



# the *Phlox Phlyer*

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Columbia Basin Chapter, Washington Native Plant Society • P.O. Box 221, Richland, WA 99352 • <http://www.wnps.org/cbasin/>

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## **Greetings from the Chair** – *Bob Fortman*

This is the time of the year when reading a book inside by a warm fire can be a delightful way to spend a day. The Salal Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society had a book review in the December issue of their newsletter, *The Potent Teller*, written by their Chair, Susan Alaynick. It is reproduced below.

DEMONS IN EDEN by Jonathan Silvertown is a book I recently obtained from the library. It is an interesting account of the spread and speciation of plants around the world, both before and after human's appearance on the scene.

We all know that plants generally produce many, many more seeds than could ever grow into mature plants. But sometimes, in a new environment, they can get a real chance to try to cover everything. One such new place for plants was the Canary Islands, a volcanic archipelago in the Atlantic Ocean. DNA evidence suggests that many olive tree species across the islands were all derived from a single seed from the mainland of Africa giving rise to a single tree on one island and the later spread of subspecies of this first arrival to the other islands. This process took millions of years. The first seed apparently sprouted in an area where it had no competitors and its off spring occupied all suitable habitats before another seed from the mainland arrived.

The book also discusses how rare species survive and looks into some of the ways plants, insects, fungi and bacteria work together to succeed. Life is stranger than we can imagine.

Another more physical outdoor activity opportunity that may be coming our way this winter is a request for assistance by the Fish and Wildlife Service for gathering sagebrush seeds this winter when things will probably be cold, wet and windy. The intent is to rehabilitate wildfire-burned areas. See the note about this in this issue. This opportunity serves as a counterpoint to the cozy book reading we may also be doing.

## **November Meeting Highlights**

### **Tri-Cities** – *Donna Lucas*

President Bob Fortman opened the meeting. Topics discussed prior to the program included:

- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is collecting rabbitbrush and sagebrush seed for use in restoring the burned portions of the Hanford Monument. Contact Mickie Chamness if you would like to volunteer
- Leslie Groves North was sprayed for weeds by the City. Seeding to begin soon. Contact Mickie Chamness.
- Potluck will be in December. Contact Janelle Downs.
- A hike in January is being considered. Contact Bob Fortman.
- Treasurer position is open. Contact any officer.
- WDFW's Conservation Committee (state level) Contact Janelle Downs.
  - o Janelle is looking for someone to take over her position. Note that this committee tends to focus on west-side issues.
  - o Grazing on the east side is being considered. Go to WDFW, Region 3, <http://wdfw.wa.gov/reg/region3.htm>, Wildlife Areas, "Proposed Whiskey Dick Livestock Grazing Plan". There are habitat issues related to sagebrush-obligate species. The CBNPS may want to provide input.

**Program: “Exploring the Ice Age Floods”, presented by Bruce Bjornstad**

Bruce is a licensed geologist/hydrologist working at PNNL. He has studied the Ice Age floods since 1980 and is the author of recently published, “*On the Trail of the Ice Age Floods*,” a geological field guide to the Mid-Columbia Basin. Bruce is an active member of the Lake Lewis Chapter of the Ice Age Flood Institute (Learn more about the Ice Age Flood Institute at <http://www.iafi.org>).

Wow, what a story of the land we live on and travel every day! I cannot do justice to Bruce’s presentation in a short summary article, but here goes.

During the last ice age, as recently as 15,000 years ago, two fingers of the Cordilleran Ice Sheet created two glacial lakes north and east of the Columbia Basin. The lakes were Glacial Lake Missoula and Glacial Lake Columbia. The biggest floods flowed from Lake Missoula. Water captured behind the ice dams reached volumes comparable to that of all the Great Lakes. The dams failed over a period of a couple of hours and the lakes drained in just a couple of days. Water ran into the Lower Columbia Basin to cover an area 100 miles wide, carving out the Channeled Scablands. Wallula Gap, only two-miles wide, presented a constriction that created Lake Lewis, which flooded the Tri Cities under 900 ft of water.

There is a unique vocabulary to describe the floods. There are *strandlines*, where lake waters cut out benches, providing evidence that Lake Missoula reached a depth of 2,000 feet, *cataract canyons*, *giant flood bars*, *rhythmites* and *bergmounds*, *giant current ripples* showing sudden drainage on a massive scale, and more.

