

# Kelseya

Newsletter of the Montana Native Plant Society

www.umt.edu/mnps/

## Montana Plant Species of Concern from *Acorus americanus* to *Zizia aurea*

by Scott Mincemoyer

**B**efore diving right into the core of the subject, we should probably first cover the basics: what is the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MTNHP)? The MTNHP is part of a hemispheric-wide Natural Heritage Network that covers all 50 States, most of Canada, and eight central and South American countries. The mission of the MTNHP is to be the source of reliable, objective information on Montana's native species and habitats, emphasizing species of conservation concern. The Montana program is in its 20<sup>th</sup> year of existence as part of the Montana State Library and the Natural Resource Information System in Helena, and was established by the State Legislature in 1985. The whole story is actually a little more complicated, but we'll leave it at that for now.

A significant part of what the MTNHP does is to maintain a list of plant Species of Concern (SOC), which are those species that are deemed to be at-risk of extinction or extirpation within the state or across its range. Species may be considered at-risk due to the intrinsic rarity of the species, or because of other threats and activities that cause declines in the species' abundance, or a combination of factors. The task of defining SOC is accomplished by collecting data on plant species in the state and determining "status ranks"

for each one. Status ranks are a simple numerical assignment on a scale of 1 to 5, with a "1" being at high risk of extirpation and a "5" ranked species being abundant with almost no risk of extinction or extirpation. The ranks are assigned at a state and global level. For example, *Balsamorhiza hookeri* (Hooker's balsamroot) currently has assigned ranks of G5/S1, meaning that it is abundant globally and not at-risk of extinction, but within Montana it is rare and potentially at risk of extirpation in the state. A contrasting example is provided by *Phlox kelseyi* var. *missoulensis* (Missoula phlox), which has assigned ranks of G2/S2, meaning

that it is rare or threatened globally and in Montana. The fact that the global and state ranks are identical for Missoula phlox also tells you that Montana contains most of the known range of the plant and in this case, actually the entire known distribution.

The state status rank for each species is assigned based on a number of factors, including the number of occurrences in the state, the size and condition of the occurrences, population trends, definable threats, and aspects of the species' biology that may make it vulnerable to extirpation. The past methodology of assigning ranks was based largely on the number of known occurrences, with a hearty dose of subjectivity entering

(Continued on page 6)



Hooker's balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza hookeri*) is ranked G5/S1 in the state.

### 2006 Montana Plant Conservation Conference

February 28-March 1  
Great Northern Hotel  
Helena, Montana

See page 3 for  
registration details.



# President's Platform

## Susan Winslow



Happy New Year! Out with the old and in with the new, especially when it comes to embracing the time-honored tradition of making New Year's resolutions. So, what are they this year? The old standbys of attaining better physical (and mental) health, improving personal finances, spending more quality time with loved ones, or on a more spiritual level, giving of oneself to social, volunteer, or religious groups? But wait, how about something a bit different, like more involvement in your local chapter of the MNPS? The resolution could start off simply as a goal to attend just one more meeting or field trip throughout the year, or squeeze in a little time to conduct maintenance in the nearby native plant display garden, or recruit a new member, or on a more grand scale, contribute a tax deductible donation to the MNPS (which just happens to hold a nonprofit status with the IRS). The Society is always happy to accept donations! Whatever the action, the outcome is an all around win-win situation.

This year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the MNPS and to coin an old phrase, "We've come a long way,

baby!" Several of the original organizers are still extremely active and provide a very helpful reference point for where we've been and where we should be going. In terms of membership, for example, the initial response back in the beginning was overwhelming and has grown from around 200 to more than 600. A bunch of that increase is due to the recruiting actions of the "long-timers" in the Society. I say, keep 'em coming and the more the merrier! Another action initiated several years ago by a few members of the botany persuasion is about to be repeated in the fourth Montana Plant Conservation Conference, sponsored in 2006 by the MNPS and the Montana Natural Heritage Program. Included in this issue of the newsletter is a brief description of the meeting and instructions on registration procedures (see page 3). I strongly encourage each and every member to attend and support the Society's endeavor to keep abreast and have up-to-date information on this important subject.

The fall Board of Directors meeting went very well and all members were either accounted for or present. Of

special concern was the frightening news that Vice President Dave Hanna would not be there to provide a scintillating update on the liability insurance issue due to an unexpected hospital stay while traveling in Oregon! All is well though, and he has indicated that he would even prefer discussing this topic at the next board meeting scheduled in Helena on March 2 following the Plant Conservation Conference, than be faced with the former alternative. Glad to hear he's on the mend. The MNPS's budget continues to provide minor funding for important issues, but the finances also continue to dip into the red zone. We are in dire need of new ideas and go-getting volunteers to develop and initiate viable fundraising activities, and for those so inclined, look at the article below for contact information.

Remember, all members of the Society are welcome to attend board meetings, so plan to stay an extra day after the Plant Conservation Conference to see what we're up to.

Have a wonderful, Montana native plant-filled 2006!

Susan Winslow

Susan can be reached at P.O. Box 502, Bridger, MT 59014 406-668-9112 e-mail: susan213@msn.com

## WELCOME new members!

The Montana Native Plant Society extends a warm welcome to the following new members:

Clark Fork Chapter: Margie Juris

Flathead Chapter: Rebecca Durham

Kelseya Chapter: John Beaver, Sam-sara Chapman, and Deborah Hayden.

