother's flowers. She has such a beautiful garden!

Went for a walk this afternoon with Rob Sandelin, a self-professed Naturalist, Writer, mostly retired teacher. The woods was a quiet place now, bird parents tending the young, intent on their chores. A little farther along, there was a nest of baby coyotes, a sight not often seen if the parents have planned well. He spoke of baby deer mice and a land of ants who tend that part of the woods, though I did not see any.

I highly recommend taking a little time and enjoying a virtual (imaginary) walk about with Rob. Works well in any kind of weather, and at your leisure. "This Week in the Woods" with Rob Sandelin.

Until next time,
Jennifer

I don't know what this flower is. I spotted it driving those back roads I love and stopped to take its picture

