

Volume 2, Issue 10, 2004

December 2004

# Northwest Native Plant Journal

A Monthly Web Magazine

(formerly NW Native Plant Newsletter)

## Happy Holidays

Mariposa Lilies by Don Eastman

Native gardening project plans

Special message from Sparky, the frisky squirrel!

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

# Northwest Native Plant Journal

## A Monthly Web Magazine

(formerly NW Native Plant Newsletter)

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# About this Web Magazine

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.).



Grand Fir (*Abies grandis*)  
© Heidi D. Hansen



# On the Cover

## Willamette University's Star Trees Shining Bright

These Sequoia Redwoods were planted in 1942 to celebrate Willamette University's 100th anniversary. The five magnificent trees were planted with the foresight that a star pattern would be formed. Stand in the center of the trees and look skyward to see a five-pointed star formed by the foliage of the trees against the sky. One of the students who participated in planting the star-shaped grove was Warne Nunn who later became President of the Board of Trustees.

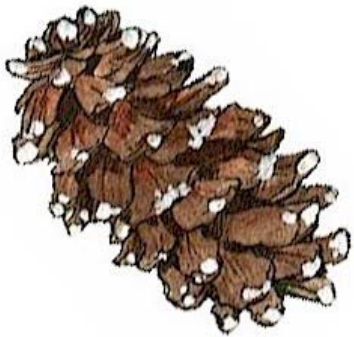


Photo © Jennifer Rehm

The grove, which sits between the state capitol and Collins Hall (home of the science departments), has beside it an Oregon rock of ages. Found atop Ankeny Hill in Salem, the granite boulder floated down from northeastern Washington on an ice raft during the same Missoula Floods that shaped the Columbia River Gorge eons ago.



# Rare plant puzzle

## Identify this plant and get a treat from Wally!

Here's another of our popular and enlightening "mystery" plant puzzles! If you can identify this plant correctly, send an email to Wally at [plants@nwplants.com](mailto:plants@nwplants.com) with the botanical name and we'll send you a high quality print of a Heidi Hansen original botanical watercolor!

Remember, you must send the correct botanical name to win. The clock is ticking--this contest ends December 31.

Here's a hint:

"I like Josephine  
and can get six feet tall!  
I bristle at the thought of being picked  
-- leave me alone!"

Send me an email with your answer before this contest expires on December 31. I'll send you a beautiful treat!

Good luck!  
*Wally*



Photo © Donald C. Eastman





# To Do List

## Caring for your NW Native Plant Garden



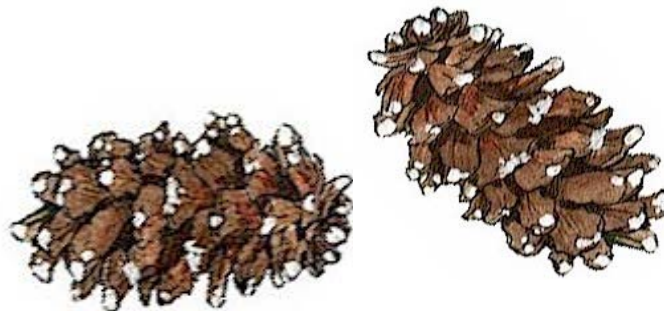
Subalpine Fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*)  
Perfectly wonderful living holiday tree!  
Photo © Wally Hansen

### **Bordeaux - Lime-Sulfur - AGAIN!**

I reminded you about this recently, but it is important for your winter gardens, so I repeat with the danger of boring you! (Wally)

If you have Native Plants in the genus *Malus* (apple), *Prunus* (Cherry) or *Pyrus* (Pear) it is very important that you make one or two applications of Bordeaux or Lime-Sulfur. Bordeaux is a mixture of copper sulfate and hydrated lime. Even if you do not have these plants, I would still apply this to most of your other native deciduous shrubs and trees. I am always impressed at the effectiveness of this “old time” formula for protection against various problems in the Spring!

This mix is rain-fast when sprayed on plants. Both are broad spectrum fungicides and give protection against bacteria. Lime sulfur gives dormant season protection against insects and mites. You might apply early in the winter and later before bud break. This is an old fashion treatment, going back centuries in France, etc, long before modern chemicals. In my opinion, you can be opposed to modern chemical for plants and have a clear conscience in using these ancient, natural methods!



# Sparky's Corner

## A special message from our frisky correspondent

I'm still racing around to get enough food stored for the coming winter but want to remind all of you to be very good to each other during the holidays. This is a busy time, and we need to take a few minutes every day to lend a helping hand wherever possible. If you've got enough of anything to share, do it! And especially share good will. Smile and say "thank you" and sing sometimes. It'll brighten up your day and others will enjoy it too!

**Have yourselves a  
merry holiday season!**

*Sparky*



# Calochortus: Mariposa Lilies

## Photos and plant descriptions by Donald C. Eastman, author and photographer

A genus of more than sixty species, western North America, Canada to Central America' about 25 in Oregon.

Source of species name from Greek kalo meaning "beautiful" and chortos meaning "grass."

### Calochortus greenei Wats.

#### Greene's Mariposa Lily (12 - 16 inches)

Species names comes from Edward Lee greene (1843 - 1915), professor of botany, California, Catholic University of America, and Smithsonian Institution.

Southern Jackson County, Oregon to Siskiyou and Modoc Counties, northern California.

Dry thickets, brushy hillsides. Stem stout, usually branched; leaf solitary, about as tall as flower, one-half inch wide, outer surface of petals lilac, banded at base with yellow and deep lilac, inner surface with dense white hairs changing to yellow toward base; sepals narrowly ovate, slightly over one inch long, greenish with tinge of purple; anthers large, obtuse; capsule one inch, slightly angled.

