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October 2009

Northwest Native Plant Journal

A Monthly Web Magazine

The Leaves of Autumn
& a very special surprise!

Published by Wallace W Hansen Northwest Native Plant Nursery & Gardens

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Editor: Jennifer Rehm

Webmaster and head writer for Wallace
W Hansen Native Plants of the NW
e-Mail: chillipepper6@comcast.net
www.chillirose.com

Staff Photographer:

JoAnn Onstott

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Features

This month we celebrate the
leaves of autumn with a beauti-
ful pictorial showing each leaf
just as our photographer, JoAnn
Onstott, captured it at its peak of
perfection.

An accompaniment to this photo
album is available to you from our
website at www.nwplants.com. It is a
new screensaver for your computer
screen with each of these amazing
fall leaves . We hope you enjoy both
journal and screensaver.....8
Screensaver29



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.).

Serviceberry
(*Amelanchier alnifolia*)
Photo by JoAnn Onstott



Writers wanted: If you have expertise for any species of Northwest plants and wish to write an article for pay for publication in this Journal, please contact Wally via e-mail at nwplants@gmail.com. Some articles (and pics) might deal with propagation, culture, diseases, restoration, reclamation, fertilizers, etc.

On the Cover

Paper Birch (*Betula papyrifera*)



This graceful native tree is a very good neighbor and a gardener's friend.

At maximum height of 100 ft, the narrow shape encourages the leaves to fall near the trunk instead of carpeting the neighborhood.

The white bark peels off in thin layers as the tree ages and the white color remains throughout its life, unlike the European birches.

The heart shaped leaves are grass green spring - summer and change to golden yellow as fall comes to stay. The drama of those leaves against the brilliant blue sky make this photo remarkable.

Photo by JoAnn Onstott



To Do List

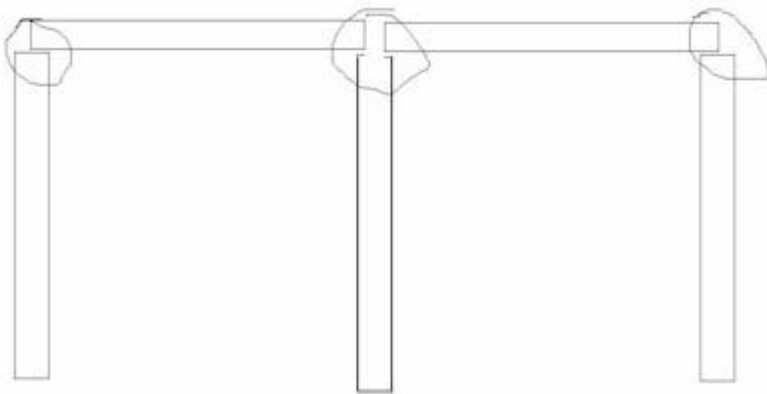
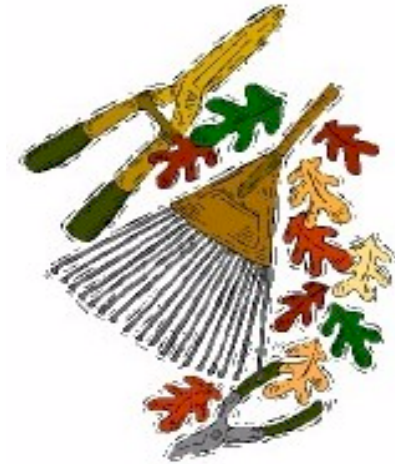
Caring for your NW Native Plant Garden

1 – Do one final tour of the yard to make sure no plant is dying of thirst. Most will be fine but any that are bone dry need a good soaking to take it through to the rainy season.

2 – Look out for increased slug activity. They do not like extremely dry weather but give them a taste of rain and they come running.

3 – Begin fall planting. Division of established plants and adding new ones is perfect at this time of year. Water at first and keep track until nature takes over.

4 – Pay attention to your compost pile now. All the trimmings and weeds and other discarded material should be added, layered with dirt or newspaper, and dampened sufficiently to get the cooking action in high gear. If you're using the two-burner method with two piles side-by-side, put down a layer of small branches, build up the new material and then fork the older stuff on top. Cover loosely to prevent all those good nutrients from washing away. By spring you should have a good crop of fresh compost for your garden.



