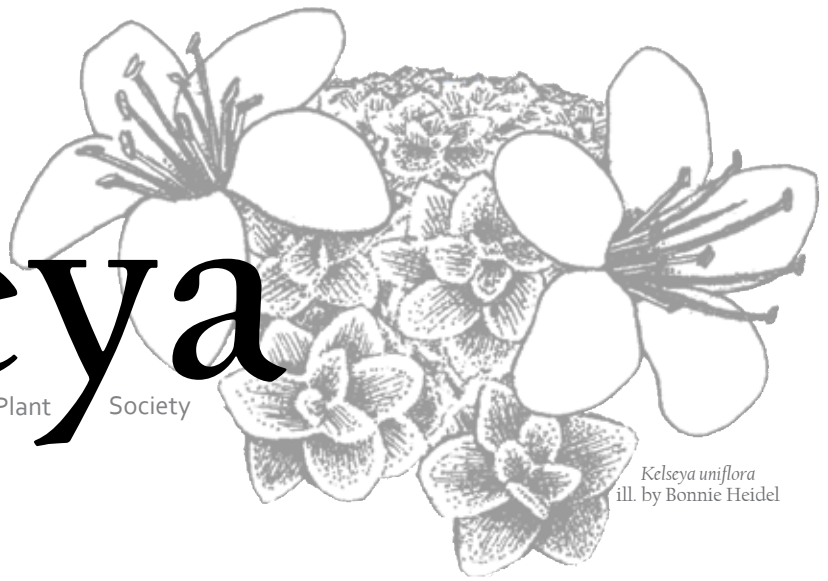


Kelseya

Newsletter of the Montana Native Plant Society



Kelseya uniflora
ill. by Bonnie Heidel

Wildflower Photography Techniques

By Steve Hegji

[The following is adapted with permission from a series of three articles by Steve Hegji, which first appeared in the March, May and July 2011 issues of *Sego Lily*, the newsletter of the Utah Native Plant Society. For color photos, see this issue online at www.mtnativplants.org. To read the original articles in their entirety, go to www.unps.org.—Ed.]

Dealing with Sun



The problem with bright sun is that for most of the day it creates conditions where every picture includes both very bright and very dark areas. The photo of *Astragalus pruessii*, (left) taken near midday, is an example of this problem. The bright areas have nice vivid colors, but they

contrast so sharply with the shadows that the picture is a bit hard on the eyes. These conditions tend to reduce the visible detail in both the brightest and darkest portions of the photograph. Notice also how the sunlit earth in the upper right hand corner of the picture creates a bright area that distracts from the subject. Here are three techniques to try, any of which will improve pictures taken in bright sunlight.

Technique #1: Eliminate the Sun

If the sun is the problem, let's remove it. It would have been better to take the *A. pruessii* picture in early morning or evening, when the plant was not receiving direct sunlight. Cloudy or overcast days are also great for

photography because the light is more diffuse, darkening bright areas and lightening dark ones. Waiting for the weather can be inconvenient, but if you happen to find yourself out there on a cloudy day, rejoice—your plant pictures will be better.

Technique #2: Create Your Own Cloud

If you don't want to be captive to the vagaries of weather, consider creating an artificial "cloudy day." This can be as simple as carrying a large square cut from a white bed sheet. A friendly assistant can hold it for you while you take the picture. A photographic accessory called a diffuser is a more expensive [but requires no assistant] version of that white bed sheet. Photo #2 (right), shows the same plant with the diffuser creating better light. Notice that although the colors are very slightly muted, you can see more detail in both the bright and dark areas, and the distracting brightness in the upper right corner is gone.



Technique #3: Get a Second Sun

Counterintuitively, another technique you can try is to add *more* light. Position yourself so that the sun is not at your back but to one side or the other, and use your camera's flash to illuminate the dark areas and even out the overall brightness. This technique is called "fill flash."

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Chapter Events

Calypso Chapter

Saturday, 2/18, 1-3 pm. Americorps Vista volunteer Leah Grunzke presents "Winter Gardening: Using Native Plants to Create Seasonal Interest and Wildlife Habitat in Your Landscape." Leah will start with an indoor presentation then take the group on a neighborhood walking tour, so dress for the weather. Meet at Block Hall, Room 311, University of Montana/Western. Info: Catherine Cain, 498-6198 or nativeplants@montana.com.