Your participation and support are important to us! Please contact your chapter representative with any ideas or suggestions you may have. You will find them listed on the last page of this newsletter.

## MNPS Seeks Development Committee Chair

Each year the Montana Native Plant Society contributes funding to Montana-based native plant projects and non-profit organizations. We would like to continue to support this valuable work. That is why we need your help. For the last few years, MNPS expenses and contributions have increased and are more than our income. We are seeking creative individuals to serve on a Development Committee, and a person to chair that committee. The Development Committee will identify potential fund-raising opportunities for the MNPS. Examples may include working with a local artist to develop a commissioned art print; marketing and selling wildflower photographs taken by MNPS members; developing and selling a MNPS calendar; or writing competitive grants. Our society grows with your support. If you are interested in participating in the Development Committee, or if you have a fund-raising idea, please contact Linh Hoang at lhoang@fs.fed.us or 406-270-7533.

Monica Porkorny

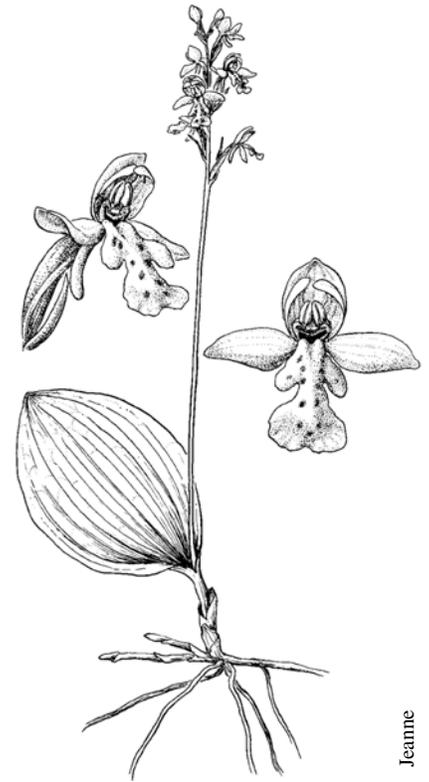
## 2006 Montana Plant Conservation Conference

This winter the Montana Native Plant Society and the Montana Natural Heritage Program are hosting a statewide conference on plant conservation, scheduled for February 28 and March 1 in Helena. The conference will focus on the status, conservation, and restoration of rare and endangered plants in Montana. The purpose of the conference is twofold: (1) to provide information on the conservation of plant species of concern to managers and the public, and (2) to gather information from professional and amateur field botanists that will aid in the conservation of these species. There will be symposia on plant conservation by government agencies, the status of Montana plants listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act, restoration of sensitive species' habitat, and

critical plant areas. There will be two afternoon workshops, one on quantifying and categorizing threats to rare plants and one on developing a critical plant areas program for Montana. In addition, there will be a special one-hour presentation on methods and utility of habitat modeling for plant conservation.

The two-day conference is open to the public and all members of the Montana Native Plant Society are encouraged to attend. Attendees are also encouraged to bring information on the status of, and threats to, any plants on the Montana Natural Heritage Program's Species of Concern list (<http://mtnhp.org>). The conference agenda, as well as information on registration and accommodations, can be found on the Montana Native Plant Society web site ([www.umt.edu/mnps](http://www.umt.edu/mnps)) or on the Montana Natural Heritage Program web site (<http://mtnhp.org>).

Peter Lesica



Jeanne

Round-leaved orchid (*Amerorchis rotundifolia*), a species of concern in the state.

### Rocky Mountain Research Station Pathology Group at Moscow Identifies New North American Alternate Hosts in the Life Cycle of the White Pine Blister Rust Fungus

While making field collections in August 2004, GERAL McDonald, Scientist Emeritus, and Biological Technician Bryce Richardson, discovered suspicious rust lesions on *Pedicularis racemosa* (sickle-top lousewort), a common perennial herb in montane and subalpine habitats in the Northwest. DNA sequencing by Bryce revealed an identical match to *Cronartium ribi-*

*cola*, causal agent of white pine blister rust. A more intensive survey by the pathology group discovered lesions on *Castilleja miniata*, (scarlet paintbrush) that also had a positive match to *C. ribicola* DNA. Greenhouse inoculation tests by Research Plant Pathologist Paul Zambino have shown that *C. ribicola* can complete its lifecycle and re-infect white pines from these new alternate hosts. Bryce says that this discovery could change how we conduct research and manage for white pine blister rust in North America.

USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station Director's Notes, February 9, 2005

Scarlet paintbrush (*Castilleja miniata*), a common montane species in Montana, is implicated as an alternate host for the white pine blister rust fungus.

Photo: Drake Barton



### Money Available for Wildlife Projects

Last Chance Audubon Society (LCAS) is now accepting proposals for wildlife habitat protection and enhancement projects.

LCAS established its Habitat Protection Fund in 1995 to "promote the protection or enhancement of habitat that has, or could have, significant value for non-game birds and other wildlife." Money for the fund comes from LCAS's annual fundraising programs, as well as from donations and special events.

Any individual or non-profit group may apply for grants from the fund. Other entities (government agencies and businesses) may participate on a cost-share basis with the applicants.

Proposals must be received by January 15, 2006, and awards will be announced in March 2006.