Rough sketch of two-burner compost bin made of used pallets. This is the view from the top. The pallets can be wired or tied together at the corners. If you do this neatly it might even look pretty. In the alternative you could put some trellis material around it or even plant some vining plants to grow up the sides.



Mystery plant puzzle



Photo by JoAnn Onstott

***NOTE:** This list only covers from May 2009. We have had a number of winners since we began this feature in February 2004 but, alas, no records showing who those winners are. We'd love to find add those names to this list. If you are among the earlier winners, please send me a note (nativeplantlady@nwplants.com). Thanks!

This bird must think he's much bigger than he really is. Or maybe he knows something we don't. The food he is attempting to eat looks like a nut of some sort but maybe it's a fruit he can squish. What do you think? Nut or fruit? The tree has obviously been around for a while if the moss is any indication, so the leaves are probably at their mature size.

That is as much of a clue as we can provide. Can you tell us the botanical name of this tree? Is it really a native as we've assumed? Will you be the next Official Plant Identifier?

Test your native plant knowledge--identify this northwest native tree. The reward is simple but very satisfying: You will be included in our list of Official Plant Detectives.

Send me an email (NativePlantLady@nwplants.com) with the correct botanical name of this plant.

Good luck!

P.S. Do you have a plant you'd like to identify? Email it to us and we'll add it to our mystery plant puzzle page.

Official Plant Detectives*

Jerry Murray

Sabrina Kis

Carol Hiler

Mike Burns



Sparky's Corner

A special message from our frisky contributor



I'm late! No time to chat! Fall is here and we don't have anywhere near enough food stored away! We thought we had plenty but we forgot about the babies born this year and the new neighbors who moved in. Oh, my!

Please, if you find any pine nuts or acorns or mushrooms or dried berries or dried corn or cones from trees like firs or spruce or pine please bring some to our neighborhood where the nursery is.

Squirrels in your own neighborhood may also need some food to store away so if you find any of our favorite foods, put them outside on a table or bird bath or just leave them in a bucket.

We especially need pine nuts and acorns because they are very high in protein and fat which we need to keep us healthy.

Gotta go--we're all working hard to store the food and I have to do my part.

See ya next time!

Your friend,

Sparky



Leaves of Autumn

Extremely colorful leaves of scarlet with wine-colored bloom bedeck this native shrub. Most attractive in the landscape.

Later on, the leaves will fall and the twisted limbs provide winter interest. The blossom gradually darkens but usually remains until eaten by wildlife.

Smooth Sumac
(*Rhus glabra*)
Photo by
JoAnn Onstott



[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Leaves of Autumn, continued

For year-round interest, few plants can surpass the Red-Flowering Currant (*Ribes sanguineum*).

The flowers are small clusters of pink to red and very showy. After the bloom has gone by, clusters of robin's egg blue berries grow in their place.

In fall, the leaves color up with a quite respectable display.

Red Flowering
Currant
(*Ribes sanguineum*
var. *sanguineum*)
Photo by JoAnn
Onstott



[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Leaves of Autumn, continued

Wild roses are such lovely plants and so easy to grow, it makes one wonder why more gardeners don't include them in their landscapes.

In the wild, we find them growing along fences where their flowers casually grow along the stems.

When the petals trickle down to the ground, the remaining hips take in sunshine until they are deep red or orange and lovely and delightfully edible.

Nootka Rose
(*Rosa nutkana*)
Photo by JoAnn
Onstott



[⇨ More ⇨](#)

Leaves of Autumn, continued

Douglas Spirea is just one of the native spireas found in the north-west.

For many years, they were considered to be not suitable for landscapes, I think because they bloom once instead of all summer. Lately though, I've seen them being used in professionally designed landscapes.

The colorful autumn foliage is unusual with the dusky tones. Beautiful!

Douglas Spirea
(*Spirea douglasii*)
Photo by JoAnn
Onstott



⇒ More ⇒

Leaves of Autumn, continued

We are well aware of the huckleberry fruit that makes such delicious pies, jams and jellies.

The Red Huckleberry (*Vaccinium parvifolium*) bears much less fruit than the darker varieties and the fruit is usually tart.