Threatened throughout its range.

Photographed Siskiyou Pass, Jackson County, Oregon; late June.



Photo by © Donald C. Eastman

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# Calochortus: Mariposa Lilies, continued

## Calochortus howellii Wats.

### Howell's Mariposa Lily (12 - 16 inches)

Species name probably after T.J. Howell, early botanist from Portland, Oregon.

Josephine and Curry Counties, Oregon.

Serpentine rocky soil; hot, dry, wooded areas.

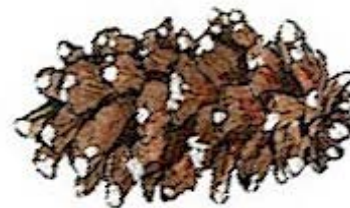
Stems erect, sometimes branched; basal leaf single, slightly longer than scape, one-quarter inch wide; bracts linear, leaf-like, subtend branches to flowers; flowers, one to three, pure white, shading to deep brown on inside near base, densely covered with short white to brown hairs, one inch long; sepals white, very narrow, shorter than petals; anthers oblong, sharp-pointed, brownish; capsule erect, three-quarters inch long, elliptic, acute.

Considered threatened throughout range.

Photographed near Onion Camp Road, south of Eight Dollar Mountain, Josephine County, Oregon; late June.



Photo by © Donald C. Eastman



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# Calochortus: Mariposa Lilies, continued

## Calochortus longebarbatus Wats.

### Var. Peckii Ownbey

#### Long-haired Mariposa Lily

Species name means 'long bearded.' Variety name is for Morton Eaton Peck, professor of Biology at Willamette University who wrote "A Manual of Higher Plants of Oregon" in 1941.

Ochoco Mountains of Central Oregon. Moist grassy areas that dry out in summer.

Stem to 10" tall, corolla campanulate, broad at base, petals 1 1/4" long, lilac color with deep purplish spot near gland on inner surface, gland covered with woolly yellow hairs, long white curly hairs above gland. Sepals narrow, pointed, greenish. Basal leaf nearly as tall as stem, plus narrow, bract-like leaves on stem, and bracts below flower-head.

Very rare, on Endangered Plant List.

Photographed near Deep Creek in Ochocos.

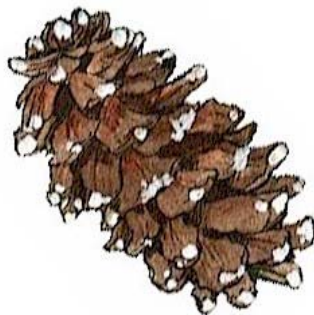


Photo by © Donald C. Eastman

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# Calochortus: Mariposa Lilies, continued

Calochortus bruneauensis Nels. & Macbride.

**Sego Lily (8 - 16 inches)**

Species name geographical referring to Bruneau Canyon, southwest Idaho where plant discovered.

Common name from Paiute Indians of western Utah and adjacent states. State flower of Utah.

Also called Bruneau Mariposa Lily.

Southern Harney and Malheur counties in Oregon; to South Dakota, Utah, New Mexico, California.

Dry sagebrush desert.

Stem stout, bulblet near base; leaves one or two, glabrous, glaucous, four to twelve inches long; flowers two to four; sepals narrow, white, purple spot at base, to one inch long; petals one and one-quarter inches, pure white with purple and yellow "eyes" at base of inner surface, yellow hairs over yellow "eye," abruptly pointed, slightly recurved; anthers yellow to blue to reddish-brown; capsule linear-lanceolate, angled, erect, to two inches long.

Rare in Oregon although dropped from Endangered List.

Photographed in Alvord Desert, Harney County, Oregon; early June.



Photo by © Donald C. Eastman

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# Calochortus: Mariposa Lilies, continued

## Calochortus umpquaensis Fredricks.

### Umpqua Mariposa Lily (12 - 15 inches)

Name refers to geographical location.

Recently differentiated from Calochortus howellii Wats. as a new and distinct species.

North Umpqua River drainage, Douglas County, Oregon. Second population recently discovered on a hill south of Tiller.

Serpentine rock and soil, open areas.

Foliage glabrous and glaucous, basal leaf one, slightly taller than stem; cauline leaf one, small, clasping; bracts leaf-like, subtend branching flower stems; flowers, two to five, showy; petals pure white, one and one-half inches long, broad near apex, hairless on outer surface, inner surface extremely white-hairy from margin to gland at base; gland dark brown, thickly covered with dark brown hairs; sepals narrow, pointed, three-quarters length of petals; anthers yellowish, sharp-pointed; stigma deeply triple-divided; capsule large, strongly three-ribbed, pendulous.

Endangered throughout range with legal status in Oregon.

Photographed by Little River, Couglas County, Oregon; late May.



Photo by © Donald C. Eastman

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# Calochortus: Mariposa Lilies, continued

Calochortus monophyllus (Lindl.) Lem.

**Yellow Cat's Ear (4 - 10 inches)**

Also called Yellow Star Tulip.

Species name means "one-leaved."

Newly discovered in Oregon, near summit of Grizzly Peak, Jackson County. A species of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, California.

Sedimentary basalt on Grizzly Peak; wooded slopes in Sierras.

Perennial herb from membranous coated corm; stem flexuous, simple or sparingly branched; basal leaf one, four to twelve inches long, about one-quarter inch wide; cauline leaves none to three, linear lanceolate; flowers one to six, bright yellow with reddish spot at base of petals; sepals glabrous, yellow, lanceolate, three-quarters inch long; petals obovate, clawed, three-quarters inch long, densely bearded above gland; gland transverse, naked; anthers pale yellow, apiculate, one-eighth inch; capsules elliptic, nodding, three-quarters inch.

