

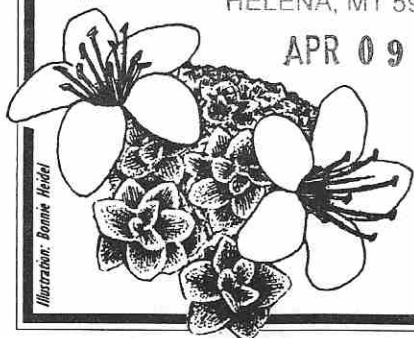
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APR 09 2007

Kelseya

Newsletter of the Montana Native Plant Society

www.umt.edu/mnps/



Stuck Between a Squirrel and a Hot Place

by Peter Lesica

Lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*) is an impressive plant. I say this in spite of the fact that lodgepole forests are among our least diverse plant communities and provide a less than emotionally moving backcountry experience. The trees are most often small and grow close together, resulting in "doghair" stands. These are surpassed in their impenetrable nature only by stands that have self-thinned leaving two-thirds of the poles stacked at all angles. As the Lewis and Clark diaries attest, these forests are generally not welcoming and majestic. What is impressive is the fact that lodgepole has one of the largest ranges of any tree in North America, dominating more than 50 million acres (50 times bigger than Glacier National Park), from the Yukon south to Mexico and from the Pacific Ocean to South Dakota and Colorado. Three common geographic races are recognized in this large geographic range: var. *contorta*, the shore pine, occurs in sandy soil along the coast; var. *murrayana*, Sierra lodgepole, is found in California's Si-

erra Nevada Range; and var. *latifolia*, the Rocky Mountain lodgepole, with the largest distribution, is centered in the Rocky Mountains. How does such a scrawny little tree with a spindly crown come to be so abundant?

Several traits contribute to lodgepole pine's dominance across western North America. Lodgepole pine grows well in infertile soils. It tends to be most abundant in coarse, sandy soils such as those found along the coast or those from sterile granite such as in the Sierra Nevada or tholith of the root Range. Other trees, such as Douglas-fir, gain a competitive advantage in more fertile soils. Lodgepole pine also grows fast. For that reason it has been planted extensively in Scandinavian countries, the British Isles, and New Zealand; over one million acres have been planted in Sweden alone. Probably the single most important reason lodgepole is so abundant is its ability to colonize after fire. It germinates explosively following fire, forming the dense, even-age stands we are so familiar with. Lodgepole accomplishes this feat thanks to a trait unique among western pines: serotiny.

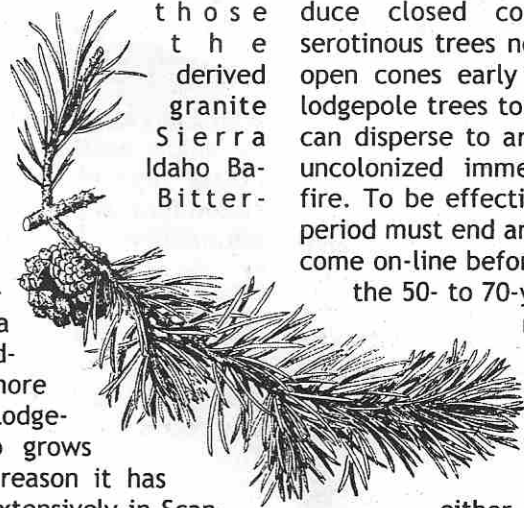
Serotiny refers to the production of

cones that remain sealed shut by resin until opened by extreme heat, usually by fire. Trees without serotinous cones must recruit seed from outside the burned area, but trees with serotinous cones have a source on site and ready to go. Lodgepole pine trees in the Rocky Mountains can be either serotinous or non-serotinous. Both kinds have open cones when young, but after 50-70 years serotinous trees begin to produce closed cones, while non-serotinous trees never do. Producing open cones early in life may allow lodgepole trees to produce seed that can disperse to areas that remained uncolonized immediately after the fire. To be effective, this open-cone period must end and serotinous cones come on-line before the next fire. So

the 50- to 70-year open-cone period usually corresponds to the average time between fires.

Although individual trees are either serotinous or not, nearly all stands of Rocky Mountain lodgepole are composed of a mixture of the two types (unexplainably, Sierra Nevada var. *murrayana* does not have serotiny). Why? Studies in Yellowstone National Park and Montana's Bitterroot Range suggest that lodgepole stands with a higher proportion of serotinous trees experience more frequent fires because of climate or topography, or those stands were initiated by a fire.

(Continued on page 7)



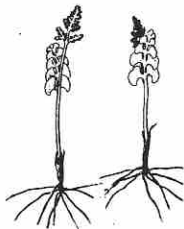
20th Anniversary Celebration

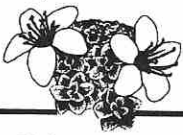
MNPS Annual Meeting

June 29-July 1 at Georgetown Lake

Use the enclosed registration form and send yours in today! See page 10 for additional details.

Don't miss it!





President's Platform

Susan Winslow

Old Man Winter is morphing into the Bonnie Maid of Spring here in the semi-arid part of the state. On a quick walk-about in the +60°F air of an extremely beautiful, calm evening, signs of plant life are peeking out. A *Lomatium* is pushing out of bare ground on a hillock above Blue Water Creek, silver buffalo berry is well developed and will flower before this missive hits a mailbox, and the box elder buds are swollen more than any other woody plant. Plus, with early arrival of daylight savings time, the extended period of twilight provides additional hours for viewing the birds and the bees!

The Board of Directors met on March 3rd. There were 12 in attendance, including people interested in two soon-to-be vacant positions, and this constitutes a 45% level of participation. Several absentees reported in ahead of time, and a few were traveling to a variety of global locales. Although their absences were felt, it was a very productive meeting and some of the highlights of the meeting include:

Budget. Madeline Mazurski, the treasurer, once again wowed us with her financial prowess. She keeps us on the straight and narrow, and works very hard in the process. It's good to know we are in her capable hands and the Society's coffers are carefully guarded. A special project was funded in cooperation with the Kelsey Chapter and the Townsend Tree Board. The proposed 2007 budget was reviewed and finalized in good order (see financial insert).