Sunday, 3/25, 10 am-1 pm. Nancy Tanner, owner of Paws and People, Inc. in Bozeman, presents a workshop on "The Scent Project: Aroma Therapy for Animals and Humans Using Essential Oil Scents Derived from Plants." Workshop date and other details may be subject to change. Please contact Catherine Cain, 498-6198 or nativeplants@montana.com, if you are interested in attending.

Saturday, 4/7, 10 am-2 pm. 5th annual Calypso workshop "Gardening with Natives." Presenters include Beth MacFawn (Bozeman), "Southwest Montana Landscaping Projects With Natives;" Tim Meikle (Hamilton), "Picking the Right Native Plants for your Landscape;" Ellie Curry (Dillon), "Hoop House Vegetable Gardening in Zone 3." There also will be vegetable and flower seeds, books, and native plants for sale. Meet at the Divide Grange Hall, Divide. Bring a sack lunch and water. Info and RSVP: Catherine Cain, 498-6198 or nativeplants@montana.com.

May, date and time TBA. Chad Larrabee, productions manager for Montgomery Distillery in Missoula, will present "Botanical Distillation: Extracting Essential Oils from Plants." His presentation will include at least one of our natives! Details will be announced by March. Info: Catherine Cain at 498-6198 or nativeplants@montana.com.

Clark Fork Chapter

Meetings are held the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm in Room Log, Gallagher Business Building, University of Montana, unless otherwise noted.

Tuesday, 1/31. Herbarium Night. They don't have flowers, but they're still pretty. Botanist Peter Lesica invites you to "Feel Those Ferns." Room 303, Botany Bldg. on the UM Campus.

Thursday, 2/9. Maria Mantas has been working for The Nature Conservancy to curtail subdivision in the Swan and Blackfoot valleys. She presents "The Montana Legacy Project: Conserving Biodiversity at the Landscape Level in Western Montana."

Tuesday, 2/28. Herbarium Night. You'll be in clover if you come to hear Heritage Program botanist Scott Mincemoyer present "The Genus *Trifolium* in Montana." Room 303, Botany Bldg., UM Campus.

Thursday, 3/8. Everyone has bought native plants from Kathy Settevendemie. Come hear her tell about "Seeds, Seedlings and Gardens: Growing Montana Native Plants in the Blackfoot."

Tuesday, 3/27. Herbarium Night. This will be a work night. Come for an hour or two and help clean up and improve organization of the Herbarium holdings. Room 303, Botany Bldg., UM Campus.

Thursday, 4/12. Can you remember the names of those wildflowers you haven't seen for nearly a year? Get an early-season refresher as Clark Fork Chapter photographers show slides of Western Montana's forest wildflowers.

Flathead Chapter

Monthly meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month at Glacier Discovery Square, 540 Nucleus Ave., Columbia Falls, unless otherwise noted. Programs begin at 7 pm; members are encouraged to come to the 5:30 business meetings beforehand to discuss and help plan MNPS activities. Feel free to bring a sack supper. Info: Rachel Potter at 892-2446 or Jen Hintz at 270-7028.

Wednesday, 1/18. No program. Work meeting to label and organize our slide file. Meet at Leslie Lowe's house, 259 Goat Trail, Happy Valley. Info: Leslie at 471-5760

Wednesday, 2/8 (note different date). Bryce Christiaens of Native Ideals Seed Farm presents "Farming with Wildflowers: Lessons Learned Growing Native Wildflowers For Seed Production."

Wednesday, 3/21. "Name That Plant" slide show. We'll show slides from the files we organized in January, especially those we didn't identify and label.

Wednesday, 4/18. Artist panel or topic to be announced.

Wednesday, 5/16. Laura Law presents "Native Plant Landscaping" (possible field trip to her garden).

Special note: Clair Strickler donated Dee's large collection of plant books to the Flathead Chapter. We will have them for an ongoing silent auction at our February, March and April meetings. Plan to come a little early to browse and bid.

Kelsey Chapter

For information about Kelsey Chapter programs and events call Kathy Lloyd at 449-6586.

Monday, 1/23, 7 pm. Kristi Dubois and Bert Lindler talk about their travels and "The Natural History of The Gambia in West Africa." Lewis and Clark Library, Helena; free to the public.