Extremely rare in Oregon.

Photographed at Glide Wildflower show; late April.



Photo by © Donald C. Eastman

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# Calochortus: Mariposa Lilies, continued

## Calochortus tolmiei H. & A.

### **Tolmie's Mariposa Lily (8 - 10 inches)**

Genus name for William Fraser Tolmie (1812 - 1868), physician from Scotland and collector of plants along the Columbia River during 1830's.

Also called Tolmie's Pussy Ears, Tolmie's Star Tulip, Oregon Mariposa Lily.

West of Cascades, Willamette Valley to Josephine County in Oregon; north to Washington, south to central California.

Dry, open grassy areas, lowland valleys to subalpine.

Stem simple, erect, forked, two to several flowers; basal leaf flat, four to twelve inches, cauline leaves few and narrow; flowers erect or spreading, white to cream color, tinged with purple, densely hairy over entire inner surface of petals, three-quarters inch long; sepals dull lilac, half the width of petals, somewhat shorter; anthers whitish-lavender, one-quarter inch long; capsule elliptic, nodding, three-winged, about one inch long.

Common in its range.

Photographed at Hugo Rest Area, Josephine County, Oregon; early May.



Photo by © Donald C. Eastman

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# Calochortus: Mariposa Lilies, continued

Calochortus elegans Pursh var. nanus Wood.

**Elegant Cats Ear (3 - 6 inches)**

Name refers to its beauty.

Other common names: Northwest Mariposa, Elegant Mariposa Lily, Elegant Star Tulip.

Mountains of northwest Oregon, disjunct to mountains of southwest Oregon; to southeast Washington, Idaho, Montana, northern California.

Dry mountain slopes, coniferous forests, grassy hillsides.

Stem slender; cauline leaf, from near ground level, much longer than scape; flowers one to three, erect or drooping; sepals purplish, lanceolate, slightly shorter than petals; petals three-quarters inch long, white with purple at base, broad, obovate, pointed, hairy on inner surface except at tip and at base; stamens purplish, with thin projecting point at tip; stigmas sessile, spreading; capsule broad, nodding, nearly two inches long.

Common in its range.

Photographed at Dutchman Peak, Jackson County, Oregon; late May.



Photo by © Donald C. Eastman

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# Calochortus: Mariposa Lilies, continued

## Calochortus coeruleus (Kell.) Wats.

### Blue Star Tulip, Beavertail-Grass

Species name Latin for “sky blue.”

Curry County, Oregon, northern California.

Open, gravelly places in woods, 35000' - 75000.'

Stem simple, slender, erect to flexuous, about 5" tall, basal leaf 8" - 10" tall, flowers bluish, sepals lance-oblong, petals obovate, clawed, bearded.

Rather uncommon in Oregon, but not listed as rare or endangered.

Photographed on Timberline Road in Curry County, Oregon.

See our next issue for the conclusion of this article!

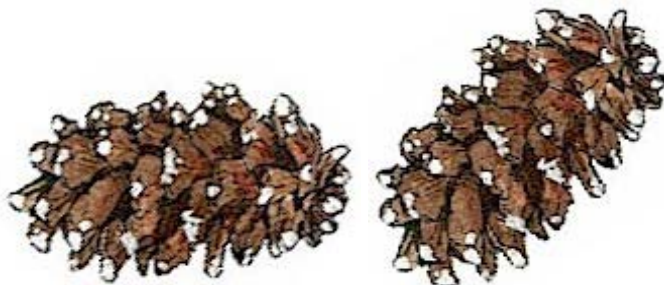


Photo by © Donald C. Eastman





# Green Holidays

Jennifer Rehm, Webmaster and Chief Staff Writer for Wally's nursery, Master Recycler for Marion County Extension Service in cooperation with OSU.

Tips to make the annual holiday season less stressful for our planet. As native plant lovers, we all understand the importance of the three R's: Reduce, Re-use and Recycle. Non-invasive and completely natural, Northwest Native plants are key to the health of our planet.

## Holiday tree: Think Living Native!

If you are tired of picking up pine needles from the floor or bending wire branches to resemble a real tree, give yourself a true gift—a live container-grown Northwest Native Tree. It's a choice that has the good points going for it and eliminates the negatives associated with a pretend tree in a box (artificial) or a cut “dead” tree (yes, once a tree is cut, it dies!). Here are some of the benefits of having a living holiday tree:

- Cost savings. You may pay as much for a living tree as you would for a dead one, but you can plant your living tree in the landscape after the holidays. Don't need one in your yard? Give it to a friend, a school, a neighborhood park, a church, a cemetery, etc.
- Clean. A living tree does not shed needles, does not need a new cut in the trunk, does not need a tree stand, smells wonderful—much more fragrant than a dead tree. It also helps clean the air in your home.
- Good for the earth. Living trees do not contribute to deforestation and they do contribute to clean air, clean water, and they enrich the soil.
- More choices. You can select from a large number of Northwest Native evergreen trees for your living tree. There's a perfect choice for all styles of trees and decor.
- This is a good time to add a tree that will attract birds and other wildlife. See our website at [www.nwplants.com](http://www.nwplants.com) for tips on building a wildlife habitat in your yard.