Membership. A report was supplied by Marijka Wessner, and to-date, 563 members have paid dues for the year. The friendly reminder notice goes out in late March, so if you've forgotten, please renew your membership. Multi-member families always bump up the total by quite a few, so we may be closer to 800 strong! Go MNPS.

Newsletter. Once again, the subject of providing an electronic option was discussed at great length. Concerns were expressed about the impacts because of the need to regularly update e-mail addresses and coordinate the maintenance of two mailing lists. This topic will be addressed at the annual meeting and input will be solicited from the general membership. Feel free to send thoughts to me anytime.

Website. The Board is holding its breath and turning blue, because we may have finally found someone to take over the reins from long-time Webmaster, Marilyn Marler: Kevin and Lisa Tucker of Helena. Kevin sat in during the meeting and we think he didn't get scared off. We're looking forward to implementing some of his ideas and will be very relieved when the transition is finalized sometime this summer.

2007 Annual Meeting: The summer meeting is hosted by the Kelsey Chapter and will be held at Georgetown Lake near Anaconda on June 29-July 1. The chapter is very organized, and is planning a great weekend. Plan ahead and come prepared to enjoy another fun-filled event. Please register early with the enclosed form and see page 10 for more information.

Standing Committees: The Small Grants Program received six proposals, and the project recommended by the committee was awarded the grant. Turn to page 7 to learn about this year's selection. The Interagency Threats Assessment Steering Committee held a second meeting in Helena and they are making progress with threat rankings for sensitive species. The Landscape Committee continues work on putting together a web-based source guide. Linda Iverson, Committee Chair, would like to step down and the Society is searching for her replacement. Contact Linda or myself for information.

Ad Hoc Committees: It is time to vote for president, treasurer, and western representative at-large. The voting process is available online, so be sure to cast your votes via the Society's web page, or the old fashioned way through the postal service (ballot enclosed). Your vote counts, and good luck to the candidates! Don't forget that the chapter sending in the greatest percentage of votes collects \$100!

Other Business: A decision was made to continue being linked from the Montana Conservation Voters website, and retain the MNPS contact person who receives and forwards pertinent weekly updates about the Montana Legislative Session. The Society is not a paying member of MCV and we, like many other groups and organizations, are simply linked from their website. A field trip booklet is mailed out by MNPS each spring that contains a list of chapter-sponsored field trips. Chapter presidents and other organizers need to submit before the deadline of April 10. See page 10. Reports were heard from chapter representatives of the Valley of Flowers, Artemisia, Calypso, Kelsey, and Clark Fork. These groups remain active, although all are feeling the strain of taking on too much with too little assistance from their members. Artemisia and the Valley of Flowers are both looking for chapter presidents.

In closing, thanks to the secretary, Pat Plantenberg, for his skill getting this all down on paper. I hope to see everyone at the annual meeting at Georgetown Lake. Good native plant hunting in 2007!

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

focus on

WESTSCAPE WHOLESAL NURSERY

native and adapted plants for the northern Rockies

by Linda Iverson

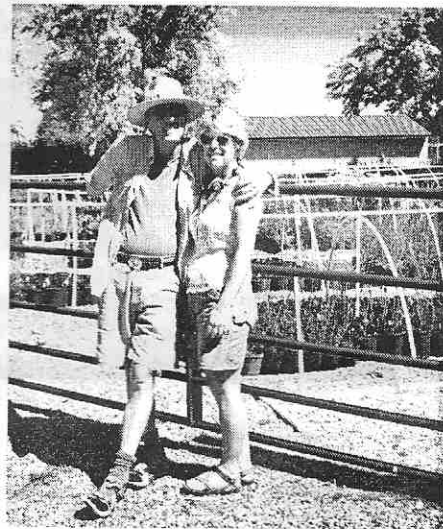
The following interview took place between MNPS Landscape Committee Chair Linda Iverson (in bold) and Westscape Nursery owners, husband and wife team Robert Dunn and Laura Smith.

It's been an interesting evolution to go from a greenhouse of cut flowers to one full of carefully propagated native plants. How do you go from raising calla lilies and alfalfa to sage and rabbitbrush?

True, we come from academic agricultural research backgrounds, working for many years in alfalfa genetics and plant breeding, forage and pasture grass development and management. After we "escaped" academic life we started the wholesale flower greenhouses (Blue Moon Wholesale Growers), which was an entirely new concept for us. We had to learn on-the-go and the curve was very steep. With the advent of energy de-regulation in Montana we knew that our ability to be both competitive and profitable was about to change. At that time we were the only year-round grower/wholesaler in the state. With de-regulation came a tripling of our energy prices and it was at this point that we realized we needed to diversify to survive. We began to slowly phase out of flowers and into the native plants nursery; using the infra-structure of the flower business to support the growth of the nursery.

We both had long standing personal interests in range plant ecology and reclamation and thought Westscape might be the place to put those interests into practice. Bringing in Chris Mahoney, of Mountain West Reclamation, as an associate was a natural fit in that he came from that type of background and had a lot of experience in reclamation practices.

We knew there was a huge, growing demand for native/adapted material in other parts of the West and the Rockies, and felt that Montana was beginning to increase in interest as well. Laura was particularly inspired by seeing native and naturalistic



Robert Dunn and Laura Smith

landscaping happening in other parts of the country, specifically the southwest and northern California where desert plants or woodlands were substituted for lawns.

Westscape has given us an opportunity to move from a business that required 365 days a year of input (the flowers of Blue Moon Wholesale Growers) to a more seasonal business that allows us some time off. Also, the energy demands of the flower business have been greatly reduced to a more manageable level by switching to natives that can leave the greenhouse after only a few weeks.

Westscape is a containerized nursery operation in Bozeman. The inventory is almost totally native, over 150 species. They also carry a small but thoughtful collection of

adapted ornamental grasses and waterwise perennials. This season, they are greatly expanding their selection of wetland plants, e.g. sedges, rushes, and other aquatics, to complement their riparian shrubs. I asked them about their propagation methods.