Wednesday, 2/8, 7 pm. Neil Snow, director of the Montana Natural Heritage Program, lived for many years in Australia and Hawaii. He presents "In the Wide Worlds of Wherever: The Discovery of New Plant Species in the Myrtle Family." Lewis and Clark Library, Helena; free to the public.

Thursday, 2/2, 6:30 pm. Montana Natural Heritage Program Botanist Scott Mincemoyer leads us through the confusing world of asters with "Hands-on Asters." Room 321, Simperman Hall, Carroll College.

Tuesday, 3/13, 7 pm. David Schmetterling presents "Gardening and Landscaping with Montana Native Plants." Info: Kathy at 449-6586. Lewis and Clark Library, Helena; free to the public.

Maka Flora Chapter

For information about upcoming Chapter events, call Beth Madden at 224-1012.

Valley of Flowers Chapter

Meetings are held at 7 pm in room 108, Plant Biosciences Building, MSU campus, unless otherwise noted. Parking is available in the lot to the north of the building. For more information, call Joanne Jennings at 586-9585.

Tuesday, 2/14. Matt Lavin, professor and curator of vascular plants at the MSU herbarium, presents "Montana Plant Collection Information Available Online." Information associated with Montana plant specimens housed in the herbaria of Montana State University and the University of Montana is now available through the web portal of the Consortium of Pacific Northwest Herbaria (www.pnwherbaria.org). This information includes more than 53,000 images of specimens for which taxonomic, morphological, geographical and ecological information is associated.

Tuesday, 3/13. Speaker and topic to be announced.

Tuesday, 4/10. Peter Husby, NRCS biologist, discusses pollinators.

Climate Change, IPAs Topics at 2012 Montana Plant Conference

Join us at the new Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks' Montana Wild center in Helena for the 2012 Montana Plant Conservation Conference, February 15 and 16.. The first day of the conference is devoted to climate change, one of the most pressing conservation issues of our time. Presentations in the morning session will cover some of the many ways that a changing climate has affected plant communities in the past and appears to be affecting plants in the present. Climate change is a hot topic with land management agencies and NGOs. In the afternoon we will hear some of the directions these on-the-ground managers propose to mitigate the effects of a changing climate on natural resources. Presentations will be followed by a discussion and question period when members of the audience will be able to engage presenters.

There will be two workshops on the second day. In the morning, botanists and resource managers will review the Montana Natural Heritage Program Species of Concern (SOC) list, providing new information on distribution and threats and suggestions for rank changes. That afternoon the Important Plant Areas (IPA) Committee and others who wish to attend will review nominations for new IPAs. Amateur and professional botanists alike can contribute to both workshops and help protect our state's natural heritage.

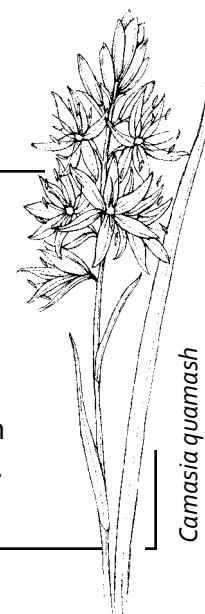
Complete the enclosed registration form to reserve your spot, or visit www.mtnativeplants.org for more information.

Save the Date!

MNPS 25th Annual Meeting

June 29-July 1, 2012

Join Clark Fork Chapter hosts at the Lubrecht Experimental Forest in Greenough, with field trips to the spectacular Blackfoot River Valley. Watch for details in the Spring 2012 issue of *Kelseya*.



Camasium quammash



News & Notes

How Does Your Garden Grow?

Show off your handiwork in MNPS' new competition

by Kathy Settevendemie

Do you have a native plant garden that you would love to have recognized? Do you know someone else who has a garden that features Montana native plants that people should know about? We've come up with an idea to help spread the word!

Consider entering MNPS' inaugural Native Garden Award competition. We thought a contest would be a great way to recognize outstanding efforts to use Montana native plants in gardens and landscapes. This is a wonderful opportunity for anyone in Montana (not just MNPS members) to share how he or she uses native plants to re-create native habitats in garden or landscaping projects.

