

Volume 5, Issue 6-2008 ~ June 2008

# Northwest Native Plant Journal

A Monthly Web Magazine



## Swamp Things!

And more....

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

# Northwest Native Plant Journal

## A Monthly Web Magazine

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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.).



Evergreen Huckleberry  
(*Vaccinium ovatum*)  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott





# On the Cover

## **Oregon Geranium (*Geranium oreganum*)**

Generally described as a Perennial Forb or herb, native to the U.S. (United States) and has its most active growth period in the Spring and Summer . It's foliage is green and blooms with conspicuous Purple flowers, with Brown fruits or seeds. The greatest bloom is usually observed in the Mid Spring, with fruit and seed production starting in the Summer and continuing until Fall. Leaves are not retained year to year.

It has a Short life span relative to most other plant species and a rapid growth rate. At maturity, the typical Oregon Geranium will reach up to 3 feet high, with a maximum height at 20 years of 3 feet.

Not commonly available from nurseries, garden stores and other plant dealers and distributors, but can be easily propagated by Seed. It spreads readily through seed production and the seedlings are very healthy. This plant cannot survive exposure to temperatures below 7°F. Oregon Geranium has no tolerance to drought and restricted water conditions. Mulch to conserve water.



Photo by JoAnn Onstott



# Monthly Highlights

## Things to look forward to this month

**1 – Strawberries!** Ripe, red and juicy strawberries will be ready this month. Don't worry, if you don't get all yours picked the birds will be sure to find any you've missed.

**2 – Lilies!** Look for Tigers and Leopards and Lemons and Washingtons, also the little Fritillaries will be bloom.

**3 – Poison Oak!** This is the time when the flowers are out and the oils are very strong. If you are allergic to this nasty plant, stay out of the wilderness. But also be careful everywhere you go. I found Poison Oak growing in a neighbor's flower bed.

**4 – Children!** Most kids are out of school or will be soon. They'll be popping up everywhere when you least expect it. Because the weather is more friendly, the little ones will be outdoors a lot also. Be careful driving! If you have young friends, try to interest them in native plants. Print out Wally's coloring book, take a nature hike!

**5 – Sunshine!** Be aware of the danger of too much sun for your skin, for dehydration and for sun stroke. Use a sunscreen lotion or spray, wear clothing that is light in color but covers your arms and legs. Wear a hat. Don't forget sunglasses. A lot of damage can occur from overexposure to the sun in a very short time. As the sun rises, it's rays are not so strong. The higher in the sky it gets, the stronger the rays. Then as it wanes and sets in the evening, the rays are again weaker.

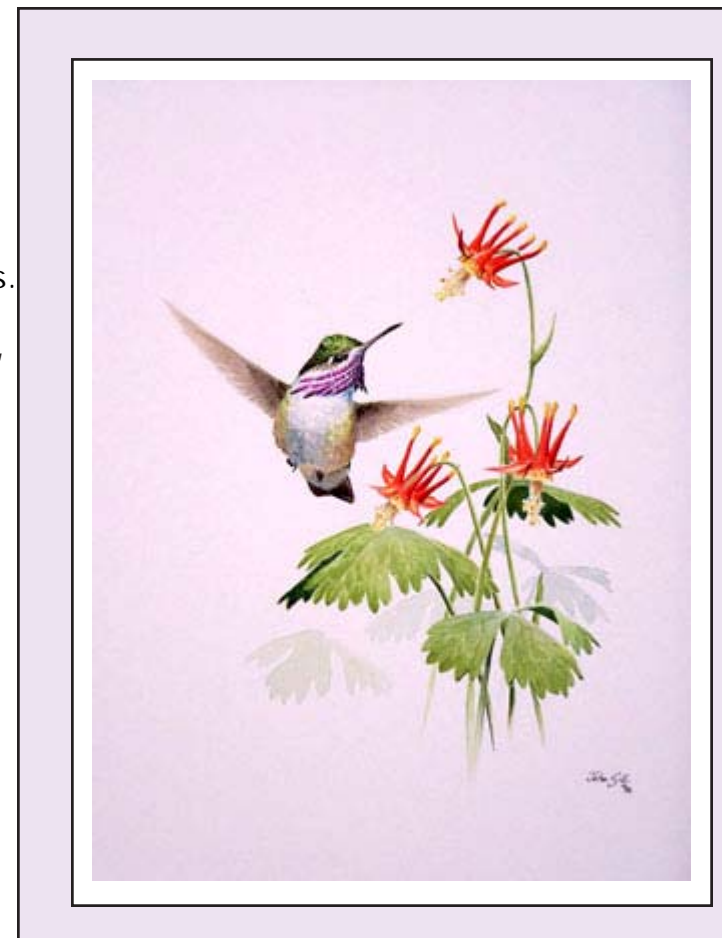
**6 – Huckleberry blooms!** If you find these in the wilderness, remember where you saw them and come back in late July or August to see the delicious berries. Remember, Hucks are Wally's favorite!



