

Volume 6, Issue 1-2008

January 2008

# Northwest Native Plant Journal

A Monthly Web Magazine

## 2008: The year of the garden

Winter and wildlife, a winning combination  
Recycling junk into garden art

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

# Northwest Native Plant Journal

## A Monthly Web Magazine

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### In Every Issue

About this Journal.....3

On the Cover.....4

Mystery Plant Puzzle

***Name this plant and get a  
10% discount on the plant  
of your choice!.....5***

Garden chores to do now.....6

Sparky's Corner.....7

Notes from the editor.....31



### Features

A different way to recycle

Using found treasures!.....9

Native garden in winter

More than just leaves and flowers .....18

Native Plant Resources

Information at your fingertips.....33

January is here, with eyes that keenly glow,  
A frost-mailed warrior  
striding a shadowy steed of snow.  
- Edgar Fawcett

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# About this Web Magazine



Sword Fern in the snow  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

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.).



“Nature has undoubtedly mastered the art of winter gardening and even the most experienced gardener can learn from the unrestrained beauty around them.” —Vincent A. Simeone, in “Wonders of the Winter Landscape”



# On the Cover



There are two seasonal diversions that can ease the bite of any winter.  
One is the January thaw. The other is the seed catalogues.  
- Hal Borland

## Black-Crowned Night Heron

Native to the continental US, the Black-Crowned Night Heron official species designation is *Nycticorax nycticorax* (Linnaeus, 1758) — bihoreau gris, Black-crowned Night Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Pedrete corona negra.

This particular bird was photographed at Fergus Falls, Minnesota, by Sharon Stiteler, aka Birdchick.

I made her acquaintance recently in cyberspace and requested permission to use some of her photographs in our journal. She graciously accepted with the caveat that I provide the following information.

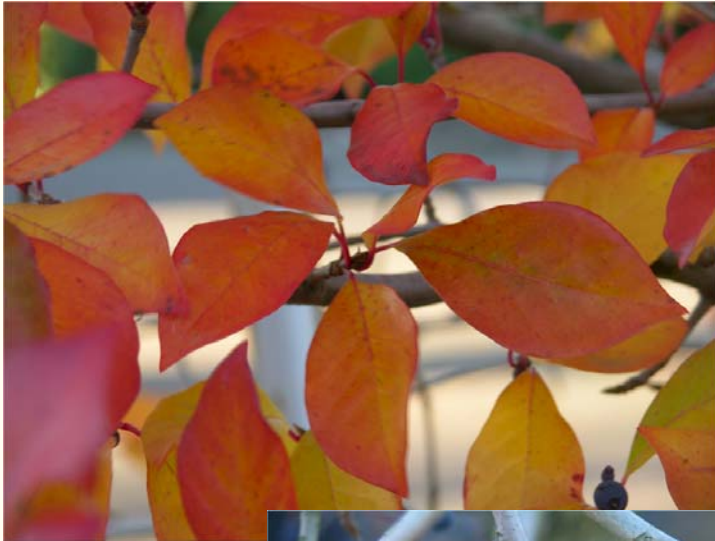
Photo by Sharon Stiteler  
[www.birdchick.com](http://www.birdchick.com)  
[www.disapprovingrabbits.com](http://www.disapprovingrabbits.com)

I selected this shot for our cover because I knew you would enjoy it as much as I do.

Many thanks, Birdchick!



# Mystery Plant Puzzle



Photos by JoAnn Onstott

## **Name this plant!**

JoAnn found this tree and took its picture but we have not identified it. Anybody know what it is? The fall color is very nice and the berries look edible. In fact, they bear a striking resemblance to our native huckleberries--but this is a tree, not a shrub. Is there such a thing as a huckleberry tree?

Send an email to [nwplants@gmail.com](mailto:nwplants@gmail.com) with the correct botanical name of this plant. We'll give a 10% discount on the plant of your choice if you are the first to identify it!

**Good luck!**

*Wally*

## **Answer to last Journal's puzzle:**

?????????????

**It's still a mystery! I surely do hope somebody will let us know what that shrub is. It may not be a native!**

Here's to thee, old apple tree  
Whence thou mayest bud  
Whence thou mayest blow  
Whence thou mayest bear apples enow.  
-Wassailing Songs, England, January 5th





# To Do List

Birdhouses from found objects

## Caring for your NW Native Plant Garden

**1** – In the northwest, we have had some extremely wet days causing drainage problems. You may need to dig a trench through areas that do not drain properly. This can be just a temporary situation but if it happens often, consider a French drain or tiling. If you're not up to digging a trench, you can try aerating the ground with a spading fork. This won't fix a permanent problem, but it might alleviate immediate standing water.

**2** – Clean up any debris from wind damage. Cut broken branches below the break. Take down any "widow makers" before they fall on their own.

**3** – Inspect mulch around trees and shrubs for rodent infestation. Rodents will sometimes burrow into mulch and make a little cave where they can feast on the soft bark of the plants in a cozy environment.

**4** – Keep a close eye on bird and squirrel feeders if you use them. Water will often be frozen this time of year and our little friends will have a hard time finding a drink. Consider a bird bath warmer for your wildlife garden.



**5** – Weeds grow well in the most hostile conditions. It's much easier to pull them out when the ground is moist and they are young. A little weeding now will save hours later in the year. But careful identification is key. A lot of desirable plants look just like not so nice ones. Make sure you're pulling the unwanted plants instead of newly emerged perennials.

**6** – Bare root plants can be planted as long as the ground is not frozen. Stake trees and shrubs if they are in an area where the wind can damage them.

**Rose-hip wreath. Decorative and excellent food for birds!**

The birds are gone, The ground is white, The winds are wild, They chill and bite;  
The ground is thick with slush and sleet, And I barely feel my feet.

-Winter Poems



# Sparky's Corner

## A special message from our frisky contributor



We are not amused! We've been fiddling around on the internet again--those two-leggers at the nursery leave the door open and, well, you know how curious we can be. We found some really cool stuff but then we went too far and found some very not cool stuff. It appears a writer for the Minneapolis StarTribune (Karen Youso) wrote about squirrels:

*Today, they thrive in near paradise — the mature trees, vegetable gardens and back-yard bird feeders of city and suburban neighborhoods, where the duality of being cute and aggravating produces the obvious results.*

*Some people love squirrels. They feed them and laugh at their antics, give them names and shoot pictures of them. Others hate them for the destruction they can wreak on house and garden. They'd just like to shoot the varmints, period.*



This part is OK, Ms. Youso is just doing her job--telling it like it is. But then somebody put a note up on the newspaper's blog (that's a two-legger thing for blabbing on the internet) asking for

comments about whether the readers thought we squirrels were friends or foes. That's when it got ugly.