However, the fall color of this huck is far more smashing than the darker shrubs. Very fine for understory planting or along a fence.

Red Huckleberry
(*Vaccinium parvifolium*)
Photo by JoAnn Onstott



[⇨ More ⇨](#)

Leaves of Autumn, continued

The northwest native viburnums are perfect shrubs for the landscape.

This one, called by the PLANTS database "common viburnum," has an unusual distribution which probably has a story behind it. It is native to Washington, Oregon, California and North Dakota.

It's odd natural distribution aside, it is a handsome shrub with very nice flowers and brightly colored fall leaves.

Oval Leaf Viburnum
(*Viburnum
ellipticum*)
Photo by JoAnn
Onstott



⇒ More ⇒

Leaves of Autumn, continued

Another of our viburnums, the American Cranberry Bush (also known as Mooseberry) has similar qualities as the common viburnum but it hands down outdoes it's cousins with this extravagant fall color.

Humans find the fruit tart but they are fine fare for small mammals and birds including ruffed grouse, pheasant and many species of song-birds.

American Cranberry
Bush
(*Viburnum opulus*
var. *americanum*)
Photo by JoAnn
Onstott



⇒ More ⇒

Leaves of Autumn, continued

The most prevalent native tree in the Willamette Valley at the time it was documented by the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery.

Though hundreds have fallen to the woodsman's axe, there still many more left standing.

Acorns are one of the favorite foods of squirrels but rarely used by humans at this time.

Native distribution encompasses the west coast of North America.

Garry Oak
(*Quercus garryana*
var. *garryana*)
Photo by JoAnn
Onstott



[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Leaves of Autumn, continued

A proud and stately oak, this one is native only in Oregon and California.

The leaves are naturally shiny with points randomly formed at the outer edge of the leaves. Their autumn color varies from pumpkin to bronze.

Highly desirable for furniture or wood floors because of its dense quality and beauty.

California Black Oak
(*Quercus kelloggii*)
Photo by JoAnn
Onstott

Note: Not positive of
the identification of
this tree.



⇒ More ⇒

Leaves of Autumn, continued

Chokecherry of some species or other is found all across North America.

This variety is a lovely small tree that will form thickets if allowed to.

Leaves are dark green above and lighter below. Flowers are beautiful sprays of pink. Fruit is about the size of an olive and edible (see inset at right). However, some parts of this plant are poisonous to humans though not to wildlife.

Chokecherry
(*Prunus virginiana*)
Photo by JoAnn
Onstott



[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Leaves of Autumn, continued

Our Native American Plum is a good landscape shrub or small tree with its pretty blooms, edible fruit and graceful fall color.

Native all along the west coast of North America, it is often the very first shrub to bloom in spring. Arching branches with bright chartreuse green leaves end in pendants of creamy white flowers.

The overall shape of the plant is very attractive. A good garden plant.

Native American Plum
(*Oemleria cerasiformis*)
Photo by JoAnn
Onstott



[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Leaves of Autumn, continued

One of my favorite trees for landscapes, the Quaking Aspen is a beautiful small tree.

It's leaves are oval but pointed at the end. They are elegantly distributed along the branches, and produce a pleasant rustling sound when light breezes blow.

Beautiful grey bark, golden yellow fall color.

Quaking Aspen
(*Populus tremuloides*)
Photo by JoAnn
Onstott



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Leaves of Autumn, continued

Often called the 'miracle tree,' Dawn Redwood was lost to the Americas and believed to be so around the world until a handful were found by botanists in China.

After carefully guarding this small stand and years of reproductive work, the tree was returned to its origin here in the northwest.

The needles appear similar to other conifers, but they are soft as feathers. Maybe this softness is why the needles turn golden in fall and drop to the ground.

A very beautiful and remarkable tree.

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



[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Leaves of Autumn, continued

More of a shrub than a tree, the mature height is 3 - 12 feet. It has small white flowers in large clusters which are followed by red-orange berries.

Birds are enamored of these fruits and make no bones about announcing how delicious they are.

The fall leaf color is exemplar before they drop off the tree.

Select the planting site carefully as many of those plentiful berries will invariably end up on the earth beneath the shrub.

Green's Mountain Ash
(*Sorbus scorpulina*)
Closeup view (above)
Photo by JoAnn Onstott



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Leaves of Autumn, continued

The Hawthorn is very beautiful at all times of the year.

