Salal Native Plant Garden Update –
PLANT SALE OCTOBER 20TH!
Brenda Cunningham

Hot and smoky summers. Is this the new normal for the northwest? I hope not, but this feels like a repeat of last summer. I will be glad for the onset of fall weather and the relief from both the heat and the smoke.

Through the hot summer we had a fantastic crew of volunteers watering the nursery behind the native plant garden. It is essential that the potted plants get watered 3 times a week. Every spring we try to sell all the plants potted in small 4 inch pots at the spring plant sale, knowing that the small pots will dry out quickly in the summer heat. Shortly after the sale this year we potted many of the left-overs into gallon pots. This took several work parties to complete. Since then 3 volunteers have taken the lead on watering: Joan Lang, Jane Mayer and Pam Pritzl. There is also a fine group of people who put their names forward to be substitutes for the watering crew. For all of these folks I am very grateful. Their work through the summer enables us to have plants for our fall sale. Thank you.

In addition to the plants we potted up into gallons after the spring sale, we have shrubs and trees that we purchased in March as bare rooted plants. These we put into gallon, and even 2 gallon pots in some cases, to grow over the summer. By now they have substantial roots and will be perfect for planting in the fall. Come shop the sale and bring your friends.

Soon I will begin advertising the fall plant sale, including a list of species. I will send that notice to all Salal Chapter members, but if you know of anyone else who would like to receive the list, please have them send me a note and I will add them to the roster: nativegarden@fidalgo.net.

Salal Chapter Fall Events

Saturday, September 15, 10 am – noon - Chapter meeting at Padilla Bay Interpretive Center: Mira Lutz will speak on recent research into the role of coastal wetlands, including local eel grass meadows, in climate mitigation.

Friday, October 12, 10 am – 2 pm – Cleaning up the garden.

Thursday October 18, 10 am – 2 pm – Plant sale set up.

Friday, October 19, 10 – to 2 pm – Plant sale pricing.

Saturday, October 20, 10 am – noon – Plant Sale at the Native Plant Garden. (Please arrive at 9:30 if you are helping at the sale).

Saturday, November 17, 10 am – noon - Chapter meeting at Padilla Bay Interpretive Center: “Restoring Native Habitat on Whidbey Island – Why and How,” Dr. Robert K. Pelant.

Note: The Native Plant Garden is located in the SE corner of the Skagit Display Gardens adjacent to the WSU extension building, 16650 SR 536, west of Mount Vernon.
UPCOMING SALAL CHAPTER MEETINGS

Saturday, September 22, 10 am – noon at Padilla Bay Interpretive Center.

“What is blue carbon? Can estuary ecosystems store more carbon than mature terrestrial forests?”

Be some of the first to hear about recent research into the role of coastal wetlands, including local eelgrass meadows (*Zostera marina*), in climate mitigation.

Mira Lutz recently completed her MS on “blue carbon” in Salish Sea eelgrass meadows in Skagit County. She received support from Western Washington University and Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, among others. A long-time marine educator and Science Specialist, she loves to share her passion for science and exploration in the wilds of the Salish Sea with audiences of all ages.

Saturday, November 17, 10 am – noon at Padilla Bay Interpretive Center.

“Restoring Native Habitat on Whidbey Island—Why and How.”

Our November 17 program will feature Dr. Robert K. Pelant, the founder and CEO of the private nonprofit Pacific Rim Institute (PRI) in central Whidbey Island who will talk about the origin of PRI and it efforts to restore a 175-acre area of forest, glacial out-wash prairie, and savanna.

Dr. Pelant spent most of his adult life in Asia, Latin America, and Africa working at local and national levels to improve food production and food security. PRI began in 2009 largely in response to the 175 acres potentially being placed on the open market. By December 2014 PRI had made the last payment and now owns the site. A conservation easement is being sought.

Please mark your calendars and tell your friends and neighbors about this interesting program.

2019 Study Weekend Update:
Call for Fieldtrip Leaders and Hosts
Kathy Murray, Study Weekend Chair

If you have attended a Study Weekend, you know that registrants go on two fieldtrips—one on Saturday and one on Sunday. Typically, there are 15 fieldtrips each day that are led by someone familiar with the plants in the area. Sometimes leaders are botanists—but not always—and I would be delighted to have members of the Salal Chapter volunteer to lead a walk or to be an assistant to the trip leader. There is an incentive: Fieldtrip leaders have the conference registration fee waived and get a sack/box lunch the day of their trip. Assistant leaders get a box lunch. Do you have a favorite walk in the Anacortes-Whidbey-Mount Vernon area? (We may have trips farther afield but I’m starting with those nearest our home base.)

