

Kelseya

Newsletter of the Montana Native Plant Society



Celebrating the Life of Peter Stickney: Consummate Collector, Curator and Conservator



By Co-Editor Jennifer Guse, Flathead Chapter

Montana has lost an iconic botanist. Peter Stickney, ardent field botanist, plant collector and herbarium curator passed away on September 29, 2023, at the age of 94.

Humble, impeccable, and passionate have all been used to describe Peter. Documenting his life may well take as long as it took for him to document the ~8,500 specimens collected for the Forest Service's Missoula Research Center Herbarium (MRC). Here it is in a nutshell.

Growing up in Long Beach, California, Peter graduated from the University of Idaho's School of Forestry, where he met his future wife, Suzann Moore. They married in 1954, while he was on leave from the U.S. Army. Honorably discharged in 1956 as 1st

Lieutenant, he subsequently dedicated his long and prosperous career to the U.S. Forest Service. Other than a two-year stint to earn his Master's degree in Botany from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, he spent the better part of six decades doing plant work in Montana. Like most botanists, he continued working with plants, both in the field and in the herbarium, long after retirement.

He was undoubtedly the most significant collector for the MRC, accruing over half of its ~16,000 specimens. Not only did he curate the MRC herbarium for nearly 60 years, but he also single-handedly boxed up the entire MRC plant collection when it was transferred to the University of Montana Herbarium in 2009. Peter contributed substantial seed money to form an endowment

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Chapter Events

Artemisia Chapter

Info: Jessica Callahan at 507-696-5467; artemisiamnps@gmail.com.

New Artemisia Chapter Update:

The new Artemisia Chapter, based in the Billings area, is off to a great start since we formed this spring. With an initial focus on opportunities for public engagement and education, we hosted three field trips over the summer on the Billings Rims and the Pryor Mountains. In collaboration with the Montana Audubon Center, we hosted a native plant seed swap in September and a public talk with Ryan Noak from Special K Ranch about starting native plants from seed.

We were invited by ZooMontana to take responsibility for maintaining and enhancing the native plant habitat and landscape gardens at the newly installed Foster Waterfowl Refuge. This area was opened in July and creates an important refuge for migrating birds. It also serves as the centerpiece for wetland conversation education. We also weeded throughout the late summer and fall while the plantings were being established. This year the Artemisia Chapter will begin to look at important native additions to the gardens and will maintain the plants and beds.

We are currently planning our winter talks and summer field trips as well as electing some new officers. If you would like to join us, we are meeting the second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. Please email us.

Calypso Chapter

Info: Catherine Cain at 406-498-6198; nativeplants@montana.com or Karen Porter at 406-498-9728; karenwporter44@gmail.com.

Calypso Chapter Update:

Dr. Paul Sawyer, retired professor in the Biological Sciences Department at Montana Tech, died last September in Vermont where he was living with family. Paul was the founding member of our Calypso Chapter of MNPS in 1997 and is well remembered for field trips in all seasons to learn the habits and habitats of our southwest Montana native flora. He gave us a great beginning and we rest on his shoulders – thank you Paul.

Calypso held its Annual Potluck & Planning Meeting on December 3rd, at the Grange Hall in Divide.

Events and trips are underway for 2024.

Clark Fork Chapter

Info: Teagan Hayes at 920-979-9009; teagan.hayes@gmail.com or Paul Buck at 970-901-2418; paul7703@gmail.com.

Monday, January 8, 7:00 p.m. Join Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks staff **Michael Kustudia** and **Jess Martin** as they introduce us to **The History and Diversity of Milltown State Park**. Their presentation will cover the role native vegetation played in restoration and opportunities for botanizing and birding. Joint meeting with Montana Audubon. Room 110 of the Interdisciplinary Science Building at the southwest end of campus. **PLEASE NOTE THE DIFFERENT DAY AND PLACE.**

Thursday, February 8, 7:00 p.m. **Glenda Scott**, retired Forest Service silviculturalist, will share some of her experiences **Restoring Forests in the Boreal and Gobi Desert Regions of Mongolia**.

The forest vegetation is much like in Montana and the changes are affecting the people and their livelihoods. Rocky Mtn. Exploration Center, 1075 South Ave. W. **PLEASE NOTE DIFFERENT LOCATION.** The parking area is southwest of South and Stephens.

Tuesday, January 16, 7:00 p.m. Herbarium Night. Learn to identify Montana's rushes (*Juncus*) with **Peter Lesica**. Room 303, Natural Science Building, UM Campus. Limit is 10 persons; email Giovanna.Bishop@mso.umt.edu to reserve a place.

Thursday, March 14, 7:00 p.m. Dr. Gary Laursen, mycologist from the University of Alaska Fairbanks and who is now affiliated with UM, will take us throughout Alaska, a huge and environmentally diverse state, on a mushroom journey entitled, **“Alaska’s Seasonal Fungi Underfoot”**. His 47 years of working with Alaska’s fungi has resulted in many interesting tales, some of which he will share through his photography and research. Rocky Mtn. Exploration Center, 1075 South Ave. W. **PLEASE NOTE DIFFERENT LOCATION.** The parking area is southwest of South and Stephens.

Thursday, April 11, 7:00 p.m. Urban and suburban areas can support a surprising diversity and abundance of pollinators. Join **Marirose Kuhlman**, Habitat Coordinator for Missoula County, to learn some of our diverse native pollinators and methods for **Home Landscaping as a Restoration Practice**. Rocky Mtn. Exploration Center, 1075 South Ave. W. **PLEASE NOTE DIFFERENT LOCATION.** The parking area is southwest of South and Stephens.