We use a variety of propagation techniques and protocols across all of our plant material, be they grasses, perennials, shrubs, forbs, or trees. The method of choice is generally predicated upon a number of factors including ease or difficulty of propagation, availability (both commercial and collectable), timing (i.e. if we have a short notice order for a 5-gallon plant that we do not have on hand, then starting from seed is not going to work), and ultimately, the bottom line frequently dictates the methodology, i.e. what is the most economical and practical way to produce a given species. Ideally, we would like to do everything from seed or vegetative cutting, and we certainly do as much as reasonably possible, but practically that is not universally possible.

As for specific techniques—virtually all of our grasses are seed propagated by us, on site. The exceptions would be a few species that are asexually propagated (plants are sterile and seed is not available) or when obtaining seed is difficult. In these cases, we purchase plugs or divisions, and then grow them on. Perennials are propagated both from seed and from plugs depending on factors mentioned above. The majority of our sages, and rabbitbrush, are seed propagated. We grow many of our shrubs from seed with the exception of *Amelanchier alnifolia* (serviceberry), which requires numerous stratification steps. We also

(Continued on page 4)

...Westscape (Continued from page 3)

carry some non-native cultivars that we purchase bare root. Exceptions are various willow and cottonwoods that we do from both vegetative cuttings and from seed. Some willows do not readily propagate from cuttings (a common misconception) and require seed propagation.

As for sources of material, native versus non-native, Montana versus anywhere else, these are widely debated topics, as you know, and there is likely no "correct" answer. This is a whole discussion in itself; does native mean Pre-Columbian, pre-Lewis and Clark, or for that matter, even pre-Native American? Many Native American cultures were nomadic and roamed far and wide, often carrying their seeds and plants with them. Trade routes among pre-Columbian Native Americans stretched from Central America to Ohio. Many goods, including seed and plant material, traveled these routes prior to the arrival of Europeans. The flow of genetic material is dynamic and always changing, be it by humans, animals, water, or wind, and knows no political or, at times, even geographical boundaries.

Our general take is this; we recognize the demand, desire, and in some cases, the importance of having a "true native" from a specific ecological niche. Our goal is to provide and produce plant material that is widely considered to be native to the region, or at least adapted to the conditions of southwest Montana and the general region, and expect it to perform and thrive accordingly. Certainly, where we can obtain material locally, we take every opportunity to do so and are always conscientious about where all of our material originates. Also, we are continuing to expand our own geographical customer base and are selling plant material regionally as opposed to just in the Bozeman area.

Do native plants have special needs when grown in containers?

We look at natives as we would virtually any other plant. Generally speaking, common sense rules; we try to ensure that everything gets adequate water, and fertilizer, and we manage for disease and insects when necessary. We do have some "unique systems" for over-

wintering that we believe ameliorate the effects of long winters, early falls, late springs, wind desiccation, etc. We have experimented with various mycorrhizae additions and formulations but at this time do not have any set protocol. We know that most "commercially available" products have little efficacy. It's an important and interesting area of research and we try to keep abreast of what's going on.

What's in your future? What direction will you take?

We want to continue in the direction we've been heading, that is to say, each year we want to expand the nursery both in terms of growth and diversity. We are not interested in becoming "an all things to all customers nursery" but instead want to focus on providing quality native and adapted material at affordable prices and keep the business casual and friendly. We hope to continue to expand our customer base of landscapers, designers, retail nurseries, architects, and reclamationists. We're very interested in the reclamation, habitat enhancement arena, and hope to expand our presence in meeting the needs of those customers, including custom and contract growing for these types of projects.

Another goal is to do more of our own collecting of seed and vegetative stock, and reduce our dependence on commercial brokers. We see this as a benefit to our clientele and us, but collection in Montana presents some challenges. Collection requires a number of factors be considered, including locating species that are relatively accessible, field identification, and just being in the right place at the right time. Many species are ephemeral and have short windows for collection time and seed viability (willows and sages are a great example). However, we figure at the least, field collection will get us out and away from the nursery more often, and provide an excuse to take a hike!

You can find the complete list of Westscape plants and more information about their operation by visiting: www.westscapenursery.net or call 406-522-3797. Although Westscape is a wholesale nursery and does not sell retail, they have open house days for native plant enthusiasts and are known to cater to MNPS members!

Source Guide Update

The Landscape Committee is in the process of updating a list of sources for Montana native plants and seeds. The list will soon be posted on our website. If you have a native plant nursery or seed company, and you think we might not know about you, please e-mail information to Linda Iverson at lidesign@mtintouch.net. We hope to have the list finished this summer. We no longer have *Source Guide for Native Plants of Montana* booklets. If you're desperate for source information, please contact Linda and she can copy the source pages from the old guide.

Linda Iverson

DONATIONS FOR SILENT AUCTION NEEDED!

Silent auction items for this year's MNPS annual meeting at Georgetown Lake are requested! Please consider donating books, art, and other appropriate fine items for this event. All proceeds from the auction fund the state MNPS organization.

If you can contribute to the auction, please let us know by contacting Susan Lenard (e-mail: esslenard@gmail.com) (home: 457-2577). You can bring your items to the annual meeting or send them in advance (by June 1st) to Delight Sullivan, 1400 Le Grande Cannon Blvd., Helena, MT, 59601.

"Hmmm... That's Interesting."

