Volume 8, Issue 3-2010 June 2010

Northwest Native Plant Journal

A Web Magazine

NorthWest Maples (hammock dreams!), pg.21

Our readers speak up-- and share their thoughts, pg. 8

Native plants/invasive twins, pg.26

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In Every Issue

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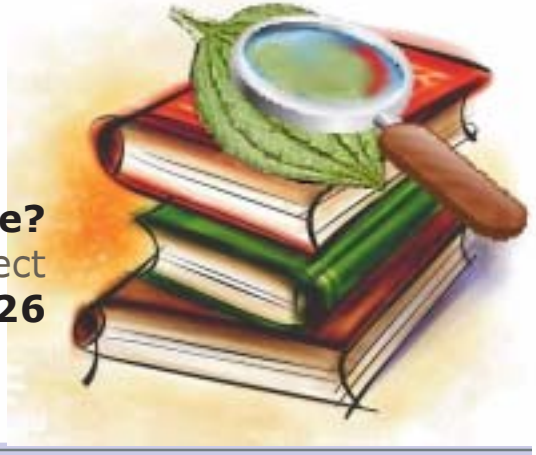
Feature Articles



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.).

Little Wild Rose
(Rosa gymnocarpa)
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 us via e-mail at nwplants@gmail.com Some articles (and pics) might deal with propagation, culture, diseases, restoration, reclamation, fertilizers, etc.**

On the Cover: Cliff Maids (Lewisia cotyledon)

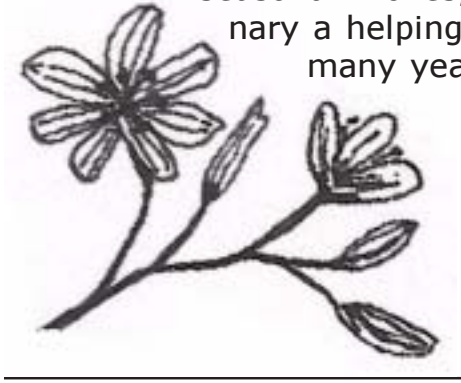
Lewisias are such cheerful bloomers!

These members of the Portulaca family require little in the way of care, and it will repay the gardener with stems of extravagantly coloured and often patterned flowers in carnival shades of pink and magenta, purple, yellow, orange and sometimes even white.

Someone left a lewisia on my doorstep as a surprise several years ago. I put it on the corner of my above-ground pond to better enjoy the floral display. Once in a while it would become a bit dry so I'd dunk it in the pond, then return it to it's perch.

When the weather turned cold in late fall, I put it down beside the pond wall where it stayed until I noticed it the following spring.

Aside from those occasional dunkings and seasonal moves, it has received nary a helping hand lo these many years. It's still in the same gallon sized pot. It's rosette of leaves has remained constantly green. It has now produced several pups around the pot perimiter. And in a week or two I know it will once again elicit a cheer at the sight of those flowers it is in the process of building right this minute.



Lewisia (not sure of the variety)
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

To Do List

Caring for your NW Native Plant Garden

1 – Work around the humidity (early am, late afternoon / evening) and be aware of how much sun you're soaking up. Lightweight long sleeves and a hat can prolong your puttering sessions if you are properly hydrated.

2 – Keep new plants well watered

3 – Mulch now to conserve water

4 – Check foliage for signs of nutrient deficiency--use compost or manure or feed with fish emulsion to side-dress anybody who is not at the peak of their form

5 – Give the compost a turn

6 – Give your houseplants a summer vacation outdoors

7 – Make sure the birds have fresh water

8 – Keep up on deadheading, for long season bloom

9 – Pinch back tall growing fall bloomers like asters, monarda and helianthus

10 – If you want to prune or shear your evergreens, do so as soon as the new growth starts to turn a darker green.

Bonus tip – Want moss to grow someplace special? One way to make a garden element appear to have been there forever is to add moss. Easy--blend buttermilk and moss into a "thick slurry" and pour or paste wherever you want it to grow. You might want to put a barrier of some sort to keep wildlife and pets away from the area until the moss begins to grow.

Mystery plant puzzle

I spotted this plant growing in the waste area alongside highway 99e near Corvallis in June of 2006.

It only came up that one year.

The flowers remind me of checkermallows.

I did not get a good shot of the leaves, sorry.

Photo by Jennifer Rehm

Test your native plant knowledge--identify this northwest native. 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 show it here on our Mystery Plant Puzzle page.

Official Plant Detectives

Jerry Murray
Sabrina Kis
Carol Hiler
Mike Burns
Nancy Whitehead
Pat Opdyke
Luke Kishpaugh

Sparky's Corner

A special message from our frisky contributor

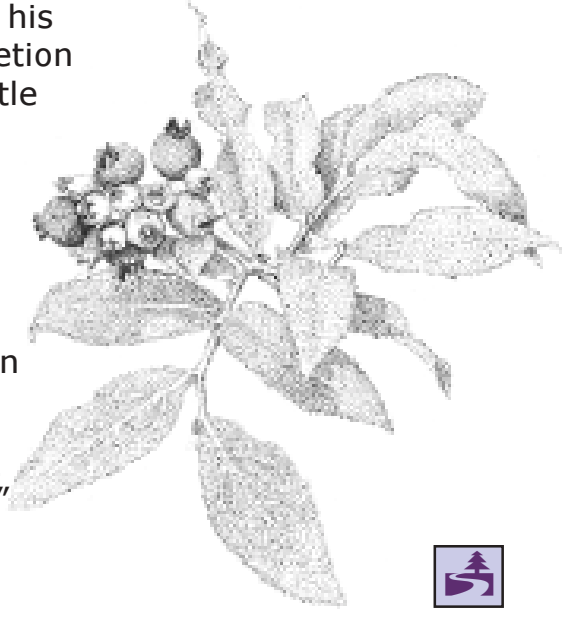
Update on Sparky's whereabouts:

We got an email from Sparky a week or so ago. He said he is fine and we should not worry about him.

Apparently there is a celebratory ritual that Sparky's clan observes to usher teenage squirrels into 'manhood.'

He could not share many of the details with us but he did say it requires extraordinary strength and agility and the utmost brain power to perform the entire ritual without faltering.

He does plan to return to his home garden upon completion of the ritual. He was a little sketchy on the time line (squirrel time does not translate smoothly to two-legger time), but he said he will be home well before the huckleberries are ripe. He didn't mention which huck but I happen to know he is especially fond of Evergreen Huckleberry (Vaccinium ovatum). They are usually ripe for picking August - September.



He said we may not recognize him as he will be "most macho and strong like bull."

Well, hurry back, furry friend.

Journal Feedback

Sharing reader responses about past issues

It is always a delight to get emails from our readers, no matter what the message might be. Corrections, suggestions, personal experiences or constructive criticism, each message is direct from the heart of a fellow native plant lover and each one carries a lesson that helps to make our journals better. Here are some reader emails I particularly enjoyed.

This sedge is native to the northwest: Sandstarr (Carex arenaria)

About the January-February 2010 journal (www.nwplants.com/information/emag/vol8-1.pdf) Streamside gardening tips from an ecologically aware professional water gardener

Flowers at the waters edge--this is fine for spring fed streams, but not so good for most streams. Alternatively, sedges, rushes or willow help to hold the shoreline together.

The big challenge comes when people want to cut things down so they can see the stream. That's where the compromise with sedges and rushes works so well. By having at least several inches of plants overhanging the stream, they invite fish to live there. That can be a significant factor to raise property value. It really does not take a lot of effort or investment.