Some thought we were wonderful and charming (some two-leggers are very smart!) but then there were other ideas. One called us "tree rats" just because one of us ate her tomatoes. Well, she was putting out bird food but c'mon.

Then sing, young hearts that are full of cheer, With never a thought of sorrow;  
The old goes out, but the glad young year Comes merrily in tomorrow.

- Emily Miller

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# Sparky's Corner, continued

Everybody knows we prefer our own space and our own food like good trees. If you want to put out food, try dried corn. Sheesh! Bird food. It's OK but how about some nice berries? No wonder we ate the tomatoes. We need our veggies!

Another one talked about trapping us and relocating (i.e. kidnapping and leaving in the woods) which did not work so she joked about teaching us to swim and we aren't learning. That is pure murder and it's not funny. Same for the one who 'resorted' to rat poison and pellet guns. THIS IS NOT FUNNY!

One of the smart ones said we were eating her annuals (whatever that is) so she clipped pieces of her rosebushes and stuck them around the annuals. This worked fine. See? Nobody died or was abandoned away from their family.

The best one said this:

*I know, I know, they eat your flowers and vegetables, but face it: you throw your litter in the streets, we keep building more and more homes taking away more and more of their space - what do you expect? How about trying to live in harmony with creatures who are obviously here to stay? Beats CRUELTY.*

Now there's a smart two-legger. Her name is Lori. You go, girl!

Another one we liked is Nancy A. She puts out special feed for us and we mind our own business, leaving her flowers and fruits and other stuff alone. She and her son even put peanuts on the window ledge for us to come get and they talk to us. They call us 'Bushies.' Aw, that's so sweet. Live and let live, that's the ticket. You be nice to us and we'll be very happy to return the favor.

Here's some stuff we really like that you can plant and forget. We'll help ourselves and you can keep your old vegetables. It's far better to give us good habitat and leave the feeders to parks and stuff.

Garry Oak (*Quercus garryana*)

Hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta*)

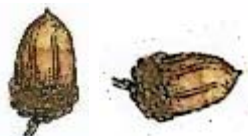
Spruce (*Picea*)

Sugar Maple (*Acer grandidentatum*)

Ponderosa Pine (*Pinus ponderosa*)

Lodgepole Pine (*Pinus contorta*)

OK, that's enough for now. Remember, we are the good guys. Western Grey Squirrels are native to Oregon! Are you?



**Your friend,  
Sparky**

Here's what happens if you forget to fill up the squirrel feeder! Trees are much better--no filling required.





# A different way to recycle

More fun than mashing into pulp or melting to use the material again.

Get creative! Because of the laws about recycling, we've figured out ways to take used cans and bottles and paper and plastics, break them down into raw material and make new cans, bottles, paper and plastic.

Some inventive manufacturers are using these recycled materials in new ways like making old tires into road beds for highways. There are garden benches and siding for houses made from old plastics. A few very out-of-the-box folks are making shoes and mattresses and a lot of other goods from 100% post-consumer\* materials.

Nothing is wrong with this. It's caring for the earth and it's a good thing. However, the more things we can keep out of the commercial recycling stream, the better.

For instance, some of that stuff we pitch into the recycle bin can be used in brand-new ways. And other stuff we have not found ways to recycle commercially. Like garden hoses and cell phones and old toys maybe. Things made from a combination of materials fall into this category, especially if they're glued or welded or something similar. These are the target items we're talking about. So far we only know how to actually recycle things that consist of purely one material. That's why we have to take the metal lids off plastic bottles.

\*Post-consumer means consumed and disposed of by the end-user. You buy milk, recycle the bottle and when it's processed into something else it is post-consumer. Pre-consumer recycled materials have not been used by consumers or businesses yet. They're virgin materials leftover from manufacturing such as paper scraps leftover at a paper mill.



Chair and ottoman from old tires and scrap wood (re-used of course)

Winter is the time for comfort - it is the time for home.  
- Edith Sitwell

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# A different way to recycle, continued

I started this article by searching the internet for bird houses made from found objects. It wasn't long before my research got very interesting .... and fun! I have a pretty good imagination but oh, my dear, what a plethora of whimsy I discovered.

Did you ever think about making:

- a trellis out of old garden hose?
- garden hose holders out of gravel and can lids?
- bird feeders out of 5-gallon bucket tops?
- garden benches out of golf clubs, gear wheels and wood stove parts?

One thing about the world-wide web, it's a lot like Forrest Gump's box of chocloates--you never know what you're gonna get. Let's get started with the show and tell.

The Berkshire Bird Paradise Sanctuary in New York has a website, [www.birdparadise.org/](http://www.birdparadise.org/). They rescue eagles, falcons and other feathered friends. And they have a nice article about making your own bird feeders from coffee cans.

*Sometimes the best feeders for birds are made from the simplest items. You can begin by using an empty coffee can. Clean the inside of the can and strip the label from the outside. At this point, you can choose to paint the can if you like, but leave the inside unpainted. Colors of red, yellow, and orange will attract some bird species. Other species may not care what color your bird feeder is, as they have no known color preferences. After the paint dries completely, find a hard plastic plate that will allow the can to fit nicely in its center.*

*Before attaching the can however, you will need to cut a few holes into it. The first hole should be at the top edge of the can. This will allow the food to spill out when the can is upside down. The next hole should be at the bottom of the can, in the center. This will allow you to fill the can with seed when it is turned upside down. After cutting the holes, turn the can upside down onto the middle of the plate and use super glue or a hot glue gun to glue the two together. There should be a rim of plate around the can to give the birds something to perch upon.*



Birdhouse from old garden hose, built atop a chopped-down tree stump cut at about 8 feet.

Winter, a lingering season, is a time to gather golden moments, embark upon a sentimental journey, and enjoy every idle hour.

- John Boswell

[⇒More⇒](#)



# A different way to recycle, continued

As to maintaining the bird feeder, this article has this advice:

*Be sure to clean out the feeder for the birds at least once every two weeks. This will allow the feeder to be fresh and appealing and keep the birds coming to your home. You can refill the feeder as needed. If you fill the feeder and attract no birds, you may want to change the type of seed you filled it with. Some birds prefer specific types of seeds, so you can try this to attract more birds. Just remember to have fun and enjoy the simple things in life that nature has to offer!*

The next website I visited was [www.kare11.com](http://www.kare11.com) which is Minnesota's KARE11 television station. They also had ideas about making a bird feeder out of an old metal lid:

## Easy to Make Bird Feeders

Your feathered friends will love this project and so will you — it's so easy!

Materials: Old lid  
wire  
wire cutter  
buttons  
knobs  
"s" hook  
paint  
bird seed  
screw gun/drill

Note: Old lids are everywhere. They get separated from their pots and need new uses. Think pans and garbage cans and popcorn tins. This is a GREAT idea!