Thursday, May 9, 6:30 p.m. Our **Spring Potluck** will be held at the Pineview Park Pavilion in the Upper Rattlesnake off Rattlesnake Drive, just west of Rattlesnake School. Bring your own plate, utensils, and a dish to share. No alcohol please. Call Peter at 406-728-8740 or Clare at 406-728-0189 for directions.

Eastern At-Large

Info: Kelsey Molloy at 406-654-4566; kelsey88@gmail.com.

Flathead Chapter

Info: Tara Carolin at 406-607-7670; mnps.flathead@gmail.com.

Field Trip Leaders Needed! The Flathead Chapter is actively planning our 2024 spring/summer field trip guide. Do you have ideas or a special place you'd like to share with fellow enthusiasts? No experience necessary, just your devotion to share these special places with our special members. Email Hailey at: mnpsflatheadtrips@gmail.com.

Watch for announcements in your email for additional programs. Please add our Chapter address, mnps.flathead@gmail.com, to your safe sender list to avoid spam folders. Questions? Send us an email.

Date TBD. Winter Shrub Keying Field Trip. We'll look for a mild day before setting a date so check your email. Download the [Winter Field Key to the Native Shrubs of Montana](#), provided online by the Montana Natural Heritage Program.

Monday, March 11, 7:00 p.m. Natives Rule! Learn how gardening with native plants will make your yard more bird friendly. Join Flathead Audubon for the viewing of a locally produced video about the importance of growing native plants in your garden. Following will be a panel of the top local native plant gardening experts. Room 26 (E. side) of the Gateway West Mall in Kalispell. Stay tuned to your email for instructions for a remote viewing option.

Wednesday, March 20, 7:00 p.m. Native Plants, Invasive Weeds and Climate Change in Glacier National Park. Climate change accelerates the introduction and spread of non-native invasive plants, further reducing ecosystem resilience and negatively impacting biodiversity. **Dawn LaFleur**, Vegetation Biologist for Glacier National Park, will discuss: What are the potential consequences of climate change for native plants in the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem? What can we do to mitigate this threat? Program starts at 7:00. Come at 5:30 to help plan Flathead Chapter activities. MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 490 N. Meridian Rd., Kalispell.

Kelsey Chapter

Info: *Devon Malizia (president) or Jane Fournier (secretary) at kelseychaptermnps@gmail.com.*

Maka Flora Chapter

Info: *Libby Knotts at 406-774-3778; libbyknotts@gmail.com.*

Valley of Flowers Chapter

Info: *Contact Gretchen Rupp for program details or to be added to the Valley of Flowers Chapter "Friends" e-mail list, at 406-586-8363; beesgrmt@gmail.com.*

Tuesday, January 9, 2024, 7:00 p.m. Nature in a Montana Winter, with Naturalist Cedar Mathers-Winn. Midwinter may seem like a time of stasis and inactivity, but as with each season, change is constant, and organisms must adapt to survive. This talk will explore seasonal change and strategies for survival during our ecosystem's most challenging time of year. We'll meet in Room 108 of the Plant Bioscience Building, on the campus of MSU-Bozeman. Park in the lot to the north of the building. Cedar's website: <https://www.natureinplainsight.com/>. This presentation will not be recorded.

Tuesday, February 13, 7:00 p.m. Post-Disturbance – How Did the Plant Community Get that Way? with Botany Professor **Matt Lavin**. How can taxonomy and ecology be integrated to better understand plant species and plant communities, especially with respect to disturbance histories? Dr. Lavin, soon to be retiring from MSU, will give this live, in-person program. Meet in Room 108 of the Plant Bioscience Building on the MSU-Bozeman campus. This presentation will not be recorded.

Saturday, March 23. Workshop on Propagating Native Seed. How do you need to treat native plant seed to get the best germination? It depends! Expert **Clare Beelman** of Missoula will lead this hands-on event. Clare is the Clark Fork Chapter-MNPS member who wrangles that chapter's annual seed-starting get-together and native-plant sale. Expect to leave with a number of starts to get your own landscape underway in 2024. More specific information will be available as the workshop date nears.

Western At-Large

Info: *Jon Reny at 406-334-0459; jreny@kvis.net.*

MNPS Presents! Online Programs

Jan. 4, 7:00 p.m. Gardening and Landscaping for Pollinators, with Angela Orpet from Xerces Society.

Feb. 1, 7:00 p.m. Pollen-associated Viruses, with Tia-Lynn Ashman and Dr. Andrea Feters from Ohio State University.

Watch for Zoom registration details in your inbox - or find them on our MNPS Facebook page. For details: bethmadden64@gmail.com.

Open access book chapter on huckleberries now available:

"**Ecological Significance of Wild Huckleberries (*Vaccinium membranaceum*)**"

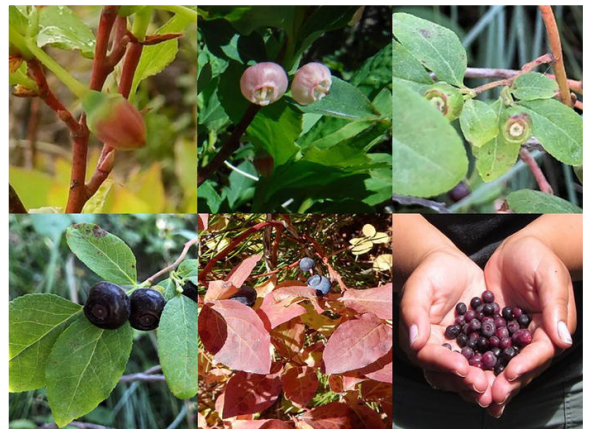
by **Janene Lichtenberg and Tabitha Graves**

From the edited volume:

Edible Berries - New Insights

by **Nesibe Ebru Yaşa Kafkas and Hüseyin Çelik**

<https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/1124802>



Huckleberry phenophases (life stages), SKC, USGS photos.