Please submit your proposal to LCAS, Habitat Protection Fund Committee, P.O. Box 924, Helena, MT 59624. Call Jean Smith at 442-6360 for more details about grant criteria and format.

# PUBLICATIONS

## Available from MNPS

The third edition of the *Source Guide for Native Plants of Montana* is still available. The cost is \$6.00. Send a check made out to MNPS to: MNPS Publications, 1270 Lower Sweet Grass Road, Big Timber, MT 59011. The cost will cover postage. The guide lists 55 sources for over 500 species of trees, shrubs, forbs and grasses. This edition has e-mail and website addresses for many sources and a handy common name index. The guide is a must for home landscapers, native plant gardeners and those involved in restoration projects. The *Source Guide* will include an insert with recent updates for each source. Contact information for several new sources is included but their plants are not listed. If you already purchased a Guide, you can find the update on the website or send a SASE to MNPS Publications (see address above).

Available free from MNPS Publications: MNPS membership brochures, *Plant Collection Guidelines for Teachers* brochures, and *Echinacea* Cultivation Information. Also available are additional copies of *Plants Collected in Montana During the Lewis & Clark Expedition*. Please send a SASE to the address above to receive any of these publications.

Available from the Flathead Chapter: a packet of information about gardening with Flathead Valley native plants. The packet can be mailed to you for \$3.50. Contact Tara Carolin at 334 North Many Lakes Drive, Kalispell, MT 59901.

Available from the Kelsey Chapter: a packet of information on landscaping with natives in the Helena area. The packet will be mailed to you for \$3.50. Contact Kathy at 449-6586 or e-mail: drakekath@direcway.com to order.

Available from the Valley of Flowers Chapter: a booklet of information on landscaping with natives in the Bozeman, Livingston, and Big Timber areas. The booklet will be mailed to you for \$6.50. Contact Denise Montgomery at 586-0156 or e-mail: nmontgomery@montanadsl.net to order.

Visit the MNPS website at [www.umt.edu/mnps](http://www.umt.edu/mnps) to download in pdf format *Weeds Listed as Noxious by Montana Counties*, a list of weeds that are targeted by each county; *Guidelines for Selecting Horticultural Plant Material for Montana*, voluntary guidelines by MNPS and the Montana Nursery and Landscape Association; and *Lewis & Clark Plants Collected Elsewhere That Occur in Montana*, an inclusive list of Lewis & Clark plants found in the state.

## Montana Wildflowers

by D. Linnell Blank

Published by Farcountry Press



At first glance, *Montana Wildflowers* is an impressive collection of wildflower photographs from around Montana. Then, as you begin to read, you realize that it is much more than a collection of pretty photos. This little book is packed with ecology lessons, landscape perspectives, botanical and taxonomic information, and almost poetic prose accompanying each page of photographs. We like how the author includes photos

of the different species in their various native settings; and how the intention of the book is to emphasize local and regional patterns in species' distributions as related to climate, substrate, and landform. The landscape photos are spectacular, and would have been even more spectacular if they could have been illustrated on a single page.

The author has organized the book around three vegetation zones: alpine and subalpine, forests and foothills, and plains and valleys. The narrative preceding each section is very informative about the general ecology of the different zones. The narratives also include a nice blend of general and species-specific information regarding adaptations. With respect to the last zone, plains and valleys, the author could have captured more true plains species with her lens.

There is a nice variety of species illustrated within each section. Each page has a large, colorful photo of a landscape with one or two color-coordinated photos of wildflowers found in that vegetation zone. The author also does a nice job of including photos of wildflowers that tend

to be more elusive or eclipsed by the more common and showier species.

The captions for each photo are brief but full of information, making them easy to page through. Each wildflower is described by both its common and scientific names, and where it was photographed. Also in each of the short narratives, the author does a nice job of covering various unique human experiences, myths, and facts, by turning them into interesting and informative short accounts. For example, on the page showing bitterroots, she describes how *Lewisia rediviva* got its name; on the page showing a pasqueflower, she explains how several Montana natives are considered noxious weeds in other countries. Many narratives also include where and what time of year to find the wildflowers.

The union of the author's photos and her enjoyable narration give us a glimpse into the author's life. It's like reading parts of her journal and every part is selected to illustrate the complexity and beauty of Montana's floral landscapes.

In conclusion—a nice gift and coffee table book. If the opportunity

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Natives in the Winter Garden

Plants may go dormant, but the evidence of their hard work during the growing season is what takes us through the long, greenless months. Those of us who love to grow plants finally have time to contemplate them; winter is when we can appreciate the subtleties that remain.

I often am distracted in my office by the gentle swaying of a basin wildrye that lives just outside the window. This giant has survived total annihilation by grasshopper plagues more than once, and still grows every season to mammoth proportions, to the point where I often need to thin it out to keep it from falling over. But no other Montana native grass can boast that kind of size.

The low light of winter illuminates many grasses. Bluebunch wheatgrass has strong stems and maintains its upright stance, the sparse chain-like seed stalks are distinct amid the rich, gold leaves. I love the bunchgrass communities on the hillsides near my house; their spacing is so random. Indian ricegrass grows in these dry places too, but it is the opposite, all lacy and fine. They both absolutely sparkle on frosty mornings.