Total Cost: Under \$2.00 if you buy the lid and supplies

Step by Step instructions:

1. Remove the knob on top of the lid (unless you like it!). Add a new embellishment — this can be a new knob, a wooden bead, a brooch — anything you like!
2. Paint the top of the lid — don't paint the inside because that is where you'll put the bird seed.
3. Drill four equally spaced holes in the lid
4. Cut four pieces of wire and thread through the holes. Twist wire so it doesn't slip out through the hole
5. Add buttons or any kind of embellishment to the wires — this is for looks only (the birds don't care if it's plain!!)
6. Bring all four wires together and twist
7. Twist top part of wire onto your "s" hook, add bird seed then hang in your favorite tree!
8. You can also tie greenery, dried flowers or fresh flowers to the wires to give your feeder a seasonal look



For the Lakota Sioux (Eastern U.S.) the month of January was the period of "The Hardship Moon."


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# A different way to recycle, continued

While I was there I noticed this station has a segment called Junk Masters--fantastic! More people with the same goal in mind! I didn't find an archive of old projects but they are worth looking into. Here's their bit from the station's home page.

Junk

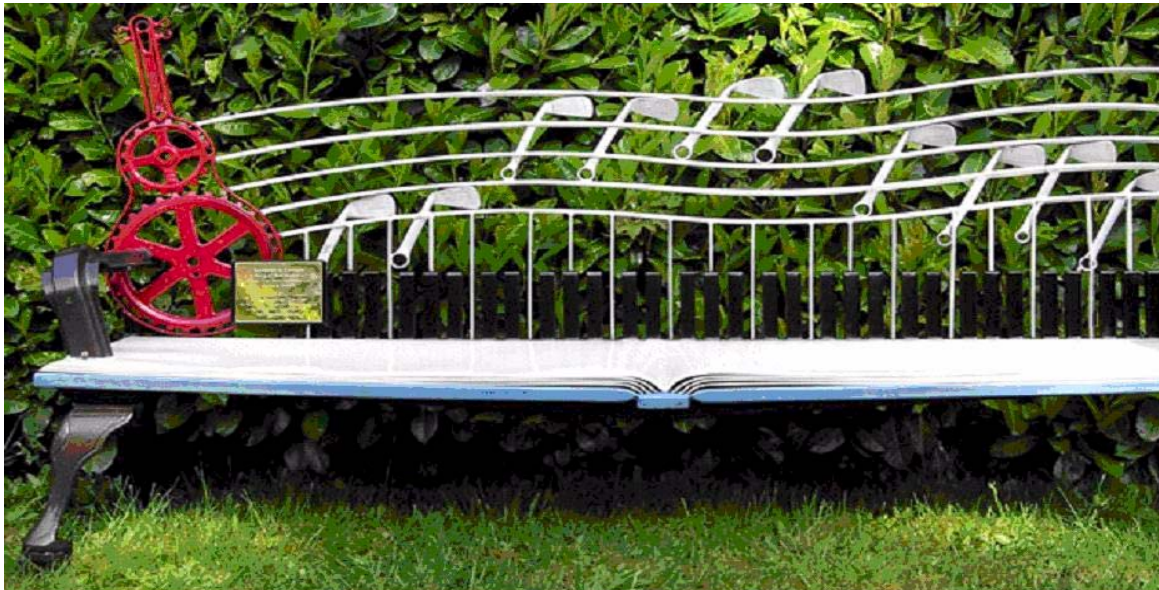
Masters



Welcome to Junk Masters! This is the show where we take all kinds of junk most people throw away and turn it into one-of-a-kind furniture and accessories for your home. We believe there's a use for just about everything and we hate the thought of throwing something away. So, instead of tossing it — we find a way to fix it or turn it into something else. Each week, we'll feature a new Junk Masters project complete with step by step instructions. Our projects are low-cost (sometimes free!!) and easy to do — so come on and try it!

With a little imagination...  
it's never "just" junk

My next stop was a website titled To Make You Smile: Art in the Schools, the web address is [http://www.tomakeyousmile.com/Art\\_Schools.html](http://www.tomakeyousmile.com/Art_Schools.html). This was the most inspiring yet. My imagination went on wings up into the sky and performed Swan Lake before coming back down. Look at this!



They have different kinds of functional and charming objects d/ art made from junk. I don't know the story on the artists for these examples but they do have titles. Imagine-- golf clubs, gear wheels, wood stove parts-- that's all I recognize, but this is beautiful!

**“Kinnaman in Harmony - A Song of Sustainability”  
2007 Bench from Recycled Materials  
Kinnaman Elementary School  
by Frank Roll Jr.**

*This delightful website and photography was done by Mary Elizabeth McAndrew*

No one ever regarded the First of January with indifference. It is that from which all date their time, and count upon what is left.  
It is the nativity of our common Adam. - Charles Lamb

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# A different way to recycle, continued

Here's what they say about the benches (check the website for links to email, drawings, etc.):

*Our dream is to help the next generation look at "junk" with an eye to re-use. For the past three years, we've created and managed the Art in the Schools Bench Project funded by Cracked Pots. As a part of Art Literacy, students study assemblage art, look at pictures of junk, and create drawings of a bench. Inspired by these drawings, an artist is commissioned to create a bench for permanent display at the school.*

*If you're interested in making a donation, be it time, money, resources, etc. please send us an email. We're seeking sponsors for 2008 — each bench project costs between \$1500-\$2000 as we cover all the costs for the schools and the artist. If you'd like to help, please let us know! Please check out our curriculum as well as a sampling of the children's drawings which you can download below.*

*We want to expand this program to give children the opportunity to participate in all aspects of the project. We'd love to see older students involved in the making of the bench or creating other art from "junk." We've created a curriculum for teaching about assemblage art. Please feel free to use our curriculum to create your own projects. We'd love to hear about your successes!*



**"Catch & Release"**  
**2007 Bench from Recycled Materials**  
**Tualatin Elementary School**  
**by David Feldt**

Antisthenes says that in a certain faraway land the cold is so intense that words freeze as soon as they are uttered, and after some time then thaw and become audible, so that words spoken in winter go unheard until the next summer. - Plutarch, *Moralia*



**"The School Bus Bench"**  
**2006 Bench from Recycled Materials**  
**Bridgeport Elementary School**  
**by David Feldt**

[⇒ More ⇒](#)



# A different way to recycle, continued



offer unique visual & textural qualities when used out of their original context in a second, more provocative life. Our goal is to provoke, in a way to arouse, a variety of different positive emotions from people often attributable to their past experiences or memories.



And there's more. This is their To Make You Smile: Birdhouses section.