# To Do List

## Caring for your NW Native Plant Garden

- 1** – Weeds are now everyone's worst enemy. If you have not checked your garden for weeds you'll find they are almost standing up and yelling "we're back!" Because they've had such a good time sprouting seeds and gaining strength you'll swear they have been taking steroids.
- 2** – Remove seed pods after blooms have dropped from rhododendrons, azaleas.
- 3** – Prune rhododendrons, and azaleas after blooming.
- 4** – Use organic mulches to conserve soil moisture. An inch or two of sawdust, barkdust, or composted leaves will minimize loss of water through evaporation.
- 5** – Birch trees dripping means aphids are present. Control as needed.
- 6** – Move houseplants outside for cleaning, grooming, repotting, and summer growth.
- 7** – Gather seeds from perennials as they are ripe and dry. Lupines, mallows, delphiniums and violets are just a few that should be ready this month.
- 8** – Keep an eye on birdbaths and hummingbird feeders. Change both daily. That water can get very hot if it's in full sun and the hummingbird nectar will ferment overnight. Drunken hummers is not a pretty sight.



John Sill painting  
"Calliope Hummingbird"





# Sparky's Corner

## A special message from our frisky contributor



Wally's having a sale--well, Diana and George are having a sale--and you know what that means? Lots of two-leggers to watch and torment and chatter to. The little two-leggers race around, not very fast but they think they are really speedy. But they're doing as well as they can with only two legs. They seem to like us better than the big two-leggers do. One little girl kept calling everybody Sparky. Smoochie really got a kick out of that! Like he looks just like me--NOT!

Big fun though. Victor is being very important and working so hard! Not that he doesn't always work hard but lately he's just bustling about and helping everybody and driving the tractor and all kinds of stuff. I heard Diana call him "boss" the other day. So he's going to be the garden master? Cool! I hope so! We all like Victor. He never ever gets aggravated at us even when we gather up in the big oaks and chatter at him. He laughs when we do that. He's one of the best two-leggers we ever had.

The flower pot project is humming along nicely. We inspect all the pots to see if anything interesting is in them. So far we didn't find anything but you never know. There may be a lost filbert or acorn or even a chestnut!

Gotta cut this short. Jennifer says I only get one page this time because she's behind in the journals. She is a real worry-wart. She's been fiddling around with the computer again, must be doing some special project or something. She hardly comes out to the nursery lately. She promised a visit soon. She better hurry up. The flowers are spectacular and she loves her some flowers.

Well, see you next time.

Your friend,

**Sparky**



# Cool Summer Craft

## Pressed Flowers Note Cards

BY PIONEER THINKING

### Materials:

- Tweezers
- Flowers and Leaves (You can also use herbs)
- White absorbent paper
- Note Cards
- Construction paper (Optional)
- White Glue, Toothpick

### Directions:

1. Choose flowers that are a good size for your work. The best ones are simple flowers with few petals such as violets, buttercups, Cow Parsnips. (This is especially true for beginners, until you get more confidence to try more elaborate blossoms and greenery.) Pick your flowers after the dew has dried, usually late morning.
2. After you have selected your flowers and greenery and picked them its time to press them. Remove all the stems from the flowers. Spread the blossoms and leaves in a single layer on a sheet of white absorbent paper. Place a second sheet of paper on top and place heavy objects such as books on top. Leave for about 2 weeks.
3. Now that your blooms and greenery are dried its time to get creative! Its a good idea to arrange your flowers and greens on paper before you glue. Be gentle though as some flowers or leaves can be brittle. Next step is to take a pair of tweezers and pick up a leaf that you want for the background. Using a toothpick dipped in white glue apply a small amount to the back of the leaf. Place on white note paper.



Cardwell's  
Penstemon  
(*Penstemon  
cardwellii*)

Photo by JoAnn Onstott  
These tissue-thin flowers will press  
beautifully!

[⇒ More ⇒](#)



# Cool Summer Craft, continued



Continue this process until you have placed all the leaves you want onto your card.

4. Next glue on all the major focal flowers. Glue the same way as the greenery. Once this is done, add all of the accent flowers.

5. Now that your pressed flower arrangement is completed you can write you quotes, poetry etc under the flowers, or you just leave blank for a simple but beautiful look.

To protect your cards cover them with clear self-adhesive contact paper. Press contact paper down firmly to make sure it sticks to the flowers, greenery and card. For extra color glue finished card onto construction paper.

## Editor's Note:

You can also use pressed flowers for other craft projects. Try adding them to place mats, Table tops, Create pictures.....Let your imagination run wild!



*Scouler's Corydalis* (*Corydalis scouleri*) leaves are lovely pressed.  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott



# Swamp Things

## *Northwest Native Bogs and Their Inhabitants*

I remember one very exciting day when I was in the first grade. I got off the school bus with several other kids including my best pal Ronald, and on the walk home we passed a swamp. The older boys (8 and 9 years old) had some tin cans and they went down into the swamp to catch tadpoles. I didn't know what a tadpole was but there were some really cool plants there and flowers and before long we were all finding containers to catch our tadpoles in. The boys told me if I took care of my tadpoles they'd turn into frogs.

Now, I have had a life-long love of frogs. I've no idea where it came from, I just think frogs are so cute and interesting. I like the way they hop. I like it when they stick out their tongues to catch bugs. And the way they swim is so amazing!

We spent hours down there in the swamp dipping our cans in the water and asking the boys to see whether or not we had caught anything. Not a one of us first graders knew what we were doing. The boys let us look into their cans so we'd recognize the taddies. There was so much gunk in the can I didn't see a thing so just busily scooped up water and asked for inspection. Finally they told me for sure I had some and sent Ronald and me off for home.