In keeping with the mission of the MNPS 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, the MNPS Landscape Committee hopes the Native Garden Award will encourage the use of native plants in home and commercial settings, and that it will help publicize what is being accomplished by gardeners state-wide. We'll celebrate the winning gardens and their creators with a special plaque and award certificate during the MNPS Annual Meeting at Lubrecht Conference Center near Greenough, MT, June 29-July 1, 2012. Awardees also will be recognized in *Kelsey* and on the MNPS website.

Entry details and an application form are available in this issue (see insert) or by download from the MNPS website at www.mtnativeplants.org on the "Native Plant Landscaping" page. The application deadline is May 1, 2012. There is no entry fee. Awards will be given to three outstanding gardens/landscapes, with recognition for additional entries. Judging will be done by members of the Landscape Committee. For more information about the Native Garden Award, contact Kathy Settevendemie, Landscape Committee Chair, at 244-5800 or kathy@blackfootnativeplants.com.

Small Grant Proposal Deadline

The deadline for the Montana Native Plant Society 16th annual Small Grant Competition is fast approaching. We seek proposals for projects or studies that support our objectives to: 1) stimulate research, conservation, and educational activities that help foster an appreciation of Montana's native plants and plant communities; and 2) promote native plant conservation through better understanding of Montana's native flora and vegetation and the factors affecting their survival.

The grant competition is open to residents of Montana and all members of the MNPS. The deadline for proposals is Feb 14, 2012 (see insert). Project or study proposals must pertain to native plants of Montana. All proposals that meet the minimum criteria will be considered, however proposals are sought that generate data or public support for conservation of native plants in the wild. Information: Dr. Linda Lyon, l_lyon@umwestern.edu.

Welcome New Members

The Montana Native Plant Society welcomes the following new members:

Valley of Flowers Chapter:

Joanna Litchfield of Litchfield Landscape Design, Lorraine Lagerbloom, Janice Hand and Richard Sanders, Diane Gresham and Whitney Tilt

Kelsey Chapter:

Katherine Zacharkevics, Jim Williams and Melissa Brown

Clark Fork Chapter:

Vicki Correia and Brooke Stallings

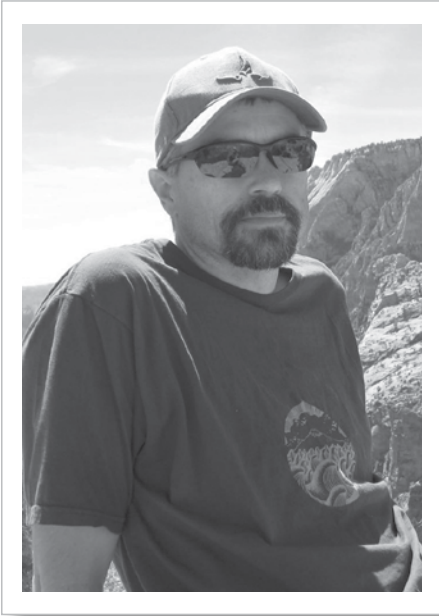
Eastern State-At-Large:

Carson Lindbeck

Please note this new email address for membership questions and concerns: mtnativeplantmembership@gmail.com.



President's Platform



Winter is again upon us. Often we don't appreciate our native plants as much as we should this time of year. We love the flowers and bright colors of spring and summer. But in winter, we have an opportunity to awaken to forms and subtleties we may have missed amid the distractions of the growing season. Patterns and textures, once overwhelmed by color, are now dominant. Leaves have fallen and the many different forms of branching are more apparent, as is the beauty of bark. Most plants have shed their seeds, leaving the remaining bracts and split fruits on full display.

Winter adds its own special effects as well. We see stems and branches outlined with ice crystals, seed heads crowned with frost. Golden grasslands emerge from a blanket of snow, which also decorates conifers and perches on top of cattails. We find seeds encased in clear ice along a river bank and elegant patterns etched into drifting snow by waving grass stems. While plants may be dormant, their appearance changes constantly through the season.

Along with a fresh perspective, winter offers us these beautiful gifts. We only have to be willing to open our eyes and receive.

~ Dave Hanna

Citizen Scientists Needed

As humans transform the earth at an ever-increasing rate, there just aren't enough professional botanists to keep track of all the threats development presents to species of concern. It's really the people who live in an area who know what the threats are. For example, part of a rare Columbia onion (*Allium columbianum*) population was destroyed in Sanders County when a gravel pit was developed. Who knew a gravel pit was going in? Local people probably knew, but professional botanists did not. That's why MNPS needs the help of citizen scientists.

