



Koma Kulshan

Chapter WNPS

Newsletter

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Koma Kulshan e-newsletter

To receive the Koma Kulshan newsletter by email, send an email to jkling@gmail.com and indicate whether you prefer to receive the newsletter in e-format only, or if you would like to receive both the print and email versions.

Another excellent way to keep up to date virtually is by joining the WNPS-Koma email list. You'll get announcements and some discussion about native plant issues. To subscribe, send an email to: WNPSDiscussionGroup+subscribe@groups.io

You can also Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/kkchapterwnps

Northwest Natura

Koma Kulshan's own Jazmen Yoder has started an outdoor education enterprise called Northwest Natura, which features place-based education in botany, fungi, wildlife, ecology, and outdoor skills open to people of all ages and experience levels.

For a longer description, see the Koma Kulshan e-newsletter, or visit Northwest Natura at www.northwestnatura.com and follow @northwest_natura on Instagram.

Spring (April, May, June) 2023

President's Corner: Rhymes with Nabisco by Lyle Anderson

Name the most essential things to support life on earth. Water, air, food, and sleep are a given. Shelter and clothing are up there, too, especially for *Homo sapiens* (Homo wimpus?). We learned these things in elementary or high school. Delving a bit deeper, we were also taught about the biological processes involved in respiration, nutrition, some chemistry and genetics, and perhaps a teeny, teeny bit of botany.

But, of course, there is an ingredient essential to life (unless you are bacteria living around deep sea hydrothermal vents) which we all know as photosynthesis. However, again to go a bit deeper, there is a step in that process that, when I heard about it recently, thought "Wait, why haven't I, or most people I would venture to say, heard of this?" I readily admit this may be due to my education (or lack thereof) and the standard curriculum during my long-ago school years.

At our February chapter meeting the presentation by Dr. Richard Stout was largely about *Dichanthelium lanuginosum* var *sericeum*, or hot springs panic grass, which is a fascinating plant that grows around the geothermal hot springs in Yellowstone National Park. Near the end of Dr. Stout's talk, he briefly mentioned a molecule that I was astounded to be made aware of. That molecule is a protein, specifically an enzyme called ribulose biphosphate carboxylase/oxygenase, commonly abbreviated to rubisco, which is by far the dominant and essential catalyst whereby carbon dioxide from the atmosphere is made available for photosynthesis. Beyond that, I will leave it to botanists to better explain the process, although the Khan academy (www.khanacademy.org) has a good primer to explore this, which you can find at <https://tinyurl.com/rubisco-primer>.

Dr. Stout pointed out that rubisco is the most abundant protein on earth! It has a very interesting flaw which makes it only about 75% efficient, and research is being done to increase that efficiency for agricultural applications.

Seeing that we wouldn't be here without this molecule, I for one am much chagrined for eating crackers made by Nabisco and not being aware of Rubisco.

Study Weekend: In case you aren't aware, study weekend is in our own neck of the woods this year and will be based up at the Mt. Baker Ski Area with accommodations at the Firs Chalet and Mountaineers Lodge. Registration opened on March 30, so sign up soon to reserve accommodations as well as the many field trips on offer.

Plant Walks (cont'd on p 2)

Join our informal walks and get familiar with plants native to Whatcom County. Sponsored by the Koma Kulshan Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society (WNPS), these introductory plant identification walks last about two hours and feature an easy pace. All walks are free and no registration is required, and all ages and experience levels are welcome. Your guides will introduce common plants and algae native to our area. Dress for the weather and wear comfortable walking shoes that may get wet. For more information contact Allan Richardson at 360-305-5270 or asrichardson5@gmail.com.

Bellingham Bay Marine Algae (Seaweeds). Friday, April 14: 5-7 pm.
Though sailors might say wind; the most interesting aspect of Bellingham Bay may be the shoreline

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Plant Walks (cont'd from p1)

marine algae. With an abundance of spring sunlight these photo-synthesizers are approaching their prime. Add the arrival of low tide season and many of us feel compelled to search out and learn something of these beautiful life forms. Join Bob Lemon and others at Marine Park for a beach walk, up to a mile, and open ended. Beginning at the pavilion we will explore southward along the shore likely reaching Post Point before 7 PM. Wear rubber boots, if you have them. Meet at Fairhaven Marine Park Pavilion, foot of Harris St.