## Functional Art with A Hole In It

Our functional, artistic birdhouses are built to Audubon specifications with cleanouts and ventilation. Each house has an 1¼" entry hole designed for your cavity nesting birds such as nuthatches, chickadees, and violet-green swallows. Our houses typically are constructed with 100yr old siding, painted to enhance the old wood, with perches, porches and bases from copper, brass and any number of historic decorative found objects. We sell the houses only at shows for \$65 - \$85. Our affordable houses are a lesson in sustainability.

## From Old Siding & Fences to New Houses

We use objects that have ceased to serve their original purpose, but offer unique visual & textural qualities when used out of their original context in a second, more provocative life. Our goal is to provoke, in a way to arouse, a variety of different positive emotions from people often attributable to their past experiences or memories.



## Tiles, Victorian Ceilings, Bed Posts, Plates, Sprinklers...

Each house features beautiful and functional objects from society's discards. The houses pictured here, represent our past creations. Our abundance of found objects, which is constantly changing, inspires the design of our future houses. When you come to one of our shows, you'll see our latest creations. We hope they make you smile!

There is nothing in the world more beautiful than the forest clothed to its very hollows in snow.

It is the still ecstasy of nature, wherein every spray, every blade of grass, every spire of reed, every intricacy of twig, is clad with radiance.

- William Sharp

[⇒ More ⇨](#)



# A different way to recycle, continued

Here's my favorite part of this website: Hose Hangers

*Have you ever noticed how even the most beautiful home is marred by an unsightly garden hose drooping off the house? With this challenge in mind, we are creating a series of artistic hose reels. Our design, which mounts on the wall, winds and hides the hose neatly behind it. Two of our initial designs are shown below. Our salmon design is titled "Ancestral Gravel" and features two copper fighting male salmon at spawning time. The other design is titled "The Great Blue Heron" and celebrates Oregon's commitment to preserving habitats. This is an exciting new project and we have a number of sketches for future designs.*



These hose hangers are outstanding. I've never seen anything like them and they're made out of junk! The trellis at right isn't bad, either.



*In addition to birdhouses, we have been creating functional garden art from recycled objects. Our first collaborative piece was an entry for an Artist's Challenge contest. The challenge was to create a trellis from garden hoses & plastic pots. Our kinetic trellis features a bicycle fork and wheel flowerhead which pivots and spins with the wind. Our trellis won the contest and we've enjoyed creating kinetic art ever since.*

The New Year, like an Infant Heir to the whole world, was waited for, with welcomes, presents, and rejoicings.

- Charles Dickens, *The Chimes*

[⇒ More ⇒](#)

# A different way to recycle, continued



## Artist's Statement:

*As birds gather from nature, we gather from the urban backyard to create their houses.*

*We use objects that have ceased to serve their original purpose, but offer unique visual and textural qualities when used out of their original context in a second, more provocative life.*

*Our houses provide a functional and affordable home for cavity nesting birds. Our work is a tribute to my Grandfather, who while the snow was on his fields, created a legacy of beautiful and functional objects from society's discards.*

*Our goal is to provoke, in a way to arouse, a variety of different positive emotions from people often attributable to their past experiences or memories.*

*When you look out into your garden, even when your flowers are sleeping, and find yourself smiling, our work has been a success.*

*David & Patsy Britton*

*In March of 2007, we donated these 14 houses mounted on poles to the national award winning Legacy Emanuel Oregon Burn Center Therapy Garden. According to Teresia Hazen, registered horticultural therapist, and coordinator, Therapeutic Gardens and Horticultural Therapy, "Watching birds gives patients, their families and staff members a window on the world of nature. And enjoying the beauty of the winged creatures while walking in the garden brings healthful pleasure. We're already noticing birds shopping the new homes."*

*In that our mission is To Make You Smile, it seemed appropriate that the patients and staff should be able to watch wild birds and enjoy the whimsy of our houses.*



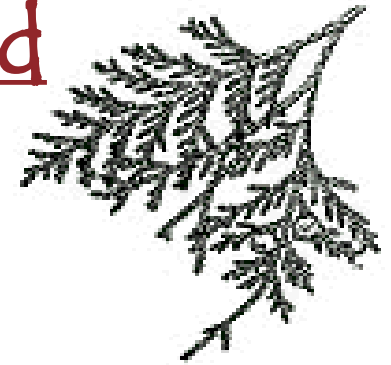
Drop the last year into the silent limbo of the past. Let it go, for it was imperfect, and thank God that it can go.

- Brooks Atkinson

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# A different way to recycle, continued



Are those creative juices flowing yet? Here's what I have in my junk pile right now:

1. An old microwave, broken down to it's smallest pieces.
2. The top and bottom of a stemmed plastic glass that came apart.
3. Knobs from faucets, both indoor and out.
4. Pieces of a broken mirror and the frame it was in.
5. An antique floor loom with broken or missing metal parts.
6. A large metal teapot.
7. A lantern (missing pieces of course).
8. A couple of clay things I don't know what they are.
9. And for that dreamed-of day when I mosaic my patio table (a work of art in itself), many chipped plates and broken pottery of assorted vintages and designs.

The moral of the story, I suppose, is simple. Before you pitch it that item into the trash or the recycle bin, think about the crafty possibilities. It could very well become a part of your most cherished treasure.

And if you do make something wonderful, snap it's picture and send me a copy to share with all our gardening friends.



To leave the old with a burst of song,  
To recall the right and forgive the wrong;  
To forget the thing that blinds you fast  
To the vain regrets of the year that's past.

- Robert B. Beattie, *A Way to a Happy New Year*



I love this table. I found it at a yard sale for \$5 several years ago. I had no car at the time so begged a ride from a friend for me and my table. Imagine that top when it's covered with a beautiful mosaic!



# The Native Garden in Winter

Our gardens are more than flowers and leaves. Winter lets us enjoy the shapes of trees and shrubs, the beauty of bark colors and patterns and other treats.



Maples are the hit of the landscape in fall. We like the big kinds, the Douglas (Acer glabrum), Bigtooth (Acer grandidentatum) and Big-Leaf (Acer macrophyllum) in summer for shade. They have big round crowns, perfect for lazing about on a hot summer day.

In autumn, Vine Maple (Acer circinatum) is the hands-down winner but the big ones are also showy with superior reds and golds.

But how many of us have actually noticed the bark in winter after those shade-giving and brightly colored autumn leaves have fallen?

This probably happens more often than we realize because unless you're a botanical whiz you may admire the shape and texture of the naked tree without realizing it's the same one you napped under and raked up after earlier in the year.