On mowing regular grass right to or near the stream edge: that is one of the biggest reasons you see large rip-rap rock along so many streams as you showed in your first photo. Grass is ok along a still water pond. However it does very little to protect a stream bank. If that stream edge had been simply left alone after removing any invasive plants, it likely would have repaired itself without the further damage to the aquatic habitat offered by the rocks. Most of your photos show this sort of streamside grass and the public needs to realize this is not a good idea. This was shown in the extension service photo of a model streamside garden! (This photo was on page 31 of that issue.)

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Journal Feedback, continued

The way to fix most of this is to allow two of the three best stream stabilizing plants to establish themselves either with help or alone. Those are the rushes and the sedges.

Rushes are the very attractive dark green round leaf grasses with pointed tips that grow alongside streams in sandy to loamy soils.

Sedges are the flat grasses that grow along waterways in heavy silt loam to clay soils. Either of these types of plants (there are numerous species) will stabilize banks better than most anything we can do. I have read that sedges have up to one MILE of roots in each cubic foot of soil. It has such an incredible stabilizing ability that a man with a shovel cannot even cut into a dense stand of sedges or rushes.

In realizing that landowners desire to see the stream and beautify the banks, there are simple ideas to accomplish the goals of the land owner along with the needs of the stream. Instead of pure grass, either plant or allow establishment of rushes and sedges, then place strategic cobbles and small boulders to form steps for people to experience the stream. This will simultaneously armor the stream bamk while still offering access to people and result in an even more attractive shoreline.

By the way, if these plants get too tall, simply cut them back to 8 to 12 inches or so. They are quite persistent.

One of the good streamside plants: Slough Sedge (Carex obnupta)
Photo by JoAnn Onstott

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Journal Feedback, continued

The third most important bank stabilizer is the form of willows.

Also, western red cedar might be the most valuable tree for streamside plantings. While they provide dense shade and good cover for fish, they also form the backbone of our stream structure when they eventually become a snag that falls into the stream and causes the pools to form that support the entire range of aquatic organisms. I say they are the most important because the logs persist longer than other species that rot faster.

Much of our work is designing and building extraordinarily efficient pond, stream and lake habitat. We also consult property owners and people buying and selling waterfront property. The very first thing we look for are opportunities to improve shorelines and stream banks to not only allow them to function better, but to also add the most financial value to property for quite small investments.

The streams in many of the photos in the newsletter were very lacking of overhanging vegetation that provide aspects such as fish cover. Just having a few fish in a stream does wonders for property value and for nature.

Northwest native Hooker's Willow (Salix hookeriana) Photo by JoAnn Onstott

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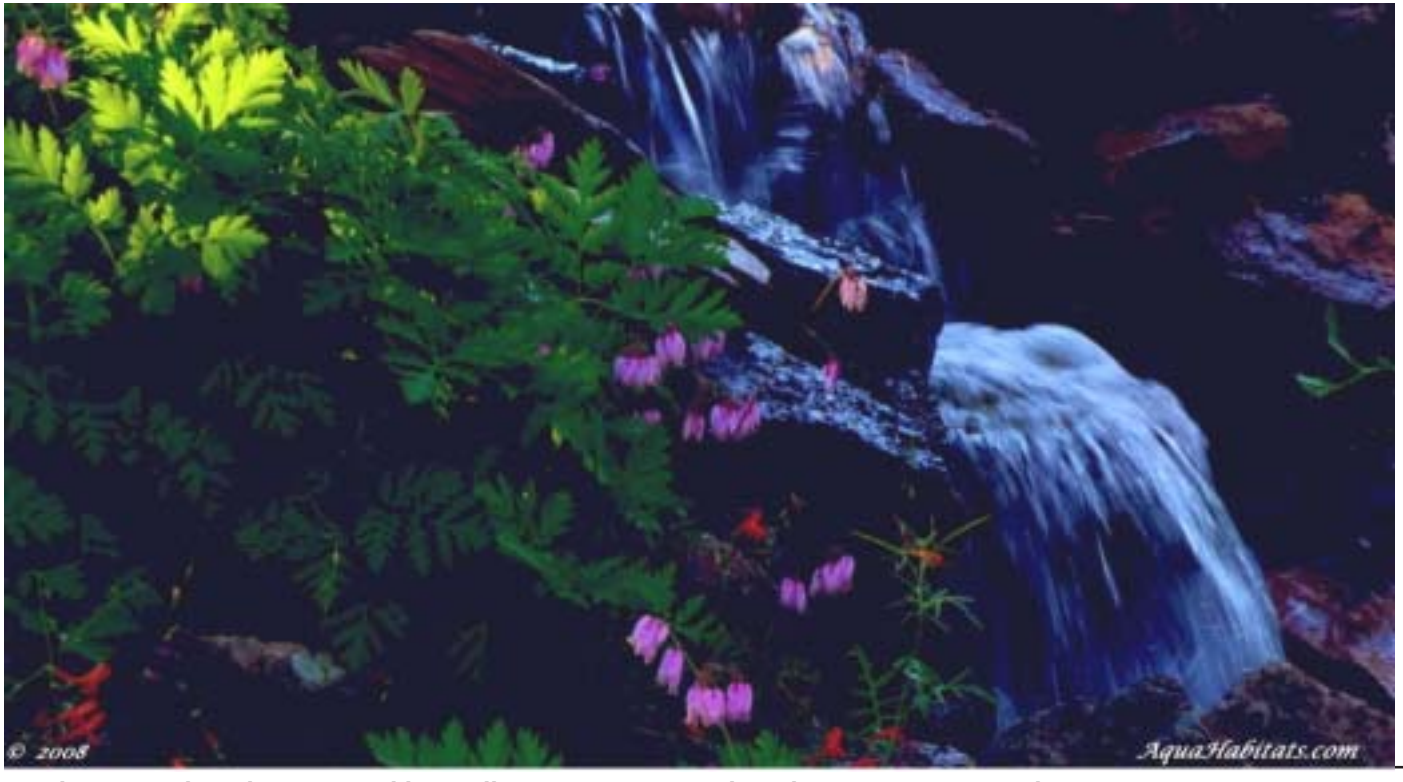
Journal Feedback, continued

Some may believe it takes a lot of work to improve streams until I share a fishing story with them. I was fishing a small coastal river once and I noticed something very interesting. A vine maple branch was laying low enough that some of its twigs were dangling in the water. Over a short time quite a few leaves had collected in the comb provided by the vine maple. The water under those floating leaves was only about 18 inches deep. What was so fascinating was the tip of the tail of about an 8 pound steelhead trout that was sticking out just a little from under the floating leaves. I watched the tail slowly glide back and forth under a full afternoon sun. I was amazed at how little it took to hold that gorgeous fish in that pool. Eventually my mischievous side won out and I very slowly sneaked up from down stream and touched the steelhead's tail with the toe of my boot. As expected, that fish shot out across the pool and found some even more obscure place to hide. I couldn't help myself, I just love watching these beautiful trout swim!



The moral of this story is it does not always take very much effort at all to accomplish a goal. You just need a little bit of forethought.

By the way, our twitter page www.twitter.com/ naturalponds has a photo of a bleeding heart in dappled sun posing in front of a waterfall on one of the streams we designed. Twitter doesn't let us scroll the text of the page out of the way, but there is a link on our twitter favorites to the original pc wallpaper the photo is framed in.

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Journal Feedback, continued

This email about our July 2009 journal (www.nwplants.com/information/emag/vol7-7.pdf) Blues article is from another eco-hero, both personally and professionally.