When I got there, Dad was already home from work so I knew I was late. He and Mom were all worried about where I was and what I'd been doing. I got a stern lecture about coming straight home and not dilly dallying. I agreed and said 'sorry' and then proudly presented my can of tadpoles. Mom was cooking dinner and didn't want to see any old tadpoles anyhow. But Dad checked out my treasure. He asked me if I was sure I had some tadpoles. "You betcha" I assured him. The big kids said so. Well, Dad allowed as how he didn't see any tadpoles but maybe they were too little for his old eyes to see. Said for me to put the can out by the garage and just wait to see if the taddies would grow into frogs.

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# Swamp Things, continued

I checked the can several times a day but never saw a thing in there except scummy water. Finally Dad said maybe the tads had turned into frogs overnight and hopped away. I was sorely disappointed but hopeful that the little froggies were safe and sound somewhere.

I've figured out since then that the older kids just wanted me to quit bugging them and that there really weren't any tadpoles in the can. I've seen tadpoles since then and can easily identify them. It was awfully nice of everybody to not burst my bubble though, and pretend I really might have grown a little frog or two.

And maybe this is why frogs still fascinate me. Or maybe they're just cute. Whatever the reason, I do adore them and am also partial to the places they live. Swamps are magical! Some are stinky and some are spooky but they are all incredibly intricate little micro-cosms of life.

Of course, a real swamp such as the famous Florida swamps are the stuff legends and songs are made of. The garden equivalent of a swamp has much more genteel names:

- Rain Garden
- Bog Garden
- Stormwater Solutions
- Puddle Plants
- Eco-Roof

These are all shallow water concepts but if your water feature is a real pond, the wetland plants we show here can be planted at the edges of an in-ground pond. An above-ground pond might have a bog garden alongside with these native wetlanders.

So, then, what kinds of plants are native to Northwest wetlands? You will be surprised at the variety--besides grassy plants and cattails, there are hundreds of plants that are suitable to populate your wetland garden. In fact, the list is so big we've elected to give you names of books and links to online resources rather than list them all here in our journal. Instead, we'll focus on just a few to give you ideas.



Wapato (*Sagittaria latifolia*)  
Beautiful  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

[⇒ More ⇒](#)



# Swamp Things, continued



*Carex densa*



*Carex illota*



*Carex limosa*



*Carex aquatilis*

Wetland plants are sorted into several families (genus), each with several species (genera).

## Cyperaceae genus

The family Cyperaceae, or the sedges, is a taxon of monocot flowering plants that superficially resemble grasses or rushes. The family is large, with some 4,000 species described in about 70 genera. These species are widely distributed, with the centers of diversity for the group occurring in tropical Asia and tropical South America. While sedges may be found growing in all kinds of situations, many are associated with wetlands, or with poor soils.

The six largest genera within the Cyperaceae account for about 3,500 species, nearly three-quarters of the total species:

- Carex (sedges), with about 2,000 species;
- Cyperus, with nearly 650 species;
- Rhynchospora (beak rushes), with roughly 250 species;
- Fimbristylis, Eleocharis (spike rushes),
- Scleria (nut rushes), each with about 200 species.

Four NW Native Carex (sedges)  
Photos from Carex Working Group

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# Swamp Things, continued



## Juncaceae genus

The Rush Family is a rather small monocot flowering plant family. There are 8 genera and about 400 species. Many of these slow-growing plants superficially resemble grasses, though are herbs or woody shrubs, growing on infertile soils. Some may be found in temperate to frigid climates or on tropical mountains. They grow on wet or damp soils, others on dry soils. A few are annuals, but most are perennials.

Andesia

Distichia

Juncus - Rush

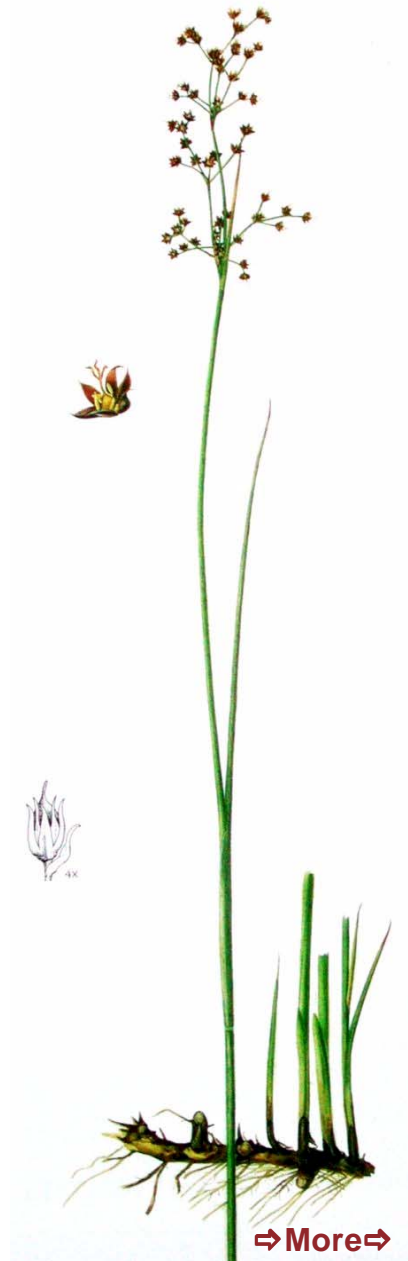
Luzula - Woodrush

Marsippospermum

Oxychloë

Rostkovia

Two kinds of Juncus, probably  
*Juncus articulatus*



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# Swamp Things, continued

## Typha genus

Typha is a genus of about eleven species of monocotyledonous flowering plants in the monogeneric family, Typhaceae. The genus has a largely Northern Hemisphere distribution, but is essentially cosmopolitan, being found in a variety of wetland habitats. These plants are known in British English as bulrush, bullrush or reedmace[1], and in American English as cattail or punks. Cattails should not be confused with the bulrush of the genus Scirpus.

