

Northwest Native Plant Journal

A Monthly Web Magazine

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Serviceberry (Amelanchier alnifolia) Photo by JoAnn Onstott





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About this Journal

This Journal was created under the direction of Wally Hansen – a dedicated Grower, Aficionado and Passionate Lover of Northwest Native Plants.

This Journal is not 'commercial.' Our goals are:

- A To generate interest, even passion, concerning the magnificent Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest.
- **B** To help you create your own Native Plant Gardens, large or small, for home or work.
- C To help you propagate and "grow on" those species that interest you the most.
- D To inform both Home Gardeners and interested Professionals of many disciplines concerning trends and news items from my little corner of the world.
- E To help the reader enjoy native plants more by understanding the historical and cultural role of native plants (i.e.—use by Native Americans, Pioneers, Early Botanists, etc.).

Common Camas Photo by JoAnn Onstott





On the Cover



Leichtlin's Camas (Camassia leichtlinii ssp. suksdorfii)

This is one of my favorite photos by our gifted camera queen, JoAnn Onstott.

The flower stems are just starting their colorful display. As the days pass, each bud will open into the star shape unique to our native Camas.

Larger than Common Camas, Leichtlin's flower spikes grow from 2 to 4 feet tall and begin blooming about three weeks after Common.

It is difficult to imagine that such a beautiful native lily is also delicious to eat. The bulbs are sweet and nutritious!

Photo by JoAnn Onstott



Rare plant puzzle



Photo by JoAnn Onstott

Name this plant!

Sorry, we have no clues for this one. As often happens, JoAnn and I were on a photo adventure looking for native plants in the wild and came upon this plant. Neither of us could name it so JKO took a couple of shots and we're hoping one of you botanical wizards can provide the true botanical name for it.

Send me an email with the correct <u>botanical</u> name of this plant. As a reward, take 5% off the plant of your choice.

Good luck!
Wally

Answer to last Journal's puzzle:

Still unknown for sure, but it might be Synthyris missurica.

Nobody correctly answered!



To Do List

Tips for the native plant gardener

- 1 Divide and replant clumps of perennials that have finished flowering.
- **2** Take cuttings from some plants.
- 3 Watering as needed, especially potted plants and anything newly planted.
- **4** Read garden books from the library.
- **5** Weed the garden.
- 6 Planting seeds in containers in the greenhouse or window shelves.
- **7** Fertilize some actively growing plants with compost or manure.
- **8** Mulch trees, shrubs and garden. Use straw mulch to conserve water and shade roots.
- 9 Take a nap in the shade.
- **10 –** Write a poem.
- 11 Keep a garden journal.
- 12 Don't get sun burnt.
- 13 Shape shrubs.
- **14 –** Prune vines.
- 15 Thin excess fruit on trees if the wildlife has not done this enough.
- 16 Sit and observe.
- 17 Make sure lath/shade house is ready.



Smart doggy!

Sparky's Corner

A special message from our frisky contributor

I'm gonna melt! What in the world is going on? We were having a perfectly lovely springtime and suddenly the universe decides it's August. Wrong! OK, I am speaking directly to whoever is in charge:



It is May! You know--May flowers and birds singing and squirrels having a gay old time jumping and running around like little maniacs. Lovely days where the temperature is around 60 to 70 and the nights are maybe 50. Are you listening? Hey! Pay attention!

This funky weather is not only a problem for squirrels and other people, the two-leggers are having a hard time of it also. They're swigging water like it's, well, water. Sitting around in the shade and waving things at themselves. Using those big metal jobs that make wind.

You know who is smart with this kind of thing my grandma calls "hot spells?" Little two-leggers, that's who. The big ones hook up contraptions that squirt water and the little ones run around in it. Now that is smart. Victor and the other dudes at the nursery do this water thing for the plants and they really like it.