Maple tree and swirl of leaves  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

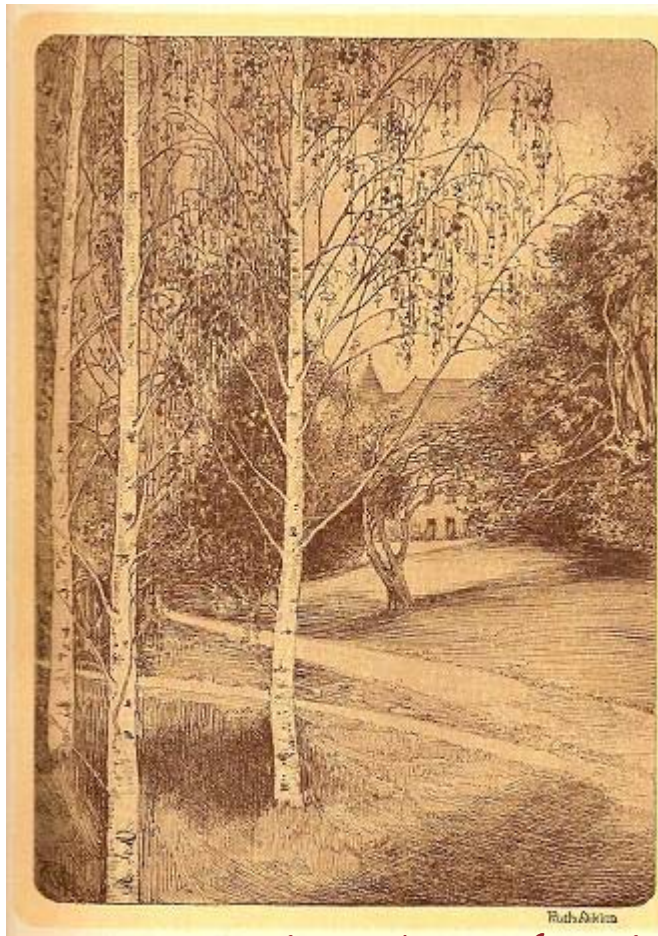
Winter dawn is the color of metal,  
The trees stiffen into place like burnt nerves.  
- Sylvia Plath, *Waking in Winter*

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# The Native Garden in Winter

Paper Birch (*Betula papyrifera*) identification is almost exactly opposite of the maples.



The white, peeling bark is usually the first thing we associate with Paper Birch. It is distinct and truly beautiful. As each layer slowly peels off revealing darker bark beneath, this Northwest native tree assumes a different face. Less showy but still interesting. Then the freshly bared bark lightens to white and our old friend looks normal again.

A fact we native plant lovers adore: the original natives retain their white bark color throughout their lives unlike the hybridized varieties.

Paper Birch (*Betula papyrifera*) Photo by JoAnn Onstott  
Engraved print from the 1924 issue of "The Beaver," the yearbook of what is now OSU.



An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves.

- Bill Vaughan

[⇒ More ⇒](#)

# The Native Garden in Winter

The Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) is an evergreen tree with multiple personalities.

--Its winter face has glossy dark green leaves, hairy underneath.

--Late spring brings bouquets of creamy white bell-shaped flowers.

--In summer, Madrone uses its energy to grow more of those leathery leaves and to gain some height.

--When autumn comes, this native tree puts forth bright red olive-shaped fruits. Some of the older leaves turn red to wine and are cast off, the better to showcase the distinctive bark which peels and finally allows us to admire the dark cinnamon inner bark.

Madrone does not usually grow straight up. Instead, it often twines around and between the larger trees in its neighborhood, usually tall conifers. It is not unusual to see Madrone stretching its branches out over cliffs and canyons.

All year, this tree is a magnificent focus in the landscape. It is hard to grow unless planted when young. It rarely survives a transplant after its youth. If you can find one in a nursery, purchase a juvenile rather than a more mature specimen.



**Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*)**  
**Photo by Jennifer Rehm**



I prefer winter and fall, when you feel the bone structure in the landscape - the loneliness of it - the dead feeling of winter. Something waits beneath it - the whole story doesn't show.

-Andrew Wyeth

[⇒ More ⇒](#)



# The Native Garden in Winter



Incense Cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*) has great beauty but its most beloved feature is the fragrance of all its parts. The bark, the branches, the cones and the leaves are equally perfumed with a clean, lemony fresh scent.

A fairly large evergreen, Incense Cedar will reach 90 feet at maturity. It grows quickly and can be trimmed as a hedge or screen for privacy or windbreak. The branches arch clear to the ground, the lustrous foliage gracefully moves with the slightest breeze.

Although it prefers an environment with summer drought, this native tree will tolerate most conditions and thrives from USDA zones 5-8.

This is a good choice for wildlife habitats, offering its cones as food and its dense branches for protection and nesting.

**Incense Cedar**  
**(*Calocedrus decurrens*)**  
**Photos by JoAnn**  
**Onstott**



And ye, who have met with Adversity's  
blast,  
And been bow'd to the earth by its fury;  
To whom the Twelve Months, that have  
recently pass'd  
Were as harsh as a prejudiced jury -  
Still, fill to the Future! and join in our chime,  
The regrets of remembrance to cozen,  
And having obtained a New Trial of Time,  
Shout in hopes of a kindlier dozen.  
- Thomas Hood

[⇒ More ⇒](#)

# The Native Garden in Winter

Our Northwest native Alaska Cedar is handsome in all respects.

The bark is even and dark, and peels to reveal yellowish inner bark on the squared trunk.

Its needles are yellow-green, gray-green or blue-green and hang downward from the pendulous branches.

Cones of Alaska Cedar are blue-green berries with a waxy coating. They eventually form small brown cones.

Hard to find commercially, this tree grows wild from British Columbia to Northern California. It is hardy to USDA zone 4 and its choice of growing space is higher elevations and deep, rich soils.



Have you ever noticed a tree standing naked against the sky,  
How beautiful it is?

All its branches are outlined, and in its nakedness  
There is a poem, there is a song.

Every leaf is gone and it is waiting for the spring.

When the spring comes, it again fills the tree with  
The music of many leaves,  
Which in due season fall and are blown away.  
And this is the way of life.  
- Krishnamurti



Alaska Cedar  
(*Chamaecyparis nootkensis*)  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

⇒ More ⇒



# The Native Garden in Winter

Western Hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta* var. *californica*) is one of the Willamette Valley's most prolific cash crop. The nuts are delicious and valued by wildlife as well as humans.



This tree usually grows with multiple stems rather than one main trunk.

It is very active, spending little of the year with bare branches. The large crinkled leaves turn gold to bronze as the nuts ripen. The nuts fall, then the leaves. Right after that, the pendulous catkin flowers grow, sometimes before the leaves are through falling.

Because squirrels



are so fond of the nuts, 'volunteer' Hazelnuts sprout up in the most surprising locations. Should you be fortunate enough to find one growing in your garden, it is easily transplanted to the spot of your choice. It is not particular about shade or sun and is drought tolerant once established. Hazelnuts look lovely beside a garden pond.