Sometimes called Thorn Apple because of the wickedly sharp thorns that occur all along the branches, the bark is rich red-brown.

The flowers are sweet posies in May or June, followed by black haws in August. Though the fruit is edible, it is seedy and not particularly delicious.

Fall color is rambunctious shades of bright yellow to scarlet to wine.

Can be grown from seed if the birds don't eat them all.

Douglas Hawthorn
(*Crataegus douglasii*)
Photo by JoAnn Onstott



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Leaves of Autumn, continued

Paper Birch in groups of three or five has been a favorite of landscape designers for years. The white bark and small, heart shaped leaves are very festive.

In autumn, the leaves are rather uniformly golden yellow and carpet the ground beneath, revealing the white textured bark once more.

I saw these trees planted along a fence in the country. They were evenly spaced and looked as sharp as a row of snow-white soldiers. Outstanding!

Paper Birch
(*Betula papyrifera*)
Photo by JoAnn Onstott



[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Leaves of Autumn, continued

Huge! That's the best description of the Big Leaf Maple's leaves.

The bark is honey-brown and fairly smooth to the touch.

The flowers of this tree are widely unappreciated, likely because the big leaves cover them.

If you stand in the shade of this maple you can see the cascades of yellow-ish flowers with brown stamens. Indeed, this maple is one of the finest shade trees and it is native only to the west coast of North America.

Big Leaf Maple
(*Acer macrophyllum*)
Photo by JoAnn Onstott



[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Leaves of Autumn, continued

A smaller maple than the "big mac," Douglas Maple's leaves are proportionate to its height which is around 30 feet at maturity.

The leaves also differ in color. Whereas Big Leaf's fall color is reliably yellow, this maple's autumn kind of salmon colored in between the veins.

Douglas Maple ranges farther than it's large counterpart--clear up into Alaska.

A hardy tree and quite a lovely one.

Douglas Maple
(*Acer glabrum*)
Photo by JoAnn
Onstott



⇒ More ⇒

Leaves of Autumn, continued

Now we come to the true diva of the native plant world.

Vine Maple can be shaped by the gardener as a vine, a small tree, even a ground cover. It is happy as an understory plant for taller trees. In fact, if left to its own devices it may present a charming shape you never imagined.

It boasts the broadest spectrum of fall color of any native. with each branch making its own color scheme.

Very hardy, grows quickly to around 10 feet and may have multiple trunks. It will not withstand severe heat but a little shade is quite acceptable to Vine Maple.

Vine Maple
(*Acer circinatum*)
Photo by JoAnn Onstott



[⇒ More ⇒](#)

Leaves of Autumn, continued

This maple has sharply notched leaves which gave it the name Big Tooth Maple. It grows in low desert elevations, along stream banks and even high mountain regions making it the most versatile of our native maples. It can thrive in USDA zones 3-10 and requires little care.

If you've not got room for a bigger maple, this one matures at 30-40 feet tall and about as wide. A lovely shade tree for sunny afternoons.

As with most deciduous trees and shrubs, an underplanting of the more delicate spring perennials makes a good partner. The branches are bare in early spring so the understory gets muted light and then they are shaded as the tree's leaves open to protect them from the heat.

Of course, it is a maple and it does give fabulous leaf color in fall.

Big Tooth Maple
or Rocky Mountain Sugar Maple
(*Acer grandidentatum*)
Photo by JoAnn Onstott



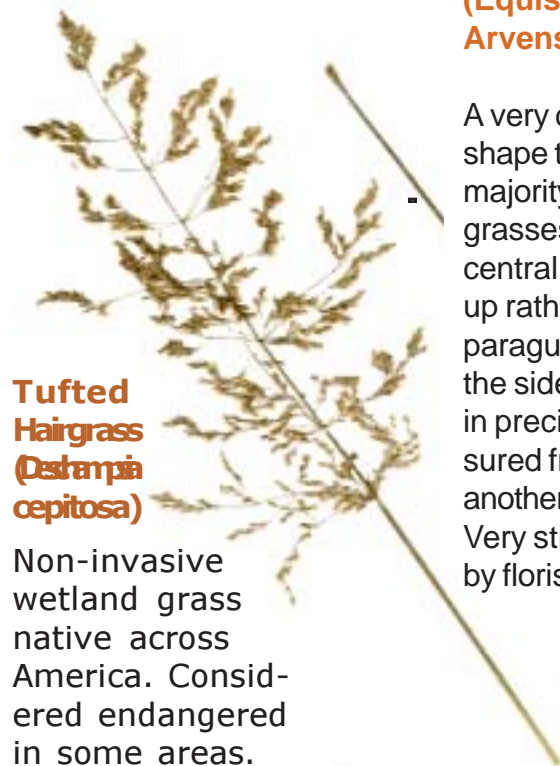
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Leaves of Autumn, continued