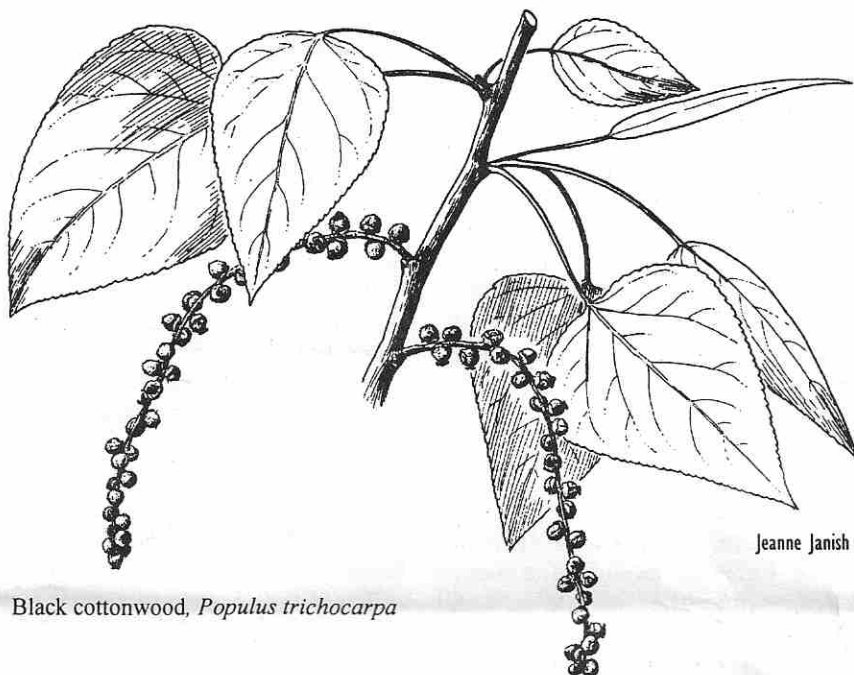
I walked up to the top of Mt. Helena after work yesterday on February 5. Seeing that the trails were icy/muddy, I ventured off into the bitterbrush and picked my way up some deer trails. About 1/3 of the way up, I looked down and saw two very real, very white flowers on a scraggly Hood's phlox. Don't know if I get a prize for the first flower of the year, but it certainly merits consideration as one of the most odd natural observations I've ever made.

Phil Johnson

Montana's Black Cottonwood is Deciphered

Black cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*), Meriwether Lewis's "cotton tree of the Columbia River" is the first tree, and only the third plant worldwide, to have its genome sequenced. The other plant species sequenced are rice and *Arabidopsis*, a

plant in the mustard family. Black cottonwood was chosen as the first tree in the world to be sequenced because of its relatively small genome and its importance in ecological systems and agriculture. The DNA code of this native Montana tree was



Black cottonwood, *Populus trichocarpa*

deciphered by researchers at 34 institutions around the world, who joined forces with tree geneticist Gerald A. Tuskan of Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee.

The researchers' preliminary results, published in *Science* (Vol. 313), suggest that black cottonwood has more than 45,000 genes, or about twice as many as the human genome. Some genes are found only in trees and other woody-stemmed plants, and may help scientists understand how trees push nutrients long distances within trunks, and how they adapt to changing conditions in one place for hundreds or even thousands of years. Industrial scientists are especially interested in cellulose and hemicellulose, components that can be fermented to create ethanol. Their research could lead to developing black cottonwood as a major ethanol crop tree. Tree geneticist David Neale, at UC Davis, is more interested in using the black cottonwood genome to improve tree health.

Condensed by H. Wayne Phillips from *Family Tree: An arboreal genome is sequenced* by Cristen Brownlee, *Science News*, Vol. 170, No. 12, p. 180.

New Native Grass Harvester

"The Seedster isn't a combine or a stripper, but a new-fangled plucker. This harvester isn't a better mousetrap; it's the first one," says Lee Arbuckle. Lee and his wife Maggie invented the Arbuckle Native Seedster, to be manufactured in Billings and on the market this year. Arbuckle's invention harvests with ease the native grasses that other harvesters traditionally had difficulty with.

"If you tried to harvest some native grass seed with a combine, it would plug in 30 seconds," Arbuckle said. More than 100 economically important native grasses are considered difficult to harvest with conventional equipment, making Arbuckle's invention a boon to the native grass seed industry.

Arbuckle's Native Seedster plucks the seed, rather than cutting the grass with the seed head attached, like a combine does. A simple spin-

ning brush and combing drum plucks the seed, leaving the rest of the plant intact, available for forage and ground cover. The Arbuckle's got the idea for the harvester when they got an especially good crop of native grass seed on their Alzada, Montana ranch about five years ago. The "Seedster" was developed by the Arbuckles with help from USDA grants, design engineer Wade Wolf, and grass scientist Brain Sindelar.

In a spin-off from his invention, Arbuckle is now classifying native grasses by their harvest characteristics, with a grant from the Montana Board of Research and Commercialization, with oversight from Brian Sindelar. To date 153 species of Montana native grass species have been so classified.

Condensed by H. Wayne Phillips from 11/26/2006 article in Great Falls Tribune by Tracy Ellig, MSU News Service.

WELCOME new members!

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

Artemisia Chapter: Jim & Jean Sells; **Calypso Chapter:** Carly Gibson, Kay, Jane & Connie Joslin; **Clark Fork Chapter:** W.P. Freeborn, Sarah Millar, Morgan Valliant; **Kelsey Chapter:** Kathleen Baird, Bob Cochran, Karen Newlon, Merle Rognrud, Lynda Saul; **Valley of Flowers:** Ralph Berman, Betsy Deleiris; **Eastern at-large:** Mike & Susan Shaw

Your participation and support are important to us! Please contact your chapter representative with any ideas or suggestions you may have. They are listed on the back page of this newsletter. Thanks for supporting Montana's native plants!

MNPS ELECTIONS- the tradition

The MNPS Nominations Committee is proud to announce that Vice President Dave Hanna has agreed to run for president of MNPS. Long-term Treasurer Madeline Mazurski has agreed to run again for her office and serve another two years. Of special interest is that Judy Hutchins of Heron has agreed to run for Western Representative-at-large.

Dave has been Vice President of MNPS since 2004, and is now answering the call to run for president of the Society. He lives near Choteau, and has been involved in the conservation of Montana's native plants for many years. He works for The Nature Conservancy as the Rocky Mountain Front Science and Stewardship Director.

Madeline, after much arm-twisting, has agreed to again run for treasurer. See the enclosed budget insert for a sample of Madeline's careful work. Madeline has degrees in landscape architecture and botany, her own design firm in Missoula, Montana Native Landscapes, and loves Montana's native flora. And, embarrassingly enough, she's forgotten how many terms she has been treasurer!