Photo by © Jennifer Rehm

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# Green Holidays, continued

## Living Holiday trees--what to choose

For a traditional full look, we suggest

- Pacific Silver Fir (*Abies amabilis*)
- White Fir (*Abies concolor*)
- Grand Fir (*Abies grandis*)
- Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)

For a southwestern or high desert look, try

- Sub-Alpine Fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*)
- Noble Fir (*Abies procura*)
- Giant Sequoia (*Sequoia giganteum*)
- Coast Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*)

For a more unusual and striking tree,

- Western or Pacific Yew (*Taxus brevifolia*)
- Baker's or Modoc Cypress (*Cupressus bakeri*—rare and very choice)
- Leland Cypress (*Cupressocyparis leylandii*)
- Sitka Spruce (*Picea sitchensis*)
- Western Hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*)

Or Northwest Native cedars such as

- Incense Cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*—divine fragrance)
- Port Orford Cedar (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*)
- Alaska Cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*)

If you're cramped for space, try the beautiful, fragrant and striking

- Western Red Cedar aka Giant Arborvitae (*Thuja plicata*)
- Englemann Spruce (*Picea engelmannii*)

Have a more Oriental look with

- Brewer's or Weeping Spruce (*Picea breweriana*)
- Mountain Hemlock (*Tsuga martensiana*)



Photo by © Jennifer Rehm

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# Green Holidays, continued

Here are some tips for caring for your living holiday tree:



Photo by © Jennifer Rehm

Buy just the right size of a tree for the space it will occupy in your home, but remember how the tree will look when it grows up.

A tree in a container or one with its roots wrapped in burlap will both work well for your living tree.

Store your new tree in a cool area outdoors where it will have wind protection until you are ready to bring it inside. A couple of days before you bring it in, move it to an unheated garage or other enclosure. You must limit the time spent in the home to 10 days, so plan on a place for it to rest until it's time to bring indoors. This is the most important factor in the survival of your new tree—don't keep it inside too long! If you do, it may think it's springtime and when you plant it outdoors where it is still winter, the tree will suffer a shock. Don't confuse your tree!

Check your tree each week to make sure it has enough water. You want the tree to be as healthy as possible when it makes its debut as a living holiday tree.

As soon as possible after purchasing your tree, decide where you will plant your tree and dig the hole. Make sure to dig a large enough hole for the root ball to relax. Place a board or other cover over the hole until planting time. It's a good idea to put some mulch either in the hole or over the board so it will be handy when you plant your tree. Be sure to save the dirt from the hole, you'll need it for planting. If your tree is large or the area is windy, drive some

support stakes where they'll be needed.

Put the burlap root ball or nursery pot in a big plastic bag or other waterproof solution so you can water your tree while it's inside.

Water carefully! Not too much, not too little! Allow it to just barely dry out and then water well but don't let it stand in water. As soon as the tree gets a good drink, take out any excess water (a turkey baster is a good tool for this).

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# Green Holidays, continued

Display your tree in a large pot or cover the waterproofed nursery pot with a nice tree skirt or other covering. A quilt makes a lovely country style cover. Use satin or velvet for an elegant appearance. Cotton or polyester batting looks like snow. Some clean burlap will go nicely in a homespun setting.

Make a very unusual cover by weaving old ribbons through chicken wire or hardware cloth—sturdy and beautiful.

Place your living holiday tree carefully indoors. Avoid direct sunlight. Keep away from any heat source such as furnace vents or fireplaces and try to keep the temperature inside a little on the cool side, especially at night.

You can decorate your tree with all the usual things—lights (miniatures please), colorful ornaments, garland.

After the holidays, if you are planting your tree, do so as soon as possible but don't take it immediately outside.



Photo by © Jennifer Rehm

Trees don't usually move around much on their own so it's best to take it outside in stages. Move to a garage or unheated area of the home for several days, then outside in a protected space for several more days, then finally to its new home. If you get a cold snap in the weather on planting day, wait until the temperatures are in the 30's before planting.

If your tree's root ball is wrapped in burlap, place it in the hole and then cut and remove any strings or wire. The burlap will compost right in the hole so there's no need to take it out. Fill in the hole with the dirt you reserved, mulch well and water thoroughly. Check your new tree often during its first year to make sure it has enough water. A nice thing to do is place a permanent marker beside the tree that tells what year you planted it and any special family events that happened during the holidays.

If your tree came in a pot, return the empty pot to the nursery. Or, you can use it yourself to plant some Fawn lilies (*Erythronium oreganum*) to bloom in the spring. Maybe a little vignette for a shaded patio of trillium, Deer Fern (*Blechnum spicant*), Licorice Fern (*Polypodium glycyrrhiza*), Wild Ginger (*Asarum caudatum*), Fairy Slipper (*Calypso bulbosa*), or other small Northwest Native perennial.

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# Green Holidays, continued

An alternative to planting out in the landscape is to keep the tree in a container. You can use it as a living holiday tree for many years if you've selected one that does not grow too large too quickly. If you choose this route, it's nice to get a plant dolly (just a frame with wheels) to make it easier to move around. Also, plant a nice Northwest Native groundcover such as Kinnikinnik (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) as a living mulch to help prevent drying out.

## If you must have a dead tree, re-use it if possible and then dispose of it responsibly.

Many areas provide a chipping service for dead trees. For a small fee you can have your tree chopped into mulch that will be used in parks or other public places.

Use your dead tree as a model to see how a real tree will look in your garden. Stick it in the ground where you are considering a Northwest Native tree to observe how it will look. You can move it around to find just the right spot.

Turn the dead tree into a bird or squirrel feeding station. Tie it to any upright structure (fence post, clothesline pole, etc.) or set it into the ground. Decorate with suet cakes, seed balls, garlands of cranberries. Cut oranges in half, scoop out the pulp and fill with suet, tie on the tree with raffia.