**Western Hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta* var. *californica*) Photos by Jennifer Rehm (left) and JoAnn Onstott (right)**

In the depths of winter I finally learned that within me  
there lay an invincible summer.

-Albert Camus

[⇒More⇒](#)



# The Native Garden in Winter

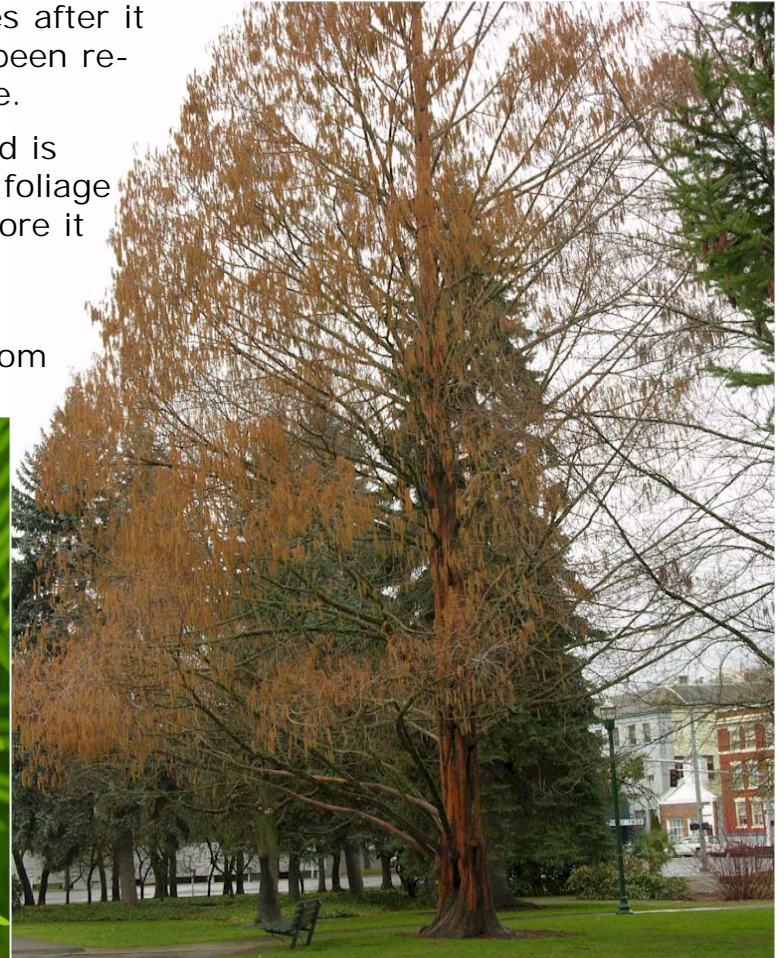


Dawn Redwood (*Megasequoia glyptostroboides*) is a miracle tree, becoming more common here in Oregon where it originated.

Discovered in China centuries after it was thought extinct, it has been re-established here in its home.

Very unusual, Dawn Redwood is deciduous with feather-soft foliage which turns to pure gold before it drops in the fall.

In winter, there are golden catkins hanging gracefully from the dark copper branches.

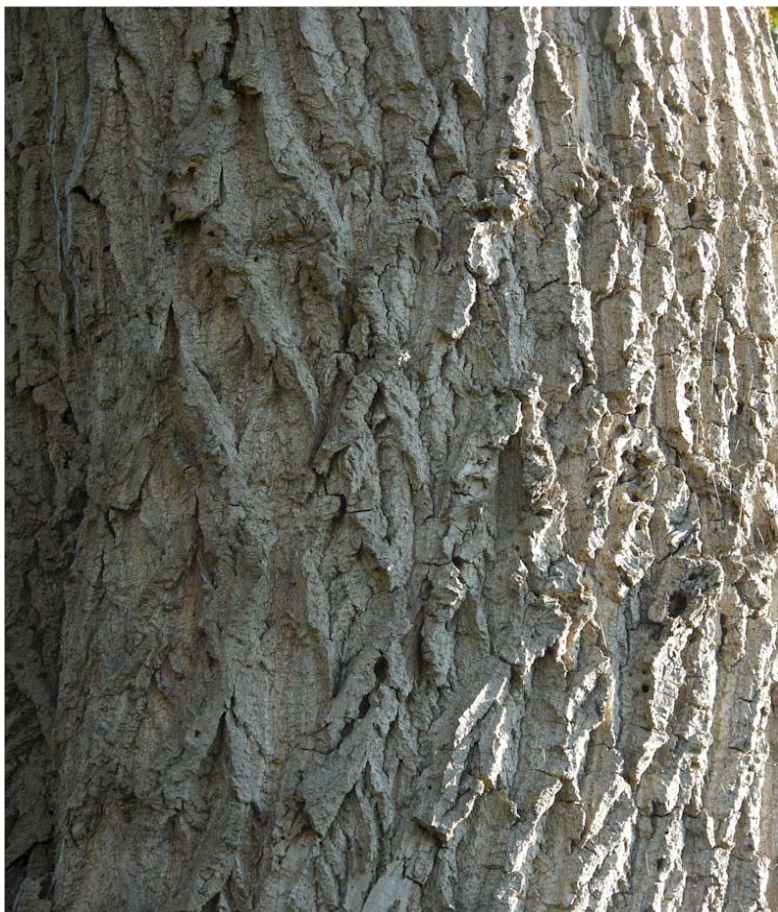


Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*)  
Photos by JoAnn Onstott

[⇒ More ⇒](#)



# The Native Garden in Winter



**Black Cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*)**

Photo by JoAnn Onstott

The largest poplar in the United States, Black Cottonwood has an astonishing growth rate of up to 5 feet a year. It reaches 180 feet when mature. It is found in Europe and along the entire Pacific coast and inland to the prairies.

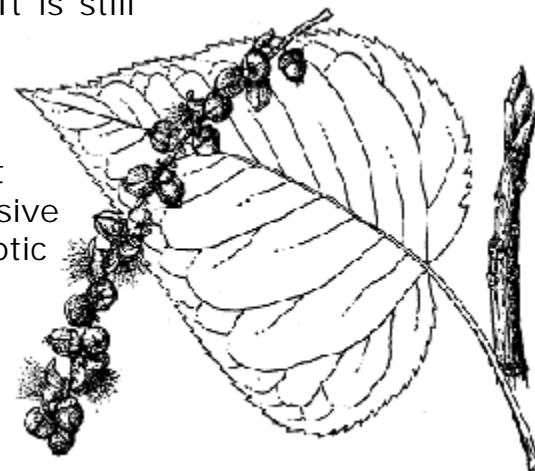
The glossy gray bark gives winter interest in the garden, obscured by plentiful leaves spring through summer which are golden in autumn.

