

Kelseya

Newsletter of the Montana Native Plant Society



Celebrating the Spirit of Volunteerism

In addition to being scary, frustrating, annoying and many other adjectives, 2020 has offered time for reflection and perhaps some re-ordering of life priorities.

For me, it's helped me nurture the things that bring me joy, or at least satisfaction, and prune away that which doesn't. Turns out, this resonated with other Montana Native Plant Society members and we thought that shining some light on why we engage with this particular organization would be a good topic for this season — with the hope that it may spark a similar reflection in readers.

Like many of you, I belong to and support several non-profit organizations beside MNPS. But MNPS differs from the others because it is a volunteer organization; there are no paid employees.

A volunteer organization with more than 700 members is pretty impressive. It means that people are excited and dedicated and willing to make the time to do the work that is needed. This all-volunteer model has worked amazingly well because enough people have said, "Yeah, I can do that."

There is a lot of satisfaction that comes from working with others on projects of mutual interest. We hope never to lose our volunteer spirit. So if you like what MNPS does, and you think you can find a little spare time, let the state board or your Chapter people know. Come on and join the party! — *Editor*



Photo by Sam Pannoni

A huge shout out to volunteer Teagan Hayes for her great job devising and running the Glacier Wildflowers Trivia Challenge on Facebook last summer! It was fun and we hope people learned something. Teagan is a Montana Native Plant Society Clark Fork Chapter member and USGS Glacier Field Office employee. Thanks also to Valley of Flowers member volunteer Beth Madden for the Grass Challenge, and Tara Carolin, a Flathead Chapter member and volunteer, for March Wildflower Madness.





Happy New Year 2021!

Chapter Events

Calypso Chapter

Info: Catherine Cain at 498-6198, nativeplants@montana.com.

Clark Fork Chapter

Info: Anne Garde at 721-7627, anniegarde@yahoo.com or Paul Buck at (970) 901-2418, paul7703@gmail.com.

The Chapter held its holiday gathering virtually this year with a Zoom presentation of members' summer wildflower photos on December 10. In addition, we've discussed several ideas for field trips for the coming season; attendance will be limited per Covid-19 guidelines. Once the schedule is finalized, we'll send out an additional email so you can register with Paul (see above contact).

Saturday, January 16, 1:00 p.m. "Winter Shrubs and Mosses."

Join Rebecca Durham, Peter Lesica, and Joe Elliott for a walk in Hellgate Canyon to identify these plants in their winter habits. We will be masked up and keeping distance. The trip is limited to 15 members; email Paul Buck at paul7703@gmail.com to sign up. Meet in the parking lot at the base of the "M" trail, UM Campus.

Also, the Chapter is seeking more people to participate in our Annual Plant Sale fundraiser by helping us start plants over the winter and spring. Clare Beelman will mentor volunteers who want to nurture these future garden beauties, and the Chapter will provide any necessary materials and equipment. Contact Peter, lesica.peter@gmail.com, or Annie Garde, anniegarde@yahoo.com, if you'd like to learn more.

And finally, the Clark Fork Chapter is happy to announce the re-issue of Sheila Morrison's classic book, "The Magic of Montana Native Plants, A Gardner's Guide to Growing Over 150 Species From Seed." This book is an invaluable aid for native plant growers, including essential tips on everything from soil and water requirements, planting media, how to germinate seed indoors and outdoors, and more. Sheila details her successes and failures, and talks about how she uses various species in her garden. To receive a mailed copy of this book, send a check for \$15 + \$3.25 for postage to Janet Simms, or you can pick up a copy directly for \$15. Contact Janet at smbok02@gmail.com. As of this date, we can only accept cash or checks but are investigating other methods of payment in the future.

Eastern At-Large

Info: Jennifer Lyman at 860-0223, jenclyman@gmail.com.

Flathead Chapter

Info: Tara Carolin at 260-7533, mnps.flathead@gmail.com.

The Chapter will not be hosting any in-person events this winter. Send us an email if you'd like to be added to our mailing list to receive announcements of Zoom events or videos that we think you'll appreciate. Make sure mnps.flathead@gmail.com is on your safe senders list so you don't miss our e-newsletters and updates.

Looking ahead, Chapter volunteers have been busy planning the June Annual Membership Meeting in the Yaak. We've also started planning Flathead-area summer field trips. Watch for emails from mnps.flathead@gmail.com for opportunities to get involved. It's more fun with more of us working together!

Kelsey Chapter

Info: Bob Person at 443-4678, thepersons@mcn.net.

Hoping to soon be able to return to "fields, flowers, and gatherings," many Chapter members have been working hard to revitalize our Kelsey Chapter and generate a new structure for our group. To build a stronger Chapter we have drafted a set of bylaws that, among other things, defines the roles and term limits of an Executive Committee, nominated four Officers and two Committee Co-Chairs, and proposed additional changes. Our next step is for all Chapter members to review and comment on the draft bylaws and vote for the officers. Come 2021, our new Executive Committee will be planning chapter Zoom meetings and spring/summer activities. Make your voices heard!