Here's how to find the plant species of concern in your county. First, you must have Internet Explorer as your web browser. Enter www.mtnhp.org/Tracker/ in the address bar. Click on "Reports" on the left side of the screen. Then click on "Generalized Observations." Now click on "Filter by Plants," select "vascular plants," and select "all vascular." Then go father down and click on "Filter by Geography." Click on "county," and pick the counties you're interested in. Go farther down yet and click on "Display." Drag up the green bar (Charts and Data) at the bottom of the screen to get a list of the species of concern in your county. By clicking on the names of individual species you can get more information.

Once you have your list of plants, go to the conservation page of the MNPS website (www.mtnativeplants.org/Native_Plant_Conservation) and click on the word "Threats." This page gives you everything you will need. There is a list of species with their ranks, a spreadsheet database with information on the specific threats and a form with instructions that you can download and send in to make your contribution. Your information will help land managers prioritize conservation actions and help preserve our native flora.

Seeking Nominations for Officers, Award Winners

This year, MNPS is seeking nominees for the offices of Vice-President, Secretary and Eastern Representative At-Large. Send nominations to either Dave Hanna (xylorhiza@gmail.com) or Jenny Tollefson (jenny_tollefson@yahoo.com) no later than February 15th.

It's time again to offer up names for MNPS' Outstanding Service Award and the Special Achievement Award. The service award goes to an MNPS member for extraordinary contributions to MNPS and its mission. The special achievement award is given to an individual—member or not— whose work exemplifies the mission and goals of MNPS. Nominations are due by April 15th and should include a brief statement about the nominee's contributions to MNPS or to native plants and their conservation in general, and why the nominee should receive the award. Awards will be presented during the 2012 Annual Meeting at the Lubrecht Experimental Forest near Greenough, MT, June 29-July 1. To submit an award nomination, contact Peter Lesica (lesica.peter@gmail.com) or Madeline Mazurski (mmazurski@msn.com).



Distraction Subtraction

Photo composition is a big topic. For now, let's confine ourselves to a simple concept: choose the elements you want your viewer's eye to be drawn to and work to eliminate everything else. This takes some practice. As you bend down to photograph a flower, the only thing you "see" is how pretty it is. However, the camera will pick up the straw, twigs, grass, small rocks, shadows, bright spots, conflicting colors and other intrusions into your pretty picture. Once you've composed your picture in your mind, stop for a minute and consciously try to identify what other elements will be captured by the camera – then remove the distracting ones. A multitool is very handy for this purpose.

Here are some pictures of glacier lilies (*Erythronium grandiflorum*). **Photo #1** highlights a nice specimen at anthesis. The details of the gorgeous yellow flower are clearly visible. One of the basal leaves nicely frames the left side of the photograph. The base of the flower is surrounded by an arrangement of gambel oak leaves, and the dappled shade from the bare oak branches above, evokes an "out in the woods" feeling. But the shot is not all it could be. The out-of-focus flower on the right edge distracts the eye. We could crop the picture, but one of the pieces of straw at the bottom would then be at the edge, detracting from the main subject.

Photo #2 shows an arrangement I'd been trying to capture for several years – glacier lilies and snow. I love the droplets from melting snow on the leaves, but there is too much shadow. Any of the previous lighting techniques would have corrected that problem. The main areas of interest don't fill enough of the frame, which allows distracting elements to creep in. Finally, the too-bright and out-of-focus the oak branch in the foreground is very distracting.

When I came across the plant in **Photo #3**, I thought it was the most perfect specimen I'd ever seen. I chose to compose the picture so that the plants were backlit, producing an explosion of rich yellow color. I have only one problem with this photo, although you may have more since the "art of composition" is somewhat subjective. I'll leave you to think about it, and what could have been done differently. I will tell you that I solved the problem by doing a "water color" conversion on the photo and a print of it sits in my cubicle, cheerfully brightening my work day. If you email me at stevehegjj53@gmail.com I'll send the digital image to you.



Photo Tune-up Checklist

I've printed this checklist on a business card and keep it in my camera bag. When I find myself getting sloppy, I pull it out for a quick reminder of what I ought to do.