The spring rains were like a life raft for so many plants. The abundance of growth this summer is testimony to their ability to revive from a long drought. Shattered seed from many of the grasses has sprouted and covered my gravelly hillsides with tiny hair-like seedlings. I'm hoping the late fall rains and early snow will protect them till spring.

Evergreens are looking stronger than they have in years. Douglas-fir, ponderosa, and limber pine provide a strong contrast to the grasses. Though not technically

evergreen, silver sage holds its soft, gray color and tawny seedheads through the winter, and shelters rabbits. I've planted several in my little compound. Rangeland shrubs, such as rabbitbrush and winterfat, do the same. They're like little snow fences out in the prairie, holding the drifts like shadows. And I can't forget the yucca, their olive green, spiky leaf blades poking out through the snow—talk about sharp contrast!

Persistent berries on many of our shrubs: ivory-white snowberries, the orange rosehips of the wood's rose, Rocky Mountain juniper laden with berries, are all pretty to us, but essential food for the tough winter birds. Often shrubs have their best show when the leaves fall. Branches of red twig dogwood and several species of willow tune-up the river bottoms.

But probably the one vision I appreciate in winter the most is the beautiful silhouette of the water birch. Again, the winter light shows off the fine, dainty branches and shiny, cinnamon bark. They grow in large, graceful groves along the creeks. I stubbornly planted a couple near the house, fully knowing they need lots of slow soaks with the garden hose. I also love the silvery-gray bark and persistent catkins of the nearby alder on the creek, but the birch steal the show.

I never cut anything back in my gardens until spring because many of the flowering forbs have such a strong presence in the winter. Dark brown globes of pale-purple coneflower and soft furry balls of blanketflower intermingle. The prairie forbs leave behind many interesting textures and colors. Goldenrod, yarrow, broom snake-weed, annual sunflowers, beebalm, clematis, and smooth aster all have so much to add. Time suspends and preserves them in a dried state for months.

Usually by March we're all weary of winter and ready for the revival of spring, but there's something special about this time of year. And the best respite for a gardener, no weeding!

Linda Iverson

*Linda is chair of the Landscaping/Revegetation Committee and a landscape designer from Big Timber*

### Native Plants for Winter Color

basin wildrye	<i>Elymus cinereus</i>
bluebunch wheatgrass	<i>Elymus spicatus</i>
Indian ricegrass	<i>Oryzopsis hymenoides</i>
Douglas-fir	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>
ponderosa pine	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>
limber pine	<i>Pinus flexilis</i>
silver sage	<i>Artemisia cana</i>
rabbitbrush	<i>Chrysothamnus</i> spp.
winterfat	<i>Ceratoides lanata</i>
yucca	<i>Yucca glauca</i>
snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>
wood's rose	<i>Rosa woodsii</i>
Rocky Mountain juniper	<i>Juniperus scopulorum</i>
red twig dogwood	<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>
water birch	<i>Betula occidentalis</i>
purple coneflower	<i>Echinacea angustifolia</i>
blanketflower	<i>Gaillardia aristata</i>
goldenrod	<i>Solidago</i> spp.
yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
broom snakeweed	<i>Gutierrezia sarothrae</i>
annual sunflowers	<i>Helianthus</i> spp.
beebalm	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>
clematis	<i>Clematis</i> spp.
smooth aster	<i>Aster laevis</i>

Plants listed are available in many nurseries in the state; see page 4 for more information on landscaping with natives.



Wood's rose (*Rosa woodsii*) provides color in the winter garden.

Drake

## A Floral Banquet 2006 MNPS Annual Meeting

The Clark Fork Chapter will host the 20<sup>th</sup> Montana Native Plant Society annual meeting July 14-16 at Wall Creek Wildlife Management Area along the Madison River at the eastern base of the Gravelly Range, south of Ennis. There is small set of buildings operated by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, including a barn and large machine shed. There is lots of room for tent and RV camping. There are no showers, but the Madison River is just a couple of miles away. There are BLM and Forest Service campgrounds nearby, and several motels and hotels in Ennis, 20 miles north. We had the annual meeting there in 1993, and everyone remembers it fondly in spite of the rainy weather. The Wall Creek site provides easy access to the Gravelly Range Road, a 30-mile gravel road that traverses the crest of the Gravelly Range near or above treeline. This road will provide the jumping off place for Saturday field trips that will include arduous climbs as well as easy strolls through fields of alpine wildflowers. We also hope to stage a mountain bike field trip. Simple breakfasts will be provided, and the Clark Fork Chapter will cater dinner on Saturday night. Before or after the meeting you may want to visit nearby Yellowstone National Park, Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, or historic Virginia City. The fishing in the area is reported to be pretty good. The spring *Kelseya* will include all the details, but mark the date on your calendar now for some good botanizing!

Peter Lesica

## MNPS Award Nominations Due

The Montana Native Plant Society presents two awards. The **Outstanding Service Award** is given no more than once a year to a member of MNPS for service to the Society. The award consists of a certificate accompanied by an individualized gift. The **Special Achievement Award** may be awarded to anyone, member or not, whose work has contributed to the mission and goals of MNPS. The award consists of a certificate and possibly a small gift. The awards will be presented at the annual meeting of the Society. Any member may make a nomination and now is the time. The awards committee must receive nominations no later than April 1. Send your nominations to Drake Barton at 314 Travis Creek Road, Clancy, MT 59634 (montana-moods@direcway.com) or call Al Joyes at 385-2579. All nominations should include a written statement about the nominee's contribution to MNPS and relate why the nominee should receive an award.