Maka Flora Chapter

Info: Bob Srygley at 488-6086, robert.srygley@usda.gov.

Valley of Flowers Chapter

Info: Beth Madden, 224-1012, bethmadden64@gmail.com.

All our winter programs are being held online via Zoom, and are free and open to the public. Meeting links will be emailed



Plant Fans!

Given the uncertainties and constraints of coronavirus on gatherings, please make sure to stay in touch with your Chapter and the MNPS through the website, Facebook, or email to stay abreast of late-breaking news and activities.

to Chapter members at the beginning of each month, and are available upon request from bethmadden64@gmail.com. Recordings of previous Zoom programs can be found at <https://www.mtnativeplants.org/chapters/valley-of-flowers/>.

Recently, author and native landscaping advocate Doug Tallamy was featured in a special holiday Zoom presentation about “Nature’s Best Hope: Sustaining Plants and Animals that Sustain Us” and the simple steps each of us can take to reverse the declining biodiversity in our world. Upcoming Zoom meetings are:

Tuesday, January 12, 7:00 p.m. “Foraging for Edible Plants,” with Thomas Elpel.

Tuesday, February 9, 7:00 p.m. “The Whitebark Pine Story: From Thriving Keystone to ESA Candidate Species,” with Diana Tomback, University of Colorado at Denver.

Tuesday, March 9, 7:00 p.m. “Landscaping for Birds,” with Paulette Epple.

Tuesday, April 13, 7:00 p.m. “Plant Biodiversity of Ecuador,” with Ryan Quire, and including an update on Ute lady’s tresses in southwest Montana.

Western At-Large

Info: Kris Boyd at 295-9414, boyd.kristina@yahoo.com.

President’s Platform

Like everyone else, Montana Native Plant Society board members have been searching for hope during this deep coronavirus winter. And we’ve found some: the opportunity to step back and assess where we are as an organization and where we want to go in the next few years.

Working within the time-tested mission and goals for MNPS, over the past six months the Board has:

- distributed a member survey and evaluated the input of the 378 folks who responded to it;
- followed up with potential new member-volunteers who identified themselves on the survey;
- examined the membership dues structures of other plant societies in our region in anticipation of changing ours (which is now 15 years old);
- discussed membership demographics, organizational structures, activities, and the roles of volunteers and paid staff with leaders of other native plant societies in the western U.S.;
- created an MNPS Zoom account and staged tutorials so that Chapters can use this platform in their planning and programs;
- assessed the possible responsibilities and funding of paid staff at MNPS.

What do we anticipate in 2021? Regardless of the course of the pandemic, look for:

- online programs through the spring;
- advocacy for native landscapes in the 2021 Montana Legislature, via a conservation lobbyist that MNPS helps support;
- continued watchdogging of public agencies and their land management plans (for example, recently MNPS made forceful comments on a proposed gypsum mine in the Pryor Mountains that would seriously threaten an occurrence of rare plants);
- active participation in the partnership that’s developing the Montana Plant Conservation Strategy;
- field trips, which can be done safely if we take precautions;
- potential opportunities to pilot a citizen science initiative on locating and describing occurrences of rare plants;
- our Annual Membership Meeting, if the Board judges this can be done safely. We envision a dispersed campout at a location with primitive facilities and no crowding folks together. Unfortunately, we’ll need to keep distancing rigorously until “This Thing” is totally under control.

And finally, expect more of what you’re seeing in this issue of *Kelseya* – requests for your active participation in your Chapter, for example by leading a field trip or organizing a program. You don’t need to be a botanist or even an expert at plant identification to do the things that keep our organization going from day to day. You just need to care about plants, and give a bit of your time and creativity. I urge you to get in touch with your Chapter contact to get that ball rolling!

Happy Holidays!

— Gretchen Rupp





MNPS News

SMALL GRANTS 2021

Call for Proposals

The January 31 deadline for submitting MNPS Small Grants proposals is coming right up!

In the Fall *Kelseya* we said we were going to seek proposals this year that focus on education. However, the committee and board have since decided to hold to the original Small Grants policy objectives: 1) to stimulate research, conservation, and educational activities that help foster an appreciation of Montana's native plants and plant communities, and 2) to promote native plant conservation through a better understanding of Montana's native flora and vegetation and the factors affecting their survival. Achieving these objectives usually involves an educational component.

If you or someone you know has a project or research idea that fits these objectives, now is the time to submit a Small Grant proposal. Eligibility criteria and application instructions are in the "Call for Proposals" on the MNPS website at www.mtnativeplants.org/small-grants-program. Contact Betty Kuropat, at blueirismt@gmail.com with any questions.