I am also seeking people willing to share their homes with a WNPS fellow and possibly his or her partner. As you may have noted in *Douglasia*, a Fellow is the highest honor given to a WNPS member. Fellows are invited to attend Study Weekends without charge. If the venue is in a camp, they receive lodging. Because those attending the 2019 event will be on their own to find lodging, I will ask Fellows if they would like to stay with a host during the event. If you live in the Anacortes-Mount Vernon area and have a spare room, please consider hosting one of these dedicated WNPS members.

The 2019 Study Weekend is an opportunity for us to share our wonderful region with WNPS members from throughout the state plus a few people from British Columbia and Oregon. Please plan to attend. Registration will open in January.

In the meantime, please email me (kandmmurray@frontier.com) about leading or assisting with a fieldtrip or to be put on a list of hosts for WNPS Fellows. You are also welcome to join our planning committee.

Impromptu Walks/Hikes with Lucie
Lucie Johns will continue to schedule and lead plant hikes on short notice during the fall. If you want to be on that list, please send her your e-mail address at luciejohns@hotmail.com.

WNPS NEWS

Membership Renewal Campaign Continues Through Summer!

WNPS Memberships expired on June 30th. Stay current and register today.

Avid plant watchers wind up wanting to know the plant families – identification of an unknown plant is quicker if you immediately recognize its family. The lily family is one of the easiest to identify: colorful blooms, flower parts based on the number three (six when petals and sepals are similar) and leaves relatively long and narrow. This family includes the onions, camas, brodiaea, fritillaries, fawn-lilies, death camas, sego lily, bead lily, chocolate lily, false asphodel, corn lilies, yucca, bear-grass, on and on.

What I have described is the “old” lily family, as it exists in the first edition of Hitchcock & Cronquist. However, DNA analysis, as it has become cheaper and quicker, has led botanists to split this family madly apart. Old friends now reside in new families.

This table shows the genera in the lily family in the first edition of H&C and their new family homes – where they will appear in the soon to appear revision.

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<tr>
<td>Asparagous, Brodiaea, Camassia, Maianthemum, Yucca, Smilacina</td>
<td>Asparagaceae</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allium</td>
<td>Amaryllidaceae</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trillium, Veratrum, Xerophyllum, Stenanthium, Zigadenus</td>
<td>Melanthiaceae</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tofieldia</td>
<td>Tofieldiaceae</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calochortus, Clintonia, Erythronium, Fritillaria, Lilium, Lloydia, Disporum</td>
<td>Liliaceae</td>
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Some of the genera listed above have made a double move, into a new genus as well as into a new family. Here is a list of the old genera and the genera into which they have moved: Disporum → Proartes; Smilacina → Maianthemum; Stenanthium → Anticlea; Zigadenus → Toxicoscordion/Anticlea. (Zigadenus was split up and the parts moved into different genera.)

The names in the right column of the table are not really “new” family names – they all existed in the past but subsequently were moved into the lily family. The new information coming from DNA analyses, has mainly provided crucial new supportive information for “splitters” in their ongoing struggle with “lumpers.” Will the pendulum swing back in the near future? Certainly, modern methods have revealed in much greater detail the evolutionary relationships among various plants, important new knowledge.

The lily family is not the only family that has been seriously reorganized. The figwort family (Scrophulariaceae) was hard hit also, dropping from thirty genera to four genera - with only two of them native. (Don’t hold me to those numbers - keeping track of all the changes is difficult.) The fern family is also radically changed. In the present H&C all the ferns are in one family. Now many fern genera have graduated to family status.

The world of plants is full of mysteries. Think of all the variation in flower form that exists in the buttercup family (Ranunculaceae) - columbine, monkshood, baneberry, larkspur, meadowrue, clematis, buttercup, marsh-marigold. Why has it not been cut up?

New names to learn, old ones to remember. Fortunately, the authors of the H&C revision have done us a favor. If you recognize a plant as one that belonged in the old lily family you can start identifying it by going to the new lily family key – that key will direct you to the proper new family. You will not have to start with the key to families, typically the hardest key in the book. I hope they have produced similar aids for the other heavily altered families.