

20th Anniversary Celebration: MNPS Annual Meeting at Georgetown Lake

by Scott Mincemoyer

from Kelsey, Spring 2007

Georgetown Lake, between Anaconda and Philipsburg, is the site of this year's up-coming annual meeting. We are celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Montana Native Plant Society, under a full moon in gorgeous country. Surrounded by montane forests, grasslands and the rugged peaks of two mountain ranges, the area provides almost unlimited opportunities for exploration and botanizing. The Kelsey Chapter is the host for this year's gathering at Camp Watanopa, a Camp Fire Camp situated adjacent to the lake. The fun starts on Friday afternoon, June 29th and lasts through the weekend. The event is open to everyone and we hope you plan to attend.

Friday night will feature the traditional potluck social, bonfire, and music. We encourage you to bring your own plates, mugs, and utensils. There are some plastic dishes available at the camp, but they may be in limited supply (depending on how many of you show up!). We are really trying to minimize throwaway garbage and be responsible stewards of our natural resources, so help us out by bringing what you need. Bring along any musical instruments, too, and make music under the full moon.

Though it may be a little early in the season to view many of the alpine wildflowers in the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness, the wildflowers below the alpine surely will not disappoint those in attendance. A variety of field trips on Saturday, led by one of Montana's expert botanists, will provide opportunities for all to enjoy and learn about the plant life and natural history of the area. Montane and subalpine meadows should be in bloom; so whether you choose to explore the expansive open country and wildflowers of Mount Haggin Wildlife Management

Area, Windy Ridge Research Natural Area, or any of the other hikes, the area's beauty and biological richness will be obvious. Many species of concern are located in the area (such as *Botrychium* species), and some of the hikes will take the opportunity to observe location and population data for sensitive species. If you can, bring along your GPS to record precise location information. A canoe trip is planned as one of the options on Saturday, with wetland and lake flora just begging to be explored. Bring your canoe and fishing gear and use the dock located right at the camp. Activities are also planned for the younger set, with walks and campground exploration possibilities. After returning to camp, be sure to test your skills with the annual plant ID contest. The evening will bring a catered dinner provided by Butte's Front Street Market, with meat and vegetarian options, as well as a boatload of desserts provided by the Kelsey Chapter. A kid's meal of hot dogs or something comparable will also be available for young eaters. After the members' meeting and the raffle we will have an opportunity to share digital photos from the day's hikes, and relax and socialize with friends.

On Sunday, a morning plant ID session along with a couple of short field trip options will complete the weekend. Also, while in the vicinity, be sure to check out some of the rich mining history of the area. Field trips to nearby Granite Ghost Town and to see the results of mining reclamation are in the works. For additional details about the annual meeting please see the enclosed registration form and don't forget to register early.