Cut it up and use the pieces. The branches and needles make a good mulch. The trunk can be used in a twig construction or as a bean pole or tomato stake. On May 1, get all the neighborhood kids together and make a Maypole!

## Green-wise Gifts:

Our favorite gift is a Gift Certificate. Why? Let me count the ways:

- You can get them in any amount.
- Many of them are beautiful
- They never need to be returned (the recipient chooses what they want!).
- Always the right size and color.
- All plants are earth-friendly—no alien, invasive plants allowed!
- Wrapping is a breeze!



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# Green Holidays, continued

## Make your own decorations.

This is a great family affair. String popcorn and cranberries (use to decorate outside trees and shrubs after the holidays as a treat for the birds). Make garlands out of any colorful paper or fabric. Hint: magazines are colorful! Cut snowflakes out of newspaper or junk mail.

## Share those leftovers!

Do you have lots of leftovers from your feast? Package it up and take it to the nearest shelter for homeless people or abused women and children. Take it to elderly friends. Call any church or community help organization and ask if they can use it. Many have lists of folks in need. Don't let good food go to waste.

## It's a wrap!

Avoid using "gift wrap" at all times. Note: there are special papers made from recycled materials and printed with soy ink that are better than regular "commercial" gift wrap. While these are not harmful to nature, they are considered by many to be a waste of time, energy and money. According to a publication by ULS Report and Earth Share, if every family re-used just 2 feet of holiday ribbon, the 38,000 miles of ribbon saved could tie a bow around the entire planet!



Give gifts that do not need wrapping.

Remember that gift certificate idea?

Or buy a Northwest Native plant for all your friends and family. Small ones can be container plants, big ones can go in the landscape. I gave some newly married friends a pair of Giant Sequoia (*Sequoia giganteum*) and suggested they take them out to a spot in the wilderness that was special to them and plant them. Then go visit on each anniversary.

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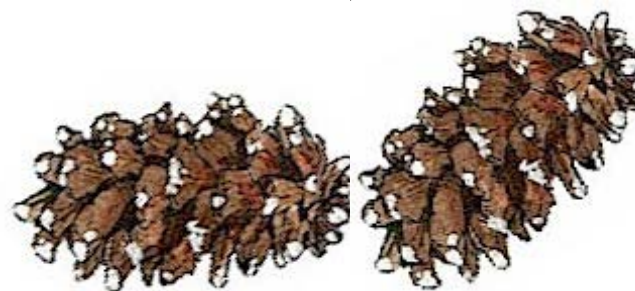
# Green Holidays, continued

## Give your time or talents.

- Tend someone's garden—mulch or clean up leaves and debris from stormy weather.
- Clean out someone's gutters.
- Wash someone's car each month for a year.
- Take somebody shopping.
- Volunteer to baby-sit.
- Clean the outside of someone's windows.
- Teach someone to play piano or paint a picture or weave a basket (Northwest Native willows make great basket material).
- A friend of Jennifer's once created a simple casserole recipe and taught her children how to make it for dinner.

## Make the wrapping a part of the gift.

- Use material remnants and scraps of ribbon or trimming on a gift for someone who sews.
- Put kitchen utensils or gifts of food in a dishtowel.
- Fill gardening gloves with seeds, small tools, gardener's soap, hand lotion and tuck in a sprig of Incense Cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*).
- Buy containers at yard sales—baskets, pretty tins, fabric boxes—and create your own gift baskets.
- An ancient custom from the Orient is to wrap gifts in a beautiful scarf tied in the shape of a flower (there are special scarves made just for this purpose).
- Give everybody a fabric shopping bag filled with homemade cookie mixes and a wooden spoon or tea blends and some crochet slippers.



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# Green Holidays, continued

Use newspaper for a wrapper.

If someone gives you a gift wrapped in commercial paper, for earth's sake re-use it. Don't burn it in the fireplace or try to compost it unless it's made of recycled material.

If you have ideas for good ways to love our earth, please email them to me at [chillipepper6@comcast.net](mailto:chillipepper6@comcast.net).

## Visit the Green Gift Guide:

This is a wonderful website from the California Department of Conservation. It's dedicated to the very concepts we talk about here. See them on the web at <http://www.greengiftguide.com/>

## Thanks to the following for great information:

- Purdue University
- Alabama A&M University
- Auburn University
- University of Illinois Extension Service  
[www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/champaign/homeowners/hc991127.html](http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/champaign/homeowners/hc991127.html)
- Creative Twist of Salem Oregon
- Colorado State University
- ULS Report
- Earth Share
- Smith County (Texas) Master Gardeners
- Marion County (Oregon) Master Recyclers
- Home and Garden Television  
[http://www.hgtv.com/hgtv/gl\\_trees\\_shrubs/article/0,,HGTV\\_3643\\_1383738,00.html](http://www.hgtv.com/hgtv/gl_trees_shrubs/article/0,,HGTV_3643_1383738,00.html)
- Green Tips by the Union of Concerned Scientists  
[http://www.ucsusa.org/publications/green\\_tips.cvm?publicationID=727](http://www.ucsusa.org/publications/green_tips.cvm?publicationID=727)



# Update on Growing Calypso Bulbosa

## (Fairy Slipper Orchid)

Article by nurseryman and native plant lover Wallace W Hansen

From time to time I talk about my long-range project of growing this beautiful NW orchid, from seed. After some earlier activity, I backed off on active propagation until more research was done. The following is a summary of what I have learned to date. Please - feel free to comment and send me your experiences!

This orchid is found around the world in the Northern Hemisphere in this latitude and Northward. Some plants occur here in my nursery on which I have experimented a little. From my limited research and current literature, I present the following update on growing this elusive beauty.