Most everyone knows the cottony seeds that fly around each year for a short time. These are considered a delicacy by birds and the tree also attracts butterflies.

The resinous leaf buds have a very nice fragrance and were used as a disinfectant by native peoples. It is still found in herbal products.

Many farmhouses will have a row of Cottonwoods to shelter them from wind and weather. Care must be taken in placement--the extensive root system can interfere with septic beds.

Because of their quick growth, this species is helpful in wetland restoration because it takes up excess nitrogen and prevents erosion.



There is a privacy about it which no other season gives you ..... In spring, summer and fall people sort of have an open season on each other; only in the winter, in the country, can you have longer, quiet stretches when you can *savor* belonging to yourself.

-Ruth Stout

[⇒More⇒](#)

# The Native Garden in Winter

The most common of our Northwest willows, Sitka Willow (*Salix sitchensis*) is more a shrub than tree, growing only 2 to 10 feet tall and just as wide.

The dark, shiny bark is appreciated in winter when the 2-4 inch leaves with velvety undersides have fallen.

Not toxic, the branches can be used for smoking meat and fish. Also excellent for hot dogs and marshmallows around the campfire.

All the willows have strong, flexible bark which is perfect for making rope or weaving.



Sitka Willow is usually found along stream banks, sand and gravel bars in rivers and in forest clearings.



Sitka Willow (*Salix sitchensis*)  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

O thou,  
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed  
The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low,  
Each like a corpse within its grave, until  
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow  
Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth.  
- John Davies, 1570-1626,  
*Ode to the West Wind.*

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# The Native Garden in Winter

Though we featured the Red-Osier Dogwood in a recent issue of our journal, that red bark is so attractive we thought it deserved a mention here as we discuss winter garden interest. The bright red color lasts the life of the shrub, from new to old growth. Compare the little bare root seedlings at right with the mature shrub below!



Red-Osier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea* ssp. *stolonifera*)  
Photos by Jennifer Rehm (above left) and Wally (at right)



If we had no winter, the spring would not  
be so pleasant.  
-Anne Bradstreet

[⇒ More ⇒](#)



# The Native Garden in Winter



Tall Oregon Grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*) at  
Riverfront Park in January  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

In the sheltered heart of the clumps last year's foliage still clings to the lower branches, tatters of orange that mutter with the passage of the wind, the talk of old women warning the green generation of what they, too, must come to when the sap runs back.

- Jacquetta Hawkes

Tall Oregon Grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*) is another of those Northwest natives with year-round beauty.

Evergreen, this shrub is uniformly attractive from the dusky blue delicious fruits, the bright yellow generous clusters of sweet smelling flowers to the foliage which performs incredible botanical feats. In spring the leaves are bronze, turning dark green for summer, then each fall they become bright red before going back to bronze. They are shiny with sharp points along the edge and at the ends, very much like the non-native hollies.

Oregon's state flower, the Tall Oregon Grape is fine in sun or shade and is highly drought tolerant.



MAHONIA AQUIFOLIUM

⇒ More ⇒



# The Native Garden in Winter

Devil's Club (*Oplopanax horridus*) is rarely found commercially. Some think it's very ugly but others see great beauty in it's sharp thorns, large leaves, spire of tiny flowers which are followed by bright red berries.

Every plant has its place and we like this one for planting among more delicate natives like Twinflowers or Shooting Stars. It is also a wise choice beneath a window or other place where visitors are not appreciated. Can you imagine the unsuspecting dog who steps into a flower bed with a Devil's Club among its members?

Very good for shady moist spaces, this shrub is hardy in USDA zones 4 to 9 and is closely related to ginseng.

Photo by JoAnn Onstott



Young Devil's Clubs (*Oplopanax horridus*) in December, Photo by Wally

The stag bells, winter snows, summer has gone  
Wind high and cold, the sun low, short its course  
The sea running high.

Deep red the bracken; its shape is lost;  
The wild goose has raised its accustomed cry,  
Cold has seized the birds' wings;  
Season of ice, this is my news.

- Irish poem, 9th Century

[⇒ More ⇒](#)

# The Native Garden in Winter



The last of our winter garden stars for this discussion is the wild rose. We love them for their sparkling color and we also enjoy them in tea!

Though the wild roses may look alike, they are really very different.

Bald-Hip or Little Wild Rose (*Rosa gymnocarpa*)--Delicate and slender, this lovely rose has tiny 1 inch pink flowers in clusters. The foliage is a bit lacy and the branches are bristly but not thorny. It like shady moist locations with good drainage.

Nootka Rose (*Rosa nutkana*)--Bright orange hips are large and the flowers are clusters of one to three 2 inch flowers with a very sweet scent. Prefers moisture, good drainage in full sun.

Clustered or Peafruit Rose (*Rosa pisocarpa*)--As the name implies, this rose has clusters rather than single flowers. Often blooms twice in one year. The branches are sharply thorned. Unlike the previous two roses, this one wants lots of water, even waterlogged soils. Very plentiful little hips.

Wood's Rose (*Rosa woodsii*)--Bright red hips of Wood's Rose last all winter until eaten by birds. Very hardy, drought tolerant, needs little sun. Good choice for difficult sites.

**Chickadee and Rose Hips**  
**Painting by Robert Bateman**

I've been a dweller on the plains,  
have sighed when summer days were gone;  
No more I'll sigh; for winter here  
Hath gladsome gardens of his own.  
-Dorothy Wordsworth,  
Peaceful Our Valley, Fair and Green





# This & That

## Notes from Jennifer

It began as an ordinary day, much like any other.

It was New Year's Day and I had set aside that time to work on this journal. I went away the previous week to snow country to visit my kids, promising myself to catch up my chores on my return.

I began searching the internet to find birdhouses made of found objects. Success prevailed right away. Feeling rather cocky I broadened my scope to see what else I might stumble upon. That was my downfall. I found a website--a blog in fact--by a girl who calls herself "Birdchick." I started reading. And reading. And scrolling through this wonderland of beautiful photographs of birds--all kinds. Closeups and some not so close, eating and flying and nosing around as birds will do. Also bees and butterflies and other stuff.

The photos were not usual. Oh, some were sort of ordinary but others were breathtaking! Still others made me laugh out loud. Then I came to the rabbits. I was a goner. I think it was the one named Cinnamon that did me in. I used to have a dog with that name so of course I connected to it. At first I thought this was a stuffed toy. No rabbit in its right mind could look like that. But it was real and, let me tell you, this rabbit disapproved. As it turns out, that's what rabbits do: they disapprove. They're pretty darned proud of it, too.