Conservation Corner

By Elizabeth Bergstrom, Conservation Co-Chair

Our 12th Montana Plant Conservation Conference will be held April 11 and 12, 2024. The Valley of Flowers Chapter will be hosting the event at Montana State University, Bozeman. The theme for the conference will embrace the multi-faceted topic of restoration. This conference has served as a venue for land managers to network and share their program achievements. It also presents ideas and opportunities to further the goals of their work. We have had an enthusiastic responses from our federal and state agencies, private consultants, academics and nonprofits to contribute to the 2024 conference. We highly encourage student participation.

Of utmost importance in restoration projects is the availability of plant materials. Michael Butts, Program Manager Montana DNRC Seedling Nursery, will discuss the formation of the Montana Native Seed Network (MTNSN). Through this partnership, genetically-rich, eco-type seed is derived from wild plant populations and produced at a large scale at the DNRC Seedling Nursery in Missoula. Among restoration objectives, developing habitat for native pollinators is a priority. Justin Runyon will present research he completed with Will Glenny and Laura Burkle regarding the pollinator “friendliness” of selected native plants and restoring habitat for bees. This will be followed by USFS Forest Botanist, Jessie Salix, reporting on the success of a pollinator “friendly” mix and the use of Biochar as a soil amendment following fire. Dr. Cathy Zabinski will focus on the emerging topic of the importance of mycorrhizae and ecological restoration.

Other restoration objectives will be discussed. BLM botanist Jen McNew and Salish Tribal Traditionalist Myrna Demetier, will speak on projects undertaken to restore the indigenous food plant, purple camas (*Camassia quamash*), to meadow systems. Sue Wall, Environmental Scientist with Herrera Consulting, will discuss the preservation of the Dutchman Wetland complex which also supports rare plants in an area that had been impacted in the past from emissions from the Anaconda smelter and grazing. BLM Regional Botanist, Wendy Velman, has been instrumental in developing a grassland restoration program across Montana and

the Dakotas. Her presentation will focus on implementation of that program. Our nonprofits will present on changing croplands to grasslands in Central Montana with TNC Ecologist, Kelsey Mallory, and Christian Meny, Audubon Conservation Director, working with ranches to adopt a bird-friendly certification program to maintain shortgrass prairie and use native grass seed in restoration mixes. Aaron Clausen, Montana Manger with the World Wildlife Fund, has information to share regarding community-led conservation in the Great Plains.

Weather permitting, following the presentations, Aaron Clausen and Matt Lavin will lead a field trip to the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve.

The second day of the MNPS Conference will be an information-gathering process led by State Heritage Program Botanist, Andrea Pipp. It is an important venue for field botanists to contribute information to the Heritage Species of Concern List and the State Threat List maintained by MNPS. With the vastness of our state, it is impossible to track known threats to our rare plants without a networking process. Please visit the MNPS website for conference registration after the first of the year.

Other Conservation Committee News:

Jennifer Lyman has continued working with the Custer-Gallatin National Forest to develop educational and interpretive opportunities aimed at protecting alpine plant communities around the Beartooth Highway. Jennifer is also coordinating an MNPS review of a project which has the potential to impact habitat of *Spiranthes diluvialis*, Ute Lady’s tresses. The Latin word *diluvialis* refers to flooding and this orchid, federally listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, occurs in areas which flood seasonally.

Peter Lesica participated in a Global review of Important Plant Areas which has showed that the IPA effort has contributed to plant conservation in many ways to achieve conservation outcomes.

Jennifer, Peter Lesica, our emeritus Conservation Chair, and I wish you a Happy and Botanically Rich New Year!

(Stickney, continued from page 1)

to the UM Foundation in 2014. Subsequently, thousands of dollars were donated to the herbarium endowment, all in his honor. Although he would humbly not allow it to be named after him, it is affectionately known as the "Stickney Endowment".

Peter’s dedication to understanding and documenting range and wildlife habitats and post-fire succession in Montana’s and Idaho’s Rocky Mountains leaves an enduring legacy for future generations. His legacy echoes in his three children, co-founding the Montana Native Plant Society and mentoring countless others.

Although his thesis delved into the ecology of rough fescue (*Festuca scabrella* or *F. campestris*), Peter clearly had an affinity for certain groups of plants. Shrubs may have been towards the top of

the list, leading to publishing *Winter Field Key to the Native Shrubs of Montana*, (Morris et al. 1962). Peter made the first collections of at least ten vascular plants in Montana and documented locations of a number of Species of Concern for the Montana Natural Heritage Program.

A life so fervently dedicated to a cause is rare, and a life dedicated to botany is rarer still. Peter Stickney will be greatly missed by this community.

Read more about Peter Stickney in the Spring 2010, Spring 2014 and Spring 2015 *Friends of the University of Montana Herbarium* newsletters: <https://www.umt.edu/herbarium/friends-of-the-herbarium/newsletters.php>.

SMALL GRANT REPORT

Grow Wild's Education Trailer (Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance is now Grow Wild)

Submitted by Jennifer Mohler, Grow Wild's Executive Director; jen@growwildmt.org

For many years, our nonprofit borrowed the Southwest Area Education Trailer to use at our annual Ophir School Invasive Species Field Trip. In 2020 we realized what an asset the education trailer was, how it would further our outreach goals, and we decided to build our own!