...*Book Review* (Continued from page 4)

exists for a second printing, we highly recommend that the next edition be hardbound.

*Montana Wildflowers* is "dedicated to all who are working to protect wildflower habitat." The author acknowledges Montana Native Plant Society members, along with others, for "help, patience, and sharing of expertise." It is published by Far-country Press and sells for \$9.95.

Catherine A. Schloeder,  
Betty Kuropat

## Memberships Are Due!

It's that time again! Your membership in MNPS will expire the end of February. Watch your mailbox in January for a renewal reminder and send your membership to the address in Missoula. Montana's native plants are counting on you for support in the coming year.

## Call for MNPS Board of Directors Nominations

The following positions are up for election: Vice President, Secretary, and Eastern Director At-Large. If you would like to nominate someone for any of these positions, please contact Linda Iverson at 932-5840. The deadline for nominations is February 15 and the ballot will be included in the spring *Kelseya*.

...*SOC* (Continued from page 1)

into the process—this happening because there was no repeatable process in place and the botanist assigning the rank would often assign a rank based on what they knew of the species and thought was appropriate. Currently, steps are being taken to make this process as quantifiable and repeatable as possible so it is not based on the subjective call of one botanist, or even a group of botanists. Unfortunately, status ranks often need to be determined with an incomplete picture of the species' distribution and abundance, so the process will never be strictly quantitative.

Finally, the Species of Concern list is composed of those plant taxa ranked "S1" or "S2" and recently, taxa ranked "G3" (globally vulnerable) have been included. The SOC list is used by agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to help them prioritize which species are of potential conservation concern on lands managed by each agency. Additionally, state and federal agencies as well as numerous consultants use the SOC list and associated data to help them plan and mitigate potential impacts to plant species during projects and activities.

To find out more about the MTNHP and plant SOC, come to the Plant Conservation Conference February 28-March 1 (see page 3). At the conference you will have the opportunity to contribute information on threats to SOC and other information that is vital to the ranking process. In the meantime, be sure to visit our website for more information (<http://mtnhp.org/>).

*Scott is the botanist for the MTNHP*

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# "Mt. Fops" Pussy-toes, or Why Study the Lives of Historic Botanists?

by Rhoda Love

Let me say at the outset that I know little of the taxonomy of the pussy-toes, which are placed in the genus *Antennaria* of the family Asteraceae. The group is considered taxonomically difficult because species apparently hybridize readily and produce asexual offspring. To me, *Antennarias* are charming, small-but-tough composites that are often found in dry and cold areas of our western intermountain regions. On the other hand, I do know a bit about some of the early collectors of pussy-toes, botanists such as Linnaeus, Macoun, Sandberg, Leiberger, Rydberg, A. Nelson, Bessey, Howell, Lemmon, St. John, and L.F. Henderson. The pussy-toes collections of these men have been named and renamed over the years; between times they remain filed away in herbaria around the country and the world.

In Canberra, Australia, the botanist Randall J. Bayer is monographing the genus *Antennaria* in preparation for his submission to *Flora of North America*. I do not know Randy except by e-mail, but in October 2004 he, Ken Chambers of OSU, and I exchanged a short flurry of messages about a pussy-toes collected in Idaho by Louis F. Henderson, a man about whose life I know a good deal. The plant was collected in the 1890s and about five years later was designated the type specimen of a new taxon, *Antennaria pulvinata* ssp. *albescens* by Elias Nelson (1876-1949) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Many years later, C.L. Hitchcock submerged it into *Antennaria umbrinella* in his *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest*. Now, in Australia, Randy was about to make his final species determination. I do not know what name he will ultimately give to the Henderson specimen, but that is not important for the little story I have to tell.

As Randy studied the specimen, the question came up: exactly where and

when did Henderson collect this little pussy-toes? The label seemed to read: "Plants of Idaho, Mt. Fops, Salmon R. Mts., Texas District, August 17, 1893." Just where was this strangely named Mt. Fops? Randy sent the question to Ken Chambers and the latter, knowing that I had delved deeply into the life and career of L.F. Henderson, forwarded

## "Exactly where and when did Henderson collect this little pussy-toes?"

the question to me. I realized at once that there were two problems here: first, I had never heard of a Mt. Fops in connection with Henderson; and second, the date could not possibly be correct. It was easy to deal with the latter; it is a well-known fact of Henderson's life that he and his family were at the Chicago World's Fair in August of 1893. The date had to be 1895 when Henderson was professor of botany at the University of Idaho and spent the summer exploring the Salmon River Mountains and other regions in central and eastern Idaho.

Having cleared up the date, we were left with the question of the mysteriously named "Mt. Fops." Could there be such a place in eastern Idaho? It did not seem likely. In my files are notes my husband and I took from Henderson's 1895 journals at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC. We had copied his entry for August 17. According to our notes, his location was: "Mt. Tops, Salmon River Mts., Texas District, 11,000 ft." It was clear that the word "Tops" had later been turned into "Fops!" The mystery was solved and I was able to tell Ken and Randy that Henderson collected the *Antennaria* on mountain tops in what are now called the Northern Lemhi Mountains, west of Idaho's Lemhi Valley. Texas District refers to an Idaho mining district that appeared on maps of the

late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The error on the label had probably been made by Elias Nelson when he named the pussy-toes in 1901.

