

The Potent Teller

Newsletter of the Salal Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society
serving Northern Snohomish, Skagit and Island Counties

November 2016

www.wnps.org/salal/

Issue 3-16

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Brenda Cunningham

Blanchard Forest Strategy Agreement – How you can help:

The Chuckanut Mountains, a range of foothills north of the Samish River, is host to the last bit of forest connecting the Cascades to the Salish Sea. As such, these hills are important to many species of plants and animals dependent on the nearshore forests that once dominated the coastlines of Puget Sound. The western slopes of the Chuckanuts overlook Samish Bay, while the eastern slopes face the rugged Twin Sisters and Mount Baker. In between are stands of large conifers, forested wetlands and freshwater lakes. The Blanchard Forest sits at the southern end of the Chuckanuts.

Blanchard Forest is in the DNR state trust lands program to be managed for income for various public beneficiaries, such as schools and hospitals. This pits disparate needs of the community against one another. The lands have become much loved for recreation, but they have also grown in importance as this forest type has become rare. Animals, like Marbled Murrelets, are dependent on this forest for nesting habitat. At the same time our state is struggling to find funds for education. Is the logging of these lands the appropriate solution?

In 2006 the Department of Natural Resources convened a group of interested organizations and citizens to craft a management plan for the forests of Blanchard Mountain that would address all the concerns of the various groups. The Blanchard Forest Strategy Agreement was signed in 2008, proposing to protect 1,600 acres of the core area of forest by funding the purchase of replacement lands for the state trust lands program, while allowing the adjacent lands to be logged. Nearly half the funding required has been secured, but an additional \$7.7 million dollars is needed. Time is running out and if the remaining funds are not secured the agreement will expire and logging will begin, perhaps as soon as 2017. The agreement represents an unprecedented partnership between community groups in a political age of few compromises. Please take some time to read more about this agreement at the website below and then write to your state legislators to urge funding of the Blanchard Forest Strategy.

<http://www.conservationnw.org/what-we-do/forests/blanchard-mountain>

Salal Chapter Winter Events

Thursday, Nov. 3, 10 to noon – planting and winterizing in the Salal display garden.

Tuesday, Nov. 15, 10 to noon – winterizing the Salal display garden.

Saturday, Nov. 19, 10 to noon, chapter meeting, Padilla Bay Interpretive Center: speaker Ben Legler, “Revising Hitchcock and Cronquist’s *Flora of the Pacific Northwest*”.

Saturday, February 18, 10 to noon – chapter meeting, Padilla Bay Interpretive Center.

SALAL NATIVE PLANT GARDEN UPDATE

Brenda Cunningham, Native Plant Garden Coordinator

We held our fall plant sale on October 15th, a bit earlier than last year, hoping to avoid bad weather. Well... high winds buffeted the volunteers who came out to price the plants on Friday and even worse weather was predicted for the afternoon of sale day. Lucky for us native plant gardeners are a hardy bunch and the forecasted winds did not appear. We had a good crowd with specific plants in mind and many went home happy. Gross sales were more than \$2400, one of the best fall sales yet. We still have plenty of trees and shrubs, so let your friends know to mark their calendars for our spring sale on May 6th, 2017.

The garden is in good shape for the winter, but I would like to have a few work parties to put the garden and nursery to bed. We will do some pruning, turn the tables in the nursery on their sides, and plant a few shrubs in the garden. We will gather on the following dates in November from 10 am to noon each time:

Thursday, November 3rd
Tuesday, November 15th

If the weather is nice and there is more to do in the garden in December, I will contact volunteers via email with more dates this winter. If you would like

to be on the list of volunteers to receive notices, please drop me a line at nativegarden@fidalgo.net.

The Salal Chapter Native Plant Garden and nursery are located behind the Master Gardener Discovery Garden at the NW Research and Extension Center on Memorial Highway (16650 State Route 536), west of Mount Vernon. See you in the garden! – Brenda

UPCOMING SALAL CHAPTER MEETING

Saturday, November 19, 10 – noon at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center.

Revising Hitchcock and Cronquist's *Flora of the Pacific Northwest*, presented by Ben Legler.

Published in 1973 by C. Leo Hitchcock and Arthur Cronquist, the *Flora of the Pacific Northwest* remains the primary reference manual for identifying vascular plants in Washington and surrounding areas. However, the *Flora* has become substantially outdated and unusable due to rapid increases in our knowledge of taxonomic classifications, coupled with the discovery of new species and arrival of new exotics. Those using the *Flora* today can only arrive at a current name and correct identification for less than half of the species in the Northwest. Clearly, a new flora is needed.

Well, the time has finally come! In 2012, almost 40 years after the original *Flora* was published, the University of Washington Herbarium began production of a second edition of the *Flora*. Slated for completion in 2017, this revised *Flora* will be fully updated with current classifications and nomenclature, many new keys and illustrations, and many additional taxa, while retaining the original book's familiar look and layout. Once again, we'll have a single resource covering all vascular plants known to occur wild in our region. Ben Legler will share how the Herbarium is tackling the task of writing a flora, the status of the process, and what the new *Flora* will look like. Along the way we'll learn about some of the changes that have occurred in our flora - such as the exciting discoveries of new species and the often not-so-welcome disintegration of familiar families and genera.