Wanna know a secret? When there's no two-leggers looking we run around in the squirt also! It cools us right down, too. Ssshhh--don't tell anybody. But if you want to get cool when it's hot outside, get in the squirt. Jennifer

told me she does this all the time. She even gets that stuff she wears all wet, says it makes the coolness last longer. So try it out. Also plant lots of trees around your nest. Trees make it much cooler, especially if you have a lot of them.

OK, I'm going to go see if Victor has the squirt going yet. See ya later!

Sparky



Penawen: Moon of the Camas Harvest

First Nations look at the month of May

This moon is the moon of the camas harvest. It is time to dig KLO,EL (camas). The earth is warming. The camas bulb illustration is shown on the cheek of the moon and in the palm of his hand. The blue plant with the bulb underneath the ground is the whole camas plant.

CONNECTIONS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

May derives its name from Majores, the Roman goddess of Spring. This is also the 'month of Mary' for those of the Roman Catholic Faith. During the PEN'AWEN moon the Saanich Peoples travelled to family locations to harvest camas bulbs (KLO,EL), which were the source of starch in their diet. This was a cherished time for the people of Saanich - it marked the time when they could begin travelling through their territory again.



Saanich drawing of Penawen.

Penawen, continued



WEATHER

Days and evenings are warm and rain is less frequent.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Saanich families had traditional territorial grounds (land and water), which were used at various times of the year. Most families left their Winter villages for Spring camps. Visits to the camas plots served two purposes: (1) to harvest the blue camas bulb; and (2) to gather the fresh gull eggs found in the camas fields. White camas is poisonous and was not harvested.

In this season both XIWE (purple sea urchins) and SQITI (green sea urchins) were collected and eaten as well.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- --Since this is a time of travel, what would you take with you on a camping trip?
- --What cultures and animals still migrate seasonally? Compare and contrast modern migration due to job loss, over-crowded population centres and health problems.

Photo by JoAnn Onstott

This article is from the Lester B. Pearson College website at www.racerocks.com/racerock/firstnations/13moons/moons/penawen.html.



The Race Rocks lighthouse logo celebrates the passage of Bill S-215 on May 1, 2008. This bill "offers a beacon of hope for historic lighthouses" in Canada. The bill awaits royal assent and will go into effect two years thereafter.

Preserving Flowers

How to Dry or Wax Fresh Flowers for Bouquets



Oregon Iris (Iris tenax) is a low growing grass iris with extremely strong leaves. In fact, native peoples used them for making rope. The flowers are beautifully patterned and dry well with either air or sand methods. Photo by JoAnn Onstott

You can enjoy the freshness of a flower garden throughout the year by cutting and drying your favorite flowers. The two easiest and least expensive methods are sand-drying and air-drying.

Sand-drying can be used to dry a wide variety of flowers, such as roses, camas, fawn lilies, asters and violets. Usually flowers that last the longest will dry the best. But feel free to do your own experimentation.

To prepare for sand-drying, cut the flowers at the peak of their show as any imperfections will be exaggerated by drying. Pick the flowers after the dew has fully evaporated. Make sure the stems are dry.

Prepare the flowers by reinforcing the stems and blossoms with florist's wire or with white glue. For daisy-type flowers and flowering shrubs, push a 6" piece of wire through the stem and right through the flower head; bend the end of the wire into a hook over the flower head and then pull it down, thus securing the head to the stem.

For flowers such as roses and lilies which are dried faceup, cut off most of the stem except an inch or so and insert the wire as above.

Preserving Flowers, continued

For many-petaled flowers, use glue instead of wire. Diluting the white glue with a drip of water and using a toothpick, dab a thin coat of glue at the base of each petal, working the glue into the base of each flower to attach each petal to the base. Dry completely.

To dry the flowers, slowly cover them with white sand in deep, open boxes. Cup-shaped or rose-shaped flowers should be dried face-up. Make the sand deep enough to hold the flowers in an upright position, settle the flower

carefully and slowly pour the sand around the base of the flower, then around the sides and under and over the petals. Pour the sand evenly and slowly in order to preserve the natural shape of the blossom.