Regarding the "blues" article on p. 22 of the latest journal (and another fine journal it is!), I would like to agree that Cynoglossum grande, our native west-side hound's-tongue (p. 22) is an excellent landscaping plant. It reproduces moderately from self seeding, and provides a very early flower display (beginning here in Eugene in late March - early April) when the only other local natives flowering are osoberry and red-flowering current.

***However,** Cynoglossum officinale (p. 23), is a different plant. It is a state listed noxious weed and is quarantined for sale in Oregon. See: http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/statelist2.shtml*

[NOTE: This website is listed in our "Useful Native Plant Resources on the Web" list near the back of every journal.]

This is the approved plant native from the northwest, Grand Hound's Tongue (Cynoglossum grande)

Photo by JoAnn Onstott

See the invasive plant, Hound's Tongue (Cynoglossum officinale) on the next page.

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Journal Feedback, continued

The invasive plant, Hound's Tongue (Cynoglossum officinale)
From Britton and Brown Illustrated Flora - 2nd Edition (1913)

Cynoglossum officinale L. Sp. Pl. 134. 1753.

Biennial; pubescent; stem erect, leavy to the top, stout, usually branched, 1 1/2 - 3 high. Basal and lower leaves oblong or oblong-lanceolate, slender-petioled, sometimes obtuse, 6'-12' long, 1'-3' wide; upper leaves lanceolate, acute or acuminate, sessile, or the uppermost clasping; racemes several or numerous, bractless or sparingly bracted, simple or branched, much elongated in fruit; pedicels 3"-6" long; calyx segments ovate-lanceolate, acute; corolla reddish-purple or rarely white, about 4" broad, each of the 4 nutlets forming a side of the pyramid, flat on their upper faces, margined, splitting away at maturity, but hanging attached to portions of the subulate style.

In fields and waste places, Quebec and Ontario to Manitoba, South Carolina, Alabama, Kansas and Montana. Often a troublesome weed. Naturalized from Europe. Native also of Asia. Called also Dog's-tongue, Rose noble. Canadian or Dog-bur. Sheep-lice. Tory-weed. Wood-mat. May-Sept.

[Note: the narrative above from this 1913 publication clearly states the plant came from Europe or Asia and had at that time become naturalized in Canada and the U.S.

In the 98 years since Britton and Brown noted that the plant is "Often a troublesome weed," it has climbed up the 'bad dog' ladder to its current status of Class B noxious weed and is under quarantine in Oregon. Quite a fall from whatever actual grace it once enjoyed.

Other states in agreement with the 'noxious' classification are Colorado, Montana, Nevada, Washington and Wyoming.]

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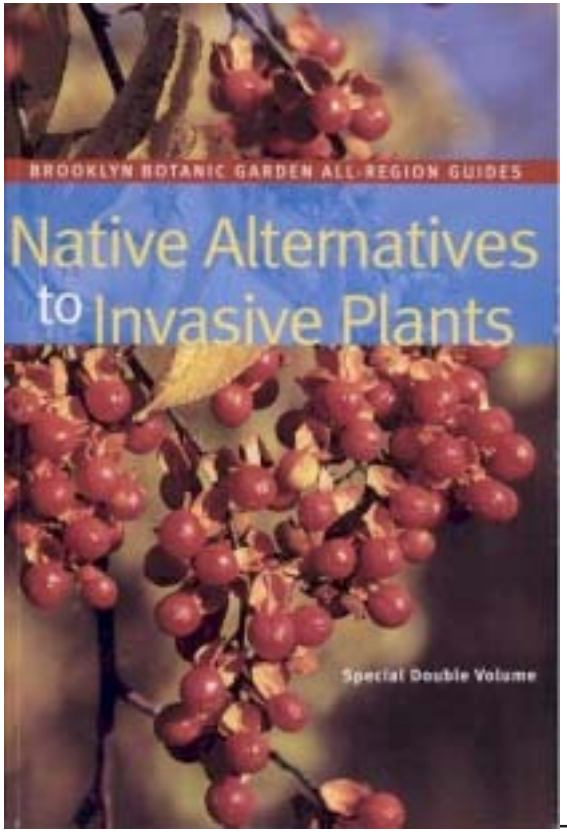
Journal Feedback, continued

Some of the other plants listed as "ornamentals" by the OSU Department of Horticulture web site are state listed weeds (Buddleja davidii and Daphne laureola, for example), so I tend to avoid using that web site. It is really confusing to the public when ODA noxious weeds are listed side-by-side with ornamentals. On one set of the lists ("natives"), "naturalized invasives" are listed side-by-side with natives. Very confusing. One species, Buddleja davidii, is noted to be an ODA B listed weed, but the definition of that category (B) is not what is contained on the ODA web site, nor is the quarantine mentioned.

[Note: In the Oregon Invasive Species Council website, www.oregon.gov/OISC/, see which plants are considered invasive and to what degree, find instructions on reporting invasive plants, and much more]



An example of what you will find in this great publication. It covers all regions, broadening the scope of information across many different environments.

Purple loosestrife, of Eurasian origin, is displacing native wetland plants across much of North America

Fireweed is a long-blooming native named for its tendency to colonize burned and disturbed sites.

From the Brooklyn Botanical Garden, this book provides attractive, acceptable alternatives to plants we already love, rather than trying to reinvent our gardens, and they start this discussion by answering those basic questions we must understand to really 'get it.'

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Journal Feedback, continued

Invasive, toxic tansy

Tansy Ragwort (Senecio jacobaea) See description on next page

On p. 19, on the list of good plants to attract good bugs, there also are some invasive species listed. These are not yet listed by ODA, but they might be some day: ***fennel*** *(very invasive along roadsides in N. CA and now in OR, and into meadows such as at the top of Skinner Butte in Eugene),* ***black locust*** *(see NPSO list mentioned below),* ***Queen Anne's lace*** *and* ***hairy vetch*** *(both widely established, and there are good native alternatives for both! What happens with these invasives is that they escape and overrun natives which are even better for insects: thus, the net can be detrimental, rather than beneficial — which none of us want, for sure.*

I recommend Douglas Tallamy's recent book, Bringing Nature Home, as a great "key" to understanding why native plants and native insects are important. Although he is from Delaware, and thus, some natives in his area are not native here, the principles still apply very well. A truly great book!

A good source list for what is invasive in the southern Willamette Valley (and applicable to the mid-Valley, and probably works well in the north) is downloadable at emeraldnpso.org. That web site also has free, downloadable booklets for native trees, shrubs and wildflowers, so it may be a good listing for your web sites at the end. And the national PLANTS web site is good for showing range maps and listing nativity and invasiveness.

[Note: Sometimes gardeners will pull up invasives and plop them on the compost pile, thinking they will die there. Instead, they can thrive and wind up back in the garden, … down the street, ……]

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Journal Feedback, continued

The journal article under discussion listed 'tansy' as a plant that could be utilized to attract good bugs.

This is not to be confused with Tansy Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*) pictured on the previous page, an invasive, toxic biennial weed that originatedin Europe but has, since its arrival in the early 1900's, made quite a mess in pastures, hay or silage. When consumed by cattle, horses and goats, sheep, pets and people, it can cause swelling, inflammation of membranes, diarrhea, blood in feces, rough coat and excessive fluid in the body. It can lead to lliver damage due to bioaccumulation. The poison is unaffected by drying, and honey from the plant also contains the alkaloids. Its seeds can lie dormant for 15 years. Due to its aggressive growth, it often displaces proper grazing grounds and can render whole pastures unusable.