Here's Your Chance: **Your Society Needs You!**

THE MONTANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY NEEDS NEW TALENT ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. We are proud to be an all-volunteer organization, but we can't be that without smart, energetic, engaged volunteers! In 2021, we must elect a President, Western At-Large Representative, and Treasurer, each for two-year terms. The Treasurer position currently is shared by two people and that system could continue, or it could revert to one person. The nominating committee is accepting nominations and self-nominations until February 15. If you would like to see a description of what's involved with any of these positions, please contact Peter Lesica at 728-8740, lesica.peter@gmail.com, or Gretchen Rupp at 586-8363, beesgrmt@gmail.com.

Mark Your Calendars

Annual Membership Meeting: Summer 2021

Flathead Chapter and Western-at-Large members are excited to host the 2021 Annual Membership Meeting — "Ferns and Forests" — in the beautiful Yaak region of northwest Montana over the weekend of June 25-27.

Rustic camping facilities will be limited to porta-potties, a large tent and canopies to socially distance under, tables and chairs, and plenty of space for tents, RVs, and camp trailers. There are some full-service campgrounds nearby and lodging options are available in Troy. We are planning numerous interesting field trips. Look for further details in the Spring issue of *Kelseya*. Please note: As with everything else during the pandemic, all plans are tentative. Limiting the number of participants and asking you to be self-contained by bringing your own food and water are minimum precautions we will be taking. This meeting will be reminiscent of times past when we focused only on field trips and gathered around the campfire at night!



Tiger lily (*Lilium columbianum*) in a small forest opening, lower Yaak valley.

Photo: Betty Kuropat

Nominate a Special Someone

The Montana Native Plant Society recognizes individuals for outstanding service, leadership, or for making a difference to the preservation, conservation, and study of, and education about, native plants. The MNPS Board seeks your help in identifying worthy awardees, either through their contributions as members of our organization or through work that supports our goals and shares our passion for native plants.

The Outstanding Service Award recognizes an MNPS member who has contributed meaningful service to the Society. The Special Achievement Award is granted to an individual — member or not — whose work has contributed in a significant way to the mission and goals of MNPS.

To nominate someone, check first with Rachel Potter, jrepotter@centurytel.net, to make sure she or he has not been a past recipient. Then send a written statement about your nominee to Rachel before April 1, indicating which award you have in mind. Awards will be presented at the 2021 Annual Membership Meeting on June 26 in the Yaak, or at another appropriate time and place should the meeting be cancelled.

SMALL GRANT REPORT

Grow Your Garden for the Birds!

By Paulette Eppe, Conservation Co-chair,
Sacajawea Audubon Society

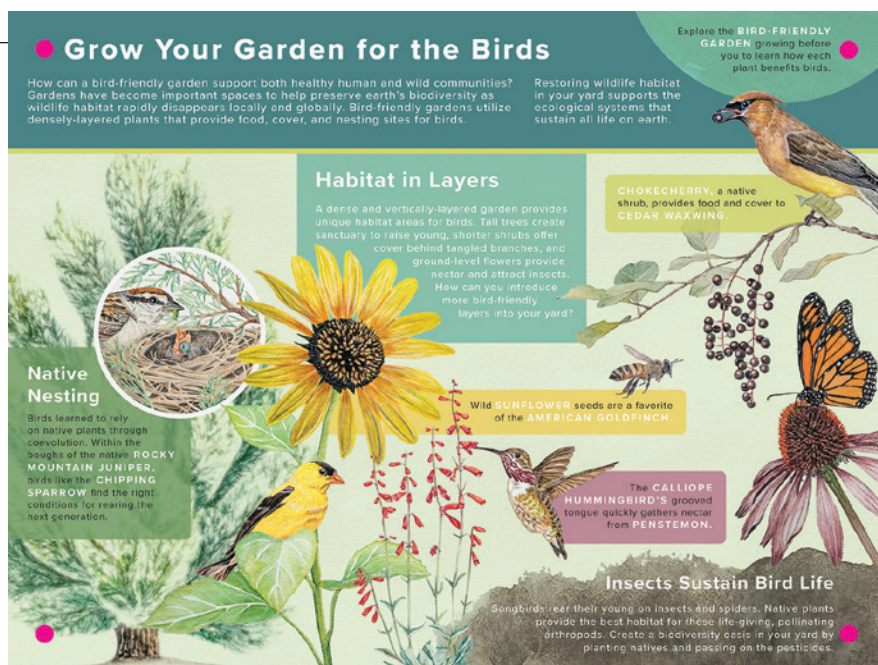
Sacajawea Audubon Society invites you to visit the exciting new “Plants for Birds Garden” in the Wells Fargo Learning Garden at Story Mill Community Park in Bozeman. With the help of a Small Grant from the Montana Native Plant Society in 2020, Sacajawea Audubon volunteers installed a demonstration garden that emphasizes native trees, shrubs, perennials, and vines that attract birds, pollinators, and other wildlife.