Daisy-type flowers should be dried face down. Make an even base of sand in the box and make a little dip in the sand the same shape as the flower.

Hold the flower steady and carefully build up the sand around the blossom until it is fully covered.

Elongated flowers and flowering branches should be positioned horizontally in the sand, flowering branches face up. Carefully pour the sand around and between the flowers and into individual blooms. A soft artists' brush will help you in lifting the blossoms slightly as you pour the sand so that they won't be flattened by its weight.

Western Trillium (Trillium ovatum ssp. ovatum) Not ordinarilly considered for preserving, well established groupings of Trillium do not mind careful harvesting of a few blooms. Do not pick these in the wild however. Photo by JoAnn Onstott



Preserving Flowers, continued

When all the flowers are completely covered with sand put the drying box in your drying area and leave undisturbed for one to three weeks. Rapid drying in a very warm, dry and brightly-lit place will produce bright blossoms; slower drying in a more humid spot will produce more muted colors.

Removing the sand should be done very carefully, tipping the container slightly, allowing the sand to flow slowly from one corner of the box. As each flower is released from the sand, lift it gently out.

If you wish to store your dried flowers for later use, seal them in airtight containers such as tins or plastic boxes sealed with masking tape, or in sealed cardboard boxes enclosed in airtight plastic bags.

Air-drying can be very successful with herbs, everlastings and ornamental grasses. Choose perfect plants with long stems, removing the lower leaves. Put the flowers in small bunches, fastening them together with an elastic band; then open each bunch into a fan shape. Hang the flowers head down from nails in a dry, dark place for one to three weeks until they are completely dry. The colors will usually be muted. Display your flowers in the house or store them as above.



Blanket Flower (Gaillardia aristata) A native perennial of varying colors, this many petalled flower often reaches 3 feet. Clumps of plants expand giving more blooms each year. Can be divided to form more plants. Photo by JoAnn Onstott

More

Preserving Flowers, continued



You may want to experiment with waxing fresh flowers. This too is simple; just melt some paraffin wax and plunge each individual flower into the wax. Remove and shake the excess wax off each flower. Put it into the refrigerator to set and harden.

Having dried, preserved flowers in your home year-round can really brighten it up. You may want to give dried flower arrangements as gifts. It is a wonderful, satisfying hobby to preserve your own flowers. You can also make lovely cards by pressing your flowers and covering them with clear mac-tac on a piece of construction paper. It's easy to do and looks lovely.

Harvest Cluster Lily (Dichelostemma congestum)

A perennial bulb, this lily is small and compact. Because the flowers last a long time it is an excellent choice for drying. In the landscape, this native requires little except a bit of sun. Very drought resistant. Plant deep for best growth.

Photo by JoAnn Onstott



Where Lilies Abound

Northwest Native Lily Habitats



Gardeners who have discovered the beauty and reliability of native lilies know a secret: few flowers are easier to grow than these colorful perennials. "A swarm of bees in May
Is worth a load of hay;
A swarm of bees in June
Is worth a silver spoon;
A swarm of bees in July
Is not worth a fly."
- Rhyme from England

In the wild, our Pacific lilies are found from the sea coast to the mountains, in the high desert and in the valleys, in meadows and in forest clearings.

I've seen the allium types of lilies near Ontario, Oregon which is high desert at the eastern side of the state. I found them growing at the edge of a pasture mid-Willamette Valley. Once I spotted one poking its head up in a hard packed gravel parking lot right in Salem.

Tiger lilies seem to want a site of dappled shade with good drainage. However they sometimes select full sun for their home. One of them decided to sprout in the middle of an azalea on the south side of my house. I have no idea how it got there. I certainly did not plant it and as far as I know there were no others in the vacinity.