A discussion of autumn color and texture in the garden should contain a bit about the native grasses nature favors us with. Many are wetland, good in bogs or rain gardens or around a pond. Many prefer dry land and form very dramatic clumps, complete with their flowering seed heads. Some have different tones of leaf color that range from light green to darker shades, almost purple. The autumn display they give is also greatly varied. Some stay green year round, some turn their leaves to shades of tan or gold. They are attractive to wildlife for their seeds and the cover they provide when grown in large clumps.

Whichever type you prefer, the contrasting shapes and patterns can add unusual interest to your gardens.

Tufted Hairgrass
(*Deschampsia cespitosa*)



Non-invasive wetland grass native across America. Considered endangered in some areas.

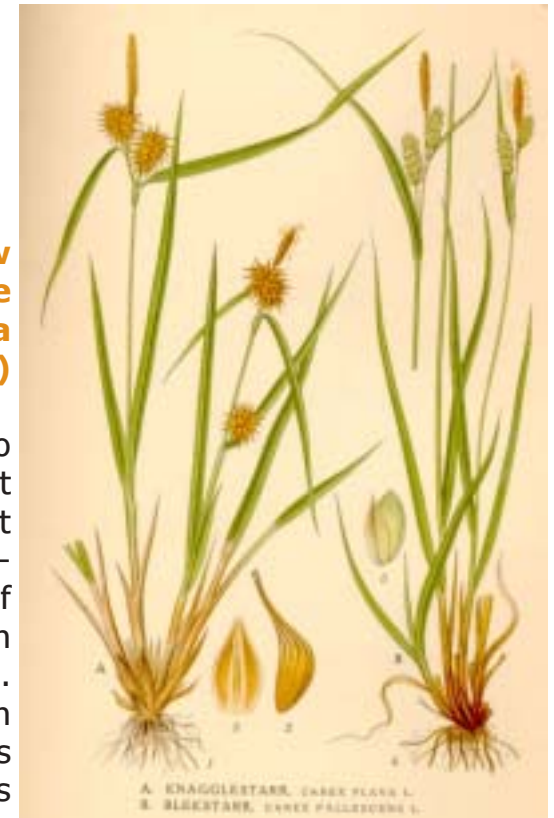
Horsetail Grass
(*Equisetum arvense*)

A very different shape than the majority of native grasses. The central stem comes up rather like asparagus and then the side branches fill in precisely measured from one another. Very striking, used by florists.



Yellow Sedge
(*Carex lava* L.)

Native to both East and West coastal regions of North America. Washington lists this plant as sensitive.



An Autumnal Surprise



Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*)



American Cranberry Bush
(*Viburnum opulus* var. *americanum*)

Does your computer need a pick-me-up?

JoAnn's seasonal photos this year are so spectacular we decided to create a new screensaver with this collection. Enjoy the beauty of the autumn leaves right on your desktop.

Find the link on our website's for Gifts from Wally, select the new screensaver (Leaves of Autumn 2009), download and install. It's easy! There is no charge, it is absolutely free! We offer this new screensaver as a gift to you from Wally's nursery.

You may share this gift with friends, as many as you like. The only restriction we place on this and all our other Gifts is that you may not change, reengineer, sell or in any other way pursue a profit from our gifts. They must remain complete with our copyright mark on them.

All photos are from JoAnn
Onstott



Nootka Rose (*Rosa nutkana*)



Garry Oak (*Quercus garryana*
var. *garryana*)

This & That

A few notes from Jennifer

This photo of the trees at the edge of the nursery illustrates how beautifully various species of Northwest Native Trees can combine.