As urban growth and new subdivisions alter the native landscape, bird-friendly yards are becoming extremely important for the survival of our native songbirds, bees, and butterflies. Native plants and bird-friendly landscaping go hand-in-hand. Birds and insects have coevolved with native plants and they seek out habitats that provide these plants critical to their survival. Too often plants installed in our gardens and landscapes are exotics, often unpalatable to native insects and wildlife. This demonstration garden highlights more than 35 species of plants that benefit birds and support biodiversity. Many of the plants are native to Montana or are cultivars of natives that grow well in a home landscape.

Our demonstration garden was a labor of love. We had almost 50 volunteers show up to help during the various work sessions to prepare the site; install edging; plant about 100 trees, shrubs, and perennials; install drip irrigation; and ultimately haul and spread 6.5 cubic yards of cedar mulch for the finishing touch. Everyone wanted to be a part of this exciting project. Since it was planted in June, the garden has come alive with a variety of bees, butterflies, and other arthropods. Birds followed close behind and devoured the berries on the, chokecherries, elderberries, golden currants, and gooseberries this fall.

The educational aspects of this garden are two part. First, Sacajawea Audubon members will offer “Landscaping for Birds” classes and provide garden mentoring on-site in the future. Second, the garden will include interpretive signage for visitor education that we hope will generate enthusiasm for providing bird-friendly habitat throughout the community. A large interpretive sign will welcome

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visitors to the garden and small botanical labels will identify the plants and describe their unique, bird-friendly attributes.

Sacajawea Audubon sincerely appreciates the support of the Montana Native Plant Society in making this garden a reality; it truly was a collaborative effort. Our other partners include Linda Iverson, who artfully designed the garden and provided invaluable consulting advice; the Gallatin Valley Food Bank, which manages the Learning Garden and provided volunteers; the Trust for Public Land, which provided financial support and assistance with the interpretive signs; the Gallatin Gardener's Club, which provided financial support; and the City of Bozeman, for their embrace of our garden within the Story Mill Community Park.

With the demonstration garden in place, and by providing future educational offerings, Sacajawea Audubon hopes to substantially influence homeowners' landscaping choices to help restore wildlife habitat and support biodiversity in our communities. We encourage everyone to visit the “Plants for Birds Garden” in the Story Mill Community Park and learn about gardening for birds. *Thanks for your support Montana Native Plant Society!*



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Spirit of Volunteerism



MNPS serves a unique role

in native plant conservation, science, and education, and also connects people to share knowledge, experience, and passion for native plants in a way no other organization does. Without MNPS, many of these things just wouldn't happen. I served as Vice President and then President for a while, which meant I got to help guide what the society was doing, solve problems, and keep things moving forward. MNPS is full of amazing people, and it was rewarding to help empower them to do good things, and to help continue the legacy of the Society's unique role and accomplishments. Not only that, but I learned a huge amount about Montana's native plants, grew personally and professionally, and built lifelong friendships and connections. The best of all that came through the shared experiences of actively working together with others in MNPS, learning and figuring things out together.

— **Dave Hanna**

My time as Landscape Chairman, and in other positions within MNPS, are right up there in my top 10 lifetime involvements. I was not a botanist and had little knowledge of native plants when I joined the group in its formative years. However, I worked in horticulture and landscape design, plus I lived on a ranch and admired the native rangeland species' abilities to cope with a harsh climate. I learned to ID natives from attending MNPS field trips and picking the brains of the people who led them. I began to compile plant lists and add more natives to my landscape projects. At a point, the Society saw the need for accurate information on using natives in home and commercial landscapes. It was hard to find natives at nurseries, so I helped members put together the first Montana Native Plant Source Guide back in 1992. Since then, the Landscape Committee and local Chapters have produced lots of great information on using natives in our gardens.



The great thing about this organization: there are many levels of involvement. You can take on responsibilities as you have the time and energy, and back off when life gets busier. Above all, I love the camaraderie of being with fellow plant people. In this crazy world; it keeps me sane. — **Linda Iverson**

I was President of the Clark Fork Chapter

from 1994 through 1997, and later from 2011 until now. Being president has entailed looking up information on our speakers so I can pen an introduction, getting up in front of people to give the intro, writing a thank you note or email after the presentation, making announcements about future meetings and upcoming events, and knowing when to end a meeting. I try to make newcomers to meetings feel welcome. My name is in the newsletter and on our website, so I get inquiries that I forward to the Chapter person best suited to answer it. It's not that hard.



Being associated with MNPS has changed my life. From the day I met Peter Lesica and learned that plants had Latin names right up to this week when I learned about tree bark from Wayne Phillips, my life has been enriched and enlivened by the friends I've met through my membership and what I've learned at the meetings and field trips, herbarium nights, and garden work. It is no trouble for me to occupy the President's chair for a while. It's a small way to pay back all I've received from my membership and my life in this beautiful state.

— **Anne Garde**

I love plants! I love to see, smell, touch, name, and eat them. I especially like to explore and learn about native and natural plant communities. In high school I sometimes skipped classes to go hang with plants at the arboretum and study their name tags. In college, I thought I would become a botanist. Instead, I became a forester, with a lot of botany and ecology woven into my work and my spare time.