Tiger Lily (Lilium columbianum)

Beautiful perennial native with tall stalks bearing clusters of pendant orange blooms. Serendipitously grows in all sorts of environments but does best in rich, well drained soil. Plant their feet in shade where the stems can reach the sun. Photo by JoAnn Onstott

Leopard Lily (Lilium pardalinum)

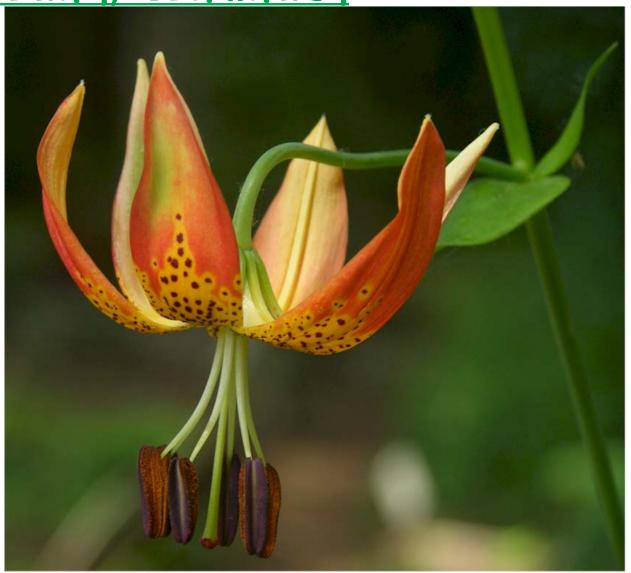
This is an early summer flowering lily of red and orange with purple spots. Stems are tall, often reaching 6 feet with as many as 10 flowers on each stem. It is comfortable in wet meadows and at the edge of streams throughout the region including the coast.

Does not transplant well--choose a permanent home when planting.

Photo by JoAnn Onstott

"May and June. Soft syllables, gentle names for the two best months in the garden year: cool, misty mornings gently burned away with a warming spring sun, followed by breezy afternoons and chilly nights. The discussion of philosophy is over; it's time for work to begin."

- Peter Loewer





Lemon Lily (Lilium parryi)

We encourage planting of this lily from (bonafide nursery stock only--make certain what you are buying has not been collected in the wild!) to assure its existence as it is becomming rare in the wild.

As does its brother, the Leopard Lily, Lemon stems are 6 feet tall with many flowers on each stem. Loves moist rich soil in partial sun.

Photo by JoAnn Onstott

"The world's favorite season is the spring. All things seem possible in May."

- Edwin Way Teale



⇒More⇒

drawing by

Marci Degman



Field Lily or Harvest Cluster Lily (Dichelostemma congestum)

A short stemmed lily found in dry grassy areas and rocky elevations. Perfect for a natural wildflower setting.

Long lasting as a cut flower. Use for the front of a cutting bed as this lily is not tall. Also excellent for drying. Very tough and drought resistant, does well in USDA zones 5-8.

Photo by JoAnn Onstott

"Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses, A box where sweets compacted lie."

- George Herbert, Virtue





Hooker's Onion (Allium acuminatum)

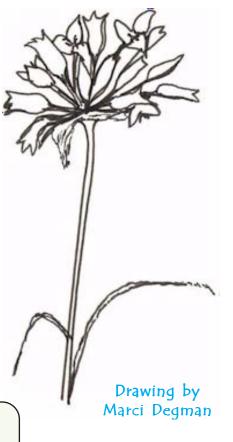
Similar in appearance to other wild onions, this one is found in clusters and the grass-like leaves die back before it blooms, much like the cultivated "naked ladies."

Flowers are usually bright pink but can be white and shades of purple. Plant in spring or fall in dry open sun. Happiest in a dry habitat.

Photo by JoAnn Onstott

"Spring rain leaking through the roof dripping from the wasps' nest."

- Matsuo Basho



Fawn Lily (Erythronium oreganum)

A prolific reproducer given time--they self seed but it takes many years to mature from seedlings to flowering plants.