*Typha angustifolia* - Lesser Bulrush or Narrow Leaf Cattail

*Typha angustifolia* x *T. latifolia* - Hybrid or White Cattail

*Typha domingensis* - Southern Cattail

*Typha latifolia* - Common Cattail

*Typha laxmannii* - Laxman's Bulrush

*Typha minima* - Dwarf Bulrush

*Typha orientalis*

*Typha muelleri*[2] - Raupo

*Typha shuttleworthii* - Shuttleworth's Bulrush

Common Cattail (*Typha latifolia*)  
Photo by Jennifer Rehm



Bulrushes are ancient! You may remember the Bible story of how the baby Moses was set in a cradle and hidden among the bulrushes to spare his life when Pharaoh ordered the male children to be killed. Pharaoh's daughter found him there.



This illustration of that story is from Bible Story Murals.

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# Swamp Things, continued

## Common Water-plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*)

Also known as Mad-dog weed, this is a flowering plant native to most of the Northern Hemisphere, in Europe, northern Asia, and North America. It grows in shallow water, and consists of a fibrous root, several basal leaves 15-30 cm long, and a triangular stem up to 1 m tall, with a branched inflorescence bearing numerous small flowers with three round or slightly jagged, white or pale purple, petals.

The word *alisma* is said to be a word of Celtic origin meaning “water”, a reference to the habitat in which it grows. Early botanists named it after the *plantago* because of the similarity of their leaves.

### Medicinal uses

The dried leaves of the water plantain has been used as both a diuretic and a diaphoretic. They have been used to help treat renal calculus, cystitis, dysentery and epilepsy.

The roots have formerly been used to cure hydrophobia, and have a reputation in America of curing rattlesnake bites.



Water-Plantain, old botanical painting. Closeup of flowers by Erick Dronnet

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# Swamp Things, continued

## *Deschampsia cespitosa* (*Aira cespitosa*)

Common Name: Tufted hair grass; Tussock grass

Hardy in USDA zones 4-9, grows from 20 to 36." Prefers light to moderate shade; will grow in full sun but reduces quality of foliage and flower. In the wild, this plant will be found in moist soils, in bogs and at the edge of slow moving streams.