Judy was raised on a pig farm in

western Colorado. She was a high school student on the East Coast, and attended college at the University of Michigan for two years. She then transferred to the University of Montana and graduated in 1976 with a Bachelor of Science in wildlife biology, with a second major in botany. Judy has lived in Heron since 1973. She was employed by the USFS from 1977-1981 as timber cruiser and also conducted timber inventories and backlog. Judy is presently self-employed as a real estate investor and manager and looks after her own hay and timber farm. She has served on numerous boards for 30 years, in such varied capacities as: Conservation District Supervisor 1989-1993; founding Board member of the Clark Fork Coalition 1984-1994; and the first Vice Chair of Montana Forest Stewardship program. Judy has occupied several positions on the Cabinet Resource Group Board, and assorted watershed councils in the Lower Clark Fork, Clark Fork/Pend 'Oreille Conservancy Board, and Citizen Rep. on the Tri-State Water Quality Council. She has just accepted a board position with the Montana Land Reliance.

This is the fifth year the MNPS Board of Directors has offered \$100 to the chapter with the largest per-

centage of voters. In 2006, the Maka Flora Chapter in northeastern Montana cast the largest percentage of votes, and won the \$100 prize for the fourth year in a row! Come on Calypso Chapter—you were one vote away from winning last year!

Don't forget this will be the third year MNPS members can vote electronically. Please log on to the MNPS website at www.umd.edu/mnps/ and find the link to the 2007 election ballot. Please fill out the ballot, paste into an e-mail, and send it to the MNPS Electoral College in Townsend at pplantenberg@mt.gov.

If you prefer snail mail and the election analyses resulting from review of the hard copy ballots, fill out and mail the enclosed official ballot today and help your local chapter win in 2007. Results will be announced and the \$100 will be awarded at the MNPS Annual Meeting, June 29-July 1, 2007, at Georgetown Lake. Can the Maka Flora Chapter win for the fifth year in a row—especially in Calypso Chapter's territory and almost 500 miles from home?

The MNPS Electoral College would like to thank MNPS members for their election support over the last few years.

Pat Plantenberg

Daunted by Wolves? Try Native Plants!

It was with irony and amusement that I learned that one of Wayne Phillips' favorite subjects, other than botany, is wolves (*Kelsey*, Fall 2006).

Who can blame him for bypassing an article about wolves in the July-August 2006 issue of *Montana Outdoors*, to read about Lewis and Clark's botanical odyssey? After all, that was real scientific discovery and true inquiry based on the logical dichotomous keys of the day—which were woefully incomplete for western species. It also had an element of wonder that is usually lacking in wolf stories. And who among us really believes that wolf management is fully rooted in rational thinking, sound

logic, good science, and actual data?

True confession—even I read "Undaunted Botany" first! I joined MNPS many years ago and well before getting mixed up with wolves. I still nurture my interest in botany, though not as active a Kelsey Chapter member as I would like to be. But I have real plants in my yard, my house, and my office ... and I actually do still carry Dorn around the hills with me.

There is something calming about the methodical, logical decision process of identifying plants, compared to the messy controversy surrounding wolf recovery and management. There is something peaceful and gratifying about growing plants, feeding oneself, and recognizing all that they contribute to our lives. Blissful simplicity!

Plants don't talk back ... plants

don't send nasty letters ... plants don't call the Governor's office or the Congressional delegation. However, they do occasionally kill livestock, and probably with greater frequency than wolves, truth be told. Go figure!

Instead of being quoted as saying things like "Native plants are cool!" I get to say things like, "Wolves are not vermin. They're not predators to be shot on sight, and they're not spiritual beings. Wolves are wildlife species native to our state and sometimes they kill things people care about." Who's ready to talk about noxious weeds?

Come out of retirement and cover for me, Wayne. I'd like to go look for Dawson's angelica myself!

Carolyn Sime

Gray Wolf Program Coordinator for
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

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

Stands exposed to other types of disturbance, such as wind throw or insects, had higher proportions of open-cone trees. The existence of both types of trees in most stands suggests that most stands experience variability in disturbance types. But this expectation is at odds with the fact that fire is the dominant disturbance throughout most of the Rocky Mountains. Does some other factor bear on the proportion of serotinous trees in the Rockies? Researchers from New Mexico came to Montana to answer that question.

Red squirrels are the predominant cone predator and occur throughout the range of lodgepole pine. Craig Benkman knew that red squirrels feed on serotinous cones as well as open cones. When squirrel predation is high, serotinous cones never get a chance to shed their seeds, but some open cones disperse seeds before they are taken by squirrels. Serotinous trees can be at a disadvantage with squirrels around. Benkman wondered whether squirrel predation might be responsible for maintaining the presence of open-cone lodgepole



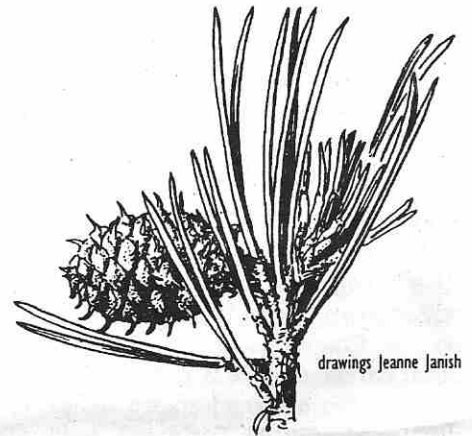
trees even when fire dominates the disturbance regime. If this were true Benkman reasoned, then lodgepole stands in areas where squirrels don't occur should have fewer open-cone trees than stands where they do. It turns out that there are a handful of isolated mountain ranges where there are lodgepole pines but red squirrels have not been present since before the last ice age. These include the South Hills of Idaho, the Cypress Hills of Alberta, and the Sweetgrass Hills, Little Rocky Mountains, and Bear's Paw Mountains in north-central Montana. Benkman found that these squirrel-free lodgepole pine stands all had more than 85% serotinous trees. On the other hand, Jim Lotan, from the Forestry Science Lab in Missoula, reported that 341 different stands with pine squirrels all had less than 85% serotiny, with the average around 34%. These researchers showed that it was not just the frequency of crown fires but also the occurrence of squirrel predation that determined the frequency of serotinous and open-cone trees in Rocky Mountain lodgepole

pine forests. You can think about all of this and maybe count serotinous trees next time you're bored to tears hiking through a lodgepole forest.