The theory of the cataclysmic floods was born out of the mind of J Harlen Bretz in the early 1920s. He traveled the land and recognized the significance of its features. It took more than 30 years for the scientific community to understand and accept his ideas.

Photos and illustrations may be viewed at the website, “*Ice Age Floods, Study of Alternatives and Environmental Assessment, Following the Pathways of the Glacial Lake Missoula Floods*” at <http://www.nps.gov/iceagefloods/>. This document describes the proposed Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail. If approved, the National Park Service will establish a network of public roadways that follow the many pathways of the floods. The trail network will provide visual and physical access to significant floods features and help link the features as part of a coordinated project.

Bruce only hinted at his geocaches, but I couldn’t resist investigating. You may see the view from one of these in the June 2007 edition of *The Pleistocene Post*. Hikers are shown at the Wallula Gap Overlook Geocache. Even at this lofty perch, the largest floods rose another 80 ft

**Walla Walla – Linda Sutor**

**Butterflies and their Habitat** The audience at the November 14<sup>th</sup> meeting in Walla Walla was captivated by the presentation of a Tri -Cities architect and self-taught naturalist, Jim Dillman. Even after a 90-minute talk on his favorite avocation, butterfly collecting, people remained to view his collection and ask questions. Jim gave a wonderful talk on how he found his love for nature as a young boy, and later focused on collecting butterflies. Jim’s talk was not limited to identification, but provided an explanation about the plants, the butterflies, and the broad environment in which we all live. Jim raised questions, for example, how do butterflies navigate? He stressed the loss of habitat for all our fauna and flora from human causes. He gave one graphic example: butterflies travel between 3 and 15 feet above the ground and so do trucks. Jim is currently assisting agencies with the inventory and post-fire recovery on the Hanford Reservation as well as giving talks to groups. Perhaps Jim will lead a butterfly field trip next year in late June. I for one hope he will come back and update us on his continued research and love of butterflies.



The **Phlox Phlyer** is the newsletter of the Columbia Basin Chapter, Tri-Cities and Walla Walla, Washington Native Plant Society.

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## Salvage and restoration

### Tri-Cities

Seeding and planting at **Leslie Groves Park** is planned for Saturday, December 1, at 1 p.m. See "Upcoming Events" for more details. Contact Mickie Chamness ([mickiec@charter.net](mailto:mickiec@charter.net) or 628-0709), so she can let you know of any changes.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR SAGEBRUSH SEED COLLECTION** - The Hanford Reach needs volunteers to help collect sagebrush seed from Saturday January 5-Sunday January 13, 2008. The seed collected will be cleaned, grown out at a nursery, and replanted into the areas affected by wildfires in 2007. Seed bags will be provided and collecting will be off of Hwy 24 near the Saddle Mountains. Please be prepared to spend a day out in the field in January weather conditions. Any help that can be provided will be greatly appreciated and you can take satisfaction in helping to repair shrub-steppe habitat on the Monument that is important to a wide variety of wildlife species. Please contact Paula Call or Howard Browers at 509-371-1801 or [paula\\_call@fws.gov](mailto:paula_call@fws.gov) and [howard\\_browers@fws.gov](mailto:howard_browers@fws.gov) to sign up for a day to help and for further information.

## Other News

### Tri-Cities – *Mary Ann Simmons*

Dot Stuit has agreed to take over Treasurer duties for the year. Looking for ideas for Christmas presents? We will have books, calendars (\$10), and notecards (\$10) by Jean Ann Mitchell available at the pot-luck.

### Walla Walla – *Laura Maier*

At the Demonstration Garden we've already had our first arrival of tumbleweeds, blowing over the fence. Maybe fifty bristly seed-bearing balls have arrived! Nancy Berlier & Laura have laid more weed-suppressing paper in an effort to thwart next year's weeds. In November, Whitman students weeded and planted two *Sambucus cerulea's* along the east fence line.

Downtown Land Trust Plaza large pots - In mid-November a gaillardia and some pussy toes were still blooming. Barely into the second year, the plants are attracting pleased second glances from passers-by. We hope to work with the downtown foundation to develop a sign for the pots to inform the public about these native plants.

## Upcoming Events

### Tri-Cities

**December 1, 2007, 1 p.m. – North Leslie Groves Work Party.** Meet at the Snyder Street boat launch. We will be planting and seeding. Let Mickie Chamness know if you plan on coming so she can let you know of any last minute change in plans ([mickiec@charter.net](mailto:mickiec@charter.net) or 628-0709). Work gloves, warm layers to adjust to the weather, water, and maybe a shovel or rake would be good to bring along. We will be spreading seed, planting potted plants, and helping either rake in or compact the seed onto the soil. So the more the merrier!