There is something to gain in using all one species for a formal, unified look. But it seems to me that a variety can give longevity that the one-note symphony cannot. It's a matter of personal opinion.

An old-tyme design of row-planting is called a calico fence. One must select plants that are agreed upon their environment but aside from that single basic tenet there are no barriers.







-  An everblooming fence could be devised.
-  An evergreen fence might be nice.
-  A flaming fall fence would be the talk of the neighborhood.
-  An edible fence could feed humans and wildlife alike.
-  Even more variation could be achieved by planting straight-stemmed plants with some vining plants to meander through and sew them all together.
-  A patriot fence could be made with Blueblossom (*Ceanothus thrysiflorus*), Snowbrush (*Ceanothus velutinus*) and Red-Flowering Currant (*Ribes sanguineum*). The Blueblossom and Snowbrush are evergreen and the Red-Flowering Currant has blue fruit followed by red fall foliage.



Photo by Wally Hansen

Until next time,
Jennifer



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.



Smooth Sumac (*Rhus glabra*)
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

American Bonsai Society

www.absbonsai.org/

The bonsai organization for North America, including Mexico, the United States, and Canada.

Birdchick

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.

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>

A distance learning approach from The Department of Floriculture and Ornamental Horticulture College of Agriculture & Life Sciences at Cornell University Kenneth W. Mudge, Associate Professor of Horticulture

Fire effects on plant species

www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/

USDA, Forest Service site summarizes and synthesizes research about living organisms in the United States—their biology, ecology, and relationship to fire.

⇒ **More** ⇒

Useful Plant Databases on the Web, continued

Flora of North America Web Site

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

Taxonomic relationships, distributions, 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.

Growit.com Rooting Database

www.growit.com/Know/Rooting.htm

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

ModernBackyard

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.

Noxious Weed Control

www.oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/statelist2.shtml

Search function, can be shown in text only

Portland Bureau of Environmental Services

www.portlandonline.com/bes/index.cfm?c=29323

Information about caring for our earth. Download their Native Plant Poster, plant list and brochure on removing invasive plants.

Smooth Sumac (*Rhus glabra*)

Photo by JoAnn Onstott



Useful Plant Databases on the Web, continued

River Corridor and Wetland Restoration

www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/restore/
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) site

Soil Science Society of America

www.soils.org/
Website for soil science professionals. Offers information and links.

Starflower Foundation

www.wnps.org/landscaping/herbarium/#starflower
Founded in 1996 by Ann Lennart to assist with creation, rehabilitation, and stewardship of Pacific Northwest native plant communities in the Washington area.

USDA PLANTS Database

<http://plants.usda.gov/>
Searchable for common or botanical name, shows origin, range and status

Washington Native Plant Society

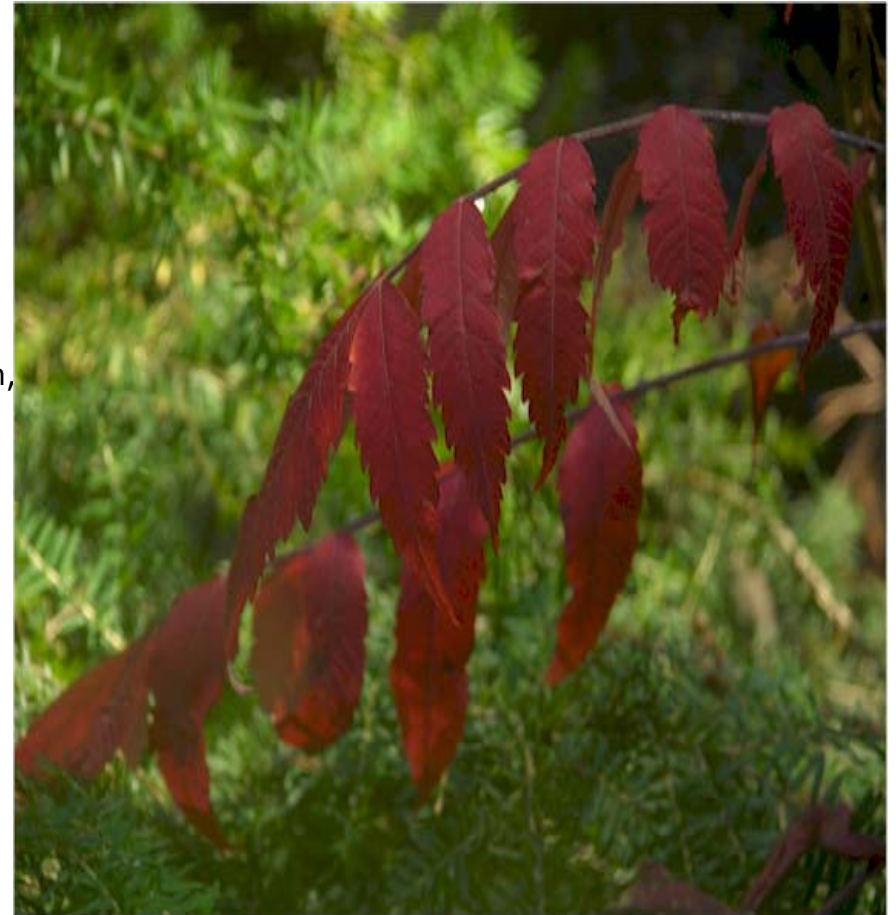
<http://www.wnps.org/>
Appreciate, conserve and study our native plants and habitats