It was easy to pin down the purpose of this interactive trailer – to educate the community about:

- Terrestrial & aquatic invasive species
- Clean recreation practices (Clean.Drain.Dry. and PlayCleanGo)
- Crail Garden/Wildscapes (promoting the use of native plants in our landscapes)

Keen to build upon others' successes, our executive director reached out to Jill Walton, Jefferson County Weed Coordinator, and Pam Schwend, Carbon County Weed District, to learn all about their education trailers.

Pursuit of funding for an education trailer began in late 2020, continued in 2021, and we picked up our custom trailer in the middle of our busy summer season in 2022. It was during that time that the board and staff began having discussions about rebranding/renaming. With the help of outside consultants and after many thoughtful deliberations, Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance voted to become Grow Wild in spring of 2023.

Once the decision was made, staff promptly kicked into high gear to finalize the design and initiate the build to ensure the trailer was ready for the upcoming season. Solar panels were installed, and the exterior wrap design was finalized, produced, and installed. Interior components were ordered and installed. The trailer was designed for invasive species to be on one side of

the trailer and native species highlighted on the other. Sections of the trailer interior include (from back to front):

- Ricker plant mounts
- Weed & wildflower posters by Nancy Seiler
- Felt tiles (which are pin-able like corkboard)
- Custom educational posters
- Posters by artist Kate Dolamore
- Custom-made paper weeds & wildflowers made by Daydream Flowers (we will design and secure protective cases before displaying)
- Custom mobile A-frame to hold educational materials
- Noxious Ned, our trailer mascot!

We had only been utilizing this trailer for a bit over a month when we received the following email from Karen Douglass from Stevenson, Washington. After visiting the Big Sky Farmers Market in June, she wrote: "Let me just say, "Wow!" The trailer display was so carefully crafted and designed to make fabulous use of the space and every inch was professional, engaging, and educational. The content met the needs of a diverse audience. I can see toddlers enjoying the bright colors and textures and adults and seniors enjoying the opportunity to read and learn...GROW WILD was the highlight of my Farmers Market experience at Big Sky." Receiving such an email validated all the work that went into this project, and the public's reception of it has exceeded our expectations!

The education trailer was first put into use June 1 and, as of the end of July, it had been used at 17 events, reaching an estimated 288 kids and 635 adults!

Up next is a visit to Gallatin Gardeners Club, a Public Lands Day event with the BLM, and we are already booked for next year's Earth Day Celebration at the County Fairgrounds.

The education trailer will reside in the Upper Gallatin Watershed/Big Sky but can and will travel throughout Gallatin and Madison counties and other locations in Southwest Montana.

Thank you to Montana Native Plant Society board and members for helping us take our conservation message to the next level with this education trailer, and please keep us in mind for any event where this trailer may be employed.

www.growwildmt.org





New Grants & Giving Program

This year there will not be a request for proposals under the MNPS Small Grants Program. Why? Our grants program is changing, and it is taking time to work out the details.

Here are some facts:

- For years and years, the Small Grants Program has been awarding funds for research, conservation and educational projects that advance our mission to foster an appreciation of Montana's native plants.
- This year, the MNPS Board announced its intention to revamp the program, adding additional funds and making it easier to administer and to apply.
- A new MNPS Scholarship Fund was also approved for students seeking a program to increase their knowledge of native plants.

• A fresh avenue was established, too, for groups and individuals requesting support for special projects that are outside the grants program realm or have time constraints.

• All this will fall under the new heading of MNPS Grants & Giving. A committee is developing the new policies and procedures.

So, there you are. We on the committee thought hashing out guidelines and forms would be a cinch. Turns out it is not. So, the grants program will not be offered in 2024, but we are working on it, honest! Please watch out for our new grant and scholarship opportunities in future *Kelseyas*.

- Annie Garde, Grants & Giving Committee Co-Chair

Prairies to Potholes 2024 Annual Meeting, June 28-30, 2024

The Clark Fork Chapter will be hosting our 35th annual meeting at Camp Utmost on Hwy 200 in the Blackfoot Valley. The venue is one mile west of Clearwater Junction, 15 miles west of Ovando. Accommodations include tent camping, RV trailers with hookups, cabins and dorm rooms with multiple beds. Motels are available 15 miles away in Seeley Lake and 40 miles away in Missoula.

The area is one of the most diverse in western Montana with myriad wetlands in a matrix of grasslands and open forest in what Meriwether Lewis called the "Valley of the Knobs." To the north are the high mountains of the Mission and Swan Ranges. There will be workshops on Friday afternoon and field trips ranging from easy to difficult on Saturday.

More complete information will be available in March on the MNPS website and in the Spring *Kelsey*. Registration numbers are NOT limited, so please bring yourself and your plant pals!



Workshop Recap:

The Valley of Flowers held a workshop in early November, led by herbalist Robyn Klein, on how to press plants for educational and decorative cards. A free plant press was given to participants as well as a demonstration on how to use it. This was a great way to introduce plants to the general public!



New Invasive Plant Alert

A volunteer for Flathead Audubon found and reported the striking yellow flowers of *Lysimachia vulgaris* (yellow loosestrife, aka garden loosestrife) along the Stillwater River in Owen Sowerwine, in Flathead County, in the very wet summer of 2022. In 2023, when water levels were much lower, more extensive searches found yellow loosestrife in additional wet areas in Owen Sowerwine. Josh Wagoner, Early Detection, Rapid Response Coordinator of the Montana Department of Agriculture, responded to the alert and is working with Flathead Audubon to eliminate the unwelcome plant. With only two known occurrences in the State, the Montana Department of Agriculture published the following press release:

HELENA, Mont. - The Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) confirmed garden loosestrife at two different sites in Western Montana. These are the first cases of garden loosestrife confirmed in Montana.