Because all wild orchids are protected by Federal Law, the only proper way to propagate this stunning plant is to grow it from seed. To my knowledge as far as Federal Regulation is concerned, it is legal to collect and use seed if needed permission is obtained from the owner. The process described below is based on seed propagation.

After cleaning the seeds and partly drying, they are placed in vitro in agar, to germinate. Agar is extracted and purified from red algae, jellied into a solid form. (It is used for culturing bacteria.)

Here is how an expert in Norway, Mr. Are E Regler grows his calypso. He uses a mix of fine grade pine bark, perlite, sand, conifer needles and a little bit of crushed charcoal. The bulb is placed 1/3 down in this growing media and live green moss from boulders in the nearby conifer forest is placed on top of the bulb and area concerned. The moss must be kept alive and should be misted with regularity. The bulbs should grow rapidly.

In this part of the world, 45<sup>th</sup> parallel in Oregon, orchids bloom in April and shortly afterward, they go dormant (disappear!) With the first rain in September – October, a green leaf appears and remains until after blooming in the spring and the cycle repeats.

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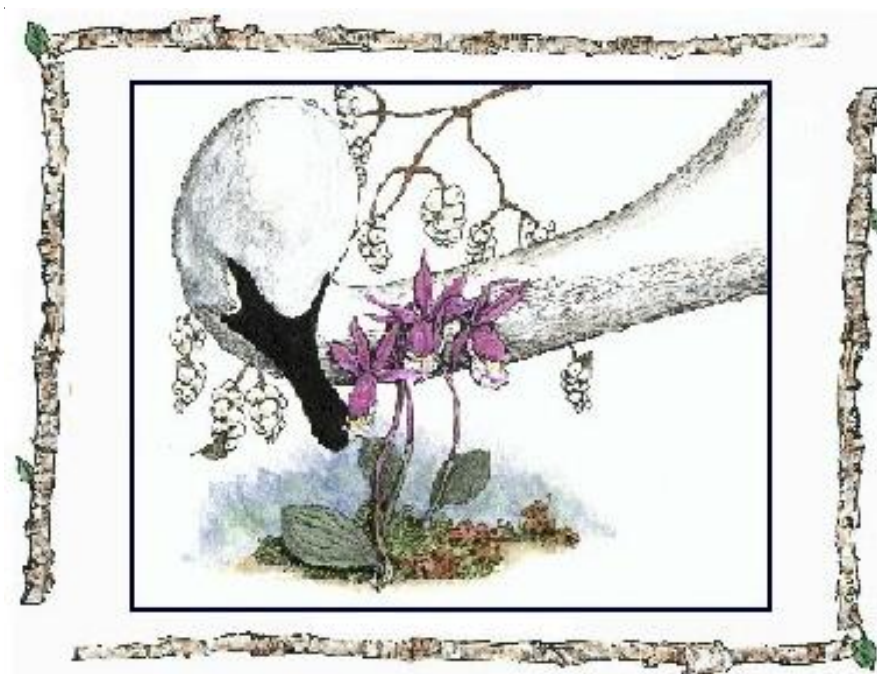
Watercolor painting © Heidi Hansen

# Growing Calypso Bulbosa, continued

Finally, here is a sort of forlorn, “lost love” poem I wrote to this heartless beauty, a few years ago!

## On Taming The Fairy Slipper

From around the world in Northern Climes,  
Alaska, Labrador, Norway – East and West  
The little Orchid of the cool, damp Forests  
Daughter of Aurora Borealis  
When cool days and long nights return in the Fall  
You send one leaf up from your summer sleep  
And bravely hold your place till Spring  
Then, miracles and wonders! –  
The beautiful exotic Fairy Slipper displays again  
Her Royal Purple raiment, proof positive  
Of Royal Heritage and superior Social Order  
Unseen tiny Woodland Fairies, dance attendance -  
The Giant Firs and Spruce bow to her sovereignty  
For one month this beauty reigns  
Then sinks below the moss  
As warm days and short nights loom.  
And I, in my humble nursery, vow to tame this  
Wild Beauty and make her grow against her will  
In neat nursery rows, pampered, prime and proper,  
But free no more!  
And if I do, how will I feel? - Perhaps  
To free her once again before I sink below the moss.



Trumpeter Swan, Calypso Bulbosa and Snowberry  
“Triumph over Winter” © Heidi Hansen





# The Transformation of a Garden

By Jennifer Rehm

Once a common landscape in Salem, Oregon, a determined woman transforms her yard to a NW Native masterpiece (I hope).



Photo © 2004 Jennifer Rehm

So many plants, so many choices! My head is reeling with the delectable decisions to be made on exactly which Northwest Native plants to put exactly where in my front yard.

Should I go formal? An unusual choice for native plants but most certainly possible.

Or natural? A 'natural' thing to do with native plants.

What about edible elements? I don't do much vegetable gardening but the idea of harvesting the same delicious food my ancestors enjoyed definitely appeals.