Likes moisture and well drained soil, a fine plant for gardens. Found only from Vancouver Island to northern Oregon, USDA zones 7-9.

Beautiful as a cut flower! Photo by JoAnn Onstott

"By the time one is eighty, it is said, there is no longer a tug of war in the garden with the May flowers hauling like mad against the claims of the other months. All is at last in balance and all is serene. The gardener is usually dead, of course."

- Henry Mitchell, The Essential Earthman





Pink Fawn Lily (Erythronium revolution)

Similar to the Yellow and White varities, Pink is found in the same range and prefers the same environment. Hard to find but well worth the search. Leopard Lily (Lilium pardalinum)

Early summer flowering lily of red and orange with purple spots. Stems are tall, often reaching 6 feet with as many as 10 flowers on each stem. It is comfortable in wet meadows and at the edge of streams throughout the region including the coast. Does not transplant well. Photo by JoAnn Onstott Photo by JoAnn Onstott

"If it's drama that you sigh for, plant a garden and you'll get it. You will know the thrill of battle fighting foes that will beset it.

If you long for entertainment and for pageantry most glowing, plant a garden and this summer spend your time with green things growing."

- Edward A. Guest, *Plant a Garden*

Glacier Lily (Erythronium grandiflorum)

Closely related to the Avalanche Lily (Erythronium montanum) and often mistaken for it.

Found on slopes and in high elevations, the bloom time for Glacier is early--just after the snow melts--or late--even as late as August. The aize of the plant depencs on where it grows. They can be 1-2 feet tall east of the Cascades or as tiny as 6 inches within the Cascade region.

This lily does well in USDA zones 3-9 and forms large colonies over time. A winter chill and good drainage are preferred by this lovely native.

Photo by JoAnn Onstott

"The sun was warm but the wind was chill. You know how it is with an April day. When the sun is out and the wind is still, You're one month on in the middle of May. But if you so much as dare to speak, a cloud come over the sunlit arch, And wind comes off a frozen peak, And you're two months back in the middle of March."

- Robert Frost



Bear Grass (Xerophyllum tenax)

Though the leaves of this native perennial look like grass, it is really a member of the lily family. It is a large plant, the finely toothed leaves grow about 35 inches long becoming shorter from outside to the center where the 6 foot flower stalk emerges.

The flowers are actually small but plentiful, creamy white and saucer shaped with a heavenly aroma. The blooms open from the bottom to the top of the stem.

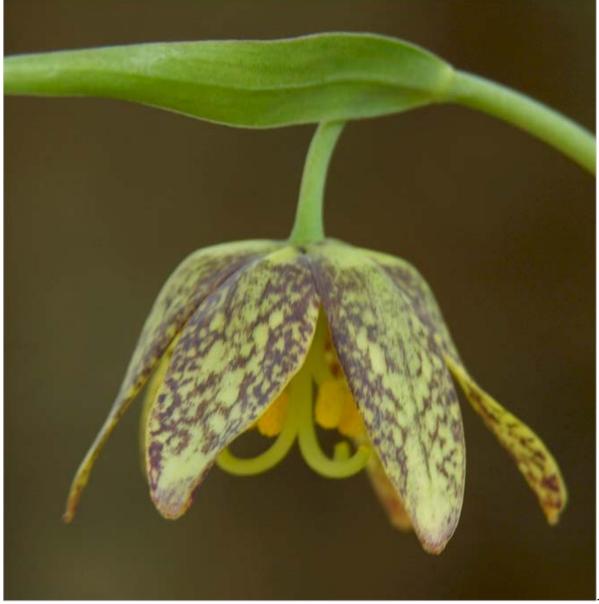
An unusual plant, it flowers in 5 to 7 year cycles. Finally it produces fruit and then the plant dies. It reproduces by seed and by sending out shoots from it's rhizome.