I was thrilled back in 1994 when I found the Flathead Chapter of MNPS. It was the first time I'd been among others who also get absolutely giddy about botanical mysteries and finds. I had found my people. Many knew much more than me and became mentors. I went to as many programs and field trips as I could. The next step to volunteering was easy.

I've played many leadership roles at both the Chapter and state levels. In addition to the personal satisfaction of helping shape the Society's direction and getting to know like-minded people, serving on the board of directors was good for my career. It enhanced my botany as well as leadership and communication skills. I currently serve as Small Grants Committee Chair for the state. It takes some time and effort, but I believe in the mission of MNPS, I love interacting with and learning from everyone because — I love plants! — **Betty Kuropat**





When I first heard about MNPS some 30 years ago, I joined thinking I might get to meet people with like interests in native plant ecology and conservation. I had no idea I was about to enter a community of people who would become like family to me. I so enjoyed hanging out with those who “got it” when it came to connecting to the natural world that I decided I wanted to permanently attach myself to the organization and help in the effort to conserve Montana’s native plants. In the early 1990s, Anne Morley asked if I would help her start a Chapter in the Flathead. Some of those who came to the founding meeting are among my closest friends today. Our connection comes from a deep appreciation of native flora and the desire to share that with others.

Recently, I joined the board by volunteering to chair the Membership Committee. Having experience with databases, I thought I could help by keeping track of our vibrant, ever growing membership. For the first time we have passed the 700 mark! I also stay involved by participating in events, supporting my local Chapter, and volunteering to help out when and where I can. It might sound like a lot of “giving,” but I am really the one who benefits. Being a part of MNPS has truly been one of the most fulfilling and rewarding experiences of my life. — *Maria Mantas*

I was Secretary of the Montana Native Plant Society for 20 years. Taking minutes was easy and not particularly mentally challenging so — what else could one do with a position like that? As Secretary, I had to report on officer elections at the Annual Membership Meeting. To make it more interesting, I initiated an routine where I challenged Chapters to a voting competition, analyzed the ballots, and made humorous presentations with commentary based on my shrewd observations and statistical analyses. The Chapter with the largest percentage of votes won a \$100 prize. I felt that the election process improved, and we had fun doing it.

Another innovation was in the stamps used to return the paper ballots. Members would use flag stamps, animal stamps, even left-over holiday stamps. What kind of message did that send? “Oh, Isn’t this nice. Must be a letter from some wonderful Audubon member trying to save a spotted owl.” No good! We need to represent ourselves as members of this fantastic native plant conservation organization! Over the years, I convinced the majority of MNPS voters to use native plant stamps, a small victory for plant-kind. Two other things stand out from my tenure — being Master of Ceremonies for the famous MNPS T-shirt modeling show and finally getting my long-sleeved MNPS field shirt. Never forget to vote! — *Patrick Plantenberg*



I am a biologist working primarily in the field of conservation, and I have been the chairperson of the Montana Native Plant Society Conservation Committee for the past 25 years. I have to admit that reading and commenting on agency documents for MNPS is about as exciting as watching paint dry. But what I really like about my volunteer position is that the comments I submit carry the weight of our 700 members; agency decision makers are a lot more likely to take them seriously. In addition, other members of the committee and



I put on a Plant Conservation Conference every other year aimed at providing up-to-date information to land managers on subjects such as genetics, climate change, and pollinators, to mention a few. We have the resources to enlist academics and practitioners who enlighten the audience, and that includes me. I work with great people, so it’s been a wonderful gig.

— *Peter Lesica*



I have been Montana Native Plant Society member and volunteer since 1990 — first organizing programs for the Flathead Chapter and later serving as state Treasurer. I’ve always been a big fan of the grassroots nature (no pun intended) of MNPS and the way it makes me feel connected to plant

professionals and plant enthusiasts from all over the state. My favorite activity is the Annual Membership Meeting. I love getting to visit a different part of Montana each year and joining friends in the discovery of new flora.

As MNPS Treasurer, and now Co-Treasurer with Shannon Kimball, I’ve had the opportunity to learn about the organization behind-the-scenes: how we create our annual budget, how we process memberships, how we file our taxes, and more. It feels good to serve in a leadership role and has been especially fun to work with smart, dedicated board members united by this common purpose. My kids have been raised in the culture of MNPS. When they were tiny, they loved to help me stamp “For Deposit Only” on the backs of the hundreds of membership checks we received each year. For a long time, my kids thought that I worked for MNPS. When I told them that, no, I’m a volunteer, it was a chance for them to see what it looks like when someone chooses to give time outside of work to a cause they care deeply about.

— *Jenny Tollefson* 🌸



Conservation Corner

By Peter Lesica, Clark Fork Chapter, and Elizabeth Bergstrom, Valley of Flowers Chapter

2020 WAS A BUSY YEAR FOR CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS TRYING TO PROTECT MONTANA'S NATURAL RESOURCES AND BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY.