Garden loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgaris*), an aggressive non-native wetland plant, has been found in western Montana. In July 2023, approximately 0.1 acres along the Stillwater River, east of Kalispell, and an additional 0.2 acres along the Bitterroot River in Hamilton were mapped and treated by local land managers and MDA's Early Detection, Rapid Response (EDRR) Program. Monitoring will be conducted on both sites and adjacent lands for the next several years.

Garden loosestrife is a Class A (highest priority) noxious weed in Oregon, a Class B (second highest priority) in Washington and is invasive and problematic in several other states. It is a rhizomatous perennial forb that grows three to six feet tall and can form dense stands along waterways and in riparian areas. The leaves are opposite or whorled in groups of three to five, lance-shaped, three to five inches long and softly hairy, which gives them a slightly grayish-green tinge. Flowers are yellow, have five petals, appear in clusters at stem ends toward the top of the plant, and bloom in July or August.

Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), a Montana-listed Priority 1B noxious weed, has many shared physical characteristics and occupies the same type of riparian areas. Montana has two closely related natives, also with yellow flowers: fringed loosestrife (*Lysimachia ciliata*) and water loosestrife (*Lysimachia thysiflora*).

To report a suspected garden loosestrife plant, contact your local county weed district, MSU Extension agent, or the Montana Department of Agriculture. Contact information below. Leave the plant in the ground so it can be correctly identified, take plenty of pictures, record GPS coordinates, and arrange for a site visit as soon as possible.



Lysimachia vulgaris (yellow loosestrife),
photo by Pat Jaquith

Josh Wagoner, Early Detection, Rapid Response Coordinator
Agriculture Sciences Division, MT Department of Agriculture
(406)444-7880; josh.wagoner@mt.gov.

Audubon Seeking Help for Plants for Birds Program

Chestnut backed chickadee on rose
hip, photo by Veronika Andrews



The National Audubon Society has a Plants for Birds program (www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds), encouraging gardeners to create native plant gardens to sustain the native birds in their localities. The program includes an extensive reference database of native plant species, with photographs. Many of the plant photographs, though, need to be tagged with correct species identification. Audubon is seeking experts to review photos of plants from their regions and identify the species, and is offering some financial compensation for this work. If you have the know-how and this interests you, e-mail John Rowden of the Audubon Society (john.rowden@gmail.com).



2023 Activities of the Montana Native Plant Society

The Montana Native Plant Society has been busy! In 2023, the Society hosted the following educational, gardening & landscaping and conservation-centered events:

Education

- Conducted more than 70 field trips, from one corner of the state to the other
- Sponsored 20 in-person workshops or presentations concerning native plants, all free and open to the public
- Distributed educational materials at five events
- Sponsored a slate of Earth Day events in Bozeman
- Co-hosted a week-long plant identification station for all Flathead Valley 5th graders
- Convened at Bannack State Park for the annual meeting with presentations, field trips and fellowship among 100 members
- Awarded four small grants for community gardens, research or education projects
- Published the *Kelsey*, a quarterly compendium of plant biology and education essays
- Hosted six online programs through the MNPS Presents! series. More than 600 members and non-members attended.

Gardening & Landscaping

- Designed or maintained five native plant demonstration gardens
- Published an up-to-date guide to sources of Montana native plant material, and detailed guidance for landscaping in south-central Montana
- Grew native plants from seed and conducted a plant sale in Missoula

Conservation

- Conducted two weed-pull events
- Commented on plans or projects of two public land management agencies
- Began a collaboration with the Forest Service and the Wyoming Native Plant Society to protect fragile landscapes jeopardized by off-road vehicles atop the Beartooth Plateau
- In 2022-2023, trained Citizen Scientists, then visited more than 90 previously reported locations of rare plants, documenting their presence and coverage (some of the previous reports were more than 50 years old)
- Led the development of the Montana Plant Conservation Strategy, a collaboration of more than 20 organizations that will shape the actions of land-management agencies for decades to come

WELCOME NEW AND RETURNING MEMBERS!

The Montana Native Plant Society would like to welcome and thank new and returning members from the following chapters:

Artemisia Chapter

Ruth Edlund, Sharon Wetsch

Calypso Chapter

Natalie Evans

Clark Fork Chapter

Sharon and Larry Barnes, Colette Berg, Liz Bradley, Sarah Elsasser, Sandy Ryan

Flathead Chapter

Gail Battaglia, B. Gorrie, Anita Scott, Carrie Sood

Kelsey Chapter

Elaina Graham and Doug Parker

Valley of Flowers Chapter

Suzy and Kim Hoberecht, Cliff Montagne, and Tracy Sterling joining as a Lifetime Member!

It's Membership Renewal Season

It's January, and that means it's time to renew your annual membership to MNPS. If your membership is due, you will receive a reminder via email and/or postcard. If you don't receive a reminder, it means you are either a lifetime member or you are already paid up for the next year. Please note, we are no longer accepting multiple-year membership payments, so any payment above dues will be considered a donation. To avoid paying annually, you may wish to consider a lifetime membership. If you have any questions, please contact us at mtnativeplantmembership@gmail.com and we can let you know your membership status. Also, please let us know if there have been any changes in your contact information. Thank you!