Ben works for the University of Washington Herbarium and has extensively collected and photographed plants throughout the Pacific Northwest and Rocky Mountains. In addition to being an outstanding botanist and student of our flora, Ben is known to many in the region as the designer and developer of both the Plants of Washington Image Gallery, where he has contributed over 9,000 of his own photos of plants

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from across Washington, and the Consortium of Pacific Northwest Herbaria database, which provides online access to over 2.5 million herbarium specimens. Ben's primary focus now is working on the revised *Flora of the Pacific Northwest*.



WNPS Calendars now available

We will have 2017 calendars available for sale at the chapter meeting on November 19th. They make wonderful holiday gifts. \$10 each.

Friends of the Forest Hikes, November and December

Hikes are led by Denise Crowe who has a long term passion for native plants and ethnobotany. A great way to increase your knowledge and awareness of the native flora. For more information see calendar page at <http://www.friendsoftheacfl.org>

Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group

More information at <http://www.skagitfisheries.org>

Saturday, November 5, 12 – 3 pm – Salmon Sighting: Chum of Oyster Creek

Saturday, November 12, 10 – 1 pm – Nursery Work Party: Burlington

Saturday, November 19, 10 – 1 pm – Planting Party: Diobsud Creek

Skagit Land Trust

More information at www.skagitlandtrust.org/

Friday, November 18, 11-1 pm – Cascade River South native plant maintenance.

Saturday, December 3, 8:30 -3:30pm – Guemes Mountain Trail Maintenance.

The Potent Teller Has Gone International!

Jim Duemmell

The Winter 2004 Potent Teller carried a list of locations of Garry Oak trees, *Quercus garryana*, in Skagit and Whatcom counties. Cataloging those locations, at the northern edge of the species range, seemed particularly appropriate since the WNPS had recently designated Garry Oak woodlands and shrub-steppe habitat as special concerns of the society.

Three years later, in 2007, through the internet, that article came to the attention of a graduate student at Notre Dame University who was studying Garry Oaks at the northern limits of the species range. He requested some twig samples, which I supplied. Some of the twigs were special: they seemed to come from a clone. The following summer he visited our area and collected more samples. Indeed, the twigs had come from a clone, an unusually large one, on a bald on Chuckanut Mountain just north of Larrabee State Park. Dozens of stems, which I had assumed were separate trees, were in fact a single organism, a clone.

Because he had found this clone through the Potent Teller I asked him to write a short report, simple enough that it would not interfere with later publication in a scientific journal. At first he expressed willingness to try. But follow-up emails went unanswered.

His lack of response was disappointing; I had spent considerable effort gathering specimens and then guiding him to the oak colonies when he visited. I could understand that the requirement imposed by scientific journals that results not have been previously published might preclude a report in the Potent Teller. At least he could answer an email even if he could not write the requested article.

There matters stood until the last few days of July this year. My computer crashed – seriously crashed. After its repair, sorting through some recovered but damaged files, I found one of my old emails to this student. Armed with his name and my curiosity piqued, I wondered: did he do anything with what he found here? Did he use it in a doctoral dissertation? Had he published it? Was he in jail? What had happened? I did an Internet search on his name.

The results: he graduated with a PhD and is now on the faculty of Kansas State University. On his list of publications is an article describing the patch of oaks I led him to: “Largest Known *Quercus garryana* Douglas ex Hook Clone Discovered on a Steep Slope at the Boundary of Larrabee State

Park, Washington, USA.” (The principal author is one of his students. He is listed as a coauthor.) The article was published in the International Oak Journal, No. 23, spring 2012. In the list of references is this citation: “The Potent Teller, December issue, 4.”

The Potent Teller has been cited in an international journal!



Quercus garryana

Rod Gilbert

SALAL CHAPTER ONLINE

The Salal Chapter maintains an email list of our members so we can send out timely notice of events between issues of the *Potent Teller*. If you'd like to be included or removed from the list, email Brenda Cunningham nativegarden@fidalgo.net

You can now receive the Potent Teller via email! If you'd like to receive the newsletter in PDF format instead of paper, email Tara McGown at kcrozier@frontier.com.

Please direct address changes to Washington Native Plant Society, 6310 NE 74th St, Suite 215E, Seattle, WA 98115, 206-527-3210 or call toll free 1-888-288-8022 or email wnps@wnps.org.

The Washington Native Plant Society (WNPS) is dedicated to the preservation, conservation, and study of the native plants of Washington and to the education of the public on the values of native flora and its habitat.

Salal Chapter Officers

Chair: Brenda Cunningham

Vice- Chair: Vacant

Treasurer: Jean Birdsall

Secretary: Kathy Murray

Chapter Botanist: Vacant

Visit our website at www.wnps.org/salal

The Potent Teller is issued four times yearly on the first of February, May, September and November. Direct submissions to: Tara McGown PO Box 26 Rockport, WA 98283 (360-853-8375), email kcrozier@frontier.com.

WANTED

Salal Chapter Vice-chair

The chapter is in search of someone to serve as vice-chair. This is not an onerous position and yet it offers the opportunity to learn more about WNPS and the working of the organization at the state level. The vice-chair should be able to serve in the chair's absence at the quarterly membership meetings. He/she should also be willing to consider the chair position in a few years. The vice-chair will participate in the executive committee of the chapter, which meets over coffee in the week prior to chapter meetings to set the agenda and make chapter programming decisions.



Helianthus autumnale

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TIME VALUE MAIL