Last September, Shoshone National Forest sought comments on potential travel management plans that would allow snowmobile use in the Line Creek Plateau Research Natural Area (RNA) at the east end of the Beartooth Range in Wyoming and Montana. This is the largest RNA in Montana and home to several rare plant communities as well as arctic species considered rare in the state, including *Kobresia macrocarpa*, *Eriophorum callitrix*, and *Senecio amplexans* which are found nowhere else in the state. Although the Shoshone National Forest plan directly affects only Wyoming, allowing motorized use in the RNA would set a bad precedent and would indirectly affect Montana by potentially damaging plant communities and populations of rare plants that straddle the state border as a result of altered snow melt from compaction and through gasoline and exhaust pollution. The Montana Native Plant Society informed Shoshone National Forest that we oppose allowing snowmobile use in the Line Creek Plateau RNA.

At almost the same time the Trump Administration's Department of Interior published a proposed rule change to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in the Federal Register. The proposed change would allow the Department of the Interior to exclude designated critical habitat whenever they determine that "the benefits of exclusion outweigh the benefits of inclusion for that area, so long as excluding it will not result in the extinction of the species." This makes no sense. Critical habitat is designated because it is necessary to minimize long-term extinction risk, so all critical habitat is necessary to prevent extinction. This



It is home to many rare plants and plant communities, including thick-leaf bladderpod (Physaria pachyphylla), a plant known from nowhere else in the world.

bladderpod. This is the driest place in Montana; the soils and vegetation are very sensitive to disturbance and difficult to reclaim. The mining company's plan of operation proposes a reclamation plan that is woefully inadequate. Simply digging up the soil and then putting it back and planting it with a generic seed mix will not restore the sensitive vegetation that occurs in the project area. MNPS comments strongly opposed the mine exploration and we are working with the Center for Biological Diversity on a petition to have thick-leaf bladderpod listed under the ESA.

More information about these issues can be found on our website at www.mtnativeplants.org, under the tabs at Conservation Issues and Important Plant Areas. 

is a thinly-veiled attempt to gut the purpose of the ESA and allow financial incentive to take precedence over protecting endangered species. Threatened or endangered plants are allowed protection only on public lands, and MNPS believes that the primary function of public lands should be the protection of biological diversity. MNPS comments vigorously opposed this rule change.

More recently, the Billings Office of the Bureau of Land Management completed a draft environmental assessment with a finding of no significant impact for gypsum mine exploration in the Pryor Mountain Desert south of Billings. This area was designated an Important Plant Area by MNPS in 2012 and an Area of Critical Environmental Concern by BLM in 2015. It is home to many rare plants and plant communities, including thick-leaf bladderpod (*Physaria pachyphylla*), a plant known from nowhere else in the world. The proposed exploratory drillings goes right through a population of thick-leaf

Photo: Peter Lesica

Perennially Curious: Malcolm Thompson

By Anne Morley, Flathead Chapter



Photo: Courtesy of Joy Thompson

MNPS MEMBERS ARE A DIVERSE BUNCH, but one thing they share is a curiosity about the intricacies of nature.

Malcolm Thompson of Columbia Falls exemplifies this outlook. Malcolm has been a member of the Flathead Chapter of MNPS since the mid-1990s and I've gotten to know him over the years from Chapter meetings, Christmas parties, field trips, and especially the Annual Membership Meetings, to which he frequently rides his bicycle — regardless of where in the state the meetings take place! He is a simple soul; more than once his contribution to our Christmas potluck was a bag of delicious homegrown carrots (unpeeled).

Malcolm is a local celebrity in the Flathead — though he certainly does not seek that status — for his role in starting RBM Lumber with his boys, Ben and Roy, and other family members. The company has been a shining leader in sustainable logging practices and in creating quality wood products for decades (visit www.RBMLumber.com to read more about their philosophy and methods). The Thompsons have dedicated themselves to working with the forest to preserve wildlife and old growth timber, while selectively harvesting logs using low impact methods, and finding the best ways to utilize every bit of wood they bring in. “The forest is too precious to waste” is their motto.

Whenever they were working in our area of the Swan Valley, Malcolm would stop by our canoe shop with an interesting fungus or native plant to show us. One time he brought over a comb tooth fungus, *Hericium ramosus*, that he found growing on a piece of dead *Abies grandis*, or grand fir, rather than cottonwood, it's usual food.

During our field trips, Malcolm often talked about the importance of thinning crowded young trees, saving a few larger ones and allowing them to begin adding thickness as well as height, mimicking the normal fire regime of times past. Visiting a site they had logged many years ago, Malcolm was excited to discover many larch seedlings growing in the forest debris. This was a moist site, not scarred by heavy equipment or treated as a typical clearcut. Small-scale logging leaves the forest more resilient to the challenges of a changing climate, he says.