Officer Nominations

Are you interested in a great opportunity with a great organization? The Montana Native Plant Society needs your time and talent on the Board of Directors. Each year, we elect three officers to two-year appointments. In 2024, the elective positions are Vice President, Eastern At-Large Representative, and Secretary. If you aren't ready for an officer position, various committees are always looking for folks with fresh ideas. Board volunteers have the deep satisfaction of actively working with others to forward our goals of education and protecting and conserving native flora. If you might be interested in any of these spots, please contact Dave Hanna at: xylorhiza@gmail.com.

President's Platform

Winter is here again, and many of our native plants are dormant, waiting for the warmer days of spring. And yet there is a lot to see and appreciate that makes it well worth getting out to experience Montana's native plants. Winter gives us an opportunity to see patterns, textures, and underlying forms that aren't obscured by the bright colors and fresh growth that grab our attention during the growing season.

A few weeks ago I was out on a calm, foggy, morning. A thick frost had formed on top of a light dusting of snow. Instead of covering everything as a heavier snow would have done, this skiff of snow topped with frost looked as though it was growing out of the plants, as if the plants were the source of all the white in the landscape. Each plant I looked at seemed to have become a multi-layered crystalline version of itself. Even though I had been to that place many times, it had been transformed into a totally new experience. It was a magical morning, and a reminder to me that the world is full of wonder, if we only allow ourselves to see it.

Many plants may be dormant this time of year, but MNPS is not! Check out the rest of this newsletter for activities, news and events - from chapter gatherings and online programs to information about the upcoming Montana Plant Conservation Conference. And be sure to save the date for the 2024 annual



MNPS President, Dave Hanna

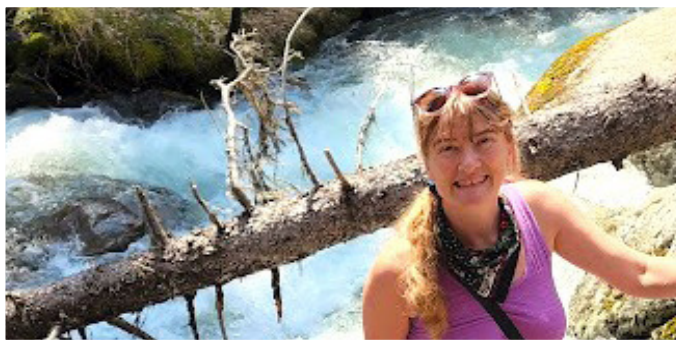
meeting, June 28-30 in the Blackfoot Valley. A huge thanks to all the volunteers and supporters who do so much to make all these things happen!

Whether you choose to do something indoors with fellow plant enthusiasts or get outside for a fresh look at your favorite places, I hope that you enjoy the winter with native plants!

Introducing Our New Administrative Assistant: Leah Grunzke

By Kenda Herman, MNPS Vice President and Kelsey Chapter

We are delighted to introduce Leah Grunzke, the newest addition to our team! As an Administrative Assistant, Leah will play a critical role in supporting the operation of the Montana Native Plant Society and enhance our efficiency as we continue to grow. Leah is a botanist, educator and artist with a wealth of experience in nonprofit operations and science education outreach. You may know her from past MNPS events, articles in *Kelsey*, or her contributions to native plant-focused research in the areas of landscaping and interaction with invasives. Over the last 20 years, her career in conservation outreach and curriculum development has benefited Montana



Leah Grunzke, New MNPS Administrative Assistant

communities in Lewistown, Missoula, Bozeman, and Dillon. She holds a B.S. in Horticulture Science from MSU and a nonprofit administration certification from UM. Leah's strong skill set, valuable insight and abundant enthusiasm are essential assets to the MNPS mission. Her expertise and dedication to conservation are a perfect complement to our mission. Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Leah. We are proud to team up with her during this important moment in the history of the organization. Welcome aboard, Leah!

Help Wanted

Now in its third successful season, our popular online series **MNPS Presents!** is seeking one or two member-volunteers to organize the series starting next fall. The electronic platform is managed by the MNPS Webmaster. The job of the series coordinator(s) is to line up monthly presenters, give them help in readying for their presentations, establish and manage the scheduled Zoom meetings, and publicize and moderate the programs. After each program, the coordinator uploads the program recordings to the MNPS YouTube channel. The season generally runs from October to March, but is flexible. If you think this might be a fun way for you to volunteer for MNPS, contact current coordinator Beth Madden for more information: bethmadden64@gmail.com.



Rachel Potter Awarded Lifetime Conservation Achievement Recognition

By Linda de Kort and Rosemary McKinnon,
Flathead Audubon Society

(Reprinted with permission from the November 2023 Pileated Post FAS newsletter)

Rachel Potter was presented with Flathead Audubon's Lifetime Conservation Achievement Recognition (CAR) at the October 9 FAS general meeting.

Rachel grew up in Berkeley, California, where her parents took the trouble to introduce her to the "great outdoors." She migrated to Montana with her partner, Jack, in the 1970s and began a career in Glacier National Park (GNP), working with Kate Kendall on grizzly food ecology. Rachel was hired to work on native plant restoration on Logan Pass in 1981. She returned to school at the University of Montana and gained a B.A. in botany (summa cum laude) in 1983. Her career was launched. She became a charter member of the Society for Ecological Restoration and was hired by GNP to lead their native plant restoration program: monitoring protocols and sourcing plant materials. She was instrumental in hiring people to start the nursery.

Rachel went on to become a charter member of the Montana Native Plant Society in 1987 and was secretary of the state board for six years. In 1988 she helped found the Flathead chapter and has stuck with this leadership role for 35 years, because she loves this community of both professional and lay people and enjoys her role in engagement and education.