So, why do we study the lives of historic botanists? Of course for the fun of reliving their fabulous adventures when the west was new and wild and hundreds of plants were waiting to be discovered. But also, perhaps, to make certain that taxonomic monographs are as accurate as possible. The spurious "Mt. Fops" had existed, at least on paper, for over a hundred years. Now perhaps it has been erased forever by a close reading of Henderson's own notes. And a collecting date has been corrected as well. It may seem a minor thing, but look at it this way: a mountain has vanished, perhaps not as spectacularly as Mt. Mazama when it exploded 6,900 years ago, but hopefully just as permanently. Goodbye, Mt. Fops.

reprinted with permission from the *Bulletin of the Native Plant Society of Oregon*, January 2005



*Antennaria umbrinella* (not photographed on Mt. Fops) Photo: Drake Barton

# CALENDAR

## ARTEMISIA CHAPTER

For a schedule of Artemisia Chapter events or to get your questions answered, please call Leslie at 445-9178.

## CALYPSO CHAPTER

Call Sheila Thompson at 846-1855 or Debbie Mueller at 782-6651 for times and details.

**Thursday, January 19, 5:00 p.m.**

Kriss Douglass will be accepting help to plant seeds, work in a greenhouse, and start spring a wee bit early. Several of us collected wildflower seeds this summer and have permission to use some space in the Montana Tech greenhouse. Please contact Kriss for more details at 782-9060.

**Thursday, February 9**

Norm DeNeal, renowned community gardener in Butte, will present a program on the gardens he has developed, with a special emphasis on *Clarkia*.

**Tuesday, March 7**

Andrea Stierle, Montana Tech research professor, will present a program on medicinal uses of Montana plants.

**Thursday, April 13**

Catherine Cain, Calypso member with extensive experience in leading natural history tours, will offer a program on native uses of native plants.

## CLARK FORK CHAPTER

**Thursday, January 12, 7:30 p.m.**

Last winter was great for desert wildflowers and Drake Barton and Peter Lesica went down to see. Join them when they try "Making Sense of All Those Desert Wildflowers." Rm L09 Gallagher Business Bldg, UM Campus.

**Tuesday, January 31, 7:30 p.m.**

Herbarium Night. "Montana's Ericaceae. What is the Heath Family Doing in Montana?" Join Peter Stickney to find out and familiarize yourself with the members of the family native to Montana. Rm. 303, Botany Bldg., UM Campus.

**Thursday, February 9, 7:30 p.m.**

Pelah Hoyt just came back from two years in the Peace Corps in Ecuador where she did field work for her Master's Thesis. Now she's going to tell us about "The Ecology and Conservation of Ecuadorian Cloud Forest and its Orchids." Rm. L09 Gallagher Business Bldg., UM Campus.

**Tuesday, February 21, 7:30 p.m.**

Herbarium Night. There was a time when Kathy Ahlenslager was the assistant curator of our herbarium. Now she's a regional moonwort mag-nate in northeast Washington. Come and find out what she knows about these "Mysterious Little Ferns." Rm. 303, Botany Bldg., UM Campus.

**Thursday, March 9, 7:30 p.m.**

Native plant restoration is important work in our national parks. Joyce Lapp has been engaged in "Cultivation and Creation of Native Landscapes in Glacier National Park" for over a decade. Join us to hear her story and how the Park Service raises native plants. Rm. L09 Gallagher Business Bldg., UM Campus.

**Tuesday, March 28, 7:30 p.m.**

Herbarium Night. Everyone is interested in paintbrushes, but "What is the Galea?" Come and find out about the genus *Castilleja* with Peter Lesica. Rm. 303, Botany Bldg., UM Campus.

## EASTERN MONTANA

For more information about Eastern Montana events call Connie Jacobs at 622-5266.

## FLATHEAD CHAPTER

Meetings are held in the Mountain View Mennonite Church. To reach the church, follow Highway 35 east from Kalispell past Woody's (Highway 206 jct.) Just past Woody's, turn left on the Lake Blaine Road and continue for one mile. Turn right on the Creston Hatchery Road and go another mile. The Mennonite Church is on the right at the junction of Creston Hatchery Road and Mennonite Church Road. From Bigfork on Highway 35, turn right by the Creston School, drive 1 1/2 miles to Mennonite Church Rd., turn right, church is on your left after 1 mile. At 5:30 p.m., everyone is welcome to the business and working meetings. Programs listed below begin at 7:00 p.m. Please call Rachel (892-2446) or Linh (270-7533) for more information.

**Wednesday, January 18, 5:30 p.m.**

A working meeting to plan a plant photo and art contest for local students this spring or summer. This should be a rewarding and fun project. Come get involved!

**Wednesday, February 15**

Marijka Wessner, Missoula County Weed Education Coordinator, will speak on the "Challenges of Weed Management and Education."

**Wednesday, March 15**

Dave Schwabb will give a presentation on "Signs of the Past—Culturally Scarred Trees of the Flathead."

**Wednesday, April 19**

Joe Elliott will introduce us to the "World of Bryophytes" (mosses for the less technically inclined).

**Wednesday, May 17**

Mel Waggy will lead a field trip up the Columbia Mountain trail to see a colorful display of wildflowers and views of the Flathead Valley. Tips on wildflower photography will also be provided.