Malcolm chooses to be a member of MNPS because, he says, the people are interested in learning all about the native plants — trees, flowering shrubs, mosses, etc. And they enthusiastically share this knowledge, working to save the many species and habitats all over the state.

One of his favorite plants is wild ginger, *Asarum caudate*. “I bought one at an MNPS meeting once, planted it in my yard, shaded by an evergreen tree. That one plant has spread to become a green carpet of many ginger plants,” he says.

Malcolm has always been curious, observing all the life that contributes to what we call the northern evergreen forest. 🌸

—Anne Morley received her B.A. in Botany from the University of Montana in 1965. She was one of the founding members of the Flathead Chapter of MNPS and is a longtime leader of field trips in the Bigfork and Swan Lake areas.

Donor Appreciation

Heartfelt best wishes and many thanks to the folks who made a donation over and above membership dues in 2020. We appreciate your support and will use it to carry out our mission to preserve, conserve, and study the native plants and plant communities of Montana, and to educate the public about the values of our native flora.

Loren Bahls
Thomas Barber
Dawn Bauman
Florence Chessin
Jeff Copeland
Susan Dawson
Jennifer Doolan
Barb Etchieson
Sharon Eversman
Mary Ann Flockerzi
Mark & Ginger Garff
Mo Gary
Vanessa Gaudette
Betsy Griffing
Lisa & Paul Hendricks
Jane Horton & Doug Holly
High Country Apps LLC
Aimee Kelley - Great Bear Native Plants
Mike & Sandy King
Steven Kloetzel & Andrea Morgan
Lisa Larsen
John Ligas
Sue Maffei
Mary Maj
Joyce McDonough
Janet McMillan Land Lindbergh
Hailey Moore - Center for Native Plants
Pat Muir & Bruce McCune
Michael Painter
Linda and John Pilsworth
Douglas Reynolds
Sherry Rivera
Barbara Ross
Shane Sater
Samantha Severyn
Sheryl Vogel
Roseann Wallander
Vicki Watson
Camie Westfall
Idell Weydemeyer
Robert Yorkelson



In Memory of Ginny Deneve

By Kelly Chadwick, Clark Fork Chapter

Ginny Deneve, our friend and outstanding volunteer at the Native Botanical Garden at the University of Montana passed away March 20, 2020.

We at the Clark Fork Chapter first met Ginny when we were looking for guidance on how to make hypertufa planters to honor volunteers. Someone suggested that a woman named Ginny Deneve had experience making these pots. We called her for advice and, without knowing a soul, Ginny showed up with all the necessary supplies to make hypertufa pots. She taught a group of novices the process while doing most of the work.

That was the beginning of the Clark Fork Chapter's life with Ginny. She volunteered as a gardener in the Botanic Gardens, helped with the annual plant sales and biennial native plant garden tours, attended meetings and potlucks. She was famous for her stunning flower arrangements and the delicious, exquisite food she shared. She was always generous and caring. Ginny was welcoming to new volunteers and nurtured them as she did her plants.

As her long-time friend Mary Lawrence said, "She loved trying new things and often would share stories of the different things she was trying,



not always successfully but good for a chuckle sometimes."

Her best friend and husband, Michael, shared that "Ginny was happiest when working in the gardens at the university or here at home." We all miss Ginny and her kindness. 🌸

Get Ready for a Yaak Attack

By Rachel Potter, Flathead Chapter

As we plan to gather for the MNPS Annual Meeting in the Yaak, June 25-27, we hope you will take some time to learn more about this unique ecosystem. Here are a few online presentations to get you started:



"Stories from BC's Forgotten Rainforest." The Yaak is part of the Inland Temperate Rainforest and "Wildsight," an environmental organization based in southeastern British Columbia, hosted photographer David Moskowitz for a program on this remarkable part of the world. A broad overview of the ecosystem along with stunning photos make this time well spent. To access the Vimeo recording, go to: <https://wildsight.ca/blog/2020/12/01/watch-now-inland-temperate-rainforest-webinar/>.

"A Vascular Flora of the Selkirk Mountains of Bonner and Boundary Counties, Idaho."

West of the Yaak River Valley sit the Selkirk Mountains. This program is presented by Harpo Faust from the University of Idaho Herbarium in Moscow and hosted by the Kinnickinnick Native Plant Society in Sandpoint, Idaho. The Selkirk range is ecologically distinct, hosting an assemblage of boreal, coastal, Rocky Mountain, and Columbia Basin floristic influences, with a rich geologic and glacial history. During the past two summers, more than 4,000 unique vascular plants were collected over the 886 square mile study area. The study resulted in many interesting finds, including state and county collection records, and an updated inventory of nearly 95 plant families. To access the YouTube recording, go to: <https://youtu.be/gEAI1vJqwFU>.