There are two tansies which are native to the northwest and both may serve as good bug attractors.

Beautiful, native tansies!

(Left) Northwest native Camphor Tansy (*Tanacetum camphoratum Less.*)
Photo from *A Photographic Guide to Plants of Humboldt Bay Dunes and Wetlands* Compiled by Gordon Leppig & Andrea J. Pickart

(Right) Northwest native Corymbflower Tansy (*Tanacetum corymbosum (L.) Sch. Bip.*)
Photo by Enrico Blasutto

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Journal Feedback, continued

The subject of good (i.e. native) plants vs. invasives, is a bit of a thorny issue! OK, not just a "bit" but really more like a dense stand of gorse!

We carry the belief strongly that as individuals we should have as one of our freedoms the ability to plant whatever we want. Unfortunately, this gets into the issue of where one person's rights end and another's start. We have accepted the idea of chemical pollution, in that we realize that it is bad for an individual to dump poisonous chemicals in the water because it can harm humans. We, as a society, have begun to understand that it also is important to not harm fish by polluting. Now, there is some understanding that the entire aquatic system needs to be kept in good heath. Progress!

The concept of biological pollution is somewhat lagging, however. Most people have never heard the word (or cringe when they do) as it is a source of unfamiliarity and discomfort. I'm not sure if it is the best term to use or not, but it does convey some of the message: that the plants we bring in and plant intentionally may escape and change ecosystems.

It is very difficult to ask people to give up a freedom. We may see an "invasive" plant in our yard, but do not grasp that while it may not be a problem in our yard it may well be a problem down the road on other private or public land.

Scotch Broom (Cytisus scoparius)
Photos by JoAnn Onstott

Journal Feedback, continued

What we can see overrides what we can't see. We certainly can't blame ourselves for that. But we need to learn to think differently.

There is a plethora of web site information on invasive species available, and many if not most of them are ornamental escapees. These escapees cost enormous amounts of volunteer time, public tax money, and other funds to control, and many cannot be eradicated.

We, as a society, have a huge disconnect here. We are either unaware or unwilling to recognize that many of the invasives that are costing us so much to try to control are the same plants we buy at the local garden center. Our response as a society very often is "too little, too late." After a species has escaped, it becomes listed as an invasive species. If it really has high impacts, it may be banned from further sale. Witness the latest state noxious weed listing updates, which added some plants that have been known widely as invasive for many years. It took decades to get them officially recognized as invasive. Regulation of a plant that has commercial sale value is hotly contested by the horticultural industry that stands to gain from sales. I would like to think that when someone finds out a plant is no longer available because it is invasive, they simply buy another plant. But with the internet making everything available to everyone all the time, importation still is difficult to control.

Ground covers

NATIVE

Manzanitas (*Arctostaphylos* species)
Barberries (*Berberis repens*)
Sedges *(Carex pansa, C. praegracilis, C. subfusca*)
Strawberry (*Fragaria vesca* and *F. chiloensis*)
Evergreen currant (*Ribes viburnifolium*)
Yerba Buena (*Satureja douglasii*)
Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos mollis*)
California grape (*Vitis californica*)—allowed to sprawl as a groundcover

INVASIVE

English ivy (*Hedera helix*), Algerian ivy (Hedera canariensis), Periwinkle (*Vinca major),* German ivy (*Delairea odorata*)

Kick the Invasive Exotic Gardening Habit with Great Native Plant Alternatives, U.S. Forest Service Celebrating Wildflowers program, www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/nativegardening/alternatives.shtml

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Journal Feedback, continued

I think our only hope is education. In general, people understand the problem when they see a photo of a plant making a huge monoculture, and hear how problematic it can be. There is a book by Douglas Tallamy that still is at the very top of my recommendation list. He is very good at laying out gardening and landscaping issues with non-native plants so that anyone can understand why non-native species may change behavior over time and why native species are so much better for wildlife. There are so many native species out there that are not in the nursery trade that are fantastic ornamentals that I want to do all I can to help people become familiar with them. The first step will be to get a list of around 400 southern Willamette Valley natives, each listed with many attributes and native benefits (birds, pollinators, etc.), up on my web site. I hope to do that within a couple of months, as reviewing/revising it takes time.

The introduction to the Emerald Chapter NPSO Invasive Ornamentals list has much more about these topics. (Some additional free pollinator species and other downloads at my web site: salixassociates.com.) Here's hoping that the "sustainability" movement soon will include landscapes and our local ecology as well!

Thanks again for a great journal, and I hope my comments are at least somewhat useful. I offer them in the spirit of hoping to make a great pub even better!

Our heartfelt thanks to all of you who take the time to share your thoughts, ideas, and very pertinent information. We learn so much from these conversations, and every one makes us better.

Visit the website of the Emerald Chapter of the NPSO (Native Plant Society of Oregon) at www.npsoregon.org/

Alternatives for Invasive Ornamental Plant Species, The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station for the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group, edited by Timothy M. Abbey, www.ct.gov/caes/lib/caes/documents/special_features/NativeAlternatives.pdf

Oregon Native Plant Alternatives to Invasive Plants, Benton County Soil and Water Conservation District, www.bentonswcd.org/invasive_species/native_alternatives.pdf

Find more information about natives vs. invasives: search the internet for "native plant alternatives invasive plants."

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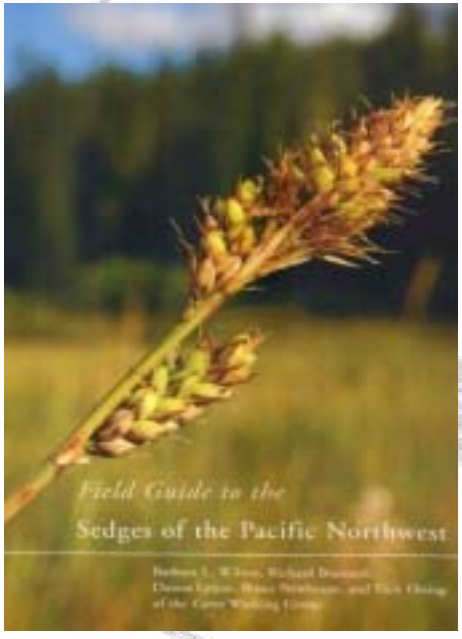
Journal Feedback, continued

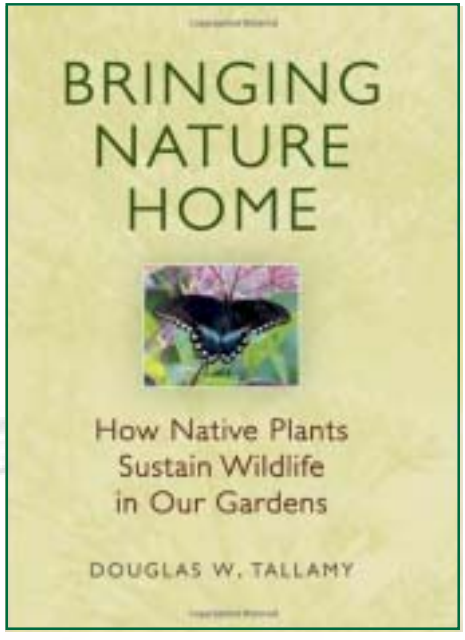
Reader recommended books:



Field Guide to the Sedges of the Pacific Northwest

By Barbara L. Wilson, Richard Brainerd, Danna Lytjen, Bruce Newhouse, and Nick Otting of the Carex Working Group 2008.