**December 5, 2007, Wednesday, at 6 p.m. –Monthly Meeting** Annual Holiday Pot-Luck, Meet at the Consolidated Information Center (Library) at WSU Tri-Cities, rm. 120. Bring a dish to share. We will provide drinks and entertainment.

**January 12, 2008, Saturday, 10 a.m. Winter Hike.** Meet at Bob Fortmans place for a hike around Hover Peak. Directions: start in Kennewick near the Cable Bridge, and head southeast toward Finley on State Route 397 (i.e., E Chemical Dr). Follow this road to the end (6.7 miles from the Cable Bridge). Turn right on Piert Road which will turn into Meals Road 1 mile from the end of State Route 397 (bear to the left). Follow Meals Road for 2.0 miles and turn right on Tierney PR SE. Go 0.2 miles and turn left on 2410 PR SE. Bob & JoAnn Fortman's house is on the left, 70301 Road 2410 PR SE.

### Walla Walla

**December 1, 2007, Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., First Annual Holiday Market.** At the Farmers Market between Rose and Main Streets. WNPS Calendars will be available (\$10). Look for Susan Hosticka's Octopus Garden honey booth. Susan and her husband Paul operate a small apiary in Dayton WA producing natural select floral source honeys as well as beeswax, bee pollen and various other products of the hives.

**December 6, 2007, Thursday Noon. First Thursday Lunch .** Meet at the downstairs table at Reid Campus Center, at Park and Boyer. Informal discussion of issues related to native plants. Bring a book to exchange if you like. WNPS calendars will be available for \$10. And, please bring any suggestions for native plants which could be planted along Walla Walla area creek banks. Alison Bower, CURB (Creating Urban Riparian Buffers) Program Coordinator for Walla Walla County Conservation District is preparing a draft list of plants for the program.

**December 12, 2007, Second Wednesday Hike** Bring a lunch and a thermos of something warm to drink. Meet at the Fort Walla Walla Arthur Rempel Trailhead between 11:45 and noon. Hike will start at noon into the nature area. Hike for an hour

or longer, as you wish. Never mind the sunscreen!

**January 9, 2008, Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.- Monthly Meeting** Room 151 in the Whitman Hall of Science. Our speaker will be Alison Bower, CURB Program Coordinator, Walla Walla County Conservation District. If you are early, enjoy local plant photographs and identification with Steve Roy at 6:45.

### **Other Events**

**First Saturday Bird Walk – December 1, 2007, 8 a.m. Wye Park.** The Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society leads a bird walk on Bateman Island the first Saturday of the month. Meet at the Wye Park off Columbia Parkway, Hwy 240. Go to: <http://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/Batemanwalk.htm> for more information.

**Second Saturday at McNary Education Center – December 8, 2007, 9am to noon.** Crafty Nature - Children's program. Directions: From the Tri-Cities, turn left on Hwy.124, go through Burbank Heights. At the fire station, turn right on Lake Road. McNary NWR Environmental Education Center, is at 311 Lake Rd. For more information, leave a message at: (509) 543-8322 or go to: <http://www.nwr.mcnary.wa.us/>

**Alternative Gift Fair – December 15, 2007, Noon to 4 p.m.** Community Unitarian Universalist Church, 2819 W. Sylvester St., Pasco. The fair offers shoppers a choice of holiday gifts to honor family and friends while supporting charities and non-profit organizations. Gifts range from \$5 to \$100. Also check out the City of Richland web-page for merchants who are participating in a waste free Holidays: <http://www.ci.richland.wa.us/RICHLAND/info/index.cfm?PageNum=385>

**Christmas Bird Count 2007 – January 5, 2008, 7:30 am.** The bird count has been ongoing for over 100 years. You do not need to be an Audubon meeting, but a \$5 donation is requested of participants age 19 and over to defray the cost of maintaining the database. For more information contact Dana Ward at (509) 545-0627 or <http://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org/CBC.htm> .

**Tapteal Bend Phase 2 Restoration Workday – February 2, 2008 at 9 a.m.** Work will involve trash clean up, pruning and planting. See the Tapteal Greenway web page for details and directions: <http://www.tapteal.org/calendarlist.php#2008-02-02>

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