Rachel Potter (left) with Flathead Audubon President, Darcy Thomas. Photo by Jake Bramante, Flathead Audubon.

In addition, Rachel has been active on the board of the North Fork Preservation Society. She worked with the Flathead Coalition to restrict Canadian coal mining north of the North Fork and was active in monitoring loons on Teepee Lake as well as negotiating a successful ban on motorized watercraft.

In her role as a botanist at large and historian of our local plant "community" Rachel co-edited a book with Peter Lesica, *Montana's Pioneer Botanists* (with Gertrude Norton, Morton Elrod and C. Leo Hitchcock) which was published in 2017 and is available at local and university libraries.

Rachel was certainly inspired by botanists that preceded her. But more importantly, she has influenced burgeoning botanists both professional and amateur. She is generous with both her time and her knowledge. Some of our finest local naturalists credit their initial enthusiasm and understanding

of our local landscape to Rachel's mentorship. She continues to volunteer with GNP. She offers presentations and field trips on native plants and wildflowers for FAS and Montana Native Plant Society (MNPS). She is not done yet and will always be scheming about how to get more of us fired up. If anyone can do it, it will be Rachel: dynamic, personable, approachable, motivational, determined and optimistic. Thank you, Rachel. You make us all want to try harder to conserve and celebrate our natural heritage.

Nominate an MNPS Hero

It's time again to send in nominations for MNPS' two periodic Awards: The Outstanding Service Award goes to a MNPS member for extraordinary contributions to the Society. The Special Achievement Award is given to an individual— member or not— whose work exemplifies the mission and goals of the MNPS, namely, 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."

Nominations are due by April 1st and must include (1) which Award your nomination is for, (2) a description of the nominee's contributions to the MNPS and/or the MNPS mission, and (3) what makes their work outstanding and worthy of recognition. Awards will be presented during the Annual Meeting, June 28-30, 2024 in the Blackfoot Valley. Send nominations to Dave Hanna at xylorhiza@gmail.com.



Rachel Potter (left) and Patrick Plantenberg (right) presenting Karen Porter from the Calypso Chapter with the 2023 Outstanding Service Award at the annual meeting at Bannack State Park in June.

MONTANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP





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An **additional donation** to MNPS helps support conservation action, educational programs, and botanical research. Donors will receive acknowledgement of their contribution in the spring issue of *Kelseyia**. You can select from the following giving categories:

	<input type="checkbox"/> Kelseyia — \$50	
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MNPS Chapters and the Areas They Serve

Members are welcome to affiliate with any chapter. Please select your chapter affiliation.

- Artemisia** (Yellowstone, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Rosebud, Treasure, Big Horn, Carbon, & Stillwater Counties)
- Calypso** (Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, Silver Bow & parts of Madison Counties)
- Clark Fork** (Mineral, Missoula, Powell, Granite, Ravalli & parts of Lake Counties)
- Flathead** (Flathead & parts of Lake and Lincoln Counties)
- Kelsey** (Lewis & Clark, Cascade, Pondera, Teton, Chouteau, Judith Basin, Meagher, Broadwater & parts of Jefferson Counties)
- Maka Flora** (Richland, Roosevelt, McCone, Sheridan, Daniels, Dawson, Prairie, Wibaux, Custer, Fallon, Powder River & Carter Counties)
- Valley of Flowers** (Gallatin, Park, Sweet Grass and parts of Madison Counties)
- Eastern-at-Large** (Glacier, Toole, Liberty, Hill, Blaine, Phillips, Valley, Garfield, Petroleum, Fergus, & Wheatland Counties)
- Western-at-Large** (Sanders & parts of Lincoln Counties)

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to: **Montana Native Plant Society**
 Please mail this form with your check to:

MNPS
PO Box 8783
Missoula, MT 59807-8783

Welcome to the
Montana Native Plant Society!

Membership in MNPS is on an annual basis, March 1st to February 28th. Memberships processed before November 1st will expire the following February 28th. Memberships processed after October 31st will expire February 28th of the year after.



MONTANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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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 Grants & Giving Fund, or the general operating fund.

Your yearly membership fee includes an electronic subscription to *Kelsey*, the quarterly newsletter of MNPS. We welcome your articles, field trip reports, book reviews, 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 scottguse@yahoo.com and jenhintzguse@gmail.com, or mailed to: Scott and Jennifer Guse, *Kelsey* Editors, 725 Twin Lakes Road, Whitefish, MT 59937.

Spring issue deadline is March 10

Please send web items to our webmasters:

Bob Person and Carol Goffe at mnpwebmaster@gmail.com

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.

If you would like extra copies of *Kelsey* for friends or family, contact the Newsletter co-editors at: scottguse@yahoo.com or jenhintzguse@gmail.com. No part of this publication may be reprinted without the consent of MNPS. Reprint requests should be directed to the newsletter co-editors.

Changes of address and inquiries about membership should be sent to **MNPS Membership, P.O. Box 8783, Missoula, MT 59807-8783.**

Please visit our website at www.mtnativeplants.org

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

2024 Montana Plant Conservation Conference

Restoration of Native Plant Communities Sponsored by the Montana Native Plant Society & the Montana Natural Heritage Program



Symphoricarpos
by Denise Montgomery



Symphoricarpos
by Denise Montgomery

April 11 and 12, 2024
Montana State University, Bozeman

Join us at the Montana State University - Bozeman, Strand Student Union Conference Rooms for the 2024 Plant Conservation Conference. The first day of the conference will be a symposium of scientists presenting their experiences in the task of restoring native plant communities. The presentations will vary from creating availability of native seed, designing a seed mix, using a soil amendment, and observations of the influence of soil mycorrhizae on restoration success. Restoration practices will be presented along with programs designed to retain shortgrass prairie and encourage ranches to use native plants for restoration. The second day of the conference will be a workshop to gather new information to update the Montana Natural Heritage Program species of concern (SOC) list. This session helps to update rare plant distribution and threats. All people working within botany professionally or passionately are invited to attend our workshop on the second day.