Further reading:

Muir, P. S. and J. E. Lotan. 1985. Disturbance history and serotiny of *Pinus contorta* in western Montana. *Ecology* 66: 1658-1668.

Benkman, C. W. and A. M. Siepielski. 2004. A keystone selective agent? Pine squirrels and the frequency of serotiny in lodgepole pine. *Ecology* 85: 2082-2087.



Lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*)

Small Grant Awarded

The MNPS is pleased to announce the recipient of this year's small grant award for research, conservation, and appreciation of Montana's native plants. Congratulations to this year's recipient. The \$750.00 award goes to Jennifer Asebrook, board member of Children's Montessori School in Whitefish, who successfully proposed a native plant garden on the school grounds. The proposed garden is part of an integrated native plant curriculum providing hands-on experience and training for students today and tomorrow, since native plant gardens are a long-term investment. An added bonus is that the gardens will improve the aesthetics of the school entry and offer the community and adjacent schools an opportunity to see how native plants can be used for landscaping. Congratulations Jennifer and we wish your project the best.

This year the Small Grant Commit-

tee reviewed six proposals and discovered all were worthy of funding. It's very rewarding to know that native plant conservation projects are taking place across Montana!

Here is a sample of the 2007 proposed projects:

Seeley Lake Historical Museum/ Visitor Center Native Plant Interpretive Display: to create an outdoor interpretive display that incorporates native plants, interpretive signs, and brochures that emphasize a variety of native plant communities local to the area.

Native Plant Gardens at Museum at Central School, Kalispell: to provide a live demonstration of the vascular plants utilized by early Native Americans of the Flathead Valley. These will include the plants that provided food, medicine, and the essentials for survival.

Red Lodge Parks Native Tree Maintenance: to evaluate, trim and, where necessary, replace and restore

native cottonwood trees on City of Red Lodge property.

Celebrating Wildflowers - Montana Discovery Foundation: to publish school childrens' wildflower art that was created during wildflower celebration. The art would be published as an insert in the Helena Independent Record.

Testing the Predictive Ability of Matrix-based Population Models: to test previously published models across a range of native plant species, by comparing model predictions with current populations. Conservation plans for threatened and endangered species frequently depend on the results of population models and this project would help to validate their utility.

Thanks to everyone who participated in this year's competition. We hope to hear from you again in future year grant programs.

Cathie Jean
Small Grant Committee Chair

CALENDAR

Please remember to leave pets at home during MNPS field trips.

ARTEMISIA CHAPTER

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

Thursday, April 12, 7:00 p.m.

Sandy King, President of SMK Plants, will give a tour of her micro-propagation (tissue culture) lab and explain the procedures she uses to produce plantlets. The program will be at 5477 Gene Sarazen Drive, Billings.

Thursday, May 10, 7:00 p.m.

Susan Newell and Dick Walton will give a slide presentation on their recent trip to Australia featuring the country's unusual and fascinating botany. Enter the Zoo-Montana admissions building (Billings) through the door in the alcove to the right before the admissions gate. The program is free and open to the public.

CALYPSO CHAPTER

June, first week

Rich Producers, a revegetation specialist, will show us Burton Park, a gigantic park on the Continental Divide with about equal coverage of forbs and grasses. Access requires a high clearance vehicle so we will meet at the Feely exit, south of Butte off I-15, and carpool. The date has not yet been set, but in May call Catherine Cain at 498-3746 or e-mail ecotour@montana.com for date and details.

CLARK FORK CHAPTER

Thursday, April 12, 7:30 p.m.

Can you remember the names of those wildflowers? You haven't seen them for nearly a year. Get an early-season refresher when Clark Fork Chapter photographers show slides of "Western Montana's Grassland Wildflowers." Rm. L14 Gallagher Business Bldg., UM Campus.

Saturday, April 14, 9:30 a.m.

"Stalking *Dicentra uniflora* II." Join Forest Service ecologist Mike Young and university plant specialist Kelly Chadwick in search of the peculiar steer's head in bloom. This will be a moderately strenuous 8-mile roundtrip hike on a good trail. Meet at the Rattlesnake Recreational Trailhead. Bring water and lunch. Sturdy boots and rain gear are recommended. Call Kelly at 258-5439 if you have questions.

Wednesday, April 18, 2-4 p.m.

"Montana Native Plant Garden Earth Day Tour." Montana Native Plant Society volunteers will introduce you to the Montana Native Plant Garden, established in 1967 by botanist and horticulturist Klaus

Lackschewitz and Sherman Preece, Chairman of the Botany Department. The purpose of the gardens is to educate students and the public about the wealth of garden-worthy plants growing wild in the surrounding mountains and valleys and to demonstrate their growth habits in a horticultural setting. This garden represents nine Montana habitats, from wet meadow to xeric steppe, with approximately 300 plant species. Volunteers from the Clark Fork Chapter now care for it.

Saturday, May 5, 10:00 a.m.

"Bison Range/Rosalie Ranch." Plant ecologist Peter Lesica will be our guide while we explore the lower, south-facing slopes along the Jocko River at the south end of the National Bison Range for spring wildflowers and migrant birds in the riparian area. From there, we will identify plants and gather a species list at Lavender Lori Parr Campbell's Rosalie Ranch, three miles south of St. Ignatius. Pack a lunch, bring water, and dress for inclement weather. Meet at the Orange Street entrance ramp. This is an all day trip.

Thursday, May 10, 6:30 p.m.

Our "Annual Spring Potluck" will be held at the home of Tarn Ream, 1250 Harrison in the Lower Rattlesnake, 1 block east of Van Buren. Bring your own utensils and a dish to share. Her back yard is Mount Jumbo, so we'll be sure to see some wildflowers after supper. Call Tarn (549-7933) if you need more information.