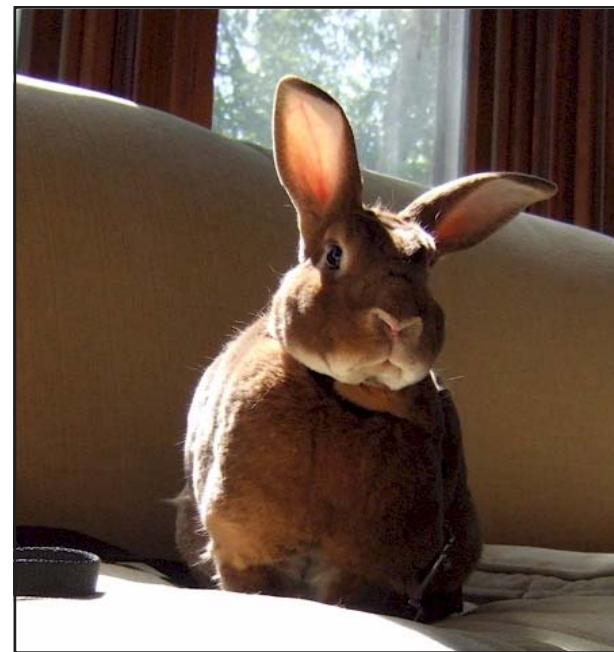
Hours later (literally!) I escaped from this web-trap. Not before I sent an email to the child who created the site (I'm old so just about everyone is a child to me). I did not confess to falling into the website like Alice down the rabbit hole. Oh, dear, another rabbit thought. I just told her how lovely I found her blog to be and asked if I might put some of her photos in our journal once in a while. She answered today and said that would be fine as long as I included a link to her website. (How could I not share that delightful place!)

One kind word can warm three winter months.  
- Japanese proverb

[⇒More⇒](#)



(Above) Here's where I came in--A Wax-wing reaching for those last berries on the Mountain Ash. Then I saw the bunny. Cinnamon in the flesh. Is that real? Yep.



# This & That, continued

So you may see some incredibly unusual photos here from time to time. You'll know them right away. They are taken with an artist's eye and are of the very best quality. Well, mostly. That's actually another really positive thing. Even the photos that are blurry or not perfect are included in the blog because they show what Ms. Birdchick wants to illustrate. No prima donna/diva here, just a real live human. But the amazing photos remind me a little of our own staff photographer's work. It's that masterful touch with the camera that reaches out and snatches a moment and holds it to enjoy again and again.

I hesitate to tell you really where to find this website. Just be prepared to stay a while once you go. Personally, I am going to get one of those disapproving rabbit books for my very best friend who has a birthday coming up and is inordinately fond of rabbits. She doesn't know their true feelings and I hate to bust her bubble but she has a champagne-like sense of humor so she'll understand. Can't wait to hear her laughter!



The snow doesn't give a soft white damn whom it touches.

- E. E. Cummings

The new year has begun and not a minute too soon. But then, it all happens when it's supposed to. My resolution this year: have as much fun as possible. Fun--try some. It's good for you.

(Top, right) She calls this one Gandalf. It's a great egret with babies. (Below, right) Herself and a friend. The thrill of holding that great bird so close!

See it all at [www.birdchick.com](http://www.birdchick.com)

(Left) My holiday escape. It's a work in progress. Winter wonderland.





# Useful Native Plant & Related Info 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)

## Birdchick

<http://www.birdchick.com/>

Hundreds of photos of birds, bees, butterflies and other friendlies. Sharon Stiteler shares the joys of birding as well as insights on rabbits.

## 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.



Grand Fir (*Abies grandis*)

Nature chose for a tool, not the earthquake or lightning to rend and split asunder, not the stormy torrent or eroding rain, but the tender snow-flowers noiselessly falling through unnumbered centuries.

- John Muir

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# Useful Native Plant & Related Info, Continued

## 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.

## 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.

## 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."

## ModernBackyard

<http://www.modernbackyard.com>

Landscape architecture provides exceptional, affordable landscape design online.

## The Native Plant Network

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

Information on how to propagate native plants of North America.



White Fir (*Abies concolor*)

The flowers of late winter and early spring occupy places in our hearts well out of proportion to their size.

- Gertrude S. Wister

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# Useful Native Plant & Related Info, Continued

## Portland Bureau of Environmental Services

<http://www.portlandonline.com/bes/index.cfm?c=29323>

Oregon's Clean River Agency website full of wonderful information about caring for our earth. Download their Native Plant Poster, plant list and brochure on removing invasive plants at

## 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

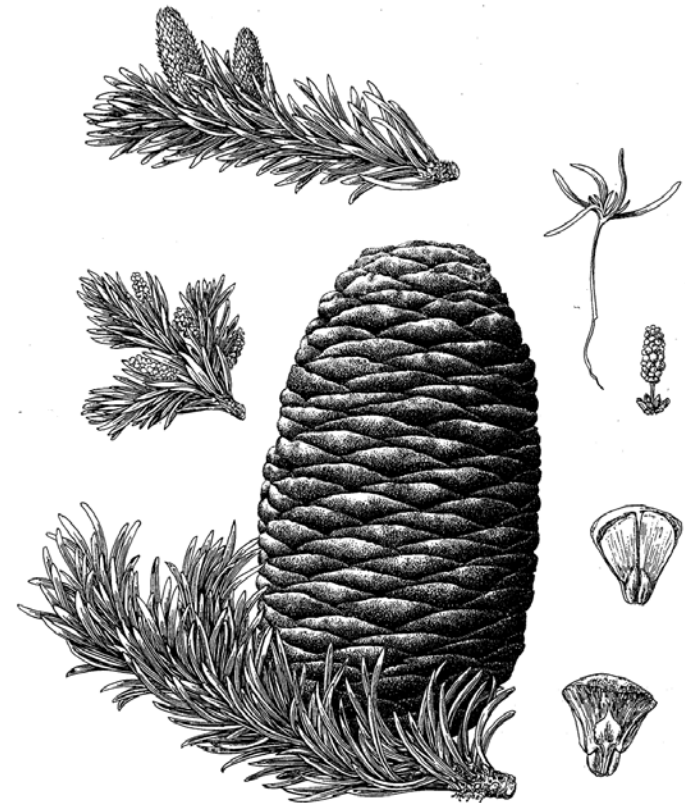
<http://www.soils.org/>

Website for soil science professionals. Offers information and links.

## 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.



Pacific Silver Fir (*Abies amabilis*)

Keep your faith in beautiful things;  
in the sun when it is hidden,  
in the Spring when it is gone.  
- Roy R. Gibson



**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 northwest. 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 JoAnn Onstott

White Fir (*Abies concolor*)  
Sweet smelling ornamental, exceptional in the landscape. Very hardy, drought tolerant.