Common companions are Alpine Larch (Larix Iyallii) and Whitebark Pine (Pinus albicaulis) on cold, rocky sites at upper timberlines. You may find this stellar lily in open forests and meadows at sub alpine and low alpine elevations.

'But I must gather knots of flowers, And buds and garlands gay, For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.'

- Alfred Lord Tennyson





Chocolate Lily (Fritillaria affinis)

A most unusual lily, the Chocolate is distinctive with its patterned petals. Its leaves form whorls from which the stem rises, ending in a pendant bloom of dark purple mottled with yellow-green.

The bulb of this native perennial is scaly and made of many bulblets that look like rice, giving another of its common names, Rice Root. The bulb is edible and tastes a little like rice. However, the rarity of this native makes consuming for food a little like using gold for container drainage. Chocolate only blooms after many years.

Photo by JoAnn Onstott

"What is so sweet and dear
As a prosperous morn in May,
The confident prime of the day,
And the dauntless youth of the year,
When nothing that asks for bliss,
Asking aright, is denied,
And half of the world a bridegroom is,
And half of the world a bride?"

- William Watson, Ode in May, 1880



Marci Degman

Yellow Bells (Fritillaria pudica)

A short lily, Yellow Bells grows only 6 inches tall in most instances. The little bright yellow blooms are usually single on a stem.

You may discover this darling from British Columbia to northern California on the eastern side of the Cascades in grassy meadows and woodlands.

Plant this perennial bulb in a rock garden where it can reproduce easily and surprise you with more plants each year.

Photo by Gary A Monroe from the USDA-NRCS Plant database.

"Spring - an experience in immortality."

- Henry D. Thoreau





Gentner's Fritillary (Fritillaria gentneri)

Currently the topic of much discussion, this native lily has been proposed for classification as endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

Colorful and charming, this lily is found only in Jackson and Josephine counties in southwest Oregon although a small population was recently discovered in Siskiyou County of northern California.

Closely resembling the Scarlet Fritillary (Fritillaria recurva), Gentner's has a slightly different style than the Scarlet.

If you are very lucky, you may see this lily growing in dry, open woodlands of fir and oak at elevations below 4,450 feet. Should fortune smile on you in this fashion, please take only photos and not samples and promptly forget where you made the discovery.

Photo by Melissa Carr

"A little Madness in the Spring Is wholesome even for the King."

- Emily Dickinson

Avalanche Lily (Erythronium montanum)

Different from its cousin Glacier Lily, Avalanche's white flowers have yellow centers. And different from another cousin, White Fawn Lily, Avalanche has non-mottled leaves. Otherwise, very much like both.

Photo by Ecstaticist on Flickr. This photographic artist describes the shot:

Yesterday at sunset I was walking along a wooded path next to the Swan Lake bird sanctuary. I was after the sunset shot over the marshland, but I came across a cluster of Avalanche Lilies (Erythronium montanum) that were catching beams of sunset light through the trees.

He then describes the edits he made to the photo. Ultimately this is a photo worthy of this lovely native lily!

> "The air is like a butterfly With frail blue wings. The happy earth looks at the sky And sings."

- Joyce Kilmer, Spring



This & That

A few notes from Jennifer

For some reason I can't seem to get myself in gear for gardening this year. I've got weeds coming up everywhere, especially those horrible Himalayan blackberries. My youngest daughter calls these 'sticker bushes.' They have swallowed the shrubs along the back side of my house and are now encroaching into the pond. There are dandelions and shoot-your-eye-outs in the front yard, all going to seed.

I know I'm being derelict in my duties as custodian of my garden. Here I have this beautiful spot in which to live and I'm not taking care of it. Self-flagellation doesn't seem to be working to get the job done so I'm looking for another trigger.

The part that bothers me the most is the fact that those weeds are going to seed and spreading around the neighborhood. So I'm harboring a nuisance. I may as well be banging on a big old cymbal or burning limburger cheese. If I want my garden to be weed-choked, that's OK. But when it affects others, that's not OK.