6 x 9 inches. 432 pages. Keys. 650 color photographs. Line drawings. Glossary. References. Index.



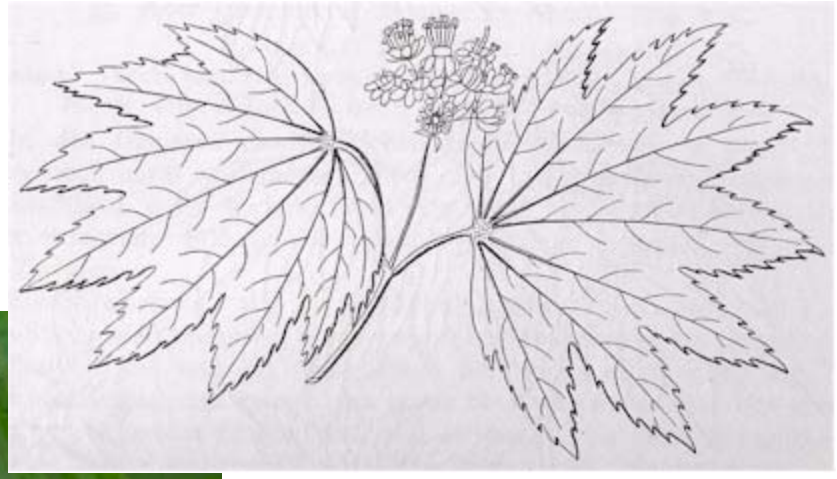
Bringing Nature Home

How native plants sustain wildlife in our gardens. By Douglas W. Tallamy

This book is available hardover (as illustrated here) and paperback.

Genus Acer

Maples of the northwest



Grown in temperate areas around the globe since the 1800's, maple trees are many-faceted beauties of nature. They provide shade, sugar and wood valued for its hardness as well as its visually pleasing qualities.

Four of the over 240 maples originating in North America are considered uniquely northwestern.

The maple tree that night
Without a wind or rain
Let go its leaves
Because its time had come.

- Eugene McCarthy, **The Maple Tree**

Vine Maple (Acer circinatum)

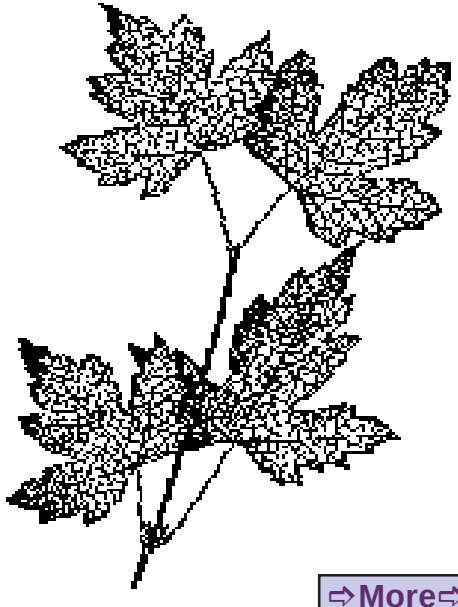
⇨More⇨

Genus Acer, continued

Her teacher's certainty it must be Mabel made Maple first take notice of her name.
She asked her father and he told her, "Maple—Maple is right."
"But teacher told the school there's no such name."
"Teachers don't know as much as fathers about children, you tell teacher.
You tell her that it's M-A-P-L-E. You ask her if she knows a maple tree.
Well, you were named after a maple tree. Your mother named you.

- Robert Frost, **Maple**

Douglas Maple (Acer glabrum)



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Genus Acer, continued

And you, how old are you?
I asked the maple tree:
While opening one hand,
- he started blushing.

- Georges Bonneau, Le Sensibilite Japonaise, 1935 Dodoitsu

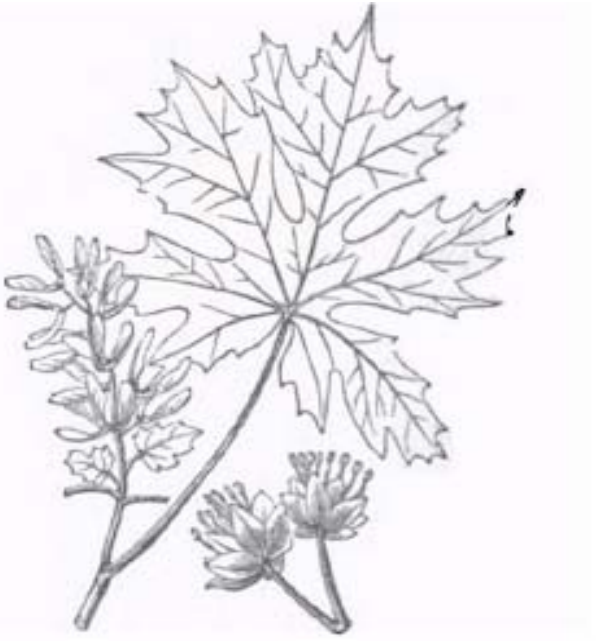
Rocky Mountain
Sugar Maple
(Acer grandidentatum)

⇨More⇨

Genus Acer, continued

That was a day of delight and wonder.
While lying the shade of the maple trees under—
He felt the soft breeze at its frolicksome play;
He smelled the sweet odor of newly mown hay.

- Thomas Dunn English, **Under the Trees**



Big-Leaf Maple
(Acer macrophyllum)

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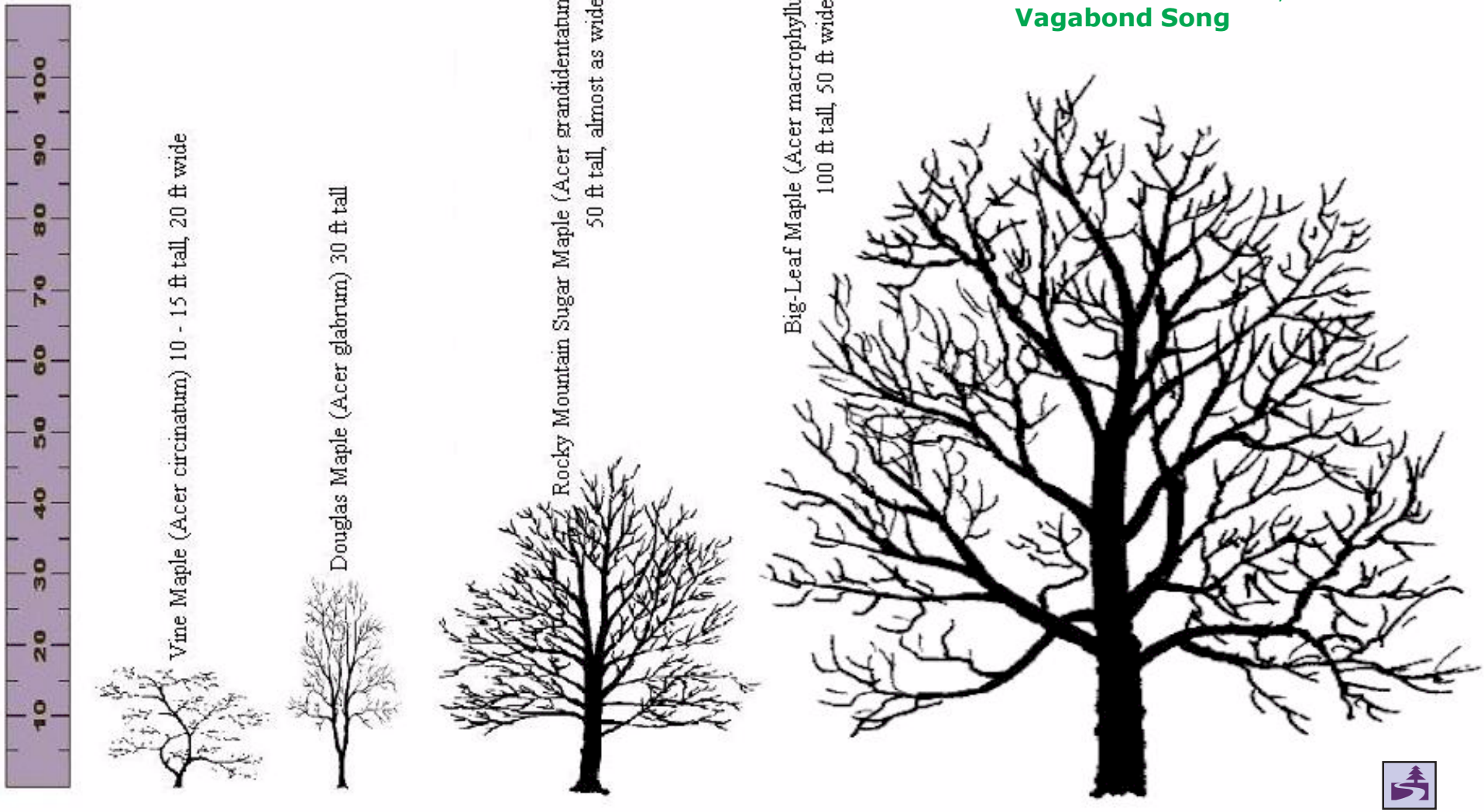
Genus Acer, continued