Saturday, May 19, 8:30-12:00 a.m.

"Annual Native Plant Society Plant Sale at the Missoula Farmers Market." We will be selling over 30 native species, including our state flower, the bitterroot. Come early for the best selection.

Tuesday, May 22, 6:30 p.m.

"Dyer's Woad Pull #1." Help control weeds and raise money for the Clark Fork Chapter. The chapter is paid \$10.00 an hour per person, up to a total of \$400.00. Fifteen years ago the dyer's woad infestation was 7,000 plants and now we rarely find more than 400; we are controlling the infestation without herbicides! The pull takes about two hours. Come enjoy the view and beautiful grasslands. Meet at the Mount Sentinel trailhead. Wear sturdy shoes and bring rain gear. Call Marilyn for more information at 243-6642.

Thursday, May 31, 6:30 p.m.

"North Hills Conservation Easement." Ecologist Mike Young will escort those interested to see native plants such as *Penstemon eriantherus* and *P. albertinus*,

Oxytropis, *Senecio*, *Lomatium*, *Douglasia*, *Lupinus*, and more. Some plants will be in seed, others in flower. The initial quarter-mile is quite steep, so wear sturdy boots. We will make a loop and the total hike will be a little more than a mile. Meet at 529 Evan Kelly Road, east off of Duncan Drive.

Tuesday, June 5, 6:30 p.m.

"Dyer's Woad Pull #2." Meet at the Mount Sentinel Trailhead. See Dyer's Woad Pull #1. For more information call Marilyn at 243-6642.

Saturday, June 9, 10:00 a.m.

"Biennial Native Plant Garden Tour." Visit some of Missoula's finest native plant gardens and meet the gardeners who created them! Meet at the Montana Native Plant Garden on the University of Montana campus to pick up your map with directions and a description of each garden in the tour. The Native Plant Garden is just west of the University Center, surrounding the Natural Sciences building. For details call Kelly at 258-5439.

Thursday, June 12, 6:30 p.m.

"John Toole Park Weed Pull." Help John Pierce and the other volunteers continue to restore the native grasslands of old Missoula Valley. Bring a tool for weeding and meet just north of the Waterwise Garden and east of the Missoulian, near Kim Williams Trail in John Toole Park. Call John at 542-2640 for more information.

Thursday, June 14, 7:00 p.m.

"Mt. Jumbo Wildflower Walk." Weed Management Area Coordinator and botanist Morgan Valliant will be our guide while we explore the saddle of Mt. Jumbo, home to a wide array of native plant communities. June is a great time to view the many wildflowers that are in bloom on Missoula's open space. Come learn about native plants and the invasive species that threaten them. Be prepared for a light hike and hundreds of wildflowers. We will meet at the parking lot 1/4 mile beyond the black top at the Lincoln Hills Trailhead. Call the Montana Natural History Center at 327-0405 for details.

Tuesday, June 19, 6:30 p.m.

"Dyer's Woad Pull #3." Meet at the Mount Sentinel Trailhead. For more information call Marilyn at 243-6642.

Friday - Sunday, July 6-8

"Big Snowy Mountains/Matador Ranch and American Prairie Restoration Project." Watch for the field trip booklet for all the details, or contact Kelly at 258-5439 or Wayne at 453-0648 for info.

EASTERN MONTANA

For information about Eastern Montana events call Wayne Phillips at 453-0648.

Friday – Sunday, July 6-8

"Big Snowy Mountains/Matador Ranch and American Prairie Restoration Project." See the event under Clark Fork.

FLATHEAD CHAPTER

The Flathead Chapter meetings and programs are on the first Wednesday of each month. All meetings begin at 5:30 p.m. and all programs begin at 7:00 p.m. We meet at the Flathead County Library in Kalispell in the Meeting Room downstairs. Everyone is welcome to the business and working meetings. We will again be organizing a plant photo and art contest for the community that will be held during the summer. Call Jen Asebrook at 863-9630 for information.

Wednesday, April 4

"Plant Family Identification Workshop." Join us for an interactive workshop to learn the differences between several common plant families. Lots of handouts, slides, and looking at plant specimens.

Wednesday, May 2

"Wildflower Painting Workshop." Jane Emmert, a local painter and teacher, will guide a wildflower painting workshop with hands-on tips on how to draw and paint wildflowers. Space is limited to 15 people so please sign up by calling Linh Hoang at 270-7533 or 758-5331. A \$5-10 donation would be appreciated to cover the art supplies for this workshop.

In May and June

"Bigfork Wild Mile Corridor Wildflower Walks." Join Anne Morley for a gentle stroll of spring wildflower identification. This is an easy 2-mile hike along the Old Swan River Road. Contact Anne at 886-2242 for details, dates, and times.

Monday–Friday, May 7-11

"Flathead Forestry Expo." We need your help to educate 5th grade students about native plants during the week. MNPS volunteers work an educational station with 20-minute presentations as classes cycle through. Contact Linh Hoang (270-7533 or 758-5331) if you would like to help.

Thursday, May 17, 5:30 p.m.

"Columbia Mountain Field Trip." Join ecologist Tara Carolin on a 2-hour evening hike up Columbia Mountain. Enjoy spring and early summer blooms along the forested trail that also offers lovely rock outcrops in the sunshine. Although the trail can be a little steep in places, the pace will be slow with no intention of

nearing the top. Meet at 5:30 p.m. at the Columbia Mountain parking lot and trailhead. Call Tara at 888-7919 or 755-9412 for more information.

Saturday, May 26, 9:00 a.m.

"Johnson Mountain Terraces Field Trip."

This is a rugged 4-5 mile cross-country hike along a series of moist, mossy rock terraces with a variety of diminutive plants. Meet at the Tally Lake Ranger Station in Whitefish at 9:00 a.m. Bring lunch and water. Call Mary or Gary Sloan at 862-3360 for details and to sign up.