I planned to go out yesterday morning early and lay waste to the mess but I overslept until 11:30 am and was due to arrive at an appointment at noon. No time to waste, I'm late, I'm late, I'm late! Like Alice's friend the white rabbit, I jumped into my duds and went right down the rabbit hole without a thought of pulling weeds. Today was filled with more appointments I'm obliged to keep and now that I'm back home it's too hot to weed. Besides, this journal is over 2 weeks late so it ranked higher on the priority pole than the garden.



2008's first rainbow. It's hard to see but if you look carefully you'll see it rising at the top of the fence.

Maybe this evening when it cools down a bit I will go out and begin putting things to rights. I hope so. Elsewise I'll be the scourge of the block. The good folks who live here may get up a lynch mob and hang me from the maple tree.

Wish me luck, please send encouraging thoughts my way and by all means help each other.

Until next time.



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

American Bonsai Society

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. "Above-Ground Camas"
Illustrations by Gordon Friesen from
Camas Country by Janis Ringuette



Useful Plant Databases on the Web, 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

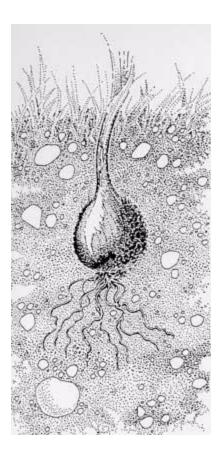
http://www.modernbackyard.com

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.



"Camas bulb"
Illustrations by Gordon Friesen from
Camas Country by Janis Ringuette

Useful Plant Databases on the Web, 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

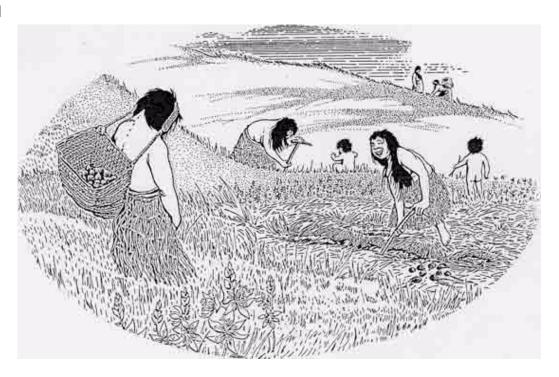
http://www.soils.org/

Website for soil science professionals. Offers information and links.

Woody Plant Seed Manual

http://www.wpsm.net/

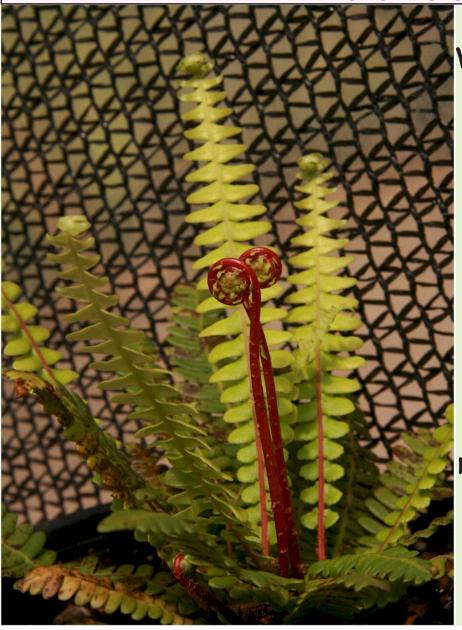
Manual by the US Forest Service covering seed biology, genetic Improvement of forest trees, seed testing, certification of tree seeds and other woody plant materials, and nursery practices.



"Harvesting bulbs"
Illustrations by Gordon Friesen from
Camas Country by Janis Ringuette



NOTICE: NURSERY IS CLOSED



In November 2010, Wallace W Hansen NW 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

Our website, 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!

Deer Fern
(Blechnum spicant)
Incredibly beautiful small native fern
Photo by JoAnn Onstott