Native Plants on the Lower Padden Creek Trail. Sunday, April 23: 1-3 pm.

Stroll through the shady Padden Creek trail in Fairhaven. Your guide will help you learn to identify common trees and shrubs, and also to learn their unique plant "personalities" and how they interact in this dynamic urban green space. Meet at Fairhaven Village Green

Spring Plant Walk at Point Whitehorn Marine Reserve. Saturday, April 29: 1:30-3:30 pm.

Visit this gem of a county park, preserved through efforts of the Whatcom Land Trust. The forest floor here has many wildflowers. Learn about the flowers, shrubs and trees of this forest on the edge of the sea. The walk will take us to the beach. You can linger on the beach or return to your car. Meet at the Point Whitehorn Marine Reserve Park. Take the Grandview Road exit on I-5. Head west on Grandview to the end, turn left (south) on Koehn Rd. and you will soon see the parking lot on the left.

Hidden Forest Foray. Thursday, May 4: 6 pm to dusk.

Explore the plants of the Sehome Hill Arboretum, a "secret" natural area in the heart of Bellingham with guidebook author and former Arboretum board member Mark Turner. Sehome Hill was logged in the early 20th century and is now developing a mature second-growth forest. We'll look at trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and a vine or two. Learn what's native and what's not. Meet in the parking area at the top of Arboretum Drive (off Bill McDonald Parkway).

Native Plants at Birch Bay State Park. Sunday, May 14: 1:30-3:30 pm.

Join us for a plant walk in the diverse plant community at the Birch Bay State Park. The walk will go from the beach through the uplands along a forested trail to the Terrell Creek estuary. Meet at BP Heron Center by the beach in Birch Bay State Park (Discover Pass required)

Downtown Plants. Wednesday, May 24: 6 pm to dusk.

Enjoy an early evening walk investigating native plants in the urban environment. We will follow the Native Plant Trail in Maritime Heritage Park along Whatcom Creek and learn about the plants, their names, and uses in native Coast Salish tradition. The walk will be led by anthropologist Allan Richardson, co-author of Nooksack Place Names. Meet at the park pavilion building, just east of Whatcom Creek, on West Holly Street at Maritime Heritage Park in downtown Bellingham

Field Trips (cont'd from p 3)

and backgrounds are welcome. An algae list is provided; bring whatever field guide you like. If buying or updating, I suggest *Pacific Seaweeds* (2016, Druehl and Clarkston) and/or *The New Beachcomber's Guide to the Pacific Northwest* (2019, Duane). Meet at S.W. corner of Birch Bay State Park (boat ramp) and last toilet facility at 9:00 AM; Discover Pass required. Bob Lemon and Doug Stark will lead up to 10 interested participants. Required pre-register, or questions, with Bob at lemprev@alphahunt.com, preferred; or voice land line (360)714-8629. More information will be supplied via email to registrants.

May 27, Saturday 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM Squires Lake/Alger Alp

This is a moderate hike of about 5 miles round trip with 1,000 foot elevation gain. It's a good early season hike to stretch those muscles for hikes later in the season. Squires Lake is a Skagit County park about 8.5 miles south of Bellingham about a half mile off I-5. We will hike the loop around the east side of the lake, take a brief side trip to see the beaver pond, then continue the loop leading to the Alger Alp trail.

Depending on the group, we will go to the top to see views of Alger and the Skagit valley. Meet at 9AM at the east side park and ride off Fairhaven Parkway: Take exit 250, turn left and go under the bridge, and the park and ride will be on the right. Bring a lunch and water. A plant species list can be found at: https://www.wnps.org/plant-lists/list?Squires_Lake

Trip limit: 12 people. Restroom at trailhead. RSVP Lyle Anderson at lyleand2@comcast.net

June 3, Saturday, 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM Chuckanut Bay Shoreline Exploration