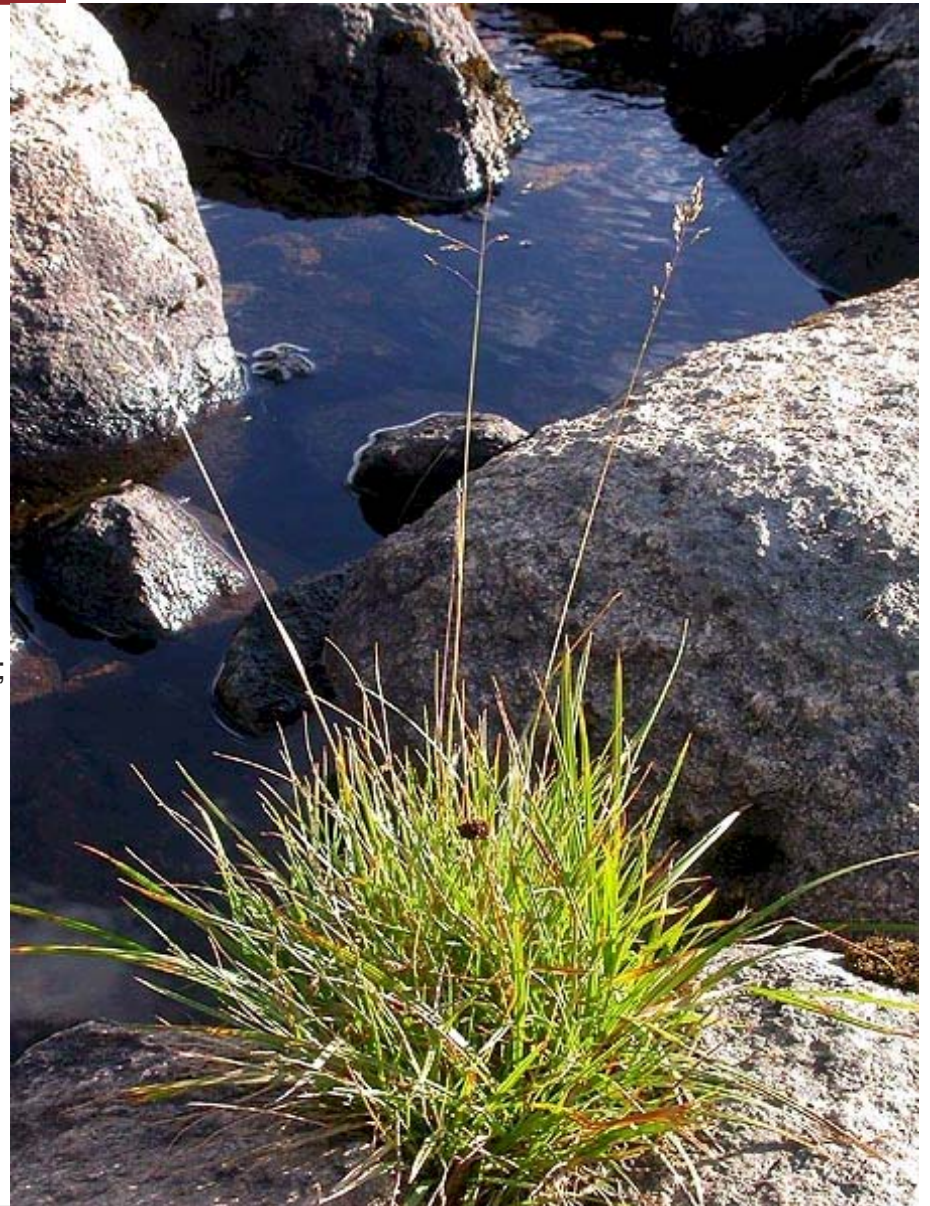


Forms a dense clump with fine hair like leaves; upright open.

Blooms in summer with airy green to gold inflourences turning to light golden straw color; lasts into winter; good as cut flower. Cool season grower; variable in flower and foliage; dark green leaves; evergreen; self seeds; salt tolerant.

Very nice non-invasive clumping native grass-like water plant.

[⇒ More ⇒](#)



# Swamp Things, continued

## *Eleocharis ovata*

### Blunt Spikerush

A summer annual up to 10 inches tall, producing a single culm or a tuft of culms. Each culm is green, hairless, round in cross-section and unbranched. The leaves are reduced to a single, rough, brown sheath at the base of the culm; there are no leaf blades. The culm terminates in a small, scale-covered, egg-shaped flowerhead up to

½" long and a little less across. Grows from 2 to 10" high and spreads 6 to 12 inches. Hardy to USDA zones 3-5.

In the garden, plant this native in full sun and shallow water. Does well in a wide variety of soils from sandy to mucky. Does not do well with Cattails and other wetland species. Likes to have it's area all alone.

A true Marlene Deitrich of the plant world, Blunt Spikerush just 'wants to be alone.' Perhaps that's nature's way of guaranteeing wetland beauty captures its share of the garden spotlight.

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# Swamp Things, continued

Dunegrass photo by W.D. Bakowsky, Ontario  
Natural Heritage Information Center

## Dunegrass (*Elymus mollis*)

Easy to grow grass-like perennial reaches 3 feet. Requires as much sun as possible and consistently moist to wet soil.

Called an 'industrial strength' native, forms dense clumps that can crowd out other species. Excellent for shorelines (soft and salt water) where invasive aliens may be prone to strike a toehold. Spreads by underground rhizomes. A perfect choice for containers or other planting sites where it will be naturally confined.

⇒More⇒



PHOTO: W.D. BAKOWSKY

Pokeweed cultivar with large leaves and fruit



Woman preparing Pokeweed in 1930

## Speaking of Swamp Tunes:

The 1969 Tony Joe White hit song, "Poke Salad Annie". Poke salad is what pokeweed is called when you cook and eat it

*Phytolacca americana* Common Names: pokeweed, poke, poke salad, scoke, pigeon berry, inkberry

Family: *Phytolaccaceae* (pokeweed Family)

Young pokeweed leaves can be boiled three times to reduce the toxin, discarding the water after each boiling. The result is known as poke salit, or poke salad, and is occasionally available commercially. [1] Many authorities advise against eating pokeweed even after thrice boiling, as traces of the toxin may still remain. For many decades, poke salad has been a staple of southern U.S. cuisine, despite campaigns by doctors who believed pokeweed remained toxic even after being boiled. The lingering cultural significance of Poke salad can be found in the 1969 hit song "Poke Salad Annie," written and performed by Tony Joe White, and famously covered by Elvis Presley and the El Orbits. Pokeweed juice is added to other juices for jelly by those who believe it can relieve the pain of arthritis.



# Swamp Things, continued



## *Potentilla anserina* ssp. *pacifica* Pacific Silverweed, Pacific Cinquefoil

Rosaceae (Rose Family)

Perennial hairy herb from long runners (stolons). Pinnately compound, alternate, stipulate leaves to 15" long, that are woolly (silvery) beneath. Flowers single on a stalk, yellow, calyx 5-lobed, petals 5, oval, stamens numerous, pistils numerous. Fruits are flattened oval achenes to 2 mm long.

Habitat: Wet spots (marsh edges, stream sides, estuarine flats), sandy spots (beaches and dunes), usually near the sea, but not restricted to maritime environs (also Sagebrush Zone of the "Scablands" eastern Washington); common at low to middle elevations.

Use: The long, brown-skinned roots were harvested in late fall or early spring. There are two types of roots, short, curly roots near the surface, and long, fleshy taproots. The roots were never eaten raw, because they are bitter. Steam-cooked, they taste like sweet potatoes, though they can still be bitter. The roots were also boiled and drank as a tea. The boiled roots were also mixed with fish oil and applied as a poultice. The roots were also pressed and the juice applied to inflamed eyes.