## KELSEY CHAPTER

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

**Thursday, January 19, 7:00 p.m.**

Last winter was great for desert wildflowers and Drake Barton and Peter Lesica went down to see. Join them when they try "Making Sense of All Those Desert Wildflowers." Lewis and Clark Library, large meeting room.

**Friday, Saturday, February 3-4**

Wayne Phillips will conduct a workshop on "Winter Shrub ID." The Friday night program will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the lower level of the Helena Community Federal Credit Union, 915 Kessler, across the street from the Brewhouse Pub. Saturday will feature a field trip to test our new skills. Call Kathy at 449-6586 for more details.

## MAKA FLORA CHAPTER

For information about the Maka Flora Chapter or events call Rebecca Kallevig at 488-5455.

## VALLEY OF FLOWERS

During the winter, the Valley of Flowers Chapter meets on the second Tuesday of each month in Room 108 of the Agbioscience Building at MSU. The building is on South 11<sup>th</sup>, and parking is free in the evening in the lot to the north of the building. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. For more information contact Monica

(Continued on page 9)

Pokorny at 763-4109.

**Tuesday, January 10, 7:00 p.m.**

Jennifer Whipple, Yellowstone National Park Botanist, will present "Rare Plants of Yellowstone National Park." The presentation will include photographs and discussion of the rare plants in and surrounding Yellowstone National Park, including the Absaroka Mountains.

**Tuesday, February 14, 7:00 p.m.**

Dr. Sharon Eversman, Montana State University Ecology Department, will present "Spring Flowering: Clues to Climate Change." Research in Europe, western Canada, and the eastern U.S. has indicated earlier flowering times for spring flowers in the past few years. The National Phenology Network is set up to receive data for native flowering dates and for specially planted lilacs. Are Montana plants being affected by warming trends? Refreshments will be provided.

**Tuesday, March 14, 7:00 p.m.**

"Restoration of Native Grasslands on Disturbed Sites in Montana," presented by Stuart Jennings, Research Scientist, Reclamation Research Unit. Native plants are well suited to revegetation of disturbed sites such as transportation corridors and mine sites where topsoil is often limited. Montana examples will be presented where native plants have been used to stabilize degraded soils and reinitiate plant succession.

**Tuesday, April 11, 7:00 p.m.**

Beth MacFawn, a member of the Montana Native Plant Society and owner of Beth MacFawn Landscape Design will give a presentation "Designing with Natives." The presentation will cover defining native plants, the purpose of planting natives, and starting your own native landscape. Beth will share inspiring examples of landscape designs utilizing natives. As a landscape designer, she creates a sense of place in harmony with the existing environment while encouraging native plants, from trees to lawns.

## WESTERN MONTANA

For information about activities in Western Montana, call Erich Pfalzer at 406-827-4078.

## Common Snowberry, Decorative White Fruit

Common snowberry is a deciduous shrub that occurs in a variety of community or habitat types and plant associations. This native is found across the northern tier of North America, from Hudson Bay west to Alaska, south to California, and east to North Carolina.

Plant names often provide clues to the description of the plant. The scientific name of common snowberry is *Symphoricarpos albus* (L.) Blake. The generic name stems from the Greek terms *symphoreo*, to accumulate, and *karpos*, a fruit. *Albus* is a Latin term for 'white'. These terms refer to the white drupes that are borne in small, axillary or terminal spike-like clusters. Common snowberry shrubs vary in height from 3 to 4.5 feet but can reach 6 feet in more mesic riparian habitats. Common snowberry commonly forms dense thickets where environmental conditions permit.

Western woodland and forest plant communities with frequent wildfires have many plants that are adapted to fire. Common snowberry is typically the first and possibly the most important widespread shrub to recolonize burned areas in this part of Montana. Common snowberry has high resistance to fire due to its rhizomatous growth habit. Rhizomes are elongate horizontal stems that, in this species, typically occur 2 to 5 inches deep in mineral soil. After fire or other disturbance kills the top of the plant, new growth sprouts from these sub-surface rhizomes. This rhizomatous growth response is highly variable. In general, light to moderate severity fires increase the stem density, and common snowberry often survives even high severity fires. The living rhizome systems can be important in retaining nutrients released by fire. In the post-fire environments however, common snowberry can also detrimentally compete with new tree seedlings.

Common snowberry stems sprouting from rhizomes are among the first woody vegetation to recolonize a site. Common snowberry will produce fruit the first growing season following a fire, often exceeding pre-

fire crops. Lush post-fire regrowth provides much needed cover for small wildlife and helps protect the exposed soil surface from splash erosion.

Common snowberry is an important wildlife food in the western states and provinces. New vegetative growth provides nutrient rich forage for many species of browsing wildlife and domestic livestock. Like other shrubs, the foliage contains a higher percentage of crude protein during fall and winter than grasses or forbs. The fruits, especially important for birds such as ruffed grouse, sharp tailed grouse and pine grosbeaks, ripen in the fall and frequently remain available on the shrubs into the winter months.

Native Americans used common snowberry for many purposes. The fruits and leaves were mashed and applied to cuts or skin sores as a poultice and to soothe sore, runny eyes. Tea from the bark was used as a remedy for tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases. A brew made from the entire plant was used as a physic tonic. Arrow shafts and pipe stems were made from the stems. Today, common snowberry is used extensively as an ornamental because of its decorative white fruits and fragrant smell following a summer rain shower.