The north end of Chuckanut Bay has steep south-facing slopes, a marsh behind a gravelly beach ridge, mature second growth forest, and oak tree meadows. This is also an important location in the traditions of the Nooksack Indians and other Coast Salish peoples, as documented in Nooksack Place Names and by five archaeological sites. We will first explore the slopes above the mud flats at low tide, then investigate the marsh. After a lunch break at the beach we will take the unmarked shoreline trail to reach the oaks at Woodstock Farm. Meet at the end of Fairhaven Ave in the Chuckanut Village neighborhood of Bellingham. Take Chuckanut Drive less than a mile south of Fairhaven Park to a right turn behind the Chuckanut Bay Gallery to reach Fairhaven Ave. Bring boots or shoes suitable for ankle deep mud, and other shoes for the trail. Contact Allan Richardson at 360-305-5270 or asrichardson5@gmail.com if you have any questions.

June 17, Saturday, 10:30 AM to 4:00 PM Hoypus Point at Deception Pass State Park

Hoypus Point in Deception Pass State Park features a forest that is quite different from those covering the mountains of Chuckanut sandstone nearer to Bellingham: the forest of Hoypus Point is much moister, supporting an abundance of moisture-loving plants like hemlock and sitka spruce trees, sedges, and also a lot of nettles. Most of it was logged in the distant past but a portion is distinctly old growth, with giant trees and snags, and an open, complex structure that is beautiful to behold. Altogether, it provides a nice lesson on forest succession and the tremendous amount of time needed to reach climax. Many trails are available but we will take a 4-5 mile loop on comfortable, mostly flat trails around the best part, and a short side trail to visit a stretch of pebble beach. Group size is limited. Note that a Discover Pass is required to park. Contact trip leader Eric Worden eric@ericworden.seattle.wa.us to register and receive specific instructions.

Spring (April, May, June)

Chapter Meetings

Meetings may be in-person or via Zoom, which is noted in each meeting announcement below. To register for Zoom meetings, go to the state events website (<http://wnps.org/events>) and scroll down to find the appropriate Koma Kulshan event among other Zoom events associated with WNPS. Meetings begin at 7:00 PM. In-person meetings are in the Sustainable Living Center education room at the ReStore (2309 Meridian St.). The entrance is off the back alley and the SLC is upstairs.

April 19 (in person): The Ecology of Ivy, Holly and Hawthorn in Western Europe and Implications for their Management.

English ivy (*Hedera spp.*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Common hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) are native to western Europe and are now regarded as highly problematic invasive plants in other locations around the globe. By learning about the ecology and natural history of these three species in their native habitats, can we gain insights for their management as invasive plants here in the Salish Sea bioregion? This talk will present initial findings from field studies of Ivy, Holly and Hawthorn in Ireland. We'll examine how the ecological status of these three species reflects both historical agricultural practices and contemporary efforts to re-wild the Irish countryside. John Tuxill is Associate Professor at WWU's Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies. His research focuses broadly on the conservation of plant diversity in traditional agricultural landscapes, with extensive field experience in Mexico, Central America and, most recently, Ireland.

May 17 (in person): Westside Wildfires—Preparing for a Future of Wildfire in the Cascades

Climate change is expected to have profound impacts on Pacific Northwest flora and fauna. Wildfires have been a natural part of the circle of life in the western United States, but many decades of fire suppression and land use change are now compounded by longer and drier summers, resulting in unprecedented changes in the fire regime in our region. In this talk, Amanda Monthei will explore wildfire's role in the ecosystems of the west Cascades, and how climate change and land management have fundamentally shifted how fires ignite and burn in our dense westside forests. Amand Monthei is a writer, podcast host, angler, skier and former wildland firefighter. She left fire in 2019 after four summers working as a wildland firefighter, including two seasons as a hotshot. She's used those experiences to frame much of the creative work she's done since, including writing about wildfires, climate change and environmental issues for NBC News, The Washington Post, Outside, The Atlantic and Patagonia. She wants to empower Westerners to learn more about wildfires, which she does in part through a podcast called Life with Fire. The podcast explores the critical role wildfire plays in America's forests, lands and communities.

June 21, 2023: Summer Kickoff Potluck

6 – 9 pm, 2582 N Shore Rd. Abe Lloyd and Katrina Poppe would like to welcome you again to their home for an outdoor potluck to celebrate the beginning of summer. Dinner will begin around 6:30 pm. Bring a dish and a drink to share, as well as a lawn blanket or chair if needed.