Step 1: Before taking a picture, try to define what elements of the scene attracted your attention. It may be a single element such as color, form or contrast with the background. More often it's a combination. As an example, take a look at my photograph of a Utah penstemon (*Penstemon utahensis*) below. The areas of interest to me here were the glands on the flower and the color of the margins of the calyx lobes. Did you find your eye drawn to those elements?

Step 2: Imagine the composition that will emphasize the elements you picked out in Step 1. For example, don't snap the first flower you come to, look for the best one you can find in terms of flower condition, lighting and background. Be aware of your focal plane and depth of field so that your image is sharp where you want it to be. In my photograph of the Utah penstemon, I positioned myself so that the background was well outside the area of focus and the long dimension of the corolla and calyx lay along the focal plane, making their images nice and sharp.

Step 3: Check the camera settings before you snap the picture. I've often taken a series of pictures and moved on, only later to realize that the camera settings were all wrong, either because I'd left them that way previously, or the act of pulling it out of my bag moved a dial.

Step 4: Make the camera as stable as possible. Tripods are good and I carry one, but you can make an impromptu triangle with your body or objects around you. Lie on the ground with your elbows forming two legs and the camera pressed tightly to your forehead as the third. Or hold the camera against a tree or a rock. Even resting it on top of your hiking pole is better than nothing.

Step 5: Adjust your camera to get the effect you want and take the picture. A little experimentation will teach you what works best. For those of you with highly adjustable cameras, you might want to get technical with your settings.

Step 6: Check the results, and retake the picture if necessary. This might be the most important step, so don't hesitate. After all, it costs you nothing extra except a little discipline.

Happy shooting!

*Utah Native Plant Society member
Steve Hegji is the author of
"Wasatch Wildflowers: A Field Guide"
(Deseret Book, 2010).*

For more information on these photography topics, check out these websites.

www.cambridgeincolour.com
Technical details for those with more advanced cameras

www.hanselmannphotography.com
Good information on composition

www.kenrockwell.com





Garden tools and wheelbarrows ready for action at Glacier High School. Photo by Bonnie Streeter.

It Takes A Village: Glacier High School Native Garden

By Bonnie Streeter, Glacier High School

[Glacier High School Science Teacher Bonnie Streeter and colleagues received an MNPS Small Grant in the spring of 2011. The following article documents the teamwork and persistence that was necessary to see their idea to fruition.—Ed.]

Looking west from windows at Glacier High School in Kalispell one can see a quilt of many colors: soft reds of prairie smoke, brilliant blues of harebell and penstemon, deep yellows of blanket flower and fuzzy tufts of pussy toes gone to seed. An otherwise unbroken view of neatly sodded grass is punctuated by three islands of native wildflowers. How these beds came to be is a story of a few hundred student volunteers and many dedicated individuals and organizations.

The creation of the native garden at Glacier High School came about through some good timing. I had wanted students to observe birds for a unit in freshman biology, but none were flocking to the newly sodded school grounds. To try to entice more birds for observation, we “planted” some dead lodgepole pine and aspen tree snags and hung bird feeders from them. When then-Audubon education director Nancy Zapotocki came to introduce freshman to the basics of bird identification, she saw the dead trees and thought improvements could be made. She approached me with the idea of applying for a Montana Audubon Wildlife Grant to produce bird habitat. The \$500 grant was awarded and we began preparations to create a native garden for Glacier High School. In addition to Ms. Zapotocki, Teresa Wenum and Amy Jacobs of the Flathead National Forest, Patti Mason with the Flathead Conservation District and Terry Divoky of the Flathead Chapter of the Montana Native Plant Society and owner/manager



of Windflower Native Plant Nursery all helped fellow-GHS teacher Pat Allick and myself plan and implement the project.

Hooper's Nursery reduced their prices for edging and stakes, and donated soil to help start the plants. Travis Gray, former owner of Flathead Forest Products, provided mulch, which he sold and hauled at a reduced price. Plants were chosen based upon their benefit for bird habitat and also their occurrence within the school's former Paloose Prairie habitat. The flora primarily came from the Windflower Nursery, however some plants were donated by Amy Jacobs, Terry Divoky, Patti Mason and the Center for Native Plants.