The scarlet of the maples can
shake me like a cry,
Of bugles going by.

- William Bliss Carman,
Vagabond Song

Size comparison of northwest native maples



Are you sure?

The importance of correct identification

Knowing exactly what plant you are dealing with is a goal that cannot be over-emphasized, for many reasons.

In the garden, planting a non-native when you think you're planting a true native can cause you to spend your days ripping out invasive thugs instead of enjoying pleasurable outdoor time. If the alien has choked out your carefully designed landscape, you may have to allocate funds for replacements. And you could be fined for harboring that weed if it is on the noxious quarantine list for your area.

Often an invasive plant will appear in the garden with no hint of its origin. It could be a wonderful gift of a rare native plant from a passing bird, a caching squirrel or even an ant. Or it could be a botanical land mine from those same donors.

Confusing a delicious native edible with a poisonous plant can be potentially hazardous to your health if not terminally so.

If you buy a plant or seed at a yard sale, flea market or roadside stand, chances are you could be paying for something other than what you intended. I have seen plants at nurseries, grocers and hardware stores with false information on their labels--some were grown by large suppliers.

Florists sometimes use invasive or poisonous plants in their arrangements. English Ivy is common, as is Deadly Nightshade flowers or berries. Either of these plants can sprout roots while in the vase, encouraging thrifty gardeners to plant them in the landscape thinking they've hit the jackpot with a free plant.

Get acquainted with your plants--the more you know, the better your garden will grow.

Examples of plants with known look- or sound-alikes are on the following pages. These are only a smidgen of plants with this quality. It should be noted that the botanical or scientific names are not factors in this scenario.

Fine evergreen native shrub, excellent in the landscape and long lasting in floral arrangements. Salal (Gaultheria shallon) Photo by JoAnn Onstott

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Are you sure?, continued

To emphasize the possible dangers of incorrectly identifying plants, we give as an example the most common of northwest native mushrooms, the Chanterelle, and its nemisis, the False Chanterelle. When the autumn mushrooms bloom, all too often we hear of someone selecting the wrong mushroom to eat and winding up in the hospital or worse. DO take the time to know for sure what plant you are using.

To my mind, without doubt **Cantharellus cibarius**, commonly known as the **Chanterelle or Golden Chanterelle**, is the most delicious mushroom on the planet (at least of those I have tasted). Ranging from pale gold to bright orange, the funnel shaped bloom is smooth on the top button which grows into ruffles as it grows larger. Underneath, there are gills that run down the stipe tapering seamlessly down from the cap.

The flavor is mildly peppery and quite rich. Delicious sauteed in butter!

Photo at right by Teun Spaans

Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca (False Chanterelle) is similar to the true chanterelle in shape and coloration. The main differences are the gills beneath the cap which have a marked line of demarcation on the stipe and the rough textured cap.

This mushroom is usually darker than true chanterelle and the orange color has more pink whereas true chanterelle leans more to yellowish hues.

Both true and false chanterelle bloom in the autumn in similar environments.

Photos by James Lindsey Ecology of Commanster

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Are you sure?, continued

Common Camas (Camassia quamash) is a northwest native perennial with spikes of beautifully blue flowers. It is a member of the family Agavaceae.

Camassia species have a long history with Native Americans as a food source, and annual celebrations surrounding the digging of camas bulbs are still held.

The basal linear leaves measure 8 to 32 inches, emerging in early spring. They grow to a height of 12 to 50 inches, with a stem of many flowers rise above the main plant in summer. Six-petaled flowers vary in color from pale lilac or white to deep purple or blue-violet, depending on the amount of sunlight the plant receives at bloom time. They sometimes color whole meadows.

Similar but larger is **Leichtlin's Camas (Camassia leichtlinii)**.

Zigadenus venenosus (Death Camas) is a flowering plant in the genus Zigadenus belonging to the Melanthiaceae. It grows up to 28 inches tall with basal grassy leaves. The bulbs are similar to onions in shape. Cream to white flower clusters, bloom between April and July.

All parts of the plant are poisonous to humans, pets or livestock. The Meadow Deathcamas (Toxicoscordion venenosum) was used by the Navajo for treatment of coyote bites.

Each part of Death Camas closely resembles corresponding parts of Camassia species. The easiest way to distinguish the two species is by their flowers which are markedly different in color and in bloom configuration.

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Are you sure?, continued

Often mistaken for the more common Poison Oak, **Poison Ivy (Toxicodendron rydbergii)** does grow in the northwest and it is just as toxic as it's more usual counterpart.

It most often assume vine shape and has hairy looking aerial roots. It grows to ten feet or more, climbing high on trees, walls and fences or trails along the ground.

All parts of are poisonous at all times of the year. It may grow in deep, moise woods or dry waste places and hillsides. The leaves vary in shape but usually come in groups of three. Both flowers and whitish waxy fruit are clustered.

Photo by Dave Powell, USDA Forest Service

Boxelder, Ash Maple or Three-Leaved Maple (Acer negundo)

This tree can be found across North America. When mature, it is distinct but young are easily confused with poison ivy. The leaves are divided into 3 - 7 leaflets, they are strongly veined, with coarse toothed margins, and they will have a woody stem.

A helpful distinguishing factor is that new leaves have pointed tips and grow all along the stem. Poison ivy leaves are bunched at the end of the stem.

Acer negundo is not poisonous.

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Are you sure?, continued

Poison Sumac (Toxicodendron vernix) is also known as swamp sumac, poison elder, poison ash, poison dogwood and thunderwood.

It does not have variable forms like those of poison ivy. Instead, it is always a shrub or tree. Favoring boggy areas, you may find this plant at the edge of a swamp or other standing water.