[Pojar & McKinnon, 1994; Turner, 1991]

[⇒ More ⇒](#)



# Swamp Things, continued

## Baltic Rush, Wire Rush (*Juncus balticus*)

Cool season perennial. Smooth, dark green, wire-like leaves are round to oval and pithy inside, growing to 3 feet tall from numerous dark brown to black rhizomes.

Small dark brown flowers borne in a clustered panicle up to 2 1/2 inches long and on the side of the stem instead at the terminal end.

The most common of rushes found in the intermountain West. Very abundant at low to mid elevations but sometimes found in subalpine zones. Grows along streams, small wet depressions and swales, moist meadows, around springs and often forms a band along banks of streams, sloughs, lakes and reservoirs.

Soil preferences are not awfully specific--silt to clay loams to coarser sandy substrates, very vigorous on neutral or slightly acidic soils. Can be found in saline and alkaline meadows and flats, sometimes with Nebraska sedge, timothy and redtop. In disturbed areas, it may be found with foxtail barley.

Blackfoot Indians used the roots for making a brown dye, and other tribes used its stems to make baskets and mats.

Baltic Rush (*Juncus balticus*) in a pot at the nursery. Photo by JoAnn Onstott

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# Swamp Things, continued



**Dagger Leaf Rush**  
(*Juncus ensifolius*)

Short in stature, usually not more than 1 foot high. Stems arise singly or a few together from creeping rhizomes. Distinct, flattened sword shaped leaves. Small, dense, rounded flower heads form from short branches at the end of the stem. Found in moist sites, but rarely in standing water. A stream or pond-side plant.

One of the most common rushes, Dagger-Leaf is recommended for wildlife habitats, for land reclamation projects and a standard for the latest sort of water garden: the Rain Garden. This could be the best garden you ever grow if you live in the Pacific Northwest. Our climate is perfectly ideal and there are natural rain gardens growing all over our corner of the world.

**Dagger Leaf Rush (*Juncus ensifolius*)**  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

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# Swamp Things, continued

## Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*)

Ranunculaceae family. Other common names for this plant are Kingcups. Water Blobs. Horse Blobs. Bull's Eyes. Leopard's Foot. Meadow Routs. Verrucaria. Solsequia. Sponsa solis.

A showy plant resembling a gigantic buttercup, found naturally in marshes, wet meadows and alongside streams where it forms large tufts.

Stems are about 12" high, hollow, nearly round, erect, but at times creeping and rooting at intervals in the lower portions, which are generally of a purple colour.

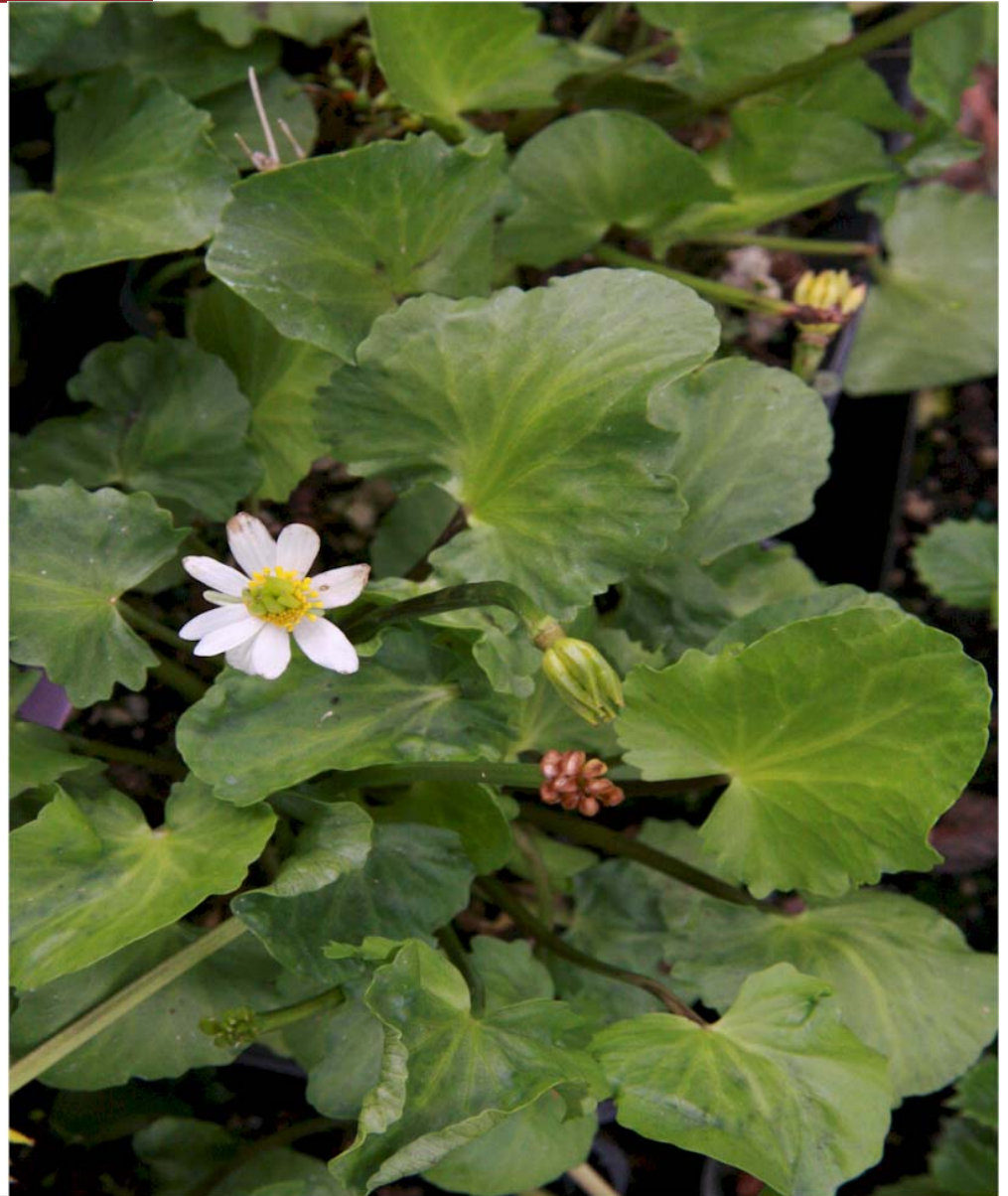
Most of the leaves spring directly from the ground, on long stalks, kidney-shaped, large and glossy. Stem-leaves have very short stalks, more pointed at top.