Saturday in early June

"Old-Growth Stroll at Sprunger-Whitney Nature Trail." Anne Morley will lead a leisurely 2-mile walk through riparian areas near the Swan River and a majestic low-elevation old-growth forest. Call Anne at 886-2242 for details, including date, time, and meeting place.

Wednesday, June 6, 7:00 p.m.

"Native Plant Garden Tour." Join Bill McClaren for a tour of the Flathead Valley Community College Native Plant Garden. Meet in back of Blake Hall at the college at 7:00 p.m. Contact Bill at 257-2540 or email mccl@bresnan.net for details. No RSVP necessary. The tour will be less than a block long and is wheelchair accessible.

Every Tuesday, mid-June to the end of August

"Volunteer opportunity at the Glacier National Park Nursery." 9:00 - 4:30 p.m. (come and leave as you choose). Help with seeding, transplanting, weeding, and cleaning. Those who are interested may also help with data management, or work on a particular research or experimental project. Bring a sack lunch, your favorite work gloves, and clothes that can tolerate dirt. Meet at the Native Plant Nursery at Glacier National Park. Contact Joyce Lapp at 888-7817 for details. RSVP.

KELSEY CHAPTER

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

Tuesday, April 24, 7:00 p.m.

"Montana's Water Problem: climate Change Under the Big Sky." This documentary by Montanans for a Healthy Climate will be viewed and Diego Rivas will answer our questions. Lewis and Clark Library large meeting room; free.

Monday & Tuesday, May 21-22

"Celebrate Wildflowers on Mount Helena." There will be a flora preview on Monday night on Mt. Helena, and the annual event for students is on Tuesday.

Call Kathy Martin at 443-1712 for information and to sign up to help.

MAKA FLORA CHAPTER

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

VALLEY OF FLOWERS

For more information contact Monica Pokorny at 763-4109.

Tuesday, April 10, 7:00 p.m.

Patrick Plantenberg will present "Edible Wild Plants Used in Montana Yesterday and Today." Patrick stresses the use of plants that are easy to collect and use. Most people don't realize how many plants are out there that they can use starting as early as April. He also stresses the use of introduced plants. Room 108 of the AgBioScience Building at MSU.

Saturday, April 21, 9:00 a.m.

"Bozeman Clean-up Day." We participate in Bozeman Clean-up Day by pulling weeds on the Kagy Road hill. Come help us pull weeds and spread grass and wildflower seed. We will meet at 9 a.m. on the Kagy hill between Sourdough and Highland. Bring gloves, bags, and any gardening tools you desire. For details, contact Sharon Eversman at 586-6788.

Saturdays, May 12 through summer

"Wildflower Walks at Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park." Tom Forwood, Naturalist at Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park, will hold wildflower walks at the park on Saturdays starting May 12. The walk will focus on a different trail weekly. Call Tom for details on walk themes, times, and meeting locations: TJFishing@bresnan.net or 406-287-3541.

Saturday, June 23, 10:00 a.m.

"Botany in the Heart of Bozeman." We will meet at entrance of trail between Kagy and Cherry Drive (New Hyalite Subdivision); the entrance is on Kagy, about a block east of the corner of Highland and Kagy, and it's marked with wooden posts. Bring a flower book and hand lens if you have one. For details, contact Sharon Eversman at 586-6788.

WESTERN MONTANA

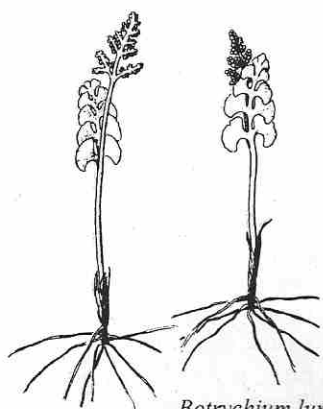
For details about activities in western Montana, call Erich Pfalzer, 406-827-4078.

Oregon Native Plant Society

The annual meeting of the ONPS will be May 4-6 in Mosier, Oregon. Contact Hanna Metzger at 541-386-3268 or hannam@gorge.net to get all the details.

20th Anniversary Celebration

MNPS Annual Meeting at Georgetown Lake



Botrychium lunaria

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 abloom; 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.

Scott Mincemoyer

Available from MNPS

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 1270 Lower Sweet Grass Road, Big Timber, MT 59011 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@hughes.net 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 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.

Field Trip Booklet Deadline

The annual field trip booklet lists MNPS hikes and events scheduled throughout the state, and is a great resource if you are traveling to other parts of the state and want to get in on a plant outing, or have a friend who is interested in native plants. THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS APRIL 10. Please e-mail your calendar items to drakekath@hughes.net

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

DATE YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES: If your label reads "2/06" your membership expired February 28, 2006. Use this form to renew your membership TODAY! Please drop us a note if any information on your label is incorrect. Please notify us promptly of address changes.

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 _____ New Membership (✓) _____ Renewal (✓) _____

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

Membership Dues

Price
with chapter affiliation

Price
no chapter affiliation

Individual

\$20

\$15

Family

\$25

\$20

Business/Organization

\$40

\$35

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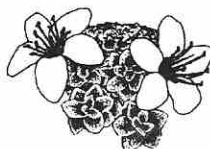
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Montana Native Plant Society

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 *Kelsey*, the quarterly newsletter of MNPS. We welcome your articles, field trip reports, book reviews, or anything that relates to native plants or the Society. Please include a line or two of "bio" information with each article. Drawings should be in black ink or a good quality photocopy. All items should be typed, saved in Microsoft Word or rich text format (rtf) for a PC, and sent electronically to: drakekath@hughes.net or mailed to *Kelsey* Editors, 314 Travis Creek Rd., Clancy, MT 59634.

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

Advertising space is available in each issue at \$5/column inch. Ads must be camera-ready and must meet the guidelines set by the Board of Directors for suitable subject matter; that is, be related in some way to native plants or the interests of MNPS members.

The deadline for each issue is: Fall—September 10;
Winter—December 10; Spring—March 10; 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 Editors, write to the above address, or e-mail: drakekath@hughes.net

No part of this publication may be reprinted without the consent of MNPS. Reprint requests should be directed to the Newsletter Editors.

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