Cathie Jean and Jay Frederick



Debbie

Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*)

## Plants of Subalpine Parks with Peter Lesica—a field trip report

Despite competing with two other local group hikes on Saturday, July 23, we still managed to have six participants on our quest for unusual plants of subalpine park habitat. After a 30-mile drive up Beaver Creek to the Montana/Idaho border (the last 5 miles referred to as the “drive from hell”), we began our hike to Beaver Peak. The 4-mile trail took us through a mix of mature mountain hemlock/bilberry/beargrass (a community amazingly lacking in diversity) and younger lodgepole-whitebark pine-subalpine fir stands.

Our destination, Beaver Peak, lies at 6661' in elevation and has a large, open bald on its southeast side where heavy snow packs and thin, rocky soils discourage tree and shrub growth. Upon arrival at the bald we were greeted with the most beautiful display of yellow buckwheat I've seen in my 12 years in this area. Other plants growing on this harsh site included green fescue, lance-leaved stonecrop, upland larkspur, purple reedgrass, rockvine penstemon, lace lip fern, rock-break, and mountain sandwort. What we didn't find was *Ivesia tweedii*, or several other species that are known to oc-

cur on nearby balds in Idaho but have not yet been found in Montana.

Discouraged, we eyed the surrounding landscape and noticed some intriguing rock outcrops and benches several hundred feet below us in the Dragin Creek basin. This needed to be investigated. After finding a reasonable route and diving down the 80% slope of mountain hemlock, menziesia, and rock, Peter and I noticed no one was following. Apparently, this was where we separated the men from the boys. Even my bushwacking animal son opted to head back to the car, but then he did have a fresh copy of Harry Potter 6 waiting there in need of reading.

There was more moisture down in the rocks on this northeast aspect and with it we found a few more interesting species. Alpine lady fern was abundant in the talus along with occasional mountain sorrel. Large patches of rusty saxifrage, mostly without plantlets, grew on the rock outcrops. An unusual species of pussy-toes with very dark involucre bracts also caught Peter's eye. Mountain pussy-toes perhaps, but I haven't heard Peter's determination yet.

Beautiful place, beautiful day, beautiful plants! Thank you Peter for sharing your botanical knowledge with us on this wonderful hike.

Erich Pfalzer

## Calypso Chapter Celebrates

The annual Calypso Chapter Christmas potluck was held at the home of Rick & Kriss Douglass in Butte on December 8th. Thirteen humans, one dog, and one cat attended, an astounding turnout considering the nighttime temperatures that week. February, March, and April meeting dates were set, guest presenters were confirmed, and initial planning for summer field trips was begun. Catherine Cain gave the treasurer's report. Food was consumed, beverages were imbibed, hilarity was shared, and no one argued about genus and species' names—though other arguments about equally trivial matters were observed by this reporter.

Debbie Mueller

## Kelsey Chapter Celebrates

This year's annual Kelsey Chapter Holiday gathering was held at Jo Lace and Brian Shover's home. The food was great, the beverages were plentiful, and eighteen festive folks were present to enjoy both. A few members brought slides to share with the group, and while few Montana plants were represented, colorful flowers and landscapes are a cheerful reminder of the spring to come.

Drake Barton

## More On Prairie Coneflower

Susan Winslow's plant profile on prairie coneflower, *Ratibida columnifera*, (*Kelsey* Volume 19 No. 1) gave us lots of good information about this interesting wildflower, and prompted me to want to add some of my own experiences growing this plant. I've used it in both gardens and larger seedings, and have found it to be short lived but a prolific self-seeder. In large wildflower/native grass seedings it continues to thrive as long as there is plenty of space for new seedlings to take root. In a garden situation, it's best to use it in areas where you don't mind it moving around. I usually cull out seedlings in the spring and leave ones that are in good positions. If you use landscape fabric, you will most likely need to replace the plants every couple

years. Other long blooming wildflowers, such as blue flax (*Linum lewisii*) and blanketflower (*Gaillardia aristata*), act the same way in cultivation; they live fast and die young. But they're worth the extra effort. Coneflowers thrive on little water and brighten up the late summer landscape.

Linda Iverson, Landscape/  
Revegetation Committee Chair

Native American people of the plains used prairie coneflower variously as a tea-like beverage and medicinally to cure stomachache, headache, chest pains, wounds, rattlesnake bites, and poison ivy rash.

Wayne Phillips

*Central Rocky Mountain Wildflowers*



Prairie coneflower (*Ratibida columnifera*)

## MNPS Chapters & the Areas They Serve:

ARTEMISIA CHAPTER - Yellowstone and Carbon Counties; southeastern/south-central Montana  
 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: ART= Artemisia; CAL=Calypso; CF=Clark Fork; F=Flathead; K=Kelsey; MF= Maka Flora; VOF=Valley of Flowers  
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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 *Kelseya* 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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If you wish to be affiliated with a chapter (see above), list it here \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Dues	Price with chapter affiliation	Price no chapter affiliation
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## 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 *Kelseya*, 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 typed, saved in Microsoft Word or rich text format (rtf) for a PC, and sent electronically to: drakekath@direcway.com or mailed to *Kelseya* Editors, 314 Travis Creek Rd., Clancy, MT 59634.

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

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

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