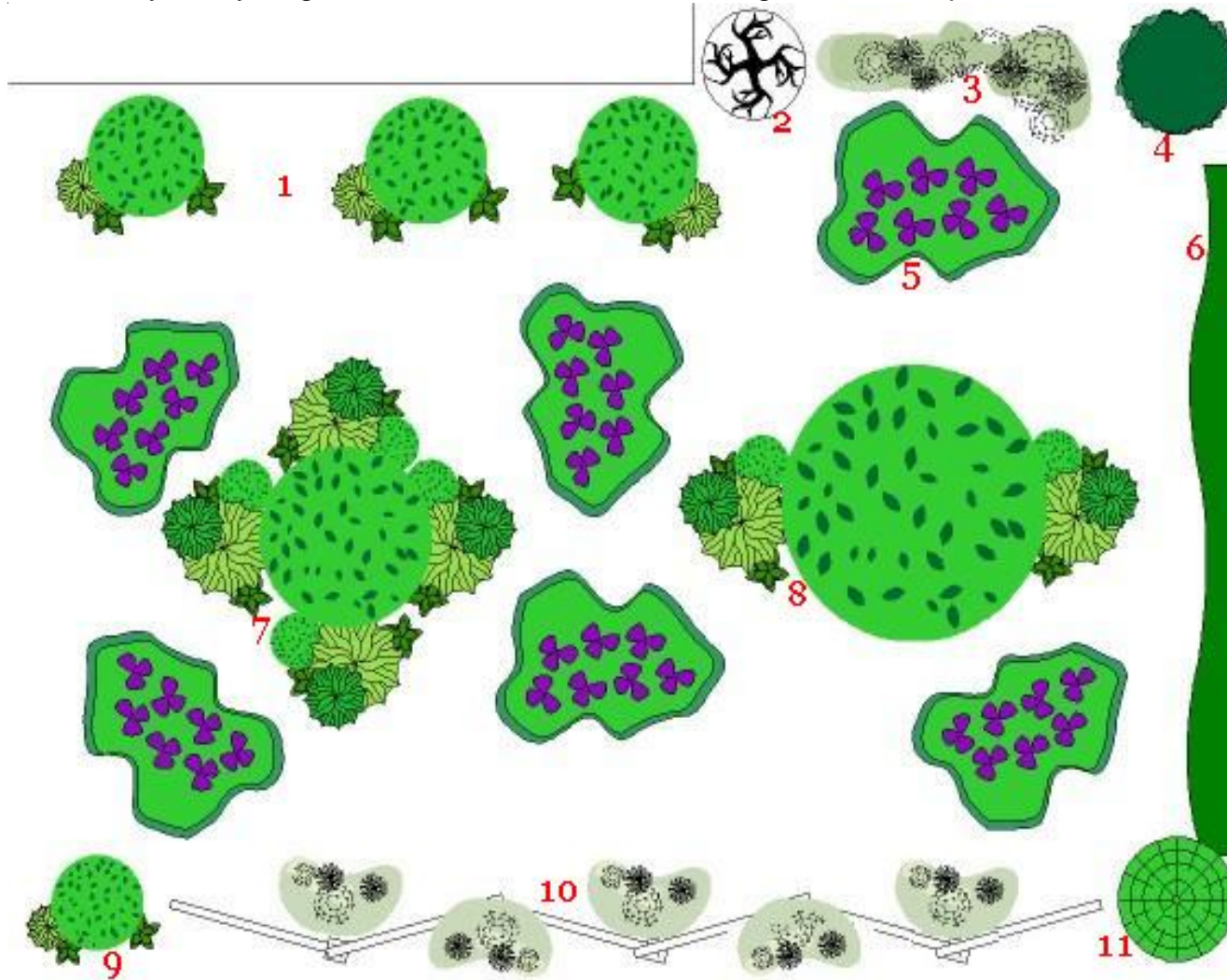
While I was pondering this pleasurable dilemma, Sparky shared a thought: why not make it a wildlife habitat? (Why doesn't this surprise me!)

Maybe a combination, something like a formal wildlife habitat? No, that doesn't seem to work. The intended visitors aren't really into formal venues. But an edible garden for people and wildlife, now that's more like it. I do adore welcoming furry and feathered friends for their helpfulness in keeping down populations of slugs and other undesirables as well as their amusing antics.

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# The Transformation of a Garden, continued

This is my favorite plan so far. It combines the existing elements I will keep plus some edible plants that can be enjoyed by wildlife as well as people. There are three Rhodies, a Vine Maple, some nice Maidenhair Fern, a Yew, a big Maple tree, a Box and a Arborvitae hedge that will stay. Everything else in this sketch is new. Following is a list of the plants in each numbered grouping.



1. The three Rhodies, beneath which I imagine some Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra formosa*) and Woodland Strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*).
2. The Vine Maple (*Acer circinatum*).
3. The Maidenhair Ferns (*Adiantum pedatum*) with Twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*) and Wild Ginger and a Devil's Club (*Ophopanax horridum*).
4. The Yew.
5. Kinnikinnik (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) and Creeping Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus* v. *lavigatus*) groundcovers.
6. The Giant Arborvitae (*Thuja plicata*).
7. A Douglas Hawthorn (*Crataegus douglasii*) surrounded by Western Redbud (*Cercus occidentalis*), Pacific Ninebark (*Physocarpus capitatus*) with Salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) in between. There is an old crabapple in this spot now but it was damaged last winter and needs to be removed.

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# Transformation, continued

8. The Douglas Maple (*Acer glabrum*), surrounded by Mock Orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*) and Red Elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*) with more Salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) in between.
9. The Box with Bear Grass (*Xerophyllum tenax*) in the front and Blue-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium douglasii*) behind.
10. A split-rail fence along the street woven with Snowberry (*Symphocarpus albus*) and Wild Roses on either side. To soften the edges of this, some Indian Hyacinth (*Camassia quamash*), Colorado Columbine (*Aquilegia coerulea*), Douglas Iris (*Iris douglasiana*) and Oregon Iris (*Iris tenax*).
11. Finally, a Brewer's Spruce (*Picea breweriana*) gracefully arching toward the fence.

This is probably not the final version but it has all the features I want--year-round interest, lots of flowers, fruit for birds and people, pieces I can harvest for crafts and decoration.