Poison Sumac
(Toxicodendron vernix)

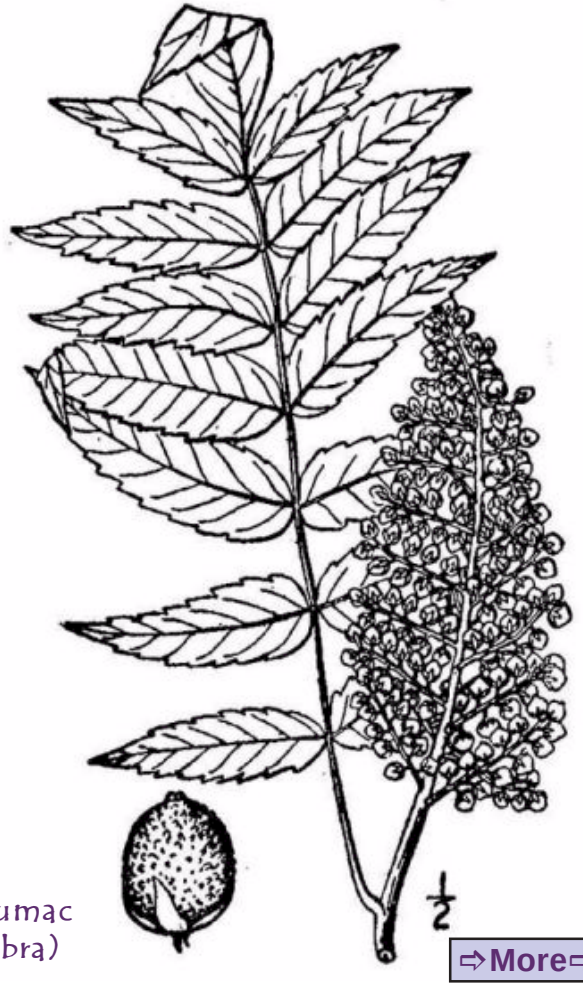
It is rather gangly in appearance with branches helter-skelter and not symetrical. The branches maintain similar size at all locations of the multiple trunks.

Leaves are in pairs with a single leaf at tip of the branch. Flowers are small and inconspicuous, loosely clustered.

Common along the same areas where you may find Poison Sumac, two non-poisonous shrubs of the same family flourish. **Smooth Sumac (Rhus glabra) and Three-Leaved Sumac (Rhus trilobata)** each have distinctly different aspects that indicate their acceptable status.

The red fruits of these species are not at all like that of poison sumac. Their distinct seed heads in no way resemble the hanging clusters of poison sumac fruits.

Leaves of these natives are slender, toothed and grow in many sets of leaflets--commonly numbering more than 12.



Smooth Sumac
(Rhus glabra)

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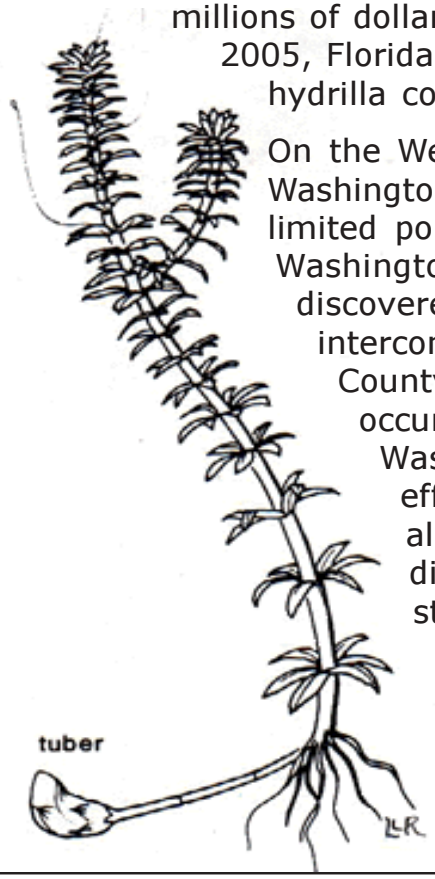
Are you sure?, continued

Hydrilla verticillata is considered the most problematic aquatic plant in the United States among aquatic scientists.

Native to Africa, Australia, and parts of Asia, was introduced to Florida in 1960 via the aquarium trade. It is now well established throughout water bodies in the southern states where control and management costs millions of dollars each year. From 1980 to 2005, Florida alone spent $174 million on hydrilla control.



On the West Coast, California, Washington, and Idaho all have limited populations of hydrilla. Washington's hydrilla infestation, discovered in 1995 in two interconnected lakes in King County, is the only known occurrence of hydrilla in Washington and eradication efforts are ongoing. Hydrilla is also increasingly being discovered in the northern tier states and in the Midwest.

The tuber is the main factor distinguishing this plant from the native American waterweed and the similar Brazilliam elodea

Hydrilla's look-alikes in Washington: Non-native Brazilian elodea - Egeria densa and the native plant American waterweed - Elodea canadensis. You can distinguish hydrilla from these species by the presence of tubers (0.2 to 0.4 inch long, off-white to yellowish, pea-like structures buried in the sediment). Neither Brazilian elodea nor waterweed has tubers.

Photo by Frank Vincentz

Photo by Kristian Peters

If you think that you have seen hydrilla growing in Washington, please contact Kathy Hamel (kham461@ecy.wa.gov) or Jenifer Parsons (jenp@ecy.wa.gov) immediately.

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Are you sure?, continued

A new discovery

In the interest of furthering our botanical brain expansion (and learning to correctly identify plants), we recently found a resource in the Portland area that offers classes which teach about edible wild plants, floral wonders from fresh viewpoints.

A short review of their website (http://trackerspdx.com/index.php) revealed a plethora of topics that, on their face, might give even the most staid of us some new ideas and broadened experiences. The classes are aimed at different age groups and offer classroom and walking venues. For instance:

A Monthly Wild Edible and Medicinal Plants Class (Ages Adult)

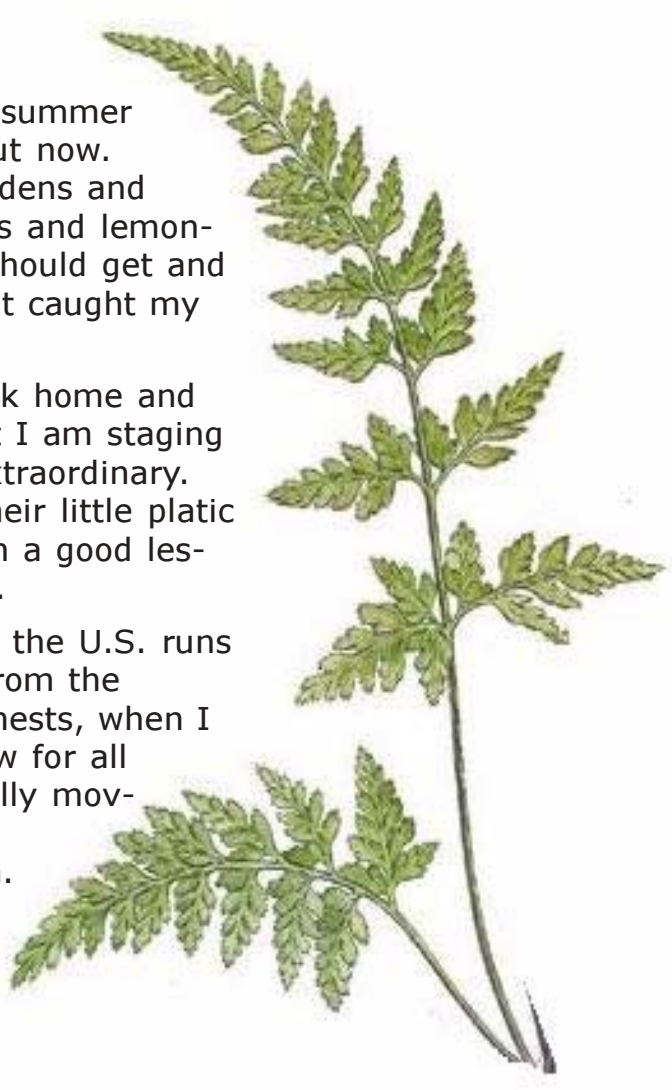
- Discover how to harvest and use wild edibles and medicinals
- Experience and discuss safe and environmentally respectful methods of harvesting
- Learn about the incredible health benefits and medicinal properties of local plants
- Enjoy the unique flavors of some of the most common wild edibles
- Participate in the rich history and native lore of this wild grocery store

Is your curiosity piqued? Take a look at their website and think of adventure.

