

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 the 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

Plantas Nativa

It's fall, which means it's the best time to put garden and landscape plants in the ground.

Bellingham has an outstanding resource for native landscapers in Plantas Nativa, which has a retail nursery downtown at 315 East Champion Stree with helpful staff.

They are also online at <https://www.plantasnativa.com/>, where you can browse the online store with over 300 species.

Fall (October, November, December) 2023

Chair's Corner

by Eric Worden

As you are leaving the business meeting, after becoming a newly elected leader of this group, the previous leader hands you a box of papers to take home and safeguard. The papers are old printed emails, meeting documents, and newsletters. While skimming the old newsletters I see that they were dated of course, but never mind that: when the officers' contact info was given only as phone numbers, no email addresses, then you know the vintage. Also the old newsletters tended to be printed on colored paper, such as bright orange. In those days the world was less exciting, and a new piece of orange paper arriving in the mailbox and laid on the coffee table provided a curious level of stimulation for a couple of days.

The names of the chapter presidents from those days are still very familiar. Almost all of those same people were present at our last meeting in September, or at the Study Weekend event this summer: Marie Hitchman, Vikki Jackson, Mark Turner, Barry Wendling, Ellen Kuhlmann, Abe Lloyd, and Allan Richardson. Together with me and Lyle Anderson, we comprised nearly half of the 20 meeting attendees. Aside from the officers' election, we exchanged some seeds and Lyle quizzed plant identification using close up photos of uncommon plants; this roused the game of the seasoned botanists attending who thought that they had seen everything.



The last couple of years I have led "Introductory Plant Walks" along Padden Creek in Fairhaven. These are casual, easy strolls where people from the general public enjoy the fresh air while I gently make introductions: People, meet the plants. Helped by sunny weather, 20 people attended my walk a year ago, and I was stunned by the effusive thanks given at the end of the walk. 20 is the same number of people that attended our last meeting, except the two groups of people were almost entirely different: one group of seasoned botanists and one group of nature strollers. Our chapter currently has ten times that number of paid members. Similarly, our chapter Facebook page has 200 followers, yet I would bet that a large fraction of those people are neither members, nor plant walk attendees, nor meeting attendees. The Facebook followers (profile photos) tend to show the glow of youth while the event attendees tend to show the glow of silver hair.

And of all those people, who is reading this newsletter?

So who is the Koma Kulshan chapter? It's a trick question. The meeters be meetin', the strollers be strollin', the Facebookers be like'n, the writers be writin'. Depending on where and when you are, you may perceive a different identity of the group. All of us have one special thing in common though: a love of native plants and a desire to see them thrive. I tend to hang out in the meeting and organizing corner of the group. I tend to stroll alone, and away from Facebook. But I believe that everyone has something to give. Now as the new Chair of the chapter board, I will make a special effort to find, see, and reach out to my allies in the other corners, and I welcome anyone to reach out to me.

Koma Kulshan Chapter WNPS Newsletter

Study Weekend Wrapup

by Mark Turner

Our Koma Kulshan chapter organized and hosted a very successful WNPS Study Weekend at the Mt. Baker Ski Area the last weekend of July. About 140 people attended, coming from all parts of Washington and few folks from British Columbia, California, Missouri, Oregon, and Vermont.

Chapter members led 35 field trips over the Friday-Sunday weekend, visiting many of our favorite places in the Mt. Baker region. Some were very local and relatively easy, like Bagley Lakes and Huntoon Point. Others were longer and more challenging, like Welcome Pass and Goat Mountain. The weather cooperated and the flowers were near their peak bloom. Many people were able to see and study plants that were new to them and others renewed their acquaintance with “old friends.”

Speaking of old friends, Study Weekend is also a time for members to get together with each other and share stories and adventures. It finally felt like we were getting back to normal after the restrictions of the covid-19 pandemic.

We received numerous compliments on the event from participants. Peter Courtney, from Kelowna, BC, wrote, “Thank you so much for all the effort you and others put into setting up and managing the Study Weekend. I really appreciated the opportunity to get together with so many enthusiast botanists and to see some really cool plants.” David Giblin, who spoke on his 50 Peaks Project Saturday evening, wrote, “Thank you again for all of your time organizing the Study Weekend - what a great time! Thank you also for including me as a field trip leader and an evening speaker - both were very rewarding experiences, and I was flattered to be invited to serve in both roles.” Kathy Darrow wrote, “Thanks again for a fabulous study weekend! You and the Koma Kulshan team did a great job pulling it together.”

It takes a lot of work to put together an event for 140-150 people. Our chapter chair, Lyle Anderson, did the great majority of the organizing, including working through frustrating communication challenges with some of the venues we used. Attendees never knew about the challenges and only saw an event that ultimately ran pretty smoothly. Thanks to all those who helped during the event — setting up and tearing down the seating for the evening meals and programs, serving happy hour beverages, staffing the registration table, and hauling away the trash at the end. You know who you are and I never got a complete list.



Study Weekend hike, field trip
Photo by Abe Lloyd



Study Weekend hike, field trip
Photo by Kathy Darrow



Photo by Kathy Darrow



Mark Turner speaks at Study Weekend
Photo by Analiese Burns

Fall (October, November, December)

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.