Work on the garden began in the fall of 2009. Mrs. Allick and I marked three garden "islands" with hoses and spray-painted their boundaries. At this point, the real work began and a high-energy crowd of more than 300 students was called in. They dug sod and hauled it to new locations, installed edging, and transported soil and red Grinnell, green Appekunny and tan Helena boulders into the beds.

Then came planting. Numerous GHS teachers, including Mr. Young and Mrs. Zimmerman, were willing to organize their students to help as well. Existing sprinkler systems were already lightly watering the sod but, for insurance, I donated a hose, nozzle and faucet key to ensure adequate water during excessively dry periods. Mrs. Allick donated a bird feeder and pole. With the planting completed, students anxiously awaited spring and the many colorful blossoms it would bring.

Students planted a total of 131 native plants, which joined three crab apple trees planted by grounds keepers once the "dead trees" were removed. The native plant list included: quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*), kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*), creeping Oregon grape (*Berberis repens*), red osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*), horizontal juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis*), thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*), blue elderberry (*Sambucus caerulea*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), pearly everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea*), rosy pussy toes (*Antennaria*

rosea), heart leaf arnica (*Arnica cordifolia*), showy aster (*Aster conspicuus*), plains coreopsis or tickseed (*Coreopsis tictoria*), purple prairie clover (*Dalea purpurea*), narrow-leaved purple coneflower (*Echinacea angustifolia*), fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*), wild strawberry (*Fragaria Virginiana*), blanket flower (*Gaillardia artistata*), sticky geranium (*Geranium viscosissimum*), prairie smoke (*Geum triflorum*), alumroot (*Heuchera cylindrical*), Alberta penstemon (*Penstemon albertinus*), hollow penstemon (*Penstemon confertus*), fuzzy tongue penstemon (*Penstemon eriantherus*), firecracker penstemon (*Penstemon eatonii*), prickly rose (*Rosa acicularis*), bluebunch wheatgrass (*Elymus spicatus*), Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*), and prairie junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*).

About a month after planting, an extremely hard frost occurred. The following spring it became evident that much of the garden had suffered frost damage. Shrubs, trees and some grasses survived, but many forbs did not. To fill in for some of the plants that were killed, I collected fireweed seed from home and a few enterprising freshman girls planted it under the aspen trees just prior to summer vacation 2010.

The light purple of fireweed and radiant orbs of yellow and deep brown from spilled sunflower seeds (carried by the wind from bird feeders), sprouted and provided staff and students with color in the fall of 2010. Frost survivors, including prairie smoke, serviceberry, elderberry, Oregon grape, blanket flower, aspen, wheatgrass, fescue and pussy toes, occupied various spots

between the sunflowers. However, while beautiful, the garden looked a bit sparse.

So Patti Mason, education director for the Flathead Conservation District, suggested that I apply for a Montana Native Plant Society grant to replace lost plants. We were extremely pleased and grateful to be awarded \$900 from MNPS in the spring of 2011. Our initial request was for new plants and soil amendments, but after seeing the extremely robust prairie smoke, the soil amendments seemed unnecessary.

My students and I impatiently awaited an end to the long 2010-11 winter to begin new planting.



Fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*).
Illustration from SDA-NRCS PLANTS Database.



Slowly, as the weather allowed, we weeded the remnants of tumble weed, dandelion and koshia that had blown in from nearby open fields. Then the spring rains began, and kept coming, continuing for days. It was difficult to get students into the garden without paving a mud path between it and the classroom. During one of the drier days, one student and I took an inventory of plants and, after speaking with Andrew Beltz from the Center for Native Plants and Terry Divoky of Windflower Nursery, we made a list of new plants to pick up. The next day one of my students happened to look out the window to see a volunteer weeding the native beds. Although the volunteer was removing pesky dandelion, koshia, mustard and thistle, he also removed some native plants, including the fireweed planted from seed, blanket flower, strawberry, Oregon grape and penstemon! We learned a valuable lesson about the importance of educating everyone involved with the native gardens.