"Yaqan Nukiy Wetland and Floodplain Restoration." The Creston Valley of British Columbia is just northwest of the Yaak. "Wildsight" hosts Norm Allard, community planner for Yaqan Nukiy (Lower Kootenay Band), as he tours restoration projects on the Kootenay and Goat Rivers. The floodplain and wetland restoration work holds multiple benefits for wildlife, water, and community. Watch the video to learn more about the blending of historical knowledge, technology, and effort to restore ecological function to this area. To access the Vimeo Recording, go to: <https://vimeo.com/483631733>.

THANKS FOR JOINING!

The Montana Native Plant Society welcomes the following new members:

Clark Fork Chapter

Kelly Dix, Wendy Garner,
Aimee Kelley
(Great Bear Native Plants)

Eastern At Large:

Kurt Hansen,
Corinne Schroeder

Flathead Chapter

Meta Kane, Carol Madden,
Karen Parke

Maka Flora Chapter

Thomas Barber

Valley of Flowers Chapter

Angela Kray, Julie Laufmann,
John Mandell,
Judy McCarthy,
Joanna McCoy,
Greta Moore, Amy Rule,
Jean Shorthill

Photo: Tara Carolin

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**Additional donations to our general fund are greatly appreciated!*

Make check payable to Montana Native Plant Society and mail to MNPS Membership.

**JOIN OR RENEW ONLINE at
www.mtnativeplants.org**

or mail application to:
Montana Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 8783
Missoula, MT 59807-8783

Membership Level	Dues with affiliation	I am paying for _____ years	Donation*	Total amount enclosed
Individual	\$20			
Family	\$25			
Business/Organization	\$40			
Living Lightly	\$15			
Lifetime (one-time payment)	\$300 per household	-----		

MNPS Chapters and the Areas They Serve

Members are welcome to affiliate with any chapter. Please select the chapter with which you wish to be affiliated:

- ☐ **CALYPSO CHAPTER** - Beaverhead, Madison, Deer Lodge, and Silver Bow Counties; southwestern Montana
- ☐ **CLARK FORK CHAPTER** - Lake, Mineral, Missoula, Powell, and Ravalli Counties
- ☐ **FLATHEAD CHAPTER** - Flathead and Lake Counties plus Glacier National Park
- ☐ **KELSEY CHAPTER** - Lewis & Clark, Jefferson, and Broadwater Counties
- ☐ **MAKA FLORA CHAPTER** - Richland, Roosevelt, McCone, Sheridan, and Daniels Counties
- ☐ **VALLEY OF FLOWERS CHAPTER** - Gallatin, Park, and Sweet Grass Counties plus Yellowstone National Park
- ☐ **EASTERN-AT-LARGE**
- ☐ **WESTERN-AT-LARGE**

All MNPS chapters welcome members from areas other than those indicated. Alternatively, you may choose to be a member At-Large. We've listed counties just to give you some idea of what part of the state is served by each chapter. Watch for meeting announcements in your local newspaper. Ten paid members are required for a chapter to be eligible for acceptance in MNPS.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES on the date displayed on your newsletter mailing label.

Membership in the MNPS runs March 1 through February 28th of the following year. Memberships processed before the end of October each year will expire the following February 28th; those processed after October 31, expire February 28th of the year after. Memberships are processed on a quarterly basis so you may experience a slight delay in membership recognition and benefits. We appreciate your patience with our all volunteer organization. **THANK YOU!**

PLEASE NOTIFY US PROMPTLY of physical and email address changes at mtnativeplantmembership@gmail.com or mail to:
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About Montana Native Plant Society

The Montana Native Plant Society (MNPS) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation chartered for the purpose of preserving, conserving, and studying the native plants and plant communities of Montana, and educating the public about the value of our native flora. Contributions to MNPS are tax deductible, and may be designated for a specific project or chapter, for the Small Grants fund, or the general operating fund.

Your yearly membership fee includes a subscription to *Kelsey*, the quarterly newsletter of MNPS. We welcome your articles, field trip reports, book review, or anything that relates to native plants or the Society. Please include a line or two of "bio" information with each article. Drawings should be in black ink or a good quality photocopy. All items should be emailed to: carokurtz@gmail.com or mailed to *Kelsey* Editor, 645 Beverly Avenue, Missoula, MT, 59801.

Changes of address and inquiries about membership should be sent to MNPS Membership, P.O. Box 8783, Missoula, MT 59807-8783. Advertising space is available in each issue at \$5/column inch. Ads must be camera-ready and must meet the guidelines set by the Board of Directors for suitable subject matter; that is, be related in some way to native plants or the interests of MNPS members.

The deadline for each issue is Fall–September 10; Winter–December 10; Spring–March 10; Field Trip Guide–April 10; Summer–June 10. Please send web items to our webmaster concurrent with these dates.

If you want extra copies of *Kelsey* for friends or family, call the Newsletter Editor or email: carokurtz@gmail.com. No part of this publication may be reprinted without the consent of MNPS. Reprint requests should be directed to the Newsletter Editor.

Visit our website at: www.mtnativeplants.org
or contact our webmaster Bob Person at: thepersons@mcn.net

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Moving? Please let us know at mtnativeplantmembership@gmail.com