Until next time,
Jennifer

This & That

Notes from Jennifer



The blending of seasons that comes when spring is fading away and summer is joyfully skipping to the fore naturally settles over our gardens right about now. We are drawn to plant nurseries, annual sales put on by various public gardens and organizations, and roadside stands where children proudly offer their plants and lemonade for a few pennies. Sometimes I'll find myself deciding which plants I should get and then realize I have no defined destination in my yard for whatever it is that caught my eye.

It is this last that dishes out defeat from time to time--I'll arrive back home and gingerly carry the plants to the back patio where I believe at the time that I am staging an outstanding container that will transport the space from mundane to extraordinary. And a week later I notice the poor plants, forgotten, plastered limply to their little platic pots. I feel like a criminal! But I am learning to plan before I buy. It's been a good lesson, and so far this year the 'poor plant' scenario has not been re-enacted.

But the disastrous event still unfolding just off the southern coast of the U.S. runs through my head at odd times: when I notice a bird singing its heart out from the branches of my old Doug Firs, when I hear the chirp-chirp of babes in the nests, when I spy a forgotten feather among the leaves of the bushes. I feel great sorrow for all that has been lost out there at sea and for all that is yet to come. Especially moving to me is that vast wetland that must stand and face the monster as it creeps closer, devouring all that it reaches in its encroaching funeral march. There is no running away. There is only waiting for the inevitable.

ABC news announced recently that BP has purchased several search phrases from Google, Yahoo and other major engines. Thanks to this bit of corporate manipulation, when you search for "oil spill" and other similar phrases the first result that comes up is a link to the company's website titled "Learn more about how BP is helping." This purchase of search engine results by BP was confirmed to ABC news.

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This & That, continued

Toby Odone, BP spokesman, told ABC news: "We have bought search terms on search engines like Google to make it easier for people to find out more about our efforts in the Gulf and make it easier for people to find key links to information on filing claims, reporting oil on the beach and signing up to volunteer." He neglected to mention the obvious ploy to regroup BP's reputation. I tried this search on Google, results below. Note the small label at the right on the pinkish bar, "Sponsored link," indicating that BP paid for the priviledge of being at the top. Personally, I'd much rather see that money going toward fixing the problem.

With over 20 percent of the estuarine wetlands in the lower 48 States located in Florida, the State is second only to Alaska.

For a reality check, I visited the blog of Sharon Stiteler, aka "Birdchick," to see what real information she had to share. As expected, she had plenty to say on the subject. If you are not familiar with her work, please check out her blog: www.birdchick.com/wp/. Warning--she's got photos of the wildlife victims of this attrocity. I consider Sharon to be the best private bird resource available.

Until next time,
Jennifer

Coastal wetlands provide food for a variety of species including this blue heron. Photo and narrative courtesy of NOAA

Google search result for "oil spill." Note the "Sponsored link" notation on BP's search result.

Useful Native Plant Resources on the Web

Here is a good collection of web data bases and other gardening topics that will be useful to professional growers and all native plant gardeners. This list began from a flyer Lawyer Nursery published in 2002 grew from there. We wish to thank them for this public service.

American Bonsai Society
The bonsai organization for North America, including Mexico, the United States, and Canada.
www.absbonsai.org/

Birdchick
Hundreds of photos of birds, bees, butterflies and other friendlies. Sharon Stiteler shares the joys of birding as well as insights on rabbits. Read about her birding trip to Panama!
www.birdchick.com/

CalPhotos
Over 33,000 plant images from the University of California, Berkley
www.elib.cs.berkeley.edu/photos/

Cornell University online grafting course
From the Dept. of Floriculture and Ornamental Horticulture College of Agriculture & Life Sciences at Cornell U. Kenneth W. Mudge, Associate Professor of Horticulture
www.instruct1.cit.cornell.edu/courses/hort494/graftage/hort494.index.html

E-Flora BC: Electronic Atlas of the Plants of British Columbia
Beautiful site, volunteer-driven. "A comprehensive picture of the plant and fungal biodiversity of British Columbia." Many thanks to Mary Sanseverino (aka Calypso Orchid) for suggesting this site be included in our list of botanical web resources. (See Mary's photos on Flicker and check out her website at www.webhome.csc.uvic.ca/~msanseve/)
www.geog.ubc.ca/biodiversity/eflora/

Fire effects on plant species
USDA, Forest Service site summarizes and synthesizes research about living organisms in the United States—their biology, ecology, and relationship to fire.
www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/

Hooker's Willow
(Salix hookeriana)

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Useful Native Plant Resources, continued

Flora of North America Web Site
Taxonomic relationships, distributions, morphological characteristics of all plants native and naturalized found in North America.
www.hua.huh.harvard.edu/FNA/

Forest Types of the United States
Maps of the most common forest types.
www.forestry.about.com/library/tree/bltypdex.htm

Growit.com Rooting Database
"Extensive information on rooting cuttings of woody plants, organized by botanical name. Developed for commercial growers."
www.growit.com/Know/Rooting.htm

Julie's Backyard Journal
Blog by insightful gardener
www.backyardjournal.wordpress.com/

ModernBackyard
Landscape architecture provides exceptional, affordable landscape design online.
www.modernbackyard.com

The Native Plant Network
www.nativeplants.for.uidaho.edu/network/

Northwest Plants Database System
From Washington State University and WSU Clark County Extension PNW Plants, this database has 481 catergorized plants and 1458 images.
www.pnwplants.wsu.edu

Noxious Weed Control
Search function, can be shown in text only
www.oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/statelist2.shtml

Oregon Invasive Species Council
Invasive list, how to report invasives
www.oregon.gov/OISC/

Arroyo Willow
(Salix lasiolepis)

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Useful Native Plant Resources, continued

Portland Bureau of Environmental Services
Information about caring for our earth. Download their Native Plant Poster, plant list and brochure on removing invasive plants.
www.portlandonline.com/bes/index.cfm?c=29323

River Corridor and Wetland Restoration
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) site
www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/restore/

Soil Science Society of America
Website for soil science professionals. Offers information and links.
www.soils.org/

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

USDA PLANTS Database (Read more about this database on page 23)
Searchable for common or botanical name, shows origin, range and status
www.plants.usda.gov/

Washington Native Plant Society
Appreciate, conserve and study our native plants and habitats
www.wnps.org

Wildflower Trails of the San Francisco Bay Area
Excellent photography and trail guides.
www.westernwildflower.com/

Woody Plant Seed Manual
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.
www.nsl.fs.fed.us/wpsm/

Pacific Willow
(Salix lucida ssp. lasiandra)