It flowers from mid-March till the middle of June, the flowers being at the end of the stems, which divide into two grooved flowerstalks, each bearing one blossom, from 1 to 2 inches in diameter. Closely allied to various species of buttercups.

[From Botanical.com, a Modern Herbal]

Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*)  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

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# Swamp Things, continued



## Stream Lupine (*Lupinus rivularis*)

A particularly beautiful species of lupine.

Globally found only along the Pacific Coast of N America, from southern British Columbia to southern California, where it grows in gravelly or sandy riverbank or streambank locations at low elevations. In Canada, this robust yet delicate-leaved species is known from seven stations, one on Vancouver Island and six in the lower Fraser Valley. In BC, it can be separated from other species of lupines by its occurrence at low elevations along the coast, its perennial nature, lack of basal leaves, hairless upper sides of the leaflets, glaucous or near-glaucous appearance, delicate leaves, hollow stem, early flowering (May), blackened seed pods, and its preference for gravelly sites which are proximal to river or creek banks. Like most lupines, hybrids have been reported for this species, and hybridization with the aggressive yellow bush lupine (*Lupinus arboreus*) is considered a major threat throughout its range. Proximity to rivers and creeks, and proximity to the coast at low elevations biogeographically define this species' distribution in BC.

[From British Columbia's Department of Geography]

## Stream Lupine (*Lupinus rivularis*)

Photo by JoAnn Onstott

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# Swamp Things, continued

## References:

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Oregon Flora Project, Beware the Hybrid Gumplant by Kenton L. Chambers, [www.oregonflora.org](http://www.oregonflora.org)

Living Landscapes, Royal BC Museum, [livinglandscapes.bc.ca](http://livinglandscapes.bc.ca)

Carex Working Group, [carexworkinggroup.com](http://carexworkinggroup.com)

Alkali Bulrush  
(*Scirpus maritimus*)

Right, American Slough  
(*Beckmannia syzigachne*)





# Useful Native Plant 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.



Bald-Hip Rose  
(*Rosa gymnocarpa*)  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

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# 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.



Bald-Hip Rose  
(*Rosa gymnocarpa*)  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

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# 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.



Bald-Hip Rose  
(*Rosa gymnocarpa*)  
Photo by JoAnn Onstott



# This & That

## A few notes from Jennifer

The common topic of conversation these days is the price of gas. I think the sign at this little corner market has an unusual take on the subject. Compare the gas prices and the little signboard at the right. It says "Beer cheaper than gas--drink, don't drive."

There are other alternatives though. I am having a real dilemma with myself about it. I drive a vehicle that does not get very good mileage with the gasoline it requires. Yet I feel the other features of this particular ride are necessary for my well-being. What to do?

For now I'm pulling a Scarlett O'Hara and worrying about it tomorrow. For today, I am going to go sit in the lawn swing and enjoy this beautiful sunny day.