If any of you readers have ideas you'd like to share, I'd love to hear about them. Send an email to me at [chillipepper6@comcast.net](mailto:chillipepper6@comcast.net). I'll write up your suggestions in our next journal (no names mentioned of course!). In the meantime, I'll see if Sparky has anything he'd especially like included.

## How much did it cost?

Here's the itemized price list for everything so far.

### Materials:

Black plastic,	
250 x 20 ft roll	\$35.00
Fasteners	\$12.50
Organic compost,	
2 yards @	
\$18 per yard	\$36.00
Mint compost,	
5 yards @ \$16	
per yard plus	
distance fee for	
delivery	\$98.00

**Total Materials \$181.50**

### Labor:

Initial laying of plastic	\$10
Spreading compost	Trade 4
	hours of
	computer
	work

**Total Labor \$10**

**Grand Total \$191.50**





# Useful Plant Databases on the Web

Here is a good collection of web data bases that will be useful to professional growers and all native plant gardeners. This list is from a larger list compiled by Lawyer Nursery in 2002 and published in one of their flyers. I wish to thank them for this public service.

*Wally*

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## **American Bonsai Society**

[http://www.absbonsai.org/abs\\_home.html](http://www.absbonsai.org/abs_home.html)

## **Bonsai web**

<http://www.bonsaiweb.com>

Portal of links to educate about the art of bonsai.

## **CalPhotos**

<http://elib.cs.berkeley.edu/photos/>

Over 33,000 plant images from the University of California, Berkley

## **Cornell University online grafting course**

<http://instruct1.cit.cornell.edu/courses/hort494/graftage/hort494.index.html>

## **Fire effects on plant species**

<http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/>

USDA, Forest Service site.

## **Flora of North America Web Site**

<http://hua.huh.harvard.edu/FNA/>

Taxonomic relationships, distributions, and morphological characteristics of all plants native and naturalized found in North America.



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# Useful Plant Databases on the Web, continued

## **Bonsai web**

<http://www.bonsaiweb.com>

Portal of links to educate about the art of bonsai.

## **Fire effects on plant species**

<http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/>

USDA, Forest Service site.

## **Forest Types of the United States**

<http://forestry.about.com/library/tree/bltypdex.htm>

Maps of the most common forest types.

## **Forestry index**

<http://forestryindex.net/>

Links to news & info on the forestry industry.

## **Cornell University online grafting course**

<http://instruct1.cit.cornell.edu/courses/hort494/graftage/hort494.index.html>

## **Growit.com Rooting Database**

<http://www.growit.com/Know/Rooting.htm>

“Extensive information on rooting cuttings of woody plants, organized by botanical name. Developed for commercial growers.”

## **The Native Plant Network**

<http://nativeplants.for.uidaho.edu/network/>

Information on how to propagate native plants of North America.



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# Useful Plant Databases on the Web, continued

## **Woody Plant Seed Manual**

<http://www.wpsm.net/>

Manual by the US Forest Service covering seed biology, genetic improvement of forest trees, seed testing, certification of tree seeds and other woody plant materials, and nursery practices.

## **River Corridor and Wetland Restoration**

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/restore/>

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) site

## **Soils**

<http://homepages.which.net/~fred.moor/soil/links/10102.htm>

A website about soil fertility, chemistry, and pH with many interesting links.

## **Soil Science Society of America**

<http://www.soils.org/>

Website for soil science professionals. Offers information and links.





# Coming next issue:

## January Journal--Planning your spring garden!



More Mariposa Lilies from Don Eastman



Winter garden interest



Calypso orchids: notes on growing



Plans for our landscape makeover project



And more!



© Heidi Hansen



# Personal notes from Wally

(Note from Wally – I sent this to some of you about four years ago - I thought you might enjoy reading it again)

“The days grow short when you reach December” - an old song with a touch of melancholy. I guess we need a bit of melancholy once in awhile so as to know the beauty, the joys, the wonder, the mysteries, the miracles of life.

For our native gardens here in the Northwest, December is the beginning of the beginning of another wonderful cycle of life.

Walk in your gardens in the early twilight. Stay out until it is dark. Breathe the cool, damp air – sense the stirrings of life and energy and vitality all around you.

There is a time for Spring, a Time for Summer, a Time for Fall and yes, a time for Winter.

At first glance the winter garden looks rather desolate – a time of decay, of sorrow - look again! Note the plump fresh buds on the maples and dogwoods – scrape away some soil from the Columbines and see the new life. Try to spot a Fairy Slipper – with new growth leaves, but too early for flowers. They are all waiting for a bit more warmth – a bit more light and then they will give the master of the garden another beautiful, wonderful treat - again!

So starts another cycle of endless cycles which stretch backwards into the womb of time and forward into the unknowable future.

Be grateful for your gardens!– Work in your Gardens - Be grateful for life with it's endless mysteries and beauty and even some melancholy - how can we know joy without knowing sorrow?

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year**

*Wally*





**NOTICE: NURSERY IS CLOSED**

**In November 2010,  
Wallace W Hansen Northwest Native Plants  
Native Plant Nursery and Gardens  
closed permanently.**

**Many thanks to all our gardening friends for your  
interest in the native plants of the Pacific north-  
west. It has been our pleasure to serve you.**



**[www.nwplants.com](http://www.nwplants.com)**

**Our website, [www.nwplants.com](http://www.nwplants.com), is  
no longer commercial. Our goal is to  
continue Wally's legacy of generating  
interest, even passion, in the  
magnificent native plants of the  
Pacific Northwest through  
information and illustration.**

**Good luck! Good gardening!**



Photo by © Jennifer Rehm