We picked up and planted our new batch of plants, which included wild chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*), fringed sagewort-woman sage (*Artemisia frigid*), prairie sagewort-man sage (*Artemisia ludoviciana*), showy milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*), harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*), paintbrush (*Castilleja miniata*), Clarkia (*Clarkia pulchella*), wandering fleabane (*Erigeron peregrines*), scarlet gilla (*Ipomopsis aggregate*), wild or mountain hollyhock (*Illiamna rivularis*), dotted gayfeather (*Liatris punctata*), yellow/Alberta penstemon combo (*Penstemon confertus/albertinus*), little blue penstemon (*Penstemon procerus*), Hood's phlox (*Phlox hoodsii*), Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium pulcherrimum*), black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), blue flax (*Linum perenne lewisii*), shooting star (*Dodecathion congugins*), and orange false dandelion (*Agoseris aurantiaca*), in addition to more of some of the species planted in 2009.

For the next three, rain-free days, five classes of sophomore earth science students, most of whom had participated in the original planting as freshmen, weeded, reclaimed edging from the sod and planted new forbs, shrubs and trees. Weeds were hauled to the large dumpsters and more mulch was added. Theresa Wenum saved the day by sending two wonderful, seasonal forest-service women to finish up.

During this past summer, automatic sprinklers added light showers of water on a fixed schedule. Theresa Wenum walked to the school most days and graciously agreed to check on the plants and water more if necessary. I also frequently visited the school garden, and Mrs. Cronin, a GHS english teacher, and Mrs. Allick helped weed.

The three islands provide a variety of microhabitats, with sunny western edges being much drier and warmer than the eastern edges, which are shaded by elderberry and aspen. Fall 2011 was beautiful. Deep blue serviceberries and shiny black elderberries were ripe while the brilliant yellow gaillardia and violet Echinacea were still in bloom. Birds are beginning to use the sanctuary of quiet and protection that the native plants provide. The garden has been a restful and beautiful backdrop for student and staff photos, writing classes, and for studying birds and native plants.

Even after a few more plants are added with the remaining MNPS grant money, planning will continue. Visions for the future include the addition of plant labels, a sign announcing the Glacier High School Native Garden, a rock bird bath, a park bench and a small silver snag. And Mr. and Mrs. deKort have been assured of help from science staff and students at Glacier High School should they receive a U.S. Forest Service "More Kids in the Woods" grant to use for local elementary schools.



Nancy Zapotocki, Pat Allick and Bonnie Streeter hard at work on the native plant garden project.



MNPS Chapters & the Areas They Serve

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

All MNPS chapters welcome members from areas other than those indicated. 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 mailing label tells you the following:

CHAPTER AFFILIATION: CAL=Calyпсо; CF=Clark Fork; F=Flathead; K=Kelsey; MF= Maka Flora; VOF=Valley of Flowers

YEAR YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES: Memberships expire in February of the year listed on your mailing label.

Use this form to join MNPS only if you are a first-time member! To renew a membership, please wait for your yellow renewal card in the mail. **Moving? Please notify us promptly of address changes at mtnativeplantmembership@gmail.com.**

Membership in Montana Native Plant Society is on a calendar-year basis, March 1 through the end of February of the following year. New-member applications processed before the end of October each year will expire the following February; those processed after November 1 will expire in February of the year after. Membership renewal notices are mailed to each member in January. Please renew your membership before the summer issue of *Kelsey* so your name is not dropped from our mailing list. Your continued support is crucial to the conservation of native plants in Montana. THANK YOU!

MONTANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Name (please print) _____ E-mail _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Chapter Affiliation (optional) _____

Delivery preference _____ paper copy by mail _____ digital copy by email

You will receive membership acknowledgement by email, as well as a pdf of the most recent Kelsey. Future newsletter issues will arrive according to your preference indicated above.

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

or by mail at
 Montana Native Plant Society
 P.O. Box 8783
 Missoula, MT 59807-8783

Membership Level	Dues w/affiliation	Dues w/o affiliation
Individual	\$20	\$15
Family	\$25	\$20
Business/Organization	\$40	\$35
Living Lightly	\$15	\$15
Lifetime (one-time pymt)	\$300 per household	-----

Canadian subscribers please add \$4.00 to cover mailing costs. Additional donations may be specified for a particular project or the general fund.



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 typed, saved in Microsoft Word or rich text format (rtf), and sent electronically to: carokurtz@gmail.com or mailed to Kelsey Editor, 645 Beverly Avenue, Missoula, MT, 59801.

Changes of address, inquiries about membership, and general correspondence should be sent to MNPS Membership, 398 Jeffers Road, Ennis, MT 59729. 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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Montana Native Plant Society

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