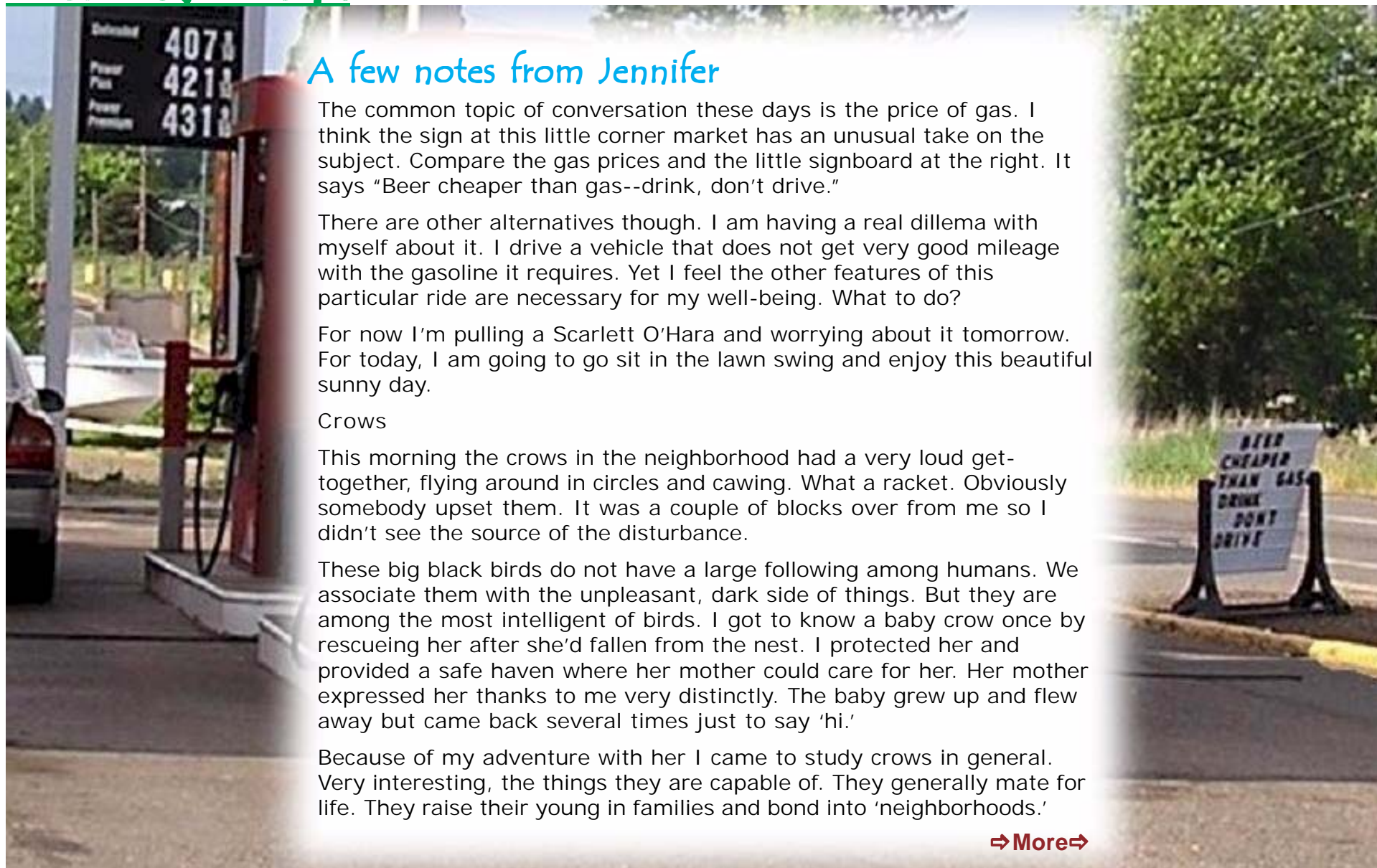
Crows

This morning the crows in the neighborhood had a very loud get-together, flying around in circles and cawing. What a racket. Obviously somebody upset them. It was a couple of blocks over from me so I didn't see the source of the disturbance.

These big black birds do not have a large following among humans. We associate them with the unpleasant, dark side of things. But they are among the most intelligent of birds. I got to know a baby crow once by rescuing her after she'd fallen from the nest. I protected her and provided a safe haven where her mother could care for her. Her mother expressed her thanks to me very distinctly. The baby grew up and flew away but came back several times just to say 'hi.'

Because of my adventure with her I came to study crows in general. Very interesting, the things they are capable of. They generally mate for life. They raise their young in families and bond into 'neighborhoods.'

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# This & That, continued

Crows have been called flying monkeys because of their antics and their intelligence. Proportionally, the crow brain is the same size as the chimpanzee brain. And like chimpanzees, crows will use tools, even making them when necessary. A crow at the University of Chicago, who preferred his mash wet, would take a toy plastic cup, fill it with water from a trough and wet his meal. If it spilled along the way, he would return and refill it. When Betty, a captive crow at Oxford University, was presented with food in a long narrow tube and a thin metal wire, she fashioned the wire into a hook to fish out the food.

In Sweden, crows have learned to fish by watching fishermen place a baited line through a hole in the ice. When the fisherman moves off, the birds pull the line from the water to eat the bait — or the hooked fish.

Crows in Tokyo wait at busy intersections for the light to turn red, then place walnuts in front of the car tires. Returning to their perches, they wait for the green light and the cars to clear, then retrieve the nut meats.

Seems odd that such wonderfully adaptable and inventive birds would attract negative attention from humans. I think the serious way they study us and the uncanny abilities they show are spooky to us. We even have a singular name for a flock of crows: we call it a murder and have done so since as far back as the 15th century. I refuse to use the word in this conjuncture. If nasty, stinky obnoxious seagulls can hang out in a flock, I think crows deserve that same designation.

That's enough out of me for the day.



Showy Milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*)  
This beauty was growing alongside 99E a ways south of Salem. I made the mistake of cutting one for a bouquet. It stunk and leaked nasty ooze on my hands and promptly wilted. Fine flower for growing, not so fine for picking. Photo by Jennifer Rehm

"May you have the hindsight to know where you've been, The foresight to know where you are going, And the insight to know when you have gone too far"



**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

[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!



CORN LILY  
(*Veratrum viride*)

When this lovely plant comes into bloom it will have  
pendant yellow flowers that hang in tassels.

Photo by JoAnn Onstott