October 18: Chaparral Ecology: Adaptations to Drought, Wildfire, and Freezing (in person)

Chaparral is the dominant vegetation type in southern California, and well adapted to a 6-9 month summer dry period, with periodic wildfires (which are becoming more frequent and catastrophic). There are also localized freezing events that occur just a few miles inland from coastal beaches. This talk will focus on physiological mechanisms that allow chaparral species to thrive under such environmental stress and the limits of chaparral survival with the advent of California's changing climate. The speaker is Stephen Davis, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Biology at Pepperdine University. Dr. Davis was selected as a Harriet and Charles Luckman Distinguished Teaching Fellow, and he received the Teacher of the Year award at Pepperdine, and the Robert Foster Cherry Award for Great Teaching through Baylor University. His research has been funded by government grants, including grants from the National Science Foundation. Much of Dr. Davis's research centers on plant physiological ecology of chaparral shrubs and understory ferns. He has published in such journals as Nature, Ecology, The American Journal of Botany, New Phytologist and Oecologia.

November 15: Quantifying the vulnerability and resilience of Washingtonian forests to climate change (in person)

The health, functionality, and productivity of forests around the world is rapidly changing in response to anthropogenic climate change. Here in the Pacific Northwest, regional climate models continue to predict widespread increases in seasonal temperature coupled with significant reductions in snowpack and spring snow water resources. The extent to which these new hydroclimatic conditions will impact our forest tree species is unclear, because the key physiological traits that determine their relative adaptive capacity to water stress have not yet been characterized. In this talk, Dr. Andrew Weitz will review the impacts of climate change here in the Pacific Northwest, highlighted recently by the 2015 drought. He will discuss the main physiological traits that trees utilize to protect their water transport systems under drought, and how his work in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest has been quantifying them by integrating methods in dendrochronology and cell morphology. After presenting some new results about species-level differences in drought vulnerability and resilience, he'll conclude with the implications of his work on the future of our forest ecosystems here in Washington in the face of climate change. Andrew Weitz is a Washington Research Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow working in WWU's Department of Environmental Sciences. As a plant ecophysiologicalist and an evolutionary biologist, Dr. Weitz's research focuses on how different tree species have adapted to survive under differing hydrologic and climatic conditions, and his work will help predict future impacts of changing hydroclimate on the structure and function of our forests.

December 13: Holiday Potluck 6:00–9:00 pm (in person)

4682 Wynn Road, Bellingham, WA. Let's celebrate the holidays in person like we used to do in days of old. We haven't met for our winter celebration since 2019. Once again, Mark and Brian Turner will be your hosts in Mark's photo studio. Gather at 6:00 pm and we'll plan to eat at 6:30, followed by our traditional slideshow of botanical highlights from the past three years. Bring a dish and refreshments to share. Those wishing to share their photos should bring a USB drive with up to 10 photos. If you want them in a specific order put a number (01-10) at the beginning of the filenames.

Field Trips/Work Parties

October 21, 2023, Saturday, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm: Hike to Clayton Beach on the New Trail

Location: Meet at the Clayton Beach parking lot in Larrabee State Park at 10:00 am (remember to bring your state parking pass). Although we will not see many flowers this time of year, if any, this is a great time to visit Clayton Beach. The new trail to the beach is finally completed, so we will be able to use the new bridge over the railroad track (much safer route). In addition to enjoying fall colors (we hope) and trying to identify native plants, we will also examine restoration efforts along the old trail completed by the State Park and discuss what could be done to help restore headlands above the beach that have been degraded by heavy use over the years. Bring your raincoat, rain hat, and something to eat for lunch. Contact Jim Davis at [jimdavispcp\(at\)comcast\(dot\)net](mailto:jimdavispcp(at)comcast(dot)net) for more information.

November 11, Saturday, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM: Community Work Party at Galbraith Trailhead

Join Bellingham Parks volunteers and others to plant native shrubs and trees to restore a natural habitat in Lake Padden Park adjacent to the new Galbraith Trailhead parking lot. WNPS has helped select the species and locations for the plantings. Gloves and tools provided at the check in area, 5090 S Samish Way. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. Please register in advance with Bellingham Parks at https://www.volunteerbellingham.org/need/detail/?need_id=841479/ Contact Jim Davis at [jimdavispcp \(at\) comcast \(dot\) net](mailto:jimdavispcp(at)comcast(dot)net) if you have any questions.



Jim Davis leads a 2022 field trip near Mt. Shuksan
Photo by Evan Johnson

Koma Kulshan Board

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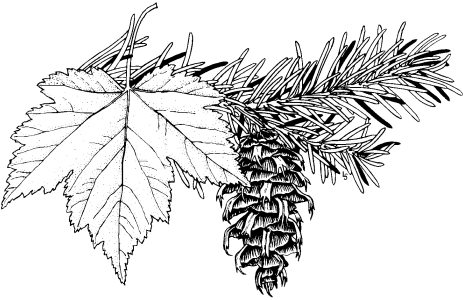
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If you would like to join WNPS

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>



Name: _____

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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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