Schedule

Thursday, April 11

- 9:30 - 9:45: **Welcome and Introduction to the Symposium.** Dave Hanna, *MNPS president*,
Moderator: Gretchen Rupp, *MNPS past president and Valley of Flowers Chapter Representative*
- 9:45-10:10 **The Montana Native Seed Network: Developing a Production Hub at the DNRC Nursery to Serve the Surrounding Ecoregions.** Michael Butts, *Montana, DNRC Program Manager*
- 10:10 – 10:35 **Assessing Pollinator Friendliness of Plants and Designing Mixes to Restore Habitat for Bees.** Justin Runyon, *USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, Bozeman*
- 10:35 – 10:50 **Break**
- 10:50 – 11:30 **Bear Creek Fire Revegetation and Biochar.** Jessie Salix, *Forest Botanist, Beaverhead – Deerlodge National Forest*
- 11:30 – 11:55 **Considering Mycorrhizae and Ecological Restoration.** Dr. Cathy Zabinski, *Plant and Soil Ecologist, MSU – Bozeman*
- 11:55 – 12:20 **Restoring Purple Camas within Meadow Systems.** Jennifer McNew, *USDI, BLM District Botanist* and Myrna Demontier, *Salish Tribe Teacher and Traditionalist*
- 12:20 – 1:20 **Lunch:** Please consider staying for the catered lunch through MSU; lunch tickets will be available for online registration through April 1st; various food sensitivity options will be available
- 1:20 – 1:45 **Lost Creek/ Dutchman Wetland Complex: 4,500 acres of Fens, Wetlands, Springs, and Rare Plants Preserved.** Sue Wall, *Environmental Scientist, Herrera Environmental Consultants*
- 1:45 -2:10 **Restoring Cropland to Grasslands in North Central Montana and Impacts on Birds.** Kelsey Mallory, *Rangeland Ecologist with the Nature Conservancy out of Malta, Montana*
- 2:10 – 2:35 **BLM’s Habitat Restoration Program: Lessons Learned.** Wendy Velman, *Botany Program Lead, Bureau of Land Management Montana/Dakota’s Office*
- 2:35 –2:50 **Break**
- 2:50 – 3:15 **The Montana Audubon Conservation Ranching Program.** Christian Meny, *Director of Conservation MT Audubon*
- 3:15 – 3:40 **Community-led Conservation in the Northern Great Plains.** Aaron Clausen, *MT Manager for World Wildlife Fund’s Sustainable Ranching Initiative*

Following the Thursday presentations, we are planning a tour of the Indreland Audubon Wetland Preserve led by Aaron Clausen and Matt Lavin. This wetland site on the east side of Bozeman is a remnant of what was a large wetland complex. It was donated to the Sacajawea Audubon Society (SAS) in 2018. Since then, restoration measures have been implemented by SAS and beaver have arrived for further wetland engineering. This will be a fun conclusion to a day of inspiring talks. The trip will be weather dependent considering the nuances of spring in Montana.



2024 Montana Plant Conservation Conference

Restoration of Native Plant Communities



Friday, April 12

Since 2006, The Montana Native Plant Society and the Montana Natural Heritage Program have worked together to gather threats information for Montana's Species of Concern (SOC) at the MNPS Conservation Conference. We will do that again on the second day of the 2024 conference and we hope that all agency and non-agency botanists will join to help update our information.

This information will be available on the MNPS website ([Montana Species of Concern Threat Assignment, https://mtnativeplants.org/](https://mtnativeplants.org/)) and the MTNHP database (<https://fieldguide.mt.gov/>). At least two weeks prior to the conference, MTNHP will provide listings of SOC vascular plants with their MTNHP State Threat Score and MNPS Threat Rank sorted by land ownership and habitat. At the conference our MTNHP State Botanist, Andrea Pipp will provide a presentation on the threat reporting and ranking processes. Please take the time to look over the SOC list and provide updated information at the conference. Andrea will lead us through this information gathering session.

Please note this second day will start at 9:00 in a smaller conference room, Strand Student Union.

- 9:00 -10:30 **Workshop: Threats and Ranks of Montana's Plant Species of Conservation Concern**
- 10:30 – 10:45 **Break**
- 10:45 12:15 **Workshop continued: Threats and Ranks of Montana's Plant Species of Conservation Concern**
- 12:15-1:15 **Lunch**, Catered by MSU Conference Center, tickets available online prior to April 1.
- 1:15 to 3:00 **Workshop continued: Threats and Ranks of Montana's Plant Species of Conservation Concern**

Thank You All for Your Participation!

Online Registration

You may register on-line by visiting the Montana Native Plant Society website at:

<https://mtnativeplants.org/>

(Registration form will be available shortly after the new year)

Registration Fee:

\$25 per person; \$20 MNPS member: \$5 student

You can use our secure online registration form and then pay through PayPal with your credit card. Registration for meals on Thursday and Friday will also be available.

You can also register at the conference.

Directions to the Strand Student Union will be available on the website due to changing conditions with road construction on the MSU Campus. A parking garage for the public is directly across from the Student Union.