Field Trips/Work Parties

While attending WNPS events, please observe these policies. Please do not attend an event if you currently have any symptoms of COVID-19 as outlined by the CDC, or have had symptoms in the past 14 days, or you have any reason you should quarantine according to the CDC. WNPS event hosts will not facilitate carpooling. If you test positive for COVID within 14 days of the event please contact the WNPS office at (206) 527 3210 or the WNPS Business Manager at wnps@wnps.org. Read the full policies online at www.wnps.org/home/covid-19resources

May 7, Sunday, 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM Afternoon Hike Teddy Bear Cove and Woodstock Farm

Highlights will be amazing views of the San Juan Islands, Honeycomb weathered sandstone, beautiful Pacific Madrone Trees and gnarly Douglas-Firs among other remarkable trees. One of them is the only native Oak Tree in Washington, the Garry Oak. This tree needs sunlight and drier soil and is mostly found on rocky outcrops such as these headlands or on the San Juan Islands. We will meet at the North Chuckanut Mountain Trail parking lot at 2:00 pm on Sunday, May 7, 2023. From there we will hike the Interurban Trail to the steep descent to Teddy Bear Cove. Going down will be easy, coming back up not so much. After checking out all that's to see at the cove we will go back the Interurban Trail to the Woodstock Farm and amble the grounds looking for all the interesting plants before we return to our cars at about 5:00 pm. All in all we will cover about 3 miles and 800 ft elevation gain. Please join me if you feel stretching the legs a bit on a Sunday afternoon would be a good idea. Group size is limited. To register, or for questions, please contact Fritz Ulrich at fritz365@gmail.com.

May 20, Saturday, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm Baker River Wildflowers and Pollinators

After pre-registering (see below), meet at 10:00 AM at the Baker River Trailhead at the end of the Baker Lake Road. Dense forest limits flowering plant abundance in much of the North Cascade lowlands. However, there are lowland areas with abundant flowers and, of course, their associated pollinators. River and lake margins provide habitats where sunlight penetrates far enough into riparian areas to create healthy flowering plant communities. Meandering rivers (Baker River as a prime example) also create forest openings that gradually recover to mature forest, going through several stages of flowering shrubs and small trees. If we have time, we may even visit a burned area along Park Creek where the shrub layer is slowing recovering. Late May to early June is the best time to visit the Baker River area. We should see quite a few flowers. This will be a relatively easy hike of about 2+ miles on mostly level terrain along the river. Hopefully the weather will be good, but you never know, so bring appropriate rain gear and warm clothing. Also bring a lunch and plenty of water. Don't forget your Forest Service / Park Service parking pass. There are no fee stations in the area. We will be meeting at the trailhead, so please arrange your own carpools as you think appropriate. It can be up to a two-hour drive to the trailhead, depending on how many stops you need to make along the way. The trip is limited to 12 people, so please register with Jim Davis at [jimdavispc\[at\]comcast\[dot\]net](mailto:jimdavispc[at]comcast[dot]net).

May 21, Sunday, 9:00 AM to 4-ish PM; Marine Algae, and Ecology of Pt. Whitehorn.

We will approach the Point from the Birch Bay side, about 3 miles of beach walking, return total. Rubber boots, field guide, snacks, water, hand-lens, hand towel; all recommended; and ANTICIPATE MUCH COOLER, BREEZY, conditions than in your garden. All knowledge levels

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If you would like to join WNPS

Please return the membership application form to:
Washington Native Plant Society
6310 NE 74th St., Suite 215E
Seattle, WA 98115

Please make checks payable to WNPS
(outside US add \$5 to dues)

or join online at <https://www.wnps.org>



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Mebership Category:

- \$20 Budget (Senior/Student)
- \$40 Individual
- \$55 Family
- \$75 Club/Institution

The Koma Kulshan chapter of WNPS is dedicated to the preservation and study of native plants and vegetation of Washington State and the education of the public to the values of native flora and its habitat.

WNPS -- Koma Kulshan Chapter
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