Wildflower Trails of the San Francisco Bay Area

www.westernwildflower.com/
Excellent photography and trail guides.

Woody Plant Seed Manual

www.nsl.fs.fed.us/wpsm/.
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.



Smooth Sumac (*Rhus glabra*)
Photo by JoAnn Onstott



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Casual bouquet

Trimnings from grasses, wild roses, snow-berries, various species of native Maples and shrubs with colorful leaves join together in an old fruit jar tied with raffia. Simple elements harvested from the landscape make a beautiful display at the remarkable hands of Julie Nichols.

Photo by JoAnn Onstott



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Come visit us at the nursery! We have over 300 different plants in stock. Special orders welcome! Restoration, wildlife habitat, native plants for every garden.

An old stump is planted with a variety of northwest native ferns and perennials. Clear testimony of using native plants in containers.
Created by Julie Nichols
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

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I offer a unique resource – probably the largest collection of native plants in one location in the Northwest. Over 200 species in containers are available 12 months of the year, plus Bare-Root and “Balled & Burlapped” plants in the Fall & Winter. You can create a wonderful native plant garden on a small city lot or on a larger acreage. Use natives for specimen and demonstration gardens in parks and around schools and large buildings. Natives are tough, often drought resistant – this is their home – they love it here! Many have delicious fruit – many attract wildlife – animals, birds, and butterflies.

A NURSERY TRIP – WELL WORTHWHILE!

This delightful, peaceful Native Plant Nursery/Garden is located about five miles East of Salem, Oregon, on five acres of Doug Firs, Cedar, Pine, and ancient Garry Oaks. This central Willamette Valley location is an easy drive from anywhere in the Northwest. If you are interested in Natives, a tour of the Nursery/Gardens is well worthwhile (improve your plant identification skills). My nursery and gardens have often been referred to as an “Arboretum” of plants of the Pacific Northwest. You will be inspired and encouraged in your own gardening.

- VISA, MASTERCARD, CHECK ACCEPTED
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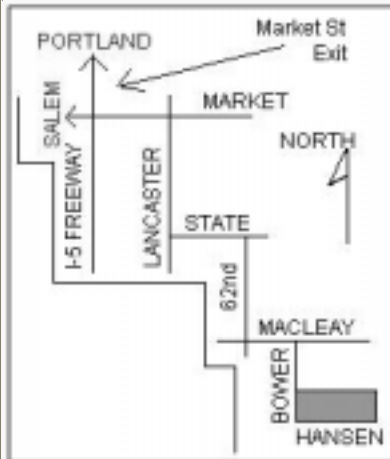
Salem, OR 97317-9216

Phone: 503-581-2638

Fax: 503-549-8739

eMail: nwplants@gmail.com

Website: www.nwplants.com



To drive to my Nursery,
Take I-5 to Salem, OR,
Get off at the Market Street
Exit & follow above map.

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Architects, Designers,
Contractors, Government
Agencies & Nurseries. Large
buyers request wholesale list.